ATTITUDES OF SCHEDULED STUDENTS

Attitude is a fairly stable opinion, reaction or state of consciousness within an individual human being regarding a person, object or activity.

When we measure attitudes, certain precautions have to be kept in mind. Since it is impossible to measure attitudes directly, we must rely on inferences. There are four alternative approaches to study attitudes viz. (1) SELF REPORTS, (2) REPORT OF OTHERS, (3) SOCIO-METRIC PROCEDURES and (4) RECORDS

For the present study, the Self-Report approach has been used. It includes procedures by which a person is asked to report his or her own attitudes or opinions on certain objects/ matters/ phenomenon

The Self-report procedure is the most direct type of attitude assessment and is used when it is assumed that the people under study have the self-awareness of, or the feel of their own beliefs, and have the ability to articulate them as well. It is also assumed that they have no reason to lie about their attitudes.

The attitudes of SC students on various issues were gathered. Their attitudes on caste system, and their position in the contemporary society were collected. Further, their attitudes on reservation policies and their implementation were also sought. Attitudes related to marriages and religion were the other social issues, which were investigated. Finally, information on their food habits, hobbies and participation in co-curricular activities was also gathered.

In the present study, the questions asked are of the following kind—‘how you feel about it?’ ‘How strongly you feel about it?’

ORIGIN OF CASTE SYSTEM

Respondents were asked to write how in their opinion caste system originated. The objective has been to explore if they have critically studied and analyzed the caste system both from academic and pragmatic point of view. Their ideas about the origin
and sustenance of caste system would have a bearing on their attitude formations and subsequent reactions and strategies to adopt these situations and ideas to annihilate the caste system. Further, it was explored, whether they believe in these theories and whether they have anything alternative to offer.

Twenty percent of the total sample, responded to this question. Some of their views were similar to the text book theories and some of them just expressed their feelings regarding caste system and gave suggestions to abolish / weaken or improve their position in the caste system.

A brief discussion of popular theories of caste system is discussed to draw the similarities or differences of the opinion of SC students regarding caste system.

Social scientists advocated seven broad theories on the origin of caste system. They are Traditional Theory, Brahminical Theory, Racial Theory, Occupational Theory, Ketkar’s Theory, Senart’s Theory, and Hutton’s Theory of Mana (Ram Ahuja, 1993).

Some of the explanations about the origins of the caste system, given by the respondents, which are similar to the above theories are discussed. The Divine Plan Theory offers the most common indigenous explanation. It primarily refers to the later hymn in the Rig-Veda (The Rig-Veda is a collection of the oldest prayers and hymns of Hinduism and of mankind) This hymn contains the earliest reference to caste and its origins. It appears to describe the origin of the universe- or atleast of many of the elements, including humans- through the sacrifice by divinities of a `cosmic being' called Purusha Sukta. The lines that contain a reference to caste in the purusha Sukta are presented (Klass, 1980 :35):

"His mouth became the Brahman: his two arms were made into the Rajanya, his two thighs the Vaishya: from his two feet the Shudra was born".

Thus the four orders of the society are said to have emanated from the sacrifice of the primeval being. The order in which the four groups of the society, namely Brahmans, Rajanya, Vaishyas and Shudras were created and the order of particular limbs that were associated with probably indicate their ranked status in the society (Ghurye, G.S., 1969).

Manu, the Hindu lawgiver, who is believed to have lived somewhere during the second to first century B.C. makes a reference to the Purusha Sukta in his influential
Manu Smriti. He states; 'For the sake of the preservation of the entire creation (purusha), the exceedingly resplendent one assigned separate duties to the classes which had sprung from his mouth, arms, thighs and feet' (Klass, 1980:37).

The Gita, the sacred book of Hindus, insists that the Divine will classify the society on the basis of the inherent qualities (gunas) and the individuals acquired their status as a result of their Karma.

The second is RACIAL ANTIPATHY theory. It has been observed that the Indian scriptures have invariably used the "Varna" to depict the four primary social divisions mentioned in the Rig-Veda. Varnas are supposed to be the precursors to modern jatis and castes.

