

Migration and Development: A Study of Gonds in Nagpur City

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Gonds are one of the largest tribal communities in the world especially in South Asia. They have traditionally been associated with hills and uplands in the Deccan Peninsula. Now the Gonds are found living in the places stretching all over the central India. They are also found in the states of Maharashtra, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. They are believed to have been settled in Gondwana between 13th and 19th centuries A.D. They ruled over the central India for remarkably a greater period of time. However, subsequently they were overthrown by the Marathas when the latter came into power in 1740s. Like many other tribal groups today, Gonds also face severe financial adversities. Growing pressure on land, increase in the proportion of landless labourers, abject poverty and unemployment coupled with exploitation and discrimination by outsiders, have drastically added to their plight over the years. In addition, lack of education and low level of literacy cease their opportunity for a favourable change in the socio-economic conditions of living and hence development. Migration acts as a factor of development among them. They chose Nagpur city as their place of destination as it is a nearest urban and industrial centre in central India with all facilities for development and change in the scenario of life. The objective of the study is to examine the socio-economic and political development and the eugenics attained by the Gonds consequent to their migration to Nagpur city.

[Key Words: *Gonds, Migration, Development, Push and Pull Models, Detribalization, Acculturation]*

Cultural diversities constitute the unique characteristics of Indian society for contributing to the unity among people and communities geographically living in various far-off areas. In India the villages, the tribes and the cities, which are by their very physical nature away from each other, assume enormous importance in terms of having significant role towards nation building with their typical cultural features of life. Each segment of population has its own relevance for the uniqueness of Indian cultural heritage. The uniqueness of Indian culture is being maintained over the centuries with greater disparity in development prospects among various communities - rural, tribal and urban. When all communities and groups equally contribute to the uniqueness of Indian culture, they do not equally share the fruits of

development with one another. The opportunities of development among the rural and tribal people have not been realized to the same extent as among the people in the cities and urban centres. For years, the rural and tribal people have been away from the mainstream development process and deprived of the access to the minimum reckonable development. They have been identified as the most neglected and underprivileged sections of the Indian society in view of persistent underdevelopment and poverty among them despite their contribution to the uniqueness of Indian culture. Thus, in the recent times a growing discontent has been witnessed among them, causing much damage to the uniqueness of Indian culture.

Absence of development opportunities in terms of lack of education, occupation, income, health and sanitation and thus inferior quality of life among the underprivileged has made them assertive and proactive for development. Although there are some schemes made available for their development, either they are inadequate to meet their development needs or they lack effectiveness in their implementation. There is an apparent decline in the faith of the underprivileged - the rural and the tribal people - on the government action and initiative for their development. Thus many of them have started thinking of their development by whatever initiative and action plan they could execute on their own. The initiative or the action plan for development among the underprivileged sections of the society emerges to be characterized as migration from the native place to the cities and urban localities in view of perceived scope for development and greater economic opportunities in the later places due to industrialization and urbanization followed by the expansion of trade and commercial activities. The opportunities for development and better quality or standard of life in cities and urban areas thus become the driving force behind mass exodus of the rural poor, the tribals and the backward communities to such places (Swain 1998).

History and origin of the Gonds

The Gonds, who call themselves as Koi or Koitur (means unclear), are one of the largest tribal communities in the world. According to Russel and Hiralal (1997), Gond is the principal tribe of the Dravidian family, and perhaps the most important of the non-Aryan or forest tribes in India. They are seen mostly inhabiting the Gond forests of central India including Madhya Pradesh, eastern Maharashtra (Vidarbha), Chhatisgarh (Bastar), northern Andhra Pradesh and western Odisha (Kalahandi). Extensive writings on Gonds about their origin, religious faith, culture, works, vigour, and position have been given an important place in the books authored by many of the historians of India. It is found by the scholars that the Gonds settled in Gondwana between 13th and 19th centuries AD. Many parts of central India came under their direct rule in fourteenth century. Gond dynasties ruled mainly in four kingdoms such as Garha-Mandla, Deogarh, Chanda and Kherla in central India between 16th and 18th centuries. They built numerous forts, palaces, temples, tanks and lakes during their rule. Gonds became warriors since British time in India. They

