CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

The Research Problem:

Indian society is composed of intersecting and overlapping groups and sub-groups based on caste, creed, race, religion, region, language, sex, etc. However, one of the most distinctive features of Indian society is its division into various caste groups. The membership in the caste group is conferred by birth. The members of each caste, residing in specific areas, have common customs and more or less a similar way of life. There is a variation in kind and number of castes but due to hierarchical stratification the highest and lowest castes are easily identifiable. The Brahmins are considered to be the highest and shudras the lowest in the caste hierarchy.

In traditional Hindu society there were legal and ritual sanctions which prevented lower castes from imitating the styles of life of the upper castes. There was no equality before law. They were forced to hold the lowest position in the society because of certain customary rules. The Hindu section of the Indian society has through the ages perpetuated the hierarchical order of castes and sub-castes conferring special privileges upon the so called upper castes and denying the same to the lower castes. These privileged castes exploited the disadvantaged section of the society in innumerable ways with the result that the later got totally dehumanized. Even within the high
castes there are groups and sub-groups, the exploiters and the exploited, but they could all enjoy common social privileges like drawing water from the same well, visiting the same temple, living and receiving education with the members of other castes, etc., but the very same privileges were completely denied to the so-called lower castes. These discriminations led to a virtual breakup of the Indian society into two broad groups, the 'higher' and the 'lower' castes, having little or no social intercourse with each other and a complete isolation of the lower castes. The very fact that a particular child was born in a particular non-privileged caste conferred upon it the same ignominious status which had been the lot of its forefathers (Misra & Kaur, 1990).

The different stratum in the caste society and the rigidity of the caste system were not found in the vedic period. The society described in Atharva Veda, was characterized by the absence of sharp class divisions amongst its members. The idea of ceremonial impurity of the shudra involving prohibition of physical contact with him appeared towards the end of vedic period (1000-600 BC). The first notice of such a marked degradation is found in the 'Satapatha Brahmana' where a carpenter's touch is said to impart ceremonial impurity. In the post-vedic period i.e. the pre-Maurayan period (600 BC-300 BC) the members of the shudra varna were denied any place in the work of administration. The idea that the food touched by the shudra is defiled and can not be taken by a Brahmin is first expressed in the Dharmasutras (500 BC-300 BC) of this period. Towards the end of the pre-Maurayan period the shudras were known as 'Bahyas' i.e. the
people living outside villages and towns. The so-called ‘chandalas’ were not only scorned and kept isolated from society but were differentiated from rest of the population. During Manu’s time (200 BC – AD 200), he ordained to avoid all contacts between the Brahmins and the shudras. The religious rights of the shudras were considerably enlarged and in respect of several ceremonies they were placed on the level with the three higher castes during Gupta period. During Muslim period after the death of Harsha (AD 647), the dark days of Indian society began. The Hindus framed rigid rules against inter-caste marriages and dinjhi. The principle of heredity had come into force by 1000 AD. In the Medieval India, Adi Jagatguru Sankaracharjya re-established the Hindu religion and opened its door to all sections of Hindus including the chandalas and the downtrodden. During British period, for the first time caste system faced a serious threat from its foreign rulers. The establishment of civil and criminal courts robbed the caste system. The prestige of caste leaders and the effect of caste system gradually diminished (Chatterjee, 1996).

The caste system has always been condemned for all the evils and maladies affecting the Hindu society in India. Although, the shudras were the life blood of India’s great civilization, yet they were treated as outcastes. To condemn the caste system, many reformatory movements were started in India. During the Medieval period, the division of society and the elaborate rituals of the Brahmins were attacked. This was done by popularizing the messages in the form of songs and stanzas for all sections of the society. Caste free society,
irrelevance of birth in a particular caste and free access to worship of God were some of the messages that were spread by the saints of that time. Ramanya, Kabir, Basav, Namdev, Ramananda were some of the popular names who attempted at the change.

During British rule, the country had been exposed to westernization. The ushering in of British rule in India marked the definite close of the old era and the opening of a new chapter in the history of Indian society. The British rule transformed the entire Indian society. They established the rule of law in a land where might was right. The western education had a great impact on the minds of the countrymen. It played an important role in the awakening of Indians in general and the scheduled castes in particular. The social reformers set up various religious reform institutions like Brahmao samaj (1828), Prarthana samaj (1867), Ramkrishna Mission, Satya Sodhak Samaj (1873), Arya Samaj (1875), out of which Brahmao Samaj and Prarthana Samaj were started as anti-caste movements. These movements were steered by social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Rande, Phule, Tilak, Gokhale, Vittal Ramji Shinde who worked for the emancipation of the shudras. Shinde opened schools and hostels for their wards. Gandhiji in 20th century started the Harijan movement in 1929 and called them as the 'children of God'. He showed great concern for the shudras and devoted his life for their upliftment. He founded All India Harijan Sewak Sangh for social reforms and education of the depressed classes in 1933. The main purpose of the said social reform was to convey the message that they
too were the creation of the same God. Gandhiji was totally against the practice of engaging a scavenger and cleaned his night soil. The reform movement started by Gandhiji played a vital role in bringing them into the mainstream of the society by providing services which were till then thought to be the privileges of the upper castes. In 1929, Ambedkar was the first person to attempt to get rid of this casteism by publicly burning the Manu Smriti. This was followed by the temple entry satyagrah in 1930. During the same period, he issued his 'Declaration of fundamental rights' for safe-guarding the cultural, religious and economic rights of these unprivileged sections of the society. Besides, his Ram Mandir Satyagrah, Poona pact of 1932, exposition of views on religious conversion in 1936, establishment of separate trade union in 1942, conversion of Buddhism in 1956, all were landmarks in the movements for liberation of the scheduled castes (Singla, 1995).

The Indian Constitution framed in 1949 has in it so many special provisions for the scheduled castes so as to maintain justice, liberty, fraternity and equality in the country. Some of the main provisions for the removal of disabilities and discriminations against the scheduled castes are like Article 15 which provides for prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste and race; Article 17 provides for abolition of untouchability and forbids its practice in any form; Article 16(1), 16(4) and 335 provide for reservations in employment to emeliorate the socio-economic conditions of scheduled castes and equality of opportunity in employment irrespective of
religion, race, caste, creed and sex; Article 29(2) provides for protection of right to admission to educational institutions (22.5 percent reservation for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes); Article 46 provides for promotion of educational and economic interests of weaker sections particularly scheduled castes; Article 330 and 332 provide for reservation of seats for scheduled castes in the Parliament (Lok Sabha) and legislative assemblies of the States; Article 335 provides for reservations for scheduled castes in services. Besides these there are other articles such as 23; 25; 244; 338 and some other special enactments relating to the welfare and upliftment of scheduled castes like untouchables (offences) Act, 1955, which was amended and renamed as 'The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 in 1976; Bonded labour (Abolition) Act, 1976; child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986; Minimum wages Act, 1948; Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 to punish those practicing untouchability and committing atrocities on them (ibid).

The new phase of globalization began in 1980s with the 1991 liberalization policy declared by the Government of India. There are two different views about the impact of globalization on the scheduled castes. One group of scholars argue that in the Indian democratic polity, globalization will not liberate people from the oppression and exploitation of the dominant power structure rather, the forces of subjugation will continue more vigorously, often in invisible and remote ways. They fear economic deprivation and exploitation of the poor, especially that of the scheduled castes. The scheduled castes
who are mostly labourers and landless peasants, will suffer under globalization due to 'jobless economic growth'. Another view is that globalization will lead to bigger development which will result in the growth of the service sector, generating employment opportunities for the lower rungs including scheduled castes of the society who are mostly jobless. Globalization will also succeed in generating the income to provide greater social security measures like employment, poverty alleviation and protection and promotion of the interests of the scheduled castes and other deprived sections of the population (Kumar, 2000).

India is rightly called as 'melting pot' of castes, races and tribes. There are many scheduled caste communities in different parts of our country. They constitute an important segment of the Indian society and are socially and economically backward in comparison to the rest of the population of the country. The scheduled caste population is found in almost all parts of the country. The scheduled caste people in India, earlier known by different nomenclatures, have asserted through the ages for their rights of justice and equality. In our country, the main causes of their backwardness are exploitation, deprivation and illiteracy. The social morphology of caste continues to be one of its important features. The division of Indian society into innumerable castes and communities has been noted by many backward classes commissions set up in our country. Mandal Commission listed as many as 3743 castes. The monumental people of India project undertaken by the Anthropological Survey of India has drawn public attention to the
continuing significance of the divisions of caste and sub-caste in contemporary Indian Society (Beteille, 1996).

The Scheduled Castes are scattered all over the country. They are mainly settled in rural areas and are engaged mostly in low paid manual occupations and also work as bonded labourers. There is social hierarchy and practice of untouchability among different scheduled castes in different parts of the country. According to 1991 census, there are 1181 castes among the Scheduled Castes in India (Wankhede, 1999). As per the same census, scheduled caste population constitute 16.48 percent of the country's total population and out of the total scheduled caste population majority (81.3 percent) of them live in rural areas and about 19 percent in urban areas. If we compare the literacy level of scheduled castes with the general population, they are far behind. While the literacy rate of the general population was 24.02 percent in 1961 which increased to 52.51 percent in 1991 but in the case of scheduled castes, it increased from just 10.27 percent to 37.41 percent during the same period. The percentage of scheduled castes engaged as cultivators has decreased from 37.76 percent in 1961 to 25.44 percent in 1991. While the number of scheduled castes cultivators decreased but on the other hand the percentage of scheduled castes agricultural labourers increased from 34.48 percent in 1961 to 49.06 percent in 1991. This phenomenal increase in the category of labourers explains the fact that more and more scheduled caste cultivators are forced to sell out even the small-holdings they have in order to survive (Louis, 2000).
The scheduled caste population in India* during 1931 census was 39.0 million; in 1941, 39.9 million; in 1951, 51.3 million; in 1961, 64.4 million; in 1971, 80 million; in 1981, 106 million and in 1991 it touched the mark of 138.2 million. The percentage of the scheduled caste population stood as 15.54 percent in 1931; 13.49 percent in 1941; 14.40 percent in 1951; 14.67 percent in 1961; 14.60 percent in 1971; 15.81 percent in 1981; and 16.48 percent in 1991 respectively. Thus, the proportion of scheduled caste population has gone up in the country over the last decades. As stated earlier, the scheduled caste population can be found everywhere in India but the higher concentration of the said population is found in the states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Punjab, Maharashtra, Orissa, Haryana, Gujarat, Delhi and in the remaining States/Union Territories their population is less. The smallest number of scheduled caste is found in Mizoram and the largest population of the scheduled castes is found in the States like Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Tripura. In the remaining states their proportion is less than the national average. The size of scheduled caste communities is an important factor. Some of

* The data in respect of scheduled castes for 2001 census is not available and is still awaited.
these communities consist of more than a million people whereas others number fewer than 1000 persons. There are number of scheduled caste communities in India like Adi-Dravira, Adi-Andhra, Adi-Karanataka, Bagdi, Badhi, Bagri, Bhangi, Chamar, Dhoba/Dhobi, Dusad, Dhed, Dagi, Dom or Dum, Gour, Gond, Gagra, Hali, Jogi, Julaha, Koli/Kori, Kotal, Kabirpanthi, Laban, Lohar, Mali, Mahar, Mala, Madiga, Majhabhi, Namsudra, Nadia, Pasi, Panan, Rajbanshi, Relli, Rohit, Sujal, Teli, Turi, Vetan, etc. The dominant among them are Chamar, Adi-Dravira, Pasi, Madiga, Mala, Dhoba/Dhobi, Dusad, Mahar, Rajbanshi, Adi-Karanataka, Namsudra, Mazhabi, Dom or Dum, etc., whereas the communities with smaller population are Jalkot, Watal, Gagra, Mala, Mazhi, Ghogia, Darain, etc. (Singh, 1993).

In our country, this unprivileged section of the society have faced a lots of discriminations, disabilities and sufferings in the past. They have suffered for a long from extreme social and economic backwardness and are thus socially, educationally, economically and politically backward in comparison to the rest of the population of the country. The main causes of their backwardness are deprivation, exploitation and illiteracy. With few exceptions, most of them have also been for centuries, the victims of untouchability and discriminations though these have been legally abolished. A majority of them often become victims of various types of atrocities committed by caste Hindus. In India, these people have to wage for mere existence a grim struggle. Their literacy rate and educational level is lowest in the country. Their social status is still downgraded and the
social relations between them and the caste Hindus are not free from traditional caste prejudices. Their economic exploitation is higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas. They are still regarded ritually or religiously impure and their entry to Hindu temples is resisted in spite of legal enactment existing since long in their favour. Alongwith these, there are other main issues related to their caste status, educational development, atrocities, social and religious disabilities, economic exploitation, deprivation, stigmatized social (caste) identity and their negative imagery portrayed in the existing literature. Over and above, the most important issues before them are of achieving their respectful identity and dignified social status for which they have been agitating and organizing various types of movements with both successes and failures (Ram, 1998).

