

Centre for Culture and Development



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Twenty Second Annual Report 2022-23



About CCD

CCD is an institution established in 2001 with the main aim of doing research in social sciences on issues of social, cultural and political significance, with particular reference to Gujarat. It is an academic centre meant to harness the knowledge of social sciences to the service of Gujarat society, particularly its disadvantaged sections, and more specifically, minorities, tribals, Dalits, and women. The Centre's field of activities includes research, evaluation, training, and relevant interventions. It undertakes research projects and publications with an orientation to intellectual activism.

Infrastructure

CCD is located on the Xavier Technical Institute (XTI) campus at Sevasi village in the periphery of Vadodara city. Baroda (now Vadodara) is geographically central in Gujarat, well connected by road, rail and air. The campus is lined by huge trees and is somewhat cooler than the city. The digitized library houses more than 8,500 volumes in social sciences, and a large collection of articles and reprints, making a total of about 10,000 entries, besides newspaper clippings. Library subscribes to 30 journals. It also has a modest guest house which can house 15 guests with moderate comforts. CCD has a dynamic website: www.ccdgujarat.org

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Faculty and Research Staff

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Dr. Jyoti	Research Assistant
Mr. Soma Vartha	Research Assistant

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Publications

Books in the Press

1. Bharati, Kanchan, Dhananjay Kumar and Lancy Lobo, *Urban Daily Labour Markets in Gujarat, Western India*, New Delhi: Routledge.

Book/s Proposed for Publication

1. Dabhi, James C. and Kanchan Bharati, *Seasonal Migration in Search of Livelihood: Choice or Fate*, New Delhi: Routledge.

Books under Preparation

1. Dabhi, James C. and Kanchan Bharati, *Urban Daily Labour Markets in Small Towns of Gujarat, Western India*.
2. Dabhi, James C. and Kanchan Bharati, *The Valmiki the Out-caste in Gujarat: Socio-economic Change and Continuity*.

Articles by the Faculty of CCD

1. Dabhi, James C. 2022. 'Mental Health and Its Relation to Poverty and the Poor', *Pax Lumina*, 3(6), pp. 42-45.
2. Dabhi, James C. and Dhananjay Kumar. 2023. 'Invisible Women's Cooperative in Gujarat Empowering the Marginalized', *IJNRD*, Vol 8, Issue 2, February.

Current Projects

1. Socio-economic Status of the Valmiki Community in the Bhal Region of Gujarat.

In Gujarat, Dalit community constitutes approximately 3.6 million persons. Within the Dalit umbrella, there are several sub-castes based divisions basically based on their occupations such as leather workers, street sweepers, cobblers and agricultural workers. The Valmiki are considered the lowest of the low among the Dalits; they are ex-untouchables traditionally associated with cleaning, sweeping and scavenging work. Officially, the community is estimated to have one million persons. After seven decades of independence, this community has been largely deprived of the development, freedom and equality enshrined in the Constitution of India. They are marginalized socially, economically and politically even today after the abolition of Varna-caste discrimination legally.



Though there are considerable studies on different aspects of Dalits in India, there is hardly any study exclusively on the Valmiki community in the region. To fill this vacuum of Sociological knowledge, the Centre for Culture and Development (CCD) has taken the initiative to study the socio-economic status of the Valmiki community in the Bhal region of Gujarat. This research study will be an empirical study located in a geographical district of Anand in Gujarat.

This study is important considering that Valmiki are poorer among the poor and most marginalised among the Dalits. They are discriminated not only by the so called upper, exploitative castes but also by the other Dalit groups. They have faced discrimination by other communities in both the rural and urban areas; private and public sectors; educational institutions; Panchayats, Administrative offices, places of worship, places of recreation and entertainment in India. By focussing on some of the selective aspects of this community, the study will give an adequate understanding of the community and their 'lived' life. It will highlight the community along with its socio-economic status, neighbourhoods, occupation pattern, mobility and so on. It would also focus on understanding the experience of the community through the spectrum of change and continuity over the years in terms of their socio-economic status.

