CASE STUDIES

Case No. 1

Case studies: The names of the respondents have been changed for the purpose of the research study.

This story told by one from the Nirale Holer community, Dipankar Bikku Born in Nirale village, he was married and was having two sons. He was influenced by Dr. Ambedkar in his childhood. He attend many functions of Ambedkar in Chikodi, a nearby town.

When he heard that Dr. Ambedkar was undergoing conversation to Buddhism, he too went to Nagapur city. He converted to Buddhism along with Dr. Ambedkar in 1956. His wife says that he wrote a letter communicating to her that “I am converting to Buddhism with Dr. Ambedkar have decided that the remaining part of my life would dedicated to the upliftment of my society, and free it from the clutches of untouchability. This is my last letter to you because I am going to become a “Bikku”, and I am going to Gaya City”.

After this Dipankar spent his life in north India. He learn Hindi, Marathi, Pali, Sanskrit and English language. He read many books in these language regarding Buddhism and Ambedkarism.

In 1990 he returned to Karnataka and Maharashtra state. Now he often visits Bijapur, Belgaum and Bidar district in Karnataka state and Poona, Kolhapur, Sangli, Sollapur and other district in Maharashtra state.

In 1992 he visited for the first time Nirale village. He not meet his family or visit his house, but he approached the Holer community. His wife was happy and invited him to her house. But Bikku Dipankar asked
her are inviting Bikku or your husband. If you are inviting your husband, then I am not coming to your house”. But she replied and said “I am inviting you as a “Bikku” Dipankar then went to her house and took food in her house. He then returned to “Ambedkar Bhavan” a community Hall in the village and slept. He spent two days in Nirale village and on the third day he went to Jaisingpur village in Maharashtra state.

After this he made continuous visits to Examba and Kadapur village in Chikodi taluk of Belgaum district. He converted many people to Buddhism in Examba and Kadapur village. He made encouraged people to visit Nagpur city. He convince the people that when one converts to Buddhism their sacred place of piligrimise was to Nagpur city. People believe in his words and are visiting Nagpur city.

In his last day he fell sick and was not able to walk to other villages. His request to the people of Examba was to build a hut for him. Most of people invited him to their house but he was not ready to stay with “Sansar” family because he was a Bikku. During this period his wife heard that he had fallen sick She came to Examba to help him and take care of him. But Dipankar was not ready to take the help from his wife. He refused her help and went to Jaisingpur village in Maharashtra. He recovered from sickness and got 4 acres of land in Jaisingpur to built a “Buddhist Vihar”. But soon after he fell sick and died.

The above is the case study of how a man from the Holer caste in the study area become so strongly inspired as to sacrifice his family and society to become a Bhikku in order to spread the message of Buddhism under the guidance of Dr. Ambedkar.
Ningappa is a 70 years old man who depends on agriculture. He spent his childhood as a bunded labourer about fifteen years in a Gouda’s family. After that he went to Goa. In Goa he worked as a labourer for about five years. He then returned back to Kadapur (Karnataka). His wife died from T.B. disease. After her death he married another woman. Ningappa is a religious person. He accepted the “gurubodh” a kind of conversion into veerasaivism with his second wife. He actively participated in all religious functions in the society. He was a believer of lord Shiva, he says once revered Hinduism and Hindu gods.

At the age of sixty he went to Nagapur with his younger brother and his son. He stayed for about three days in Nagapur city during “Dammachakra parivartana” a day celebrated in the memory of Dr. Ambedkar’s conversion to Buddhism. Here he was influence by this function and later he started thinking about why the scheduled caste community is depressed. He started thinking of Hinduism again and again and its inequality. Many times he asked himself this question. Do deities belong to a which belong to a caste they are they “Brahmin” or priestly class or do they belong to other castes. He wanted to know people sacrifice fowl, goat and buffelo to a deity why upper caste people do not sacrifice the animals to their deity. He came into contact with a brahmin swami and a lingayat priest and he asked why the SC caste is untouchable. But he could not get any satisfactory answer from them. After a year he came into contact with a “Bikku” a Buddhist monk. A “Bikku” explained with suitable examples to him about Buddhism and Ambedkarism. Thus he got a suitable answer from the “Bikku”. He converted to Buddhism. Now he visits Nagapur on ‘Dhammachakra” day. He now realises and thinks that Nagapur is a sacred place for him. Along with him he converted he spread the metrage of Buddhism and influenced many others in the village to convert to Buddhism.
Case Study No 3

