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OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF DANGE TRIBAL IN-MIGRANTS IN KOLHAPUR CITY, MAHARASHTRA

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Abstract:

Dange tribals, living in the Western Ghat region of Kolhapur district, have typical forest-based economy. The shrinkage of forest and many other reasons in their original habitat have forced them to migrate to different locations for their survival. The present paper attempts to analyze the occupational structure of the in-migrant Danges in Kolhapur city of south Maharashtra. The study also examines the diversified occupational structure of Danges in the city which is quite different from their original habitat. The study is based on primary data, generated through field surveys in the city. It is found that the Danges have adjusted themselves with new city-environment and followed a different occupational pattern for their survival.

KEYWORDS:

Migration, Danges, In-migrant, Places of origin and destination, Occupational Structure, Tribals

INTRODUCTION

The tribal communities, living in different eco-systems of the world, have their own way of survival. To meet the basic needs which are very limited, the tribals mainly depend on forests. Dange tribals in their original habitat in the Western Ghat region of Kolhapur district have a typical forest-based economy which constitutes mainly livestock, subsistence agriculture and collection and sale of minor-forest-produce. The shrinkage of forest and other reasons in their original habitat have made a great negative impact on their economy which has forced them to migrate to different locations for their survival.

Dnages have been migrating to Kolhapur city for the last 30 years. There are 37 locations in the city where Danges have been settled. The occupations which they have been practicing in the city are quite different from those in the original habitat. An attempt has been made in this paper to examine the occupational structure of the in-migrant Danges in Kolhapur city.

STUDY AREA

The study area, undertaken for the present study, is Kolhapur city, a district head-quarter. It is located in Karveer tahsil of Kolhapur district on the bank of Panchaganga river in south Maharashtra. It is located between 16° 42' north latitude and 74° 14' east longitude (Figure 1). According to 2011 census, the population of the city was 5, 49,283 with 92.12 percent literacy. It is a big commercial, industrial and educational center with a rich agricultural background. There are 37 locations (Figure 2) where the Danges

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have been concentrated. The total population of in-migrated Danges in the city is approximately 6600, distributed among 1010 households.

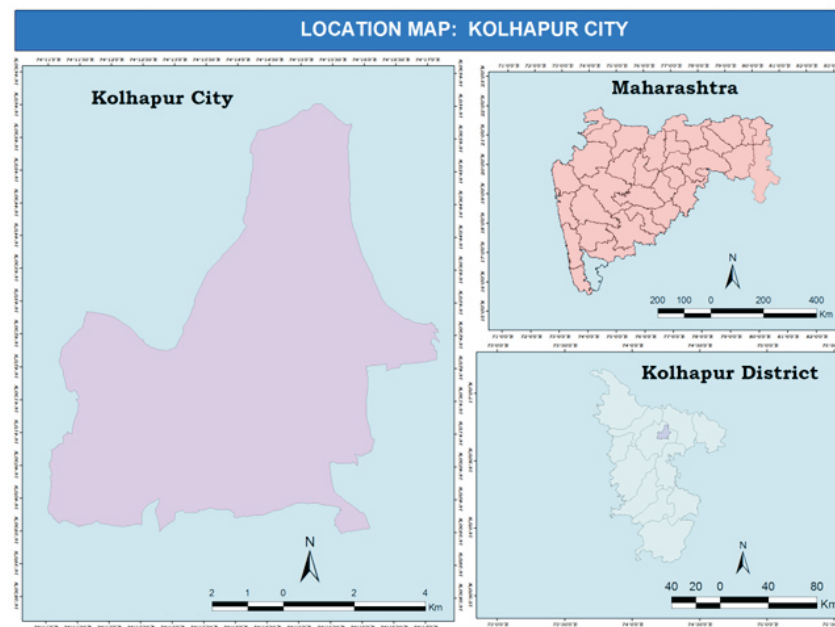
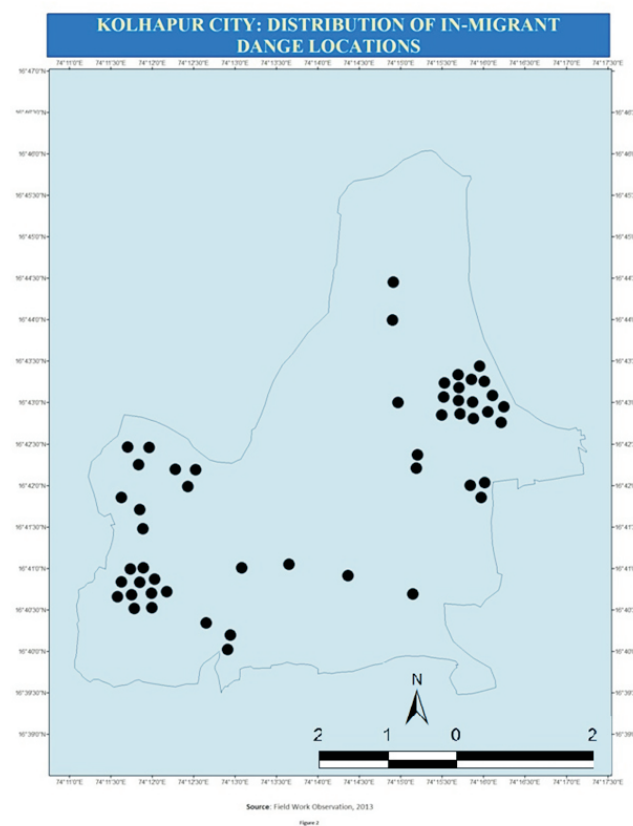


