

Muslim Mochi Community in a Threat of Poverty at Kishtwar District in Jammu and Kashmir

Touseef Iqbal Butt

*Eastern institute for integrated learning in management university Sikkim
C/O:- Deptt. Of Sociology Govt. Degree College Kishtwar (Delete It).*

ABSTRACT: *Poverty is not the only essence for the Mochi Muslim community but it's a matter of nation where all slotted deprived and an under-privilege community suffers from decades. The problem among the Muslim Mochi's is poverty not excluded all the forms of social reforms. They are economically backward, socially marginalised, educationally weak even they have all around their life un- hygienic environment. What actually life will be understood by them? Questioning the society even Muslim Community either do not want to exclude them from religion because of the softness of religious laws but how the Muslim Mochi could re-inforce himself for getting benefits of society as such. This research is strictly based on the only Muslim Mochi Community because they are excluded from the reservation of schedule caste in spite of being the equal of Hindu Schedule Caste. Other Backward class status is not enough for them on rightly based on their daily human work in society. The cause behind their poverty and involvement might be such. Under the scanner of government policies they have been included as categories wise but somewhere the castes and communities have been suffering. Rehabilitation and Reformation (R&R) for the Mochi community implemented for boosting their livelihood. . Our results indicate that while the poverty rate is in increasing gradually or fast. It has improved only marginally in the post-reform decade, the regional dis-connectivity and developments in such areas has widened much more drastically. Poverty states are now growing much faster, and there is no evidence of convergence of growth rates among states. Even more disturbing is that there is now an inverse relationship between Mochi community population growth and other Muslims saturation. The cultural values of societies are now in a new era. The very well socio-economic collaboration stream led to make a strong change in entire society.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is not a part of democratizing but Poverty and its hand maiden inequality to which everywhere for all those with eyes to see the every landlord's house in each village; every Grand hotel or Palaces are surrounded by the poor. In every society the lightening of colonies has its attached antithesis outside its gates, where the other part of society strives to survival. It's all about the insecurity for developing nation and the explosion for the future as the population becomes the vital behind it. Poverty is one of the main problems which have obvious attracted the mind of social researchers and even economists. It indicates a condition in which a person fails to maintain a living standard adequate for his physical and mental growth. It's a situation from people want to escape and very difficult to draw a demarcation line between affluence and poverty.

“ we must act so that poverty will be alleviated, our environment protected, social justice extended, human rights strengthened, social injustice can destroy, economic and political advances’.
(James D. Wolfensohn, 1995)

To eradicate the poverty line from the demarcation of communities in particular there is a need of voluntary displacement and the environment from where the stigma of society for the caste and other community as far. According to ‘Adam smith’ man is rich or Poor according to the degree in which he can afford to enjoy the necessities, the convenience and amusements of life. India is still in a trauma of over population and the stream of poverty. The question of poverty has come to the center stage with the world submit for social development, held in March 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main focus of development in the past was on the eradication of poverty. Poverty related issue has always been a matter of greatest concern for the developing countries like India. It's a situation which gives rise to a feeling of discrepancy between what one has and what one “should have”. India is living in a villages

and the most of the population is below poverty line. The scene of absolute poverty seems to be everywhere in India. In India 27.9 percent of population lives below poverty line and it is seen that incidence of poverty is also very prevalent in Muslim Mochi's households higher than among the other backward classes in Muslims. According to Indian Mochi's total Population are about 3,431,000.

The present study is an attempt to understand and analyze the caste-class nexus by focusing on the interface between poverty and community. The community of Muslims who use to make 'Leather shoes' called Mochi's or in local languages 'Watal' in Jammu and Kashmir will be the main concern. The study will be carried out in Lal Pattan area of District Kishtwar now change its name as Indira Nagar on the name of Indira Gandhi because, after the official visit of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1983 in Kishtwar for laying Foundation Stone of Dul Hasti Project where she announced 7 (seven) marlas of land for each Mochi with 12000 Rupees for their houses. Before allotment of land they were living in slums of Indira Nagar. The Mochi's of Kishtwar came from the Kashmir where their ancestors were doing Fishermen including Gada Hanze work but after migration from Kashmir to Kishtwar they change their trade and choose SHOES MAKING AND LATHER WORK. The study will focus on the reasons of poverty and shows that it is not economic criterion alone that is responsible for perpetuation of poverty among the community. Moreover, the incidence of land distribution under the land reform programmed in J&K (1950s and 1970s) after independence could not help Mochis substantially to raise their living standards. It is intimate relation of poverty and culture which will remain the focus of cultural reproduction. This was the study which will come out with certain suggestions for the upliftment and reformations of Mochi's.

Many social researchers would say that circumstances of poverty are similar, in many respects, in different societies. Similar circumstances and problems tend to produce similar responses, and these responses can develop into a culture. But on the other hand some critical theorists would say that it domination of the minority masses, which is responsible for poverty. The present research would see all the relevant theories and approaches to arrive at a conclusion that how far poverty and culture are related and makes the condition of MOCHI community deplorable even after government intervention to improve their economic condition by means of land reform.