Santosh is a man of 30 years, having P.G. education. His father was a government servant. Santosh completed his education staying in the city and got a First class. He joined a college in Chikodi taluk. When he was in PUC II he faced family problems and he could not pass the PUC. He cleared PUC in the month of October. After his PUC he came into contact with the D.S.S. in Chikodi city. The D.S.S. conducted a conversation function in Chikodi. He came under the influence of the Ambedkar movement. During this ceremony he came into contact with his "mama" (mother's brother) who had already converted to Buddhism. He was given some book related to Buddhism to read and study the Buddhist literature. He came under the influence of Buddhism and he converted to Buddhism.

For higher education he went to Belgaum city where he contacted many other many people. He heard that every year, the "Dhammachakra pravistana" day was celebrated in Nagpur city. He visited Nagpur where he completely turned his mind towards Buddhism. He came into contact with the 'Bikku's" and they gave him some Buddhist guidance. The Bikkus cleared his doubts regarding Buddhism. The contact directly or through letters continued. Thus understanding Buddhism he started the Buddhist movement. With his education he is one person who introduces Buddhism to the Kadapur village to make the villagers understand the basic tenets of Buddhism. Since he is educated he is able to convince the people.
Case study No 4

Pundalik is 35 years old. He spent his childhood in his mother's place. He completed his education up to 5th standard. Most of his life was spent in selling liquor in his mother's place. After his marriage, he returned to his native village of Kadapur. Here he depended on agriculture and agriculture labour for an income. During this period the Buddhistic moment was going on in the villages. He came into contact with his peer-group, where they discussed most of the time about Buddhism. He became a panchayat member in the village. During the time he was a panchayat member he started the social activity for the people and the village people began to support him.

During the period of his membership he came into contact with a "Bikkus". Most of the Bhikku's began to visit his house because of he was leader of the Holer caste. Whenever the Bhikku's visited his house, they preached about the importance of Buddhism. Due to this reason his attitude began to change and he inclined towards Buddhism. He converted to Buddhism.

Now he has started to spread the message of Buddhism to his relatives and friends. He visits Nagapur, Bombay and Poona frequently in order to understand Buddhism better. Since he is a panchayat member and a leader of the Holer caste, he has great influence on his community. He is in a position to spread the message of Buddhism among his people.
Case Study No 5

Mallappa is a retired school master. He spent his most of his career in Examba, which is his native place. He was interested in social work. He believed in Ambedkarism. Whenever he got the time, he preached Ambedkarism in his colony. During this he came into contact with Bikku Dipankar, who was a native of Mirale village in Chikodi taluk. Bikku Dimpankar was convert to Buddhism in 1956 along with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Nagpur city.

Dipankar is influenced may people in Examba village. Mallappa was one of them. Mallappa heard new things about Ambedkarism and about conversion. He read books on Buddhism and about conversation, which turned his mind towards Buddhism. When he came under the influence of Buddhism he started his movement in Examba. Kadapur, Nandi and other villages in Chikodi taluk.

His movement was for removal of untouchability. He felt that for this Buddhism was necessary. He started a movement against Hindu deities. Thus this retired school teacher became the leader of a self-respect movement. He and his followers often go about in surrounding villages to spread the message of Ambedkarism and the importance of adopting the Buddhist religion.

The above case studies of the common folk of the study area helps us to understand how Buddhism is spreading among the scheduled caste community in different villages and how it is gaining popularity. Since many of the leaders have a basic education they go about frequently in the villages. So that the neo-Buddhists are not again influenced by Hinduism.