CHAPTER - 5
CHAPTER 5
The Consequences Of Caste Conflicts

This chapter tries to record the nature and dynamics of consequences of the caste conflicts between caste Hindus and Dalits in two villages of the sample of the study. We have also tried to substantiate the consequences by taking help of some other incidences of caste conflicts and studies as well. At the outset we have tried to highlight the changes occurring in the caste inflicted society. We have liked into the processes of loosening of caste rigidity because of the existence of certain democratic process. The process has empowered Dalits to assert which in turn has created caste conflicts with the traditionally dominant caste Hindus. The chapter has recorded how caste conflict in different villages and areas between Dalits and caste Hindus has positively affected the solidarity and consciousness among both the Dalits and caste Hindus. Further, it is true that Dalits get unsettled and loose their property in caste conflict yet they are ready to assert and not ready to take things lying anywhere. In the same vein chapter also records the emerging autonomous leadership among Dalits because of the caste conflicts. This leadership has broken the monopoly of the Dravida Parties and Congress on the Dalit votes, which has caused them worries. In the process of recording the consequences of caste conflicts the respondents of the universe have exposed the ineffectiveness of each institutions in taking care of their rights and in turn proved the point that they all are yet very far from the Dalits otherwise Dalits would have never expressed mistrust in the democratic and constitutional institution. Similarly, the caste conflicts have changed the residential pattern of the Dalits specifically after the caste conflict with the compensation Dalits have constructed pucca houses in place of their houses in the slum. Last but not the least, a significant change in the religious life, which occurred in these villages is that the Dalits have got little access to village temple, which was not present before caste conflict.

The caste conflicts in India have passed through many phases, the phases which are evidently from the protest of hierarchical exploited order of society to the protest for the equal identity with the main stream society. The Dalits assimilation into mainstream society has always been faced with physical, mental and psychological aggression of caste Hindus shown against them. The recent development in states like
Uttar Pradesh (U.P), Bihar and Rajasthan, Harayana and Punjab are important to study the assimilation and integration of Dalits in political, economic and social spheres. The political and social assertion of Dalits has lead to the mobilization of Dalits and has created a political space for Dalits and because of this space Dalits have demanded their constitutional rights, which are noticed through their participation in the parliamentary democracy. Subsequently, the emergence of Dalits' social movements and political parties because of caste conflicts has brought a considerable political and social change in the Indian society as well. On the other hand the counter forces protect their status quoism, and therefore countertry to changes adopted violent methods of suppression of Dalits.

In the case of Tamil Nadu, Dravidian movement is known for regional identity politics with anti-Brahmin ideology, which includes taking of social problems of Dalits and backward castes. But in effect the Dravidian ideology of anti-Brahmin movement could not deal with the exploitation of Dalits rather it accommodated the Dalits in their campaign against Brahmins. The active participation of Dalits in anti-Brahmin movement lead them to talk about their own statutes in the society. This has been counter-productive of the Dravidian movements and their ideology for more than one reason. Though, it is a fact that the problems of Dalits could not addressed by the Dravidian leaders but this movement paved the way for the identity assertion and social mobilization of Dalits. Secondly, once the identity assertion started among the Dalits and expected result of social reforms, initiated by the Dravidian politics, could not reach the Dalits, they left behind the political and social mobilization of Dravidian and started organizing themselves independently of any patronage of caste Hindu anti-Brahaminism.

Studying of the social reforms in parallel with Dalit movements is necessary to identify the gaps unabridged by the political forces. Moreover, social problems are identified with the political reasons and vice-versa. The consequences can reveal fissures in the existing the social order. This was the case in the Kodiankulam caste clashes in 1995 and that was the flash point of all these consequences. And it followed the suit further in the other clashes evidently. Policemen roughed up people and damaged the households, belonging to 67 Dalit families. The damaged items ranged from TV sets, radios, fans, mixies, wooden furnitures, clothes and bureaus. The public well was rendered unusable poring diesel, kerosene, pesticides and throwing broken pieces of vessels, pots and glass. Police assaulted a woman who was pregnant.
and snatched her mangalasuthra and kicked her in the abdomen. After sometime, the woman had a miscarriage.¹

