CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION OF COMPENSATORY POLICY

India, after attaining independence, took special measures for the weaker sections of our society with a view to removing their social disabilities and to uplift their social, economic, educational and political status. Our Constitution envisaged a multipronged action comprising measures for removal of inequity embedded in the traditional system and for building up an equitous social order. Certain special provisions for the disadvantaged sections were designed to ensure that no handicap-old or new-comes in their way, particularly SCs and STs, for meaningful participation in the new system and also that they are specially helped to acquire an equable position in the national life. The policy of compensatory discrimination or reservation has been adopted ostensibly to protect the SCs and STs from unfair competition and accepted as principle because equal treatment of unequals is an insidious way of perpetuating and rationalising existing inequality. The policy of reservation has three major components: reservation in admission into educational institutions, reservations in public services and reservation of seats in Lok Sabha and the various Vidhan Sabhas of states. Whatever be the constitutional implications, \(^1\) politically all three components have acquired the attributes of permanence and mandatoriness. The policy of compensatory discrimination as an instrument of social change has both long-term and short-term objectives. \(^2\) The state

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1. As Andre Beteille argues that reservation in governmental appointment and in education is more a matter of public policy than Constitutional compulsion. (See Andre Beteille, 1981:11; also see Nirmal Mukerjee 1981:14).

2. The long-term objective is the establishment of an 'egalitarian social order' by rectifying the exploitative and unequal social order through compensating the deprived and disadvantaged social groups for their past suffering and victimisation at the hands of privileged section of society. In order to realize this long-term objective various other short-term objective has been formulated to enable them to come on a par with other section of society through education, employment and political participation.
being the primary agent of development of the society in general and weaker sections in particular launches various schemes to promote their upliftment.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to examine the achievement of this policy of compensatory discrimination. This chapter will deal with some pertinent questions which have been raised in this context.¹ This chapter has been divided into six parts. The first Part deals with the special educational opportunities given to the SCs and STs and its accomplishments. The second part analyses the provision of reservation for SCs and STs in services under the central government and its resultant effect on them. The third part contains the provisions of political reservation in Lok Sabha and State legislatures and also taken into account its achievement as well as failure. The fourth part deals with other welfare measures apart from reservations in education, governmental jobs and legislature designed for the upliftment of the depressed sections of the society. The resultant consequences of several governmental measures, various welfare schemes and other arrangements meant for SCs and STs have been discussed in part five. The critical evaluation of the compensatory discrimination policy has been done in part six. In this part it has also been tried to trace the major causes of failure of policy formulation and its implementation.

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¹ What are the measures taken by the government to retrieve this nearly 22% of India's population from the morass of sub-human social existence, abject poverty and inhuman economic exploitation by deeply entrenched vested interests? How equitably have the benefits of planning and development trickled down to the bottom of social stratification? How effective have the government schemes of welfare for this weaker section been and what have been their accomplishments? How effectively these SCs and STs have availed of the opportunities to come on a par with other sections of society through education and quota reservation of government and public sector jobs for them? What have been the consequences (i.e., social and psychological) of upward mobility for the new SC and ST elites? What have been the patterns of their political participation in electoral and legislative politics and how efficacious are such participatory endeavors, through reservation of legislative seats for them been?
EDUCATION

Education, since ages, has been considered as a potent force of progress, development and social change. In a transitional society like India, with the growing importance of technology which itself has been changing at a faster rate, education has been acknowledged as a crucial investment for economic development. It was also presumed by the policy makers that the socio-economic condition of the weaker sections and particularly SC and STs would be bettered and the process of change would be accelerated by providing education to them. Education has been assigned a major role to bring about the desired change and been entrusted with the task of liberating the disadvantaged and the deprived by removing the veil of ignorance and creating awareness of rights among them as members of democratic society. Education is a mobility multiplier; it opens up secular avenues to social mobility and is expected to equip the SCs and STs and overcome their caste-defined confinement from low status occupation by promoting occupational mobility among them and thereby improving their standard of life.¹ In Indian society where mobility is restricted by the traditional institution of caste system, education is expected to act as a vehicle of social change. Education is also considered as an enculturative experience in tribal society.² Hence the major importance of the compensatory discrimination policy has been attached to the education of the SCs and STs.

Since the inception of compensatory policy, emphasis has been given to providing a variety of inputs for preparing the backward class to come forward and receive whatever


education was available in the country and especially at the level of secondary and higher education, inputs are provided in the forms of reservation of seats for admission to different educational institutions, relaxation in age and qualification for such admissions, exemptions from fees, free boarding and some stipend and scholarship to meet their exigencies. Special care has also been taken in the area of tribal education to ensure that tribals are retrieved from ignorance as well as from seclusion and isolation and properly integrated with the mainstream and they take every advantage by participating in national development process. As part of policy measures, the government agencies have been geared up to provide special incentives to promote education among the weaker section, specifically among SCs and STs and thereby accelerating the process of bridging the gap between socially advantaged categories of people. Reservations in different educational institutions are supplemented by a series of supportive facilities like scholarships (pre-matric and post-matric scholarships) with additional financial assistance a scheme of providing book-aids and books form 'Book-Banks' (for higher studies), other educational and study materials, special hostels for the SC and ST students. Other facilities like midday meals (in primary educational level), exemption of tuition fees and examination fees, remedial teaching, special coaching for professional courses at the district level, preparatory training are made available for the SC and ST students. The Adult Education Programme and Minimum Needs Programme (M.N.P) are also targeted for these people to accelerate process of education.

After four decades of implementation of these policies, we have not been able to reach the target. There has been progress of literacy among the SC and ST communities, but it is not satisfactory (as is evident from the Table-I). Despite all the efforts, the achievement is quite meager and negligible. Again the wide gulf in the literacy rate

between SCs and STs on the one hand and the other communities is yet to be bridged up. The trend (see Table II) shows that the gap is widening further instead of being narrowed down.

**Table I**

The Progress of Literacy amongst SCs and STs from 1961 to 1971 and from 1971-81.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Literacy Rates</th>
<th>Growth Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>24.00</td>
<td>29.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>14.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>11.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Communities Excluding SCs and STs</td>
<td>27.91</td>
<td>33.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Although the rate of growth of literacy amongst SCs and STs was faster during 70s compared to 60s, yet it is quite slow. The gap in the literacy rate between SCs and STs on the one hand and the other communities has widened not withstanding the growth of literacy as will be evident from following figures:
Table II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gap between literacy rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>among the SCs and non SC/ST</td>
<td>17.64</td>
<td>19.13</td>
<td>19.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap between literacy rates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>among the STs and non SC/ST</td>
<td>19.37</td>
<td>22.51</td>
<td>24.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The level of literacy among the female population of SCs and STs is abysmally low (as is evident from Table-III). Although the figure shows an upward trend, yet the achievement is extremely low. Even after four decades of policy implementation the literacy among the female population of SCs and STs i.e., 10.93% and 8.04% respectively, indicates the depressing state of affair.

The progress of literacy among the female population of SCs and STs is given below:

Table III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Literacy Rate</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>10.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>8.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excluding SCs and STs</td>
<td>22.25</td>
<td>29.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gap in female literacy rate between SCs and STs on the one hand and the other communities (like the male literacy rate) has been further widened as will be evident from the figures of the Table-IV.

Even the global figures of literacy for SCs and STs are not truly indicative of the real situation of many communities among whom these rates are extremely low. The rate of literacy among the SCs and STs themselves is uneven. The percentage of literacy among SCs is deplorable in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in comparison to all India SCs, literacy percentage.\(^1\) The position of literacy in case of the STs, in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh is poor in comparison to all India STs' literacy.\(^2\) Similarly there are wide gaps in the literacy rates among different STs within the same state.\(^3\) Even among different SCs and STs there are significant variations in literacy with regard to females belonging to ST in Rajasthan and females belonging to SC in Bihar which is abysmally low, i.e., 2.5%.\(^4\)

### Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gap between female literacy rates among the SCs and non SC/ST Communities</td>
<td>15.81</td>
<td>18.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gap between female literacy rates among the STs and non SC/ST Communities</td>
<td>17.40</td>
<td>21.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From the above statistics it is quite obvious that the benefits of the policy provision have not yet reached all the SCs and STs and the policy of compensatory discrimination has not been successful in realization of its goals in educational front. It is evident that the spread of education among the SCs and STs has not been uniform and the various educational facilities are unevenly distributed and the capacity to utilise these facilities has tended to vary from one sub-group to other. The SCs and STs have not been able to take the maximum advantage of the facilities provided to them because of their late exposure to the forces of modernization and development and the evils of rigid hierarchical caste system and the stigma of untouchability in case of SCs. The socio-economic handicaps manifested in various forms have prevented them from higher education which is considered as essential for vertical social mobility.

Some of the reasons found for their low literacy may be as following:¹

(i) Their late exposure to the modern educational process; (ii) Inadequate provision of educational and institutional facilities in the areas which are thickly populated by these people; (iii) Poverty and stringent economic conditions have pushed their children into child-labour market to do all odd jobs to supplement their family income; (iv) Illiterate and ignorant parents fail to realise the value of education; (v) Over domination of upper caste and fear of various kinds of atrocities discourage the SC and ST parents to send their children to schools; (vi) Poor enrollment of girls in educational institutions because of poverty, early marriage and domestic obligations; (vii) Large scale drop-outs at the primary and secondary level of schools; (viii) Their poor representation in higher, technical and professional education; (ix) Lack of organised community support to deal with such problems; and (x) Absence of any formal organised group within SCs and STs.

STs to encourage their children for study. All these problems have a chain effect and each of them is the cause of the other. Hence they combinedly make a vicious circle.

Similarly, the STs also face many disadvantages. In addition to the above mentioned problems, the STs face some peculiar socio-cultural problems. The major disadvantage the STs have is the non-availability of schools. More than 25,000 tribal habitats had no schooling facility. While 82.18% of the general population had a secondary school within 8 kms., only 51.89% of the ST population can claim this facility. At the higher secondary level 41.08% of the general population was covered by a school within 8 kms., only 18.8% of ST population had that facility. It is not possible for the children in the context of the rugged terrain to attend the schools far away from their home. Areas with large tribal population had very high percentage of single teacher school and the physical facilities like teaching and learning material available at the school not only inadequate but also of very poor quality. A number of schools, especially in tribal areas remained closed for certain period of time. The policy of transferring teachers, for punishment to schools in tribal areas needs to be immediately stopped. On the contrary incentives may be provided to the teachers in those schools. Other problems the STs have are: (a) medium of instruction which is alien to them, (b) non-availability of teachers from their own community, (c) Unwillingness and lack of interest of the outsiders to serve there, (d) non-inclusion of syllabi relating to local culture and tradition in the

1. This is based on the findings of the Fourth All India Educational Survey cited in the Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:296.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. It is observed that the teachers belonging to non-ST communities are transferred to schools in tribal areas for punishment. As a result, the teachers lose their interest in teaching for which the tribal students suffer (See Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:302-4).
school. The most important factor, true for both SCs and STs, is their abject poverty and economic hardship which discourage them to send their children to the schools.