The research team consists of Drs. Kanchan Bharati and Mr. Soma Vartha. The project is coordinated by Dr. James C. Dabhi.

2. A Socio-economic Study of the Daily Labour Market Workers in the Selected Towns of Gujarat.

There is a huge demand for informal labour in every state of the country, which cannot be met locally, hence its cities and towns act like a magnet drawing in skilled and unskilled labour in large numbers. The daily labour markets (DLMs) as informal/unorganized employment sector, received less attention both by academia and by the government despite its significant contribution in providing employment to a large workforce and contributing to the country's economic growth. Such labour markets are a worldwide phenomenon known by different names in different countries and places, but, unlike India, in developed countries, they are highly regulated in terms of the hiring process, wages and better accountability.

The Centre for Culture and Development (CCD) had recently completed a study on migrant workers at 15 daily labour markets in three metro cities of Gujarat. The study revealed that a majority of DLM workers were tribal migrants within the states and from neighbouring states namely Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. These workers provide their labour chiefly in the construction and allied industries.

In Gujarat, a few major urban centres are linked with several small towns surrounded by villages. These urban centres are by and large evenly distributed so that a village has several towns in its vicinity. For these villagers, these towns are market centres having their specific economic structures and have close linkages in several aspects. The most important linkage is that they provide work for surplus unemployed rural labour in different sectors. They offered opportunities for informal sector employment, mostly in the form of informal and seasonal occupations. Jobs are created to accommodate off-season workers who come from surrounding villages seeking employment either to sustain their families or diversify their income. These works consist of agricultural labourers in sugarcane plantations and allied sugar industries or providing industrial labour in small



industries providing readymade semiskilled labour. It is believed that various labour markets in many towns have a pool of marginalized labour, responding to a variety of jobs that town people may offer them daily. Experiences of these daily labour markets in different towns may be different regarding their work and life but they may converge towards indicating similarities in patterns.

As these markets and the workers rarely studied in small towns or suburbs, hence, it was felt to study them. This research study is an empirical study of the workers of DLM at the selected smaller towns in the state of Gujarat. The study examines the nature, character and dynamics of the workers, their work, life and issues at DLMs. Besides it attempts to understand in what ways they differ or show a similarity to their counterparts in the major metro cities.

The research team consisted of Dr. Kanchan Bharati and Mr. Soma Vartha. The project is coordinated by Dr. James C. Dabhi.

3. Functioning of Tribal Political Structures: A Study of Tribal Self-Governance and Panchayats in Selected Villages of South Gujarat.

A large amount of research literature on tribals in India deals with tribal ecology, economy, arts and crafts, magic, witchcraft, religion, and culture (narrowly defined to include dress, music, dance, drama, festivals, ceremonies, and so on) (Shah 2010: 21). However, there is very little literature on tribal political life and engagement in the political sphere at the community, local, regional and state level. Only after Surajit Sinha's (1962, 1965 and 1987) explorative works, some enquiries on this dimension, by anthropologists and historians became available (Kulke 1976, Thusu 1980, Hardiman 1994, Guha 1996, Sundar 1997, Skaria 1999 and Panda 2005). However, most of these studies remain limited to either the central or eastern part of India. So far, in western India, there is very little information about the tribal political structure and understanding of how the traditional system of self-governance interacts with the constitutional system of governance (after the 73rd Amendment Act). In this context, the present study proposes to examine the interaction of the traditional tribal self-governance institutions in relation to constitutional panchayats in selected tribal villages of south Gujarat. It tries to throw light on the structure, process and functioning of these institutions and their socio-political impacts on people in these villages.

4. Participatory Action Research for Fishing Communities in Coastal Gujarat: Understanding Policy Impact, Socio-Economic and Livelihood Changes Gujarat (India).

This action research study addresses the problems of socio-ecological changes and its impact on fisheries communities in coastal region (Gir-Somanth) of Gujarat. The study takes into account various categories of people engaged in fishing activities. The study is under taken in collaboration with two organisations, the Human Development and Research Centre, Ahmedabad (<https://hdrc-sxnfes.org/>) and the Centre for Culture and Development, Vadodara (www.ccdgujarat.com).