The need to improve their conditions has been recognized and many serious attempts in this direction have been made at the state and national levels only after independence. Since then, numerous measures and strategies have been devised with a view to ameliorating and improving their conditions. The move for improving the socio-economic conditions of this weaker section of the society is indeed a welcome and commendable step. Although, the Government of India has started various schemes, policies and programmes as well as other constitutional provisions and special enactments for their welfare and upliftment, yet at the national level most of these scheduled caste people are still living lives of abject depravity and subjugation (Khan, 1980).
As far as Himachal Pradesh is concerned, it is also not an exception to the disappointing state of affairs of the scheduled castes. In Himachal Pradesh, scheduled castes are those castes which have been notified as such by the Presidential order in pursuance of Article 341 of the Constitution of India. In the state, the scheduled castes were earlier notified in 1956, separately for the old areas as well as the merged areas which was further amended by the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes order (Amendment) Act, 1976 (No. 108 of 1976). The main objective of the Amendment Act was to remove area restriction in respect of scheduled castes with the result that most of the scheduled castes are now notified as such throughout the state, unlike that in 1956 order where these were notified in relation to different regions of the state, registering area restrictions. According to the Amendment Act, (1976), there are 56 scheduled castes in Himachal Pradesh (Kapur, 1985).

In Himachal Pradesh, the scheduled castes present a picture of considerable complexity and magnitude. The distinguish features of scheduled castes in the state are that most of them are cultivators and agricultural labourers and generally reside with the majority community in the same village or slightly away.

The scheduled caste population is about one fourth of the total population of the state. Table 1.1 shows that the total population of scheduled castes in the state in 1951 was 2.52 lakhs which increased to
### Table 1.1

**Growth of Scheduled Caste Population in Himachal Pradesh (1951-2001)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Total Population (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Total SC Population (in lakhs)</th>
<th>Percentage of SC Population to the Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>23.86</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>22.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>28.12</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>27.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>34.60</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>22.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>42.81</td>
<td>10.54</td>
<td>24.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>51.71</td>
<td>13.10</td>
<td>25.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>60.78</td>
<td>15.02</td>
<td>24.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:**

15.02 lakhs in 2001 which is 22.70 percent and 24.72 percent of the total population of the state respectively.

According to 2001 census, a vast majority of scheduled castes (93.40 percent) reside in rural areas and only 6.60 percent in urban areas. The sex-ratio among them is 968 females per thousand males.

The data on literacy rate in respect of Scheduled Castes for 2001 census is not available. However, as per 1991 census, the literacy rate among them is 53.20 percent as against the state average of 63.86 percent which is higher than the national average of 52.21 percent.

There has been a remarkable progress in the field of education among the scheduled castes during the decade 1981-1991 as in 1981, the
literacy among them was just 31.50 percent which increased to 53.20 percent in 1991.

### Table 1.2

District-wise Scheduled Caste Population in Himachal Pradesh (2001 census)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Total SC Population</th>
<th>%age of SC Population to Total Population of the District</th>
<th>%age of SC Population to Total SC population of the State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bilaspur</td>
<td>340885</td>
<td>86581</td>
<td>25.40</td>
<td>5.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Chamba</td>
<td>460887</td>
<td>92359</td>
<td>20.04</td>
<td>6.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Hamirpur</td>
<td>412700</td>
<td>98539</td>
<td>23.88</td>
<td>6.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kangra</td>
<td>1339030</td>
<td>279540</td>
<td>20.88</td>
<td>18.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kinnaur</td>
<td>78334</td>
<td>7625</td>
<td>9.73</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kullu</td>
<td>381571</td>
<td>107897</td>
<td>28.28</td>
<td>7.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>L&amp;S</td>
<td>33224</td>
<td>2605</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Mandi</td>
<td>901344</td>
<td>261233</td>
<td>28.98</td>
<td>17.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Sirmaur</td>
<td>458593</td>
<td>135774</td>
<td>29.61</td>
<td>9.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Solan</td>
<td>500557</td>
<td>140642</td>
<td>28.10</td>
<td>9.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Una</td>
<td>448273</td>
<td>100588</td>
<td>22.44</td>
<td>6.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H.P.</td>
<td>6077900</td>
<td>1502170</td>
<td>24.72</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Within the districts, the data in table 1.2 show that the scheduled caste population has varied concentration. As per 2001 census,
Sirmour District with 29.61 percent has the highest population while Lahaul and Spiti with 7.84 percent has the lowest population of the scheduled castes. However, out of the total population of the scheduled castes in the state, their largest concentration is in Kangra District with 2.80 lakh persons i.e. 18.61 percent and Lahaul and Spiti has the smallest concentration with just 2605 persons i.e. 0.17 percent. As far as Shimla District is concerned where the present study has been carried out, it ranks fifth in respect of percentage of scheduled castes population to total population of the District and ranks third in respect of concentration of scheduled caste population to the total scheduled castes population of the state.

The scheduled castes in the State are not concentrated into specific regions but are widely dispersed and would be benefited equally as rest of the population. Accordingly, approach to economic development in the case of special component plan for scheduled castes is not area based as is the case with the tribal sub-plan: The district of Bilaspur, Kullu, Mandi, Solan, Shimla and Sirmour are the predominantly scheduled castes population districts where scheduled caste concentration is above the State average. Thus, these six districts taken together account for about 60 percent of the scheduled caste population in the State and are contiguously situated.

In Himachal Pradesh there are a number of scheduled caste communities such as Ad-Dharmi, Badhi, Bhangi/Balmiki, Bandhela, Bangali, Banjara, Bansi, Barad, Barar, Batwal, Bauria, Bazigar,
Bhanjra, Chamar/Ravidasi, Chanal, Dhobi, Dagi, Darain, Darai, Daule, Dhaki, Dhanak, Dhaogri, Dhangri, Doom/Dumna, Gagra, Gondola, Hali, Heri, Jogi, Julaha/Kabirpanthi, Kamoh, Karoack, Khatik, Kori/Koli, Lohar, Marija, Mazhabi, Megh, Nat, Od, Pasi, Perna, Phrera, Rehar, Sanhai, Sanhal, Sansi, Sansoi, Sapela, Sarde, Sikligar, Sipi, Sirkiband, Teli, Thathiar, etc. However, Koli, Chamar, Julaha, Lohar and Doom are the dominant scheduled caste communities who constitute about 78 percent of the total scheduled caste population of the State (Census of India, 2001).

In Himachal Pradesh, the scheduled castes have suffered for long time from the extreme social and economic backwardness in the past. With a few exception most of them have also been for centuries the victims of discriminations and exploitations. Even today, in some parts of the State they are denied access to drinking water facilities, eating places, balwadis, village ceremonies and functions, etc. These people are kept aloof and can not interact socially with other caste people. Even in a far flung village temples, they are denied entry into them. They are still associated with menial jobs and occupations and are even denied entry into the houses located in the higher caste community. They suffer from the dual disabilities of severe economic exploitation and social discrimination. They have a very few assets and are generally dependent upon the agricultural pursuits and other low income generating occupations like shoe-making, sweeping, bamboo basket making, blacksmithy, weaving, poultry, piggery etc. The upliftment of scheduled castes was envisaged to be achieved along
with the general population in a routine manner and funds were provided under the overall State plan. With the passage of time, it was found that these efforts were not adequate in order to offer a package of assistance to the beneficiaries belonging to these socially and economically down-trodden communities of the state.

It may be stated that the Article 46 of our Constitution prescribes that 'the State shall promote with special care the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation'. The scheduled castes contribute to the sustenance and growth of the production system of the country and the nation's economy. The experience of the first four decades of planning has revealed that the process of economic development and modernization has not benefited this weaker section of the society to the extent it did the other communities, though growth with social justice has been accepted as the main objective for the planned economic development. The fruits of progress and flow of benefits have not reached the majority of scheduled castes to the extent these should have been.

It is obvious that the development efforts for the scheduled castes must be assigned a top priority in the national endeavour for growth with social justice. Accordingly, a State committed to a policy of growth with social justice has got to adopt policies and programmes in such a manner that it should minimize the gap between the rich and
the poor. The benefits from all sectors of development should flow in equitable and just manner to all groups and communities for reducing socio-economic cleavages. The concerted efforts have been made through the planning process to maximize the growth with distributive justice to narrow down the inequalities in pursuance of the objectives laid down in the preamble to the Constitution and directive principles of state policy. By the end of the fifth five year plan, it became apparent that attempts to quantify financial and physical benefits to scheduled caste has not achieve the desire results realizing the need for special development which can directly benefit the scheduled caste families, providing institutional credit and marketing facilities and extending adequate socio-economic amenities to the scheduled caste families especially those living below the poverty line were considered to be the operational modes of making the benefit of development reach this neglected section of the society (Tenth Five Year Plan 2002-07 and Annual Special Component Plan for SCs 2002-03).

For the rapid socio-economic upliftment of scheduled castes, the state government has started Special Component Plan at the end of fifth five year plan. The main objective of Special Component Plan in the state is to ensure that benefits through different programmes actually reach to the scheduled caste community. To provide infrastructural facilities in scheduled caste concentrated areas where 50% or more scheduled castes live, the cent-percent expenditure is provided under the special component plan. An outlay of Rs. 1046.65 crore has been approved for the Tenth Five Year Special Component Plan 2002-07.
The Special Component Plan is designed to help poor scheduled caste families through composite income generating schemes. This plan seeks to improve the living conditions of the scheduled castes through provision of drinking water supply, link roads, house-sites, establishment of educational, health, veterinary institutions, etc.

The concept of sub-plan as a strategy mainly aims at rapid socio-economic development of scheduled castes. The first-ever exercise towards formulation of the special component plan for scheduled castes in the State was initiated in 1979-80 when Rs. 4.61 crore were earmarked but real thrust was given in the sixth five year plan (1980-85), when 11 percent of the State plan outlays were provided under this sub-plan. This earmarking has been continuing for tenth five year plan 2002-07 and annual plan 2002-03. Though the percentage flow does not commensurate with scheduled caste population in the State but the same has been above the all India average. Besides this, provision of special central assistance and the centrally sponsored schemes has helped the State in augmenting the pace of economic development. The strategy of scheduled caste component plan has given some results but a lot more is yet to be done to improve the socio-economic condition of these disadvantaged groups of the State (Ibid).

The main strategies which should be adopted for the welfare and upliftment of scheduled castes in the State are as under:

- The special component plan should ensure adequate thrust on economic and educational development of scheduled castes.
• The special component plan should provide for fully meeting the minimum needs/basic amenities of all the scheduled castes habitations with a view to improve their quality of life.

• The special component plan should also provide for a judicious mix of beneficiary oriented programmes and human resource development.

• The schemes taken up should be viable and as far as necessary innovative in a way to diversify scheduled castes into newer areas of economic activities.

• The voluntary organizations should be associated in programmes for the upliftment of the scheduled castes (ibid).

The important schemes started by the Govt. for the welfare and upliftment of the scheduled castes in the State are as follows:

(a) **Housing Subsidy**: Under this scheme, the members of scheduled castes are given subsidy upto Rs. 10,000/- per family in snow-bound areas and upto 8,000/- per family in other areas for house construction purposes. Further, 50 percent of the above amount is granted to the members of these castes for the repair of the house.

(b) **Environmental Improvement of Harijan Basties**: Under this programme, small drinking water supply schemes are undertaken by constructing wells/bowaries etc., in the villages with concentration of scheduled castes population and not covered by the schemes of public health department.

(c) **Special Component Plan**: Under this scheme, a budget provision of Lakhs of Rupees as State and Central share in kept for the socio-economic development of scheduled castes community in the State.
(d) Compensation to Victims of Atrocities on the Scheduled Castes Families: Under this scheme, monetary relief is granted to those scheduled caste families who become victims of atrocities committed by the members of other communities due to caste consideration.

(e) Technical Scholarships: Under this scheme, trainees of scheduled castes getting training in I.T.Is, etc. are given technical scholarships @ Rs.250/- per month per trainee.

(f) Award for Inter-Caste Marriage: Under this scheme, an amount of Rs. 25,000/- per couple is given as incentive money.

(g) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation: For the socio-economic development of scheduled castes in the State, a Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation has been set up. This Corporation undertakes various loaning programmes in collaboration with banks (Economic Survey, HP, 2003-04).