III. AREA OF STUDY

The population of Mochi community is spread in different areas of Kishtwar like Indira Nagar, Sangrahambhata, Hullar, Bandharina and Gurihean. The destruction of community is not only in form of economics but socio-economic and the loss of cultural values. The present research would see the different aspects of community and the impurity behind them. The Muslim Mochi in Jammu and Kashmir are further divided into 'biradaris', which theoretically descend from a common ancestor. Marriages are preferred within the biradari, with the Mochi practising both cross cousin and parallel cousin marriages. Major Mochi clans or Gotra include Bargujar, Gaur, Jadon, Jat and Sheikh. The Mochi are found in multi-caste villages, occupying their own distinct quarters. The word Mochi signifies a worker in tanned leather, as distinct from a tanner. The Muslim Mochi of Jammu and Kashmir is said to be by origin Chamar convert to Islam. However, the exact circumstance of their conversion is unclear. Historically, Muslim Mochi was found throughout J&K. They have now been granted Other Backward Classes status, which allows them to access a number of affirmative actions schemes by the Government of India. In Jammu and Kashmir the trial for the reformation of these communities has been taken in consideration of reservations.

This is a list of Muslim communities that have been granted Other Backward Classes status by the Government of India in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, India.

S.No	Caste/Community
1	Bahach Hanjie & Shikara Wallas (excluding house-boat owners)
2	Hajam (Barbers) (Rural only)
3	Bhand
4	Dambali Faqir
5	Doom (excluding those in Scheduled Castes)
6	Fishermen including Gada Hanz
7	Kulfaqir
8	Kumhar, Kumahar (Village Potters)
9	Madari, Bazigar,
10	Mirasi.
11	Shaksaz
12	Shoe-repairers (working without the aid of machines)
13	Shupri Wattal (excluding those in Schedule caste)
14	Teli, Teeli
15	Village Washermen
16	Lohar, Tarkhan

Some of the works handled by the Muslim Mochi's in society which is in district Kishtwar and only attributed for them. Some of the photographs show us the reality of poverty under the values and roles of Muslim Mochi Community. By and Large all such community is busy in doing cleaning of Drainage in society, polishing the Boots and Boot making etc. Photographs in a series are as under:-

1). Muslim Mochi Community working In a Dirty Drain at Semena Colony Kishtwar.



(Fig.1)

2). Muslim Mochi polishing and making Boots on footpaths in District kishtwar.



(Fig: 2)

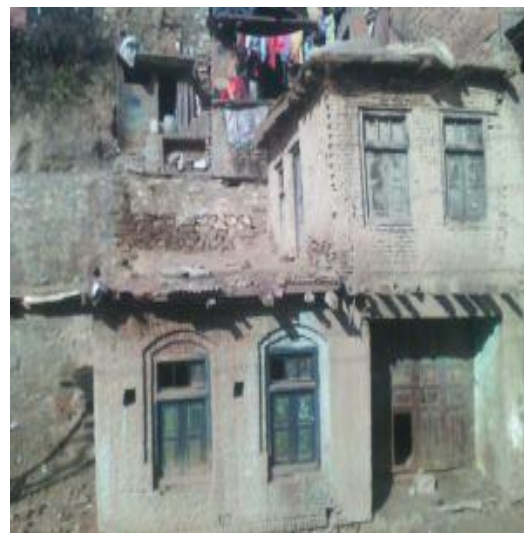


(Fig: 3)

This community is facing by and large so many of problems which are so reluctant in such a modern world for all of them. The are not even in a position to admit their children's in schools, no doubt Indian Government/Law has given the benefit of free and compulsory education for all without any discrimination but what actually this community lack is the daily wages which somewhere parents could not afford to let their children's to admits in schools and they prefer to settle them in Boot making and other works to carry their livelihood. While doing my interview I used to ask a question to interviewer that why only you people are working in dirty drains and cleaning the all streets and other places of towns and cities? He replied to me, we people are simply made for these works; we are biologically equal to you, religiously equal but only works have been distributed on discriminatory basis that leads to poverty and deprivation. Even the living habitation of Mochi's in Gureainh areas is such a unhealthy and drastic with a saturation in general. It is in view that about (179) households are living in that area and they are engaged in same business of Boot making, collecting Scraps and cleaning ,working in Drains and so on. The below photographs shows the living standard of Muslim Mochi Community in Gurieahn area at District Kishtwar.



(Fig.1)



(Fig.2)

IV. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the socio-cultural aspects of poverty in relation to Other Backward Classes.
2. To understand the interface between poverty and community in the context of the Mochis of J&K.
3. To analyze the causes of poverty among the Mochi's
4. To suggest remedies for the poverty alleviation of this community.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research will be assisted by both primary and secondary source of date, and will consult primary and secondary literature available in the state galleries. The primary source will be the census and Secondary source will include the research studies conducted in the concerned areas, books, reports etc.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Mochi in rural Jammu and Kashmir is still dependent on the local landlord, who acts as patron. Often, the Mochi does not own his property, but rents from the landlord. The Mochi is thus entirely dependent on the locally dominant caste. Presently, many Mochis are no longer involved in their traditional occupation of shoemaking. Many are now landless agricultural labourers. Overall, the condition of the Mochi community in Kishtwar in particular has worsened. There has been a marked shift towards manufactured shoes, which has seen a severe decline in their traditional occupation and even the population rate is increasing very rapid. They are lacking the education and the poverty increases with it.

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