'Varna' stands for 'color' or complexion. In the earlier references in the Rig-Veda, only three-fold classification is made. The Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas are said to belong to Aryan race and the Dasus are depicted as a different category. Thus, the question of colors was at the root of the varna system. In subsequent references, one comes across the four varnas- Brahmns, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras.

Aryans were immigrants. They belonged to the Caucasian race and their hordes invaded India and overpowered the local Dasyus, who were Dravidian belonging to a different racial stock. The Aryans, who were white in color, developed antipathy towards Dravidians and so sought to preserve their color through marital exclusivity. Thus, they became endogamous. But since they were invaders, they had lesser stock of women folk. So some of them replenished their female stock by marrying the native women. Thus the blood got mixed up in several measures resulting in multiple varieties of groups which in turn became endogamous units and castes. All such endogamous groups including varnas were called jatis by the great grammarian Patanjali (Ghurye, 1969:75).

However, Anuloma marriage between higher caste men and lower caste women was permitted for some time. But pratiloma- marriage between lower caste men and higher women- was disapproved. Tradition not only disapproved pratiloma but downgraded such a couple socially. Their issues (children) were invariably condemned to a very low status. The contacts between a shudra male and a Brahmin female were
abhorred and issues stemming from such contacts were condemned as 'chandalas'.

The third is the OCCUPATIONAL or FUNCTIONAL THEORY which advocates the emergence of castes from occupational groups; since each caste is associated with a specific occupation, social scientists started hypothesizing that initially castes were occupational groups or guilds which developed into closed, hereditary marriage associations. Even priesthood, which was presumably an openly recruited occupational category in the beginning, closed its ranks to all, but the children of priests became a caste and descent group. In fact such an endogamous priestly caste became a model to be emulated by other occupational groups (Klass, 1980:65).

The lower castes render services to higher castes and wait for jajmani favors. They were economically dependent. Socially, they belonged to the lowest rung of the society with the status corresponding to the location in the hierarchy. They were despised and hated and always a gulf divided the lower castes and the higher castes. There was always a cultural gap indicated between them. The gap between the higher castes and the lower castes was there with respect to the food habits, levels of occupations pursued, economic status permitted, the vocabulary used, social status enjoyed, values held, world view articulated and in fact regarding the whole range of life. Thus, economic servitude, social inferiority, cultural deprivation and spiritual starvation marked the life of the lower castes (Klass, 1980).

One MA student in Economics department gave an economic reasoning. According to him, in the olden days, population was less and there were plenty of resources. As the population grew, resources became scarce and people started producing them, e.g: some started cultivating land, some started making pots etc. People who were strong and bold started to safeguard the land and the people. Those who had enough resources started dominating and controlling the resources and started a unique group formation. In this way, people were divided into sections. They were given a specific name and were started being called with that particular name. Depending upon the work they performed they were rated in the society. Now, the upper caste people use this concept for their own benefit.

More or less conforming to the theory of Racial Antipathy by Ghurye, a respondent who is pursuing Ph.D. course, wrote that there was an invasion by Aryans on
the native people. Those who lost were reduced to slaves. Thus came the words ‘lord’ and ‘slave’. The slaves had been working for the prosperity of the landlords, while remaining themselves as poor. This division of labor further lead to the formation of the caste system: Brahmā were supposed to be the priests, Kṣatriya were supposed to be the warriors and Vysyas were the traders. These three divisions were highly placed in the society, based on their economic status. The poor people who were made as slaves by landlords were considered as lower castes without social recognition.

Aryans divided the society into Chaturvarnas; the three upper castes were dominant and the fourth is a servant caste. The fifth or untouchable caste was not described in puranas or in the vedas. They are the least preferred and the most oppressed by the society. The uppercaste socially, economically and politically oppressed and treated the lower caste in an inhuman way. They did more injustice to the untouchable castes or the scheduled castes.

Describing the Divine Plan Theory, one respondent writes, ‘To be frank there is no question of people being born from the feet or head or shoulders or thighs of the God Brahma, like wise Hindu caste system is fully based on a false doctrine. It is very difficult to believe this kind of mythological stories. It was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who said that the caste system is not only the division of labors, but also the division of laborers.