In the wake of educational and socio-economic development, the evil of untouchability is somehow not so acute and is on the decline in the state. The State Government has adopted various measures to check the incidences of exploitation, harassment and atrocities on the scheduled castes. To safeguard their rights and interests, the State Government has adopted the measures like Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 which has been enforced in the state w.e.f. 30th January, 1990; u/s 14 of the Act. Eight
district and session courts have been designated as special courts and Public Prosecutors attended these courts and have been declared as special prosecutors u/s 15, of this Act. The State Government is committed to wipe out the evil of untouchability and atrocities on Scheduled Castes. The Government has issued strict instructions to the law enforcing agencies regarding this. Further, the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 is also applicable in the case of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the state under which provision exists for statutory fixing of minimum rate of wages in those industries where any sweated labour is involved or there are more chances of exploitation of labourers. This act empowers the State Government to fix minimum wages in the scheduled employment given thereunder. This act is being enforced under the overall supervision of the Labour Commission, Himachal Pradesh through four zones each under a Labour Officer. Further, the State Government under the special component plan has provided many facilities and concessions to the scheduled castes for their upliftment. They are given upto 50 percent subsidy in the fields like agriculture, horticulture, be-keeping, soil conservation, animal husbandry, fisheries, sericulture, education, etc.

Thus, the need to improve the socio-economic conditions of the scheduled castes has been recognized and many attempts in this direction have been made at the State level. Various programmes/schemes have been started with a view to improve their conditions. It is the lasting credit of the successive governments in the State which have gone ahead unflinchingly to realize Gandhiji's dream of finding
for the scheduled castes their legitimate place in the sun. The State is yet to attain the levels prescribed by the Constitution in safe-guarding the interests of this unprivileged class of the society. Although various welfare related schemes, policies and programmes as well as the Constitutional provisions and special enactments have been framed by the Govt. for their betterment, yet most of these scheduled caste people are still a subjugated class of the society. In nutshell, it can be said that more and more is yet to be done for their welfare and upliftment. With this backdrop in mind, the present study is an attempt to analyse the social mobility among the scheduled castes in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh.

Conceptual Framework:

Some important concepts related to this study have been discussed here. The brief description of these concepts is as follows:

Caste:

Traditionally, Indian society has been based on structured caste inequality, of which hierarchy and 'purity-pollution' has been the guiding principle. The society has been divided into four 'varnas' namely Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra wherein the Brahmins are at the top and the Shudras at the bottom. Each varna consisted of many castes and each caste was further divided into many sub-castes. There were specific rules and regulations regarding social and religious life. Caste members were not allowed to follow the occupations other
than those prescribed by the institution of caste. The untouchables were known as ‘Ati-Shudras’ or ‘Avarnas’ and treated as out-castes. Their social status in the society was very low, stigmatized and their occupations were menial in nature and so treated as polluting. They had no right to property, land, education and religious rituals like that of upper castes. They were forced to live in miserable conditions for centuries together. They were subjected to educational, religious, social, cultural, economic and political suppression and exploitation.

The basic changes in the socio-economic structure of the society started taking place only after the industrial revolution and India came under the British rule (Wankhede, 1999).

The word ‘Caste’ comes from the Spanish word ‘Casta’ signifying ‘breed, race or a complex of hereditary qualities. It also owes its origin to the Portuguese word ‘casta’ which too means breed, race or kind homem de boa casta is a ‘man of good family’. The Portuguese of the sixteenth century applied the term to the classes of people in India known by the name of ‘Jati’. They also indiscriminately applied the term to the various social and occupational groups found in the sub-continent and this confusion has even continued to the present time as well. On the one hand, the term is used to describe in the broadest sense, the total system of social stratification peculiar to India and on the other hand, it is used to denote three perhaps four, more or less distinct aspect of this total system i.e. Varna, Jati and Gotra. Varna is not the same thing as Jati, the former representing the four-fold division of society which the authors of the Dharamsutras sought
to derive from one or the other of the four varnas. Manu directly says that there are only four varnas – Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra and there is no fifth varna. He also admits that there are over fifty Jatis. Varna, according to him, is four divisions into which the castes are grouped (Chatterjee, 1996).

The English word ‘Caste’ is an adjustment of the original term and corresponds more or less closely to what is locally referred to as ‘Jati’ or ‘Kulam’. Although the term Jati and Varna normally refer to different things, the distinction is not consistently maintained. Varna refers to one of the four main categories into which Hindu society is traditionally divided while Jati refers generally to a much smaller group. The word ‘Jati’ has a series of meanings and by extension it applied to what according to traditional usage should be designated as Varna. Thus, it is quite common for a person to say that such and such individual is a Brahmin, or even a Kshatriya, by Jati. Within a given context such usage is intelligible and does not generally lead to any ambiguity (Beteille, 1965).

In the classical literature of India, the caste was represented as ‘Varnas’ and this is no longer the case and the caste is now represented much more typically as ‘Jati’ or its equivalent in the regional language. This displacement of ‘Varna’ by ‘Jati’ indicates a change in the meaning and legitimacy of caste even among those who continue to abide by the constraints imposed by its morphology on the institution of marriage and other related matters. This change has not as yet
received the systematic attention from the sociologists that is its due (Beteille, 1996).

The exact origin of the caste system can not be easily traced. The system is said to have originated in India. There are various theories of the origin of the caste system in India. According to the Brahminic theory, the origin of the caste is divine and God given. The Brahmins are to be at the top of the social order followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. The racial theory maintains that majority of the middle and the low castes (Shudras and Ati-Shudras or Dalits) were non-Aryan inhabitants while the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas were the descendants of their Indo-European (Arya conquerors) inhabitants. According to this theory, the caste system took its birth after the arrival of Aryans in India (Omvedt, 1994).

According to the traditional theory, the caste system is of divine origin. In vedic literature, it is mentioned that castes were created by God Brahma- the Creator. Those who sprang from the mouth of Brahma were called Brahmins, from the arms were called Kshatriyas, from the thighs were called Vaishyas and from the feet were called Shudras. As the shudras were supposed to have sprung from the lowest part of the body, they were relegated to the lowest position in the varna hierarchy. The scheduled castes of today are said to belong to the shudra varna (Vidyarthi and Mishra, 1977).

According to the political theory, caste system is a clever device invented by the Brahmins in order to place themselves on the highest
ladder of social hierarchy. Ghurye states, “Caste is a Brahminic child of Indo-Aryan culture cradled in the land of the Ganges and then transferred to other parts of India”. The occupational theory maintains that the origin of caste system can be found in the nature and quality of the social work performed by the various groups of people. According to Nesfield, “Function and function alone is responsible for the origin of caste system in India”. With the functional differentiation there came in occupational differentiation and numerous sub-castes came into being. According to the evolutionary theory, the caste system did not come into existence all of a sudden or at a particular date. It is a result of a long process of social evolution and a number of factors played a vital role in its growth and development. According to the religious theory as said by Hocart, ‘Social stratification originated on account of religious principles and customs’. In ancient India, religion had a prominent place and the king was considered to be the image of God. The Priest Kings accorded different positions to different functional groups (Sachdeva and Bhushan, 1978).

The relative position in the caste hierarchy are related to the division of Hindu society into four varnas. According to Varna vyavastha, the hierarchical order of these four varnas is, first, the Brahmins – priestly and scholarly class; second, the Kshatriyas – rulers and soldiers; third, the Vaishyas – merchants and agriculturists; and fourth, the Shudras – the menial and the service class supposed to serve the other three varnas. Mythology says that Brahmins were born from the mouth, the Kshatriyas from the hand, the Vaishyas from the
stomach and Shudras from the feet of Brahma. As the time passed, the varnas were replaced by caste and birth rather than occupation became the determiner of one’s class. However, since the castes retained the broad nomenclature of varnas, the hierarchy of the letter came in handy to be applied to the status of the different castes and sub-castes. The Shudras were treated inferior to the other three varnas and were constrained to perform only menial jobs, forbidden to study the Vedas, exception apart, and enjoined to be deferential and subservient to the other castes. In the recent times, untouchables have been identified as unclean shudras in some parts of India, elsewhere they are treated outside the four varnas. Hence, untouchables are considered as out-castes. But they are from the castes which have the lowest ritualistic standing and often socially, economically and politically the most depressed class (Misra and Kaur, 1990).

Scheduled Castes:

The term 'Scheduled Castes' is the expression standardized in the Constitution of the Republic of India. Article 341 of the Constitution empowers the President, after consulting the head of the particular State, to notify by an order the castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within the castes, races or tribes which shall for the purpose of this Constitution be deemed to be scheduled castes in relation to that State. The second clause of the Article empowers Parliament to pass a law to include in or exclude from the list so notified by the President any caste, race or tribe. Thus, scheduled castes are those groups which
are named in the scheduled caste order in force for the time being. The expression thus standardized in the Constitution was first coined by the Simon Commission and embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935 in Section 309. The scheduled castes formerly known as depressed classes have been provided in the Indian Constitution with not only special privileges in the matter of recruitment to services but also with special representation in the legislative bodies (Ghurye, 1969).

Scheduled castes does not stand for a particular caste but it is a group of such people from among the untouchables who have been declared as scheduled castes by the President of India. In census of 1911, an inquiry was instituted to ascertain the castes and tribes which suffered specified religious and social disabilities. Although the term depressed class has been mentioned in the census report of 1921, the caste constituting the depressed class have not been defined. The term 'Depresses Castes' was used before 1930, but since the enactment of the Government of India Act, 1935, they have been consistently referred to as the scheduled castes. Ambedkar was appalled by the inhuman treatment met out to them and he preferred calling them 'Untouchables'. Many untouchable castes in different parts of India were listed separately in the Act and this practice was continued in the Constitution of free India. The great crusader, Mahatma Gandhi, in a bid to end the social stigma attached to them called them 'Harijans' (children of God) and as such he tried to bring them on the same level
as the clean caste, otherwise they were outside the pale in the eyes of superior castes (Vidyarthi and Mishra, 1977).

In the Hindu society various castes whose names differ in different parts of the country have been associated with unclean occupations, social restrictions, poverty and exploitation by the strong and advanced sections of the Hindus for centuries. Shudras, Panchamas, Antiyajas, Chandalas and a few other names figure frequently in several documents. Later on, the 'Depressed Classes' was used freely for these low castes. The report of the Inspector General of Education for the year 1914-15 had a reference to the words 'Panchama' and 'Depressed classes'. The term depressed classes was introduced some time later in the last century in British official records as per the opinion of Issacs. It was only in 1932 that this word was officially defined as only meaning the untouchables. Ambedkar demanded inter-alia a change of nomenclature. He suggested the words 'Protestant Hindus' or 'Non-conformist Hindus'. Finally, as recommended by the Simon Commission, the term 'Scheduled Caste' was adopted by the Government. In 1933, Gandhiji coined the new term, 'Harijan' meaning 'Children of God'. The Constituent Assembly used the word 'Scheduled Caste' while drafting the Constitution. Ambedkar had earlier opposed the word 'Harijan'. The various terms used to denote the low castes from time to time gives an impression that all these terms are synonymous. But this is not so, particularly in the case of untouchables. All the depressed classes are not untouchables as pointed out by Blunt and Borale. It may be said that
the 'Depressed classes' are 'Harijans'. All the Harijans are scheduled castes. All the untouchables are depressed classes, Harijans, scheduled castes or untouchables. However, in common usage, the term 'Harijans' denotes untouchables. (Khan, 1980).

A number of terms were coined to address scheduled castes such as the 'Depressed classes', 'Exterior castes', 'Excluded castes', 'Backward classes', but the term that came into vogue with the Government of India Act of 1935, that of 'Scheduled castes' was found most appropriate, and is being retained in the Constitution till date. The Constitution of India provides no specific definition of 'scheduled castes'. It simply mentions that the President of India is empowered to draw up a list in consultation with the Governor of each State regarding the castes, races or tribes which shall be deemed as the scheduled castes in relation to that State. The scheduled castes are included in the 'Backward classes' and are thus characterized as the socially, economically and educationally backward. A look at the scheduled castes list highlights the fact that castes and groups considered to be a part of scheduled castes is not a homogenous category. It is a term created by legislation which comprises of low occupational castes including those with the concept of pollution attached to them (Singla, 1995).

The Scheduled castes were described in the early Indian literature as 'Antyja', 'Panchama' and 'Chandala' and in modern times as 'Harijan'. But now they are being called as 'Dalits'. They are
known by different castes names in different parts of the country. The official list of the scheduled castes was for the first time published by the Government of India in early 1930's and revised and re-revised by the Indian Government in 1957. There were about 1100 of the castes listed but these remained in fact in separate and distinct groups (Prasad, 1997).

