Chapter - VII

CONCLUSIONS

GLOBALISATION, IDENTITY AND DALITS

Globalisation, privatisation and liberalisation (GLP) are key concepts to define the post cold war world. Notwithstanding the primacy of economic factors in characterizing the global interaction, political, cultural, and social implications are given due consideration by scholars on globalisation. The 20th century debate over the values of social justice, equality and liberty marked significant departure from the traditionalistic notion of communal life which was feudal, anti liberal and most significantly devoid of equality to vast sections of deprived groups. Process of GLP at the end of the century has implications on the movements which aimed towards justice and equality. It is argued that globalisation accentuates the divide between haves and have-nots at both the international as well as intra-national levels. It has far reaching political implications. It affects social and cultural bases of identity construction. It is said to have brought on the surface, the paradox of identity assertion of ethnic communities. A serious implication of globalisation which is highlighted by leading researches is the undermining of effective power of the nation state that resulted into the strengthening of ethnic identities. In the preceding pages an attempt is made to inquire into political identity of the educated Dalits in Mumbai city which is displaying signs of transformation owing to post 1990 changes in the political economy of India. Impact of globalisation over Dalits can be observed from the objective life conditions and subjective meaning of their identity. Both in turn have strong bearing on the political orientation which they harbour in the last century old struggle.

The present study attempts to contextualise the political identity of the Dalits in the background of globalisation. Identity operates through difference. Process of globalisation claimed to have undermined certain differences such as nationality and culture but made salient the categories of class and ethnicity. Identity is multi dimensional phenomenon broadly conceptualised in three forms- personal, social and political identity. The classification is largely analytical and remains ambiguous unless and until evoked in extreme situations. In the present study political identity is defined as a subjective sense of self based on in-group and out-group differentiation that shapes
the political orientation of individual/group. Identity also emerges from the objective conditions of life which acquire subjective meaning in the life worlds of individuals. Effect of globalisation over material conditions as well as ideological and cultural values seems to have impact over the political identity of individuals.

In the backdrop of globalisation, a claim that circulates in the academic world is that globalisation brought out the differences between haves and have-nots more visibly. Applying this formulation to the Dalits in India, it is highlighted that discrimination on the basis of ascribed lowest caste status and consequent material deprivation in terms of access to conditions of opportunities to secure dignity and respect makes them highly vulnerable to ill effects of globalisation. On the basis of this the Dalits are claimed to be natural have-nots fulfilling automatically the conditions of alignment with other deprived classes. This in turn points towards reshaping of political identity of the Dalit in India as anti-globalisation subject.

It would be appropriate to turn back to the proposed definition of political identity. The definition consists of three parts, firstly, a subjective sense of self; secondly, based on in-group and out-group differentiation; and finally, shapes the political orientation of individual/group. As suggested by Erikson (1975) subjective sense of self takes into account observable quality of personal sameness and continuity. The sense of self is subjected to changes in the surrounding circumstances and historical continuity of otherness as well. This in turn highlights the importance of second part of the definition, that is, in-group and out-group differentiation. Tajfel and Turner (1978, 1979, and 1986) underscore such tendency of individuals to categorize others and themselves. The modernity brought individuals in the political sphere, not merely as object but an actor and initiator as well. Therefore their estimation of the self and society assisted them in development of their political orientation that ultimately shaped their political identity, and it can be said that their political behaviour must have emerged out of the same.

In case of the Dalits in India their stigmatisation as untouchables and impure is the core of their social identification. In 20th century the Dalit emerged as a political subject that strives to convert a negative description into a confrontational identity and seeks their inclusion and share in the political modernity (Rao 2009:1). Their movement in the last century was towards shedding of the stigmatized identity and to acquire secular meaning. Diverse strategies they adopted includes,
leaving villages and traditional occupations, acquiring education, conversion to Buddhism, and political mobilization. The strategy was to focus on reservations in politics, educational institutions as well as in public sector employments. Despite of deployment of various strategies the social identity persists in the social interactions within the modern urban environment that was looked upon by the Dalits as liberal and conducive to ameliorate their pliable conditions. An explanation of the continuity of the differentiating behaviour can be obtained in the formulation of Goffman. In his words,

“When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed. They will be interested in his general socio-economic status, his conception of self, his attitude toward them, his competence, his trustworthiness, etc. Although some of this information seems to be sought almost as an end in itself, there are usually quite practical reasons for acquiring it. Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them what they may expect of him. Informed in these ways, the others will know how best to act in order to call forth a desired response from him” (Goffman 1959: 1).