gained control over Malwa after the decline of the Mughals and also fought several battles against the British forces. But with time passing on, the Gonds lost their territory to the Marathas. With their population increasing over four million, the Gonds emerged as one of the major tribes in central India provinces. Like many other tribal people in India, the Gonds now face many adversities in life, especially economic hardship. Although some Gonds possess great deal of land, most of them are deprived of even a minimum required proportion of land at their disposal. However, the Schedule Tribe recognition of the Gonds like any other tribe in India, has blessed all those Gonds who are deprived of minimum required size of land for their survival. With the special social and economic help received from the central as well as the state governments the Gonds see a little ray of hope for bettering their situation, if not expecting a miraculous change for better. Education among Gonds is very discouraging. The literacy percentage among them varies from 25 per cent in Maharashtra to less than 15 per cent in Madhya Pradesh. Among females in Madhya Pradesh, it further drops to a meagre 4 per cent. Children are rarely found attending schools. Compared to boys, the situation of girls attending schools is abysmal (www.angelbroking.com).

Living pattern and culture of the Gonds

Gonds prefer to live in villages with each village having a headman known as a Mukhia or Majhi or Patel. The village is governed by a village council (Panchayat) chosen by the villagers. The council includes the headman, priest, village watchman, and four or five older persons. The objective of forming the village council is to ensure a smooth functioning of the village on the one hand, and to maintain the tradition and customs of the Gonds on the other. Each Gond village has some service castes known as Ahir (Cowherds), Agaria (Blacksmiths), Dhulia (Drummers), and Pardhan (bards and Singers). Besides service castes, the Gond village also consists of many hamlets each of which comprises homesteads with extended families. The houses in the Gond villages are made up mud walls and thatched roofs. The houses contain living room, kitchen, special room to be used by women while menstruating, guest room, a room for Gods and a veranda.

Gonds have a culture different from others. The culture includes their art and artefact, food pattern, language and dressing pattern, dance and music. Gonds exhibit a unique culture of welcoming the visitors with tobacco leaves, fruits or other small gifts. They normally select their mates for marriage which is later approved by the tribal council. However, Gond matches are also made when groom and bride elope. In such cases, the marriages require to be approved subsequently by the relatives and the village council. Gond marriages involve a payment of bride price to be paid usually by the father of the groom. The marriage is believed to be accomplished only after the bride and groom walk seven times around a wedding post. The newly wedded join the groom's household till they are able to have their own house.

The Gonds of Indian origin have a typical culture of wearing dhoti or loincloth and sari by men and women, respectively. Dhoti is usually found as a piece of cotton cloth, wrapped around the waist of a man passing through the middle of his legs, whereas a sari is seen to be a long piece of soft cotton cloth wrapped around the waist of a woman, with one end of it thrown over the right shoulder. The Gond women wear sari along with a choli or blouse. Gond food comprises kodo and kutki. These are either boiled to a broth or cooked to a dry cereal. When broth is chosen mainly for the first two meals of the day the dry cereal is usually taken in the night with vegetables. The Gonds grow vegetables in the gardens and collect them from forests as well. They also collect roots, tubers and honey from forests. Rice is supposed to be a luxury food item and thus is consumed by Gonds only during feasts and festivals. Meat is eaten by most of the Gonds. This is why haunting of animals has been a traditional practice among the Gonds. Animal sacrifice on religious occasions is also a part of Gond tradition and culture. The animals sacrificed are ultimately consumed by the Gonds with much enthusiasm and satisfaction. However, Gonds never harm the animals identified as their totems. They cultivate tobacco for smoking and make liquor from the mahua tree for its consumption on festive occasions.

The customs and festivals of the Gonds are largely influenced by the Hindu tradition. The festivals are usually observed with song and dance. One of the most important festivals among the Gonds is Keslapur Jathra in which the snake deity called Nagoba, whose temple is located in Keslapur village of Indervelly Mandal of Adilabad district, is worshiped. Gonds perform Gusadi dance as one of the commonly known dance among them. The Gonds perform this dance by wearing head gears decorated with peacock feathers and cotton cloth around their waist. They apply ash all over their body and keep beard made of animal hair as they become the essential part of their dance costume. Madai is another festival during which the Gonds from various parts of the country meet their relatives. They sacrifice goats to appease their goddess, consume liquor, play music and perform dance. The Gonds have a cultural tradition of arranging a community feast at a time when they go for collecting the crop from the field. The pigs and fowls are sacrificed and liquor prepared from mahua flowers and rice is consumed by them as a part of the community feast. Dusshera, a widely acclaimed Hindu festival, is also celebrated by the Gonds with much eagerness. Besides all this, the Gonds represent a rich tradition of arts reflected in pottery manufacturing, basket making, body tattooing and floor painting. They paint designs on the walls of their houses with red and black colours. The designs drawn on their walls symbolize the festivals celebrated by them, portray the animals, birds, human shapes, haunting and dancing. Gonds produce musical instruments, prepare memorial pillars in wood and stone for their dead, and decorate their houses with carved doors and panels. Not only the Gonds take care to decorate their houses, they also decorate themselves. Both men and women are seen using heavy silver ornaments over