In spite of the fact that the scheduled castes had been contributing significantly to the economy of the land, being the tillers of the soil and the hewers of wood but they were kept aloof and could not interact socially with other castes. They were denied access to drinking water facilities, eating places, village roads, balwadies, cooperatives, village ceremonies and functions, etc. meant for upper castes. They remained associated with the most menial occupations like those of sweepers, scavengers, attendants at cremation grounds, hide and leather workers. They were usually considered to possess unclean habits loathed by higher castes such as eating beef, carrion, etc. They were blamed for polluting the higher castes by their touch, even by a look. The Shudras were considered ineligible to become Sanyasins or read the Vedas. Any kind of respectable employment was banned for them. They were denied the services of barbers, laundrymen, restaurants, shops and theaters used by higher castes. They were required to use special utensils for eating. Riding on horse-back and bicycle or the use of umbrellas, foot wears and ornaments were not permitted to them. Their very presence was considered to be polluting so their movements were restricted and certain specific paths,
lanes and streets were declared out of bounds for them. They were also normally told not to be seen in the vicinity of the houses or gatherings of higher castes. They were punished badly for breaking these norms. They were treated worse than animals and beaten severely for small faults. Such was the pitiable condition of schedule castes for centuries before independence. The psyche of these people became so conditioned that they accepted injustices done to them as God ordained. They were morally shattered and lacked self-confidence (Misra & Kaur, 1990).

The Indian Constitution has provided a number of provisions with a view to safeguarding and securing the political, educational, employment and also economic rights of the 'Scheduled Castes' and 'Scheduled Tribes'. The 'Reservation Policy' is one of the most important aspect of these provisions. The reservation policy was formally started in 1950 with its three important components. The first is political reservation which ensures representation of the schedule caste and schedule tribe candidates in the Parliament and State Legislatures. The second is Educational reservation which ensures admission to the schedule caste and schedule tribe candidates in all the educational institutions including engineering and medical colleges and the third is job reservation which ensures representation of the schedule caste and schedule tribe candidates in all government departments and other public sector undertakings. Due to the implementation of reservation policy, all the schedule castes and
schedule tribes are now entitled for 15 percent and 7.5 percent reservations respectively in each of these three areas of activities.

As most of the scheduled castes are dependent on land to earn their livelihood, some policy measures have been introduced to help them acquire lands and also to protect the minimum quantum of land that they have. The national land reform policy, the national policy of tenancy reforms and tree patta schemes are some of the policy measures taken by the government which are of some use to the scheduled castes. In addition to these schemes for the welfare and upliftment of the Scheduled Castes, there are also various loan schemes for them with 50 percent subsidy for starting dairy, piggery and goatery farms. The same facility is also extended for initiating other self-employment programmes such as tailoring, motor and television repairing and so on, and for these purposes vocational training is also extended to them free of cost. Moreover, the National Housing Policy gives special emphasis on allotting houses and house sites to the schedule caste and also provides them financial assistance for the same in both urban and rural areas. (Ramaiah, 1998).

Social Mobility:

The traditional Indian society was based on caste system in which there was no possibility of an individual moving up or down in the caste hierarchy. Any social mobility was possible in terms of the group as a whole in one area. Such a mobility, though rare, did happen. Though in ancient India, the Kings were supposed to belong to
the Kshatriya caste, the famous Mauryan and Gupta empires were built up by Kings who were not Kshatriyas. Similarly, in the modern era, Maratha empire was built up first by the peasants Marathas and later by the Peshwas who were Brahmins. The Yadavas who belonged to the peasant group also built up several dynasties in the different parts of the country and called themselves Kshatriyas. Further, the Gond Kingdom in Madhya Pradesh was built up by the tribal people in the sixteenth century. In fact, Panikar asserted that none of the ruling princes belonged to the Kshatriya caste since they came from different castes (Kuppuswamy, 1972).

Similarly many middle castes, who did not belong to the vaishya caste, became commercial magnates in the medieval as well as in the modern times. One of the important developments in the recent years is the establishment of powerful commercial houses by Brahmin families in some parts of the southern India. But all these cases can not be treated as evidences of social mobility in the caste system. These are the exceptions. They did not affect the hierarchy of the caste system in any significant manner. Even when a person changed his occupation, he continued to be member of the caste in which he is born. The recent studies in Indian villages have shown that while the two ends of the caste scale are rigidly fixed by the Brahmins at the top and the Harijans at the bottom, the position of the middle castes differs from area to area depending upon the progress made in the socio-economic and educational fields by the local caste group (ibid).
During the pre-independence era in India, social mobility was often sought through the process of sanskritisation in which the lower castes observed certain customs, rituals, rites and beliefs of Brahmins and other higher castes for achieving higher social status in the society. It can be said that the status or prestige of a person or a group of persons was very often determined by their ritual status during the pre-independence days. It may be said that there was greater emphasis on the criterion of ritual status in assessing the social status of an individual or a caste group. A number of castes sought to sanskritise their rituals with a view to move upward, in the Hindu caste hierarchy. Sanskritisation proved to be a successful mode of acquiring higher social status for a number of lower caste groups. It may be viewed as a mode of achieving group mobility consistent with the Hindu caste system. Sanskritisation of rituals for caste mobility is a group phenomenon and the role of an individual or family in the context of such ritual mobility is to conform to the expectations of the mobile group to which he belongs. The process of Sanskritisation had been more pronounced during the pre-independence period than there after. Although the current of Sanskritisation still continues to exist yet the modern egalitarian, socialistic and secular forces in free India have undermined it to a certain extent. Sanskritisation as a factor for social mobility on the part of the lower castes often met with failure. It was more so in the case of untouchable castes, to whatever degree they might have sanskritised their ritual customs, it was hardly possible for them to cross the barrier of untouchability. They had to resort to
factors other than sanskritisation for achieving a higher social status in the society (Bhat, 1984).

Sriniwas has drawn attention to three main sources of flexibility in the traditional Hindu society, namely, hypergamy which means men of higher caste marrying women of lower caste; the fluidity of political system; and the availability of marginal land. These three factors enabled the castes to move up within system by the process of sanskritisation. The concept of sanskritisation was first developed by M.N. Sriniwas in 1952 in his book ‘Religion and Society among the Coorgs’. It explains how low castes change their customs, rituals and way of life in imitation of the high castes. Srinivas (1952) defined sanskritization as ‘the process by which a ‘Low’ Hindu caste or tribal or other group, changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of Life in the direction of a high and frequently ‘twice-born’ caste.’ Due to these changes in the customs and rituals, the low caste people claim a higher position in the caste hierarchy. The mobility associated with sanskritisation results only in ‘positional changes’ within the caste system and it does not lead to any ‘structural’ change in the society. In other words, we may say that the system itself does not change (Kuppuswamy, 1972). Of the both Indian and western scholars have done research on changes in the social structure and mobility patterns of the scheduled castes in different parts of India. Nowadays, the concepts like ‘tribalization’, ‘kshatriyaization’ and ‘sanskritisation’ have lost much of their shine and the focus is on ‘asparashyekaran’ which can also be substituted by ‘dalitization’ (Lal, 1995).
Mobility is a part of the general and broad process of social change. It makes the social structure elastic, breaks the caste and class isolation. Social mobility may be understood with reference to social change and change of place. The change in place can be taken as one of the factors that may result in a certain amount of social mobility. If any change in space results in a change of social status, whether it is in ascending or decending order such spatial mobility leads to social mobility. Kurane (1999) says that "social mobility is the movement of an individual from one social position to another. It is a change in one's education, occupation, income, economic condition, status, prestige, power, wealth, social object, or value, beliefs and anything that has been created or modified by human activity". Wankhede (1999) terms social mobility as the process by which individuals move from one position to another in society positions which by general consent have been given specific hierarchical values. It is the movement of individuals, families and groups from one social position to another in the society. While studying social mobility, one analysis the movement of individuals from positions possessing a certain rank to positions either higher or lower in the society. According to Sorokin, "social mobility is any transaction of an individual from one social position to another in a constellation of social groups and starta". In another definition Lipset and Bendix (1967) defines social mobility, "as the process by which individual move from one position to another in the society positions for which generally consent have been given specific hierarchical values". It is natural for members of a
group to move to another group. Even in a closed system like caste there are instances when members of certain caste have improved their caste status in the social hierarchy.

Social mobility is to be related to the analysis of changes taking place in one's status in the class structure as well as the caste system which are two main regulatory structural elements of the Indian society. Further, it is related to the identification of the status of a person. The nature, amount and degree of social mobility acquired by him are to be exhibited to others so that they may recognize the mobility of his status in the existing social hierarchy and accept him as their equal if his acquired status is identical to that of their own. Social mobility occurs within the system's framework of status acquired by certain reference groups or individuals. In other words we may say that the people get socially mobile by way of adopting the life styles, behaviour patterns, beliefs and values of certain groups and individual though their enhanced socio-economic status and material conditions play an important role in it. This is applicable in the case of social mobility both in class structure and the caste system. The social mobility of a group or individuals is determined both by its shift and the ranking of multiple variables like occupations, consumption patterns and social power along with the social class. In a society, there is a possibility of having a higher rate of mobility in one dimension and lower in others (Ram, 1995).
Social mobility helps to diminish class consciousness and solidarity and defuse class conflict because the able and ambitious persons from lower class backgrounds can improve their lot and position in the society. Those from higher class backgrounds, furthermore, may not always be able to perpetuate their position of privilege or status. Social mobility then, is the process by which individuals change their class or status position moving either upward or downward in the hierarchy. There are two types of mobility usually distinguished by sociologists, namely intergenerational mobility and intra-generational mobility. Intergenerational mobility involves a comparison between the position of an individual and that of his or her parents position. Intra-generational mobility involves a comparison between the positions of an individual at two or more points in his or her life time or career. Any given individual can, of course, be both intergenerationally and intragenerationally mobile. The son of bricklayer, for example, might begin his career as a labourer in a small firm and work his way up eventually to the position of Managing Director (Hamillion and Hirszowicz, 1987).

The system of stratification based on social class tend to be more ‘open’ than that based on status. What this means is that people’s position in the modern class societies is not determined at birth in the way that it tended to be in feudal and caste systems. There is a movement between class positions. This movement may occur within one individual’s life time e.g. the person who starts working as a clerk and ends up as Managing Director, in which case sociologists refers to
intergenerational mobility may occur between generations as children achieve a different position from that occupied by their parents, in which case we refer to intragenerational mobility. It is possible, for example, to start life as a son of petrol pump attendant but end up as a chartered accountant, just as it is also possible for the daughter of a High Court judge to end up as a short hand typist. Similarly, if a person becomes a minister from an ordinary shopkeeper, his status is enhanced and on the other hand if he loses his job as minister and comes back to his old shop, the status enjoyed by him as a minister is lost. Thus, it can be seen that people in the society continue to move up and down the status scale. This up and down movement of the people in the status scale of the society is called social mobility. In other words, it may be said that mobility may be both upward and downward. Downward mobility is permitted in every society. If a member of an upper class fails to live up to the class standards expected of him in his class, he will fall below the class status. In India, a person may be excluded from his caste by marrying someone of another caste, especially a lower one. As regards upward mobility, no society absolutely forbids it but the amount and ease of upward mobility will depend upon various socio-economic and political factors such as education, industrialization, urbanization, transportation, communication, social change, division of labour, economic development, role of legislation, etc. An individual’s mobility up or down is a measure of how his achieved status compares with his ascribed status (Sachdeva and Bhushan, 1978).
Sociologists have been most interested in intergenerational mobility. This emphasis is related to the implications that upward mobility has for social stability and the meritocratic ideology of contemporary society which holds that ability and talent, should be fully utilized and appropriately rewarded. Equality, for a considerable proportion of those who have concerned themselves with such matters, means equality of opportunity. The task that sociologists interested in social mobility have largely set themselves is to determine just how far society meets this ideal of equality of opportunity, how far modern society is ‘open’ in the sense that positions are filled on the basis of merit and achievement rather than on the basis of background, social origins and other ascribed criteria. Another important concern has been with the extent to which socio-economic change has promoted mobility and reduced the divisions between the classes in the society. Such mobility is mainly due to the changing propositions of the various major occupational categories in the workforce as a result of the growth of white-collar and service positions relative to manual positions. The third concern has been with the factors which determine which individuals are socially mobile or in other words the routes by which particular individuals rise in the social hierarchy (Hamillon and Horizowicz, 1987).

Social mobility refers to the change in the status of individuals or groups in relation to a given system of social stratification. This change manifests itself in two forms, either as a threat to the contiguous system and ultimately its displacement by the emergence of
a new criterion of status – evaluation (vertical mobility or structural change) or through changes within parameters of the system (horizontal mobility or positional change). Horizontal mobility refers to transition of individuals or social object from one place to another within the same social stratum. According to Green, ‘Horizontal mobility refers to all other types of movement associated with social-class changes, such as going from place to place or accepting a job elsewhere with no change in salary or status’. Horizontal mobility, thus refers to change of residence or job without status change, such as a teacher leaving one school to work in another or even in a factory as a welfare officer. Vertical mobility on the other hand, is characterized by movement between socio-economic ladder because the movement may be upward or downward, in ascending or descending order. According to Green, ‘Vertical mobility refers to movement in any or all of the three areas of striving class, occupation and power’. Apart from these structural determinants, the Government has also played a vital role in social mobility. The caste, class and status besides being the determinants of social mobility have also given cause for social tensions and movements. Besides these institutions, education in particular has contributed to and accelerated the pace of social change and mobility. The contribution of education is borne out by the fact that the people from the depressed and downtrodden sections of the society have been in the forefront of the anti-Brahmin and anti feudal movements (Sharma, 1997).
The rate of social mobility is not uniform in all the societies of the world. It is different for different societies. Even in the advanced societies, the rate and pace of social mobility is not the same. In India, the rate of social mobility is low because of the rigid caste system and the farming culture of the country. Although under the impact of social changes, the people in lower social scale are moving up, yet the rate and place is low and slow.

