CHAPTER VII
CASE STUDIES

This chapter consists of the case studies. Although the researcher studied a number of cases in detail to obtain a complete picture of the modernisation of the cobblers, not all the cases can be reported here owing to considerations of space. Hence only ten select cases are reported here. These cases throw some light on the socio-economic and educational background of the various individuals who have been the subject of the modernisation. There has been no uniformity of the format but an effort has been made to keep some broad considerations in view. Attention has been paid to the educational background of the individual, his marriage and family, the number of children, the attitude to family planning, his income and property status, his contact with the modernising agencies, his experience of getting loans etc. In some cases the experience of social distance or untouchability is also narrated.

Some individuals have been vocal on political parties and elections. Their views also have been stated. The relations between the cobblers and the other castes and classes have been given some attention. These cases are designed to strengthen the analysis of the modernisation process involving the cobblers.
Suresh Satwajji Bhandare is aged 33 years and belongs to the Savagar caste engaged in leather work. He is married and has three children. His family consists of his wife, children and a brother. He has studied up to the 9th standard. Although his father encouraged him in his studies, he did not evince much interest in studies. His father was a supplier of leather goods to the Charmalaya. He also lived very near the Charmalaya. With his exposure to the leather craft since childhood, Suresh evinced particular interest in learning this craft and developed a bent of mind towards the trade. According to him, he did not study further because he wanted to expand his trade. All his children go to school. Bhandare has no landed property. The family has to depend on the craft for livelihood. By sheer hard work the family has improved its economic condition in the present generation. He says that during the days when his father started his work, there was neither a development agency to help them nor any bank facility to provide credit for the scheduled castes artisans. They were entirely at the mercy of the middlemen, traders who in turn depended on merchants in Bombay and other far off places. However the things have changed much for his family now.

Suresh has a unit for manufacturing leather goods and employs on an average two-three persons, paying them anywhere
between Rs.30-40 per day depending on the nature of the work. He too works in his unit and his younger brother who is not married assists him. This younger brother has studied up to the 5th standard. He is aged 24 years. Bhandare says that his younger brother will start his own unit once he gets married and establishes a separate household.

It is interesting to note that while these two brothers have settled down to their traditional occupation, of course, with modern equipment, the youngest brother, Sudhir, seems to be on the move towards higher status. Sudhir is working for the Lidkar as Quality Control Officer after obtaining a diploma in leather technology at Madras. He is currently posted at Hubli and is said to draw a salary of Rs.1,100/- per month.

During the discussion, Suresh said that neither agency, the Lidkar or the Sarmalaya, procures all that his unit could produce. Neither one utilizes his capacity completely. Suresh expects the development agencies to take all the things he produces so that he could have a definite market and income. But the management of the agencies states that their work is primarily to make the craftsman an independent entrepreneur and help him by procuring his product only when he fails to market it himself. This policy has worked. Take the case of Suresh
himself. It is true that Suresh's father came up because of the help given by the development agency. Now Suresh is a very well established manufacturer, and the development agency takes from him smaller lots of consignments. Suresh sells the rest to the outside merchants who visit him periodically. He has also procured large orders from the nearby Miraj merchants and is busy supplying them. His unit is equipped with better tools and he also has a sewing machine.

Under the influence and aid of the development agencies, Bhandare has been able to modernise his method of production, which has improved his economic status and living conditions. He and the members of his family live in comfort. Socially, he has achieved an image. The fact of his belonging to the lower stratum of society has not affected him. He is neither experiencing discrimination on the grounds of his caste nor has caste come in the way of his progress. His wife is literate and she assists him in managing the affairs of his unit. Both husband and wife have adequate knowledge of planned parenthood. According to him, he enjoys a happy family life. His wife has undergone sterilisation.

The change in the family's attitude is reflected in its (family) planning, the wife's participation in the production
process, and in the living style. The family has taken to modern medical care and has moved away from reliance on superstition and rituals. The respondent says that when one is sick, one should go to the doctor and not to the temple priest.