their body. On marriage, Gond women are observed wearing coloured glass bangles and necklaces made of black beads (www.angelbroking.com).

Religion of the Gonds

Gonds have close affinity towards Hindus and this closeness has made them to be ardent followers of Hinduism and hence following the Hindu culture and traditions. They worship Janani or the mother of creator. Pharsa Pen is the most distinctive aspect of Gond religion. Like other tribes, Gonds are observed in worshipping a high God recognized as Baradeo, whose alternate names include Bhagavan, Sri Shambu Mahadeo, and Pharsa Pen. Gonds also believe in the existence of many other Gods such as Marai (the Goddess of plague and other diseases), Shitala Mata (the Goddess of smallpox) and Bhimsen (the Hindu God). Numerous other deities along with the spirits are also worshiped by the Gonds. Besides all these Gods and Goddesses, the Gonds worship the forces of nature in the form of hills, rivers, lakes, and trees, etc., as they are inhabited by a spirit. On all occasions of celebration of the festivals, the Gonds never forget to worship their village-mother. Each Gond is again seen worshipping his household Gods, Gods of the field and Gods of the cattle. The Gonds have priests, called the Devaris, who perform their rituals. The religious and festive occasions of the Gonds are marked with animal sacrifices performed by the Devaris (en.wikipedia.org).

Language of the Gonds

Gonds speak mainly Gondi language which is a part of the Dravidian language family and is recognized as a non-scheduled language. According to the 1991 Census, Gondi ranked third among the non-scheduled languages with Bhil and Santali occupying the first and second ranks. Along with Gondi, the local languages like Hindi and Marathi are often spoken by Gonds living close to the northern parts. Gonds in the southern parts are found even speaking Parsi or Persian. Gondi as mother tongue of the Gonds has lost its importance in terms of being retained among them over the past years. Increasingly more numbers of Gonds have been attracted to other languages thus losing their own language through regular contact with other cultures and deculturation of their own (en.wikipedia.org).

Migration and development

Migration largely influences the human history and immensely causes socio-economic transformation of various populations in terms of their composition, distribution, and placement of labour force in suitably available occupational situations in the new place. Population movement responds faster to the economic changes than the population size or growth thereby causing major changes in the socio-economic and political development. The study of human migration is gaining momentum due to the increasing complexities of life characterised by the fast changing socio-economic conditions in society at present.

The growing phenomenon of migration seems to prove that it results into the perceived chance for socio-economic and political development of the

people experiencing this move within the context of existing polarized development. Migration is a fundamental component of economic development, social change and political organization. It contributes to balanced development within the circumstances of unbalanced economic growth and disparity in development of various regions such as rural, urban and tribal areas. The flow of populations from underdeveloped and backward regions to the urban areas involves a structural change in the socio-economic realms of their life (McGee 1975). Migration of the poor always brings among them the desirable extent of socio-economic development compared to the non-migrant poor. According to Musgrove (1963), those who move beyond their local boundaries attain a greater socio-economic standing. Migration thus has been perceived as a necessary step toward socio-economic promotion among all those born in the country (Yung-Teh Chow 1966).