Social mobility occurs through various factors like education, occupation, social-stratification, political participation, anticipatory socialization, migration, urbanization, industrialization, democratic liberalism and rationalism. Education is the most important factor which helps the individuals to go up to the highest level in the hierarchy of the society. It offers opportunities to achieve a higher place in the social hierarchy and facilitates social mobility. It also provides good opportunities to enter into prestigious occupational fields and raise the social status. Education and social status are co-related. Higher the level of education, the greater are the chances of acquiring a higher social status in the society. The occupation is another important factor of social mobility. Society gets stratified on the basis of occupation. One’s level of occupation and status in the society is co-related.

Social stratification is also one of the important factors through which social mobility takes place in different groups and persons in the society. We can stratify the society on the basis of the level of caste,
class, family, education, occupation, economy, polity and psychological sphere. Social mobility is a movement on stratified path from any one point to another. Political participation is another important and modern factor responsible for social mobility. Scheduled castes have proved that political participation is an alternative to the process of sanskritization for social mobility. The collective political actions taken by Dr. Ambedkar succeeded in achieving political power. Anticipatory socialization is another most common avenue for social mobility. Individuals or groups try to raise their social status for getting acceptance from other communities by their anticipatory socialization. Migration is another important factor of social mobility. Urbanization and industrialization which have broken the relationship between caste and occupation, are the modern and most important factors responsible for social mobility in the society. These two have given different kinds of occupational opportunities to the people. These have also helped in raising the standard of living of the people by increasing their income. These have also influenced the attitudes, values, beliefs and life styles of the people. Last but not the least, the democratic liberalism and rationalism are the other recent factors of social mobility. Ambedkar has inculcated the values of liberty, rationality and civic rights among the depressed classes (scheduled castes) and made them aware about their miserable conditions and also awakened them about their rights and liberties (Kurane, 1999).
A large section of the people in India have suffered and are still suffering from multiple forms of deprivations and backwardness in social, economic, political, religious and cultural aspects of life. Their sufferings and deprivations sometimes more visible and sometimes subdued and lesser taken note to have existed since long. Despite these deprivations and variations, in the recent years, socio-economic and political systems appear to have increased their autonomy in relation to the social structure. This enables individuals of low ritual status to attain higher socio-economic and political status to some extent. Adult franchise, reservation of seats and posts for scheduled castes, abolition of untouchability and other constitutional safe-guards appear to be undermining the legitimacy of traditional status distinction and thus appear to promise the lower castes, in some situations, a status equal to that of traditionally higher castes. To what extent this promise is fulfilled as a whole, is an open question (Sachichidananda, 1974).

In the light of fore-going brief discussion, it may be said that research involves posing questions and seeking answers. In the present study, the following few questions have also been raised. These are:

1) To what extent the social mobility among the scheduled castes brings about the changes in their attitudes, values, life styles and behaviour patterns?

2) To what extent the social mobility among the scheduled castes brings about the structural and positional changes within the caste system of the rural society?
3) To what extent the social mobility among the scheduled castes influences the socio-cultural, economic and political aspects of their lives?

4) Where do the scheduled castes stand today in the caste hierarchy of the rural society?

5) What is the nature and extent of social mobility among the scheduled castes in the rural society?

The question raised above do not have ready answers. The present study, therefore, is aimed at exploring these questions in depth with special reference to the social mobility among scheduled castes in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh. In order to understand the above raised questions properly, it would be proper to review the existing literature pertinent to our research problem.

**Review of Literature:**

In the context of the present study, it is important to take cognizance of some of the studies related to the research problem under study:

Vaishishtha (1946-47) in his study observed that the Chamars had abandoned their unclean occupations and instead they had adopted agriculture and cattle-rearing as their new economic pursuits. Due to liberal social policy of the Jaipur State and the efforts of the All India Bairwa Mahasabha between 1943 and 1946 alongwith the occupational mobility, the Chamars had stopped performing begar (forced labour) for Rao Raja and his officials and had touched to all those symbols of social status which were denied to them for ages. They had began to keep cattles like cows and buffaloes. The transformation of the social
status of Chamars (scheduled castes) from begaries (forced labourers) and agricultural labourers to cultivators and above all, their tenant assumption of special symbols apparently placed them at par with zamindars (land-lords). The occupational mobility of Chamars deprived the Rao Raja and the zamindars from their privileges of employing them as agricultural labourers.

David (1951) observed that a vast majority of the scheduled caste population according to the census of 1931 (about 86 percent of them) had already given up the occupations of their social origins. Cohen (1954) has mainly dealt with the changing status of the scheduled caste community, especially Chamars and has found that their increasing faith in education and choice of new clean occupations has generated in them a sense of optimism to enhance their socio-economic status and they are also constantly trying to enforce discipline in matters of drinking, dress, behaviour pattern, life styles and rituals.

Cohen (1955) again observed that the scheduled castes have tried and have been found to raise their status in north India by adopting some practices of orthodox Brahmins, by making their caste panchayat active, restrictions on eating and drinking, diet, dress, occupation and verbalise a desire for more education.

Cohen (1958) who had first visited Madhopur village in Utter Pradesh some time in 1952-53 re-studied the conditions of the Chamars and has thrown valuable light on the changes taking place among them.
He indicated that within the period of six years i.e. between his first visit and the second, the condition of the Chamars in Madhopur was no doubt deteriorating rapidly. They had lost a good deal of cultivable land and had no other steady source of income or occupation in the village itself.

Cohen (1961) in his study of 'The changing status of depressed caste' further analysed that the Chamars of Madhopur are in the midst of processes of change like many other people of the country. These processes of change are complicated and even contradictory. The Chamars on the one hand are organizing and fighting for social, political and economic equality with the higher castes and on the other hand they are also trying to borrow and to revive for themselves elements of culture that the higher castes are shedding. As the higher castes of Madhopur became secularized and are increasingly drawn into an urban economy and culture, the Chamars seems to be trying not only to benefit by the loosening of some old restrictions and taboos but also to buttress their own positions by adopting these old restrictions to new uses.

Epstein (1962) while dealing with economic development and social change among the Dalena and Wangala – the two villages of Mysore (Karnataka) shows how economic changes have brought about political awareness and change in Dalena, while in Wangala still steeped in traditional folkways, mores and customs, the economy has
remained traditional, the result being that the rituals still govern the social status of the persons in the society.

Bhowmik (1963) has examined the relationship between caste and service in a Bengal village and has observed that occupational mobility is occurring among the scheduled castes as a result of the emergence and functioning of markets in the rural social setting.

The studies from south and western India by Silversten (1963), Oreustein (1965) and Alexander (1968) indicate social mobility, withdrawing from the traditional relationship and moving up both on ritual and secular planes. These trends receive more consideration from the villagers than before in coming together, leaving unclean occupations and becoming economically well off. Education and enactment of laws seem to have contributed a lot to this change.

In their studies, Beteille (1965), Alexander (1966), Singh (1968), Jha (1973), Abbasayullu (1978) and Pimply (1981) have found the educational efforts of the Government and some other agencies have contributed positively to uplift the status of scheduled castes. It has been observed by these scholars that spread of education among the scheduled castes have provided them with more equal chances of political participation. They have gained greater economic independence and higher status. They have come to occupy elite positions and have led to their improvement in socio-economic status in the society.
The scholars like Patwardhan (1965), Issacs (1965), Sagar (1975), D'Souza (1980), Rao (1981) and Kamble (1982) have noted a partial impact of education on scheduled castes. They have found that education has increased their social mobility only to some extent and there is only slight increase in their literacy level. They have also observed that the changes are taking place in the lives of the scheduled castes.

Issacs (1965), Singh (1968), Malik (1970), Chitnis (1972) and Singhi (1979) have observed that education has led to the emergence of a new elite group among the scheduled castes and it has led to the alienation of the educated elites from their own community. On the one hand, it has reinforced the ascribed status of the upper castes in most parts of the country and on the other hand, it has minimized the contacts of scheduled castes with their own community with wider implications for breeding a kind of universe alienation.

Ahluwalia (1966) in his study, 'Inter-caste relations in a Kullu village in Himachal Pradesh' found that there are three main castes in the village i.e. Brahmins, Rajputs and Dagis. The two castes Brahmins and Rajputs are the clean castes while Dagis are thought to be and treated as unclean. Dagis are a low caste people and are known as Harijans (scheduled castes). They are so named because they remove dead catties. They often perform subservient jobs to the higher castes and work as Khoridards to Rajputs. The Dagis are treated as low as untouchables and are not allowed to enter the houses of the Brahmins.
and the Rajputs. They are not even allowed to enter the two temples of the village. They are economically dependents upon the Rajputs. He also observed that although children of all the castes including Dagis do play together yet still they keep at a distance. They observe the rules of pollution and commensalism. In general, women are more stringent about keeping ritual distance than are men in the village community.

Beteille (1966) in his study found that caste system was overlapping class structure. Certain aspects like land ownership, occupation and education are not dependent upon the caste as before. Education enabled the untouchables (scheduled castes) to compete on equal terms with others for white collar jobs. They freed them from attached labourers as serfs. The land legislations also to some extent have contributed to this freedom. They seemed to have adopted a number of sanskritic practices. Further, Beteille (1966) in his study of Sripuram village of Tanjore shows the changing patterns of power and authority with special reference to the changes in the relationship between the Brahmins, the non-Brahmins and the Adi-Dravids or the untouchable castes. It is found that with the spread of education and political awareness, Adi-Dravids are no more the underdogs and even Paraiya and Pallas, the lowest in the rung of scheduled castes, though still largely labourers, are no longer treated as bonded labourers. They are trying to sanskritise them in the ritual spheres, while their secular activities and political participation in village affairs are increasing.
Aiyappan (1966) in his study shows how among the scheduled castes, the Irvas of Mayur constantly fought against the traditional untouchability and many Irva leaders have occupied important positions in Kerala ministry and interestingly one of them even got elevated as a Chief Minister of Travancore Cochin.

Patwardhan (1966) has conducted an interesting study of the process of sanskritisation at work among many scheduled caste groups in Maharashtra such as Chamars, Dhors, Mahars, Mangs, Holars and Mang-gurudis. She noticed how the Holars who were very low in the hierarchy of the scheduled castes themselves have been able to raise their social status to the level of Chamars.

Betelé (1967) has found that the process of Sanskritizations affects the culture of castes in the lower and middle order to the caste hierarchy of the society. He observed that the young members of the scheduled castes are no more keen on Sanskritizations. They have organized the self respect movement as in the case of Tamil Nadu. The modern secular social order provides alternative models of prestige and values. This paves the way for westernization which comes to be adopted as a means of acquiring social status in the society. This has opened a new vistas for individual mobility in the social hierarchy.

Lynch (1968) in his study observed that in north India Jatava a leather workers' caste was separated occupationally as well as residentially. Since the beginning of the 20th century they have been making efforts to more socially up by becoming contractors of labour,
construction, supplying hides and skins which has also given them economic security. The advent of shoe-industry in the city has added dimensions to this situation. Arya Samaj further provided art, knowledge of sanskritic symbols and effective reference group behaviour in the caste system. They organized themselves for bringing about reforms and started putting on sacred threads. The Jatava assumed a militant posture and they tried to achieve political power and to some extent they succeeded in achieving this.

Cohen (1968) opined that the textual view of Indian society developed in the 18th century portrayed it as being a static one, allowing for title as no social mobility among scheduled castes. Harper (1968) says that there was indeed very little scope for their (scheduled castes) upward social mobility. Stein (1968) observed that the members of scheduled castes are assuming the occupational roles and statuses which are reserved for higher castes.

Lynch (1969) has conducted an important study about the effects of constitutional provisions as also of parliamentary democracy on the status of Jatavas of Agra and has found that legal innovations have opened new frontiers of political opportunities to the scheduled castes and have brought about a positive change and improvement in every aspect of their socio-economic and political life.

Betteile (1969) observed that enhancement of status is not only objective, but now improvement in material conditions is becoming
more important. The patterns of social mobility is no more based upon ascription for scheduled castes.

Singh (1969) conducted a study of sanskritisation process among Madigas (scheduled castes). He observed that they have sanskritised their ways with the result that the social distance between the higher castes and Madigas has narrowed down and they are now seeking to align themselves with the higher castes.