Forced migrations in the conflict situation attached to the urban settlements bring assertion, identity formation and political mobilization. Counter mobilization of Thevar under many leaders engrossed the identity formation of Dalits as one community at the conflict situation. Numerical strength matters along with education, employment and property in countering the dominant force. The affluence of Thevar community especially, the attainment of political powers and states patronage boosted their position by excluding the Dalits from the mains streams politics. This status of Dalits made them to question against the social order, which is generally advantageous for Thevar community. Though the reservation policy has given a great hope for the Dalits in the present context in education and employment spheres, the current situation as far as recruitment is concerned, the number of jobs are decreased in the government sectors. So, Dalits trying to find a way out by moving towards the private sectors. The private sector has its own provisions and social dynamics in the recruitment policy and that excludes the Dalits in the labor force if at all given a chance that would be at lower level jobs. Certainly, this condition provides the unemployed youths of both the communities at the village level to indulge into the violent activities under the economic compulsions and social status. The below mentioned incidents are the landmarks of the Dalits assertion and identity in countering the dominant forces.

The political and institutional consequence happened through DGP Parama Guru batch 1972-75 recruited many Thevars in police force. Institutionalizing the caste dominances in the important powerful state upon such as police and state level bureaucracy have taken place in the last decade. For instance, Jayalalitha, Sasikala's intimate friendship helped Thevars to came up on the privileged powerful key position at the state level unprecedented dominance which fueled the caste clashes, the state as a neutral institution itself bound to bow its head to the political bureaucratic nexus. Where as other dominant, intermediate castes took as an advantage of suppressing the Dalits further. After 90's, the range of atrocities could not be checked. Thevars have become vital players of southern Districts politics unlike the earlier. Because of 'Personality Cult Politics' is seemed to be on its way.

¹ *Caste Clashes in Southern District of TamilNadu: An overview*, Society for Community Organisation Trust, Mother Teresa Women's University. 1997, p. 42.
out or loosing it's strength to confine the mass where Dalits were part and parcel of the AIADMK vote bank for a longer period as MGR was their ‘messiah’.

On Melavalavu-panchayat chairman murder, George Mathew’s observes that killings are compensated by the state government by giving 1.5 lakh under SC and ST (prevention of atrocities act) 1989, but the justice were not been given to them. In one-way, the government’s action directly supported the (culprits) perpetrators and by punishing a few of the perpetrators and many of them were not found guilty and went Scot free.

Political mobilization of Dalits on the basis of social cause and assertion was intolerable with the existing situation in the modern society of late 90’s. Southern part of Tamil Nadu have never interrogated the Dravidian Ideology of Pon. Muthuramalinga Thevar who never agreed any kind of social reforms on the other hand he identified himself with the Forward Block as a great revolutionary and the follower of Subash Chandra Bose in the National Movement. At present the Forward Block (Revolutionary) is as like Thevar Peravi, which has produced some of the reactionaries. The above discussion show the nature of atrocities against Dalits and resultant conflicts are important to understand the caste conflicts in general. But further study of micro level consequence of conflicts is essential in order to understand the conflict in specific contexts.

Consequences and dynamics of caste conflicts through the observation of Village I and Village II

The basic presumptions of caste conflicts have noticed through the crucial part played by the Thevars in legitimizing and controlling the changes of social hierarchy or reinstating the old form of social exclusion by continuing of menial job like digging pits for the burial of bodies of dominant caste by the Dalits for the caste Hindus. In addition, the suppression which resulted in non-performing of traditional jobs by Dalits and Dalits of the village opted for jobs, which are not based on traditional and hierarchical exploitation. This is an important and dynamic change of Dalits perception over their outlook in accepting the social reality. The so-called virtue “caste system” had been completely questioned when the retaliation process started by the Dalits over the caste Hindus. The series of suppression on one-way or

2 Ibid., p. 90.
other like the existence of two ‘tumbler system’, ‘victimizing the Dalits’ because of their questioning attitude against the exploitative structures and the non-dependence of Dalits against the Thevars have created a grave reasons for the suppression of Dalits in Village I and village II.