Case No. 2:

Sangappa Naruthi Vagmari is Samagar by caste and cobbler by occupation. He lives in one of the Liskar houses allotted to him two years ago. He has studied up to the 3rd standard and he is in his 30s. He married in 1972. His wife has studied up to the 7th standard. This wife is childless and therefore he took a second wife at the instance of his first wife. Vagmari says that when his wife did not bear children after years of marriage, he got her medically examined and treated at Kiraj where medical facilities are good. Though he had no superstitious beliefs, to please the older relatives, the couple went to pilgrimage to the family deity at Vishaligad near Ratnagiri. He confirms that he went there along with his wife keeping in mind that the best can come from the medical expert and not from the family deity. His wife too is a well informed woman. They read newspapers and magazines regularly. They seem to have a good knowledge of the achievements of modern science and medicine.
Because of the compulsion of his wife, he married another woman in 1980. In contrast with the first wife, the second wife is illiterate, though young in age. She has two daughters now thus fulfilling the desire of the family.

Vagmari and his family are content with the two daughters. Discussion with them indicated that they are not too keen on having any more children. They are not so willing to follow the family planning practices. However his friends, who were to some extent instrumental in his marrying again, are pressurising him into having another issue with the hope that it would be a son. The respondent is not much inclined. His family does not let him undergo the (family planning) operation.

Vagmari, when he started his working career, was dependent on the daily wages he earned by working for others. In the course of his work, he came in contact with the development agency through his employer five years ago. This contact helped him to fulfil his strong desire to work independently. Being an efficient worker, it was not difficult for him to convince the development agencies of his capabilities and skill. As a result, he was able to procure full assistance from the development agencies, which put him on the road to progress. Before the agency came to his help, he was living in a hut, now he lives in a house-cum-workshed allotted to him by the Lidkar.
Vagmari says that he has gained much from the Lidkar as well as the Charmalaya. He supports the idea of working without borrowing even if the loan facilities exist. He thinks that public life is for those who can afford to invest time in it. It is for the rich too. He is against caste associations and militancy in bargaining for benefits. He is for hard work. He feels that public life and politics are meant for vagabonds—those who avoid work and spend money earned by elders.

Case No.3.

Barayan Barashuram Kadam belongs to the Dhor caste which comes under the scheduled castes and tanning is his traditional occupation. At 60, he is full of energy and vigour. He has studied up to the 7th standard. Compared to the other scheduled castes members, his family seems to be economically very well off. He owns 64 acres of land along with his mother. (Kadam owns 40 acres and his mother 24 acres.)

Barayan has three sons and three daughters. The three daughters and two sons are married. All of them, along with his aged mother, live together forming a big household. All the three sons-in-law are employed. One is a floor inspector in the railway workshop, Hubli; another is in the health department at Gulbarga and the third one is a junior assistant in the Kalaprabha Grameena Bank.
Narayan’s eldest son, Seetharam, holds a bachelor’s degree in Arts and is said to be the first graduate in his caste. The second son has studied up to the 4th standard; and the third son up to PUC II. While the first and second sons look after tanning pits and trade, the last one is engaged in agriculture. It is interesting to note that the graduate son has taken to the rather degrading family occupation.

Narayan is an active political worker. He is right now the secretary of the Janata party, taluka unit. He was elected to this position in 1984. He was an elected member of the Agricultural Produce and Marketing Committee. He has served as a member of the Town Municipal Council several times and he was its Vice-President in 1957. He is the chairman of the Kakkayya Samaj Charmakar Utpadak Sahakari Sangha. He was also the chairman of the SC and ST Housing Society a few years ago.

While the Samagars are craftsmen, Kadam’s caste is specialised in producing raw materials for them. There is a close link between these — an interdependency relationship. The prosperity of his community depends on the prosperity of the cobblers. The cobblers of Athani are prospering under the patronage of the Charmalaya and the Lidkar. As a result the tanners like Kadam are also flourishing. This is an indirect result of the activities of the development agencies of the area.
There are certain developmental programmes meant for tanners also. For example, the Khadi and Village Industries Commission has certain specific programmes for them. However the tanners in this area have not found it necessary to take the benefits. This is because of the constant demands generated by the cobblers for the raw materials.

Case No. 4.

Atmaram Jayaram Devmane belongs to the Samagar caste and is a cobbler by profession.

He is one of the regular suppliers to the Chamarlaya as well as the Lidkar. He makes mostly the leather footwear of local design.

At 45 he is already a grandfather. His 20 year old daughter, Vidya, is married and has a child. She lives with her husband. Besides Vidya, Devmane has a son, who is 14 years old. He is studying in the 9th standard.

