

Problems of Vishwakarma Community in Ballari District: A Sociological Outlook

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The Vishwakarma community has existed since long back and has been engaging in different occupations parts in the history of India. The Vishwakarma is known for their creative work and have contributed not only to art, structural design, Sculpture and also to the agriculture and others in manufacturing tools and implements required by them. Vishwakarma communities are the traditional artisans in society

Method: adopted for this study paper is as usual to the social science. The authors adopted a secondary source of data. Data is generated from research books, articles and electronic media.

Aims: This study paper attempts to understand their Historical Perspective of the Vishwakarma Community. To know the Problems of the Vishwakarma Community etc.

Conclusion: Community plays a very significant role in the life of an individual. A community is the total organized social life of a locality. The community life provides the individual the needed protection and security. It is also applicable to the Vishwakarma community. Historically, this community has been an expression that emphasized the unity of the common life among the artisan people.

Key Words - Vishwakarma Community, Artisans, Historical Perspective, Problems and Society.

Introduction:

Vishwakarma is the name of the God. Vishwakarmas are Basically Artisans in Society. The Vishwakarma community, also known as the Vishwabrahmin, is a social group of India, sometimes described as a caste. The community comprises five sub-groups - Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Bronze smiths, Stonemasons and Goldsmiths—who believe that they are descendants of Vishwakarma, a Hindu deity.

Vishwakarma or the Vishwa Brahmin community is used in India for the class of engineers, architects, sculptors, temple builders, and artists. Generally the term Vishwakarma caste is used for five classes of people, namely the Gold-smiths, the Black-smiths, the Copper-smith, the Carpenter and the Sculptors. In India there are several sub-divisions of the Vishwakarma caste in the different regions.

Their communal identity has always been strongly tied to their profession. With industrialization and more recently, globalization, the traditional artisan trade has been greatly affected. The socio-economic and technological forces are buffeting their profession to extinction. This has contributed to a sort of identity crisis - being unable to identify with the upper castes or the lower castes. They also have a rather unpopular history (until the 1980s) of identifying with the communists. Their socio-economic status varies from a very high level to a low level in different parts of India as they earned high wages in towns because of their factory employment and income low in villages.

Human society is divided into different classes or strata. This is a universal feature found in all societies. Social inequalities are generally expressed in certain social differences like power, occupation, prestige, position and wealth or status. Generally we find different groups or classes ranked one above the other in different strata or layers. Such a kind of hierarchical order of different groups like a ladder is called stratification.

Vishwakarma People are indicated in Vedas as Special Creation. They are not Created by Sri Brahma who creates other People, Animals, Birds, Etc. Vishwakarma People are Created from five heads by Sri Vishwakarma who Creates All Gods and Whole Universe. They have Separate Identities, Religious rites, traditional culture, and Individual Heritage. If They Follow the Procedures as they can, they can Make New History like as their ancestors in Society.

Vishwakarma community products are not just related farmer activities, but they are needed by every community, such as weavers, cobblers, shepherds. They are also important in their communities' construction work in society.

The agriculture and artisan sectors as indistinguishable and termed artisans as village servants who were to serve the need of the peasants and villagers and, therefore, Main played a subordinate role in the village economy. The artisans are also entrepreneurs, who are engaged in production of different productions in society.

People always aim at high in each and every corner of the world. They are not satisfied with their present positions and powers. People put maximum efforts to increase their status in society which leads to change of a person or group from one status to another.

Artisans traditionally belonged to the profession of Blacksmith, Carpentry, Bronze smiths, Sculpture and Goldsmiths. They used to provide effective support and servicing facilities for the economic activities like household tools and farm equipments and maintenance's of these equipments in the village. In return they used to get a fixed share of the peasants' produce and raw material for producing the equipments and household things.

The Vishwakarma Community Artisans sector is the largest decentralized and unorganized sector of the Indian economy. Craftspeople from the second largest employment sector in India, second only to agriculture. There are twenty-three million craftspeople in India today. In India, craft is not merely an Industry but a creation symbolizing the inner desire and fulfillment of the community. While Artisans Blacksmiths Carpenters, Bronze smiths, Sculpture, and Goldsmiths. Those all fulfill a positive need in the daily life of people in society. They also act as a self-expression, and of a conscious aesthetic approach.