The incidence of stagnation\(^1\) and drop-outs at different levels of education, particularly at primary and secondary levels is far more acute amongst the SC and ST students than among others.\(^2\) The low rate of literacy among SC and ST women speaks itself about low enrollment of girl students in schools. The poverty, early marriage, domestic obligation, socio-cultural ethos and lack of awareness have prevented the girl students from entering into educational institution. Low retention and higher rate of drop-outs (as is evident from the following figure) continue to erode the gains derived from educational expansion.

\textit{Table V}

The National Drop-out Rates at different stages of education

\begin{tabular}{ | l | c | c |}
\hline
 & Primary Stage (Classes I-V) & Middle Stage (Classes VI-VIII) & Secondary stage (Classes IX-X) \\
\hline
Scheduled Caste & 59.21\% & 74.76\% & 85.72\% \\
\hline
Scheduled Tribe & 74.00\% & 84.99\% & 91.65\% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}


There are some institutional factors such as family, school and the community as a whole account for large scale drop-outs. More clearly the SC children very often inherit

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] The repetition of school and college years either because of their failure in examinations and consequent denial of promotion to the next classes or due to frequent gaps and breaks in school and college attendance necessitated by economic difficulties, poor health, domestic compulsions, etc.
\end{itemize}
certain social and economic legacies which hinder the progress in educational expansion.\(^1\) Some of the legacies may be mentioned as:

(i) Poverty and economic hardship mars the honest, genuine and determined efforts of many school-going children; (ii) Parental unconcern and carelessness coupled with children's own apathy is a great hindrance; (iii) Irregularities in school attendance is mainly due to domestic duties to help their parents; (iv) Starvation and malnourishment with frequent absenteeism affects their class-room performance; (v) Lamentable physical condition, inadequacy of education and teaching material adds to the apathy of the children; and (vi) Hostile and non-cooperative, sometimes vindicative, attitude of upper caste people towards education of SCs. The above mentioned reasons are also true for drop-outs of ST students with some additional problems.\(^2\)

The enrollment in Class I and II is not the real indicator of the achievement on the educational front. What is important is how many children are reaching the middle school level (Classes VI to VIII) and passing out. The problem of class promotion is more acute with single teacher schools and schools having large percentage of SC/ST students on their registers. The percentage of girls completing the middle stage of schooling is lower than of the boys. The performance of the SC and ST students at the elementary level is dismal. In comparison to the drop-outs the regular children in schools have a more favourable background in terms of having parents belonging to relatively higher socio-economic status groups, more exposed to modernisation, having a higher level of political awareness and having higher aspirations for their children. Further, the regular students are less involved in helping their parents compared to drop-outs. The three major reasons, found out by the

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2. The problems faced by the STs, mentioned earlier, also hold good for the large scale drop-out of ST students.
Commissioner for SCs and STs, for discontinuing their studies are: (a) the child being required to help at home, (b) poverty and inability to afford education and (c) their lack of interest in education. Hence there is a strong correlation between social and economic obligations these students have to their families and the progress in education.

Although there has been an upward trend in the enrollment of SC/ST students at various levels, such increase is not substantial in nature since there is a proportional decline in their enrollments at a higher level. The SCs and STs start their education with a lot of inherited social handicaps like no tradition of education in their families, lack of proper guidance, encouragement, inspiration, past culture of submission and humiliation, and are left alone in the vast area of education. As a result of which they face a lot of personal problems at the level of higher education and particularly in technical and professional institutions like IITs, Medical Colleges and other Engineering Colleges. They fail to overcome the deficiency and to cope up with the prevailing ethos of higher education and educational institutions which are too alien for them. And there arises a lot of psychological frustration and inferiority complex among them. The above psychological problem added with the problem of their interpersonal relationship with fellow students and teachers guided by ethnic prejudice and cases of victimization becomes critical. It is observed that absence of their interaction with their fellow students and teachers in the universities further strengthens the congruence between the social and educational segregation of SC and ST students. Moreover in higher education, especially the technical and professional, the intakes are guided strictly by meritocratic principle. However, such merit and competence can only be explained in terms of the disguised

restrictions on the openness of competition and in case of SCs/STs they serve as useful cover for ethnic prejudice.\(^1\) The little assistance which pupils receive at the primary, middle and secondary levels also comes too late. The disbursement of post-matric scholarship leaves much to be desired. Sometimes the first instalment may not be received even till the middle of the session and in some cases the students may collect the entire amount at fag end of the session.\(^2\) As a result the students face lot of difficulties without money since they have hardly any other source.

It has been observed that policy of compensatory discrimination in educational sphere has strengthened elitist orientation and functions as a seize for catching the most able and favours the most fortunate of them and discards the down-trodden group.\(^3\) The advantaged among the SCs and STs take all the privileges of the policies while the disadvantaged at the bottom are left untouched and unattended. However, the growth of literacy and the emergence of minute section of elite bears testimony to the ability of the SCs and STs to take advantage of reservation while the large majorities lagging much behind are left unnoticed. The success of the policy is boasted of very often in terms of this minute elite section of the SCs and STs and the miseries of the suffering lot at the lowest rung are ignored. The continuation of this policy measure could make them occupationally and economically indistinguishable from any other caste.\(^4\) Education and special development programmes for SCs and STs are full of paradoxes. This policy has failed to achieve its basic objective. It has been rightly said that the bourgeois- cum-feudal ruling class, with its protective discrimination and policy of integration is unable to meet

\(^1\) Desai, 1981:10.

\(^2\) See Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:305.


\(^4\) See Uma Ramaswami, 1985.
the more basic problems of poverty and exploitation of deprivation, backwardness and social oppression.¹

Mere formulation of policies and existence of facilities does not in itself ensure success nor the benefits automatically trickle down to the masses. Creation of awareness enhancement of ability to make use of benefits and careful implementation of the policies are essential for effective realisation of set objectives. Reservation for education has not been able to meet their expectations and aspirations in the absence of basic infrastructural facilities to make the best use of them and its proper and systematic implementation. It is felt that the genuine equalisation of educational opportunity still remains as a distant ideal because of faulty planning and its unimaginative implementation. It has partially succeeded in retrieving its recipients from traditional exploitative mooring without equipping them adequately to join the emerging socio-economic stream of the country and to withstand its onslaught.

Hence the policy of reservation for SCs and STs as well as its implementation need certain modifications and change to remove the deficiency and hindrances on the path of success. There should be adequate provisions for the nutritional needs in terms of calories and protein intake to overcome the handicaps. Both quantitative and qualitative improvement in institutional as well as physical facilities is called for. Innovative institutional mechanism is required to develop for proper and even distribution of special incentive. The special mechanism should be there to ensure that the benefits percolate down to the needy masses. Mere alphabetisation should not be the objective of literacy programme rather it should be functional education which would be more relevant to meet the needs of beneficiaries and also would be suitable for their social and cultural milieu without its alienating effect. For higher education imaginative programme of

anticipatory and preparatory education as well as remedial and supplementary educational system should be devised to overcome their disability to cope with the system. The scholarship and other financial aid should be adequate enough to meet the exigencies and be disbursed in time. The basic purpose of education should be to make self-sufficient and instill confidence among them so that they can manage themselves without depending much on external help.

II

PUBLIC SERVICE

A public service like education is a mobility multiplier. It promotes socio-economic mobility by opening up secular avenues and also improves the standard of life. It creates a sense of participation in the development process and instills sense of confidence particularly among the deprived section of the society. Especially in a country like India where there is severe resource crunch, unemployment is too high, competition are too tough and job opportunities are too scarce, civil service plays a major role in enhancing one's socio-economic status. In India, which is marked by built-in structural hierarchies and inequity, the job sector, specifically higher jobs, was rather monopolised by the higher caste because of their earlier exposure to education and other means of mobility. The dispossessed in the lowest stratum of the society, particularly SCs and STs were mainly confined to menial and impure jobs because of the restrictions imposed on their occupational mobility by the upper caste. And till now these SCs and STs have not been able to come on par with the higher section of society. Given their past history of economic exploitation, political subjugation, social humiliation and cultural submission they are not expected to compete with the upper section of society on the basis of formal equality. This will be like putting an ass on the horse track. Hence job reservation for the
SCs and STs has been rightly considered as the most appropriate mechanism for their socio-economic mobility. One of the proclaimed objectives is to enable this deprived community to catch with the rest of the population and thereby ensuring equity and justice.

In accordance with the constitutional provision the percentage of reservation of services under the Central Government have presently been fixed at 15% for SCs and 7.5% for STs.\(^1\) Reservation in services has also been extended to public sector enterprises, nationalised banks, statutory and autonomous bodies and institutions receiving grants-in-aid from the Government of India. Similarly reservation in services and posts is also applicable under various State Governments and Union Territories (UTs) Administration but the percentage of reservation in services varies from State to State depending on the actual percentage of SCs and STs in the States and UTs. In 1972 reservation was extended to promotion on the basis of seniority subject to fitness in Groups A,B,C,D, i.e., in almost all groups. It has advanced vertically not all types of promotions except only for selections above the lowest rung of Group A. In 1975, reservation was further extended to appointments made to scientific and technical posts except in space, electronics and atomic energy. Rapid acceleration during 1970s has thus been the outstanding feature of the policy.

In addition to reservation, number of special measures have been taken and concessions been granted to facilitate their adequate representation in the governmental services. In order to improve representation of SCs and STs in services pre-examinations training centres have been set up by the Government of India in various States and UTs to provide special coaching to suitable SC and ST candidates who intend to appear in the

\(^1\) In 1954, the reservation in governmental appointments was started with 12.5% for SCs and 5% for STs. Since it was appeared that the system of reservation operated was not good enough to achieve adequate reservation for the target groups, in 1968 a High Power Committee was constituted, first under the Home Minister and later under the Prime Minister, to review performance in the matter of recruitment for SCs and STs in services. Only then a series of far-reaching decisions followed to accelerate the process.
competitive examinations. Other concessions provided to them are relaxation of upper age limit, exemption of examination fees, relaxation in the standard of suitability and of the qualification and experience in the case of direct recruitment.

