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A STUDY OF SITAR MAKING HANDICRAFT BUSINESS IN THE MIRAJ CITY

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to outline some of the key issues related to HR Practices in the Miraj sitar making Handicraft business. The Indian handicraft Business needs huge development of sustains its growth. Considering huge population and strong potential for handicraft business needs organize efforts and proper Human Resources Management practices.

Key Words –Craftsman, HR-Practices, Resources.

Objective of the study

1. To study the existing Human Resources Practices in the Sitar making handicraft business sector.
- 2.To Study the problems of craftsman in this sector.

Limitation of this study..

1. While collecting the data from craftsman's, problem of language as some of the craftsman were illiterate.
2. Craftsman hesitated to reply inquires on cause of confidential data.
3. The data is collected from limited respondents out of total craftsman.

Methodology adopted for this study. In order to collect the relevant information pertaining to A STUDY OF SITAR MAKING HANDICRAFT BUSINESS IN THE MIRAJ CITY the following methods has been adopted.

The research methodology of present study is as follows.

A) Sources of Data Collection

1. Primary Sources
2. Secondary Sources

1) Primary Sources of Data Collection

The primary data is collected where supported by the spot observation of the concerned Sitar making manufacturing unit. The Survey method was adopted to collect the relevant information. Pilot survey was conducted initially to finalize certain issues.

A comprehensive questionnaire was administered to collect additional relevant data personally visited concerned Sitar making manufacturing unit and Observation method was followed. Thus data collected from both sources where then tabulated and used for further analysis.

2. Secondary sources of Data Collection

Secondary data relating HR practices at the micro level along with the secondary data relating to sitar making unit concern were Secondary data was collected through visit to –

a) Visited well known libraries –

1. Visiting well-known libraries. For the collection of literature from News Papers, text books, periodicals magazines and websites etc.

Thus, the collected data from both sources were then tabulated and used for further analysis

1.7 SAMPLING DESIGN

The researcher has framed following sampling design.

The researcher has adopted quota sampling with selected 25 manufacturing units as sample size of its study. In order to solicit the proper responses the researcher has focused on those respondents willing to participate and co-operate in the present study. 25 units as a sample size for this study. Further, the researcher has used structured questionnaire to get relevant data.

VALIDITY OF THE STUDY

Handicraft sector occupies an important position in the Indian economy. It provides largest level of workforce to the country. This sector forms the backbone of the Indian economy and industrialization for the last five decades.

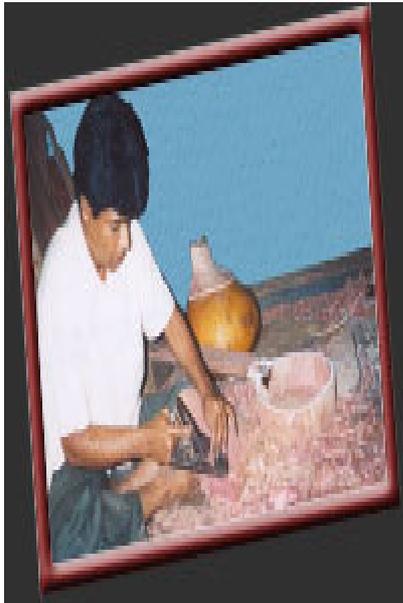
Economic liberalization and globalization have their impact on all segments of economic activities including personnel management and industrial relations. They demand high skilled and committed personnel and provide the scope for high quality of work life. However, they result in unemployment to less skilled personnel in short run; continuous development of human resources along with setting up of a number of new units would provide better employment opportunities.

The competitive culture of market economy would result in personnel problems, health problems like craftsman's stress and tension. These changes would call for special emphasis on counseling and human resource maintenance and development. However, the perseverance of Indian culture would resist the spreading up of such type of ill effects. Thus, liberalization would have positive impacts on Human Resource Management in long run in the country.

Advanced countries in the world have experienced that economic progress and industrial development are interdependent. In a developing economy like Indian handicraft sector should be viewed not only as a series of specialized activities related production, pricing, and marketing of a products but also as continuing thought process about Human Resource Management which seeks to build the present situation in the scope of future. Thus Human Resources is not only the decisive element of formation and development of handicraft sector. Reformation of Human Resource is the key to industrial transformation and change awareness of human resources is the key to reformation of human resources.

In view of the above discussion and taking in to account of the various aspects directly affecting the Human Resource Management practices in the Handicraft sector, to solve the existing H.R. problems steps should be taken through appropriate Human Resource Management practices.

The researcher has recommended the valuable suggestions, which are more useful to Sitar making business at Miraj city.



LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As every research has limitation this study also encountered limitations during the study. Initially survey was carried out by visiting Sitar making manufacturers units, which were selected by researcher in study area. The questionnaire was prepared and contacted the craftsman prior appointment it was a time consuming activity. Arrange only 8 to 12 craftsman and 2 to 3 manufacturers were interviewed daily. Questionnaire and discussion were held which required lot of time.

It was very difficult to get appointment of an owner of the units, as they were busy with their work. Secondly, it was very difficult to convey the importance of this research article to them Interest towards filling questionnaire was poor. Secondly getting correct and important information was not possible due to fear. During this study the Author came to many situations where he had to create confidence among the Craftsman and owner for not disclosing their views. Sources of contract craftsman (karagir), payment to craftsman (karagir) and any other financial

aspects not covered under this study. The present study being based on the HR Practices, rest all other information like sales taxes paid was of no use.

Introduction.

Indian traditional musical instrument handicraft sector is done from ancient era. There are various cities involved in this sector and huge number of handicraft are involved from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. In that they are manufacturing Flutes, Tabalas, sarod, Sitar/Tanpura, Harmonium, veena, Rudraveena, symbal, Drum, etc.

Miraj town, District Sangli, Maharashtra state, India has been associated with this Indian traditional instruments manufacturing industry from ancient time specially the Sitar/Tanpura which manufactured in Miraj Town. Miraj Town is world famous sitar making handicraft sector. These, Sitar making handicraft sectors run by localities Muslim Families since last 300 years. The Author has tried to focus their problems related to this family business and also tried to throw a light on the Human Resource Management problems which are present in this Sitar making Handicraft sector. The Author has also further tried to study 250 craftsmans, karagirs and Manufacturers who are involved in this family business and by the help of study the Author has tried provide solution to their problems.

About the Miraj Town.

Miraj is a town in southern Maharashtra, India, that was founded in the early 10th century. It was the important jagir of Adilshahi court of Bijapur. Miraj an important junction of the central railway network. This Miraj town is recognizing world famous due medical facilities available here.

The town is recognized for performance of Indian classical music. Marathi, Kannada and Hindi widely spoken languages. Miraj town is a popular place for artist to perform *Urus* and *Navratraustava*. The Administrative office of Gandharva mahavidyalya is at Miraj city.

Miraj town is World famous for manufacturing Sitar/Tanpura i.e. Indian string instruments which can be traced back to Indian civilization. This article analyzed the development path of human resources in Miraj sitar making industry.

Sitar/Tanpura Making Activity.