The social life of a community is molded and nurtured by the economic activities of the people. Thus, there is a close relationship between economic and social conditions. Therefore, these two interlinked aspects of human society help to comprehend the problems of the Vishwakarma Community. These factors involved changes in occupations in the phase of Socio-economic development and other important factors like education, occupational diversification, and the impact of modernization.

A study of a particular community along with its economic conditions reveals the nature of production, distribution and consumption patterns of that community. It is so important here because some Vishwakarma artisan people are changing their primary occupation. As a result of higher education and reservation they are moving towards other occupations both in public and private sectors. Hence the occupancy patterns and economic activities of Vishwakarmas exhibit a different lifestyle in society.

Social change is a multi-dimensional concept, understood in terms of change in income, education, and profession. It is a universal phenomenon, present in all societies and at all historical periods of time in one or the other form. No society is static. Occupational changes are the most significant process that indicates the migration of workers from one place to another in search of better occupation. Underemployment, marginal occupation, and lower-income are fundamental causes of the migration for jobs or change in present occupation. For this, educational achievement and improvement is more important for this community.

The caste system is one of the unique features of Indian Society. Every community represents its own culture, tradition, and practices. The Vishwakarma community is one of the oldest existing castes of India. Its history goes back to prehistoric times. Among groups in Karnataka, the Vishwakarma artisans are found to be medium in number. Vishwakarma community residing in Karnataka is all called Kannadigas. Of border areas of Karnataka state also speak Telugu along with Kannada. The population of this community in Karnataka is nearly about Thirty five lakhs are considered said that Karnataka state community president K.P. Nanjundi.

Artisans are an essential link in India's traditional village economy. The Vishwakarma community has contributed significantly to the development of techniques for making wood, agricultural implements and tools, Carpentry, Blacksmithing, Stone, Bronze, and Goldsmith artists. Such strategies of local employment skills are well received by the rural masses because community artisans are fully engaged in the development of traditional technologies in rural and urban areas and other community people are challenging this community in the profession and other fields. They face more problems in society,

For people, employment is an important creative skill and it is in a universal format. Therefore, in recent years, in the study of community jobs, socio-economic conditions, current issues the modern shift in employment has taken a prominent place in sociological studies.

Then a lot of knowing that the artisans faced problems and challenges. Problems are Identified primarily going to the field area on Poverty and Occupationally, Government & Community facilities and the Modern education Problems are observed. Faced know the Challenges are Competition from other community, Socio-cultural problems, Modern technology, Poverty- inequality, Globalization, Prepared items, Large Industries, Inadequate finance, Decreasing demand for artistic products, Marketing Problems & challenges, Agricultural and rural backwardness, Access to facilities and resources and other Problems are identified in this community level area.

Methodology of the Study:

The method adopted for this study paper is as usual to the social science. The authors adopted a secondary source of data. Data is generated from research books, articles, and electronic media.

Objectives of the study:

1. To understand the historical perspective of the Vishwakarma Community.
2. To know the Problems of Vishwakarma Community.

Historical Perspective of the Vishwakarma Community:

Vishwakarma is the Personification of ultimate reality and the deity of the creative power. He is believed to be one of the ancient architects or engineers who created and taught building of ancient monuments, architectures in India. According to the Rig-Veda He is considered to be the architect, divine engineer of the universe from before the advent of time in Society.

Vishvakarmas was originally used as an epithet for any supreme god and as an attribute of Indra and the Sun. The name Vishvakarman occurs five times in the tenth book of the Rig-Veda. The two hymns of the Rig-Veda identify Vishvakarman as all-seeing, and having eyes, faces, arms and feet on every side and also have wings. Brahma, the later god of creation, who is four-faced and four-armed, resembles him in these aspects. He is represented as being the source of all prosperity, as swift as thought and titled a seer, priest, lord of speech.