The propositions formed through the study of caste conflicts in Village I and II show that there are differential attitudes of the Dalits in response to the caste conflict. (1) The temporary displacement of the Dalits (2) The attitudinal changes of the Dalits in adopting the new situation (3) Consolidation and challenging attitude of Dalits due to insecurity created by the caste Hindus and non-seriousness of government towards Dalits grievances. (4) Re-settlement and progression of Dalits through the caste-based organizations (5) Upsurge of Dalit political leaders and creation of political space for the Dalits (6) Cultural consequences

The Temporary Displacement of the Dalits

Mangapuram, which is a part of the Rajapalayam Taluk. The Dalits who occupy this village have also kept pace with the socio economic development of the other communities in the area. Even after a lapse of many weeks the Dalits are still feeling the impact of the attacks. The gravity of the loss of property and anguish had not been brought to the notice of the government by the district authorities. Some of the Dalits who were driven out of their homes were still living on the streets. 3

The aftermath of caste conflicts begins with the temporary displacement of the Dalits. “In villages where Dalits constitute a minority, caste clashes have led to large scale displacements of Dalits communities. The displacement often follows an attack by neighbouring caste Hindu villages in which Dalits are assaulted and their houses are burned.” 4 The temporary displacement of Dalits either voluntarily or through the arrangements put forth by the government was done in order to save the Dalits from further attacks of dominant Thevars or caste Hindus. The displacements of the riot victims were forced to live in makeshift arrangement by the government organizations. As far as the temporary displacement of Dalits is concerned, this is a preventive measure from the dominant and aggressive force that is aimed at destroying the assets and lives of Dalits. The study of Village I (Mangapuram) show

4 Ibid.
that the deserted Dalits were accommodated in nearby Dalit villages like Kammapatti, Sunderajapuram, and among other villages also after the violence. Apart from these places, government also built shelters in nearby villages. For instance, the below case study would give a comprehensive nature of atrocities committed inflicted on Dalits during the caste clashes.

In the village-1 when we asked about what is the past and present situation and resulted consequences of caste conflicts in the village, one of the Dalit respondent stated that, “we are allowed to offer coconut and banana to the deity only at the entrance of the temple. We were not allowed to enter the temple before forty years. Later our children fought for it and entered into it. This resulted in a clash between these communities. Though we are allowed to offer the coconut for the deity but they denied the permission to prepare pongal as well as the animals’ sacrifices at the premises of temple. We would perform these in our street and then offer them to the deity. They would allow well water to be used for preparation. Taking all these problems into consideration that we have decided to make pongal in our land. Even in the teashops these is a separate tumbler for us. ‘Further he revealed that, “when a women walks through the street, they are being yelled at as ‘Hi Palli! Go away!’ Only when our children are educated then they will call us as sister, mother and so on. This led to another clash. At first, Thevars tortured us by throwing bottles and stones and setting fire to our houses. The Thevars in nexus with the police beat us up. The youngsters started running away as they are unable to bear it. As the police tried to shoot down one of them, I prevented them from doing so. This has infuriated the policemen due to that I was severely beaten up. In front of Magistrate it was the police who beat me up and no action was taken against them. And even we went to the madras high court but no use’.

In addition, another Dalit respondent who was targeted during caste clashes in 1997 stated that, “It is useless we made a representation to the then, but threatened us with dire consequences, if we speak wrong against caste Hindus. We fled to the neighboring village fearing of police harassment. Later we were pacified and brought back to the village. They provided roof to our houses. I suffered injuries in the riot that took place thereafter. If there could have been rapid action then these losses could have been avoided. We fled the village when the riot took place for the first time. When it happened for the second time we protested against them. The whole village was witness to this. All this has to do with caste solidarity. Collector asked us since
you ran away last time why didn’t you run away this time also. We got angry and asked him to leave the place. He shouldn’t have asked such a question and only women stayed behind and men fled the village fearing arrest”.