Devmane’s wife, Kalavati, is also a skilled leather worker. Besides cooking and running the household, she works with her husband, making leather footwear.
This was one of the scheduled castes families that did not own a house. They lived in a hut. Today they live in a Lissar house.

Devmane cannot recollect what his parents did for their living. He says that they were menial workers and worked for anyone who hired them.

Devmane never went to school. Right from childhood he has worked, first to support his parents and later himself and his family. He recalls that while working for another cobbler over the years, he learnt to make footwear. He worked, and as far as he remembers, his wife too worked for others earning wages to support themselves. He sums up that the life was hard and the family lived on meagre earnings. From his account, their life never seems to have been smooth. He was indebted to the traders who took away all that he produced, adjusting the payments everytime against advances made. This was irksome. In a way the system was similar to the system of bonded agricultural labour. Neither the person could get out of the system nor could he feel comfortable in it.

The anti-poverty programme of the Indian government during the national emergency in 1975 liberated Devmane from the
exploiting traders. This was a turning point in his career.
It was then that he came in contact with the Charmalaya.

The Charmalaya staff was over-working during this period to fulfil the targets. Devmane says that Mr. K.A. Swamy, of the Charmalaya, who lived in the Harihankeri was very helpful in guiding him. He recalls that it was due to Swamy's grace that he could get a small working loan from the State Bank of India, to work independently of the traders and make a living.

Mr. Swamy confirms this and declares that he has done this for Devmane as a part of his regular work. Mr. Swamy says that during the national emergency, as part of a drive to protect the weaker sections, the government of India came out with a number of measures. The people's education programme was one of them. Under this programme the Charmalaya was authorised to identify the artisans in the Belgaum district to receive bank loans and other related assistance. As such the Charmalaya staff worked to identify the needy artisans for the State Bank of India, Athani. In this connection, Mr. Swamy had set up a field office in front of the State Bank of India to assist both the artisans and the bank staff. He says that even the bank staff appreciated the situation and lent him a table and a chair for a couple of weeks to make the work easier for him.
Devmaoe recalls that the artisans would gather around Mr. Swamy every day near the State Bank of India to get the several blank forms filled and to file them with the bank for loans. Devmaoe says that the exercise of entering the State Bank of India premises was a spine-chilling one. It was like an attempt to enter the sacred Hindu temples which were prohibited for the scheduled castes for centuries. Though there was no bar on the scheduled castes' entering the bank premises or other public places like post office etc., a certain amount of self-imposed hesitation was working in the minds of these people. Anyway entering the bank was an experience, not only for Devmaoe but for all other cobblers who were there with Swamy seeking loans.

Devmaoe declares that with this little loan he started producing footwear and selling it to the Charmalaya. He could sell in small lots all that he produced and obtain cash payments at any time of the day when the office was open.

Devmaoe confesses that the quality of the footwear he made in the beginning was not so good as he can deliver today. Over the years, he has learnt from the inspection section of the Charmalaya the weaknesses and the strength of footwear he has made. The section educates him every time he goes to it by
pointing out even minor flaws in his work. Thus he has learnt the craft the hard way. Today he uses the semi-modern tools and makes a good job of whatever he does.

In the process of his becoming a sophisticated leather-worker he has also become a literate. He recalls that Mr. Swamy was organising night classes to help the illiterate members of the scheduled castes to learn to read and write. Devmane attended the classes. Now he can read and write. Now, he does not have to depend on others to write down the orders received and to keep accounts. He can make transactions in the bank independently. For all this, he says, the credit should go to the Charmalaya and its staff.

He is an allottee of the Lidakar's house-cum-work shed. He offers a steel chair to the visitor which he could not think of possessing when he lived in the hut. He has a radio and a wrist watch. He operates an account in the Corporation Bank, and prefers bank transactions.

He prefers modern medicines for the sick. He completely approves of the planned parenthood policy. He is aware of the benefits of a small family. In fact, his information on the family planning incentives given by the government to those
undergoing surgery was surprisingly detailed and accurate. He says that he has been keeping track of this in order to educate others. He himself underwent a sterilisation 11 years ago. He remembers that the incentive he got was a paltry Rs. 18/- which was insufficient for a family to live even for 10 days without working. However he approves of the incentives provided now.

He does not have any land. His material wealth is what he uses at home. The family cooks in aluminium and stainless steel utensils. They use stainless steel plates to eat in and plastic ware to store water.