Thus, although political modernity offered a political space to Dalits, their historical exclusion continued in the social and economical sphere. In urban sphere the exclusion acquired hidden form and camouflaged behind the cosmopolitan notions of civic life.

ELEMENTS OF POLITICAL IDENTITY OF DALITS: THE HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Political Identity vacillates between three strands, primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism (Joireman 2003). Primordialism attributes identity to ethnic sentiments, culture, and psychological as well as emotional factors such as attachment to history and a myth of common homeland. Instrumentalism characterised identity as a means to achieve political ends. Social constructivists consider identity as evolving entity that emanates from social, economic and political conditions surrounding the individuals. The three strands of political identity as described by Joireman provide grounds to classify different political identities that a group may possess at a time. It implies that an individual or group as a political actor can possess multiple
political identities, salience of which in appropriate settings can be attributed to the definition of the situation in which it is evoked. Further the definition of the situation can be depended on the differentiation and categorisation such situations may warrant. The argument can be illustrated by the case of political identity of Dalits that has been the central concern of present study.

Valerian Rodrigues (2006) outlined some essential ideas of Dalit-Bahujan political discourse in modern India. These are, opposition to brahminism, recourse to hermeneutics, historiography, positive reception to modernity, oppression and colonialism, positive disposition to power, community and nation, avowal of political values such as justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, avowal of rights, communal representation and preferential politics, rejection of culture of masculinity, and religion and morality. This is not the exhaustive list but covers the major currents underlining the discourse. In the course of more than hundred years of evolution the Dalit as an identity incorporated such ideas as main elements of the subjective meaning of the political identity. Total sum of these ideas shapes the Dalit orientation as universal, egalitarian and humanitarian construct. In addition to the ideological design of the political self the discourse also took into account certain binary oppositions to formulate the otherness. Various identifications that were attributed to them indicate the complexity that evolved out of multiplicity of identity constructions of the Dalits. Historically in addition to their caste names they were referred as asprushya (untouchables), bahishkrit varga (excommunicated classes), Anarya (non aryans), atishudra (lowest among the shudra or labouring classes), depressed classes, Scheduled Castes, Harijan, nava Boudha (neo Buddhist) and Dalit (Rao 2010: xx). The broad outline of the trajectory of these identity positions can be traced as follows.

In an effort to acquire positive meaning the Dalit historiography in Maharashtra projected primordial account of political identity through claiming the lineage to ancient Naga rulers from central India and Buddhism as well as indigenous association with the state of Maharashtra. These claims endorsed primordial element of ethnic pride as well as in-group association with Marathi linguistic group as well as with Buddhist religious community.

The medieval period marked presence of various elements of the Dalit identity, as socially stigmatized untouchables, as military achievers, and a crucial part of village administration
without which none of the social or administrative business could be accomplished. Their separate settlements outside the village are interpreted as an indicator of distinct political identity, as a different tribe than the touchable Hindus. Salient administrative role as well as noteworthy military achievements preserved their collective pride. Till the advent of British rule, a socially stigmatized untouchable identity was strictly imposed over them through the religious and political instrumentalities. Despite of that within themselves they maintained primordial element of identity as a pride in their military skills, administrative importance as well as loyalty to the rulers they served.

