PART-FOUR
CHAPTER-7 SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In the present study "Socio-Economic Status of Scheduled Castes" is the central theme. The word 'status' has been used for comparison of the different caste groups in respect of socio-economic parameters. The study is an attempt to compare the status of the sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes alongwith their comparison to the Backward Castes and Upper Castes in the district of Rohtak. This particular district is selected because it has about one-fifth of its population as Scheduled Castes. Secondly, it has more than 75 percent of rural population. Lastly, it lies in the periphery of Delhi (the National Capital). It is assumed that the metropolitan city of Delhi influences the socio-economic processes in the surrounding area. It will be interesting to study its effects on more disadvantages segments of population i.e. Scheduled Castes population.

In the present study, only those villages have been selected where the percentage of Scheduled Castes population to the total population is more than thirty percent. Thus a 43 villages have been found in the district. And out of these villages, only 9 villages i.e. about 20 percent of the total 43 villages, randomly selected. The sample of the households has taken on the basis of percentages of the total number of households i.e. about 20, 10 and 5 percent of the households, have been selected from each of the village lying in the category of the population size of less than 1000, 1000-5000 and more than 5000 person
respectively. Accordingly, out of the total 4448 households of sample villages, 354 households i.e. 7.96 percent, have been taken into consideration. Categorically 135, 56 and 163 households have been selected from Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively. The study is mainly based on primary data which includes interview based on questionnaire and field observation. For the study of geographical background, secondary data have also been consulted.

There are 37 sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes in the study area. Among them Chamars are dominant (50.20) on the basis of population. They are followed by Dhanak and Balmiki constituting about 22.46 and 21.64 percent of Scheduled Castes population respectively. On the basis of field observation in the sample villages, it may be safely concluded that though untouchability is in practice and manifested in some form or other, it is certainly on the decline. The caste bondage seems to be loosening. Though there is negligible number of inter-caste marriages, the social tension on account of caste feelings is almost absent.

The high literacy rate among Scheduled Castes is noted in Bainsi village. Their rate of literary is 55.2 percent. The lowest rate i.e. 41.0 percent is recorded in Belochpura village. In most of the villages, the literacy rate of Chamar is higher in comparison to other sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes. Bawaria of Belochpura have 27.5
percent i.e. the lowest literacy rate among all the sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes. The Upper Castes of Belochpura have 81.4 percent i.e. the highest literacy rate as compared to all other caste groups of the villages. The lowest literacy rate i.e. 49.3 percent is recorded in Madana Khurd. Among Backward Castes the high literacy rate is recorded 61.2 percent in Bainsi whereas the lowest rate is noted 27.3 percent in Katwara village. In higher education, the Scheduled Castes of Bainsi, Madana Khurd, Tamaspura and Chandol are progressing. In these villages, their literacy rate almost equals the Upper Castes. Regarding, sex-wise literacy rate, it is found that less than 10 percent of females are literate in the villages like Ladrawan (9.3) and Katwara (9.8). There are only two villages viz. Tamaspura (23.2) and Bainsi (20.3) where the literacy rate is found more than 20.0 percent. Overall, Upper Castes have higher educational status than Scheduled Castes. And Chamars among Scheduled Castes have more literacy rate.

Regarding sex-wise composition of working population Chandol has highest percentage of males having gainful employment. The lowest percentage in the village like Tamaspura where only 63.4 percent of males workers are found. Except Ladrawan, all the villages are dominating in primary activities. The highest primary occupation i.e. 93.7 percent is recorded in Tamaspura village. The lowest i.e. 16.0 percent is noted in Ladrawan village. The marginal workers are noted
less than 9 percent in the sample villages. In category-wise occupation, the Scheduled Castes of Sempal and Tamaspura have 39.7 percent of total workers. The lowest i.e. 28.9 percent is noted in Chandol village.

In terms of per capita income, the Scheduled Castes of Bainsi (500) followed by Sempal (448) are leading. Their lowest per capita income (176) has been found in Belochpura village. Among sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes, it is found that Chamar of Sempal (536) and Bainsi (525); Dhanak of Bainsi (517) are at the top. The other sub-constituents of Belochpura (125) have lowest per capita income. The average per capita income in the sample villages is 344, 447 and 816 for Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively. Od (417) followed by Chamar (372) have highest per capita income. The lowest per capita income has been recorded among Bawaria (149).

Regarding house types (based on building materials used) of Scheduled Castes, all sample villages have kutcha houses in the range of 3.5 percent in Sempal village to 20 percent in Belochpura. The maximum pucca houses are found in Sempal (86.2) village whereas the minimum is noted in Katwara (55.5) followed by Chandol (57.1) villages. Bawaria (57.1) of Scheduled Castes have noted the maximum kutcha houses. The lowest are noted of Od (8.3).