Sitar is perhaps the most well known of the Indian instruments. Artists such as Pandit Ravi Shankar have popularized this instrument around the world. *Sitar* is a long necked instrument with an interesting construction. It has a varying number of strings but 17 is usual. It has three to four playing strings and three to four drone strings. The approach to tuning is somewhat similar to other Indian stringed instruments. These strings are plucked with a wire finger plectrum called *mizrab*. There are also a series of sympathetic strings lying under the frets. These strings are almost never played but they vibrate whenever the corresponding note is sounded. The frets are metal rods which have been bent into crescents. The main resonator is usually made of a gourd and there is sometimes an additional resonator attached to the neck. The sitar developed during the collapse of the Mogul empire (circa 1700). It reflected the culture of the times in that it showed both Indian



and Persian characteristics. (go for origin of sitar a better description. *Sitar* is used in a variety of genre. It is played in north Indian classical music Hindustani film music and western fusion music. It is not commonly found south Indian classical performances or folk music. The city of Miraj is known to produce the finest tanpura in the world. The typical north Indian tanpura, favored by Hindustani musicians, is known as the Miraj style. The name of the instrument has a number of variations, including: tanpura, tanpoora, tambour, thamboora, thambura, and tamboora. Male tanpuras are larger than the female. The decorative inlays may vary, but all are artfully carved. Includes wooden case. The typical north Indian tanpura, favored by Hindustani musicians, is known as the Miraj style. The tanpuras have been hand crafted in Miraj for over 200 years by four generations satarmakers family. The art of tanpura and sitar making has been honed and improved from Grandfather to grandson. The satarmakers families have perfected innovations to improve the look and sound of the instrument. They skillfully cut the pumpkin gourd to create the correct shape, and join the gourd and body pieces with precision. They understand how the thickness of the wood body and neck will affect the tone of the instrument and take great care to craft the structures of even thickness. The progenitor of these families originally made his tanpura from teak. Today, this wood is becoming scarce and is too costly to use. Miraj tanpuras are crafted from seasoned toon wood. The tanpuras are characterized by accurate woodwork, precise joining, artful decorations, and attention to the finishing and Jawari (tuning) work. The result is a light weight instrument of high sound quality that will last for years to come. The current proprietor is as proud of his tanpura as he is proud of his family. The Miraj Satarmaker's mark is inlayed on the soundboard above the bridge. The tanpura is an Indian drone instrument known for its rich sound. It resembles the sitar in size and shape, but has no frets and no sympathetic strings. Most Tanpura have four strings tuned to the tonic, a few have 5 or 6 strings.



Above middle image Mr. Abdul Rehaman Satarmaker, Miraj sitar Manufacturer invention shows folding sitar can be accommodated in a 2 feet case long journey and Air Travel luggage charges can be saved

Types of Sitar manufacturing in Miraj.

A. SITAR.

1. Black sitar 2. wooden sitar 3. Foldable sitar 4. Sur Bahar.

B. VEENA

1 Veena (Been) 2. Vichitra Veena.

C. TANPURA.

1. Tanpura pair

2. Single Tanpura.

3. Kinner Tanpura.

4. wooden tanpura.

5. Hemraj tanpura.

D. Other musical instruments.

1. Sur Srinagar 2. sarod 3. Harmonium 4. dilruba santoor 5. sarangi 6. Tabala.

In this sitar making activity craftsman of all ages involved in this instruments making and selling. The art of sitar making can be traced to ancient time it means the 5th generation of craftsman and i.e. why their surname has also been attached to the business. It is found that majority of

craftsman manufacturers producing sitar. All the members of the families and close relative as well as karagirs from same business involved in this activity, surprisingly it is observed that no outside workforce or karagirs is used.

While manufacturing sitar it has go under various process, right from bringing the raw material, cutting it proper, assembling, polishing, coloring, attaching with other accessories and drying takes a lot of time. When they received order from customer or agent for making sitar to fulfill the order in limited time is a compulsion on the manufacturers but it is seen that due to unavailability of raw material like wood from Karnataka forest, Pumpkin gourd from solapur, celolite tapes from japan, strings from Germany, and varnish and polish paper. The manufacturers and craftsman's unable to fulfill orders of agents and customers. It is also observed that for making one Sitar required 16 days process is a must and 4 to 5 craftsmen are involved in this activity. It is seen that majority of orders gets from agents as well as direct tradinonal customer. If they gets one Sitar order up to Rs.5, 000 less profit gets i.e. only Rs.400 to manufacturers from the agents even though Miraj Satarmakers continues and sustains this business due to tradition and affection with Indian classical culture. It is also found that every Satamaker family some of member searching different job and carrier but since childhood they are in this business hence they couldn't concentrate education and other professional course so they attract toward Auto rickshaw driver, Pan shop, Grossary, poultry business etc. It is also observed that this business is completely depend on Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, Agra and Baroda agents surprisingly it is found that none of member Satarmaker family has become an agent till today. It is also found that not single rupee subsidies of Government of state as well as central even N.G.O., they do not have association to bring attention towards their problems like financial, Marketing, Human Resource problems as well as loans, subsidies, Credit society, Exhibitions.

Miraj sitar making handicraft industries at different stages affecting Human Resource Development were interfered by outside environment such as unclear objective, less organized, structured imbalance lack of reproduction and lack of Human Resource Management.

Hence, due to all above and other problems facing critical condition of their life and business by the Miraj Satarmakers'



Suggestions for the development of this satarmaking business

The Author has suggested following suggestion for motivating Sitar making Business.

1. Professional Attitude.
2. New Technology.
3. Network creation.
4. Awareness of Global Market.
5. Exhibitions and Fair Events.

1. Professional Attitude.

For the development sitar making business under the handicraft sector the craftsman should develop positive attitude towards in the today's professional business environment. The craftsman of sitar makers of Miraj city should not depend on outside agents or mediator for the upliftment of sitar making business. It is found that the sitar making business controlled by only some families those are in since 300 years none of outside craftsman trained this sitar making art so hence; the manufacturers also arrange training to new comers. The new innovation should be develop in this sector so to bring this industry as per with other modern musical instruments.

2. New Technology.

No doubt sitar making business is an traditional art but to sustain if the craftsman must adopt new technological advance to make this industry a profitable one for e, g.one of the renowned craftsman Mr. Abdul Rehaman Satarmaker, from Miraj has developed of 2 foot folding sitar Which is traditionally 4 foot by this new advancement this folding sitar can be carried easily without having any effect on tune or performance of sitar this should serve as a sample for the upcoming craftsman to start new trend in this business. Surprisingly it is found that majority of craftsman do not using computer or internet for new designing of sitar.

3. Network creation.

For the developing this sitar making business crafts should form a marketing net work which would lead to marketability of this product. They should form an association and tie up with other corporate houses and entertainment organizations to develop this sector widely. Also for spreading their business they should develop network through giving agency, franchisees to other cities. The world famous Miraj Sitar brand should find its place in Global market.

4. Awareness of Global Market.

To make Miraj Sitar popular as a brand the craftsman should have knowledge about global market of musical instruments and they can manufacture other traditional and classical musical instrument under the Miraj Sitar brand. The craftsman's new generation should concentrate their traditional business and create awareness among the about new opportunities of this Indian classical instrument making business.

5. Exhibitions and Fair Events.

.Exhibitions and Fair or Events has a great commercial potential and due to this the gets mass recognition and due to media news it is reaches million of people. Sitar making industry wants to get recognition in global arrange special Exhibitions and fairs of sitar performers on maximum level.

Contribution Of Women In Changing Business Environment Through Information Technology

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ABSTRACT

Women represent half the resources and half the potential in all the societies. Efforts to promote greater equality between women and men can also contribute to the overall development of human society. The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of women's social, economic and political status is essential for the achievement of women's participation in economic activities is fast increasing. The role of women in entrepreneurship is also increasing. In India too, women are participating in large number in almost all the spheres of economic activity. In the case of Work Force Participation Rate (WFPR) by sex, it had been much lower for females as compared to males. Working women are major part of labour market of India. Their problems cannot be ignored. They are engaged in gainful employment and contributing to home and national economy. But they are still over burdened and there is a need to correlate, the working women have become a major part of labour market of India and hence their problem cannot be ignored. When they are engaged in gainful employment and contributing to the household and national economy, they should be given the due respect and status they deserve in the family and the society. In the changing socio-cultural environment of India, women are entering in a new era. But they are still over burdened with the household chores.

Introduction

Communication is indispensable for all endeavours to bring about a societal change. The emergence of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has enabled to collaborate, interact and disseminate information in a fast pace which has brought a greater impact on society. The ICT is a diverse set of technological tools and resources to create, disseminate, store, bring value-addition and manage information, in fact Internet Technology has redefined the way we communicate, live, work and conduct our business. Traditionally the organizations which operated in a face-to-face context are now increasingly engaged in virtual Communications supported by a wide range of ICT including e-mail teleconferencing, mobile technology, videoconference etc. ICT makes the role of time and distance less significant in organizing business and production related activities. Thus the role of ICT and e-commerce in driving the global economy is now widely recognized.