Because of their poor representation in various categories of jobs, central and state governments have undertaken many special assistance schemes. The Government provides Special Central Assistance (SCA) to State Special Component Plans for the SCs and STs to ensure the implementation of income generation, economic development scheme. Similarly, special tribal sub-plans are drawn and implemented in states like Assam, Bihar, Orissa etc. where there is majority of tribal population. These plans are an attempt for the integrated development of tribal areas through physical and financial support.

Although this policy of reservation, with a number of special facilities and concessions, has been implemented since 1954, yet the representation of SCs and STs in services under the Central Government, Public Sector and Nationalised Banks is quite far from Satisfactory as is evident from the following figure:

A comparative statement showing the Representation of SCs and STs in services under the Central Government, Public Sector Undertakings and Public Sector & Nationalised Banks as on 1-1-1987.

*Table VI*

*Government of India*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>57,654</td>
<td>4,746</td>
<td>8.23</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>75,419</td>
<td>7,847</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>1,447</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>21,30,453</td>
<td>3,07,980</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>90,147</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (Excluding Sweepers)</td>
<td>11,67,759</td>
<td>2,34,614</td>
<td>20.09</td>
<td>68,206</td>
<td>5.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34,31,285</td>
<td>5,55,187</td>
<td>16.18</td>
<td>1,60,980</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table VII

Public Sector Undertakings (211 PSUs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1,61,825</td>
<td>7,862</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1,904</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1,62,339</td>
<td>10,010</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>2,522</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>13,94,015</td>
<td>2,58,500</td>
<td>18.54</td>
<td>1,23,017</td>
<td>8.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (Excluding Sweepers)</td>
<td>3,99,000</td>
<td>1,23,010</td>
<td>30.82</td>
<td>68,111</td>
<td>17.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21,17,179</td>
<td>3,99,382</td>
<td>18.86</td>
<td>1,95,554</td>
<td>9.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweepers</td>
<td>38,900</td>
<td>30,150</td>
<td>17.51</td>
<td>1,311</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table VIII

Public Sector and Nationalised Banks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officers</td>
<td>2,15,805</td>
<td>15,745</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>3,986</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks</td>
<td>4,49,144</td>
<td>16,891</td>
<td>13.77</td>
<td>16,957</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate Staff</td>
<td>1,67,136</td>
<td>37,272</td>
<td>22.30</td>
<td>7,721</td>
<td>4.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,32,085</td>
<td>1,14,908</td>
<td>13.81</td>
<td>28,664</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweepers</td>
<td>17,794</td>
<td>8,740</td>
<td>49.11</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The representation of SCs and STs is much below the percentage i.e., 15% for SCs and 7.5% STs given to these communities, specifically in public sector undertakings. The
trend shows that representation of SCs and STs is high in percentage in lower ranks but they are highly under represented in high ranks i.e., Group A and B. Their concentration at the lower rung of services indicates a caste ridden public sector with the members of lower classes concentration at the lower rung of the services.

Looking retrospectively, there has been definite improvement in their representation in the governmental services over the period i.e. 1977-1987. this phenomenon is evidenced in the figures given below (see Table IX, X,XI).

The percentage of representation of SCs and STs in various groups of posts under the Central government as on 1-1-1987 as furnished by the Department of Personnel and Training are given below along with their increase in intake as compared to the position obtaining on 1-1-1977:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group of Posts</th>
<th>Scheduled Castes 1-1-77</th>
<th>Scheduled Castes 1-1-87</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribes 1-1-77</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribes 1-1-87</th>
<th>Increase SCs</th>
<th>Increase STs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>8.23</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>6.07</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>11.84</td>
<td>14.46</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>19.07</td>
<td>20.09</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The percentage of representation of SC and STs in the public sector undertaking as on 1-1-1987, as made available by the Bureau of Public Enterprises, is given below showing their increase in intake as compared to 1-1-1977:
The position of representation of SCs and STs in Nationalised Banks in various groups of services as on 1-1-1987 along with the actual increase in intake as compared to 11-1-1976, is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>As on 1-1-1977 SC</th>
<th>As on 1-1-1977 ST</th>
<th>As on 1-1-1987 SC</th>
<th>As on 1-1-1987 ST</th>
<th>Increase SC</th>
<th>Increase ST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C</td>
<td>16.76</td>
<td>7.68</td>
<td>18.54</td>
<td>8.82</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>22.53</td>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>30.82</td>
<td>17.07</td>
<td>8.29</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** The Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs 1986-87:491.

This is true both in terms of their absolute number and in their percentage in relation to the total number of employees in all groups. But the achievement is not so heartening to develop complacency. Reservations in the services seem to have yielded
diminishing returns to SCs and STs.\textsuperscript{1} Even fortyfive years after independence, the proportion of SCs and STs in the Class I and II services are meagre in spite of reservation and special concessions. Besides there has been several fold rise in occupational opportunities in trade and commerce and industries in the private sector during this period. But very few SCs and STs have been represented in administrative, ministerial and supervisory positions in these concerns.

This poor presence of SCs and STs in Group A and B posts is generally attributed to non-availability of qualified candidates for scientific and technical posts. There are some glaring anomalies at the time of giving promotions to SCs and STs for which the Commissioner for SCs and STs has suggested that where promotions are to be made from Groups of C and D posts recruitment to which is initially made on local and regional basis, reservation percentage at the time of promotion should correspond to that prescribed for initial reservation.\textsuperscript{2} It is also suggested that the government may consider issuing a general order - regarding dereservation of reserved vacancies both in direct recruitment and promotion in case of absence of suitable candidates form SCs and STs-banning filling up of vacancies shall not apply to the reserved vacancies which were unfilled on the date of issue of that order unless the order imposing the ban specifically makes a mention to that effect.\textsuperscript{3}

The anomalies are more frequent in the public sector undertakings. Some of the general observations about the shortcomings noticed by the Commissioner are as follows:\textsuperscript{4}

(i) Full details about the number of reserved vacancies as well as various

\textsuperscript{1} See B.K. Roy Burman, 1974:13.
\textsuperscript{2} Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:485.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Ibid.}:489.
\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ibid.}:505-7.
concessions or relaxations permissible to SC and ST candidates are not indicated in many cases in the advertisement issued by public sector undertakings. (ii) In many cases SC & ST officers are not associated with the Selection committee for one reason or the other. (iii) In case of posts filled by direct recruitment grouping is permissible only in the case of isolated posts and small cadres. No grouping is permissible in posts filled by promotion. (iv) SC and ST candidates are not adjusted against the older list that brought forward reservation in their chronological order. (v) In many public sector undertakings rosters are not maintained properly and the reserved posts are not correctly earmarked. (vi) Even though SC and ST officers require more and more training they are in most cases ignored for training at home and abroad. and (vii) In many organisations instructions are not followed and the quarters are allotted according to seniority without giving any benefit of reservation to SC and ST employees.

To rectify the situation it has been suggested that in order to ensure that the legitimate claims of SC and ST employees do not suffer due to diversification of staff on lateral basis all vacancies should be brought under the relevant roster before initiating any action in the matter and it has also to be ensured that whenever the SC and ST candidates are available for promotions vacancies are not filled through diversification.¹

In our divided society with extremes of inequality between caste and communities inherited form the long past which is also nurtured and perpetuated till now we can hardly afford to be sanguine that reservation in jobs will bring about a social revolution in India. Rather it has given rise to some unwanted developments. Very few better-off section of SC and ST have taken the lion’s share of the benefits conferred on the community. There has emerged a tiny section of SC and ST elite who have totally conformed to the logic of the system of developing vested interest in maintaining a separate identity in order to reap

¹ Ibid., 495.
more and more benefits for a small fraction of their relations and friends.¹ This newly emerged SC and ST bureaucratic elite being affected thoroughly by the prevailing bureaucratic culture, have developed a feeling of superiority in relation to their own social group and to the extent possible with other sections of society also. This very feeling of superiority further distances them away from the value and attitudes of their fellow being.² They no longer represent the interest of their own community. This brings some scholar to the well-known argument about the 'betrayal syndrome' which raises the important question of the attitude of public servants, who find the comfortable berth only as SC and ST representatives.³ But this ironical or paradoxical situation may be attributed more to the nature of bureaucracy. A bureaucracy is governed by norms for regulating both its internal life and its relation with the outside world which called for dispassionate conduct in accordance with impersonal rules. Hence there is the dilemma for a civil servant. The expectation that the civil servants would protect or promote the particularistic interest of his caste or community sets him at odds with the basic requirement of his service.

Even after getting job the SC and ST elites are not free from discrimination. The problem doesn't end there but persists in different forms. Bureaucracy, being a part of society, inherits some kind of attitude and values prevalent in society at large. The SC and ST recruits also face the problems of social distance and discrimination from fellow officers and also from laymen as they face in social sphere.⁴ It is also observed that the SC and ST themselves have a stratified structure, where one section within it discriminates the

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1. More about this emergence of SC and ST elite will be discussed later in this Chapter.


other in its social interaction.\textsuperscript{1} Being surrounded by such hostile atmosphere, the SC and ST officers develop a sense of alienation and identity crisis.\textsuperscript{2}

But this is not to say that there should not be reservation for SCs and STs in service. In order to make this policy more effective and more result-oriented, the policy should be modified and changed. And the existing anomalies and loopholes which defeat the very purpose should be dispensed with. It has been told that the inadequate representation especially in top ranks of government jobs and other enterprises is due to the lack of their proper educational attainment. And also on the plea of merit and efficiency, the SC and ST have been debarred from getting admitted into technical and professional courses such as engineering, medicine, management etc., and for which they remain under-represented in professional jobs and particularly in private sector, one of the main employment generating sectors, where they get a step motherly treatment. Thus to boost up their morale and build up self-confidence they should be provided with better education. Some special institutional arrangements should be made for their better schooling and higher education so that they can compete with others without any sense of inferiority-complex. Special attempts should be taken to create a conducive working environment for SC and ST employees so that they won’t fall victims to the group prejudice and caste discrimination.