Case No. 5.

Kallusha Jakkappa Soudagar belongs to the Samagar caste and hails from a family which has made a name in the leather footwear manufacture in Athani. The family is known for its contribution to the sales promotion of leather footwear of local design in the metropolitan cities of Bombay and Calcutta, thus generating employment for the local cobblers. It has worked for the general uplift of the caste members when one of the Soudagars served as an elected member of the State legislature for two full terms. (The MLA was Bala Siddaraya Soudagar. He died in 1975.)
J.S. Kallusha received his BA degree in Economics from the Karnataka University in 1965 after studying two years in the Lingaraj College, Belgaum, and then at the BID College, Bijapur. During his student days he held several positions in student organisations. He is proud to recall his college days at Belgaum where he served as a member of the Silver Jubilee Celebration Committee of the Lingaraj College. He moved over to the Bijapur college because of its proximity to Athani, his native town, and because this enabled him to be associated with his family's footwear production unit and trade.

The Soudagar family was a wealthy family. They had already achieved fame as well as acquired riches through hard and innovative work of a generation by the time Kallusha was born. The Soudagars, he declares, were eager to see that one of their children receives university education which in their view would bring great laurels to the family. Being members of the scheduled castes, his grandparents had lived in poverty. He recalls how his father and uncles slogged to make a living in their traditional occupation — leather work. He recalls the extent to which the untouchables were oppressed socially were deprived of the basic human necessities. He pays a tribute to the great emancipator, Mahatma Gandhi, and believes that both World War II and the freedom movement helped the
emancipation of the oppressed untouchables a great deal.
His uncle was a local leader and in his own right a freedom fighter.

His parents and uncles had high expectations from Kallusha who, as a boy, had already demonstrated his intelligence and leadership qualities. In him they wanted to see a leader of importance and were ever ready to meet the demands of his public life. His father, who is around 70 years of age now, says that he had planned and saved enough fund for his son to take to public life and contest an election on the Congress party ticket. He puts the fund figure, thus saved over the years for Kallusha, at Rs.40,000/-. The family knew that under the protective policy for the scheduled castes, Kallusha had a bright chance of becoming a minister in the government if he could contest an election to the legislature successfully.

Kallusha did not get the Congress party nomination. He sincerely tried for the party ticket twice to contest Lok Sabha election as well as the State Legislature election. Other contenders for the Congress party nomination from among the untouchables proved stronger for Kallusha. His principal opponents within the party were led by Mr.B.Shankaramab, the sitting MP from the constituency as well as a Member of the
Council of Ministers at the centre at present. The failure to enter public life on the support of the Indian National Congress party is considered a turning point in Kallusha's life. He recalls that he started whole-heartedly devoting his time and energies to the family trade. In the process, he came in contact with Mr. Palani, the chief of the Charmalaya, the unit of the development agency started by the KVIC at Athani to help the helpless artisans and to promote footwear and leather craft trade.

Kallusha claims that it is the Soudagar family that introduced the "Chappal with ears" which was named 'Kanwali.' This was designed and produced by the Soudagars and marketed at Bombay and subsequently at Calcutta in the early part of 20th century — probably during or after the First World War. This Chappal with two side flaps attached to the main strap on either side where it joins the main body of the Chappal was said to have become very popular in the fashionable centres of Bombay and Calcutta for the following reasons:

1. The Chappal was made wholly of the locally tanned leather with a decorated upper strap.
2. It had no nails on it and was sewn with tong (leather thread).
3. It was hand made (done manually).

4. Its price was low.

The Bombay merchants who encashed on this popular Chappal from Athani simply called it 'Kolhapuri' to conceal its place of origin from competing traders -- who eventually started scouting for its manufacturers in and around Kolhapur region. It is in this way that this particular popular design reached the cobblers of the Kolhapur area where it came to be produced in small quantities initially. But what was produced in and around Kolhapur acquired in a way newer shades of design as the talents of the different cobblers were different. Every pair they produced was different from every other as the material inputs and the talent that went into production varied. In Athani, the Soudagar family had achieved standardisation of the material inputs and the whole lot was produced like an assembly line. Thus the cobblers in Athani produced the best they could and were specialised in certain aspects whereas in the Kolhapur area each cobbler worked on all the aspects of the footwear and the product lacked finish. The Athani product was known for standards in size and pattern. Kallusha says that it was his uncle who contributed to this line of production in which each cobbler contributed the best work in which he was talented.
This also helped to produce more — more than what the cobblers in Kolhapur could do with the same investment of time and labour.

