

A STUDY ON OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE BHOVI COMMUNITY IN GADAG TALUK

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Abstract: Indian society comprises numerous communities distinguished by their occupations, rituals, culture, language, and traditions. Among these, the Bhovi community has a longstanding history with distinct customs, culture, language, and traditional occupations. This research delves into the occupational status and socio-economic conditions of the Bhovi community in Gadag Taluk, Karnataka.

Keyword: Bhovi, Vaddar , community, occupation

1.0 Introduction: India is known for its rich cultural diversity, with various castes, religions, and tribal communities. Each community possesses its own customs, culture, language, and traditions. The Bhovi Vaddar community, a nomadic group, has a unique heritage characterized by their traditional occupations and way of life. The Havanur Committee established in 1972 recommended the inclusion of Vaddars in the list of backward tribes in 1975, which initiated efforts to address their social, educational, and occupational needs. This research explores the challenges and changes faced by the Bhovi community and its sub-castes, including Kallu Waddars, Mannu Waddars, Uppu Waddars, Bandi Waddars, Girini Waddars, Raja Waddars, Aragu Waddars, Tudugu Waddars, and Oru Waddars, named after their traditional professions.

Scheduled Tribes are recognized in various states and union territories across India, with a diverse range of ethnic groups. The tribal population constitutes a significant part of the country's demography, particularly in states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and others. These communities have distinct social, cultural, and religious beliefs, and many have caste organizations to protect their interests.

The Bhovi community's primary occupation includes brickwork, house construction, and stone cutting. They are also involved in secondary occupations like labor, trade, agriculture, and retail to sustain their livelihoods. In Gadag Taluk, the Bhovi Vaddar community practices their traditional craft using white stone found in hilly areas. However, despite their hard work and resilience, they face various socio-economic challenges and are often marginalized in society.

2.0 Review of Literature:

Devendrappa H (2022) on “**Economic impacts of industrialization on traditional occupations of Bhovi community**”, it has given opinion that the people of Bhovi community depend on their basic occupation from ancient times. The price of the traditional tools prepared by the Bhovi community such as grinding stones, whetstones, and grinding balls has decreased so that in recent times due to the impact of industrialization, privatization and globalization, they are migrating to other professions because they are not able to continue their profession. Bhovi mentioned the impact of industrialization on the economy of the community.

Mr.Murali Nagalavi (2019) on “**The historical background of vaddar community**” the Bhovi vaddar community people depended on stone and soil for their work”, they have built many stone statues, wall stone carving, Temple Gopuram etc. Whatever the historical places are there in Karnataka and India like Badami, Aihole, Halebidu, Pattadakallu etc are the contributions of these community people.

Suresh K B on "A Sociological Study of Bhovi Community in Karnataka". This is a research study on Traditional Profession of Bhovi Community Socio Economic Political Educational History Background Changes of

Bhovi Community in Indian Society Career on Industry and Engineering Career Life is discussed in this chapter. social, economic, political and cultural life continues to changes Bhovi community.

Venkatesh B (1999) on “**Challenges faced by Bhovi community on the transformation**”, in this study the author expressed that along with changes in language, food habits, dress, clan craft, customs, ideas, norms and traditions along with the challenges of this community such as nomadic life, migration, clan crafts like stone and clay works like intar kallu, besu kalu, Jadpada stone is facing many challenges due to impact of modernization on manufacture and sale of sand stone and construction of embankments, lakes, wells. The transformation in the Bhovi community is discussed here how the change in the socio-economic educational and political spheres has taken place and the social transformation has been held.

3.0 Objectives:

1. To analyze the traditional occupational status of the Bhovi community.
2. To assess the socio-economic, educational, and political conditions of the Bhovi community.
3. To understand the traditional methods and products used by the Bhovi community.
4. To identify the needs and challenges faced by the Bhovi community.

4.0 Methodology:

This research adopts a descriptive research design with primary data sources. Purposive sampling was used for data collection, and semi-structured interviews were conducted in Gadag Taluk.