Saberwal (1970) observed that the belief in inherited pollution and inequality has considerably weakened during the last two decades and a number of factors have enabled the scheduled castes to enhance their status in the society. He conducted a study in a small town in Punjab on the scheduled caste groups, viz. The Balmiki, Ad-Dharmi and the Ramgaghia. He found that the constitutional and legal safeguards and their politicization has led them to a higher awareness of their rights. Many scheduled castes have now become full fledged members of high status symbols.

Sachichidananda (1974) after surveying the aspect of change among the scheduled castes till the end of 1960's stated that the impact of change is more striking among the scheduled castes as they have been comparatively immobile in the past. Changes in the status which may appear limited in absolute terms, acquires different significance when viewed against the back-ground of traditional society. He also stated that the changes come through three factors, first by reform
movements, second by the process of sanskritisation and third by the process of westernization.

Lynch (1974) revealed in the study undertaken by him among the Jatavas, one of the scheduled caste community in Agra city, that they were traditional leather workers and occupied lowest position in the social hierarchy of the area. He found in his exhaustive study of this group and provided rich account of their socio-economic and political development leading to latter's social mobility. Shoe-production was by and large carried on a small scale by them. Alongwith shoe-making the Jatavas had been able to acquire contracts for supply of skins and hides, stone-cutting, labour supply and leather tanning. These activities coincided with the efforts of Arya Samaj's reformistic activities concerning Jatavas uplift. As a result of which Jatavas started getting education as well as becoming conscious of their rights. The rich Jatavas contractors expended their economic base by opening cotton mills. The weaving work, like leather tanning was a traditional occupation of Jatavas. The ownership and monopoly over shoe-industry significantly added to economic prosperity. This proved to be a take off point for them in the field of education and politics.

Bhatt (1975) found a considerable progress in the movement of upward vertical mobility among lower status caste groups because of legal and constitutional provisions.

Murthy (1976) observed that inspite of all the welfare policies and schemes of the Government, the conditions of the majority of the
scheduled castes is at the lowest ebb. It is a crude fact that despite constitutional –legal safeguards taken to protect scheduled castes from social discriminations and injustices, educational and welfare measures, higher castes have committed the worst types of atrocities on them in various parts of the country.

Srinivas (1977) opined that though the educational facilities were provided to the scheduled castes but by and large they seem to be unable to take advantage of it. Sachchidananda (1977) in his book ‘The Harijan Elite’ has pointed out that as a result of reservation policy, a new educated elite class has emerged among the scheduled castes in the society and they are taking up leadership roles to the scheduled caste masses. He also visualized that scheduled castes has no complete freedom of occupational choice leading to a sense of frustration and meaninglessness among them.

Abbasayulu (1978) has found that constitutional provisions have permitted many of the scheduled castes to obtain elite positions in the society. Malik (1979) has also found that the constitutional provisions have brought about an improvement in the status of scheduled castes along such dimensions as that of education, income and occupation and in respect of improving their political status.

Goyal (1981) observed that educational development, social consciousness and economic level have definitely led to effective, political participation by scheduled castes. Khare (1981) has found that the policy of reservations has adequately compensated for
centuries of oppression against the scheduled castes and that the latter have sufficiently overcome the psychological, educational and economic disadvantages taking place from the oppression to compete on equal footing. But, it is seen that the reservation policy in India has not served the basic purpose of reducing the alienation of scheduled castes.

Kapur (1985) has opined even after so many decades of planning, the economic position of scheduled castes has not been improved much and there is an enough scope for their socio-economic amelioration. The scheduled castes constitute one-fourth of the total population in Himachal Pradesh but their proportion is much higher in the poverty group. They are mostly agricultural labourers, weavers, spinners and leather workers, etc. From times immemorial, the scheduled castes had to pursue unclean occupations such as scavenging and sweeping, flaying and tanning. It is a matter of common observation based on the earlier plans that the process of economic development and modernization has not benefited this weaker section of the society to the extent it did the other communities. The fruits of progress and flow of benefits have not reached the majority of scheduled castes to the extent these should have. Since the attempts made in the earlier five years plans could not yield the desired results and efforts to uplift these down-trodden sections of the society were actually found lacking. It is necessary to undertake various developmental activities in the integrated manner so as to ensure that scheduled caste beneficiary families received a package of developmental assistance.
Sharma (1986) in his study in Karnal district of Haryana found that by entering into the organized factory system, the Chamars have experienced themselves changes in various aspects of their lives. The findings at inter-generational level suggest that today, the Chamars are much better off than their elder generations. This indicates social mobility among them. The problems they face in the factory-system, and in the society make them somewhat immobile. They can have a better future with increasing industrialization and state intervention in the solution of their problems. Their own struggle on the socio-economic and political fronts can bring about greater changes and make them more mobile.

Mathew (1986) summarized in his study of a Maharashtra village that the state of mobility of scheduled castes into salaried occupations was 23.93 percent. The study also revealed that the scheduled castes who entered salaried occupations took up their traditional occupations as sweepers and leather workers etc.

Pundir and Kahlon (1986) found in a study of a town in Punjab that 'political', 'administrative' and 'social workers' elites are emerging from among the scheduled castes in urban and semi-urban areas. The elites found in the process of making, the higher caste people as their positive reference models, particularly in the higher, dominant caste in the area. They were inspired by them as their classmates, friends and fellows belonging to the same locality, get more closely associated when they came out to either places for higher
education. The study further indicated that education has not much importance for political and social workers elites. The reservation policy and education have contributed much to the coming up of administrative elites.

Aggarwal (1987) found in his study in a village, which has come in the urban agglomeration of Meerut city in three generations that the second generation of scheduled caste women are getting education and they are contributing to the education and occupational mobility of the family for the upcoming generation. The increasing education among the males is contributing to the all round mobility of the family. Both horizontal and vertical mobility is seen in education as well as in occupation. In such a situation, the Brahmins are found to be lesser inclined than other higher castes for integration of scheduled castes. In the socio-cultural life, child marriage and purdhah-system are disappearing among the scheduled castes.

Chaudhary (1987) found in a study of Valmikis and Chamars in a town of central Uttar Pradesh that they have improved in the fields of education, adopting new occupations, entering in white collar jobs using such opportunities and becoming politically more conscious and active in this process. This mobility is more observable among the Chamars than among the Valmikis. It is also found that more education and opportunities have been availed by the Chamars as compared to the Valmikis. They appear to adopt life and behaviour patterns like that of the higher castes. Thus, there is a breakthrough from the ascriptive
traditional roles, as the new roles and status is being achieved. This is mainly due to the spread of education among them.

Sisaudia (1987) found in a Tarai village of Nainital district of Uttranchal that there is a trend of urbanization and westernization in the housing, furniture and dress patterns in the present generation of scheduled castes in comparison to previous generation. The mobile families are going ahead in education, new occupations, life styles and in political participation at the grass-roots level. The social intercourse with higher castes is increasing. There is an emphasis on educating their children for increasing contracts with higher castes and achieving prestigious positions in the local community. The higher education and better economic conditions bring greater prestige, more social relationships with the higher castes and more political consciousness and participation among the scheduled castes.

Pundir (1987) observed in a village of western Utter Pradesh that a vertical mobility appears to have taken place in the last two generations among the scheduled castes. Education and State policy have contributed to their educational and occupational mobility. The developmental works like construction of canal and roads have freed them from bondage type of labour relations with land-owing castes to free wage. The local level elites are emerging among the scheduled castes in this process of mobility. They are concerned and conscious about the education of their coming generations. In this context, social
inter-course is emerging on more equal footing with higher castes of the area.

Kaistha (1987) in his study ‘Measuring Social Mobility through Occupational Prestige’ found occupation and education as two main indicators of social mobility. The studies on social mobility, social stratification and inter-generational social change have highlighted that the occupational rank is one of the most important indicators of social status, or even of social class membership and participation, though other indicators like education, income, power and authority have also been used to analyse social status.

Sharma (1987) analyses some aspects of continuity and change among Dumnas, an untouchable caste in Punjab and found spatial, educational, occupational, economic and political mobility among the Dumnas. He, however, found that these spheres of mobility are not applicable to all the Dumnas of Punjab as a vast majority of them still continues to live in poverty and are illiterates. Further, he found that the type of mobility which has taken place among the Dumnas is not that of Dumna caste as a whole but of few individuals belonging to this caste.

Ahmed and Akhtar (1991) in their essay ‘The Scheduled Castes: Are they really mobile?’ notice some trend of upward mobility among the scheduled castes. However, they found that modernization and mobility do not end with the capture of high positions by the scheduled
castes. Achievements have to be accepted and granted social legitimacy if they are to be meaningful.

Dhawan (1991) while studying the ‘Changing Status of Scheduled Caste Women’ in Chandigarh, has found that scheduled caste women in particular have improved their status in the society. No doubt they are confronted with the problems of social adjustment, but on the whole, educational and occupational mobility have brought a change in their social positions. He has opined that the scheduled castes should be made aware of the existing constitutional and legal safeguards so that more and more people from this section of the society can move up the social ladder and the difference between scheduled castes and non-scheduled castes can be narrowed down.

Pandey (1991) has observed a perceptible change in literacy rates among the scheduled castes over a period of time in Allahabad district in eastern Uttar Pradesh. It mainly appears to be taking place due to educational programmes and facilities provided by the Government. But poverty is the major problem which comes in their way and forces their younger children to become bread earners by participation in the labour force or by doing odd jobs. They have also not shared equally the benefits of adult education programmes. Thereby in the area these economically deprived castes remain comparatively at the lower level in educational achievements. He further noticed that their insanitary conditions of households are worst. The health conditions of scheduled castes are far from a satisfactory
level. They get much less calories than required for their level of labour work. They suffer from deficiency diseases. A very less percentage of scheduled castes have been benefited by the welfare programmes and schemes.

Chauhan (1992) in a study of leadership among the scheduled castes in Meerut (Uttar Pradesh) found that they are coming up in organizations, based on traditional patterns like caste organization, in voluntary organizations for their occupational mobility and thereby progressing economically, and attaining positions in statutory panchayat. Their numerical strength also added to this uplift in political participation at the grass-roots level and in establishing wider linkages. Their skill at leather work gets translated into new entrepreneurships in the village in producing specialties of leather items. The provisions of the state policies and programmes are better used when they have their own organization for self-employment using their skills. Such voluntary organizations are giving opportunities of upliftment, independence and education for the young.

Chandrasekaran (1992) in a study 'Social Mobility among the Madiga of Karanataka' found that changes in the external environment and efforts by the Madiga (a dalit caste of old Mysore) have led to some improvement in their position in the society. The efforts have been made by the State since the days of Maharaja's rule to open up new channels of secular mobility to the dalits. This has contributed to Madiga entry into almost all occupations – those that were caste-linked
as well as those that traditionally belonged to the upper caste. This occupational mobility, however, is more in form than in content. The Madiga have neither achieved the full economic potential of their sponsored mobility, nor have they been socially integrated into the middle classes of Indian society. Without social acceptance, there cannot be any real economic mobility for the individual Madiga.

Pundir (1993) in a comparative study of a western Uttar Pradesh and a Madhya Pradesh village, found the spread of education and westernisation especially among the scheduled caste ‘Chamars’. The scheduled castes could get education, availed the facilities of job reservation, thereby the change occurred in their traditional occupations, life styles, behaviour patterns, working in mixed and co-operative manner, inter-caste organized relationships. He found that politico-historical and geographical conditions of a particular region play an important role in the upliftment and social mobility of scheduled castes.

Pundir (1993 b) in another study conducted in the same region observed that if the social structure varies in its social attributes, though the technological and productive bases remain the same, attaining equality and social justice by weaker sections (scheduled castes) also varies. Dominant caste attribute of the rural social structure seems to be less favourable for achieving social justice. Thus, social-structural attributes of the rural social structure appears to be less favourable for achieving social justice. Thus, social-structural
attributes appear relevant in achieving equality and social justice by the scheduled castes. The proposition that if a group is sizeable and well organized then the group may seek redressal of grievances which may be examined in the recent processes of scheduled caste organizations emerging in north India.

Pundir (1995) in his study 'Social Change among scheduled castes in North India' found that the scheduled castes have shown a tendency of change in North India. The directions and process of change among the scheduled castes indicate that more changes are observable in their transformation, upgrading and diversification of occupation.

Lal (1995) in his study, 'Acquiring a dalit identity : Downward Mobility of some upper castes of Rajasthan' analysed the process of conversion from upper castes to Dalit Castes (scheduled castes). He focused his attention to this new social phenomenon in the state during 1991-94. In total, 84 Bhangis of higher caste origin were investigated. The study covered 13 out of 31 districts in the state of Rajasthan. It analysed their socio-religions and educational background and their demographic characteristics. It was found that the converts were both males (48) and females (36). The study noted that the converts were originally Brahmins, Rajputs, Khatris, Jats, Sunars, Sindhis, Nais and so on. He observed that the conversion of upper castes into the Bhangi caste is not confined to Rajasthan and this process can be observed in other states as well.
Singh (1997) observed that while there has been a reduction in the percentage of population living below poverty line, the incidence of poverty was still very high. There has been no visible change in the occupational patterns of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and they still constitute bulk of the cultivator class, agricultural class, land-less labourers, construction workers and workers in the unorganized sector. They suffer from long periods of unemployment and under-employment. Poverty, backwardness, ignorance and lack of continuance of option in employment opportunities and so on, facilitate their old age exploitation.