Figure 1

Objective

The main objective of the present study is to analyze the occupational structure of in-migrant Dange tribals in Kolhapur city.



Data Base and Methodology

Since no secondary data, pertaining to Danges at the place of origin and destination are available, the study is mainly based on primary data which is generated through field surveys. Out of 37 Dange in-migrant locations in the city, 8 have been selected randomly for sampling. Out of the 440 families from 8 settlements, 100 families have been randomly selected for the present investigation.

Family Structure of In-migrant Danges

The in-migration of people brings quantitative and qualitative changes in the demographic structure of the place of origin and destination (Gupta and Sharma, 2004). The family of any social group has been found in different forms and evolved at all levels of man's cultural development. The family structure in any society changes through time and space which has greater bearing to the changing occupational structure of that society. Therefore, the study of family structure of Danges has been attempted.

Table 1- FAMILY STRUCTURE OF IN-MIGRANT DANGES.

Family Members	No. of Families	Population		
		Male	Female	Total
< 5	24	41	39	80 (13.00)
5 to 8	66	203	205	408 (66.34)
9 to 12	06	30	39	69 (11.22)
>12	04	30	28	58 (9.44)
Total	100	304 (49.43)	311 (50.57)	615 (100.00)

Source: Compiled by authors through field survey, 2013

The total population of 100 families is 615 persons in which number of females (50.57%) exceeds the males (49.43%). The highest number of population (66.34%) is concentrated in 66 families having 5 to 8 members in the family. In other categories of family members, the percentage of total population is almost uniform. The big-size families (more than 9 members) which were common to their destination are recorded to only 10 percent.

Occupational Structure

Occupation occupies a prominent place among various qualities of the regional population as it reflects social as well as economic status of a person inhabiting in a particular region (Sharma, 1992). Occupational structure shows the working force in different occupations which 'reflects the socio-cultural, economic and technical status of the society' (Ajagekar, 2011). The occupational structure of Dange tribals in their original habitat was limited to livestock, subsistence agriculture and collection and sale of minor-forest-produce (MFP) which has been totally changed in the new city environment. Therefore, 'every in-migrant tries to establish more or less his native environment in the new environment' (Beaujeu Garnier, 1966) is partially true with Danges. The occupational structure of Dange in-migrants has been discussed in the following pages.

A. Work Participation of Families

Due to hard working attitude and low educational status, in-migrant Danges in working category are engaged either in temporary job or some small business. The following Table 2 shows the participation of workers among families.

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Table 2- PARTICIPATION OF WORKERS AMONG FAMILIES.