ICT and the Internet reach many people, have a wide geographical coverage and are efficient in terms of time and cost. They facilitate access to markets, commercial information, new processing technologies and knowledge. But do women have equal access to these new technologies and the Internet? Does e-commerce enhance business opportunities for women, especially in the developing countries? What are some of the promising new employment opportunities for women in the ICT sector. or does it replicate patterns of segregation elsewhere in the job market? These are some of the issues largely posing, as the barriers in entering the women in to ICT sector require policy measures in the developing economy.

ICT industry has been the principal contributor to increase the real standard of living of people in the industrialized world five-fold. Apart from telephone services, women's handicrafts business also be developed using business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce. B2C endeavors have been found in South Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East in the areas of clothing, bakery, gifts and other handmade products., Using the Internet, women are able to tap into new markets while saving time and money otherwise spend on travelling or selling in the local markets. For small home-based business the Internet offers information and networking opportunities that could make these endeavors profitable rather than marginal. The ability of women to earn income at home while raises a family — with the technology to communicate inexpensively with customers around the world, and handle accounting and order processing online - is adding to the attraction of the Internet for women business owners.

Objective:-

- How ICT can play an important role in improving the women status.

Area of Study:

Gurgaon district of Haryana is the area of study and the samples are women who are participating in ICT are the limit & the unit of the study. Important thing is that Electronic City Gurgaon is one of the major industrial area so it gives major participation in using ICT. The IBM Company situated at NH-8 (opposite-32 mile stone) Sector-30, Gurgaon, Haryana. It is also included in NCR of India which gives more participating in ICT, all over India. So that's why I want to study empowerment of women through ICT, the studies showed that how ICT is also leading towards empowerment.

Methodology:

Primary data was collected through a semi-structure questionnaire. The questionnaire includes all aspects of socio-economic background of the respondent, their educating, trading, income generating activities constraints benefits etc. The data was collected through group discussion & observation techniques.

Secondary data was concluded from books, journals, published papers, government & district offices.

Information Technology (IT) Revolution - A Tool for Empowerment

Technology is the non-linear tool available to humanity, which can affect fundamental changes in the ground rules of economic competitiveness. Technology consists of stages like research and development, technology transfer, technology absorption and production of products or systems with the desired performance, quality, and cost-effectiveness. In the case of India, progress in technology, particularly indigenous design, is the thrust area to enable India to become competitive with other countries. Hence technology empowers the nation. (Abdul Kalam, 2006). Information technology (IT) has become a potent force in transforming social, economic, and political life globally. Without its incorporation into the information age, there is little chance for countries or regions to develop. More and more concern is being shown on the impact of those left on the other side of the digital divide - the division between the information "haves" and "have nots." Most women within developing countries are in the deepest part of the divide - further removed from the information age than the men. It is imperative to ensure that women in developing countries understand the significance of these technologies and use them. If not, they will become further marginalized from the mainstream of their countries and of the world. It is essential that gender issues be considered early in the process of the introduction of information technology in developing countries and not as a corrective measure afterwards. It can

be an important tool in meeting women's basic needs and can provide the access to resources to lead women out of poverty.

IT can offer significant opportunities for virtually all girls and women in developing countries, including poor women living in rural areas. However, their ability to take advantage of these opportunities is contingent upon conducive policies; an enabling environment in the countries to extend communications infrastructure to where women live. And increased educational levels. In other words, the TTC can be viable sector through which the empowerment of larger women population could be envisaged. The empowerment process is one where women find time and space of their own, and had begun to re-examine their lives critically and collectively. They enable women to look at old problems in new ways. Analyze their environment and situation, recognize their strength, alter their self-image, access new kinds of information and knowledge, acquire new skills and initiate action aimed at gaining greater control over resources of various kinds. In a way, the term empowerment is often used to describe a process whereby the powerless or dis-empowered people gain a greater share of control of resources and decision-making.

As far as the women empowerment is concerned, it is about gaining autonomy and control over one's life, which includes many dimensions such as, economic, social and political. Comprehensively, "women empowerment is a state of being that reflects a certain level of critical consciousness about external realities and an awareness about their internal thought construction and belief systems that affect their well being in terms of gender justice; as well as the determination to use their physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual resources to protect their lives and sustain values that guarantee gender equity at personal, social, economic, political and institutional level". The single most resource that liberates people from poverty and empowers them is "knowledge". At this juncture, it is essential to see the possibilities of women's empowerment through 'knowledge'. And this knowledge is passed by Information Technology. The need to use information technology in empowering women can be understood in two fold manner. Access to information is the key for economic, social and political empowerment of women. So far no other technology claimed to have given the instant, uncensored, practically feasible, economically viable information to the women folk than the information technology. The IT poses new forms of learning, education, health services, livelihood options, governance mechanisms and e-commerce options which would lead to the ultimate goal, i.e., women's empowerment. Hence the use of IT will be a necessary condition, if not sufficient one for the women's empowerment. IT offers many new possibilities that offer women in developing countries lifeline for economic, social and political experiment.

Economic and Political Empowerment through IT

The new information economy offers many possibilities for new IT-enabled business that women could establish or in which they could work. Women's handicrafts can find niche markets, but marketing and management skills are needed, and supply and delivery problems must be addressed. Some successful developing country e-business have targeted their Diaspora markets and taken advantage of local delivery. More profitable opportunities exist for women's small-scale enterprises in business-to-business and business-to-government markets.

Women farmers could greatly increase productivity using ICT to assist them in their current economic activities, including farming, trade, and entrepreneurship, to obtain information on improved technologies in agricultural inputs, weather and markets and disseminate information about their business. For instance, School girls from the local communities who generally learn computer skills rapidly could be trained to serve as information intermediaries for the older women.

IT-enabled communications business offer much promise for women entrepreneurs, following the model of Grameen Phone in Bangladesh, teleboutiques in Senegal and Morocco, and phone shops in Ghana. Given high demand, low capital and skills requirements, these businesses are within the reach of many women in developing countries, if their country has the necessary enabling environment permitting the establishment of such business. Availability of credit, particularly in the form of micro credit, is a necessity for women to enter such business. For employment in core sector information technology jobs, women in developing countries need to acquire the necessary training to move into more technical, better-paying, cognitively oriented jobs. While degrees in science and technology are the entry tickets to the higher end of using and producing information technology, women can master many aspects of computer use and maintenance with much less training, with much of it available outside the formal education system.

Political empowerment still remains a distant dream for Indian women. Information technology can contribute to the political empowerment of women as tools for networking women to perform social and political advocacy, to strengthen women's participation in the political process, to educate, and to disseminate indigenous knowledge. IT is particularly useful in increasing the transparency and accountability of government.

Gender Difference in IT Education and Training

Women in developing countries do not yet find it easy to obtain suitable jobs or income-generating work in the fields of network management, web design or software development, because they are not equipped with the necessary skills. The explanation does not necessarily lie in discrimination against women in centres of education and training in developing countries. In developing as well as in developed countries, there are difficulties in attracting and retaining women in ICT training and education. An example used by Taggart and O'Gara (2000) from the experience of Cisco's international Networking Academy Program (CNAP) provides some answer to why women's participation in IT training has been minimal. Female enrolment in IT courses is lower in both U.K and Philippines countries. However, in the Philippines, where mechanisms and e-commerce options which would lead to the ultimate goal, i.e., women's empowerment. Hence the use of IT will be a necessary condition, if not sufficient one for the women's empowerment.