\textbf{III}

\textit{POLITICAL PARTICIPATION}

In highly stratified society of India social and political mobilization was more a privilege and monopoly of the higher strata of the society and in recent past, it gradually

\textsuperscript{1} Ibid., 84.

\textsuperscript{2} This aspect will be discussed later in this chapter.
moved downward to the lower. After independence the political participation of the SCs and STs started largely under the tutelage of the upper and middle castes through legislative or political reservation with the commitment to herald an egalitarian social order and to ensure a just distribution of political power. The patron-client network in the socio-economic sphere seemed to spill over the political sphere giving rise to the phenomenon of 'vote-banks' and 'clientelist politics'.\(^1\) Newly born Indian democracy started functioning with a unique experiment of political reservation for SCs and STs in the Lok Sabha and State legislatures. The objectives behind this political reservation are to provide the deprived section a say in political management and to ventilate their genuine grievances for recovery from their plights and also to reduce the hegemony of political power of the traditionally dominant group.\(^2\) This is also a measure to integrate the SCs and STs with the national mainstream who remained secluded and isolated for long.

This political reservation has yielded some concrete results and has given some definite advantages to the SCs and STs. It has brought a large number of SCs and STs into the mainstream, and has also involved them in political responsibilities. The participation has boosted up self-confidence and enabled them to resist harassment and to protest against indignities, of course not with a greater extent. This has at least provided this section a platform to ventilate their resentment and grievances and has created a consciousness of their right as citizens of India. Now they are counted as respectable citizens, if not in real terms at least apparently, of the Indian Republic.\(^3\) Political reservation has ensured entry of the SC and ST legislation into the Lok Sabha and State legislatures.

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Legislature. In the present competitive and manipulative political set-up which is thoroughly partisan and caste-ridden and is still a dominion of the upper strata of our society, the SCs and STs could not have been represented without this reservation. This is evidenced from the following figure.

Table XII
Representation of SCs and STs in Lok Sabha from the general/Unreserved Constituencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Election</th>
<th>SC/ST Members elected from Unreserved Constituencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Their presence in legislature and in government have made them a potent force to be reckoned with. Now any political party can hardly afford to dispense with them since they constitute the major vote-bank.
SC and ST, political participation seems to have been more efficacious at the national and state levels than at the local.\(^1\) The elected SC and ST M.Ps and M.L.As get aggregated into politically influential members. Moreover the shifting caste coalitions continue to operate behind the facade of political parties with SCs and STs as an important element of such coalition. But their participation and representation in local panchayats and co-operative institutions is too sparsely scattered to make their influence felt. Besides, the convergence of the traditional social structure and feudal attitude dominated by the norms of caste and varna (being least affected by the winds of secular change) and local economic and caste interests facilitates a greater social as well as political co-operation between the land-owning upper and middle castes and socially isolates the landless SCs and STs.

But the net resultant effect is not up to expectation. The general masses of these communities are yet to develop adequate political consciousness to assert their right. They continue to remain subdued and suppressed and they are yet to have right to resist the exploitation and atrocities perpetrated against them by the upper caste. This is because of the basic approach to the problem which is more or less an act of charity and pity combined with a guilt conscience of India's leaders.\(^2\) Acts of charity and pity or pious desire without sound rational approach, have their own limitations. They did not want to cure the malaise rather tried to soothe the pain. The beneficiaries were kept as passive recipients to depend on other's mercy. This passivity gets reflected in their continuous reliance on the political parties. The fact can hardly be contested that the mobilization of SCs and STs takes place under the patronage of one or the other political party. The SC and ST legislators are mere proteges of central political parties. They have so far mainly

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supported and identified with established political parties and have preferred to work through those parties. Till now they have not been able to assert themselves independently; and their grievances are always expressed by or through one political party. As a result there has developed a 'dependencia syndrome' among the SC and ST leaders who can hardly afford to contest elections independently since it requires huge money as well as muscle power and the organised structure to win elections.

The lack of development of political consciousness among the SCs and STs is attributed to the way in which their political accession or mobilization was done. First, the legal and political rights were thrust upon them by the then new modernising political elite more because of their liberal-democratic ideology and historical compulsion rather than too much of pressure from the below i.e. the general mass of SC and ST. The pressure was from a few dalit leaders but not from the politically conscious masses. The incorporation of SCs and STs proceeded mainly through universal adult franchise, liberal policy of quota reservation of jobs and legislative seats consensually guaranteed by the political leaders through Constitution. Second, the SC and ST (more specifically the SCs) political participation conformed to the patron-client politics of earlier stage. Third, because of their unresisted political accession under the patronage of upper castes, they lack cohesiveness and group-consciousness that comes naturally to a group. Their entry was mainly as a factionalised force because of the recruitment of earlier SC and ST sub-elites as proteges of upper caste political elites of various ruling party factions. Even though there is little group consciousness among some sections of SCs and STs, this is manipulated by the leaders of competing political parties in their favour to achieve their own electoral interests.

The legislative reservation has failed badly to deliver the intended benefits to the SC and ST groups. Rather it has suffered from some serious anomalies which have had negative impact on the future policy. The most telling negative consequence of this provision is the creation of a gulf between the common mass and the political elite of the same community.¹ There has emerged a new group of political elite from SCs and STs who are immediately catapulted into a world of privileges, amenities and influence. These political elite are successfully incorporated into what may be called Establishment and turned into brokers of power and attest to the hegemony of ruling class. Demographic arithmetic and communal politicking within the confines of reserved constituencies, unrestrained by the necessity of larger social coalition-building typical of unreserved constituencies, became their dominant political concern.² The SC and ST politicians who have already had their individual social mobility, tend to assume an essentially instrumental even exploitative, orientation and role vis-a-vis their ethnic clientele and constituency.³ They are little concerned for the upliftment of their fellow beings and even sometime show apathetic attitude to the issues relating backward classes.⁴ Because of their dependency, the SC and ST leaders have failed to organise themselves into a political group at the national level. Poor leadership and lack of fund have further worsened the situation for the backward classes.⁵ The SC and ST leaders owe their allegiance more to the political party than their own community. For this the leadership

¹. See C.Parvatham, 1973:221-34; Ghanashyam Shah, 1873:3; Chetakar Jha, 1979:29-30; Gora, 1974:22-25.
². See Chetakar Jha, 1979:30
becomes subordinate and subservient to the political bosses of these parties and loses its substantial freedom.\textsuperscript{1}

IV

\textbf{WELFARE MEASURES}

In addition to above mentioned reservations in education, governmental jobs and Lok Sabha and State Legislature, variety of measures have been taken since independence including specific safeguards which have yielded some positive results. When the inadequacy of the percolation effect of the growth oriented theory was realised i.e. in 1960's, some welfare measures specially designed for poorer sections of society were adopted. Poverty alienation and employment generation programmes, like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), Minimum Need Programme (MNP), Jawahar Rojagar Yojna (JRY) (of more a recent origin) have accorded priority to rectify the situation. Some special programmes were launched for the tribal development. The tribal-sub-Plans and Special component Plan for SCs do comprise a major step forward which has also occasioned a substantial rise in the financial outlays for the development of SCs and STs. But their implementation leaves much to be desired. In fact, some of the basic premises of the new strategy remain to be operationalised. A substantial part of the Special Central Assistance given to the States remains unutilised.\textsuperscript{2}

The achievements, however, are so meagre that they do not measure upto expectation. The progression in the desired direction has suffered on account of certain

\textsuperscript{1} Ghanashyam Shah, 1987:5.

omission, aberrations and lapses which related to the effort and more with its quality and content and involve some very basic issues. Consequently, notwithstanding the achievements the present situation cannot be reasonably summed up with a touch of optimism that 'we have come a long way' rather 'we have a long way to go'. The above mentioned poverty alienation and employment generation programmes have not achieved expected result and the benefits have not reached the target group i.e. the real needy ones. The programmes continue to suffer from several deficiencies i.e. inadequacy of funds, misutilisation of allocation, pilferage of allocated funds, wrong selection of target groups, insufficient co-ordination, bureaucratic bottlenecks and corruption, undue haste in implementation, absence of feed-back system etc.\(^1\)

In respect of economic welfare schemes, the dilemma i.e. whether institutional reform should come first or amelioration first. Although a large number of schemes have been introduced to diversify the occupational structure of the SCs and STs, quite frequently a majority of them remain lied down to their traditional occupations. The improvement of economic condition of these people requires strengthening of the technological and economic base of occupational structure. Where attempts in this direction have been successful, two contradictory results follow.\(^2\) In this case either the traditional association of the caste with the occupation is strengthened or weakened. Where the association is strengthened, it accentuates and perpetuates casteism and the process of transformation of social structure gets delayed or with-held. Where the association is weakened new sets of people from other castes enter into occupation and derive the benefits of new technology; but the traditional craftsmen belonging to SCs and

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1. For detailed analysis of the implementational loopholes of the poverty alleviation programmes of SCs and STs, see Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:441-49. The major causes of the poverty and failure in its alleviation have been analysed in the next chapter.

STs fail to take the leverage or are thrown out. They are also not capable enough to take alternative occupation immediately with higher returns. Thus they suffer from economic insecurity and remain impoverished. So far the economic system has been less favourable than the political system for SCs and STs, who have failed in availing themselves of government schemes of credits and subsidies for small scale industries and business.

Most of the members of the SCs and STs are dependent, in some ways or other, on agriculture. The SCs and STs earn their livelihood by working on land everywhere which is regrettable. They are deprived of control over the land on which they have been working. The incidence of landless is more among them compared to other groups as is evident in the following figure. (see Table-XIII)

The size of the land holdings is also smaller than that of caste-Hindus. Bulk of the total agricultural labourers are from among SCs and STs, (more in case of SCs). Most of the SCs and STs have uneconomic land holdings and in most cases they are in possession of barren and fallow lands. The fertile land and strategically important lands have been allotted to the caste-Hindus with the connivance of the local leaders and district administration. In some places the SCs have not even been able to occupy the land allotted to them.

The distribution of land holdings among the SCs and STs and others by major size groups has been given in the table below.