With the emergence of social movements in the 19th century India, after advent of modernity through British rule, a social consciousness developed among Dalits. During this period the symbolic and cultural sphere of the Indian social life was questioned and foundation of powerful alternative to the Brahmanical world view was laid down. The Dalit and anti-caste movement represent the tradition of this alternative. Two approaches of social reforms influenced collective consciousness of Dalits. Modernists’ favoured politicization of the struggle of emancipation from untouchability and revivalists attempted to address the issue at socio-cultural level within the folds of Hinduism. The Dalits in Maharashtra accepted the modernist version that defined another trait of their political identity. Phule laid foundation of the movement of Dalits and shaped their identity as Bahujan, a broad coalition of untouchables and non-brahman castes, in opposition to hegemonic Brahmanical orthodoxy. Along with radical critique of Phule there developed mild gradualism of his contemporaries who supported sanskritisation and introspective reformism to shed off the stigmatic identity. While Phule’s formulation presented Anti-Hindu protest element of the Dalit identity the alternative was oriented towards retaining Hindu characterization. Phule’s work leads to emerging political consciousness while the alternative was allergic to political activism.

In first quarter of 20th century both the trends emerged visibly clear in the formulations of Ambedkar and Gandhi. Gandhi echoed the argument of early Hindu social reformists to consider Dalits as a part and parcel of Hindu identity. Ambedkar continued legacy of Phule by maintaining autonomy of Dalit identity. Both of them led strong foundation of politicization of Dalits. Gandhi attempted to politicize them with an objective of incorporating them in to the
broader nationalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-colonial movement. Ambedkar viewed Brahmanism, and not imperialism as the main culprit to be held responsible for the plight of Dalits. One more alternative that was making inroads into the Dalit struggle of dignity and social justice was of that of class identity based on the Marxist mode of thinking. Leftist framework emphasized industrialized worker class as advanced and potent force for the revolution and rejected primordial affiliations of caste/religion and did not consider them important enough to take into account while formulating strategy for revolution.

Ambedkar formulated the core of political identity of Dalits with both essentialist and constructivist arguments. His theory of untouchability tracked the historical roots of Dalits to Buddhism and even to the Naga rulers of ancient India and defined them as political class in ancient India. Against the non-Aryan theory of Dalit-Shudra identity, he developed theory of conflict between Brahmanism and Buddhism. He located primordial roots of the political identity of Dalits. During his period anti-Gandhi, anti-Congress and anti-Communist elements of political identity of Dalits were developed and which posed certain essentialist dilemmas to the Dalit movement in future.

First overt attempt to assert the distinct political identity of Dalits was made by Ambedkar in Second Round Table conference in 1932 by demanding separate electorates for the depressed classes. He countered Gandhi’s attempt to label Dalits as *Harijan*. Both the Poona Pact of 1932 and his critique of Gandhi and Congress occupied important space in the political consciousness of the Dalits in the later period. He rejected Hindu cultural nationalist construction of Dalit political identity by Gandhi and carefully crafted his own Dalit nationalist discourse centred on the notion of social justice.

Formation of RPI as the party of labourers, peasants and Dalits; and mass conversion to Buddhism were two noteworthy attempts by Ambedkar in post independence period. Both were in accordance with his long term objective of casteless society and healthy parliamentary democracy in India with strong political alternative to Congress dominance. The conversion offered to Scheduled Castes gave a new social identity, of a self-willed, self-propelled and
dignified individual and RPI offered new political hope to stage broader movement of protest against all forms of exploitation.

In post Ambedkar period the core of the political identity remain to be influenced by the life and works of Ambedkar. While anti Hinduism and Anti-Caste elements were visible in the event of conversion to Buddhism, religion, caste, class and language offered alternatives to Dalits to project them as a political subject/category. For a brief period at the end of 1950s, language offered an alternative political identity to the Dalits in Maharashtra. While other alternatives emerged out of the core principle of the emancipation from the exploitation inherent in the caste structure and subsequent annihilation of the same structure, the role of language is restricted as an instrument to achieve some immediate objectives. Primary among them is to win political allies against one party dominant system of congress in the Indian politics. Buddhism as a marker of political identity emerged immediately after the death of Ambedkar. RPI emerged as a political party of Buddhists from Maharashtra. Issue of reservation was at the centre of the Dalit discourse since 1932 Poona Pact. On the issue of reservation instrumentalist strand of Dalit Identity clashed with constructivist version. As a tool of empowerment, policy of reservation was viewed by few like Bhayyasaheb Ambedkar as regressive, which according to them will hamper Dalit’s quest to positive meaning that they try to seek through conversion to Buddhism. Further link with class struggle was maintained by RPI with popular land struggle in 1960s and 1970s.