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Findings

Barriers to Women's Participation in the IT Sector

Despite the great potential for job creation and development, only those who can afford the new technologies, and have the skills to use them, will benefit, while the poor risk being marginalized. Given that women make up the large majority of the poor worldwide, any strategy to increase their participation in the digital economy would increase national capacity and help raise the national standard of living. The large majority of women in developing countries are "employed" by the informal economy (street vendors or women working at home on, for example handicrafts and sewing). Reaching these women will be the major challenge for policy makers trying to bridge the digital - and particularly the gender digital - divide. Among the key barriers faced by women are access to education, skills and training, access to the technologies themselves (both hardware and connectivity) and other constraints such as those related to knowledge of foreign languages (i . access to Internet content) or lack of financial resources to acquire acces; Women experience low rates of access to information an: communication technologies for a number of reasons, ranging from socio-cultural attitudes and preconceptions about women's interaction (or lack of) with technology to a lack of understanding of the resource and situational obstacles experienced by women. Specific barriers include literacy and education, domestic responsibilities, training, language, time. cost, and the value to women of the information carried by ICT. Research and analysis on the effects of development on women, specifically development technologies, has found that gender biases exist in determining who receives technologies and who receives the education, credit and other resources for technologies. A series of constraints to women's use of technologies and their participation in the knowledge society follow from or exacerbate the results of gender misperceptions framing ICT implementation. In general, women are more likely to lack basic literacy and computer skills. Girls are less likely than boys to enroll in maths and computer science courses. Socio-cultural barriers to the education of girls and women in science, maths and technology further restrict their interaction with technology as well as their entrance into ' S&T fields. Following are the barriers faced by women in pursuit of their goals-

1. Internet Language
2. Education Skills & Training
3. Availability of Finance
4. Access to Technologies & Foreign Languages

Strategies to Overcome Barriers

The majority of women who have access today do so from research institutions, governments and some businesses. Access among poorer and rural classes is currently non-existent, but is critical for any developing country like India. A technical mix of transmission of old ICT's with new ICT's combining networks, fax, telephones, radio, Television, computer communications and even WWW connectivity and connects them to larger off-line or low-tech dissemination networks should be made available. Information can be locally distributed by downloading from the Internet by a communications centre or NGO, through verbal interaction and education. Access needs to differentiate from connectivity and the government needs to engender the process so that it is not left to the individual women to make the access. Further interventions are needed to make connectivity accessible to the grassroots' women.

Specific government commitments to gender equality set the stage for the adoption of transformative strategies that aim at ensuring that women's development priorities and needs are considered in all policy areas, including the many areas where ICT policy is relevant (e.g., gender equality, rural development, education, health and telecommunications universal access policy, among others). Thus governments needs to take this issue of women empowerment through ICT's as a priority issue and frame necessary policies in consultation with NGO's, grassroots workers, women themselves apart from ICT's specialists. This policy should be able to address issues like urban - rural bias, literacy levels,

- Promote the enrolment of women in ICT programmes by providing incentives such as scholarships and awareness-raising activities.
- ICT policy must rest on the understanding that technology must be adapted to fit the needs of women. The key issue is that die technologies should be adapted to suit women rather than that women should be asked to adapt to suit the technologies. Most policymakers are proceeding on the second premise. If they can be encouraged to think and act in terms of the first premise then we will ensure that ICTs become more "women-friendly" in terms of cost, access, applicability in different fields, etc.

There is a need to explore many more useful models of participation of the private sector in social development projects in order to reduce costs and make ICT accessible to women.

Conclusion

Government policies and programmes to facilitate support networking and career development for women in IT and telecommunications are inevitable in the digital divide era.) IT jobs that are cerebrally - rather than physically-challenging, demands creativity, flexibility, teamwork and multi-tasking - all qualities at which women excel naturally in their everyday lives. ICT could moreover, enhance rural productivity. Access to market information via communication networks could help farmers make judicious and timely decision. ICT can provide access to rural finance, a facility indispensable for most entrepreneurs who are unable to undertake projects because of lack of information about credit facilities and methods.

Women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology. This will strengthen their ability to combat negative portrayals of women internationally and to challenge instances of abuse of power of an increasingly important industry. Women therefore need to be involved in decision making regarding the development of the new technologies in order to participate fully in their growth and impact. The priority themes like supporting electronic networks, promoting .strategic use of information and communication technologies among partner communities, developing information content and tools, lobbying and advocacy etc. thus have to be given an emphasis.

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Physico-Chemical Characteristics of a Fresh Water Pond of Ghugus, District Chandrapur, Maharashtra (India)

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ABSTRACT:

In the present study an attempt has been made on physico-chemical characteristics of a pond, located in Ghugus Town in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra. The study was carried out for a period of twelve months i.e. November 2014 to October 2015. Monthly details have been collected and were represented seasonally along with standard deviation. Different parameters were taken in the study were Humidity, Atmospheric and water temperature, pH, Electrical Conductivity, Total Dissolved solids, Dissolved oxygen, Biochemical Oxygen Demand, Total alkalinity, Bicarbonate Alkalinity, Total Hardness, Calcium Hardness, Chloride, Nitrate-Nitrogen and Phosphate. The results of the present study indicated that the water of the pond lies just below the level of eutrophication.

INTRODUCTION:

Ponds are important wetlands located in and around human localities as they are generally semi natural ecosystems constructed by man in landscape suitable for water stagnation. Ecosystem services rendered by these wetlands are innumerable including tangible and non-tangible ones. Besides acting as a source of fresh water, they lower the ambient temperature, raise the water table, increase the diversity of flora and fauna, and provide aesthetic atmosphere.

Due to uncontrolled increase in human population and development of township at large, these freshwater bodies are under enormous pressure owing to their overuse on one hand and enrichment due to nutrients and organic matter on the other, leading to the cultural eutrophication. Erosion of catchment and direct pouring of domestic effluents along with sewage are threatening these wetlands all over the world. In view of the above, the present study deals with the assessment of physico-chemical characteristics of a freshwater pond located in the middle of township of Ghugus district Chandrapur of Maharashtra, India.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Study site characteristics:

The pond selected under investigation is known as "Malgujari Talav". It is situated at the central part of the town Ghugus, Maharashtra. Ghugus town is well known for coal mines in and around the town. It is located at 19.9414° N latitude and 79.1153° E longitude. The Pond is somewhat circular in outline. Maximum depth of the pond at full water level is about 4.5m and the average depth is about 2.5m. The surface area is about 11,000sq.m

Sampling and Sample Processing:

Observations for of the present study were carried for a period of twelve months (November 2014 to October 2015). Observation and analysis were done every month. However, the results are expressed on seasonal basis as variation was of less magnitude. Since the climate of the region is tropical monsoonal, three clearly defined seasons were identified viz. rainy (July - October), winter (November - February) and summer (March - June). The sampling was done during morning hour (8:30 to 10:30 am) and the water samples were collected using modified Hal's sampler. Physico-chemical parameters like temperature, pH, electrical conductivity,

dissolved oxygen, total dissolved solids, nitrate nitrogen, phosphate were analyzed with the help of thermometers and Elico Water Quality Analyzer PE 138. Transparency was measured by Secchi disc. For analysis of other chemical parameters, the samples were collected in glass bottles and transported to laboratory and were analyzed as per procedure given by Adoniet *al.* (1985) and APHA (1998).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of physico-chemical attributes of water and a few climatic parameters are presented in table 1.

Humidity:

Maximum humidity was recorded during the month of August i.e. 69 % and minimum in April i.e. 34 %. It is a typical trend in equatorial regions where hot and humid rainy season prevails.

Atmospheric and Water Temperature:

Temperature is a physical factor that alters the water characteristics and considered as an important factor in controlling the fluctuation of plantation and functioning of aquatic ecosystem. (Wetzel, 1975; Dwivedi and Pandey, 2002; Singh and Mathur, 2005). In the present investigation seasonal variability of atmospheric and water temperature have been observed. It was maximum during summer and comparatively less during monsoon and minimum during winter. Kannan and Job (1980) also found similar results as observed in the present study.

Interestingly the magnitudes of variation in atmospheric and water temperatures were of less during summer. Surface temperature closely reflected to ambient air temperature. This is particularly true for shallow lakes and ponds like in present study (Efford, 1967; Moss, 1969). It may probably due to smaller water bodies. It is now a well-known fact that smaller the body of water, more quickly it reacts with the changes in the atmospheric temperature (Welch, 1952; Ghosh and Basu, 1968; Young, 1975; Sehgal, 1980; Jayanti, 1994; Joshi and Singh, 2001).

pH:

Welch (1952) states that the limnological value of pH is a limiting factor and works as an index of general environmental condition. The pH value of the pond showed alkaline tendency with a few variations. The maximum pH value were in the month of April i.e. 9.26 and minimum in the month of October i.e. 8.99. It is evident from the data that the pH declines during the rainy season and increases during summers. Sharma *et al.*, (1984) states that in India, many small confined water pockets are particularly alkaline in nature.

