

CHAPTER-IV

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FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The Scheduled Castes constitute a sizable population (15.75%) in India (Census Report, 1981). But their position was peculiar in India. They were at the lowest rung of the ladder amongst all Hindu castes. They have been kept at a very debased condition by all means, economically, socially and religiously.

Now, the Independent India brings constitutional safeguards, legal enactments, reservation of posts, socio-economic development programmes, etc., to the Scheduled Castes to improve their conditions. Socio-Political movements also work for the welfare of Scheduled Castes.

The Scheduled Castes are now conscious^S_^ of their rights and privileges given to them. They utilise the reservation system for their employment and educational progress. They derive the benefits from the socio-economic development programmes, etc., which are meant for them. Thus they are changing progressively. Hence to understand the changes taking place among the Scheduled Castes this study is very essential.

The earlier studies show that most of the researchers have focused only on discriminatory problems of Scheduled Castes in India. The studies conducted exclusively on the problems of recent socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes are not many. For further research, the scholars have suggested studies in relation to education, health, housing and the economic development of Scheduled Castes. Exploring the impact of development programmes on Scheduled Castes is also suggested by them. Thus this study is undertaken to fulfil the above necessities.

This study is conducted in Thanjavur district, Tamil Nadu. Two Panchayat villages in Thanjavur block are selected as case study villages. One is Developed Village by name 'Chitrakudi' and the other is Less Developed Village by name 'Inathukkanpatti'. For the selection of these villages, the Village particulars were collected from the Rural Welfare Officer of each village in Thanjavur block through the village schedule. The important Socio-economic factors (Literacy, Housing, No. of Households above povertyline) and infrastructural facilities (Transportation, Postal and Telecommunications, Health care facilities, Source of drinking water, Irrigation facilities, Library and Mass-media and Service organisation) available in each village were analysed through the statistical method 'Weighted arithmetic Mean' to know the development of each

village. By knowing the Development of each village (according to ranks arrived) the ~~Developed~~ and relatively ~~less Developed~~ Villages are thus identified and selected. Under Census method, all the Scheduled Caste Hindu families (234) living in these villages are selected. To compare the Scheduled Castes with others a sub-sample of Non-Scheduled Caste Hindus were (126) purposely selected by using stratified Proportionate Random Method. Since it was decided to study only Hindus under Non Scheduled Castes, Christians and Muslims were not covered. In India caste system mainly follows the principles of Hindu religion only. The concept of Pollution and Purity make the caste distinction. The hierarchy of the caste which is based on occupation held, is the main feature of the Hindu religion. Since these special characteristics are only in the Hindu religion, Hindus alone are considered for this study

The data are collected mainly through interview, and focus^{ed} interview, case study and observation methods for the study. For the statistical analysis Chi-square test, Normal test (testing difference of two means) (large sample) and test for difference of the proportion are used.

This study mainly assesses the changes of the Scheduled Castes on the socio-economic conditions between the present and ten years before. It also assesses the educational and occupational changes of the Scheduled Caste respondents with their father's level.

This study focuses on the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes in finding the relationship between a Developed village and a relatively Less Developed Village.

For general comparison, the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes is also compared with the socio-economic conditions of the Non-Scheduled Castes in the study.

The findings and conclusions of the study are summarised in this chapter in the light of the discussions made in the foregoing chapters.

FINDINGS

GENERAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Nearly nine out of ten respondents both in Scheduled Castes (87%) and Non-Scheduled Castes (90%) are males and only one tenth are females. The representation of young age-group is more in Scheduled Castes while old age people are more in Non-Scheduled Castes. All the respondents are married, out of which a few are widows and widowers in both Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Castes. The joint family system is slowly vanishing. Nuclear family is more predominant among the Scheduled Castes (79%) and Non-Scheduled Castes (66%). There are more joint families in Non-Scheduled Castes (34%) than Scheduled Castes (21%). The medium size of family (4-5 members) is found more both in Scheduled Castes (42%) and Non-Scheduled Castes (48%).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND NON-SCHEDULED CASTES

Between Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Castes, illiterates are found more in Scheduled Castes. Even in higher education, Non-Scheduled Caste people dominate the others. Though the Scheduled Caste's literacy percentage (65%) is low, compared to Non-Scheduled Castes (78%) it is higher than the National Scheduled Caste literacy level. (ie 21.38%) (Census Report)