5.0 Brief Explanation of Sub-Castes:

- kallu vaddar – These people do stone carving
- mannvaddar-These people work with clay
- Bhandi vaddar-They use cart
- mail vaddar-grinding stone makers
- Uppavaddr- lake sellers,
- Raja vaddar- royals
- Oru vaddar-town dwellers

5.1 Brief Description of Sub-Castes:

5.1.1 Mannvaddar:

Among the sub-castes of the Bhovi community, the Mannvaddar are known for their expertise in working with the soil. They engage in a range of activities, including building houses, digging foundations, constructing lakes, erecting dams, roads, walls, embankments, and tunnels. Mannvaddar excel in earthworks and are renowned for their physical strength and resilience. Regardless of the weather conditions, be it wind, rain, or sunshine, they tirelessly toil in the rugged terrain. Their daily routine involves strenuous labor in the soil, from morning till evening, to support their livelihood. Mannvaddar often lead modest lives, predominantly dwelling in huts. They face the challenges of undertaking arduous tasks in the earth, earning them the moniker "sons of the soil." Tools like hoes, shovels, pickaxes, putty, level sticks, and measuring instruments are essential in their daily work. They operate in groups, each led by a designated leader, undertaking collaborative projects wherever the need arises.

5.1.2 Kallvaddar:

The Kallvaddar sub-caste within the Bhovi community specializes in stonework and carving. Their work involves various aspects, including Kallu Kutiga, Kallu Odehuvava, Kallu Udavuvava, and Shilpi. Legend has it that Brahma created five children known as Panchalas to assist in his creation, and in the Brahmanda Purana, the Panchalas are associated with Vishwakarmas, carpenters, potters, goldsmiths, bronzesmiths, and stonemasons. Kallu Kutiga or Kallu Padda is the expert who skillfully sculpts massive rocks, giving them intricate forms and shapes. The art of stone cutting and sculpting has earned acclaim nationwide. Kallvaddar craftsmen are known for their physical and intellectual prowess, with the ability to sculpt intricate designs even in low-light conditions, based on the perceived shapes. A stone cutter or sculptor, they shape rugged stones into smooth, beautiful forms. Their work includes crafting idols of deities, temple towers, mandapam arches, sculptured pillars, stone chariots, as well as small and colossal deity statues, found in various districts of the study area.

5.1.3 Bhandivaddar:

The Bhandivaddar sub-caste earns its name from their profession, which involves transporting rocks and boulders from rocky hills using carts. They load large stones onto stone beams, massive pillars, and bed stones, which are then transported to construction sites, including areas where forts are being built. Bhandivaddar individuals employ various tools, such as carts and flying hammers, in their work. They are known for their robust physique, akin to the strength of rocks and earth, and they rely on these tools to extract stones from the earth. Additionally, Muddi Vaddas, a subgroup, specialize in transporting soil excavated during foundation digging from one location to another using carts. The carts used by Bhandivaddar sub-castes are commonly referred to as Oddara Bandi in the villages.

5.1.4 Giranivaddar:

Giranivaddar sub-castes primarily found employment by breaking stones and excavating soil for their livelihood. However, when job opportunities became scarce, and wages were insufficient, they adapted by seeking employment in yarn mills. These individuals, known as mill vaddars, continue to sustain themselves by working in yarn mills, particularly in regions such as Gadag, Hubli-Dharwar, Vijayapur, Bagalkote, and Belgaum districts. The Giranivaddar sub-caste is also present in Gadag Taluk

6.0 Challenges Faced by the Bhovi Community:

The Bhovi community grapples with a multitude of challenges, including economic instability, migratory patterns, health-related concerns, low literacy rates, poverty, discriminatory treatment, child labor, and substance abuse. Their physically demanding occupations lead to health issues such as respiratory problems, allergies, eye ailments, and physical discomfort.

In the modern era, community members are often compelled to move from one place to another in search of livelihood, adding to their economic woes. The traditional artisanal skills of this community are gradually eroding due to the advance of modern technology. These individuals toil diligently in crafting stone products, but this work can take a toll on their health, causing respiratory problems, allergies, eye issues, and physical discomfort. Additionally, the equipment they use can pose health risks. To uplift these community members socio-economically, it is imperative to address issues like illiteracy, poverty, health and sanitation, economic disparities, discrimination, child labor, political underrepresentation, as well as the challenges associated with alcohol and substance abuse.