Seasonal fluctuations are small indicating good buffering capacity. It has been suggested that the high pH is normally associated with a high photosynthetic activity in water (Goellet *al.*, 1986; Wani and Subla, 1990). High value also promotes the growth of algae and results heavy bloom of phytoplankton (George, 1962; Nandan and Patel, 1992).

Table 1: Seasonal variation in physico-chemical characteristics of water of Malgujaritalav from November 2014 to October 2015.

Sr.No.	Parameters	Seasons		
		Rainy July-October	Winter November-February	Summer March-June
1	Humidity (%)	69.75±8.26	41.75±4.11	34.50±12.79
2	Atmospheric Temperature (°C)	38.91±2.44	28.02±2.55	42.52±4.52

3	Water Temperature (°C)	34.03±2.19	22.11±2.86	33.25±4.63
4	pH	8.99±0.12	9.02±0.14	9.26±0.14
5	Electrical Conductivity (mScm-1)	2.61±0.41	2.22±0.09	2.44±0.07
6	Total Dissolved Solids(mgl ⁻¹)	1248.81±133.17	1011.69±142.8	1382.75±86.80
7	Dissolved Oxygen(mgl ⁻¹)	7.40±0.36	9.29±0.91	6.71±1.17
8	Biochemical Oxygen Demand(mgl ⁻¹)	2.79±0.22	2.18±0.60	2.78±0.45
9	Total Alkalinity(mgl ⁻¹)	558.31±19.99	464.24±25.55	433.90±34.82
10	Bicarbonate Alkalinity(mgl ⁻¹)	462.39±15.78	330.57±18.97	331.26±50.10
11	Total Hardness(mgl ⁻¹)	242.96±12.05	268.64±13.07	271.62±12.38
12	Calcium Hardness(mgl ⁻¹)	43.16±8.60	49.07±6.62	41.32±6.87
13	Chlorides (mgl ⁻¹)	95.63±26.88	81.93±3.54	101.84±5.71
14	Nitrate- Nitrogen(mgl ⁻¹)	0.86±0.27	1.39±0.45	2.64±0.53
15	Phosphate(mgl ⁻¹)	0.05±0.014	0.034±0.014	0.046±0.009

Values are mean ± standard deviation.

Electrical Conductivity:

Electrical conductivity of the water depends on the nature and concentration of salts. In the present study high values of conductivity, could be due to high ionic concentration, pollution status, trophic levels, some domestic effluents and other organic matter in water (Ahluwalia, 1999; Fokmare and Musaddique, 2001).

The range of electrical conductivity in the present study was between 2.22 mScm-1 and 2.61 mScm-1. The values of electrical conductivity showed marked seasonal variation being maximum during rainy season and minimum during winter season. Similar results were observed by various workers (Datta and Bhagwati, 2007; Hulyal and Kaliwal, 2011; Ramulu and Benarjee, 2013). The water during the summer decreases as a result of high temperature and evaporation.

Total dissolved solids:

As water is a universal solvent it has a large number of salts dissolved in it which largely governs the physico-chemical properties of water. The maximum value of total dissolved solids were recorded in July (1356.50 mgl-1) and minimum were recorded in January (889.50 mgl-1). A seasonal variation shows maximum values in summer followed by rainy season and minimum during the winter season. The high value of TDS during rainy season may be due to addition of domestic sewage along with wastewaters, garbage etc. in the natural surface of water body (Verma *et al.*, 2012). Increased high concentration of TDS increases the nutrients of water body which resulted into eutrophication of ponds (Swarnlata and Narsigharao, 1998; Singh and Mathur, 2005). The water containing more than 500 mgl-1 of TDS is not used for potable purposes. Hence, 500 mgl-1 is desirable limit and 1500 mgl-1 maximum possible limit for domestic use (ICMR, 1975).

Dissolved Oxygen:

Oxygen content is important for direct needsof many organisms and affects the solubility of many nutrients and therefore the periodicity of aquatic ecosystem (Wetzel, 1983). Fritsch (1907) stated that the oxygen contents in tropical water would be low considering their high temperature. The results in the present study shows that highest value of dissolved oxygen was recorded during the month of January i.e. 9.98 mg/l and least in the month of June i.e. 6.01 mg/l. The value increased from July to January and then decreased from February to June. Results of the present study are similar to those reported by other (Prasad *et al.*, 1985; Hulyal and Kaliwal, 2011; Ramulu and Benarjee, 2013).

Biochemical Oxygen Demand:

BOD is dissolved oxygen required by microorganism for aerobic decomposition of organic matter present in water. Jain and Dhamija (2000) have considered BOD as an important parameter in aquatic ecosystem to establish the status of pollution. The observation of present study shows that highest value of BOD (3.16 mg/l) during the June and lowest (1.69 mg/l) in January. Seasonally, the BOD was highest during late summer or in early rainy season. High BOD during late summer or in early rainy season is due to the presence of several microbes in water body which accelerates their metabolic activity with the increase in concentration of organic matter in the form of village and domestic wastes pouring into the pond with water run off (Kaushik and Saxena, 1999). Prasanna Kumari *et al.*, (2003) stated that the higher values of BOD during rainy season was due to input of organic wastes and enhanced bacterial activity. High temperatures play an important role by increasing rate of oxidation.

The BOD of unpolluted water is less than 1.00 mg/l moderately polluted water 2.00-9.00 mg/l while heavily polluted water have BOD more than 10.00 mg/l (Adakola, 2000). In the present study, BOD is fluctuated between 1.55 and 3.26 mg/l in different seasons indicates that the pond is moderately polluted.

Total Alkalinity:

Alkalinity in most natural water is the function of bicarbonate and carbonates. Their salts get hydrolyzed in solution and produced hydroxyl ion. It is also used as a measure of productivity (Jhingran, 1982; Hulyal and Kaliwal, 2011). Natural water bodies in tropics usually show wide range of fluctuations in their total alkalinity value depending upon the geography and season.

In the present study the total alkalinity ranged between 428.25 to 578.01 mg/l. It is gradually decreased from July to September and then increased in the month of October reaching to 556.90 mg/l again followed by a decrease in November and December. Seasonally highest value was recorded during rainy and lowest during the summer season. Increases in total alkalinity during rainy season were due to input of water and dissolution of calcium carbonate ion in value of calcium during winter season. The decrease in the amount of calcium may be due to its absorption by living organism. Hulyal and Kaliwal (2011) found that the calcium content was higher in summer and lower in monsoon season. However, Verma *et al.*, (2012) observed maximum calcium content in the water of Chandlodialake during monsoon and minimum during winter.

Goldman and Horne (1983) reported that any value above 25 mg/l indicate calcium rich water. Higher calcium content in drinking water cause incrustation in water supply structure and adversely affect on domestic use (Raghvendra, 1992). The values of present study are found to desirable limit for the domestic use.

Chloride:

In the present study chloride content ranged between 77.40 mg/l to 126.62 mg/l. Variations in chloride content were irregular as they declined from July to September (126.62 to 74.40 mg/l) and then increased in October and again gradually decreased from November reached to 81.10 mg/l during January. The chloride content showed marked seasonal variation being maximum

during rainy and minimum during winter season, which is the agreement with the observation made by Saha and Pandit, (1985) and Hulyal and Kaliwal, (2011). However, higher concentration of chloride during the summer and lower during the winter was also reported (Sharma *et al.*, 2007; Verma *et al.*, 2012; Ramulu and Benarjee, 2013). Higher concentration of chloride content was found during the rainy season may be attributed to increasing the organic waste of human origin with runoff water. Munawar (1970) suggested that high value of chloride in water as an index of pollution of animal origin. Higher concentration also be associated with frequently runoff loaded with contaminated water from surrounding (June and Fred, 1987; Sunder, 1988).