Wankhede (1999) in his study revealed that with the principle of equality and social justice supported by constitutional and legal provisions, the scheduled castes are expected to make significant progress. The experiment of special provisions is in operation since the last over 50 years and therefore, it is expected that there have been changes in their socio-economic conditions. However, the progress made by them is marginal and is limited to the urban setting only. The majority of them, still have a long way to go.

Wankhede (1999) has observed that there is a very high degree of educational and occupational upward mobility among the scheduled castes central government employees of Delhi because of general awareness they gained from Ambedkar’s movement, urban exposure and the facilities provided to them. The shift from traditional
occupations to modern, secular white collar occupations has been possible through education.

Rajeshwar (2000) in his editorial, 'Handling the Ambedkar Legacy' analysed that more than half a century after India's independence and the temple entry movement by Mahatma Gandhi for scheduled castes, they are still being discriminated against. The crucial issue is the untouchability factor which permeates all walks of life in the village communities. With increasing education, awareness and economic empowerment, the Dalit identity is bound to assert itself more and more in the country. Unless the upper castes and the intermediary backward classes, who are no less hostile towards the scheduled castes, change their social outlook, there will be no peace and social amity in the society.

Louis (2000) has observed that scheduled castes neither own land or other resources nor are they educated enough to look for Government and non-Government jobs. Even in the private enterprises like business or small-scale industries, their presence is negligible. The only source left for them is lower grade jobs on the basis of reservation. The government has made provisions for reservation to the Scheduled Castes so that they could get jobs in the public sectors. Even in the areas of welfare measures like making them literate, it was not carried out in the right earnest manner. Education is one of the most important factors for social mobility. The various literacy programmes have been started by the government from time to time to
educate the scheduled castes but they have not been benefited much by these literacy campaigns. He also found that the phenomenal increase of the scheduled castes in the category of labourers during the post decades indicate that more and more scheduled castes are forced to sell out even the small holding they have in order to survive.

Kaur, Sharma and Aggarwal (2001) in their study in Ludhiana and Bathinda districts of Punjab observed that the education and income were considered as most important factors responsible for decline in social distance between higher castes and scheduled castes. They further observed that these two had exerted, their direct influence on interaction while age had its inverse influence on interaction of different castes.

Kiran, Vermani and Bhan (2001) found in their study, in the villages of Bhiwani and Hisar districts of Haryana that the scheduled castes attraction towards tenants and labour work was decreasing whereas attraction was increasing towards business and service sector. They observed that the scheduled castes were leaving manual jobs especially in service sector. They found that urban ward migration had further accelerated the process of social mobility among the scheduled castes because in urban areas scheduled castes had better occupational opportunities, open class structure, better civil amenities and educational facilities hence they observed them moving towards modern occupations which were beyond their preview in the past. They also visualized change in occupation which had enhanced their socio-
economic status. However, they could not move towards higher class occupation category due to their low education level. According to them scheduled castes can move further if their educational status is improved.

Jindal, Kaur and Arora (2001) found in their study in Bhatinda district of Punjab that the majority of scheduled castes residing in rural areas were having large sized families and lower family income level as compared to higher castes families. They found that majority of the scheduled caste families were landless and working as a casual labourers. Although none of the scheduled caste was found educated upto the graduation level yet they noticed a drastic change in their education level which increased gradually from one generation to another. They further revealed that as far as higher education was concerned, they were also not in a far better position as compared to higher castes. Majority of the scheduled Caste children were found studying in government schools. The important factors affecting their education achievement levels was not others than that of occupation, family income and the family size. They noticed scheduled caste families having favourable attitudes towards inter-caste marriages. They also observed that scheduled castes were attending social and religious ceremonies of higher castes denying the existence of untouchability in the rural areas which resulted mainly due to the improved level of education. They finally concluded that although the scheduled castes had improved their socio-economic status to some extent, yet they have still a long way to go.
Ajay Kumar (2004) while examining the dynamics of development and social mobility among the Lahulis of Himachal Pradesh found that the Lahulis have made strides in development despite harsh economic and tough geo-climatic conditions. The Lahulis have risen to high positions from very humble beginnings after much struggle. The development process in Lahul after independence has contributed a great deal to the upward social mobility among the Lahulis. With the diversification of occupations, people have moved from the traditional occupations of subsistence farming, trade, mule keeping for transport and manual labour to scientific farming, horticulture, hotel industry, services in government and the public sector, tourism based occupation and a host of other occupational activities. Both inter-generational and intra-generational mobility have taken place in terms of occupation and education. They devised spatial mobility strategies not only to sustain life under different ecological conditions but also for their development and upward social mobility. By moving to places outside the valley, they learnt new skills, adopted new ideas and techniques, attained higher levels of education and entered modern occupation and other diversified economic activities.

The fore-going review of literature suggests that:

* The scheduled castes suffered from the socio-economic handicaps which placed them in the disadvantaged position.

* There are numerous scheduled caste communities in the different parts of the country including Himachal Pradesh, many of whom still maintain their traditional culture.
The scheduled castes are at the lowest strata of Indian society because of their degraded position and they remained backward socially and economically in comparison to the rest of the population.

No uniform policy and development approach in all matters can be applied to all the scheduled castes because of the significant divergence in their resources base and constraints.

Education development has brought about awareness among the scheduled castes, who are now prepared to face the challenges of changed scenario. Education symbolises the important aspect of quality of life concerned with human beings understanding about the self, the society and the universe.

Social mobility has its impact on the socio-economic life of the scheduled castes and it brought about significant changes in their life-styles, behaviour pattern, attitudes, values and value-orientations.

The economic position of scheduled castes has not been improved much and there is an ample scope of their economic amelioration.

The process of economic development and modernization has not yet benefited this weaker section to the extent it did the other communities.

The fruits of progress and the flow of benefits have not reached to the majority of the scheduled castes to the extent these should have.

There is a breakthrough among the scheduled castes from the ascriptive traditional rules as by the new rules, a status is being achieved by them. This is mainly due to the spread of education.

Education and government policy have contributed to a great extent to the educational and occupational mobility among the scheduled castes.

The scheduled castes are coming up in organizations based on traditional patterns like caste organizations and voluntary organizations for their occupational mobility and thereby progressing economically and attaining positions in the statutory Panchayati Raj Institutions like Panchayats, Panchayat Smiti and Zila Parishads. Some of them have also even made their way to State Legislatures and Indian Parliament as well.
The scheduled castes traditionally occupied the lowest social position in the social hierarchy. They were kept away from the higher castes and were considered untouchables.

The evidences suggest that in various social situations, the social distance appears to be lessening. The practice of untouchability and social distance are getting reduced. They have changed their behaviour patterns and life-styles.

The scheduled castes appear to have become lesser and lesser dependent on higher and land owning castes for their livelihood.

The development programmes have made the scheduled castes more autonomous to choose the work for their livelihood different from the types of work they had to do in the past.

The dependency on higher castes to some extent got reduced, so a contractual type of labour relations are observable in agricultural activities.

At many places, they have achieved power positions at the local level. Everywhere they are the members and office-bearers of the local bodies by virtue of reservation. Thus, their participation in quality, in number of positions have been facilitated by legislative provisions initially.

The findings indicate that some of the scheduled caste people possess good housing, household gadgets, dress-patterns as are possessed by higher caste people.

The Government and voluntary agencies should play a very important role in the socio-economic development of the scheduled castes.

There is an urgent need for the effective enforcement of various constitutional safeguards and protective measures for the upliftment and welfare of the scheduled castes.

Objectives of the Study:

Keeping in view the nature of research problem, the present study focuses on the following objectives:

(1) To analyse the demographic, socio-cultural and economic profile of the area and the respondents.
(2) To examine the variations in the social mobility patterns of the sub-groups among the scheduled castes.

(3) To analyse the variations of socio-economic factors in the social mobility at the individual level among the scheduled castes.

(4) To study the emerging trends of social mobility among the scheduled castes.

(5) To analyse the problems faced by the scheduled castes in availing the benefits and other related facilities provided by the State and other agencies.

Hypotheses:

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, the following hypotheses related to the present study have been formulated. These are:

(1) Educated persons may tend to have better chances of acquiring social mobility than the uneducated and less educated ones.

(2) Persons who have got an opportunity to attain employment through reservation policy may tend to have better chances of social mobility than those who could not avail this facility.

(3) Persons having higher educational status may tend to have higher educational aspirations for their children than those with lower educational status.
(4) Persons having higher educational status may tend to have higher occupational aspirations for themselves and their children than those having lower occupational status.

(5) Person having higher educational status may tend to have taken more benefits of reservation policy in different spheres than those having lower educational status.

(6) Reservation policy may tend to bring about social mobility (educational, occupational and political) among the scheduled castes.

(7) Persons belonging to high sub-caste category of the scheduled castes may tend to have better chances of acquiring social mobility than those belonging to medium and low sub-caste categories of the scheduled castes.

(8) Persons having higher occupational status may tend to have better chances of acquiring social mobility than those with lower occupational status.

Methodology:

Generally speaking, research methodology is the description, explanation and justification of various methods of conducting research. It has an important role in social science research, as it presents a mode of analysis which enables generalizations and theories to develop. A well laid down methodology helps the theory in the
development of further knowledge and fact finding mission. The choice of suitable methodology at the first hand depends upon the nature of the research problem. A researcher adopts a number of steps while conducting research. A brief account of the phases of scientific procedure include precise formulation of the problem in question; formulation of a working hypothesis; observation and exploration of the problem by a variety of scientific techniques; uniform recording of the data collected; classification of the data into various categories; and scientific generalizations (Young, 1984). In social science research, the plan of the study is the most important thing upon which the whole process of scientific enquiry depends. Design means adopting that type of techniques of social research which is the most suited for the study of the problem. Research design is the base on which we proceed towards the study of the problem. It provides the empirical and logical basis for drawing conclusions and gaining insight about the problem under study. As far as, the present study is concerned, it is by and large descriptive in nature as it mainly deals with the social mobility among scheduled castes in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh. This section of the chapter mainly deals with the brief description of the methodology adopted in the present study.

Area of the Study:

Keeping in view the nature of the present study, it is in the fitness of the research problem to look up for the setting where the social mobility among the scheduled castes in rural areas of Himachal
Himachal Pradesh could be assessed. Himachal Pradesh is a hilly and mountainous region. The selection of Himachal Pradesh as an area of study has been mainly guided by the fact that the area as a whole may be taken to be an under-researched area because the research done so far in respect of the social mobility among the scheduled castes of the State is so scanty, sporadic and sketchy as not to amount any mentionable research. No substantial study is also available on the social mobility among the scheduled castes in the State. The State also has a sizable population of scheduled castes which constitute about one-fourth of the total population of the State. Hence, it draws our attention and the present study is taken up for sociological research purpose in the State. A brief account of the study area is given below. However, its detailed description is given in Chapter-II under profile of the area of study.

Himachal Pradesh consists of 12 districts namely Kangra, Mandi, Shimla, Solan, Sirmour, Hamirpur, Una, Kullu, Chamba, Bilaspur, Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti. The geographical and topographical setting as well as the vastness and diversities of the State i.e. different zones, difficult terrain and climatic conditions, make it difficult to study the whole area with limited time and resources available at the disposal of the researcher. Hence, the present study has been confined to Shimla District which has a sizeable population of Scheduled Castes (26.13 percent).
Shimla District comprises of nine development blocks namely Rampur, Narkanda, Theog, Chopal, Jubbal, Rohru, Chohara, Basantpur and Mashobra. It was decided to select Mashobra Development Block because it has a sizeable population of scheduled castes (32.45 percent) and is one of the nearest blocks adjacent to Shimla town, the headquarter of the State capital. This block comprises of Shimla (rural) tehsil and Junga sub-tehsil. In this block, there are total forty one panchayats, out of which 35 panchayats fall in Shimla (rural) tehsil and six panchayats come under Junga sub-tehsil. In this block, the settlement patterns of the panchayats vary from the urban fringe to the interior areas. Within this block, Junga sub-tehsil is selected as it is comparatively interior, less developed and has high concentration of scheduled castes population (41.14 percent) as compared to Shimla (rural) tehsil (27.37 percent). In Junga sub-tehsil, out of the total six Panchayats namely Junga, Koti, Balog, Piran, Satlai and Janedghat, two panchayats i.e. one third of the total six panchayats with high concentration of scheduled castes namely Junga (45.66 percent) and Piran (51.75 percent) have been selected. As per the office record, Junga panchayat consists of 21 revenue villages namely, Junga, Pujarli, Kohan, Gharot, Kaderi, Chauri, Mehshu, Chewra, Loha, Kheel-Ka-Jewra, Chajeyan – Payandli, Bahli – Khanlog, Jungle – Bhalawag, Dawaru, Bharech, Kot, Kayana, Dhaliana, Jungle-Rathmu, Jungle – Manoon and Jungle – Jhageribagh. On the other hand, Piran panchayat consists of two revenue villages namely, Piran and Trai.
The justification behind selecting these panchayats for the study purpose is that Junga panchayat is more developed and having a sizeable population of scheduled castes numbering 1853/4058 persons (45.66 percent). On the other hand, Piran panchayat is remote and less developed one and having a high concentration of scheduled caste population possessing 845/1633 persons (51.75 percent). The population size of scheduled castes in these panchayats, thus, helped us to have a sufficient number of respondents in our sample. Further, the area is socio-culturally homogeneous and is also easily approachable. It has also facilities like education, transportation, communication, health, electricity, banking, etc. available to the people of the area.