Emergence of Dalit Panthers in the 1970s highlights key ideological contradictions within the Dalit movement. It disdained the linguistic affinity as regressive after the emergence of Shiv Sena with its anti-Dalit posture but was puzzled between communist, Buddhist and sub-regional ideological varieties. Congress’s politics of summation and intricacies of electoral politics further blurred the boundaries of the identity and weakened the anti-congress stand. The growth of Dalit literature during 1960s reflected the anger, frustration, alienation and the desire to revolt. The literature was also marred with debate over its identification. At least six nomenclatures were suggested (Dalit, Ambedkarite, Non-Brahmin, Buddhist, literature of Phule-Ambedkar Motivation, and Bahujan Sahitya). Along with existing identities of Bahujan, Non-Aryan and proletariat this debate opened up avenues for new political identity constructions which were the outcome of post-Ambedkar search of identities. Broadly these were ideological and religious.
Ideologically some authors personified and named it after Ambedkar and Phule-Ambedkar; some authors called it Buddhist. Thus, broadly two new elements were added with political ideological construction as well as newly found religious assertion.

Soon after the death of Ambedkar, in 1956 his life and works emerged as a venerated element of political identification of Dalits. In the writings of Dalit writers and poets, struggle of Ambedkar was reproduced to evoke political consciousness and solidarity among Dalits. Establishment of his statues, renaming of streets and places, protecting his writings, speeches and memoirs acquired central place on the agenda of RPI and other Dalit parties. Thus in the post-Ambedkar period, Ambedkar as an image of liberation, dignity and self respect emerged as a crucial element of political identity of Dalits.

Post 1990 period marked a complicated stage in the history of Dalit movement. Globalisation brought manifold changes in the Indian society. Dalits being at the lowest ladder in the social hierarchy are among the poorest of the population also. It is argued by many scholars working on conditions of Dalits that they are the most vulnerable to the negative effects of globalisation. Concurrently many argued that small section of educated middle class urban Dalits emerged as beneficiary of the globalisation with their urban English educated background. The same microscopic section became apathetic towards the century old anti-caste movement of Dalits and distances themselves from the movement against the stigmatic identity. As a member of group primordially hooked to stigmatized identity which tries to escape from it and acquires language of globalisation like confidence, merit and performance has evidently marked state of identity crisis among them.

Thus the question of political identity of the Dalits in India can be seen in the light of the historical trajectory of intersection of multiple identities that the Dalits carried through their more than century old struggle in political, social, economical and cultural spheres. On the basis of the above discussion it can be argued that the confrontational identity that Dalits acquired was aimed against caste structure. Various accounts, constructs and notions that the Dalits in India formulated were primarily instruments of their counter engagement with stigmatised identity.
MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Nearly all the respondents covered under the study were born in Mumbai and mostly belong to second or third generation of the Dalits who migrated from districts of state of Maharashtra near the city of Mumbai in search of jobs in railways, ports, and Municipal Corporation and cotton mills. Majority of the respondents completed their education in Mumbai. Irrespective of their sex, high percentages of respondents were computer literate. Despite having common environment of Mumbai city, inequality in terms of education, occupation and income was visible among them.

Effect of shrinking of state and reduction of job opportunities in public sector were revealed in the employment profile of the respondents. Majority of the respondents who were serving in private sector had lower paid job profile like manual labourer or clerk as compared to respondents working in government sector who were getting high wages for similar type of work. Proficiency in English language and education in private schools seems to have influenced financial achievements of the respondents. It emerged from the study that income level of English educated and privately educated respondents was significantly high as compared to the respondents with poor English speaking skills and government schooling educated respondents. Similarly, professional degree holders respondents were found earning high income as compared to the general degree holders. This finding is closely linked to the findings that majority of respondents with general degrees are serving in private sector and earning less compared to their professional counter parts who are earning high in private sector. Gender differences were visible among respondents where women were considerably less represented in professional type of education. Although high computer literacy was observed among the respondents, very few female as compared to male respondents reported use of internet. Thus despite of the fact that all the respondents were urban born with differential access to the skills required to survive in globally competitive economy that affects their income as well as professional achievements.