Scheduled Castes, the percentage of low income group is only 25%. In the high income group (i.e. Rs. 40,000 and above) the Non-Scheduled Caste is more than Scheduled Caste (Non-Scheduled Caste 39%, Scheduled Caste 6%). In the annual expenditure classification, more number of Scheduled Castes (61%) come in the category of Rs. 1 - 11,000/-, but Non-Scheduled Castes are not found as a majority in one particular group. Among Non-Scheduled Castes, 29 per cent come in the category of Rs. 1 - 11,000/-, 17 per cent come in the category of Rs. 11,000/ - 25,000/-, 13 per cent come in the category of Rs. 25,000 - 40,000/- and 41 per cent come in the category of Rs. 40,000 and above. With regard to savings, nearly one fifth of Scheduled Castes (19%) and more than three fifth of Non-Scheduled Castes (66%) respondents have deposited their money in different forms of savings. 62 per cent of the Scheduled Castes have borrowed money, for the purpose of family maintenance, etc.,

In the ownership of lands Non-Scheduled Castes are better than Scheduled Castes. Among the distribution of lands, the persons having 'less than one acre' is more among Scheduled Castes (9.4%) than Non-Scheduled Castes (1.58%) and in the category of '5 acres and above' Non-Scheduled Castes (36.5%) are more than Scheduled Castes (3.41%). In the possession of

1981). The high percentage of literacy among Scheduled Castes is due to various facilities extended to Scheduled Castes, such as location of number of schools in the villages including schools run exclusively for Scheduled Castes (both by Government & Private). Awareness of and need for education particularly in relation to employment opportunities, the nature of occupations in these villages, influence of higher castes on education are responsible for this variation in the high percentage of literacy. More than three fifth of the Scheduled Caste respondents and nearly four fifth of the Non-Scheduled Caste respondents want to educate their children upto higher education (ie Graduation and above). Nearly nine tenth of both Scheduled Caste (89%) and Non-Scheduled Caste (87%) respondents are in favour of girls' higher education. 'To get employment' is the main reason for the girls higher education is revealed by both Scheduled Caste and Non-Scheduled Caste respondents. The rate of school drop-out is relatively more in Scheduled Castes (39%) than Non-Scheduled Castes (35%). Adult education programme is not able to motivate the illiterates to the desired level.

Regarding the occupation of the Scheduled Castes, 57 percentage belong to Agricultural labourer, 25 percent belong to agriculturists, 12 percent belong to the category of 'other

type of occupation' and 6 percent belong to employment categories. When examining the occupational status of the Non-Scheduled Castes it is quite opposite from that of the Scheduled Castes. Among the Non-Scheduled Castes, Agriculturists are 56 percent, Agricultural labourers are 21 percent, Employee are 16 per cent and 7 percent are involved in other types of occupation. The present occupation satisfies most of the Non-Scheduled Castes (98%). Three fourth of the Scheduled Castes (75%) also say that they are satisfied with their occupation.

The Impure occupation such as scavenging, carrying dead animals, grave digging, drum beating, etc., carried on in the past by the Scheduled Castes do not exist to that extent now. There ^{are} no child labourers and bonded labourers found in these [^]villages, as observed by the researcher at the time of study. Unemployment position is less among Scheduled Castes (11%) than Non-Scheduled Castes (33%). Majority of the Scheduled Caste and Non-Scheduled Caste respondents like Government jobs to their children. More than sixty per cent of the Scheduled Castes (63%) and Non-Scheduled Castes (67%) have opined that girls may be allowed for jobs even outside the state.

More than 50 per cent of the Scheduled Caste households belong to low income group (i.e. upto Rs.11,000). Among Non

Scheduled Castes, the percentage of low income group is only 25%. In the high income group (i.e. Rs. 40,000 and above) the Non-Scheduled Caste is more than Scheduled Caste (Non-Scheduled Caste 39%, Scheduled Caste 6%). In the annual expenditure classification, more number of Scheduled Castes (61%) come in the category of Rs. 1 - 11,000/-, but Non-Scheduled Castes are not found as a majority in one particular group. Among Non-Scheduled Castes, 29 per cent come in the category of Rs. 1 - 11,000/-, 17 per cent come in the category of Rs. 11,000/ - 25,000/-, 13 per cent come in the category of Rs. 25,000 - 40,000/- and 41 per cent come in the category of Rs. 40,000 and above. With regard to savings, nearly one fifth of Scheduled Castes (19%) and more than three fifth of Non-Scheduled Castes (66%) respondents have deposited their money in different forms of savings. 62 per cent of the Scheduled Castes have borrowed money, for the purpose of family maintenance, etc.,

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materials (Bi-cycle, radio, tape-recorder, fan and pumpset) also the Non-Scheduled Castes are better than Scheduled Castes. In the livestock possession (cow, buffalo, goat/sheep) the Scheduled Castes are better than the Non-Scheduled Castes, except cow.

All Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Castes have own houses. Three fifth of Scheduled Castes (60%) live in thatched houses, where as more number of Non-Scheduled Castes live in pucca and mixed type of houses. (Non-Scheduled Caste-pucca 43%, mixed type 34%). More than three fifth of Non-Scheduled Caste's (63%) houses and more than two fifth of Scheduled Caste's (42%) houses are electrified. 13 per cent Scheduled Castes and 24 per cent Non-Scheduled Castes are having toilet facilities in their houses.

More than one tenth of Scheduled Castes (11%) and more than half of the Non-Scheduled Castes (52%) are the members in the village co-operative societies. Both Scheduled Castes (26%) and Non-Scheduled Castes (26%) equally participate in electioneering work at the time of election. 45 per cent Scheduled Castes and 56 per cent Non-Scheduled Castes belong to political parties.

INTERCASTE RELATIONS

Though the Untouchability (offences) Act, 1955 is in force, the level of discrimination is not decreased much, is observed in the study. The Scheduled Castes are not allowed into the temples. Still, house entry is not allowed to the Scheduled Castes. Some changes are also found in these villages. Now the Scheduled Castes are taking water from the wells and tanks of the caste Hindus. In schools also there is no discrimination maintained between the Scheduled Caste and upper caste children.

VALUE CHANGES AMONG THE SCHEDULED CASTES

Majority of the Scheduled Castes (85%) prefer 21-30 years as the proper age for marriage of sons and 69 per cent Scheduled Castes prefer 18-21 years is the right age for marriage of daughters. 98 per cent of the Scheduled Castes are against dowry systems. 29 per cent Scheduled Castes are supporting widow remarriages. Intercaste marriage is not encouraged by them. Only 22 per cent Scheduled Castes are in favour of intercaste marriages. 98 per cent of the Scheduled Castes get Allopathy treatment at the time of sickness. 42 per cent feel 'two children', 29 percent feel 'three children', 24 per cent feel 'more than three' and 5 percent feel 'only one' are the appropriate number of children for their families. 31 per cent

of the Scheduled Castes respondents have undergone family planning operation.

EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

More than 50 per cent of the Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Castes are aware of the development programmes. Among the Scheduled Caste respondents 26 per cent have got loan for Agriculture related purposes, 7 per cent have got loan for housing purposes, 5 per cent have got loan for agricultural purposes, 4 per cent have got loan for self-employment, 3 per cent have got loan for education and another 3 per cent have got loan for other areas like Bio-gas, etc., Among the Non-Scheduled Castes, 10 per cent have got loan for agricultural purposes, 6 per cent for education 3 per cent each for agriculture related purposes and self-employment and other schemes and only 1 per cent have got loan for housing. 82 per cent Scheduled Castes and 70 per cent Non-Scheduled Castes feel that their socio-economic condition is improved due to the development programmes implemented for them. On the whole, that the Scheduled Castes are the greater beneficiaries than Non-Scheduled Castes in availing the benefits of development programmes, is found in the study. This is statistically proved by **Chi-square test** and the **test for difference of proportion**.

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF SCHEDULED CASTES IN BETWEEN DEVELOPED AND LESS DEVELOPED VILLAGE

The **Chi-square test** is used for the analysis of finding the relationship between Developed and Less Developed Village on the socio-economic conditions (education, occupation, household assets (land, material possession and livestock possession), housing and political participation of Scheduled Castes. Since income (one of the socio-economic variable) is a quantified data, to find the significant difference between the Average household income of Scheduled Castes in Developed and Less Developed Village, the **Normal Test (Testing difference of two means (Large sample)** is used. In the above two tests, all the factors of the socio-economic condition are found to be significant.

Findings

The number of literates is more in Developed Village than in Less Developed Village. The number of agriculturists and employees are more in Developed Village than in Less Developed Village. Agricultural labourer and others are less in the Developed Village than in the Less Developed Village. The average income in the Developed Village is greater than in Less Developed Village. The number of landholders is more in Developed Village than in the Less Developed Village. The number of respondents possessing both household (Bi-cycle, radio, tape-

recorder and fan) ^{and} agricultural materials (pumpset) are more in the Developed Village than in the Less Developed Village. The number of respondents having livestock (cow, buffalo and goat/sheep) is more in the Developed Village than in Less Developed Village. The pucca and mixed type of houses are more in Developed Village than in Less Developed Village and thatched houses are more in Less Developed Village than in Developed Village. The political participation is found more in Developed Village than in Less Developed Village. Thus the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes is better in Developed Village than in Less Developed Village. Raise of literacy, employment status, political participation, development programmes implemented and other facilities available in the village are the main causes for improvement of Scheduled Castes in Developed Village.