The reservation in the jobs and educational institutions is approved by 90.4 percent of the respondents of Scheduled Castes. They
wanted the continuation of reservation policy in the present form. Od, Bawaria and other sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes have fully supported the same policy. Dhanak (12.7) followed by Chamar (11.4) have not favoured the reservation. Among them 37.0 percent have supported the economic criteria. Bawaria (85.7) are found more in this regard. And 49.6 percent of the respondents of Scheduled Castes have supported the social and educational criteria. Dhanak (58.2) followed by Chamar (56.8) are noted more in this regard. The social and economic hardship is being felt by 31.9 percent of the respondents of Scheduled Castes. Majority (23.0) of them were affected by poverty. Regarding opinion on strategies for improvement of socio-economic status of Scheduled Castes, majority (64.4) of the respondents have supported the education. Only about one third of the respondents of Scheduled Castes have supported self efforts.

Regarding discrimination, the observations of respondents have been recorded in respect of three time periods, i.e. late sixties, early eighties and late nineties. Accordingly, it has been found that 35.7 percent of Balmiki followed by Dhanak (34.5) experienced discrimination during late sixties. Most (20.7) of such discrimination were of social type i.e. socially boycott, ban for entry of Scheduled Castes in the fields etc. Only 4.4 percent of discrimination are noted of educational type. Chamar (9.1) have found more experienced in this regard. During early eighties also, about the same picture has been
noted. At present, only 9.6 percent of the respondents of Scheduled Castes are affected by the discrimination. It is important to note that during this period, the nature of discrimination has changed. At present, most (3.7) of the discrimination are those of educational type. Balmiki (7.1) and Chamar (6.8) are found more in this regard.

On the basis of field observation, it has been concluded that some inter and intra-caste variations are noted among the different categories of caste groups. Such variations can be seen on various aspects. For example, regarding the family types, about 64, 68 and 85 percent of Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes, and Upper Castes respectively reside in the joint family. In caste-wise variation, Od among Scheduled Castes; Kamboj among Backward Castes and Jat among Upper Castes have mostly joint families. In schooling, mostly i.e. more than 75 percent of the respondents of all the categories of caste groups have preferred government schooling for their children. In higher education, majority of the respondents i.e. 53.3, 62.5 and 54.6 percent among Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively have preferred general education. The technical education (17.0) is preferred more by Scheduled Castes than Backward Castes (14.3) and Upper Castes (11.7). The medical education is also more preferred among Scheduled Castes (21.5) than Backward Castes (12.5) and Upper Castes (17.8).
Regarding social interaction, it has been concluded on the basis of field observation and the data that the economic status and the educational level have played an important role in the study area. With the passage of time, the social interaction of Scheduled Castes with the other castes is increasing. Only 28.1 percent of Scheduled Castes and Chamar (40.9) in particular were taking food and drinks with the other caste(s), caste groups during late sixties. Balmiki (14.3) have noted least in this regard. At present, more than 80 percent of Scheduled Castes are sharing food and water with the other caste groups. About 75 and 85 percent of Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively are also sharing food and water with the Scheduled Castes.

About the impact of Panchayati Raj institution, it is important to note that all nine sample villages have the Scheduled Castes Sarpanches i.e. the heads of the villages. Regarding the role of Panchayat in various aspects of development, mostly i.e. 65.2, 66.1 and 52.1 percent of Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively have shown negative response. About social, economic and political justice majority i.e. more than 51 percent of all the caste groups have shown the positive response. As the Panchayat Raj is recently implemented, so some of the respondents stated that they are not aware with this institution.
Regarding health status during the preceding year, mainly typhoid has affected most of the households of Scheduled Castes (3.7), Backward Castes (5.4) and Upper Castes (0.6). Majority of them i.e. 0.9, 0.8 and 0.3 percent of Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively have taken treatment of illness. The death rate during the same period is noted 10.86, 18.46 and 12.33 among Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively.

On the basis of the above mentioned figures viz. educational, interaction in sharing food and water and excesses which are related to social status of Scheduled Castes, it may be said that hypothesis number-1 is rejected. As the social status of the Scheduled Castes is not lower as compared to the other segments of the society.

Regarding facilities available during late sixties or about 30 years back in the households of Scheduled Castes, it has been found that water tap and lavatory were negligible. Only 35.6, 24.4 and 17.8 percent of the households had the facilities of bathroom, electricity and others respectively. And in the households of Chamars such facilities were found more in percent. During early eighties or about 15 years back also, the facilities of water tap and lavatory remained poor. The frequency of other facilities have been increasing so far. During late nineties i.e. 1997-98 or at present, most of the quantum of such facilities has increased. For example water taps are available in 14.8 percent of the
households of Scheduled Castes. About 14.1 percent of the households are having the lavatory facility also. Except a few castes the Backward Castes and Upper Castes have fair position in all the facilities available in their households. Except Bainsi and Ladrawan villages, all the sample villages have poor amenities available.