While many sources refer to the five sub-groups of the Vishwakarma as artisans, Ramaswamy believes that the Vishwakarma of the medieval period should be distinguished as craftsmen, arguing that "... while all craftsmen were an artisan, every artisan was not a craftsman". Ramaswamy notes that the socio-economic and geographic stability of a medieval village-based maker of plows differed considerably from that of the various people who banded together as Vishwakarma and lived a relatively itinerant lifestyle that was dependent on the "temple economy" that waxed and waned as dynasties such as the Vijayanagara Empire were formed and disintegrated. The latter group, who did work in proximity to each other while constructing and embellishing temples, had opportunities for Socio-economic advancement, but also bore the risks of withdrawal of patronage and changes in religious focus.

Archaeological discoveries show the highly advanced civilization emerged in India as far back as 5000 years. Hitherto, some scholars assumed that civilization had been brought from Outside by Aryans. The people who lived in the Indus valley knew about agriculture, sculpture, engraving, carving, jewelry, astrology, agriculture, etc. They were skilled craftsmen in gold, silver, and bronze. Rich ornaments like bangles, ring, necklaces, earrings, bronze mirrors and cosmetics were enjoying great popularity among noble citizens. They worshiped Shiva or Pashupati and mother goddess. Edifices of temples were also found in these settlements.

Indian society is diversified into an infinite variety of people belonging to various castes, tribes, religious and linguistic groups. Each group claims that its cultural life is unique and distinct from others. The patterns of behavior, self-image, and other aspects of life reflect their religion. An outsider finds it difficult to understand the Indian scene in its real perspective because of its complexities inherent in the social system. Despite such complexities, the social scientists have penetrated deep into the various issues of Indian society and can explain many of the problems. Though that ancient scholars as well as foreigners [orientalist and ideologists] have studied about the community orientation of the Hindu social structure, broadly under ideological, culturalological and empirical approaches, yet certain aspects of community studies have been relatively unnoticed or the studies seem to be inadequate.

Vishwakarma is the largest single group under the Hindu fold in India with a population of 18 crores. Vishwakarma community could never consolidate itself like other communities either politically or communally. It failed to organize politically since it never had a philosophical vision needed for political organization. On the other hand, it could never organize communally also since it lacked a spirituality that could impart symbolic coherence to the community's aspirations.

Vishwakarma or Vishwabrahmins is a term used in India to describe five castes of artisans in India, formerly more closely connected than they are now. Vishwakarma is a common term for five castes who are into artisan professions namely Goldsmith, Carpenter, Blacksmith, Copper-smith and Stone-mason. The Vishwakarma of south Karnataka is composed of several sub-castes namely the Kulachars (Ironsmiths and carpenters) the Shivachars (ironsmiths-cum-carpenters, founders-cum-sculptors) the Uttaradi goldsmiths, the Matachar founders, the Muddekammaras Chikkamanes and the Doddamanes. Most of these sub-castes do not intermarry, and do have a hierarchy amongst them. All the sub-castes worship goddess Kali and they are very similar to Brahmins in their ritual practices.

According to traditional belief, Vishwabrahmins are descended from five sons of Lord Vishwakarma. They are Manu (blacksmith), Maya (carpenter), Thwastha (metal craftsman), Shilpi (stone-carver) and Vishwajna (goldsmith). The community is spread widely throughout India and played a vital role in the village economy. Their socio-economic status varied from a very high level to a low level in different parts of India as they earned high wages in towns because of their factory employment and low in villages.

Contribution by these artisans who belong to the Vishwakarma community to the rural economy is quite significant. The architectural beauty of the temples and idols of gods and goddesses is sculptors' creation. With all this gifted craftsmanship Vishwakarma remains backward economically, educationally and more important, politically in Karnataka. The absence of unity is the main cause of their backwardness in society.

Problems of the Vishwakarma Community:

The rural artisans like Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Bronze smiths, Sculpture and Goldsmiths these are called Vishwakarma Community, are facing many difficulties and problem these days. The importance of their artwork is decreasing in their respective village and adjoining towns. The quality of their output is decreasing and they have to face greater competition with the industrial sophisticated products. Major factors which are responsible for their failure in this regard can be listed and explained as under this Vishwakarma community.