Social Identity Profile

Salience of caste is characteristic feature of social identification of individuals in Indian society. In case of Dalits, it is abomination to highlight their caste because of its stigmatized nature. Their
conversion to Buddhism was decisive step in quest to earn positive social identity for sizeable Dalits from Maharashtra. In the sample of 90 that was studied, it was observed that Buddhist identity emerged as dominant label to self categorization for the majority of respondents. The abominable character of the caste is highlighted by small section of respondents who refused to report their caste and claimed that since they were converted to Buddhism they do not belong to any caste as such. The caste is linked to Hinduism and thus anti-caste stand combined with anti-Hindu stand drive majority of the respondents to reject temple, Gandhi, Harijan as being symbols of Hinduism. Overwhelmingly respondents claim themselves close to the symbols like Dr. Ambedkar, Buddha Vihar and Blue Flag.

Conversion to Buddhism was not easy metamorphosis for Dalits. It was complicated and crisis ridden process to alter one’s social as well as personal identification. Three tendencies were generally found among them, first, to retain Buddhist religion in public appearance but report Hindu on caste certificate. Second, is to retain Buddhist religion in public as well as on government documentation. Third, is to retain Buddhist identity in public as well as on caste certificate but to follow cultural practices of Hindu religion. These diverse practices point towards incomplete transformation of primordial stigmatized caste identity into constructivist ascribed emancipatory religious collective identity. This leads to an identity crisis, signs of which were observed among those respondents who reported their religion as Hinduism. Less than half of them preferred to identify themselves as Buddhist, one forth preferred to be identified as Scheduled Caste and one forth reported other preferences like Indian and human being but none of them preferred Harijan or Hindu identity. The crisis was further visible among SC respondents out of whom 62.5 percent preferred Buddhist, 25 percent others and 12.5 percent preferred Dalit identity.

Another evidence of the social identity crisis, underlined in the preceding paragraph, was observed while collecting responses to the questions inquiring about affective dimension of salience of their caste. It was observed that majority reflected upon those questions by drawing parallel between Buddhism as a religion and Buddhist as a Caste; and caste is interchangeably used with religion. This was primarily due to the mention of Boudha or Nav-Boudha as a Caste on the Caste Certificates Issued by the Government to the converted Buddhists in Maharashtra.
A significant number of them reported that they feel pride in their caste (or religion). This can be corroborated from the observation that out of total 74 respondents who claimed pride in their caste, majority respondent’s preferred Buddhist identity. Incidentally younger respondents exhibit feelings of pride about their caste than older respondents. This finding, along with other findings that significant majority claim that they greet ‘Jay Bhim’ to fellow caste members highlight the defiant, assertive posture adopted by them. Feeling pride about one’s ascribed social identity and applying marker of daily greetings to assert the same provide evidence of positive self image developed by Dalits. Importantly this tendency was observed in higher percentages among young, Buddhist and General degree holder respondents as compared to older, Hindu and professional degree holders.

**Salience of Caste in Social Settings**

Although in day to day interactions in urban settings caste identity remains obscured, very often it acquires salience in certain situations. Majority of them admitted that they reveal their caste to others. Reasons for the same varies from administrative compulsion while school admissions, applying for government schemes and recruitment to general discussion among colleagues or friend circles over social, political issues. It was observed that younger respondents show decline in the tendency to reveal their caste. It was further observed that less percentage of private sector employees shows tendency to reveal their caste than public sector employees.