Traditional fishing communities are socially and economically marginalized communities in Gujarat. From the varna-caste perspective some of them fall within the social category of OBC or Scheduled Castes. Some of these communities fall within the category of religious minorities. These communities are pushed to the margins in a number of ways and a few of them are growing consumer market economy, mechanization of fishery and industrial pollution of the sea.

These coastal communities are engaged in small-scale fisheries but make an important contribution to nutrition, food security, sustainable livelihood, and poverty alleviation, in developing countries. Despite this significant contribution, there is a neglect of the small-scale fisheries in the fisheries policy globally (Johnson, 2018). There is no universal definition of small-scale fisheries because of their universality and diversity (Alfaro-Shigueto et al., 2010).

The study is located in the Junagadh and Gir-Somnath coastal districts of Saurashtra region of Gujarat. It focusses on a community residing in a coastal socio-ecology zone for years and engaged in traditional fishing activities. This area is also facing a socio-ecological transition. The villages included in the study are from Kodinar, Sutrapada, Veraval, and Una talukas of the Gir Somnath District.

Gir Somnath is one among the group of new districts created in Gujarat in 2013. Its headquarters is Veraval, which is the major fishing hub of the state. Gir Somnath District is the most important area for fish production in Gujarat. In 2021 the district landed 295,000 tonnes of fish, which was approximately 41% of the total state landings (CMFRI Annual Report 2020–2021). The district is known for its contribution to both fresh fish as well as the dry-fish economy. The fishing season is officially from August 15 to June 10. The fishery is closed for the rainy season. Suitable geographical and ecological conditions, and the presence of many processing units and exporting industries at Veraval have contributed to the thriving fishing industry of Gir Somnath.

Lectures and Participation in Workshops and Seminars by the Faculty Members

1. James C. Dabhi took a session on 'Caste Ideology and Practice' for the students doing professional development programme in Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science.
2. James C. Dabhi along with HDRC research director made a field trip to Gir-Somnath for Fishery research.
3. James C. Dabhi took a 6 days course on 'Potential to Performance' for Senior Executive - IIMA, Ahmedabad in September 2023.
4. James C. Dabhi took a 6 days course on 'Role and Identity' - second year students - IIMA, Ahmedabad in December 2022.
5. James C. Dabhi participated in the Board of Governance of Indian Society for Applied Behavioral Science, January 2023.
6. James C. Dabhi participated in the South Asian Conference of Jesuits in Higher Education and Research at St. Aloysius, Mangalore, January 2023.
7. James C. Dabhi participated in the workshop of Jesuit Social Scientists of West Zone, India at Vadodara, 11-12 March 2023.

Seminars/Workshops/Lectures arranged at CCD

1. National Seminar on 'Outcastes among the Outcastes: Valmiki Community in India' on December 16-17, 2022 at Centre for Culture and Development. Partially funded by Indian Council of Social Science Research, Mumbai.
2. Sixth Foundation Day Lecture, on 25th February 2023 by Prof. Ravinder Kaur, entitled, 'An Accidental IITian Reflections on Education, Gender and Work in the STEM World', presided over by Dr. Franco Fernando.

Persons to be especially thanked:

1. Professor Ravinder Kaur for her Lecture on Centre's Fifth Foundation Day on 25th February 2023.
2. Dr. Franco Fernando for honouring our request to be the Chief Guest at the Centre's Sixth Foundation Day Lecture on 25th February 2023.
3. Prof. P. M. Patel for facilitating the feedback process for a CCD faculty.
4. Ms. Sara from Isabel Martin Foundation, Spain for her visit to CCD.



YEAR IN PICTURES

Sixth Foundation Day Lecture on 25th February



A Study of Socio-economic Status of Valmiki Community in Bhal Region of Gujarat





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A Study of Tribal Self-Governance and Panchayats in Selected Villages of South GujaratMarket Workers