Urbanization has been seen inducing the process of population movement from the most underdeveloped areas to the most developed areas symbolically identified as the urban-industrial localities. Population movement or migration, as we call it now, has usually been termed as occupational migration, virtually taking place in a society characterised by the perceived economic inequality. Migration becomes acute and uncontrolled when the society is polarized by its population in terms of rural and urban-industrial or tribal and non-tribal components, with rural and tribal being persistently characterised as backward, undeveloped, poor and poverty-stricken, and urban and non-tribal as forward, developed, rich and flourished. This implies the fact that when some areas of the society advance in terms of urbanization and industrialization, offering people the better opportunities for income and various other facilities of life, the other areas lag in such process. This makes the deprived move to the areas flourished with development under the processes of urbanization and industrialization. In a study conducted by Vidya Sagar (1984), urbanization and industrialization emerge as the major factors of occupational migration from primary sector to other sectors. More the spread of urbanization greater is the tempo of migration from rural and tribal areas to the urban areas. Thus, urbanization and internal migration go hand in hand and reveal to be closely interrelated processes (Gosal 1987).

Migration, in general, involves population shift from the areas of low economic opportunities such as rural and tribal areas to the areas of high economic opportunities like urban and industrial areas. In a society like India, unbalanced economic growth and disparity in development among different regions, particularly the regions with larger number of urban centres, have always worked for migration of rural and tribal population to the urban setting. The speed of migration has further increased in contemporary time due to the growing expansion in the system of transport and communication. The 'push' and 'pull' factors are seen to be influential in effecting large scale exodus of rural and tribal people to the cities and urban centres. It is observed that when the low or lack of economic opportunities in rural or tribal areas push their

people to the urban areas to avail the facilities of high economic opportunities, the high economic opportunities of the urban areas pull out the people from their rural and tribal areas to the urban areas to overcome the problems of low economic opportunities. Migration from rural and tribal areas to urban areas has always been determined by the economic factors (Chattopadhyaya 1987).

Migration has been closely related with the perceived scenario of occupational change and socio-economic progress of the migrants under the circumstances of polarized development. For the migrants who had been socially as well as economically backward over the centuries due to the polarized development, migration brings to them the hope for socio-economic development and a change in the overall situation. Migration produces significant occupational change for the new entrants. The change is marked in terms of the differences between the occupations pursued in the place of origin and the place of destination. Those who migrate to an urban area are able to attain an occupational position higher than the one compared to their local area (Musgrove 1963). Progress in occupational career is accompanied by migration from rural to the urban or from the areas of high fertility to the areas of low fertility with perceived economic opportunities (McGee 1975). In a study conducted by Pande (1986), it is observed that the migrants increasingly acquire better occupational positions in the new place of the urban centres. It is also observed that with the dawn of industrialization accompanied by different modes of communication the larger sections of the population from the rural and other backward regions including the tribal area move to the urban areas, pursue education and acquire skills necessary for the jobs offered by the urban-industrial sector, and finally land into the better occupational avenues and achieve reckonable socio-economic development. The process of occupational change among the rural and tribal migrant people attendant upon the process of industrialization and urbanization results into an overall change in their attitude, mindset and perspective of understanding their life and the prospects of development in future. The first generation rural and tribal migrants who achieve significant development and progress in the city are seen providing a reference group model to all other prospective migrants left behind the villages and tribal areas, in order to adopt the process of migration for development. With the passage of time, the migrants steadily learn the language of the city, encourage their children to learn it as well, seek their admission in better schools and higher educational institutions, and wish them better occupational avenues. The educational and occupational avenues present in the city lead to the socio-economic development and change in the scenario of life among the migrants (Bogue 1969).

Migration of the Gonds

Conventionally, the tribal had been an integral part of the hills and forests earning their livelihood as hunters and food gatherers. While being hunters and food gatherers for years together, they gradually acquired the art of shifting cultivation and knew the use of hoe and primitive methods of cultivation. The

economy accrued from forest resources and shifting cultivation provided them with a subsistence level of economy and also proved to be reasonably sustainable, with their population more or less remaining constant over a period of time. However, subsequently with the means of transportation and communication system gradually reaching to the tribal areas, the farmers, the shopkeepers, businessmen and the money lenders of the adjoining region entered into the midst of the forest and encroached upon the tribal land and forest resources. Although the tribals had a chance to learn the improved methods of farming from the non-tribal farmers, skills of business from the shopkeepers and businessmen and have the financial assistance from the money lenders, they often fell prey to their ill intention, who were driven by their one point agenda of commercializing the tribal land and exploiting the forest resources as well as the poor tribals for their personal gain. In the whole process of increasing penetration of the non-tribals in the tribal zone the tribals became increasingly alienated from their land and forest resources for development. The continuous tribal land encroachment and the control of the forest resources by the non-tribals which led to nonstop increasing alienation of the tribals from their own resources ultimately disabled them to meet the minimum level of subsistence.