Urban milieu show propensity to hide caste under the formal behavioural patterns at public places. It was observed that significantly high majority of respondents said that they invite non Dalits at their home for functions and majority among them said that non Dalits attend such functions. Regarding composition of their social circle majority of them said that it comprised of mix caste peoples and few accepted that of mainly other castes mostly upper castes. This shows that, apparently in urban settings caste considerations emerged nonessential in interpersonal relations. It will be difficult to acknowledge complete absence of caste consideration owing to the findings that sizeable majority of respondent claimed that they sometimes discuss issues concerning caste with their friends, with considerable percentages discuss it very often. If both are clubbed together, very high percentages of respondents discuss the issues concerning either often or sometimes with their friends. Significantly, younger respondents discuss about caste
issues ‘sometimes more than older respondents. Another factor that points at the covert presence of caste is that majority revealed that they can identify caste of others by various signifiers like surname or language. Further others can recognize their Dalit identity by surname, religion and locality. Thus the factors like frequent reference of caste in regular discussions among friends and knowledge of signifiers of caste highlight the clandestine existence of caste identity within the urban settings.

**Experience of Caste Based Discrimination**

Although experience of untouchability in the urban context was completely ruled out by the respondents, discrimination owing to lower caste identification was reported by sizable respondents for at least once in a lifetime. Incidentally, respondents from lower income group and younger respondents between age group of 21 to 30 years reported high percentages of such experiences compared to higher income group and older respondents. Occupation and qualification wise self employed and professional degree holder respondents reported more experiences of discrimination than salaried and general education degree holders. From their experiences it was revealed that sites of discrimination were generally educational institutions and office places where they have to reveal their caste. Lower income group respondents found more vulnerable to discrimination than higher income groups.

**Organizational Participation**

Along with personal salience of identity, social relations with other caste persons, and experiences of discrimination, another aspect of participation in social organizations was probed to have comprehensive understanding of social identity issue of respondents. It was observed that caste associations lost their earlier vigour to connect fellow caste members through social gatherings. Now their role is reduced to attend marriage ceremony and few life ceremonies. Majority respondents revealed that that their caste association does not meet regularly in Mumbai and accepted that they do not attend a single meeting in a year. Clear decline in attending meetings of caste associations was observed as age of respondents lowers. Owing to the fact that more respondents were employed in private sector, no organization based on caste interests was reported at their working place. Government servants reported presence of those
associations but reportedly said that their role is now limited to conduct functions on the occasions of birth and death anniversary of Ambedkar and Buddha.

**Globalisation and Political Identity**

Contemporary wave of globalisation invited two types of reactions. Supporters of Globalisation claim that it opened up enormous opportunities to material advancement with gradual decline in poverty. Critics argued that it benefitted few upper classes and deprived large masses of the basic necessities of life. Many studies on the impact of globalisation on Dalits endorse second position and claim that it not only impoverished Dalits from the basic necessities but also alienated urban middle classes among them from the struggles of marginalized groups including their own.

**Defining globalisation**

It was found during present investigation that, barring three respondents all other frequently referred to the themes of competition, integration, technological advancement, opportunities, development and change in their attempt to define and elaborate meaning of globalisation. Thus majority of them defined it in positive language. This was despite of the findings that significantly high number of respondents recognizes poverty, lack of education, and lower caste status as a cluster of factors responsible for victimization under globalisation. Again majority believe that Dalits are also victims of globalisation. This response declines in percentages as the age of respondents lowers, as less percentages of young age group of respondents view Dalits as victims of globalisation than older respondents. Similarly degree, occupation and income wise differences among the responses were observed. More professional degree holders than general degree holders, more self employed than salaried and lower income group respondents than higher income group respondents believed that Dalits are also victims of globalisation. Thus realization of being a victim of globalisation was observed among professional degree holders, self employed and lower income groups respondents. As majority of respondents reveal that their victimization is due to lack of proper educational income opportunities. It is noteworthy that despite of the knowledge of vulnerable position of Dalits, majority define globalisation in positive words.
Future of in-group members
Despite of this recognition of victimization majority believed that future of their fellow caste people will be better in the era of globalisation. This response is cross tabulated with age, occupation, income and type of degree. It revealed that younger respondents found more pessimistic about future of the caste people in the era of globalisation. Significant variations found among occupational, income and educational categories. More respondents serving in private sector than government sector and self employed, more respondents in higher income group and more respondents with professional degree holders think that future of their caste people will better in the age of globalisation.