Further he stated that in present conditions, there is no problem, no intimidation now. We are enthusiastic and things have changed. The displacement of the Dalits of Village I have shown that there are significant changes in the attitude of Dalits towards caste Hindus. The agony and shock faced by Dalits through the caste conflicts inflicted by caste Hindus resulted in temporary disarrangement and dissolution among the Dalit community members. The temporary displacement did not yield anything because of its in temporary nature. Rather, it deviated the attention of Dalits, i.e., Dalits were not in a position to retaliate against the caste Hindus. This period noticed that identification of victims and sharing of their feelings among the Dalit community was very prominent characteristic than among caste Hindus. The losses inflicted upon Dalits were more intensive in nature. The losses were very heavy in terms of the loss of lives and of their houses and valuables.

Women were the primary victims of caste conflicts and they have been in the vulnerable condition throughout the conflict situations. This has been the unfolding excess of the caste-Hindus with the help of police arbitrariness by raiding their houses in the name of searching the miscreants. The motives behind the targeting of the woman during the conflict situation are to demoralize and provoke the Dalit males psychologically. Moreover, instigating the violence through these provocative forms against women would shatter the Dalits being sexually assaulted by the dominant caste-Hindus, where women as a symbol of pride for the community. The following case study would give an idea about the way in which old women was attacked and killed by the caste Hindus during the caste riots or conflict situation.

Contrary, the Village II noticed the displacement of dominant castes or Thevars by the majority Dalits. But the nature of displacement was voluntary by the caste Hindus due to less in number. It is only because of the feeling of insecurity felt by the caste Hindus. As for as the loss of live and property is concerned, both of them faced severe damages. According to the primary data, the death toll was in equal number. For instance, more or less five Dalits and five caste Hindus were killed in the clash. In village II, the excess of number cases had been framed against Dalits by the

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government officials evidently observed by the report prepared by society for community organization trust tells that During the communal clashes the Chief Minister issued several statements to the effect that erring Dalits would be severely dealt with under both the Acts and National Security Act (NSA). As for as the attitudinal change of Dalits in village II is concerned, Dalits were more secure and positive towards reconstruction than the Dalits of Village I. Moreover The repercussions of caste conflicts in Village II produces different picture where the solidarity against the Thevars because they were in minority, scare to re-settle for more than a year.

The Attitudinal Change of the Dalits

The attitudinal changes occurred in individual as well as in societal level because of the caste conflicts and displacement. The aggressiveness and condescending attitude of the dominant class created a fearful and social insecurity in an individual level among Dalits and material loss was added to that. The loss of individual identity and the attitude of exigencies were growing and loss of action from the people ends up with some sort of frustrations. The women and children have been deeply affected due to the loss of lives of several breadwinners of the families and especially the children were undergoing a trauma. Though, it was a very difficult task for men of the community to accept the temporary displacement, women of the community suffered the maximum. Profoundly, the changes were in their attitude of non-belief in oneself and loss of confidence in their outlook. Though the displacements of Dalits were temporary, the non-serious attitudes in re-settling shown by the government officials were made the Dalits in an unsettled and unhopeful condition for their livelihood. “Most families were left without a source of income, and there was little word from the government about returning them to their village”. The non-committal attitude of the government in rehabilitating the victims especially, the weaker section in Dalit people are women and children were made them to non-belief in the government itself.

Pre-caste conflicts period narrates the consolidation among the Dalits which were absent generally, but the communal tension and intensity of atrocities had played