Nitrate- Nitrogen:

Nitrates are contributed to fresh water through discharge of sewage, industrial wastes and runoff from agricultural fields. The concentration and rate of supply of nitrate in the land use practices of the surrounding watershed. Results of the present study envisaged that the value of $\text{NO}_3\text{-N}$ varied from 0.71 mg/l to 3.17 mg/l. Lower values were recorded during rainy season and higher values were found during summer season. Higher concentrations are due to influx nitrogen rich flood water and bring about large amount of sewage. The rainy season was period with the highest nitrate-nitrogen concentration which is known to support the formation of blooms (Shai and Sinha, 1969; Anderson, *et al.*, 1998).

Phosphate:

Phosphate is the key nutrient also causing eutrophication leading to extensive algal growth. The results of present study showed that maximum phosphate concentration observed in the month of August i.e. 0.063 mg/l and minimum in January i.e. 0.028 mg/l. It is evident from the data that seasonally phosphate concentration in the pond was more in summer followed by rainy followed by a decline in winter season. Highest seasonal values were reported during rainy season and lowest during winter season is in the vicinity with the findings of various workers (Kaure *et al.*, 1997; Khurshid *et al.*, 1997; Hulyal and Kaliwal 2011; Verma *et al.*, 2012).

The increase in the concentration of phosphate during rainy season is the results of incoming water from the catchment areas of human settlements and the entry of domestic sewage. The occurrence of few nutrients during winter season may be due to their utilization in macrophytic growth. Increase in nutrients during summer season is related with the decrease in water level affecting concentration and the release of nutrient during decomposition, which increase with rise in temperature (Chaurasia and Adoni, 1985).

Comparatively higher values of total alkalinity may be attributed to the hardness. Philipose (1960) has classified freshwater ponds of India into four categories on the basis of alkalinity. Ponds receiving effluents have been reported to show alkalinity from 462 to 505 mg/l. He further endorsed that polluted ponds may have even higher alkalinity. In another study Prasad *et al.* (1985) had given a range of alkalinity from 128 to 730 mg/l. Similarly Kumari *et al.* (2007) obtained remarkable differences in the total alkalinity in different months (140-370 mg/l) in two tropical ponds of India. They have further correlated the higher pH values with alkalinity.

A higher level of chlorides in the present investigation is unusual. However even greater concentrations of chlorides have been reported by Chowdhury and Mamun (2006). Munawar (1970) suggested that higher chlorides in water are an index of pollution of animal origin. It has also been observed during the present investigation that the pond under observation has been under constant pressure of animal bathing, receives a variety of effluents from village discharge, as well as organic and inorganic wastes from a temple nearby the water body.

CONCLUSION:

Present study provides a base line data for the conservation and monitoring of the pond. Data envisaged that the current status of the pond lies just below the levels of eutrophication. A few efforts like diversion of sewage, presentation of leaching of nutrients from catchment area through plantations would definitely yield good results.

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बंजारा समाजातील स्त्रियांची आर्थिक व सामाजिक स्थितीचे अध्ययन

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कामठी रोड, नागपूर - २६

प्रस्तावना :-

बंजारा समाज भारतीय संस्कृतीचा एक घटक आहे. जागतिक स्तरावर ते जिप्सी, बोटेमियान, प्लेमिश, तारतार, हितेन्स इत्यादी नावाने ओळखले जाते. त्यांचा इतिहास त्यांच्या बोलीभाषेतून उपलब्ध आहे. त्यांचे राहणीमान व आहार इतर समाजापासून वेगळे आहे. त्यांचा अभ्यास केला तर असे दिसून येते की, प्राचीन व मध्ययुगीन काळात हे लोक अशिक्षित होते. ते भारतीय असून राजस्थानातून इतर राज्यात स्थायिक झाले आहेत. ब्राम्हण राजवंश शासन काळात बंजारा जातीचा उल्लेख पहिल्यांदा आढळते. त्या काळात भारतावर मुसलमानांचे आक्रमण झाले होते. "फेरोजशहा बहामनीचा भाऊ खान खानन ह्याने इ.स. 1417 मध्ये पुष्कळ बंजारांच्या बँल आणले असा लेख फेरिस्ता ह्याने लिहून ठेवला आहे". केवळ बहामनीच्या काळातच बंजारा लोकांची उत्पत्ती झाली असे आपण म्हणू शकत नाही. कारण त्यांच्या पूर्वी कित्येक वर्षांचा इतिहासात बंजाराचा उल्लेख आढळतो याचाच अर्थ असा होतो की बंजारा ही जात 1000 वर्षांपासून किंवा त्याही पूर्वी पासून अस्तीत्वात आलेली दिसते. तिचे अस्तीत्व इतर जातीच्या तुलनेत वेगळे आहे. त्यांची भाषा, पोशाख, आहार, विवाहाच्या पध्दती इत्यादी वेगळ्या आहेत. पण काही पध्दती हिंदू समाजाशी जुळणाऱ्या आहेत.

शब्द कुंजी :-

बंजारा समाज स्त्रीयांच्या समस्या बंजारा समाजाची उत्पत्ती आर्थिक समस्या, समता, सामाजिक स्थिती, विवाह पध्दती, हुंडा पध्दती, सन उत्साह, धर्मपिते, शिक्षण, पुरुष, सामाजिक समस्या, आर्थिक समस्या. 1) बंजारा गणाची उत्पत्ती व इतिहास :- बंजारा समाजाची उत्पत्तीचा इतिहास पाहिल्यास असे दिसून येते की, बंजारा ही जमात संपूर्ण भारतात विखरलेली आहे. काही राज्यात अनुसूचित जमात तर काही राज्यात अनुसूची बाहेर असलेली भटकी जमात म्हणून ओळखली जाते. इ. स. 1971 च्या जनगणनेनुसार त्यांची लोकसंख्या 1,98,885 ऐवढी आहे. ही जमात वेगवेगळ्या राज्यात त्यांना वेगवेगळ्या प्रवर्गात ठेवण्यात आलेले आहे. याची वस्ती प्रामुख्याने महाराष्ट्र, आंध्रप्रदेश, कर्नाटक, ओरिसा, पंजाब, बिहार, तामिळनाडू, हरियाणा या राज्यात आढळते बंजारा जातीच्या अनेक उपशाखा आहेत. वेगवेगळ्या राज्यात त्यांना वेगवेगळ्या नावाने ओळखले जाते. राज्यपरतवे या लोकांना लमाणी, सुकलीर, अंबाडी, मथुरा, लमाण, न्हावी, बंजारा, चारणबंजारा, गोर बंजारा, कचलीवाले बंजारा, शिंगवाले बंजारा, या नावाने ओळखले जाते. बंजारा ही जमात मराठवाडा व विदर्भात आढळते विदर्भात त्यांना बंजारा काही जिल्हात बंजारी विमुक्त जातीचा दर्जा दिलेला आहे. आंध्रप्रदेशात त्यांना सुगाळी दिल्लीत शिरकिवन, राजस्थान व केरळात गवारिया गुजरातमध्ये चारण म्हणून ओळखले जातात.

बंजारा या शब्दाच्या अर्थाविषयी अनेक विधान केल्या गेले आहेत. "हे लोक वाणिज्य करू लागले तेव्हा पासून त्यांस राजपुतांनी "वाणिज्य करणारे" अशा अर्थाचे नाव दिले "वाणिज्य" या संस्कृत शब्दास हिन्दी पर्यायी शब्द आहे. तो 'बनत' तसेच वनात दडून राहणाऱ्या भयंकर दरोडो खोऱ्यांना व लुटारूंच्या प्रचंड टोळ्यांना जेरीस आणणारे ते बंजारी वन + ज + जारी अशा तीन शब्दाचा यात समावेश होतो. 'बंजारा' हे उत्तरेकडे 'ब्रिजारी' ह्या नावाने मोडतात. तसेच हा शब्द उर्दु भाषेतून इकडे आळा असावा असाही एक तर्क आहे. उर्दुमध्ये 'बंजारा' ह्याचा अर्थ 'पंडित जमिन' म्हणून पंडित जमिनीवर उपजिविला करणारे लोक असाही ह्याचा अर्थ होईल.