Individual benefits from globalisation
Across all the age groups, majority of respondents believed that they were benefitted by globalisation. Significant variations were observed across categories of occupation and income. Majority of the respondents serving in private sector claim that they were benefitted by globalisation. Incomewise, as the income group lowers, decline to the view that globalisation is beneficial for them was observed. High income groups show highest percentages of respondents thinking that globalisation was beneficial for them.

Attitude towards Globalisation
It was observed that although majority of respondents view themselves as victims of globalisation, their response was not of confrontation but of adaptation. As against the most discussed notion, that being the most exploited one responsibility of leading the protest against this new form of imperialism naturally goes to Dalits, majority of the respondents think that Dalits should not lead the anti-globalisation protest. Moreover a few of younger respondents than older ones think that Dalits should lead the anti-globalisation protest. Importantly as income level of respondent decreases, increasing support was reported to the view that Dalits should lead the anti-globalisation protest.

Internationalization of their struggle
Majority of respondents were of the view that Dalits should take up their issues before international community. Majority of supporters to this view were from younger and low income group. On this issue Buddhists exhibit more aggressiveness than Hindu respondents.
Responding Globalisation:
It emerges from the study that opposing globalisation and protesting against it was not an option considered by majority of the respondents. Their response was within the framework of self improvement and introspection as advocated by century old efforts of social movement. Higher education and self employment were the most sought out means preferred by them to respond to globalisation. Political unity, religion and reservation appeared at the end of their list. Similarly as a strategy of emancipation during the era of globalisation majority of them preferred education followed by organization, political power, economical empowerment and judicial legal means. Further majority of them rejected utility of protest techniques as a means to fight for justice. Younger respondents were in favour of protest march as useful method of struggle. Significantly high support is observed among Buddhist.

Globalisation and Political Participation
Declining active political participation of youths among Dalits is one of the big concerns raised by strategist of the Dalit movement. In the light of the study, the concern was proved well founded despite of the findings that majority of respondents regularly exercise right to vote and majority of their friends and relatives were politically active. Majority of the respondents were not members of any political party and never joined any protest march organized for the Dalit cause. High percentage of younger respondents reported that they never attended such march in their life time.

Further, it was increasingly found that younger respondents lack political socialization. Most of the younger respondents claimed that neither any of the member of their family ever participated in social nor political movement nor they have SC/ST associations at their work places. This is largely because majority of younger respondents are employed in private sector where SC/ST associations are not formed. Thus younger respondents show less political participation than older respondents. It was further reported that majority of respondents do not attend rallies of political parties. Here too as the age of respondents lowers, decline was observed in tendency to attend rallies organized by political parties. Income wise lower income group respondents show high tendency to attend rallies of political parties. Further unemployed and government servants claimed high percentages of attendance in political rallies than self employed and private sector
employees. Professional degree holders report low level of attendance to political rallies than general degree holders.

**Opinion on National Issues, Political Parties, Dr. Ambedkar**

Opinion on various contemporary issues may emanate from identity salience of individuals. It was observed that for majority of the respondents terrorism was greatest challenge before political system in India. Nearly less than half of the respondents do not show trust in any political party. Among rest some preferred Congress and few preferred BSP. Interestingly, MNS was mentioned by very few respondents. Other national parties were clearly sidelined. The Dalit parties received preference for problem of casteism while Congress received preference for rest of the problems. Further, majority of respondents said that they were dissatisfied with the working of political parties which are claiming to be fighting for the cause of Dalits.

**Relevance of Ambedkar:**

Majority believed that Ambedkar’s ideas contain the solution for today’s political problems in India and are relevant in the era of globalisation. Remarkably, as the age of respondents lowers belief in both the assertions exhibit declining trend.

**Policy of Reservation and Political Identity**

Majority of the Dalits still perceive that employment in government sector gives security. This reflects in the finding that majority of the respondents preferred government jobs and only few respondents preferred private sector. Remaining preferred self employment. Majority do not feel that policy of reservation remind them their stigmatized Dalit identity. It was observed that highest percentage of respondents from private sector felt that reservation policy keeps them reminding their identity as Dalit.