Kallusha recalls how his uncle encouraged him to develop additional attachments and techniques to increase the production in their family unit to meet the growing demand. He says that the Chappal strap was decorated either by punching holes of different sizes in attractive patterns or by zari work (metal coated thread work). It was, in either case, laborious and time consuming. A well trained artisan could complete hardly 20 pairs of straps a day by then known techniques. But young Kallusha (when he was around 11 years) developed both attachments and techniques to use the sewing machine to accomplish this with minimum of labour and time. Because of this the unit could meet the increased demand by producing more. However the market they had created for their product in the two large cities started shrinking. It was at this stage that the KVJC entered the scene at Athani.

Kallusha, the young graduate from the well known footwear maker’s family, and Mr. Palani, of the Charmalaya, met to work out a strategy for the survival of the local footwear industry. Mr. Palani used Kallusha's leadership to infuse confidence in the
local artisan community. Both met regularly, spent their time studying the local footwear maker's problems and planned strategies to safeguard the trade interests and the people involved. The objectives of the KVIC appealed to Kallusha although pursuit of those objectives was going to rob him of his family income and break the family monopoly of many decades. The arguments of Palani sounded reasonable. Though Kallusha's family did not require the services and patronage of the KVIC, they decided to go with Palani.

Mr. Palani's strategy was to enlarge the market for the Athani footwear and take it to small as well as big towns instead of relying on the big business houses of Bombay and Calcutta for marketing. The strategy meant the use of the Charmalaya as a lever to prevent exploitation of the artisans by the middlemen, traders, employers etc. This appealed to the Soudagars. They had participated in the freedom struggle. They were in the forefront in the local movements against untouchability — the bane of the Hindu society. They were well known for their socio-political role in the region. In this background the Soudagars approved of the KVIC entering the scene though it meant loss of trade for the family. Kallusha is proud that he was the very first supplier to the Charmalaya. Mr. Palani confirms.
Kallusha avers that the Charnmala has created market for the Athani footwear all over India by marketing the product in all the important towns through the Khadi Bhandars and interested private retailers. The local image of the cobblers who earn for themselves and the town has improved. The economically better off cobblers in Athani are the envied lot -- envied by the other scheduled castes in the town.

Kallusha's younger brother concentrates on agriculture. He has developed a fine vineyard. Kallusha has shifted to Bombay to enlarge his trade and also to provide his children better education. He has set up a footwear making unit in Bombay. He sells his product mostly to the wholesale exporters. He has employed about 20 artisans in his unit. He supplies small consignments to the Charnmala in Athani to reinforce his contact with the development agency.

Now Kallusha is 45 years old. He is married and has four children (two sons and two daughters). His wife hails from Kolhapur. His first son is studying in the II year in the Municipal Medical College at Bombay. Two children are in the pre-degree classes and the youngest one is in the school.

Though late, his wife has undergone surgery to stop bearing children. (She is in her mid-thirties.) Kallusha
remarks humorously that the last child is an intruder (was not wanted).

Being exposed to the life in Bombay, neither the children nor the wife ever feel that they belong to the untouchable class. They are a model to their relatives and other artisan families in Athani.

Case No. 6.

Hammant Kallappa Kakmari belongs to the Kadar caste. Traditionally rope making has been his occupation. But Kakmari has taken to leather work. He prepares the local variety of leather footwear and sells it to the Charmalaya and the Lidkar. He says he grew up in the vicinity of the Charmalaya. His parents made rope out of local fibre, but Kakmari took to leather work since it is more paying. He worked with a cobbler of Samagar caste for 6 years and learnt the craft. Today he makes leather Chappals independently.

He is married and has 3 children. The older children are attending Balawadi near his residence. He hopes to educate his children well. He himself has attended school though dropped out when he was in the 4th standard. His wife is illiterate.
He is a Lidkar allottee and lives in one of the houses. He says he pays Rs. 37.70 every month towards the cost of the house. The payment is done through the Corporation Bank. He has no difficulty borrowing a little money from the Corporation Bank where the recovery is ensured through small deduction in the transactions. He says the repayment of the loan is not burdensome. He prefers bank transactions.