Another respondent, referring to Dumont’s theory of caste system based on hierarchy, endogamy, purity and pollution notion, feels that these theories were intended to exploit the lower caste people particularly Sudras, i.e., peasantry and agricultural laborers. Over a period of time, Brahmīns and Kṣatriyās made rules, for their own benefit. Tribals and other lower castes, who were engaged in activities, such as hunting, carrying corpses and leather work and others who worked as laborers, were regarded as Chandals. Over centuries several changes have taken place, but caste system has been re-intensified for the benefit of the ruling classes and the Brahmīns. The system is still persisting in the rural areas.

One respondent agrees that he does not know much about the origin of caste system, but he says that the word ‘Harijan’ given by Mahatma Gandhi is abusive in which the paternity of the child is questioned.
Many respondents felt that God did not create this caste system; they opined that we ourselves developed these caste barriers. Another respondent is optimistic, and is of the opinion that the caste system created by human beings will eventually be destroyed if all the people, SC and non-SC together, form a strong and good will.

Thus, it was found that few of the respondents have a theoretical knowledge about the origin of the caste system. There seems to be lack of scholarly insights into the theories of caste system. The impressions gathered from their description shows that few have ever taken seriously to know the origin of caste system and opinions were generally based on simple reasoning and logic. The respondents do not believe in these mythological stories. They feel that this system was made by a section of people for their own benefits. And hence, they do not consider themselves in anyway inferior

FEELINGS EXPRESSED RELATED TO CASTE SYSTEM-

According to one respondent, there are no castes or divisions among birds and animals. Like wise humans too are born equal. Every human being in this world is made of same blood and flesh, then where is the question of differentiating people on the basis of caste, religion etc? It is the society, which has formed the divisions, some are considered to be inferior to the extent that in the villages, the SC people are treated like ants. Different forms of untouchability are still prevalent in the villages all over India, even after abolishing the untouchability and providing safeguards to them.

Some respondents reported that they do not believe in the caste system, since this system has not given anything else, but humiliation. They feel that in this modern era, the worth of a human should be measured in terms of his character. Being born in a particular caste does not give him a superior or an inferior status.

Another respondent did not approve caste based occupational system. According to him, the work should be given importance; even the manual labor should be given dignity- i.e., dignity of labor. He expressed that an individual’s worth should be considered and the value of a man should be measured in terms of his deeds. If a man commits any crime or has committed any sin, he should be punished or isolated but belonging to a particular caste is no ground for being isolated or discriminated. He feels that treating a fellow human being as an untouchable is inhuman, and those who practice
untouchability should be severely punished.

Some of the respondents expressed that though there are inequalities all over the world (like class, race etc) but the social stigma attached to the SCs is unique to Indian phenomenon, which should be eliminated because this is the problem graver than economic inequality. One of the respondent expressed that it is foolishness to believe in the caste system even in this modern age.

Most of the respondents are unhappy on the position assigned to Harijans and the consequent humiliation to them in the system. Some feel that they would be happy if they are treated as equals and will not feel humiliated just because they are born in a lower caste. One of the female respondent reported that she does not reveal her caste to others as it makes others to treat her differently because of which she feels isolated and discriminated.

Another rural respondent expressed that because of the inferior status assigned to their caste, they start feeling inferior as well. He also feels that he is not able to adjust himself in this society. He feels uncomfortable to attend functions, religious functions like poojas etc., even though he is invited to such occasions. He feels that the feeling of fear, of being isolated and of humiliation is still prevalent in the minds of the SC people, because of the cases of atrocities, arson and crimes against them. Hence, even though a forward caste person invites for some occasion, he feels uncomfortable and anxious and avoids such occasions. He feels that SC people can mingle freely only when there is no more caste prejudice and no more fear of being humiliated. He suggests that only the Government can take strong measures to check the caste prejudices and hence eliminate the caste differences.

Many respondents expressed different kinds of feelings. These include feelings of pain, agony, anger, anxiety, anguish and hatred for experiencing the caste prejudices. Many expressed that even today caste is an important factor. Though caste is not written on the faces of the people, still people make guesses to know their caste and try to find some identifying marks. First and foremost they try to find out the name of the person, specifically full name, which gives the caste identity. If the name is not indicating any thing, next they may ask the fathers name and his occupation. Secondly, they make guesses by the appearance of the person, especially the dark skin.
texture, short stature, not-so-well built body structure. Another guess is that all Christians are considered to be either Mala or Madiga. In the rural areas, they directly ask for the caste name. Few respondents expressed that they hate such people who are interested in knowing the caste of the person. And they like those who do not bother about the caste of the person, but gives respect to an individual, his education and his character.