Even after independence the tribal situation in India has not developed to the expectation of the tribals themselves. The development schemes of various types launched by the government of India have not yet proved to be fruitful in improving the tribal situation in the country. Either the development schemes have not fully reached to the tribals or they have not been thoroughly implemented by the implementing authorities. It is indicative of the fact that somewhere some sort of willpower for tribal development is missing out on the part of both government and bureaucracy. The resources from the tribal areas are still drained out by the non-tribals thus leaving the tribals in the utter condition of impoverishment. Large-scale projects like power, irrigation, industries and mining activities have confiscated the tribal lands causing displacement and migration of tribals to cities and urban areas for earning livelihood. Increase in the growth of tribal population, the resultant scarceness of the available means of sustenance and their exploitation in their own place also seem to have pushed out the Gonds from their place of origin to Nagpur city. All these factors work as 'push factors' compelling the Gonds' for migration. At the same time the processes of industrialization, urbanization, expansion of the city in terms of increase in large scale industrial manufacturing, trade and commercial activities, business and service sectors, and job opportunities along with tremendous rise in educational hubs, health institutions, sports and cultural activities are also found to act as 'pull factors' for pulling in the Gonds to the city. The Gond migrants living in Nagpur city over a span of forty years and more are found to have come from the remote tribal areas of Wardha, Gadchiroli, Chandrapur and Gondia districts of Vidarbha region of the state of Maharashtra. Many of them are also found to

have come from Madhya Pradesh (Chhindwara district), Chhatisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.

Methodology

The present study is concerned with migration and development of the Gonds supposed to be one of the most primitive tribal people of India. The study is based on the analysis of empirical data obtained from a male sample of 100 Gond migrants settled in Nagpur city along with their family for more than a period of 40 years. According to the statistics available with Nagpur Municipal Corporation, the total population of the Gonds in Nagpur city is 88,792, out of which a substantial size belongs to the migrants as informed by the organizations of the Gonds, i.e. the Gondwana Ganatantra Party (National Organization of Gonds), All India Adivasi Employees Federation (An organization of Gonds' employees in Nagpur) and Gondwana Vikas Mandal, all founded by the educated migrant Gonds of Nagpur city. From the office of these organizations it was known that the migrant population of the Gonds was highly scattered over the city. The areas in which the Gonds are located were traced by the help of the members of the above organizations operating in Nagpur city. The sample thus adopted in the present study was characterised as area sampling. From each area certain number of households in order to complete the sample of 100 male respondents was chosen. However, while picking up the households from each area the principle of simple random sampling was injected into the process of sample selection, so that the process of sample selection is not biased and the sample retains its characteristic of being representative of the whole population. The research design employed was descriptive in nature. The data from the Gond migrants of the city were collected with the help of a structured interview method conducted by the field investigator.

Migration in the present study has been operationally defined as a process of population movement from a place of low socio-economic opportunity to a place of high socio-economic opportunity. The 'push' and 'pull' models adopted in the present study have been found the most appropriate models in understanding the migration of the Gonds from their place of low socio-economic opportunity to the place of high socio-economic opportunity.

Findings

The respondents covered in the sample are all males and aged between 25 years minimum and 60 years maximum. This age group was found to be quite productive for the study as it contained all the respondents showing lot of maturity, responsiveness and enthusiasm to answer all the questions very sensibly. Development of the Gonds attendant upon their migration to Nagpur city has been examined in terms of their socio-economic attainment, change in cultural and institutional spheres of life and possession of modern household gadgets. Socio-economic attainment among them has been understood by improvement of their educational, occupational and income levels. Educational opportunities especially the institutions of higher education in India are

predominantly available in the cities and urban areas and therefore the tribals are deprived of their right to education. It is due to their inaccessibility to the system of education including higher education as well as vocational skills and trainings required for pursuing diverse occupational activities, the Gonds in their natural habitation remained confined to their traditional occupation, thus perpetuating their backwardness and hence enmeshing themselves more into the vicious circle of poverty and underdevelopment. Lack of scope for education among the Gonds has made them unaware of the phenomenon of exploitation over them by the outsiders. The Gonds were not thoroughly aware of their environmental and health problems due to the lack of education among them. However, migration of the Gonds to Nagpur city has been found to have given them greater chance for educational attainment, occupational mobility, improvement in income and overall change in their material conditions and social perspectives.