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7 Caste Clashes in Southern District of TamilNadu: An overview, Society for Community Organisation Trust, Mother Teresa Women’s University. 1997, p. 73.
an important role in consolidation of the Dalits. The consolidation of people on the basis of the similar status in orderly, the sufferings, pains, shocks shared by the community members made them to be united and look for consolation form the government bodies. The consolidations of community members were undoubtfully emotional basis and had served close association with rest of the members. This social phenomenon of consolidation after the conflict situation was even found in caste Hindus, it is more evident in Village II of the sample. The presumption of such kind of consolidation is due to the fear of retaliation. The insecurity inflicted upon by caste Hindus for their lives and materials were another important factor of consolidation among Dalits. Thirdly the insecurity attitude of the Dalits were coincided with government inaction especially the failure of Collector’s action in safe guarding the people and activating the redressal methods in serving the victims. “When this horrific incident was reported on 18.5.97 to the District Collector Rajagopal, he showed them a cold shoulder, arrogantly demanding of the representatives, why should they bear the attack, instead of running away from the village and setting somewhere else.” Due to non-serious attitude and absence of the welfare measures from the government created a vacuum in the minds of Dalits in expressing and safeguarding them. The dissolution and impermanency of their livelihood made them unite under one organization. Earlier, these communities’ represented in different political and ideological groups in heterogeneous manner. Due to the social hierarchy and the practice of the modern form of untouchability by not giving due respect to Dalits and treat them in dignified manner, similarly, the experience meted out by Dalits were the important causes of their consolidation.

The parallel development of the consolidation of the Dalits, specifically, the educated youths were gathered and aimed their reconstruction work at the welfare of the victims as well as rehabilitations that had been seen as the threat of retaliation on caste Hindus, the influential community compelled the government to apprehend the leaders and the youths. The government, which yield to the pressure and arrested many of the youths under different laws like, “National Security Act as well as the (Tamil Nadu) Goondas Act were being grossly misused against the Dalits by the state government and several Dalits had been kept in preventive custody for many days.”

The above-mentioned view had been substantiated with the statistical data representing the number of cases against Dalits and caste Hindus. The total number of cases of Goondas Act and NSA show that the number of cases against the Dalits are more despite the fact they were the helpless victims of caste violence. The statistic representing the registered cases for the years, 1995, 1996 and 1997, cases against Dalits are 79 and against caste Hindus' are 63. The statistic implies the biasness in registering cases. The absences of the proper enquiry on the accused members are the main reasons of concealing many genuine cases of violence.

The role played by the students in the earlier caste conflicts disturbances in the district has caused much concern to the government authorities, police, educationist and the public. The earlier clash brought to the light the sad fact that, the despite the efforts by the governments and by the university and other agencies, including the service organizations, caste and communal feelings were prominent among a majority of the youths, particularly the students community. Especially the Tirunelveli and Virudhunagar district witnessed a flare up in caste violence in two phases since 1996-97. The main political grumble of the Dalits is that they do not have access to political power. And to overcome what they see as a continued betrayal of their cause. They feel for a new and exclusive political identity to take their move up the socio-economic ladder on its logical end. Moreover, the phenomenon of caste violence and alienation could not be understood exclusive from the class angles to comprehend the dynamics of the on-going changes, but one should view the dynamics of caste conflicts between Dalits and caste Hindus in a multi dimensional way.
Table 5.1
The following data shows the patterns of detention of number of different castes under Goondas Act and National Security Act (NSA) in Tirunelveli District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste/ Communities</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thevars</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernandas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mudaliars</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Held under NSA</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thevars</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adi-Dravidars</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of cases filed under prevention of SC/ST Atrocities Act</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under PCR Act</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of cases filed during communal clashes</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases lodged by Adi Dravidas</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases lodged by other communities</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>280</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of arrests during communal clashes</td>
<td>1491</td>
<td>1491</td>
<td>1491</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adi dravidars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>758</td>
<td>758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thevars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>512</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>155</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The re-settlement of Dalits from the forceful displacement was taken place gradually. The voluntarily occupation of Caste Hindus in the Dalits lands and their homes were not easily given away to Dalits and there are cases of denial of their properties so the re-settlement was not without the disturbances from the caste Hindus. In this process, the part of Dalits organization in assuring the Dalits was crucial. And with the help of organizations the settlement taken place in Village I. The re-settlement of caste Hindus of Village II show that Dalits were not obstructing the caste Hindus to settle down in their homes as in the case of Village I. In fact the re-settlement of the village after the caste conflicts have changed the physical structure of their entire village and socio-psychological construction of inferiority complex is quiet evident, especially village I Dalits. Where as Village II Dalits are educationally, economically better than Village I Dalits and Village II caste Hindus.
due to their numerical strength and continuous alertness towards caste Hindus attack is quiet evident as caste Hindus displaced from the village