He has a radio at home, some steel chairs, and stainless steel and aluminium utensils. He wears a wrist watch.

Interestingly, he declares that he does not drink or eat beef. This is necessary, he feels, since he lives in the new surroundings. All his neighbours belong to the Samagar caste. None of them eat beef. Many do not drink liquor. A few older cobblers whom he meets every now and then for seeking their expertise in cutting the hide eliminating waste are all followers of God Vithoba of Pandharapur. As such, many have given up even meat eating. Kakmari too, though a beef eater earlier, has given up the habit completely.

Untouchability is not felt by him now. But he recalls his childhood days and says that even the Samagars considered the Madars as inferior and did not approve of intermixing and interdining. Two practices of the Madar caste were responsible...
for this: (1) Beef eating and (2) Dedicating women in the service of God. The Samagars were opposed to both and hence the distance between the two groups.

He approves of modern medicines. He is fully aware of the benefits of a planned family. The couple are thinking of surgery so that they do not have any more children.

Kakmari observes that but for the development agency in Athani he would have ended up as an agricultural labourer. He says the leather work is quite remunerative and nearly 20 families of his caste, out of a total of nearly 100 families living in Athani, are completely involved in it. They have given up making ropes.

Case No.7.

Bamswamy Bhiva Hommore is 31 years old and belongs to the Samagar caste. He lives with his wife, Kasturi Bai, in a Pukka house and makes leather footwear to earn his living. He has a 7-year old daughter and 3-month old son. His daughter is studying in the second standard.

Hommore has studied up to the 7th standard. He says he had no difficulty in attending school. In fact, he recalls how
his father, Bhiva Mahadev Honmora, encouraged him and pampered him for attending school.

Honmora says that he inherited agricultural land; but does not own it today. He sold all his land when he took to liquor. He regrets what he has done.

His father was an enlightened person. Besides encouraging children to study, he actively helped other cobblers to market their product. He was a founder member of the Haralaya Cooperative Society. He was also an elected member of the Town Municipal Council.

Honmora is now supplying footwear to the Charmalaya and the Lidkar. He has no difficulty in marketing what he produces. His difficulty lies in getting over his addiction to liquor. Though he has almost given up drinking, he indulges in it at least once a week. He says that this habit drains off his income and also in a way robs him of his physical energy which is so much required in his household industry.

Since he has come under the influence of the Charmalaya staff he has stopped going to the money lenders. He now borrows money from the bank. In the event of his requiring
money which he cannot get from the bank, he borrows from his friends and relatives.

He has a radio and sufficient furniture at home. They cook and eat in stainless steel and aluminium utensils. They also use plastic ware to store water and food grains.

He uses a semi-modern tool kit in his work place. Speaking of profits in the footwear industry, he says that those who avoid wastage of raw material earn more. According to him, the prices of raw material keep rising. The hike in the price of the finished product that cobblers sell is not commensurate with the increase in the raw material price. He adds that, though self-employed, he cannot make a good profit if he is not conscious of the time invested and the volume of work accomplished during that period. This self-discipline in work and waste consciousness are emphasised in his conversation.

Speaking of untouchability, he feels that it is an old issue. He himself has not experienced it. He does not believe in the caste system.

He admires modern medicine and its achievements. The planned parenthood concept is fully acceptable. In fact he
wanted to undergo surgery, but instead his wife underwent it when she had her delivery 3 months ago.

Case No.8.

Babu Tamanna Ajatrao is 27 years old and belongs to the Samagar caste. He is married with two children aged 3 years, and 4 months. He lives in a Pukka house constructed in recent years. Adjoining the house is a thatched workshed where he makes leather footwear.

He claims to possess 5 acres of agricultural land in the Chamkeri village jurisdiction, located very close to Athani. He obtained this land in 1981 by a government grant under the scheme 'land for the landless.'

He possesses a radio and a bicycle and his house is adequately furnished with steel furniture. He wears a good automatic wrist watch. A look around his house and kitchen indicates that the family has clean habits. The uncooked foodstuffs are stacked neatly. The stainless steel and aluminium utensils too are kept neatly.

His first child goes to Balawadi near his house. Ajatrao himself has studied up to the 5th standard. His wife Phulabai,
though illiterate, manages the household chores and supervises footwear production besides working in leather herself. In his household footwear making unit he employs (hires) 2 workers to keep up adequate supplies to the development agency.