There has been an impressive progress among the migrant Gonds in terms of their educational development compared to those left behind in their place of origin. Data in the context of the present study show that all the migrant Gonds covered in the sample have acquired education, with 17.0 per cent attaining the status of higher education up to post-graduation and 23.0 per cent up to graduation. Those acquiring education up to the level of above matriculation and below graduation constitute 29.0 per cent of the whole sample of the migrants. The sample of the study also constitutes 21.0 per cent of those respondents who have obtained education to the extent of middle school and 10.0 per cent of those to the level of primary school.

As city offers a backdrop of occupational neutrality with great variety of non traditional and new modern occupations capable of providing with better avenues for development, the Gonds of the migrant community are seen striving hard for increasingly pursuing such occupations depending on their educational qualifications, skills and expertise required in them. The data in the present study reveal that most of the Gonds (31.0 per cent) have taken to the business activities as key to their development. In this category of occupation they are engaged in running grocery/kirana shops, stationary shops, road side hotels/dhabas and supplying sands and bamboos for building construction. A sizeable proportion of them (23.0 per cent) have taken up various professions such as teaching in schools/colleges/University departments, engineering jobs, legal practice and social work through their association with NGOs operating in the city. When 21.0 per cent of them are found engaged in various other jobs entailing clerical, supervisory and administrative nature of work, 25.0 per cent are engaged in manual occupations, varying from construction labour and running thellas to the office attendants and peons. The data concerning occupational attainment among the Gond migrants in Nagpur city reveal a considerable measure of development among them in terms of their material achievement and change in the perception about life. The migrants assess their

development prospects to be much better than all those Gonds whom they left behind in the tribal areas long ago.

The income of the Gond migrants is also quite indicative of their development. The data reveal that the majority of migrants' (55.0 per cent) monthly income is about Rs. 60, 000/- to Rs. 70, 000/-. Those below this level of income (12.0 per cent) are found to earn even quite reasonably gratifying level of income per month. The data relating to their income reveal that they earn their monthly income varying between Rs. 40, 000/- and Rs. 50, 000/-. There are 8.0 per cent migrants whose monthly income varies from Rs. 20, 000/- to Rs. 30, 000/- per month. Those associated with manual nature of work either in construction site or engaged in running thellas (25.0 per cent) are found earning quite lesser amount of income i.e. Rs. 10, 000/- to Rs. 15, 000/- approximately per month. The income earned by most of the Gond migrants is seen to be satisfactory and hence meets all their requirements such as education for children, family health, social obligations, entertainment, etc. A considerable amount of money is also saved by the Gond migrants every month for their future contingency. Although some of the Gond migrants earn relatively lesser amount of income, they are not yet so much disheartened. In view of their educational qualification and the level of skills used in the occupations pursued by them, they feel that their income is not that meagre. Within the given circumstances they perceive that their situation is improving further. Moreover, they feel gratified when they compare their socio-economic condition with the non-migrant Gonds in their place of origin.

Gond migrants have attained reckonable socio-economic development and this has been reflected in terms of their possession and ownership of the houses constructed by them in the city. It is also determined by their possession of immovable properties like agricultural lands or plots and the modern movable household gadgets. 77.0 per cent of the Gond migrants have their own houses against only 23.0 per cent having rented houses in the city. Those belonging to the occupational categories such as teaching, business and administrative work have mostly constructed new modern houses. It is amply clear from the data pertaining to the ownership of houses in the city that even some of the Gond migrants belonging to the occupational categories of clerical nature of works and manual occupations have constructed houses of their own. However, their houses have been constructed in the peripheral areas of the city with low cost of construction. The data reveal that while 45.0 per cent migrants have acquired quite sizeable dimension of plots in and around the city, 11.0 per cent of them have acquired agricultural lands within 40 to 60 km away from the city. The migrants earning a monthly salary above Rs. 50, 000/- per month have been found increasingly possessing the modern household gadgets especially air conditioner, car, refrigerator, LED television, VCR, VCP, washing machine and vacuum cleaner besides having fan, cooler, scooter, bike, radio and tape recorder. The other migrants in the city particularly those engaged in manual nature of works, who cannot afford to have the luxurious modern household

gadgets like air conditioner, refrigerator, washing machine, etc., are found to have possessed other household gadgets like fan, cooler, scooter, bike, refrigerator, television, radio and tape recorder. This suggests the fact that despite low income and hence the family constraints, the Gond migrants particularly in the category of labouring activities have strived a lot in improving their financial situation and fulfilling the requirements of life better than those in their native place.