Dalit leadership emerged in midst of the violence, conflicts and riots as an unavoidable, inevitable force where state continuously kept its soldier cold at the break up of violence against Dalits. Consistent dilution of Dravidian ideology to the core and keeping Dalits at the periphery in the political domain. In course of time, the vacuum created because of the Thevars' domination and lack of platform in expressing under repressive measure of state machineries, invariably by both DMK and AIADMK gave rise to Dalit political leaderships. Especially, John Pandian and further Dr.K.Krishnaswamy emerges as threat to the existing social system to the southern parts of state to safeguard the interest of Pallars who were constantly attacked by the Thevars in southern Tamil Nadu and Secondly, Thirumalvalavan, DPI leader emerged as a young dynamic, arousing but elegant and sparking in his speeches brought the educated youths under his control in the northern part of TN especially the Parayar settlement areas. These atrocities brought the powerful intellectuals, think tanks and social activities, writers and there is a specific Dalit wittings of literature are under emergence. It incorporated so many like-minded intelligentsias to curtail the dominance of the caste Hindus.

Temples in the village were controlled by the respective majority caste Hindus all over Tamil Nadu, which would mostly common to all other caste people exclusion of Dalits from the culture sphere or preventing / eliminating Dalits participating in the festivals. In the case of Village I the annual festival together celebrated by the caste Hindus like Thevar, Raju's, Nadars, Chettiars, Saliars, Brahmis etc. but not the Dalits. That is why Dalits are having their own temple and annual celebration at their own street is quiet evident. Even in the other parts of Tamil Nadu, most of the conflicts occur due to car festival as an important source of the resistance/ Dalits questioned the composite culture? In the case of Kanda Devi car festival, the question of Hindu Religious Endowment and Charitable Trust have completely taken away from the particular community, which has been controlling the temple and properties related to that and other grants. Untouchability at the ritual sites has been a social practice and culture of purity and pollution. Separate cultural shows to re assert the folk culture and taking it into a dimension of social awareness and looked with strong ideology of resistance against the giving hegemony –Trichy Shakti Group cultural night, every
year they perform in so many villages and also some other urban locations of Tamil Nadu

Conclusion
The consequences of caste conflicts not only destroyed or disturbed the Dalit community but also gave them a new found confidence to realize their socio economic and political relative deprivation which was subdued under the caste dominance of caste Hindus generation together. To achieve freedom from traditional bondage and liberation from the economic dependence on the upper castes have attracted the convulsing acts of the caste-Hindus, which are resented by the Dalits. This has resulted in violence and bloodshed between these caste groups. The police, political parties, judiciary in lieu with the caste Hindus resulted into an ineffective implementation of the constitutional safeguards which are meant for Dalits. The criminalization of social activism in India is a pattern witnessed in the suppression of Dalit assertion. Though the Dalits have been asserting for their liberation, it was constantly seen suppressed by the state machinery under the patronage of the caste-Hindus.

In fact dissatisfaction with the police has helped to fuel armed and Dalit movements. This has led to caste-based political parties and human rights movements against the state and the caste Hindus counterparts since the 1960's. As the traditional political parties like DMK have abandoned or avoided efforts to mobilise support among Dalits at the grass root level, they paved the way for autonomous Dalit Leadership to emerge in the early 1990's leading to the formation of DPI and PT. As is seen in the previous chapters the conflicts between Dalit parties and Dravidian parties have led to increased atrocities. Untouchability acts are further renewed in the name of atrocities. Thus, the desire and action of the Dalits towards liberation leads to reaction from the caste Hindus and then counter reaction of the scheduled castes placed in the sequence of chain-responses are such that ultimately take the form of the atrocities and caste conflicts which is quiet evident not only in the studied villages particularly but also in Tamil Nadu in general.