In addition to these, the researcher being himself a resident of this area is advantageously placed in a position to effectively communicate with the respondents in particular and the people in general. Further, more, no substantial study exclusively of this nature has so far been attempted before in this part of the State. Thus, this setting provided us with a suitable design of research whereby we could delineate the social mobility among scheduled castes in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh.

Universe and Sample of the Study:

As soon as the area of the study was selected, the next step was to have a representative sample in an objective manner. To reduce biases and ensure accuracy to the measurements in research, it is
necessary to make use of a proper sampling technique in the selection of a sample (See Table-1.3). For selecting such a sample, it is necessary to have a proper sampling frame, i.e. a list of units selected from the total population of the study area. Since the present study has been carried out in two panchayats namely Junga and Piran of Junga sub- tehsil, therefore, a complete list of all the scheduled caste households from these two panchayats was prepared by doing a preliminary door to door survey and with the help of panchayat record. The total number of scheduled castes households in both the panchayats at the time of survey came out to be 406 which was 291 in the case of Junga panchayat and 115 in Piran panchayat. This constituted our universe of the study. In order to have a sufficient number of respondents in the sample so as to have more data regarding the research problem under study, it was decided to include all 406 scheduled caste households in the sample. Thus, the actual size of the sample for the present study is 406 scheduled caste households.

The unit of investigation in the present study is the head of the household either be a male or female. He/she being the eldest member of the family is well informed and acquainted with the area and the whole family affairs rather than other family members. He/she is also generally responsible for taking decisions on behalf of the family members. Since, an attempt is being made to analyse the social mobility among scheduled castes in rural areas of Himachal Pradesh, the descriptive research design has been adopted for the present study.
### TABLE - 1.3

**SELECTION OF SAMPLE (DISTRICT SHIMLA - H.P.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS IN THE DISTRICT</th>
<th>09</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPMENT BLOCK SELECTED with sizeable population of SCs (32.45%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF TEHSIL/SUB-TEHSIL SELECTED</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME OF THE TEHSIL/SUB-TEHSIL SELECTED with high concentration of SCs Population (Shimla (rural) tehsil = 27.37%, Junga sub-tehsil = 41.14%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER AND NAME OF THE PANCHAYATS IN SELECTED SUB-TEHSIL = 06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER AND NAME OF THE PANCHAYATS SELECTED @ one third of the total panchayats = 2 with high concentration of SCs population (Junga = 43.66% and Piran = 51.73%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF REVENUE VILLAGE IN EACH SELECTED PANCHAYAT</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF REVENUE VILLAGES SELECTED FROM EACH SELECTED PANCHAYAT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SCHEDULED CASTES POPULATION IN EACH SELECTED PANCHAYAT</td>
<td>1853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHEDULED CASTE HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH SELECTED PANCHAYAT</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER OF SCHEDULED CASTE HOUSEHOLDS SELECTED FROM EACH SELECTED PANCHAYAT</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE (HOUSEHOLDS)</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **RAMPUR**
- **NARKANDA**
- **ROHRU**
- **CHAUHARA**
- **JUBBAL**
- **BASANTPUR**
- **THEOG**
- **CHOPAL**
- **MASHOBRA**

**SHIMLA (RURAL) TEHSIL**

- **MASHOBRA**
  - **JUNGA SUB-TEHSIL**
    - **JUNGA**
    - **KOTI**
    - **Balog**
    - **PIRAN**
    - **SATLAI**
    - **JANEDGHAT**

**JUNGA SUB-TEHSIL**

- **JUNGA**
- **PIRAN**

**JUNGA PUJARLI KOHAN GHAROT KEDERI CHAUDRI MEHSHU CHEWARA LOHA KHEEL-KAJEWRA\nCHAIJEYAN-PAYANDLI BAHLI-KHANLOG JUNGLE-BHALAWAG\nDAWARI BHARECH KOT KAYANA DHALYANA JUNGLE-RATHMU JUGLE-MANOON JUNGLE-JHAGRIBAGH**

**PIRAN TRAI**

- **115**

81
Tools and Techniques of Data Collection:

The data for the present study have been collected with the help of primary and secondary sources. The primary sources mainly consist of interview schedule designed for the purpose of ascertaining informations on different aspects of research problem. Before launching field work, a preliminary survey was made to collect informations on crucial areas of the present study to know the different aspects of the research problem. After collecting the necessary informations and careful review of available literature, a structural interview schedule was prepared to carry out the pre-testing. The interview schedule was pre-tested and after the pre-testing of the interview schedule, the necessary changes and modifications were made therein for its finalization and actual administration in the field.

The interview schedule (Appendix-I) included questions on various aspects of the research problems. It has questions on personal profile of the respondents, their family composition, housing pattern and level of living amenities, possessed amenities, exposure to mass-media and urban living, land ownership status, participation in religious and cultural activities, etc. It has also questions on social mobility among the scheduled castes such as questions about emerging trends of social mobility with focus on inter and intra caste relationships, and inter caste marriages, socio-economic factors and social mobility with emphasis on education, political participation, occupation, employment and reservation policy, practice of
untouchability and social mobility, and also questions about the problems faced by the scheduled castes. Both open-ended and close ended questions have been included in the interview schedule.


Besides the interview schedule and secondary sources of data collection, another technique of data collection i.e. 'observation' was also used. Both participant and non-participant observations were used to have a close view on the various aspects of life of the scheduled castes in the village communities to supplement the data collected through other methods. Usually, it was possible to observe the way of lives of the people in the village communities during the course of interviewing the respondents. To know more about the research problem, informations were also collected through discussions with government functionaries, social workers, leaders and prominent persons of the area, activists of various volunteers organizations (Yuvak Mandals, Mahila Mandals, Gram Sudhar Sabhas, Koli Samaj
Anusuchit Jati Kalyan Parishad, etc.), Panchayat representatives etc., They provided informations on various issues and problems confronting the Scheduled Castes in the area and about the social structure and social mobility among the scheduled castes in the village communities.

Collection of Data:

After finalizing the tools and techniques of data collection, the field work was started through primary and secondary sources. Before interviewing the respondents, the purpose of the study was explained to them. They were fully assured that the replies to the queries put to them would be kept strictly confidential and nothing untoward would happen to them and they were told that the study was purely academic and had no other motives and intentions. In order to keep uniformity in the data collection, the researcher himself conducted all the interviews with the selected respondents. Both Hindi and Pahari languages were used as medium of interview. All the questions in the interview schedule were read out carefully step by step and clearly to the respondents so as to obtain correct responses. The responses were carefully recorded by the researcher himself for further analysis purposes. To collect the informations, all the respondents were personally contacted by the researcher and they were interviewed either at their residences or at the places of their work such as offices, agricultural fields, shopping establishments etc. wherever they were found available according to their wishes and ease. In many cases,
keeping in view their busy schedule, a prior appointment was scheduled to be fixed with them for the purpose.

Each interview with the respondents took about 2 hours to fill up a single schedule. An atmosphere of privacy was maintained between the respondent and the researcher in order to obtain the desired rapport during the process of interview. After the process of interviewing, the majority of the respondents with few exceptions showed a keen interest in the interview and were very co-operative.

Difficulties During Data Collection:

To contact the respondents was really a very tiresome exercise. Besides traveling on foot to approach the desired respondents especially those inhabiting in too far-flung and distant villages, some of the respondents had to be contacted at their place of work i.e. in the agricultural fields, grazing fields, shopping establishments and their respective institutions/offices, etc. where they use to serve. Another problem faced in the process of data collection was that the inhabitants in general and the respondents in particular suspected the researcher to be either a government/semi-government official from social welfare department or scheduled castes welfare related department deputed to collect the requisite informations pertaining to scheduled castes especially about their living conditions and the sources of income so as to take stock of the situation for their welfare and upliftment. They also suspected the researcher to be the official from the income tax
department who wants to access their income levels by asking them about their sources of income, land owned, property and assets possessed by them. Most of the respondents were found initially reluctant and felt hesitated in giving the desired informations to the researcher during the process of data collection. But with the help and co-operation of prominent and educated persons, representatives and functionaries of Panchayats and other social organizations active in the area, the respondents in particular and the people in general were convinced of the motives and intentions of the study.

The next problem faced by the researcher in general was that the other residents of the villages particularly belonging to the upper caste families by viewing the researcher paying visits only to the households of the scheduled castes and seeking their views and hence they suspected him to be only the well-wisher and sympathizer of the scheduled castes. They thought that the researcher is inclinched towards scheduled castes and is hostile towards higher castes. They were of the view that by doing this the researcher was harming their interests. They also suspected him to be the government nominee who was on its way to divert the Government Welfare Schemes towards the Scheduled Castes which are actually meant for the general people of the area. They assumed that the researcher is the protector of the interests of scheduled castes only. Some of the inhabitants belonging to the higher castes also suspected that the researcher is provoking the casteism (Jatiwad) which may result in spreading hatred between the two communities in the area. It may also be pointed out here that
some people especially youths belonging to higher castes even passed many ugly remarks upon the researcher and tried their best to compel him to leave their village. They even warned the people especially the scheduled castes to be vigilant and alert about the intentions and motives of the researcher and keep watch on his activities. Some people behaved very irresponsibly while some other turned hostile. Such type of non-cooperation and stiff resistance was faced during the field work. But as the failure and success went side by side thus each and every obstacles was faced by the researcher with ease. Fear and suspicion of these people was handled with patience and perseverance. Notwithstanding the fact, the majority of the respondents were assured that the informations sought from them would be kept strictly confidential and would be used only for research and academic purpose. Thereafter, they honestly co-operated with the researcher and answered all the queries according to their ability and understanding. Some respondents tried to hide some actual facts and tried to mislead. This, however, is one of the hazard of field survey. But even then the researcher tried his best to verify and check such wrong misleading informations from other sources. Despite all this, the field work ended in a cordial manner and the researcher enjoyed the whole process.

Analysis of the Data:

After the data collection was over, the data were subjected to statistical operation starting from coding, scoring and tabulation to the writing of the research report. All the filled interview schedules were
first checked thoroughly to see any discrepancy in them. Then all the informations were first compressed into meaningful and manageable categories and these categories were then assigned codes systematically. Thus, a comprehensive code design was prepared. All the relevant informations in the interview schedules were coded carefully and then transferred to the sheets. The data were also fed in the computer for further analysis. After this, in order to make the data more meaningful and manageable, the data were classified and arranged in the form of sample and co-relational tables manually as well as with the help of computer so as to draw the generalizations. Some statistical tests such as simple ratio, percentage, arithmetic mean, chi-square test ($x^2$), etc. have also been applied wherever needed according to the nature and requirement of the data.

Limitation of the Study:

Some of the main limitations of the present study are as follows:

(i) The selection of the present area of study as a locale for research work was mainly motivated by the fact that the researcher himself being a resident of this area. This was done because of the possibility of easy establishment of rapport with the people in general and the respondents of the study in particular. The conclusions drawn are, thus, not necessarily valid for other areas of the State or country.

(ii) The selection of the area of study had to be purposive, keeping in view the nature of the research problem. This itself is a limitation of the study.

(iii) The study is co-relational in nature. The results, therefore, cannot be taken as evidence of casual relationship between independent and dependent variables.
(iv) The problem of communication is a serious limitations in the study of a rural community. Most of the people in the rural areas speak local dialects unknown to the academic world. The help of intermediaries sometimes may lose a good deal of substance of the interview.

(v) There is high degree of introversion among the people in the village communities which is difficult to pierce. Thus, the responses sometimes are incomplete and not reliable.

(vi) Although, it could have been a comparative study of Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Castes yet to make the data sizeable for meaningful results, the sample was not taken caste-wise. This may be one of the main limitations in ascertaining the views of the Scheduled Castes towards various aspects of life in comparison to non-Scheduled Castes.

But these are the limitations of behavioural research. In human behaviour, we cannot be completely objective and factual as in the case of natural sciences.