Most of the respondents feel angry and are against ‘Manu’ who wrote the code of conduct for different castes. They held ‘Manu’ responsible for the sorry state of their castes. One of the respondent expressed his anger to such an extent that he would have killed Manu, if he was living today.

At the same time many respondents appreciated and paid respectful regards to Dr B R Ambedkar, who is considered to be the messiah, who had fought for their cause and showed a path for their emancipation through education and by changing to other religion especially Buddhism.

Some of the rural respondents expressed that after joining the universities, after acquiring knowledge, after knowing their rights and after feeling that they are equals and not less than any body, still when they are discriminated they felt the pain, agony, which is intense and could not be expressed.

There were some respondents who even felt happy to be in this caste. One of the female respondent expressed that since it is said that they are born from the feet of the lord but the feet are the important organ of the body. These feet help in walking and carrying the body. Another respondent feels that people from his own caste are talented like there’re craftsmen, and artists and they are hard working.

Thus most of them expressed that they’ll be happy and feel satisfied if they are not humiliated and treated as untouchables.

FORMATION OF NEW IDENTITIES; THEORITICAL APPROACH-

As already mentioned in chapter 2, under the theories of untouchability in literature review, Michael Moffats “view from the bottom” is based on the same principles and evaluations as the “view from the middle” or the “view from the top”. The cultural system of Indian untouchability does not distinctively question or revalue
the dominant social order. Rather it continuously recreates among untouchables a microcosm of the larger system (Michael Moffat, 1979).

Similarly Bernard Cohn’s study about the social change of Camars reported that Camars have in the last fifty years attempted to sanskritize, to raise their status by adopting symbols of higher status in their local hierarchy. In doing so, they have abandoned many of the features of their distinctive little tradition and have adopted the dominant Thakurs traditional caste code, which includes a non-beef diet, a tighter joint family and more ‘Brahmanic’ ritual practices.

Another sociologist M.N.Srinivas coined the word Sanskritisation to account for the indigenous process of change in the caste system. As a functionalist, he has focused on analysis of functional co-ordination among groups of caste system. Sanskritisation for him was a process by which a lower caste imitates and adopts the behavior pattern of dwija that is, twice born castes, especially Brahmans. In it, he does not find any element of protest. On the contrary, it represents what we may call the process of internal adaptability of the caste system. But Gerald Berreman, claims that untouchables in some way reject a high caste model of the system. The lowest castes are uninterested in rationalizations and ideology.

Similar views expressed by Oscar Lewis, who states that untouchables in India do not accept high caste culture because this culture has no rationalizing value for them. Robert Miller too claims that the untouchable Mahars of Central India are already engaged in political action. They are said to be actively constructing a radical disjunction between themselves and the higher castes, to be in a sense revaluing their little tradition.

From the present study, it is revealed that though SC students have found no divine cause in the existence of caste system but they feel that caste related disabilities do exist. Even though they do not recognise the caste system but caste system continues to exist and they suffer from the caste disabilities. Lower caste status also corresponds to poor economic, political, educational, occupational status and self-esteem. SC students have realized that for their improvement in status and self esteem they have to assert themselves and the assertion could come through the gains of political power, improvement in education, getting good jobs etc. In the process of developing their new
identity they are not influenced by any high caste and are not imitating their ways. They are becoming more independent and are taking pride in revealing their caste identity. They no more feel shy or try to hide their caste, instead with the growing political awareness and their rights and privileges, they are asserting themselves in the society under their own ‘dalit identity’ Their formation of organization, and affiliating themselves to local, state and national politics, they are creating their own niche. They are no more passive, mute spectators, and no more suppressive, they are actively coming out of it and revolting the caste system. Most of their affiliation and ideology is based on Dr B R Ambedkar’s philosophy.