CHANGING SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF SCHEDULED CASTES

The changing socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes is studied by comparing the present position (1994) with the situation ten years before. (1984) The variables, education, occupation, household income, household assets, housing and political participation are considered for the analysis under socio-economic condition. The present positions in all the above variables except education and occupation are compared with the

positions ten years before. Educational and Occupational changes are studied by comparing the respondents' position with their previous generation (i.e. the father's level). **The test for difference of proportion** is used to find the significant difference on the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes between the present and ten years before. The same test is used for finding out the significant difference on the socio-economic conditions (Education, Occupation) of respondents and their fathers. The analysed factors on the socio-economic conditions are found to be significant. (The House hold income is analysed through the frequency table description only due to the limitation in finding out the real income ten years before.)

Findings

The number of literates is more among respondents than their fathers'. While the fathers of the respondents were mainly agricultural labourers, the respondents are agriculturists, employees and carry on other occupations. The income of the Scheduled Castes is more now than that of ten years before. The landholding is increased now than that of ten years before. The number of persons possessing materials (Bicycle, radio, tape recorder, fan and pumpset) and livestock (cow, buffalo and goat/sheep) is on the increase now. Now, most of the

thatched houses have been replaced by Pucca and Mixed houses. The Scheduled Castes have more political participation now than in ten years before. Thus the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes is better now than what was prevalent ten years before.

This may be due to the policies, programmes and facilities extended by the Government. Awareness among the people and the political changes that took place in the above period are responsible for the changing conditions.

CONCLUSION

Since Independence, the Scheduled Castes have become a special concern of the nation. The constitutional measures, legal enactments and the development programmes, etc., have facilitated the process of socio-economic change among the Scheduled Castes. Hence to study the changes taking place among the Scheduled Castes, this study has been conducted.

To study the progress of the Scheduled Castes, this study has been focus^ed in three angles. They are

- 1) studying the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes with Non-Scheduled Castes in general,
- 2) Studying the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes in finding the relationship between Developed and Less Developed Village and
- 3) Assesing the changes of the Scheduled Castes on the socio-economic conditions between the present and ten years before.

In the general comparison between the Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Castes except the Livestock possession,

Scheduled Castes have not competed with the level of socio-economic condition of Non-Scheduled Castes. This is quite natural as the Scheduled Castes are found backward since many years. But they are the greater beneficiaries than Non-Scheduled Castes in availing the benefit from the development programmes. It shows now they are more aware of their rights, privileges, and facilities, etc.,

In the analysis of the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes between Developed and Less Developed Village, the socio-economic condition of the Scheduled Castes in the Developed Village is better than, the Less Developed Village. Since the socio-economic condition of the Scheduled Castes is better in the Developed Village, it shows that the Scheduled Castes have improved their status owing to better facilities in the Developed Village.

In the main analysis of the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes in comparing the present level, to what was prevalent ten years before, the socio-economic condition is found better now. Likewise, the educational and occupational condition of the Scheduled Caste's respondents is better than their father's level. It shows the changes taking place in the socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes in the recent time.

On the whole, since the Scheduled Castes are better in the socio-economic conditions in the Developed Village and also the socio-economic condition of Scheduled Castes is changing in the recent period it could be concluded that they are considerably improved in their socio-economic life.

SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of data and the findings of this study the following suggestions are made here to be carried out in future for the welfare of Scheduled Castes.

1. There should be encouragement for intercaste marriages for which generous incentives should be given as in the case of family planning operations.
2. Concerted efforts should be made to ensure that all people without an exception benefit by the development programmes.
3. All welfare programmes initiated by the Government should come under strict scrutiny and constant evaluation.
4. Motivational efforts should be saturated by mass-media and personal contacts to remove social disabilities.
5. Since the Government machinery alone could not implement all the ameliorative measures successfully for the Scheduled Castes, voluntary organisations should be involved in implementing the measures for which they should be given suitable incentives.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

To conclude it is suggested that special and comprehensive studies about health and socio-economic developments of the Scheduled Castes is of paramount importance. So also studies on atrocities on Scheduled Castes become vital. Research also needs to be conducted on the role of socio-political movements on the development of the Scheduled Castes. The findings of all the above researches are sure to provide guidelines to the planners.