On the basis of the availability of household assets, it has been concluded that the number of assets per hundred households and assets per total population are least among Scheduled Castes in comparison to Backward Castes and Upper Castes. The farm assets and implements are about negligible among Scheduled Castes. There is unequal distribution of land resources which is the prime cause of interpersonal disparity. This is evident from the fact that only 4.4 percent of the Scheduled Castes own land. On the other hand, 17.9 and 84.7 percent households among Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively are land owners. The size of land holding among Scheduled Castes is very low (0.2 acre), whereas it is 0.9 and 4.6 acre among Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively. The operational holding is noted 0.57, 1.16 and 4.46 among Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes respectively. Regarding interaction of money, it has been concluded that most of the respondents have to borrow money from local money lenders. The banks are considered safe by most of people for lending the money and savings.
Regarding the government plans, it has been found during field observation that most of the respondents of Scheduled Caste are not acquainted with these plans. During late sixties or about 30 years back, only 11.9 percent of the Scheduled Castes benefitted from the different plans. During early eighties or about 15 years back, the number of beneficiaries were noted 23.0 percent, which is about twice in comparison to late sixties. And, at present, the figure of beneficiaries is found 37 percent. During above mentioned periods, Chamars alone are more benefitted through the various plans.

Regarding means of communication for awareness of different plans, it may be concluded that government agencies are more popular, whereas the newspaper are found the least. Again, it may also be concluded that except in few cases the level of awareness about government plans is low among Scheduled Castes as compared to other caste groups. And the hypothesis number-4 is accepted, as they have found lower levels of awareness about the government's development plans.

On the basis of the figures on levels of living, household assets, farm assets and implements and the size of land holding, it may be said that hypothesis number-2 is accepted as economically the Scheduled Castes have found low status as compared to the other segments of the society.
There are some limitations of the present study. Firstly, it has been discussed earlier that those sample villages selected for the study purpose have more than 30 percent of Scheduled Castes population to the total population of the villages. Secondly, they also have Scheduled Castes heads of the villages. Socially, the Scheduled Castes are advance and economically low in the sample villages, viz. Muradpur Tekna, Sempal and Madana Khurd. It has also been recorded that their average literacy rate (47.1) almost equals to the other caste groups i.e. Backward Castes (50.2) and Upper Castes (55.0). It has been noted that the percentage of highly educated persons vary from one caste group to another. For example, among Scheduled Castes, the percentage of higher education has been recorded as 1.2 percent graduates, 0.7 percent postgraduates and 4.1 percent diploma holders and others. While in case of Backward Castes, 1.6, 0.3 and 5.8 percent are graduates, postgraduates and diploma holders, respectively. Regarding the Upper Castes, the percentage of graduates, postgraduates and diploma holders has been noted as 3.2, 1.3 and 5.4 percent respectively. The data related to excesses with Scheduled Castes clearly shows that it has been declined from 31.1 percent to 9.6 percent during late sixties to late nineties respectively. The interaction in terms of sharing food and water during various periods, the data shows that it has been increased from 28.1 percent to 80.7 percent during late sixties to late nineties. On the basis of the data related to the economy i.e. land holding in particular, only 4.4 percent of Scheduled Castes are landowners. It has been noted that the size of land is only 0.2 acre. Whereas the percentage of land ownership among Backward Castes and Upper Castes is 17.9 and 84.7 percent respectively. The size of the land of Backward Castes and Upper Castes is recorded as 0.9 and 4.6 acres respectively. The operational size of land holding among Scheduled Castes, Backward Castes and Upper Castes is recorded as 0.57, 1.16 and 4.46 respectively. The farm assets and implements are about negligible among Scheduled Castes. On the basis of socio-economic status it may be concluded that hypothesis number-3 may be rejected because the
social status of a segment of the society is not related to its economic status. It may also be proved on the basis of analysis of the above said sample villages as well as the caste groups.

By perusal of observation and findings, concluding remarks may be presented by saying that the socio-economic status of Scheduled Castes in comparison to Backward Castes and Upper Castes is poor even after the introduction of various measures. However, it is also apparent from the analysis of the data that some of the sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes like Chamar, Dhanak and Balmiki have benefitted from the various measures and try to achieve for the better social and economic status.

For the improvement of the socio-economic status of Scheduled Castes population in the study area, some of the suggestions and measures have been proposed for consideration: There is need to improve the housing conditions of Scheduled Castes particularly in the villages like Katwara, Chandol and Belochpura where maximum kutcha houses have been recorded as 16.7, 14.3 and 20 percent respectively. They may be converted into pucca houses by providing financial assistance. The reservation policy for Scheduled Castes may be continued in the present form for the next ten years or till the satisfactory progress. As 90.4 percent of the respondents of Scheduled Castes have also opined in favour of it. More than 64 percent of the respondents of Scheduled Castes have opined in favour of continuity of educational facilities and 30.4 percent of respondents opined in favour of self efforts. The land reforms must be implemented in the true spirit of letter because more than 95 percent of the households of the Scheduled Castes are landless agricultural labourers. By implementing land reforms rules in the villages like Katwara, Tamaspura, Belochpura etc. the economic status of Scheduled Castes may be achieved up to a satisfactory level. The role of Chamar (who are educationally forward than the other sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes) may be helpful for bringing about the socio-economic upliftment of other sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes in the area under study. The sub-constituents of Scheduled Castes should also make a non-government organisation so that their socio-economic status may be improved.