PRESENT STATUS OF SCHEDULED CASTES-

Since independence, several efforts have been made for the overall development of SCs. Apart from the socio-economic development, efforts were made to improve their educational status. In this study, the respondents were asked to evaluate the present status and conditions of the SCs.

Status, here, refers to socio-economic educational and political status. Three questions were posed to them: whether they feel they are now equal to non-scheduled castes, whether their position has improved, but still inferior and whether their position has not improved at all.

Table 4.1 shows that a large majority of the respondents, both rural and urban feel that there is no doubt, that the position of SC has improved but at the same time they feel that their position is still inferior. Also, a lot has to be done in order to bring them at par with the people belonging to the other castes.

As large as 55% of the respondents feels that the status of SCs has improved but still is inferior in some or the other way. Many respondents gave suggestions, as to how to improve their position, which are enumerated under the sub-heading abolition of caste and untouchability.

Few of the respondents 19%, especially rural students opine that the position of SC has not improved at all. They feel whatever benefits the SCs got are just peripheral. Reservations are like crumbs to appease them. These too are not properly implemented. They reported that no day passes without a SC being hurt or harassed. Every day newspapers report about the atrocities, which are very small in number. Numerous
cases go unreported. The atrocities on SC are of various nature. SC men are abused, humiliated, beaten up and even murdered. SC women too face the similar situation, or even worse, they are molested, raped and many a times paraded nakedly. SC children both boys and girls are abused in various ways. SC people are burnt alive. One of the respondents, reported that in some regions of Telangana in A P. the SC young men if raise voice against casteism or if involve in any conflict with the landlords or forward caste people are considered to be naxalites. And these young men are killed in the name of encounters. The respondents feel that the situation is quite grim.

Few respondents who are coming from a better socio-economic background, especially from urban background, feel that the status of SC is now equal to status of non-SC. The respondents reported that in the cities if a SC man is well placed i.e., if he is in a respectable position, even the forward caste people respect him.

Another respondent, whose father is educated and working, is respected in his village. Even the forward caste people interact with him. His father is a respected and influential person in his own community. So, the forward caste people for political reasons come to him. The respondents feels that there are so many SC civil servants who have build their houses in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, where mostly the rich people stay. The children of these civil servants study in good schools. No body is objecting to their rights. He feels now the caste discrimination is not so much prominent, it is the economic discrimination. If a man is rich and powerful be it a SC or Brahmin he is respected and draws attention, at the same time, if it is a poor man, be it a SC or Brahmin is not cared or bothered about. So the respondents feels that all the avenues for development are open for theScheduled Castes. It is just that they have to become aware of and grab the opportunities. Figure 4.1, shows that there are 15% of the respondents who feel that the status of SC is now equal to non-scheduled castes. These 15% are mostly the urban respondents.

Most of the respondents agreed that due to the social welfare measures and reservations, only sections of SC people have been benefited. They have made use of their rights and opportunities. But, the rural respondents feel that the majority of the SC population who lives in villages are still poor and deprived. They are still reeling under the same old caste structure. They still have to toil day and night to survive. Most of
them are still illiterate and totally dependent on the mercy of the landlords. They do not own any property. As they are indebted, their children, instead of going to schools, have to work in the fields or at some landlord’s house in order to survive. Though constitutionally, bonded labor and child labor are banned, but in the rural areas, the practice of bonded labor is continuing, while child labor is common both in the rural and the urban areas. Most of the children below 14 years, who are working, belong to SC or other backward castes.

Many of the respondents feel that though in the urban areas, a small percentage of SCs have created a space for themselves, but they too face problems in their day to day life. Though their problems are not so grave but at some or the other instance, they are reminded of their ritually allotted inferior position.

**FIGURE—4.1**

![Pie chart showing opinion about present status of SC](image)

The respondents feel that the position of the SC has improved that too a very small percentage, but the large majority of the SC are still in the same position. In order to improve their position, they have to be made aware of their rights, opportunities and benefits. It is to be seen that there is an overall development among all the SCs, especially the rural SC.