Table XIII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size Groups</th>
<th>SCs</th>
<th>STs</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. in</td>
<td>in %</td>
<td>No. in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lakhs</td>
<td></td>
<td>lakhs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal (Below 1 hectare)</td>
<td>69.93</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>27.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (Between 1 &amp; 2 hectares)</td>
<td>16.44</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>15.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Medium (Between 2 &amp; 4 hectares)</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>14.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (Between 4 &amp; 10 hectares)</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All size Groups</td>
<td>100.52</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>68.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The biggest muddle in this regard has been in the tribal areas, which is continuing even now. Firstly, in many areas there are no authentic papers. Therefore, the position of land such as size of holding, its precise location, is not properly located. Secondly, the laws are too intricate which are beyond the understanding of the people. The case of Sonbhadra in Uttar Pradesh is extremely regrettable which is witnessing open loot in the name of settlement.¹

In the traditional sector of our economy the crucial issue of land reform has gone out of focus and even there are serious reversals.² Although being largely rural and

illiterate the SCs and STs would have been benefited most from such reforms, their land hunger, has over the years been whetted by the 'rhetorical socialism' and 'political populism'. The first phase of post-independence land reform has mainly saved the interest of middle peasant castes and the traditional village landlords. The second phase of land reform legislation is full of shortcomings and has been implemented half heartedly and evaded ingeniously by landowners. Not only does land to the tiller remain a distant dream, even their tenure has not been protected effectively. Instead there has been an emergence of big class of absentee and capitalist lords of the land.

The worst disregard of the right to life is being perpetrated in case of bonded labour. Despite governmental comprehensive plans for their liberalism and relief, their condition is extremely pitiable. According to the 'Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, the tribal labourers of coffee plantation in Tamil Nadu are virtual prisoners and the limbs of labourers working for big landlords in Daltanganj and Chaparan are chained in lieu of 5 Kathas (measures) of agricultural land. In many border areas of Utter Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh working in the stone quarries is the destiny of the people.¹ These are the few examples of their plight but in many places this is more or less in practice in different forms which remain unnoticed. A bonded labourer is subject to two constraints: i) he does not get full wage which is his rightful claim and ii) has no freedom to leave his job at will and take up another one. There are inherent defects in the present policy about bonded labourers. It is an irony that the plan of his liberation cuts him off from his life support system rather than cutting the chain of his slavery. Many bonded labourers are not able to get Government's help or other form of assistance and therefore continue to be the victims of oppression and exploitation in large scale.²

². Ibid., 70-83.
The tribal communities have become completely helpless in the face of the omnipotent system on account of 'criminalisation' of their social and ecosystem itself, denial of their rights over resources and non-recognition of their traditional governing system. The government of India has more or less adopted the policy of isolation, though in a modified form, after independence. This isolation and apathetic attitude of the government led to much exploitation by non-tribal moneylenders, zamindars and created a sense of separateness in them.¹ The Shilu Ao Committee observed that some notable limitations of tribal development blocks like: i) fragmented approach to development planning, ii) application of large number of standard schemes in tribal areas, iii) negligence in employment aspect of development, and iv) failure to take up settlement of land disputes, in the pre-extension stage. B.K. Roy Burman also pointed two significant shortcomings of tribal development blocks i.e. - a) in most cases the exclusive efforts of the tribal sector and the programme of general sectors failed to reach the tribal areas, and b) the benefits of development did not trickle down beyond the upper Crust of the tribal communities in most of the areas.²

The laws regarding the conversion of forest have made the tribal life more torturous and traumatic. The forests are now the property of state and the tribals, who have been living in those forests for ages and earn their sustenance from those forests, have been denied the right over it.³ The criminalisation of the entire community in the tribal areas is the darkest blot on the liberal tradition and development process of our country. Rather it is expected that the tribal society should change and adapt itself in conforming with the frame of modern system. The situation in tribal areas in relation to

displacement\(^1\) is specially a matter of grave concern. A comprehensive review of the situation about displacement clearly expresses the undesirable repercussion of the developmental process particularly in tribal areas which can scarcely be ignored. The greatest loss in the wake of development has been caused to tribals and the resourceless people. The stark reality about the wanderings of a proud farmer, whose honour is inexorably linked with his land, for rendering his labour and his deep agony are not even alluded to.\(^2\) The problem of the tribals, who work on land and carry on their cultivation for sometime, only to find sooner or later that their lands are no longer theirs. This misery is brought about by a combination of many factors viz. improvidence and ignorance of the tribals, passion for land and higher powers of intelligence of non-tribals, thrift and chicanery of the money-lending classes and the rather complicated, costly and inconvenient machinery of law.\(^3\) Meaningless are to the new world the question of his honour, his sentiment and even his future.

The problems confronted by the development administration may be viewed mainly from two angles: i) structural and ii) behavioural.\(^4\) Structurally the organisational set-up is not appropriate to translate the objectives into reality. Behaviorally, the set of values and attitudes nurtured by the administration is not conducive to push through the programme. This is true for the welfare measures taken both for SCs and STs. What is needed is well structured administrative machinery with a set of values, goals and priorities which would be compatible to the tribal ethos. It has been observed very often that non-tribal officers go to the tribal areas with their culture and consider tribal culture inferior and their

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1. For factual analysis of displacement in tribal areas, see Ibid:273-96.
2. Ibid., XV.
tradition absurd, their rituals exotic and their behaviour mysterious.¹ And it is also expected that tribal society should change and conform to the modern system; and finally, an attempt is made to convince the people that this is what development really is. This has created a wide gulf between the administration and the mass and frustrate the very philosophy of development.

Other major problems i.e. isolation, inaccessibility, low productivity, poor communication facility, weak marketing infrastructure and the ruthless exploitation of the moneylender and the middle man still continue to haunt the tribals. The administration remains oblivious to the situation and sometimes deliberately turns deaf ear to these problems. The half-hearted implementation of programmes² and the apathetic attitudes of the government officials have made the situation worse. No action has been taken to correct this anomaly. Even if some action is initiated, one can never be sure as to where it might get stuck. The result is that today there is a state of confrontation in almost all tribal areas.

With the realisation of the inequitous nature of government programmes, importance has been attached to the role of voluntary organisations. These voluntary organisations have taken on the role of alleviating the conditions of the most hit and resourceless sections of society. There are on the one hand, large voluntary agencies having large establishments with their own headquarters, branches and bureaucracy. Many schemes that are given to these voluntary agencies do not really reach the poor.

². The fact, however, remains that since the commencement of the constitution, not a single directive has been issued under the provision of the Fifth schedule of the Constitution. It only creates an illusion of a super-father image for the Central Bureaucracy. (B.K. Roy Burman, Strategy of Tribal Development, in Jose Konnaikel (ed.), 1985:66)
They suffer from the same handicaps of the ordinary bureaucracy and political parties.¹

The government has failed to provide these needy tribals adequate financial help for which they continue to be dependent on petty traders who lend money at exorbitantly high interest rate to the tribals at the time of need. The tribals exhaust their little surplus in repaying the debt and most of the time all the payments are adjusted towards the interest and the capital of the loan continue to exist. These traders, mostly non-tribals, leave no way to exploit the ignorance and helplessness of the tribals. By creating an artificial gap between the officials and the tribals these traders act as 'middle men' by providing link between the developmental administration and tribal people. This unholy nexus between these middle men and the officials do not let the benefits filter down to the tribal mass. The formal and intricate official procedures make the situation more complicated and put the beneficiaries in much trouble who fail to comprehend the procedure and nature of the scheme.

V

CONSEQUENCE

The government since independence has taken several measures, launched various welfare schemes and made several arrangements for the development of SCs and STs. Despite all such efforts and massive inputs, the achievements have hopelessly fallen short of expectations as only a nominal benefits have reached these miserable sections. Rather these efforts for the alleviation of SCs and STs have given rise to some undesirable developments and consequences that run counter to the desired objectives.

One of these developments is the emergence of an elite class, the microscopic minority, within the backward class or caste which is termed as Neo-Brahamin\(^1\) or Class within Caste: Harijana Elite\(^2\) the better-off among the SCs and STs, which has taken all the advantages of the concessions and facilities in spheres of education, employment and political representation really meant for the whole group.\(^3\) The development of an elite is not per se undesirable. On the contrary, the emergence of such an elite is indeed the objective of the reservation policy with the expectation that this very group would strengthen and give hope to the weaker sections from which it has sprung and would also make a dent in the exclusivist attitude of rest of the society. It is through this newly emerging elite that the process of co-option with the elite of the society at large is intended to take place, paving the way for greater integration. But this has remained as a pious hope because of the very nature of this elite group which it has acquired in successive phases of developmental process.

This tiny section of elite only have succeeded in achieving upward socio-economic mobility and the rest of them are still left in the same miserable condition without having a change in their socio-economic status which is a negation of the envisaged objective of the compensatory discrimination policy since it is meant for the upliftment of the whole group but not for some individuals. As a result they have developed a conspicuous hiatus between this fortunate section of the privileged and the general mass of beneficiary groups which is widening day by day. Moreover, these developments have created cleavages also among various SCs and STs.\(^4\) Thus certain new forms of inequality have emerged among

\(^{1}\) See C.Parvathama, 1976:226

\(^{2}\) See Sachchidananda, 1977:70.

\(^{3}\) This has been discussed earlier in this chapter.

the SCs and STs themselves. The better placed and more conscious groups have been able to take the benefits whereas the less privileged groups remain unheeded.

The special treatment policy has given rise to vested interests amongst the underprivileged and the label of backwardness and untouchability is deliberately perpetuated to reap the benefits of reservation. The caste-Hindus and the SC and ST elites have combines, may be unwittingly, to prevent the flow of facilities and new opportunities to the rank and file of the SCs and STs just to safe-guard their vested interests or to promote further their own interests by directly or indirectly diverting the resources or sabotaging the welfare plans meant for SCs and STs\(^1\) for which the policy has failed to affect the lives of vast majority of the SCs and STs.

