

# BUSINESS ORGANIZATION, CASTE AND TECHNICAL CHANGE IN A FISHING COMMUNITY

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THE fishing communities in India are caste-cum-occupation groups. Caste, apart from the technique of fishing, plays an important part in production organization of the fishing industry. The degree of necessary labour co-operation, varies from technique to technique, and depends upon the size of the required operational unit of the organization. When new techniques are introduced, they lead to a change in the organizational set-up. It is the object of this paper to study these organizational changes that occurred, from time to time, in the fishing industry of a coastal village in South Kanara district of Mysore State.

## *The Village*

The village Paduthonse lies about six miles to the north-west of Udipi along the western coast on the southern bank of the river Swarna. The northern part of the village is a strip of land, about 100 yards wide and a mile and a half long, jutting into the sea in a north-western direction up to the river estuary. The total village coast line is approximately two-and-half miles. It is a line village. In 1958-59, the village had 961 households with a population 5,450. Fishing and fish-curing labour is the main source of livelihood for 25.1 per cent of the households. The village has 307 acres of paddy land wherein two to three crops are annually grown. The total rice production, which is about 3,000 maunds per year, is not sufficient for the village population, and about 9,500 maunds of rice, worth about rupees two lakhs, are imported annually from outside. Coconut groves occupy an area of 494 acres. Coconuts worth Rs. 88,000 and coir products worth Rs. 51,000 are exported annually. The most important item of export is fish which fetched rupees two-and-half lakhs in 1958-59.

## *Fishing Community*

The fishing community in Paduthonse consists mostly of two caste groups, namely Mogavirs and Karvis. There are communities like the Byari Muslims and Roman Catholics, and castes like Billavas and Koosas; a few of them have taken to fishing, especially in the Big

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