1. Illiteracy of Artisans:

Mostly rural artisans are still illiterate or uneducated and some of them are not educated up to the metric level. Their illiteracy also a crucial factor which disposed of their family occupations. Because they are not aware of the various policies and strategies of marketing and various artisans this community. Programme organized by the state and central Government.

2. Non-Availability of Raw Material:

Due to industrialization these Vishwakarmas are facing the problem of non-availability of raw materials. For this raw material they have to depend upon the middle men and dealers on a very high price and even of the poor quality. So, these Vishwakarma community artisans have to shift as a labour to agriculture sector.

3. Income Level of Community Artisans:

The income level of these community artisans is also a main constraint for them. Most of the artisans are still below the poverty line. They cannot purchase good quality of raw material, modern tools and equipment's.

4. Lack of Financial Assistance:

These artisans have to depend on money lenders for their financial requirements, who charge a great interest to their loans. However, government, have announcement loans on concessional rates and finance for tool-kits and equipments, yet that is not enough. They are still waiting to be awarded which can help them to survive their business and linked to the modern industries.

5. Seasonal Demand of their Product:

The demand of the product of Vishwakarma artisans like, Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Bronze smiths, Sculpture and Goldsmiths etc. are quite seasonal in nature. There are so many factors which affect their sales as crops, festivals, marriage and other social and cultural factors. In addition the maximum part of their sale is on credit because their main customers are rural and urban persons, who make their payments on the crops and in exchange of food grains. They get their necessary goods throughout the year from these community artisans. Hence, these poor artisans get their payment only two or three times in a year.

6. No means of Transportation and Communication:

These poor artisans are lacking the various facilities of transportation and communication in rural area. They have to depend on the means of transportation provided by the landlords on high in addition to this they have no distribution centre from where they can distribute their products in this society.

7. Shift of rural customers towards the Industrial Products:

The growth of industrialization the demand of their product decreased substantially and attracted the rural buyers towards the machine made, good looking, and attractively packed products. The rapid growth of media communication and transportation Network transformed the rural culture life in to a new life style among the rural masses in society.

8. Lengthy Production Time:

Normally about 3-5 months' time is required for production of occupational products. Sometimes it even extends up to 7-8 months depending on the intricacy of the design.

9. No Regular Work to Artisans:

The artisans are not directly related to the manufacturer for work. One contractor of the area procures the work from the manufacturers and distributors it to the artisans.

10. Very Less Wages to Artisans:

Due to the job distribution by the contractor, the Vishwakarma community artisans who are the actual masters of the art not get their due wages. The normal earning of an artisan is just Rs. 150 to 500 per day.

11. Poor Workplace Conditions of Artisans:

The workplace conditions of the Vishwakarma community artisans are quite poor. Usually they do work at their home along with their regular household work. The kachaa homesteads' tend to soil the cloth to be embroidered and also the poor light and hygienic conditions of the work place adversely affect the health of the artisans.

12. Lack of Awareness about Market:

Most of the Vishwakarmas artisans have been making their products directly to the customers at their work place only. They are not aware about the bigger markets for their products.

13. Lack of financial Resources:

Due to lack of financial resources, these community artisans are not able to buy raw material in bulk. This makes their production cost higher and profit makes their production cost higher than profit lower. Also, they are not able to build a big inventory needed for whole sale marketing, as revealed by researcher.

14. Affection for their Native Place: Affection for their native place is also one of the reasons for their non-migration.

15. Feeling of Satisfaction: The artisans, in spite of their meager earnings, feel satisfied and live a life of limited need.

Other Problems of Vishwakarma Community

1. Lack of modern technical skills
2. Lack of formal Training
3. Marketing support
4. Non-competitive products
5. Application of traditional left over technologies
6. Neglect by state and central Governments
7. Non coverage under agricultural relief programmes
8. Non-involvement in rural development programmes
9. Lack of skill improvement and technology up-gradation in society
10. Lack of specialised marketing
11. Non-existence of infrastructural facilities
12. Non availability of quality raw materials
13. Weak financial power
14. Inability to get bank loans
15. Poor access to information
16. Lack of linkages with different developmental Institutions
17. Need of social security Mechanism

Review of Literature:

Venkataramacharya Naaba. Chandrasekharacharya (2000): In his "Vishwakarma Theory" he said that the world was null and void, and he made Panchamukha myself. The same Jagat underwent a conversion. His brilliance was caused by five Vishnu Brahmans - Manu, Maya, Tvashtha, Sculptor, and Vishnu. The Universalist said about them. Walk the world through the Panchamukha and society will know that the world runs by these five. I am the master of sculptures and the sacrificial ritual. He said that all the skills of this world sculpture are my luxury. In this essay, I would like to know about the creation, status, and core of the Vishwakarma Theory for my research.