The migrant Gonds have increasingly undergone the process of acculturation. They have been completely assimilated into the city life, speaking the city language, worshiping Hindu Gods, getting adjusted to its food habits, dress patterns and style of living. The original living and cultural patterns of the Gonds have undergone tremendous change over the whole period of their stay in the city. Data reveal that less than 30.0 per cent of the respondents speak Gondi language, while the majority i.e. 70.0 per cent of them speak only Hindi language at home. The children have never been oriented to the Gondi language. Therefore, they are unable to communicate with that language. It is found that while adopting the city life the Gond migrants have given up drinking alcohol, especially of their own, chewing tobacco, and even taking tribal/herbal medicine. They are also seen increasingly disbelieving the superstitions. It is strongly believed that most of them have given up their own language, customs, traditions and conventional practices due to their acculturation and complete assimilation into city life. There is no trace of joint living among them. All of them are found living in nuclear family.

There has been very significant change in the institution of Gond marriage also. The practice of mate selection prevalent among the Gonds in their native place is no more followed in the city. The parents and the other elderly family members like in Hindu tradition are seen playing a significant role for choosing mates for their grownup children. Even among most of the Gond families the marriageable children are given a free hand for choosing their life partner. The cross-cousin marriages much preferred originally by the Gonds are almost out of fashion now in their present setting. Very negligible number of families (4.0 per cent) is found practising this type of marriage in the city. A very important change noticed among the Gonds in the city is that their marriage is no more solemnized by their tradition. The age at marriage is strictly followed as prescribed by the law. This clearly shows that the migrant Gonds are thoroughly aware of the legal implications of the early marriage. They are against the idea of giving and taking dowry in the form of bride price, which is still a prevailing practice among the Gonds in their native place. The marriages among the migrant Gonds are performed in conformity with the standards and decorum of the urban setting. The Gond bridegroom like any other non-Gond urban bridegroom rides either on the back of a horse or on a car and leads the marriage procession to the bride's place. The marriage follows almost similar rituals as in case of a Hindu marriage.

The Gonds have made their access to right to the political participation due to their migration. It is due to their migration to the city that they have become aware of their voting rights and participation in municipal and state politics. There has been a growing participation of the Gond migrants, exercising their right to vote as well as contesting the elections for Nagpur Municipal Corporation and state assembly. Many of the migrant Gonds from Nagpur city have already reached to the NMC and Maharashtra state assembly as distinguished members.

Conclusion

Migration has played a very significant role in bringing about development and socio-economic changes among the Gonds in Nagpur city. It is due to their contact with the new social milieu that the Gond migrants have exposed themselves to the facilities of development and socio-economic change. Availability of development avenues such as educational opportunities, industrial occupations, various other earning sources created by the service sectors (organized and unorganized sectors), and teaching jobs have opened their access to the facilities concerning development and socio-economic change. The Gonds no more face any structural barrier on their way of development as the city exhibits a secular and rational character. The process of acculturation which aims at effecting contacts between different cultural groups has induced the Gonds to acquire and internalize the cultural patterns of the city life. Besides the culture of the urban society, the Gond migrants have also immensely adopted its values of individualism, personal attainment, materialism, modernity and rationality inducing development and change among them. By taking to the culture and values of urban, industrial and modern society, the Gonds have been completely assimilated with and absorbed by the city life. In the whole process of adopting the new culture and values paving their path for accommodation, assimilation and absorption in the new society, the Gonds migrants have become increasingly detribalized, deculturalized, and sanskritized. There has been a complete hinduization of the Gonds in the city. The kind of development and socio-economic change that the Gond migrants have gone through can be well explained by David McClelland's concept of the need for achievement (1961), Merton's concept of the reference group behaviour (1968) and Dube's concepts of empathy and high participation (1988).

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