No. of workers in family	No. of families	Total workers	% of total workers
1	09	09	03.36
2	41	82	30.60
3	27	81	30.22
4	19	76	28.26
5	04	20	07.46
Total	100	268	100.00

Source: Compiled by authors through field survey, 2013

Table-2 reveals that the highest number of families (41) possess 2 workers in each family whereas 4 families having only 5 workers in each family. Table also shows that 87 families who have workers ranging from 2 to 4, possess more than 89 percent workers. It is found that such a big figure of workers is due to the fact that the children among Dange families entering the working age left the school and join the family in the work of different kind.

B. Working Status

The Dange in-migrants have been working in different types. It is found that majority of Dange in-migrant workers are unskilled, poor and illiterate or having low level of education. Therefore, a major section of Dange in-migration tries to establish themselves in unskilled work to start immediate earning for their family. The distribution of working population in different occupations is shown in Table 3.

Table 3- WORKING STATUS OF DANGE IN-MIGRANTS, 2013

Sr. No.	Working category	Male	Female	Total
1	Hired job workers	0 (00.00)	109 (100.00)	109 (40.67)
2	Porters	20 (100.00)	00 (00.00)	20 (7.46)
3	Gardeners	33 (94.59)	04 (5.41)	37 (13.81)
4	Agricultural labourers	15 (100.00)	00 (00.00)	15 (5.60)
5	Construction workers	20 (95.24)	01 (4.76)	21 (7.83)
6	Sales workers	18 (81.82)	04 (18.18)	22 (8.21)
7	Service workers	21 (95.45)	01 (4.55)	22 (8.21)
8	Other workers	22 (100.00)	00 (00.00)	22 (8.21)
	Total	151 (56.34)	117 (43.66)	268 (100.00)

Source: Compiled by authors through field survey, 2013

Out of the total workers (268) the male workers (56.34%) exceeds the female workers (43.66%). It also shows that excluding 'hired job category', the male workers are distributed among all other categories almost uniformly but the female workers predominate the hired job category. The detailed account of the occupational structure of in-migrant Danges is presented in the following pages.

1.Hired Job

A person who carries his work for a certain period on a fixed wage is known as hired job worker. It is found in the survey that almost from every Dange in-migrant family, the females in the age group of 12 to 60 years are engaged in this category of work which is popularly known as 'Dhune-bhandiwali' or 'molkarin'. They clean the floor of house, clothing and kitchen wares etc. for which they are paid monthly. The industrious Dange women contribute significantly to their family income. In this category the female

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workers constitute 100 per cent share of total male-female workers.

2. Porters

The Dange tribal in-migrants, being strong, hard workers are engaged as porters in the loading and unloading of goods from lorries and wagons in the city. The porters, predominantly males, consist of 7.46 per cent of the total workers. At some commercial locations like Laxmipuri, Market Yard, the Dange porters have proved their monopoly.

3. Gardeners

Some Dange in-migrants have acquired a skill of gardening. This category of workers ranks second, constituting 13.81 per cent of the total workers.

4. Agricultural Labourers

Though there is little scope to have employment in agriculture in the cities, the Kolhapur city, having rich agricultural background, invites labourers in different agricultural operations. Table 3 shows that 15 percent of the total workers are engaged in this category.

5. Construction Workers

There is a greater scope for the workers in this category in the city. The Dange workers in this category are dominated by males constituting 7.83 percent of the total workers.

6. Sales Workers

The Dange workers in this category are engaged in sailing of fruits, vegetables, onions, garlic etc. constituting 8.21 percent of the total workers of which 18.18 percent are females also.

7. Service workers

The Danges are also working in the industries, offices, education as the salaried workers. It constitutes 8.21 percent of the total workers.

8. Other workers

The persons working in other than above categories of work are included in this category. The workers working in hotels, brick industry, auto rickshaw, cutting of trees, etc. fall in this category constituting 8.21 per cent of the total workers.

CONCLUSION

The preceding analysis reflects very clearly that the in-migrant Dange tribals have accepted different types of occupations in the city. The study reveals that 87 per cent families who have workers ranging from 2 to 4 possess more than 89 per cent workers. The unskilled, poor and illiterate Danges have established themselves in unskilled work to start immediate earning to their family. Therefore, they particularly males have kept themselves in diversified occupations. It is wonderful fact that they have accepted the occupations for which they had no any experience in their original habitat.

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