Anigbogu, Kingsley. C (2014): This article entitled "New Technology and Challenges of the Blacksmithing Industry in Awka: Implication for Entrepreneurship Development" The Blacksmithing technology is as old as human civilization itself. Indeed the development of different human civilizations has been linked to the discovery and use of metal to manufacture tools and implements that supported an agrarian way of life. In Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria, this livelihood has come under intense threats associated with modernity. The paper attempts a speculative analysis of threats associated with modernity as it affects the local Blacksmithing industry, using the skill discretion model an analytical tool. In this regard, I have concentrated on new technology and challenges of the Blacksmith artisans of communities in Awka, on the study for my research.

Dr. K.V. Krishna Murthy (2012): This book entitled "Traditional Artisans of South India" (Sociological Study of Vishwakarma) This study of traditional artisans, noted for their artistic skills, who preserved the rich heritage of Indian culture has been relatively ignored and unnoticed for a long period by sociologists and anthropologists. The Vishwakarma comprising five craftsmen viz, Blacksmiths, Carpenter, Braziers, Sculptures, and Goldsmiths. A cluster of these five occupational is called Vishwakarma or Traditional artisans in society. In this regard I have concentrated on the origin and development of the study for my research.

Significance of the Study:

Traditional Vishwakarma artisans are defined as those native engineers, known for artistic excellence, namely Blacksmith, Carpenters, Braziers, Sculptors, and Goldsmiths, the cluster of these occupational together constitutes an ethnic group or community called Vishwakarma. Though they comprise a small number, yet they contributed much to the development of art, architecture and culture. They are famous for artistic skills in metal, wood, stone, ivory, and in the field of fine arts. Their past and present role in the field of social, economic, and cultural spheres makes them one of the most significant and Interesting people in the Society.

Findings and suggestions:

1. Socio-Economically backward of this community.
2. This Community Members do not have machinery equipments.
3. The literacy level is very back in this society.
4. Vishwakarma community has not been successful in their efforts to improve their status and Position.
5. Vishwakarma artisans making a livelihood out of their capabilities suffer as they need capital to invest.
6. The government has neglected the Vishwakarma Community artisans.

7. This community needs training and technical skills.

8. No facility in these Community differently occupational artisans.

9. The data indicated that the majority of the Vishwakarmas' original native place is the village. They were migrated in search of jobs for their livelihood. As far as migration is concerned the majority of the Vishwakarmas have not migrated to any other places. They are staying in their original native place. Among the migrated Vishwakarmas small number of Vishwakarmas migrated from villages to other places.

10. One of the major traditional occupations of Vishwakarmas in Bellary district is the community employment. Agricultural employment comes second. None of the World Workers expressed themselves as bonded labourers, businessmen and politicians. Whatever the outcome, the Vishwakarma community is the original caste-based work community of artisans. Vishwakarma also changed his views on his traditional occupations as the other castes passed by. Thus, many Vishwakarmas turned to agriculture in the fields of art, literature, theatre and other fields.

Conclusion:

The community plays a very significant role in the life of an individual. A community is the total organized social life of a locality. The community life provides the individual the needed protection and security. It is also applicable to the Vishwakarma community. Historically, this community has been an expression that emphasized the unity of the common life among the artisan people. But in the wake of modern industrialization, increasing mechanization and other changes and Problems, the task of retaining its traditional occupations, customs, and architecture is more difficult in a society. The cluster of these occupational together constitutes an ethnic group or community called Vishwakarma. They have scattered in villages and towns all over India since the dawn of civilization. Though they constitute a tiny minority, functionally plays a significant role in the Socio-economic and Occupational Changes and development of the state in particular and the country in general.

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