Ajatroo declares that he worked for another cobbler for nearly 11 years before he started working independently. He remembers that he came in contact with the Charmalaya in 1979. His former employer was supplying footwear to the Charmalaya. Thus he knew that the development agency would buy from the artisans directly and pay on the spot. He also knew that the banks would advance small amounts of loans to artisans if they were approached. He cherished to be an independent manufacturer some day, and since 1979 he has been one.

He is an active member of the caste association. He has paid Rs.101/- towards its membership. For him, the association is for making collective efforts to get benefits from the government for the community in general and the helpless artisans in particular.

He endorses the idea of planned parenthood. He says the second child in his family would be the last child. His wife has undergone surgery. He prefers modern medicines to others
for treating the sick. He does not approve of the caste system. Untouchability, he says, is more talked of than felt. He claims to secure services of barbers, tailors, washermen and others without any difficulty. He is for active political participation for all. He says democracy is meaningless if only the rich and the upper class people take part in the political process. He is for participation at levels.

For his requirements of money he prefers to borrow from the bank. He believes in bank transactions for his business. He uses improved tool kit in his production unit. He is for mechanisation of the industry to the extent possible. Yet, he is not obsessed with the idea of amassing wealth.

Case No.9.

Vittal Annappa Kamble is 33 years old and belongs to the Samagar caste. He is married with three children. He is an allottee of the Lidkar house in Athani. He is a native of Telsang village of the Athani taluka.

He has studied up to SSLC. His wife did not go to school. His two sons are in the fifth standard and daughter in the second standard.
He has a radio, some odd steel chairs. He wears a wrist watch and dresses well. He recalls that he had 24 acres of land which was all sold by his drunkard brother. Lately he has lost 4 acres of fertile wet land to a cultivator under the land tenancy act.

He came in contact with the Charmalaya five years ago. Earlier he was selling his product to the export merchants from Bombay. He says the Lidkar secured him a loan from the ESFC which he has repaid. He prefers bank transactions. Besides his wife two others work for him. These workers are hired on piece work contract. Each worker earns from Rs.15 to 20 a day depending on the volume of work they turn out. He uses in his work place improved tool kit. He says it was bought from Kanpur by a trader. He is happy with his trade links with the development agencies.

He is not with the caste association. He does not approve of segregation. Politically, he is oriented to the Janata party. He openly declares it. He admires the achievements of modern medicine. He fully endorses the planned parenthood policy. He says his wife has undergone surgery to stop adding children to the family.
He believes that dependence on the private traders is not good. Their visits and procurement schedules are uncertain. He is all praise for the performance of the development agencies. The more quality goods he produces, the more these two agencies buy. Thus marketing what one produces is no problem so long as the producer maintains sizes and quality.

Case No. 10.

Pandu Annappa Kamble is 32 years old and is a Samagar, originally of Telsang village which is about 30 kms from Athani. Now he lives in a Lidkar house in Athani and supplies footwear to the Lidkar. Prior to his contact with the Lidkar, he used to market his product himself. He used to visit Athani every Sunday to sell in the weekly bazaar (Sante). He used to visit other village bazars also when necessary. But eventually he thought of settling down at one place after his marriage and chose the Athani town. He was living in a hut built by himself and his wife on a government land adjoining the Harijankeri where both the Charmalaya and Lidkar offices are located.

He says he was lucky in getting a house allotted by the Lidkar to which he had begun to supply footwear. He has a five-year old daughter and a five-month old son. The daughter is attending Balawadi. He himself has studied up to the 4th
standard and wishes his children to study well in school. He says two children are enough. He intends to undergo surgery himself one of these days.

He has a radio and a wrist watch. He has some steel chairs to offer to visitors. He prefers bank transactions to borrow or save.

He hires other workers only in case of emergency, i.e., if he has orders to deliver goods within a stipulated time. He and his wife work and make enough money needed for living.

He approves of modern medicines to treat the sick. He does not believe in the caste system and the practice of untouchability. While talking of untouchability, he narrated how because of the stigma of being born in the low caste, he moved away from his village and chose to settle down in Athani. In Athani he has not experienced any discrimination due to his caste.

He is happy that his work of marketing has been taken over by the government. He admires the work of the Ydikar and says that such agencies must begin to cover other items of village artisans like rope making etc.