Eleven percent of the respondents could not however judge the present position of SC. And they could not say anything about the situation.
FUTURE OF THE SCHEDULED CASTES-

It is significant to understand their own perceptions regarding their future in the fast changing society–the modern period of globalization, technical advancement, modernization and privatization. Three kinds of opinions were gathered. Majority of the respondents opined that the position of the Scheduled Castes will improve.

Both rural and urban respondents opined that if the reservations and other constitutional benefits continue, and if the policies and programs for their welfare are implemented seriously, the position of the Scheduled Castes will improve. More than half of the sample respondents i.e., 57% are optimistic and foresee the improvement in the position of SCs as shown in figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2**

**Attitudes about the Position of SC in Modern Era**

- Remain Same: 25%
- Improve: 57%
- Deteriorate: 18%

Some of the respondents however opined that the position of SC would remain the same. According to them, though, some of the SC people have come up, a large majority of SC’s position is still the same. The small group who is already in a better position utilizes the benefits and reservations. Most of the SCs are poor and rural based and their conditions continue to be miserable as they are not aware of their rights and opportunities provided for them. Neither anybody is taking care of them, nor is anyone
trying to make them aware. Few of the respondents reported that, even the SC people in
good position do not bother to help their own community people. So how can they
expect the other caste people to help them?

They feel that corruption and nepotism is growing all over. If one has money, he
can achieve anything. But the SCs are not in a comfortable financial position and thus
they have to struggle. So, 25% of the respondents as shown in figure 4.2 feels that the
position of SC will remain the same.

Few respondents are not so optimistic in their view. They feel the position of
SCs would deteriorate. These account to 18% of the total sample as shown in the figure
4.2. They expressed that if most of the companies are privatized, then there won’t be
any reservation and the employment opportunities will decrease even more.
Respondents opined that there should be reservations for the jobs even in the private
sector and if the company feels that the SCs are not efficient, they should train them,
then recruit thereafter.

Others expressed that though the life of SCs people was miserable, at least the
crime, against them was not so obvious. Now due to the positive discrimination, the
forward caste people are not able to tolerate the independence and better position of the
SC people. There is intolerance among the feudal lot. The crime against the SCs is
increasing day by day. They cited example of Sundur massacre, Karamchedu incident
and other crimes in the villages of Bihar and U.P., where the SCs hamlets are attacked,
their houses are burnt and even the women and the children are shot.

ABOLITION OF CASTE / UNTOUCHABILITY AND SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE THE
STATUS OF SCHEDULED CASTES-

The data can be analyzed with respect to the three points. 1. Respondents who
are in favour of abolishing the whole caste system as such and if so, what are the
measures. 2. Respondents who wants to abolish the untouchability, or who want an
equal treatment or respect within the society i.e., the respondents who want that there
should not be any more humiliation, discrimination and injustice. The suggestions to
ameliorate untouchability and enhance the status of SCs are also included in the
analyses. 3. Finally, the measures that can be taken to improve their position in the
society are also enumerated.

Most of the respondents are of the view that the caste feelings and caste based discrimination is more prevalent and perceptible in the rural areas, where each person knows the other person. Being born and brought up there, an individual identity cannot be concealed. Mostly the people in the villages pursue caste-based occupation and they abide by the caste rules and regulations. But in the large towns and cities, the identity of the person can be concealed. The interaction is limited. People are pursuing varied occupations. People in the city travel in buses, dine in hotels, visit temples, attend parties and functions, and visit each other’s houses. Still the respondents feel that there exists the caste factor in some or the other way. According to them even in the cities most of the upper castes and Brahmins do not let out their houses for SC people.

Another important thing is that inspite of so many changes in the society, endogamy is still prevalent. Almost all the arranged marriages are within the caste. According to the respondents, intercaste marriages are the only way through which one can abolish, or atleast weaken, the caste system. So they feel that as long as endogamy persists, caste cannot be abolished.