This privileged group like non-SC/ST elite group has developed vested interest who have little concern for the amelioration of the lot of their unfortunate fellow beings. They are largely out of tune from the mass of their communities and seek realignment with status and power groups in the wider society.\(^2\) They join hands with power brokers and are interested, like their caste Hindu brothers, in enjoining the privileges that power brings. Their immediate interests are all inward looking and they, therefore, stress on personal and family prestige to elevate themselves to become *neo-Brahmins*.\(^3\) This elite group of SC and ST has successfully joined the ruling class and developed craze for power and authority and its consequent perks and facilities. It is observed that after becoming minister one avoids to be treated as SC (or ST) minister because he intends to show that he has become minister in his own right rather than by caste to which he belongs.\(^4\) They


\[^{2}\text{Karuna Ahmed, 1978:74.}\]

\[^{3}\text{Sec C.Parvathama, 1973:226.}\]

\[^{4}\text{See P.C. Agrawal and M.A. Ashraf, 1976:170.}\]
are more or less engaged in their self-aggrandisement by defeating the basic purpose of compensatory justice. After securing a berth for them, this elite group fails to represent the interest of their own community thereby giving rise to "betrayal syndrome".\(^1\) Narayanan (a member of Harijan elite himself) has observed that signs have already appeared of alienation between educated SC elite and the ordinary rank and file of the community of SC, leading to a condition of Untouchable Aristocracy.\(^2\)

Gunnar Myrdal's law of Cumulative Causation\(^3\) holds good in case of the development of the weaker section in India. Those who have already advanced undergo accelerated advancement while the backward people continue to lag behind. The vicious circle of cumulative backwardness poses a challenge to the basic thrust of development and sometimes it appears to be irreversible and immutable. In a stiff competition for limited benefits, this privileged better off section grabs a lion's share of it leaving very little for the under-privileged mass which results in inter SC/ST and intra-SC/ST inequalities.

This policy of compensatory discrimination has also created a strange paradox and dilemma, which sometimes seem to be unresolvable, that plagues this upwardly mobile social group in various forms. The 'Identity Crisis' and a sense of alienation among the SC/ST elite group has acquired a critical dimension. Reservation has conditioned the educated elite among the SCs and STs to look upon the administrative bureaucracy as their reference group and psychologically they orient themselves towards it.\(^4\) When they fail to get into it they feel excessively frustrated; and at the same time they can scarcely

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take any entrepreneurial role in trade, commerce and other arenas. The upward mobility is generally individual and is often self-defeating. The result is that social distance between the individual dalit and his community widens. Since neither his community nor even his family change as rapidly and totally as he moves through this reservation, the individual gets increasingly estranged from both. Even sometimes this elite section which has already moved up the social ladder are hesitant to identify themselves with their fellow beings. Isaacs has observed that these educated socially mobile ex-untouchables are in *semi-limbo*, where they are already estranged from their old community and not sure of their acceptance or integration in the new environment.¹ This crisis becomes severe when other caste groups refuse or are unwilling to accept them as co-equals which very often happens. On the one hand, it has reinforced the ascribed status of the upper castes in most parts of the country and on the other it has minimised the contacts of SC/ST with their own community with a wider implication of breeding a kind of inverse alienation.² It has not only led to the accentuation of old inequalities but also has added new ones and new areas of social inequality. This elite group is really at the cross-roads of life. Sometimes this elite section takes recourse to 'passing' i.e. an attempt on the part of a Harijan elite to conceal his caste identity or to falsify if it is necessary to gain acceptance or at least to avoid rejection.³ Yet there remains a conflict, ascribed and acquired status that co-exists in an uneasy communion further fragmenting his self-identity.

The implicit purpose of the policy of compensatory discrimination was to eliminate or reduce the sense of alienation in all manifest forms by giving the weaker section special status, removing their social disabilities and uplifting their socio-economic, educational


172
and political status. But this policy has very often been self-defeating. There is a significant relationship between the sense of alienation,\(^1\) and education and political participation. The relation is found to be inverse in both the cases i.e. the higher the level of education and political participation, the lower the sense of alienation. So far as the impact of occupational differentiation is concerned, both the SC/ST and non-SC/ST manifest a sense of powerlessness, meaninglessness and social isolation with difference in their occupational callings. But the sense of alienation is more with the SC and ST than the other and particularly the unemployed SC and ST engaged in unskilled work which manifests the highest sense of alienation.\(^2\) The irony is that even after getting education and prestigious jobs, the SCs and STs are not free from this alienation rather they suffer from different kinds of estrangement and isolation, as has been discussed earlier. It is only a curse of history that under the heavy weight of Brahminical arrogance and craftiness resulted in the rigidities of closed caste system, compartmentalisation, fissiparousness, group rivalries, caste prejudices, intensification of social discrimination, tactics of subjugation and dominance, exploitation and harassment, that the integrative and adaptive models of Indian caste-based symbiotic and egalitarian society has begun to show signs of crumbling down leading to alienation of different social groups and castes, (particularly SCs and STs) among and between themselves.\(^3\)

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1. Although the subjective elements are inherent in alienation, yet while talking of alienation of social group our conceptualization can (and should) be more objective in nature and its connotation (as well as manifestation) is also capable of objective assessment at the same time, in terms of powerlessness, meaninglessness and social isolation.


3. Ibid., 279.
For social mobilization and gaining acceptance of the higher caste the SCs (and also STs) spend their social energy in the blind alley of Sanskritisation. They accept one of the economically and politically dominant castes, which also enjoys a high ritual status as reference group and emulates its life-style. But finally they gain hardly anything. They do not have the economic resources at their command, neither do they have the aura of history behind them. Soon they find themselves in the arid zone of vanishing dreams and they get frustrated and alienated. Sometimes the SCs and STs take recourse to religious conversions to rid themselves of the structural disabilities like socio-cultural discrimination or alienation, economic subjugation, administrative harassment and political oppression, that they suffer at the hands of caste Hindus. Their recourse to conversions implies their lack of faith in the capability of governmental measures to deliver the goods. Their life is also no less traumatic after conversion into Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. The poor performance of Christianity, as a leveler of caste inequality, is no more a secret. Given the separate churches and burial grounds for higher and lower caste Christians, given the tendency of caste Christianity it appears as a poor solvent of the problem of caste inequality. On the other hand, like Christianity, Buddhism also failed to solve the problems of caste discrimination. Inspite of their conversion to Buddhism, they have hardly risen

1. The term Sanskritisation used by Srinivas in his study on Coorgs was primarily meant to describe the process of cultural mobility in the traditional rural India. According to him, Sanskritisation means the process by which a low caste or tribe or other group takes over the customs, rituals, beliefs, ideology and life style of a higher caste and in particular 'twice born' (dwija) caste. (See M.N. Srinivas, 1952).

2. Sometimes this process of Sanskritisation by SCs and STs faces hostility and ridicule from the castes of middle strata. Moreover, in some cases even Sanskritisation may not lead to elevation in socio-cultural status and they may continue to suffer the traditional social disabilities. (See B.K. Roy Burman, 1974:12).


174
above their traditional social image. The professed value of equality in Islam seems to be more of a myth than a reality. There is also hierarchy and discrimination within Muslim community and caste system among the Muslims is not altogether unknown. Hence there lies a vicious circle. There is hardly any choice left for SCs and STs to come out of the social disabilities.

Recently the SCs and STs have been subjected to ruthless atrocities by the upper castes. This phenomenon may paradoxically be indicative of their social mobility however slow it may be. Cases of atrocities, mass killings, massacres inflicted on SCs and STs are not new to Indian history. Earlier the object was to punish a specific individual for specific contravention. But now the object is more often to persecution of a caste or caste-cluster rather than individual. It has taken the form of group atrocities perpetrated by higher caste and class against local Harijans and landless agricultural labourers. Its increasing rate and intensity of occurrence in recent years is a new development. Atrocities are products of socio-cultural set-up that are used to treat SCs and STs (more particularly SCs) as inferior and destined for ever to play a servile role in a society pre-dominantly dominated by caste Hindus. Atrocities are viewed as a meticulous treatment inflicted upon the victims which besides doing physical harm, hurts their personal ego and damage their image in the society. It arises in the course of constant and unavoidable interaction between members of the SC/ST and caste-Hindu groups in different areas of activity. Now the cases of atrocities against SCs and STs are rising and that too by non-SCs/STs as


is evidenced from the figures below:

Table XIV

Statement showing the number of IPC crimes against members of the Scheduled Castes in the States/UTs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Murder</th>
<th>Grievous Hurt</th>
<th>Rape</th>
<th>Arson</th>
<th>Other Offences</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>1492</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>1295</td>
<td>10434</td>
<td>14318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>1429</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>11441</td>
<td>15054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>1351</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>11440</td>
<td>14949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>1454</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>12327</td>
<td>15987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>1376</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>11824</td>
<td>15373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>1408</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>1002</td>
<td>11715</td>
<td>15416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3139</td>
<td>8501</td>
<td>3997</td>
<td>6278</td>
<td>69181</td>
<td>91097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table XV

Against members of Scheduled Tribes in the States/UTs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Murder</th>
<th>Grievous Hurt</th>
<th>Rape</th>
<th>Arson</th>
<th>Other Offences</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>110</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>2657</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3261</td>
<td>4102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>3163</td>
<td>4134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>3327</td>
<td>4290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>3143</td>
<td>4055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>2957</td>
<td>3945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>1872</td>
<td>1617</td>
<td>1078</td>
<td>18508</td>
<td>23958</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table XVI**

The number of cases of crimes against the Scheduled Castes committed by members of non-SC in the various states/UTs during 1981-86.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>1981</td>
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<tr>
<td>1982</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
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<td>15373</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>91097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of cases of atrocities against the Scheduled Tribes by members of non-ST during 1981-86.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>3432</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
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<td>4102</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4134</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>4290</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
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<td>3945</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23958</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:239-40.

However, the nature of atrocities varies from place to place and always one particular reason cannot be accounted for all kinds of atrocities while caste-conflicts are now becoming so widespread that regional variations are narrowing down if not altogether obliterating. Nevertheless, all India generalisations are difficult to make because of the complexity of facts and wide diversities. Always one particular reason cannot be accounted for all kinds of atrocities since sometimes it is due to land disputes, sometimes due to failure on the part of SCs and STs to carry order of landlord of upper caste, sometimes due to antagonism created by the politicians by putting one community against the other. Exploitation of tribals are also varying in nature. They are ruthlessly exploited by landlords, moneylenders, contractors, officials and politicians. Despite the variation there is still a commonality in the factors responsible for all these cases of atrocities such as issues of wages, sell out of government land, land grab by the rich peasants and non-economic factors like not showing respect to the caste-Hindu landlords, rich peasants, overlooking their wishes and views on certain issues, dissociating from the traditional caste calling, and the manipulations by the politicians, the decreasing willingness of SCs to
acquiesce to the molestation of their women, and their increasing willingness to defy local elites.¹

During 1960-70 the incidence of atrocities was very high in number in comparison to that of preceding years. There has been improvement, however little it may be, in the socio-economic conditions of SCs and STs because of various governmental measures, and also rise of consciousness about their objective social positions. For, more recently they have been able to shed their deferential outlook and assume a more assertive posture. On the other hand, the upper caste groups feel deprived to see the beneficial effect of the policy on SCs and STs and they consider it as an encroachment on their traditional privileges and a threat to their hegemony of power. Thus, there is frequent recurrence of caste violence. Since independence and particularly since 1970s, as untouchables (as well as tribals) have more openly resisted discrimination, reports on terrorism against them have increased both in number and ferocity.²

Some remarkable features of the recent caste conflicts have been noted.³

1) These conflicts have been mostly unequal and it is the SCs and STs, being on the weaker side, have borne the brunt of it. The weaker side has neither the support of the police nor the people and the higher castes manipulate the whole episode and escape scot free.