Pro reservation penchant remains dominant element of the political identity of Dalits which reflects from the observation that significant majority of respondents believed that reservations are necessary for upliftment of Dalits and majority respondents asserted that reservation is their right. No significant inter-generational difference was observed in pro-reservation stand. Significantly high percentages of respondents with low level of income claim reservation as their
right than high income group respondents. Further, higher percentages of respondents from the category of self employed and unemployed think that reservations are their rights as compared to respondents serving in private and government sector. In the context of globalisation majority believed that policy will not continue in future. Still majority believed that it should continue. Further, majority of them support reservations in private sector.

**Political Implications of Reservations Policy**

Political implications of reservations were clearly visible where majority stated that they will certainly not support any political party which opposes reservations even though it may offer personal benefits to them. Reservation as a line of demarcation between political parties was evident from the responses to both the questions regarding support and opposition to the reservation policy. Majority respondents said that RPI, BSP only support reservation, followed by Congress and NCP. An overwhelming consensus was observed on the point that BJP and Shiv Sena are critique of reservation policy. A small faction included MNS in the list of parties that support policy of reservation.

**CONCLUSION**

Thus it may be concluded that process of globalisation that engrossed the collective life in India after introduction of New Economic Policy, affected the Dalits in general and their political identity in particular. Present study explored few of the important aspects of this phenomenon. Therefore on the basis of the discussion in the dissertation it can be said that political identity of the Dalits appears to have influenced by the globalisation. In the case of Mahars from Maharashtra who settled in Mumbai in search of better standard of living and human dignity, education emerged as strategy of their empowerment. It empowered them and was used as an instrument of self as well as community development. Along with the search for material space, they carved out political space for themselves out of the dynamics of industrial society in 20th century. Traits of primordial identity as follower of Buddhism as rulers of the region as Naga kings continued to fuel their political aspirations. The difference of separation as untouchables was employed with instrumentalist version of the political identity in terms of their politicisation throughout the 20th century. Thus Dalit emerged not only as a category that is stigmatised but also a symbol of revolt and fight against oppression. The entire construction of the identity of the
Dalit is undergoing change in 21st century especially among the educated Dalits in metropolitan city like Mumbai. Globalism seems to have invaded the class consciousness of the educated Dalits while retaining caste consciousness and alienated them from the rest of the protestors of globalisation and thus posing serious challenge to the anti-globalisation movement in India. Thus within the limits of the empirical enquiry, the present study concludes that political identity of Dalits is a multifaceted phenomenon, the core of which lies in experiences of exploitation and discrimination. Disparities in educational, occupational background and economical outcomes among Dalits, warrants the assessment of the Dalit as political subject. The educated among the Dalits who have undergone the higher education denied possibility of coalescing with anti globalisation movement and perceived the Dalit experience as located in caste rather than class structure and thus different than what the anti globalisation movement highlights. In order to reject the stigma of untouchability and associated social, economical and psychological impediments the educated Dalits employed education as a means of self improvement as well as weapon of contestation also. The religious identity as Buddhist served them an instrumentalist purpose as well. If education offered them an economical and social mobility then in Buddhism they found much needed identity that offered not only spiritual space but political ideology as well. The overt projection that ideology of globalisation makes such as advocacy of liberty, merit, and competition along with technologically induced development found appealing for the Dalits who have undergone the higher education and thus they found it complementary to their objective of emancipation rather than contradictory. This can be prominently observed from the responses of professional degree holders, private service holders, higher income group as well as young generation of the respondents. In the course of its development the political identity of the Dalits, acquired an instrumentalist character. A possibility can be presumed that the construction of new political identity or adding new dimension to that shall go through the already existing primordial identity and eventually it will acquire the instrumentalist role. So far the differentiation and categorisation continued to be on the line of the caste other identities will find it difficult to acquire permanence in the political identity paradigm of the Dalits. So far only instrument of power that the Dalits acquired have claimed to be the education, and not even the political power, continued to play determining role in their perception of the world around them. Therefore education also emerged with its outcome in terms of occupation and income as a major criterion of differentiation among the Dalits as well.