7.0 Findings

Based on the 2001 census, the Bhovi community accounted for 74.9% of Karnataka's population, totaling 955,752 individuals. In the 2011 census, this population had grown to 1,915,691, with Gadag district alone comprising approximately 28,000 residents. When examining the occupational composition of the Bhovi Vaddar community, it is observed that 60% of its members continue to engage in their traditional professions. In the context of this research, an analysis of artisans within the villages of Gadag Taluk revealed that the Bhovi Vaddar community predominantly resides in a select few villages, primarily in hilly regions. Among these community members, some families have perpetuated their traditional occupations, while others have transitioned away from them, as comprehensively documented in this research paper.

Table 1: Information about age of Bhovi community peoples.

S.No	Age	Frequency [N-210]	Percentage [%]
1.	18-25	8	20%
2.	26-35	31	37.5%
3.	36-45	81	30%
4.	46-60	66	12.5%
5.	Above 61	24	11.4%
Total		210	210

The above mentioned table shows that 3.8% of respondents are in the age group of 18-25, 14.8% of respondents are in the age group 26-35, 38.6% of respondents are in the age group of 36-45, 31.4% of respondents are in the age group 46-60, 11.4% of respondents are in the group of Above 61.

Table 2: Information about the types of meals of Bhovi community.

S.No	Types of food	Frequency [N-210]	Percentage [%]
1	Traditional	6	2.9%
2	Modern	0	0%
3	Both	204	97.1%
Total		210	100%

The above mentioned table depicts that information on the type of meals of Bhovi Community. 2.9% percent of the informants follow traditional type of food, percent of the informants follow modern type food and while 97.1% percent of the informants follow both types of food. The eating habits of the Bhovi community have seen a change. A carnivore herbivore consists of a two layered system

Total 3: Income about professions of Bhovi community.

S.No	Income	Frequency [N-210]	Percentage [%]
1	10-15 K	23	11.0%
2	16-25 K	88	41.9%
3	26-35 K	80	38.1%
4	36-50 K	19	9.0%
Total		210	100%

The above table depicts that information on the type of total income of Bhovi community. 11.0% of respondents about family income is 10-15K, and 41.9% of informants income in the age group of 38.1%, 36-50K 9.0% informants income in the age group

Table 4: Information about Sub castes of Bhovi community

S.No	Sub castes	Frequency [N-210]	Percentage [%]
1	Kalluvadder	78	37.1%
2	Mannuvadder	52	24.8%
3	Giranivadder	12	5.7%
4	Bandivadder	68	32.4%
Total		210	100%

The above mentioned table contains information about the Sub castes of Bhovi community. The high percentages of people are Kalluvadder of 37.1% in Gadag Taluk. And low percentages of people are from Giranivadder i.e 5.7%. Bhovi community is found in some villages and some rural areas, work by sub caste in Bhovi community.

Table 5: Information about started this profession

S.No	Sub castes	Frequency [N-210]	Percentage [%]
1	childhood	186	88.6%
2	After Education	17	8.1%
3	After Marriage	7	3.3%
4	Other	0	0%
Total		210	100%

This table contains information about the Bhovi community people started this profession, the high percentage of people from childhood 88.6%. And low percent of people are after marriage and other 3.3%. Subspecies included in the Bhovi community.

These tables provide insights into the age distribution, dietary habits, income, sub-caste diversity, and the age at which Bhovi community members begin their professions.

6.0 Suggestions:

- Enhance government initiatives with innovative facilities, programs, and schemes to enhance the quality of life for the Bhovi community.
- Increase awareness about the available facilities and schemes to ensure community members can benefit from them.
- Provide employment opportunities that align with the community's skills and expertise.
- Promote awareness about marketing service platforms to help community members sell their products and services effectively.
- Establish training centers and offer training to those in need to enhance their skills and employability.
- Implement social security and skill training programs to reduce the need for migration.
- Strengthen the community's financial capabilities and empower them to become self-reliant.
- Consider implementing a mobile education system in areas where the Bhovi community resides to improve access to education.
- Encourage community members, including children, to pursue higher education.

7.0 Conclusion:

The Bhovi community engages in physically demanding work such as breaking stones, digging soil, constructing lakes, building houses, and manufacturing various household materials, relying on their hard work and strength. Understanding the traditional, socio-economic occupations, and cultural status of this community can be instrumental in devising strategies to improve their livelihoods and overall well-being.

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