वाणिज्य पूर्व अवस्थेत या लोकगणाला आपले स्वतःचे एखादे नाव होते. अरबी फारशी भोषला 'बंजारा' या शब्दाला अभिप्रेत अर्थ 'गाण प्रिय भटकथा' हा आहे. रानोमाळ भटकणारा तो बंजारा 'बंजारा' हा शब्द अरबी फारशी भाषेतून आलेला आहे. बंजारा राजाने स्वतःच्या गणजीवनाला आपल्या बोलीत

दिलेला शब्द महत्वाचा आहे. 'बंजारा लोक आपल्या सांस्कृतिक एकीकरणाला 'गोरवट' असे म्हणतात. बंजारा स्वतःची ओळख करून देतांना 'मगोरा' म्हणजे मी गोर अशी करून देतो. गोरमाटी म्हणजे बंजारा स्त्री पुरुष असा बंजारा बोलीतील शब्द आहे स्वतःच्या बोलीला हे लोक 'गोरबोली' 'गोरुर बोली' म्हणून संबोधतात म्हणूनच बंजारा गणाचे खरे नाव 'गोर बंजारा गण हे असावे.

त्यांच्या विषयी जी विचार मांडण्यात आले आहे "गोर म्हणजे शासनकर्ते असा अरबी भाषेतून आधार सापडतो. तसेच बंजारा लोकास स्वाभीमान असून ते स्वतःस गोरे म्हणजे श्रेष्ठ किंवा गोरे समजतात व इतरास 'खोर' म्हणजे कनिष्ठ किंवा काळे म्हणतात."

2) बंजारा समाजातील स्त्रियांची स्थिती :- पितृसत्ताक बंजारा समाजात स्त्रियांचा दर्जा कोणता असतो ? याचा विचार करणे आवश्यक आहे. पितृसत्ताक बंजारा जमातीत परंपरा ही पित्याकडून निश्चित होते. विवाहानंतर पत्नी पतीच्या घरी राहायला जाते. ती पतीच्या कुटुंबात नविन असते तिला पतीच्या आणि नातेवाईकांच्या आशेत राहावे लागते. या कुटुंबात पित्याची सत्ता असते म्हणून ज्याप्रमाणे मातृसत्ताक जमातीमध्ये स्त्रियांचा दर्जा हा चांगला असतो. त्याचप्रमाणे पितृसत्ताक जमातीमध्ये पुरुषांचा दर्जा चांगला असतो. पितृसत्ताक असलेल्या बंजारा जमातीमधील स्त्रियांना सामाजिक जीवनातील विविध क्षेत्रात पुरेशी प्रतिष्ठा आणि स्वातंत्र्य असते आधुनिक काळात पतीची निवड करणे, घटस्फोट घेणे, इत्यादी बाबतीत बरेच स्वातंत्र्य आहे परंतु इतर क्षेत्रात मात्र त्यांचा दर्जा हा कनिष्ठ असतो.

बंजारा समाजात अजूनही रूढी परंपरांचा प्रभाव आहे. म्हणून ज्या प्रमाणे सभ्य समाजात व्यक्तीच्या भूमिकेनुसार दर्जा मिळतो तशी परिस्थिती बंजारा समाजाची नाही. अनेक बंजारा जमातीत स्त्रिया महत्वाच्या भूमिका करतात पण त्यानुसार त्यांना दर्जा मिळत नाही काही स्त्रिया पुरुषांच्या बरोबरीने आर्थिक क्षेत्रात आपली भूमिका वडवितात तसेच मुलांचे पालन पोषण आणि घरातील कामकाज करतात. परंतु त्यांच्या या भूमिकेला अनुसरून त्यांना वरचा दर्जा दिला जात नाही.

अ) आर्थिक स्थिती :- प्रत्येक समाजात आर्थिक कार्याला विशेष महत्त्व आहे कारण आर्थिक कार्यावरच लोकांच्या उदरनिर्वाळ चालत असतो म्हणून आर्थिक कार्यात स्त्रियांचे किती योगदान आहे. त्यानंतर त्या समाजातील स्त्रियांचा दर्जा अवलंबून असतो जेव्हा स्त्रिया आर्थिक क्रियांमध्ये महत्वाचे योगदान देतात तेव्हा त्यांच्या कामाचे महत्त्व पुरुषांना कळते. आर्थिक कार्यात स्त्रियांनी सहकार्य करावे असे पुरुषांना वाटते. म्हणून ते स्त्रियांशी चांगले वागतात. त्यांच्यात आपुलकीची आणि सहकार्याची भावना निर्माण होते व त्यामुळे स्त्रियांना चांगली वागणूक मिळते त्यांचा आदर केला जातो.

शिकारी अवस्थेत पशुंची शिकार करणे, पक्षी पकडणे, मासेमारी करणे या आर्थिक क्रियांचा अंतर्भाव होतो. शिकार करणे, मासे पकडणे या आर्थिक क्रियांसाठी अधिक परिश्रम आवश्यक असतात. विशेष म्हणजे या क्रियाकरण्यासाठी धाडस पाहिजे. पक्षी पकडण्यासाठी झाडावर चडणे, सापळे लावणे, नदीतून मासे पकडणे इत्यादी अनेक कामे स्त्रिया करू शकत नाही. फक्त त्या घरकाम करतात. म्हणून शिकार अवस्थेतील बंजारा जमातीत स्त्रियांचा दर्जा हा पुरुषांपेक्षा कनिष्ठ होतो.

पशुपालन अवस्थेत गाई, म्हशी, बकऱ्या आणि इतर प्राण्यांचे पालन करतात, पशुपालनाच्या कार्यात स्त्रिया सहजपणे मदत करू शकतात. पशुपालनात मदत करणे, चारा आणणे, दूध काढणे, दुधापासून पदार्थ बनविणे, गुरांचा गोठा साफ करणे, इत्यादी कार्ये बंजारा स्त्रिया करतात. स्त्रियांनी घरातील कामकाज संभाळून पशुपालनाच्या कार्यात सहकार्य केल्यास त्यांना मानाचे स्थान प्राप्त होते. हॉकन हाऊस यांनी आर्थिक जीवनातील स्त्रियांच्या योगदानाच्या आधारावर स्त्रियांचा दर्जा स्पष्ट करण्याचा प्रयत्न केला. त्यांनी असा निष्कर्ष काढला की, पशुपालन करणाऱ्या बंजारा जमातीमध्ये 67% स्त्रियांचा दर्जा हा कनिष्ठ आहे.

विविध राज्यात बंजारा समाजाला विविध प्रवर्गात ठेवण्यात आलेले आहे. महाराष्ट्रात बंजारा समाजाला विमुक्त जाती या प्रवर्गात ठेवण्यात आलेले आहे. या प्रवर्गात ठेवण्यात आलेल्या जातींना विविध सायी देण्यात आलेल्या आहेत. अन्य जातीच्या तुलनेत बंजारा जातीने विमुक्त जातीकरिता उपलब्ध करून दिलेल्या सोयी सवलतीचा चांगलाच उपयोग शिक्षणाकरिता व नोकरीकरिता करून घेतला आहे. यामुळे अन्य जातीच्या तुलनेत बंजारा जातीची आर्थिक स्थिती चांगली आहे.

ब) सामाजिक स्थिती :- भारतात वेगवेगळ्या जाती व जमाती राहतात. त्यांच्या भाषा, वेशभुसा, पेहराव, खानपान वेगवेगळी आहेत. या जमातीत बंजारा ही एक जमात काही बाबतीत वेगळी आहे. या जमातीत

बंजारा ही सर्व जमातीतील मुख्य जाती व पोटजातीसाठी वापरलेली आहे. या सर्व जाती व उपजातीचे मिळून जी एक व्यवस्था अस्तीत्वात आली तिला बंजारा समाज व्यवस्था असे म्हणतात.

बंजाराचे धर्म व धर्मपीठ :- बंजारा समाज वेगवेगळ्या राज्यात भारतभर विखरलेला आहे. बंजारा समाज हा स्वतःला हिंदुधर्मीय मानतो. पण मुखेरी बंजारा ही जात मुस्लीम धर्मीय आहे. दिल्लीच्या आसपास असणारे लोकांनी गुरु नानकांचे शिष्यत्व स्विकारलेले आहे. त्यांच्यावर संस्कारपण तसेच झालेले आहे. ते शिख गुरुचे अनुयायी असून स्वतःला हिंदू धर्मीय समजतात.