2) Their incidence is greater in the rural areas and small towns because of the closer contact between the people and also these incidences escape the attention of the administration. In big cities the SCs and STs have better


economic opportunities and administrative protection; and also the urban anonymity and indifference prevents their occurrence.

3) Tension seems to be greater between the structural neighbours on the immediate social strata i.e. middle peasant caste and Harijans (or tribals). Of course, there are cases of conflicts and atrocities between the upper and bottom strata but it is less in comparison to the other. Until recently this backward middle caste was engaged in a conflict with the entrenched upper caste for political ascendancy but now the rising SCs and STs have become the victims of their wrath. These middle peasant castes as well as the Harijans are mostly confined to villages and agriculture is their main source of income. Now this middle peasant castes have found a threat-perception from the SCs and STs since both are engaged in an ever increasing competition over scarce land and agriculture wages.

4) The role of the local law and order machinery, police, (either mostly managed by caste-Hindus or dominated by them), in the context of caste atrocities has frequently been controversial. More often the alleged deliberate inactivity -- like delayed arrival on the scene, lukewarm intervention, refusal to register complaints -- and alleged complicity or collusion between the upper caste and the law and order machinery also aggravates the situation. The rich and influential sections are in close touch with administrators, police and politicians and are in a position to manipulate police investigation.¹ They are also rich enough to bribe the police and the police generally resort to motivated arrests, brutal beatings, lathi charge etc. Sometimes the police are also not willing to register criminal cases against the powerful landed interest

¹ Today more than seventy percent of the public believe that police are corrupt as well as partial towards rich and influential people. (See Third Report of the National Police Commission, 1980:26).
to save their own skin. A related problem has been the extremely slow adjudication on atrocity cases coupled with political interference in the judicial process in favour of aggression. It may be told that the law favours the richer sections of the community and the complaint of the poorer go by default. Each event leaves behind its own shadow which is bigger and more powerful than itself and continues to affect the psyche of the masses and persists even long after the happenings. Each tragedy leaves behind a trail of hatred, suspicion, fear and insecurity. It aggravates and vitiates the antagonism and prepares the ground for another one. When the cases are highlighted, investigations are conducted and the place of occurrence attract journalists and politicians, who take the undue advantage of the situation in favour of their electoral calculus and even sometimes instigates one community to retaliate against the other.

The atrocities against the SCs and STs lie deep in the economic context of the culture. According to Sachchidananda, the Harijans are exploited and oppressed not so much because they are Harijans as such but because they are poor, landless and depend on the higher castes for their livelihood. But this view is contested. Apart from economic factor, the socio-cultural factors also play a crucial role in the exploitation of the Harijans. There is an element of Harijanness in the atrocities. It is true that all the resourceless irrespective of caste background is subjected to inhuman treatment by the caste-Hindus. But there is difference between the Harijan proletariat and the caste-Hindu or Brahmin proletariat which is based on occupational background, prestige of occupation, numerical

1. This has already been discussed in the earlier chapter.

strength in the respective castes, patronage from caste dominants and cultural milieu.¹ The fact remains that a Harijan usually becomes a victim of a landlord's fury whereas a labourer belonging to the land-owner's own caste gets somewhat preferential treatment even while working on the farm as an agricultural daily-wage labourer like his Harijan counterpart.

No single factor will be able to trace the root cause behind these atrocities against the SCs and STs. A combination of factors like economic, socio-cultural and political, act simultaneously to perpetuate this kind of exploitation against the weaker section. The upper caste and the landlords want to maintain their monolithic control over the resources of the society and to keep the deprived sections as their servants and slaves. The continuing hold of the traditional structures of caste, a semi-feudal and backward economy, and the growing predominance of the ascendant peasant backward middle castes in the politics accentuate and perpetuate this kind of sub-human existence of the weaker sections.² As such, caste becomes a mechanism of exploitation of the poor people, particularly the SCs. Untouchability has major role behind this atrocity against the SCs and is largely responsible for the inhuman treatment by the caste-Hindus.³

The problem of untouchability like an incurable ailment still afflicts the body politic in India. In spite of all legal safeguards and welfare schemes the progress in this direction is said to be much below expectations. It has been observed that provisions of anti-

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3. The caste wars erupted in rural India since 1970s have exposed the state's limited or perverse penetration of the countryside. At the grass roots level the state is too weakly articulated and dependent on the powerful local elites to insure the security of persons as well as property.
untouchability laws are being disregarded on a larger scale.\(^1\) Although, untouchability has been abolished legally and many a measures have already been taken, yet the problem is nowhere near the solution. The ban on untouchability remains more or less a legal fiction. Though the practice of untouchability in its overt form has declined in metropolitan and urban areas, still there are rural areas where it continues unabated notwithstanding the sanctions under law against the same. The response of the administration by its very nature has not been very encouraging to prevent the practice which has resulted in a quite complex and intricate situation.\(^2\) Condemned to the lowliest position in the socio-economic status hierarchy, the untouchables are even now no better than the earlier one, whose legitimate claims for social upliftment and advancement even if recognised never allowed their fulfillment. Being refused by the society, denied the opportunity of socio-economic status, upliftment and exploited for the benefit of the upper caste, the untouchables suffer from double disadvantage. Untouchability reduces them to the status of social refuse which in turn deprives them of economic and other opportunities to escape from the oppressive social order. Despite all the provision, the manifestation of untouchability appears and reappears in different areas of Indian social and political life.\(^3\) Because of ill-treatment throughout the country, humiliation and undignified behaviour at the hands of upper caste people and frequent explosion of caste violence in different areas, the destiny of the untouchables still remain doubtful and uncertain. Given the humiliating past, exploitative present and enigmatic future, the untouchables are really at the cross road and do not know where they are leading to.

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A typical formal response to the denial of access to common facilities like drinking water is to have a new source of drinking water in the SC hamlet, ostensibly as a facility for those people but in reality making the segregation a normal feature. Separate settlement and separate drinking water wells for the members of SC under the programme of removal of untouchability continue to be a rule in the village.¹ The position in urban areas is also not much different. Urban heterogeneity affords a relative sense of anonymity to the individual, but even here the stigma of untouchability remains though removed from the public to the private sphere. Pollution and maintenance of social distance are specific forms of segregation and inequality bred within the Indian caste system. The established and entrenched norm of separation and stigma for the untouchables in a thoroughly caste-ridden society can hardly be changed. In the unorganised sector, particularly amongst the poorest sections of the community, clustering is generally on caste lines. The approach leading to segregation indirectly legitimises untouchability. But there lies a real dilemma which seems to be unresolvable. The untouchables are too weak in the local power structure to assert their right of drawing water from the common village well and even legal action can assist them to a limited extent only.² On the other hand they have to be provided with drinking water immediately which is quite essential for their survival before sorting out the legal and moral issues with the caste Hindus.

It is a crude fact that despite constitutional safeguards and legislative measures taken to protect the SCs/STs from social discrimination and injustice, higher castes have committed the worst type of atrocities and indignities on them in a various parts of the country. The statistics furnished by the States both in relation to the offences under the


protection of Civil Rights Act and atrocities against members of SCs and STs do not reveal the real picture.\(^1\) The pitiable situation of the SCs and STs is inevitable in any formal approach to the solution of human problems which are laden with vicious interests of all hues and colours, old and new. This is also a result of the propensity of the government to equate creation of institutions with fulfillment of objectives and resultant euphoria about the success based on paper reports devoid of reality.

The situation in tribal areas is particularly disquieting. The consequence of development strategy followed by the state has been distressing for the tribal community.\(^2\) The life and death struggles of many primitive tribes in India had led to moral depression and its effects have been disastrous on the tribal stock.\(^3\) The toll of discomforts and miseries enumerated by D.N. Majumdar are as follows:\(^4\)

i) The excise laws have hit them hard. The "outstill system" had led to an increase in drunkenness and mortality.

ii) The frequent displacement of tribal officers by the administration has disorganised tribal life in all its aspects.

iii) Prohibition of shifting cultivation in most areas has forced them to take the kind of agriculture unsuited to them or for which they do not know adequate offering and sacrifices which will please the Gods presiding over agriculture.

iv) Quarrying in the land owned is not allowed except with the payment of heavy licence fees.

v) The intrusion of Indian Penal Code in tribal marriage i.e., the recognition of

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4. Ibid., pp.146-67; Also see D.N. Majumdar and T.N. Madan, 1986:266-67, 270-74.
marriage by capture as offence punishable by law, has seriously undermined social solidarity leading to racial dysgenics.

vi) The fairs and weekly markets which have begun to attract these people are ruining them financially.

vii) Education which has been and is being imparted has been more harmful than otherwise.

viii) The judicial officers, not being conversant with the dialects, customs and mentality of the people, have not been able to give them justice.

ix) Missionary effort has resulted in creating in their minds a loathing for their own culture and longing for things for which they have not the means to satisfy.

x) Contact has introduced diseases in tribal people for which they possess no efficient indigenous pharmacopoeia and medical help rendered by the state is inadequate.

xi) Because of culture-contact with outsiders, the tribals are suffering from severe cultural crisis. Beliefs in what exists is undermined and the substitutes are not available, or if available, do not fit into their traditional pattern of "artifacts", "socifacts" and "mentifacts". The crisis in culture is caused by arrest in growth, by one sided and haphazard acculturation leading to cultural bondage and by either sudden changes forced by a shift in the economic base or lack of adjustment with the changed socio-economic milieu. The cultural breakdown makes a people either spineless or anarchic and both are anti-social conditions which do harm to the wider social organization of which the disorganising group is a sub-culture.