या जातीच्या लोकांना शिक्षणाचे ज्ञान नसल्यामुळे धर्माविषयी त्यांना जाण नव्हती. उपजिविकेसाठी माल एका ठिकाणातून दुसऱ्या ठिकाणी नेआण करण्याचा व्यवसाय बंजारा लोक करित होते त्यासाठी ते बैल व गाईचा वापर करित होते. त्यामुळे तो एका ठिकाणाहून दुसऱ्या ठिकाणी भारतभर भटकत असे भटकत असतांना विविध धर्माच्या सानिध्यात बंजारा समाज आला. त्यापैकी हिंदु धर्माच्या सर्वई, पुजापाट, धार्मिक चालीरिती, रहण-सहण या बाबीचा फार मोठा प्रभाव बंजारा समाजावर झाला. व त्यांनी त्या सर्व बाबी आत्मसात केल्या. हिंदु धर्माची देवी, सन धर्मपीठ यांना पण ते मानायला लागले.

भारतातील प्रत्येक जिल्हयात तसेच तालुक्याच्या ठिकाणी हनुमाणाचे मंदिर आहे. तसेच हिंदूचे सर्वच देवतांची पूजा करतो खोटे बोलणे, चोरी करणे, पाप करणे अशा लोकांना देव पावण होत नाही. अशी त्यांची धारणा आहे.

भारतात निरनिराळ्या ठिकाणी भटकणारा बंजारा समाज हिंदू धर्मीय कृष्णाला कान्होबा म्हणून, विष्णुला बालानी म्हणून, शंकराला महादेव म्हणून देव मानले व स्त्री रूपात जगदंबा, सामकी माता, वाघाईमाता, अनुसयामाता, कालीमाता, इत्यादींना आपली दैवत मानली खास करून जगदंबा व सामकीमाता ह्या बंजारांच्या खास देवता म्हणून त्यांची पुजा केली जाते.

बंजारा लोकांची धर्मपिठ खूप असून त्या वाशिम जिल्हयातील पोहरादेवी येथे आहे. त्याच प्रमाणे माहूर येथील अनुसया माता पण त्यांची देवता आहे. 'पोहरादेवी' हे ठिकाण बंजाराची काशी म्हणून प्रसिध्द आहे. प्रत्येक बंजारा आपल्या जिवनात एकदा तरी काशीला जातो व आपली इच्छा पूर्ण करतो. दरवर्षी रामनवीमीला पोहरादेवी येथे यात्रा भरते. ठिकठिकाणाचे बंजारा येथे जावून मन्त मागतात व इच्छा पूर्ण झाली की त्यांनी जे कबुल केले आहे ते येथे चढवितात. एक विशेष म्हणजे बंजारात बलीप्रथा रूढ आहे. जेव्हा पोहरादेवी येथे यात्रा भरते त्यावेळी ठिकठिकाणाहून आलेले बंजारा लोक बकऱ्याची बली देतात व आपली इच्छापूर्ती करतात.

बंजारा समाजाच्या धर्मपिठात पोहरा देवीला अग्रस्थान दिल्या जाते दुसरे स्थान उमरी या स्थानाला दिले जाते. पोहरादेवीला 'सेवादास' महाराज याचे श्रध्दास्थान आहे. तसेच 'उमरी' या ठिकाणी 'संत जेताभाया' यांचे समाधी स्थान म्हणून हे धर्मपिठ प्रसीध्द आहे. संतजेताभायाच्या वंशातील बंजारांना आताही 'महाराज' म्हणून संबोधिले जाते. भारतभर भटकणारा बंजारा समाजाला महाराज, भगत धर्मगुरु, जाणीया, हे धर्माविषयी व पुजापाठाविषयी मार्गदर्शन करित असतात. बंजारा समाजातील लोक 'सेवालाल' महाराजांना खुदा मानतात व त्यांचे शिष्य असलेले 'रामराव महाराजांवर' बंजारा समाजाची निष्ठा आहे. बंजारा समाजातील होणाऱ्या मोठमोठ्या कार्यक्रमाला त्यांना आवर्जन आमंत्रित करतात. रामराव महाराज हे बंजारा बांधवांना दिशा दाखविणारे गुरु आहेत. अशी बंजारा समाजाची श्रध्दा आहे.

बंजारा समाजातील विवाह पध्दती :- भारतात वेगवेगळ्या जातीचे धर्माचे वंशाचे, भाषेचे लोक राहतात अन्य जमाती नागरी संस्कृतीच्या संपर्कात आल्यानंतर त्यांच्यात बदल घडून आला. पण बंजारा गटात कोणताही फारसा बदल झालेला नाही. बंजारा गणाच्या विवाह प्रथेतील महत्वाची बाब म्हणजे त्यांच्यातील वधुमुल्य पध्दती होय. सध्याच्या स्थितीत मागासलेल्या लोकांत हिच पध्दती आढळून येते. या पध्दतीत वर पित्याने वधु पित्याला एक निश्चित धनराशी द्यावी लागते.

सुरुवातीच्या काळात हे वधु मुल्य गुराढोरांच्या स्वरूपात देण्याची प्रथा होती. वधुचे पिता किंवा काका हे वधु पित्याकडे पोहचवित असे. वरांकडील मंडळी काही रक्कम वधुला देत असे तेव्हा मुलगा मुलींना हुंडा देवून आणत असे. पण आधुनिक काळात वधुची स्थिती वाईट झालेली आहे याला पुरुष प्रधान संस्कृती जबाबदार आहे.

बंजारा गणाचे दिलेल्या वधू मूल्यांना हुंड असे म्हणतात. हे वधुमूल्य नायकाच्या उपस्थितीत पंचायतीच्या साक्ष संमतीने ठरते ठरलेले वधुमुल्याची निवेदन कोणी एक जण करतो. त्यावर नायक वर पक्षाला ते मूल्य मान्य आहे काय ? असे विचारतो. दोन्ही पक्षाला मान्य असल्यास चहापाण होते. 'कानसळोई' हा पदार्थ बोकूड किंवा बकरीचे आतडे व रक्त एकत्र शिजविल्याने तयार होते.

'कानसळोई' म्हणजेच सगाई नंतर बंजारा गणात विवाहपूर्व व्हायचे जे विधी असतात त्याला 'गोळ' असे म्हणतात गोळ म्हणजे साखरपूडा होय. या समारंभाचा पूर्ण खर्च वर पक्षाकडे किंवा आधी ठरले असेल तर वधुपक्षाकडे सोपविण्यात येते गोळ किंवा साखरपूडा या कार्यक्रमाला वर पक्षाला नवरदेवासारखे तयार करतात. वधू पक्षाकडे जातांना वराच्या बाहेर पडण्यापूर्वी आपल्या कुलदेवताच्या नावाने पान व सुपारी ठेवून नमस्कार करतो. विवाहीत स्त्रिया येतात व निरोप देण्याचे गाणे बंजारा बोलीत गातात. बाहेर पडल्यानंतर जेष्ठ नातलगांना नमस्कार करतो त्यानंतर समोर-समोर छालीया विशिष्टताल आपल्या डफावर वाजवित चालत असतो.

गोळ झाल्यानंतर विवाहपूर्व महत्वाचा समारंभ म्हणजे 'साडी' वरगृही करतात. विवाहाचा मुहुर्त पंचांगाशिवायच ठरविल्या जायचे परंतु हल्ली पंचांग पाहून मुहुर्त सोपण्याची प्रथा रूढ होतेच. विशेष म्हणजे गोर बंजारा गणाचे विवाह संस्कार पूर्वी केवळ वर्षा ऋतुतच होत असे कारण इतर ऋतुत हे लोक मालाच्या ने आणीच्या कामात व्यस्त असल्याने त्यांना विवाह समारंभ करणे शक्य नसते.

निष्कर्ष :-

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- 2) बंजारा समाजात हुंडा पध्दती दिसून येते.
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