The tribal people are at a critical juncture where they are obliged, rather forced to contend with an unfamiliar formal system of state, unknown forces of new economics and
uninhibited intrusion or interference by other people while their own system has been rendered weak, superfluous and redundant for want of due recognition and appreciation. There are two facets of the present tribal scene. Firstly, each community or even part thereof is facing a unique configuration of socio-economic forces; secondly, the problem in all cases are essentially those of transition.

VI

CRITICAL EVALUATION

The compensatory discrimination policy in its operational context has both positive and negative results. The compensatory policy has been an instrumental in reducing group disparities affording representation and encouraging the development of the depressed section. In the present context, reservation offers one mechanism to bring persons from different castes together for secular activities and boosts up socio-economic mobility. By providing institutional protections to the lowest strata of the society, the policy has paved the way for vertical mobility of the members of those marginalised communities. It has also succeeded in raising the consciousness of the target communities of their rights as citizens of India by providing institutional arrangement. With the boost of compensatory policy a section of SCs and STs have secured entry into the modern class populating the organised sector. A number of studies have mentioned that the governmental measures for SCs and STs have served the positive purpose of bringing about an upliftment in their social and economic status.¹

But against the backdrop of an inbuilt hierarchical structure, rise of minute section of society (elite group) at the cost of other, continued prevalence of mass poverty and lack

of even or balanced socio-economic transformation of society, this policy has been a faulty and ambitious one to achieve a just social order or to usher in a new era of social revolution by transforming the hierarchical social and economic set up. All the compensatory policies other than reservation in legislatures have run counter to the objectives of reservation. A number of scholars irrespective of their standpoint agree that this policy has failed to achieve its goal. It has been observed that there is either no change in the conditions of social inequalities or it has further accentuated and deteriorated.

A variety of programmes were initiated soon after independence for the welfare and development of SCs and STs. Some nominal benefits have accrued in education and some of them entered Government services but the condition of the bulk of the people has not improved. In many cases their condition has further deteriorated. The tribal people are continuously loosing command over their resources on almost all counts - pressure from the more advanced people, claims of the state in utter disregard of their traditional right and virtually forcing displacement in favour of a variety of development projects, big and small. The administration of the Scheduled Areas is not being reviewed systematically at any level. Not a single rupee has been given for raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas even though the first provision to Article 275(1) of the Constitution provides for automatic devolution of funds the moment the need is established. The agricultural pursuits from which the tribals are deriving their sustenance are exploited in various possible ways by moneylenders, would be absentee landlords, rack-renters and middle-men. Some of them by loosing their very means of production have been reduced

1. A number of studies have already been mentioned and to add some more Harold R. Isacs, 1965; S.S. Anant, 1972; N.D. Kamble, 1982; S.K. Ghosh, 1980; Ramashray Roy and V.B. Singh, 1987; R.K.Sinha, 1986

2. This aspect has already been discussed earlier in detail.

to the position of wage-earners and even to that of serfs and helots at the mercy of a rather unsympathetic class of landlords, moneylenders and the middle-men.\(^1\) As a result there is simmering in almost the entire middle Indian tribal belt particularly on the issues of land and forest.

It is difficult to measure performance since effects ramify in complex interaction with other factors. The complex correspondence between policies adopted and services actually delivered gives rise to the realisation that implementation is not a mere mechanical translation of goals into routine procedure but it is something more than that. Compensatory policies are designed to pursue a multiplicity of incommensurable goals in unspecified mixtures that vary from proponent to proponent and even evaluation of specific scheme for specific group during a specific period, is itself a daunting undertaking.\(^2\) Explicit considerations of the frequent disparity between goals and outcomes in the implementation of public policy should not only focus on the administrative apparatus and procedures of implementing bureaucracy or on the characteristics of bureaucratic officials, importance should also be attached to linking characteristics of policies and programmes, to their subsequent implementation, to relating implementation problems, to characteristics of the political regimes in which they are pursued. Both the content as well as the context (How does the political context of administrative action affect policy implementation?) should be taken into consideration. It is an ongoing process of decision making by a variety of actors, the ultimate outcome of which is determined by the context of the programme being pursed and by the interaction of the decision makers within a given politico-administrative context.\(^3\)

\(^2\) See Marc Galanter, 1984:547.
\(^3\) See M.S. Grindle (ed.), 1980:5-14.
Implementation means the translation of public policies - broad statement of goals, objectives and means - into action programme that aim to achieve the ends stated in the policy. Policy implementation as a general process of administrative action can be evaluated by measuring programme outcomes against policy goals (see the following figures).

*Figure: Implementation as a Political and Administrative Process.*

**Policy Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal Achieved</th>
<th>Action Programme and Individual Projects Designed and Funded.</th>
<th>Implementing Activities Influenced by:</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a) Content of Policy</td>
<td>a) Impact on Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Interests Affected</td>
<td>Individuals Groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Type of Benefits</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Extent of change envisioned</td>
<td>b) Change and its acceptance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Site of Decision Making</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Programme Implementations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6. Resources committed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programmes delivered as designed</td>
<td>b) Context of Implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Power, Interest and Strategies involved.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Institution and regime characteristics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Compliance and Responsiveness</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEASURING SUCCESS**

*Source: M.S. Grindle (ed.), 1980:11.*
The kind of policy being made has considerable impact on its implementation. For instance, to the extent the policy seeks to bringing about changes in social, political and economic relationship, the interests affected by it (both of the beneficiaries and those whose interests are threatened) and behavioural adaptation and participation of recipients play a crucial role in the implementation of policies. In addition site of implementation and bureaucratic agencies involved in and the way the decisions are made are equally important for successful implementations.

The context of policy and programme (in addition to the content) is an unimportant factor in determining the outcome of implementation initiatives. It is critical factor because of the real or political impact it has on a given social, political and economic setting. Thus it is necessary to consider the context or environment in which administrative action is pursued. Implementation is an ongoing process of decision making involving a variety of actors. A brief listing of those who might be involved in the implementation of any particular programme would include national level planners; national, regional and local politicians; economic elite grouped, especially at the local levels; recipient groups, and bureaucratic implementors at middle and lower levels. Very often, the goals of the actors may be in direct conflict with each other and the outcome of this conflict and consequently, of who gets what will be determined by the strategies, resources and power positions of each of the actors involved. The problem arises mainly because the resource committed is too meagre for the target groups. Hence there is a stiff competition among the target groups to gain the benefits. The final result may thus be the outcome of a political calculus of interests and groups competing for scarce resources, the response and attitude of implementing officials and the actions of political elites, all

1. The content of the compensatory policy has already been discussed earlier.
interacting within given institutional context. Analysis of the implementation of specific programme therefore may imply assessing the "power capabilities" of the actors, their interests and the strategies for achieving them and the nature of the regime in which they interact.1

In achieving goals officials face two subordinate problems i.e. compliance and responsiveness that highlight the interaction of programme environment and programme administration.2 The officials must acquire the support of political elites, and the compliance of implementing agencies, of bureaucrats charged with carrying out programmes, of lower level political elites and of intended beneficiaries. Ideally speaking, public institutions such as bureaucracy must be responsive to the needs of the intended beneficiaries, in order to serve them most adequately. Equally important is the extent to which political regimes and administrative organs have the power to implement policies they are committed to. Good intentions only can hardly achieve the desired objective if those responsible for various policies or programmes are unable to control their pursuit. Variables like structure of political institution and nature of political regime or state have also considerable impact on successful implementations.3 Matters of ideology, culture, political alliances and pay-offs are other environmental influences that affect administrative process.4 Policies and programmes are not implemented in isolation; programmes

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1. For elaborate analysis of 'power capability', see, C. Anderson, 'the Latin American Political System', in N. Uphoff and W. Ichman (ed.), 1972:171


3. This aspect will be discussed elaborately in the next chapter.

identical in content may still yield different results if the context in which they are pursued differ substantially.

Any assessment of outcome of the safeguards provided for the SCs and STs appropriately begins with presentation of a clear perspective of the safeguards themselves and the review of the overall socio-economic situation within which these are expected to operate. The weakness of the basic structure during the operational phase or any aberrations arising there from, adversely affect the entire scheme for the welfare and advancement of SC/ST as well. The state of Welfare of community depends on the Socio-economic structure of the community itself and also the nature of relationship of its members, severally and collectively, with the rest of the society in different spheres of their life.

In the present setting equity is getting relegated to a secondary position, particularly in the milieu of quick success of consumerism, primordial considerations are becoming more and more prominent. The entire economic system of our country has been moving in such a way that inequality continues to increase instead of decreasing. The issues concerning equity thus have become more complicated. With the consolidation of vested interests and differential growth the task of ensuring an equitious deal to the underprivileged is tougher than in the beginning. Atrocities on SCs and STs have acquired a new economic dimension. It is disheartening to note that the SC/ST suffer and even face penal action for acts of omission and commission of the state. The most regrettable situations are those where the state itself sometimes tends to adopt a particularistic role and becomes a privy even for actions not quite legal simply because the matter concerns voiceless weaker communities. ¹ While exploitation in various forms continues unabated, the backlash become increasingly severe as the level of financial investment has risen in

1. See Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:V.
recent years for their development. The nascent strife is weakening not only the economic system but also severely straining the social fabric beyond the limits of tolerance. The dark side of development paradigm which manifests itself through its backlash has remained largely unnoticed and unattended. While the backlash is affecting all vulnerable groups universally, it is particularly horrifying for members of SCs who face a double lash due to their increasing exclusion from the larger economic system and devaluation of their skills in the changing matrix of the economy. It is also traumatic for STs who are confronting all possible adverse effects of development, the most diabolic being the dispossession and displacement from their traditional habitat.\footnote{Sec Report of the Commissioner for SCs and STs, 1986-87:4-5.} The powers with the Executive both at the center and the States have remained unused even after four long decades because the system has rather been unresponsive to the problems faced by them. Hence any evaluation of welfare and advancement in terms of general indication of development and also the special welfare measures targeted for deprived sections without taking note of the nature of the state in its socio-economic context will not reveal the real picture. It is inadequate and incomplete to evaluate developmental process without analysing the nature and dynamics of the Indian state which is the prime agent of socio-economic development, particularly of the weaker sections of the society. The Indian state has emerged as a weighty actor to set the agenda for socio-economic changes through policy formulation and its implementation. Hence understanding the nature and role of the state with its power configuration is crucial for the assessment of any kind of developmental measure. This task has been carried out in the next chapter.