According to one of the rural respondents, caste system cannot be removed so easily. It has been there for centuries and cannot be abolished so fast, it is expressed in one or the other form. SC people have been living in the state of poverty, and they are the socially, economically, and politically deprived. They are given the most inferior status in the traditional Hindu system. In the past, most of the SC people were in consensus with the position they had been allotted. Even today when the situation has changed little, especially the older generation of SC, are not able to come out of their inhibitions. It is important to change the nature of their thinking. They have to be made to realize that all human beings are equal. He quoted an old saying that ‘If a lie is told 99 times, it is considered to be the truth the hundredth time’. Similarly the SCs have been hypnotised for the past few hundred years, that they are like slaves and servants. That they must serve the dominant caste people and listen to them. They are told that they are born low and that their position cannot be improved in this birth or during this lifetime. They can improve their status in the coming life, if only they follow the caste rules strictly. The respondent feels that there is a lot of power in the words. The
respondent expressed that all the SC people should realize that they too are just like all the other humans. They should forget their caste status and think that 'We are not Malas, we are not Madigas, all humans are equal', then they can get rid of the caste stigma. They should become aware of their new position and rights. The SC people should feel equal to others and try to mingle with the people of other caste.

At the same time, few respondents are of the opinion that the changes have to come from both sides, i.e., SCs and non-SCs. Scheduled Caste people should be equipped with education and awareness. They should be made to understand that they are equal to any other person or any other caste. Similarly even the people of other caste should be willing to welcome the change. They too should feel free to mingle with the SCs. If the forward caste people do not interact or avoid the interaction with SCs, then there cannot be any improvement in the relationship among different castes. The respondent suggested that the intellectuals should preach to the masses that all are equal, especially to people belonging to the other caste. If all people are positively mobilized towards a non-caste system, then one can imagine the golden period for India.

Another indication for a casteless society would be only when no person is identified by his or her caste. And, even a Shudra or the SC man is accepted as a pujari in the temple. The respondent feels that then only, can one imagine that the caste system is abolished.

Most of the respondents are not so optimistic about the whole situation. They reported that they'll be happy if they are not ill-treated, humiliated and discriminated. That they just want to improve their position. One of the respondent expressed that they do not want a kind of Brahmin status but the status, where they are not attached to any inferior position and are treated equal or just as another human being.

Few respondents are of the view that the caste system is inherent in the Indian society. It gives identity and name to a person. They do not want to abolish the caste system as such, but that it should not be attached to any discrimination or stigma. It should be free from all prejudices. They want to improve their status in the caste system but do not aspire to remove the whole of the caste system.

Most of the respondents came to the conclusion that education is the only means for their upliftment. Even today, a large population of SC is illiterate and unaware of
their rights and privileges. Since half of the SC population is below poverty line, they do not have any other means to rise in life. Education, that too free and compulsory education for children accompanied with literacy programs for the adults, can improve their educational status. Even though these provisions exist for a long time, they are not reaching the needy person. So, they suggested that, these welfare measures should be made available to each and everybody, by making them initially aware of these facilities. There should be a kind of social movement for educating the people.

Another suggestion is that though crores of rupees are said to be spent on the welfare of the SCs and STs, there is no way to measure that they are utilized properly. There are no significant results in the welfare of the SCs. So, they feel that these policies and programs meant for the welfare of SC should be implemented properly.

As reported by another respondent, the funds should be increased for the upliftment, especially in the field of education and employment, and should strictly implement it. Few respondents expressed that even today, most of the employment posts meant for the SCs are not properly filled. There are a lot of backlogs. Most of the firms, write 'no suitable candidate found'. One of the Ph.D. scholar in Science department, who has been a first class student throughout her educational career, expressed that she had applied for the post of a scientist in many places, but she did not even get an interview call. She suggested, there should be some studies (like the present study) on the employment of SCs too. Few respondents expressed that the reserved post are kept vacant for years and then are filled by the people of other caste. There are very few places where the reserved quota is completely filled up.

Another female respondent from the Central University expresses that the reservations are like appeasement, and are hoax. Very few are getting benefits out of it. Mere reservations do not serve the purpose. She feels that these reservations are diverting the SCs from the real struggle or a mass movement in order to achieve a better position. The respondent feels that nearly 80% of the SCs are poor and rural based. Their position can be improved only by equal distribution of land among them. They have to be self-reliant as most of the oppression is because they are landless and they have to depend on someone else for their survival.

Another respondent is of the view that for the overall development of SCs, like
socio-economic and political, focus on one aspect won't help. All the factors should be
given equal importance. That is, strategies or policies should be made to see that they
are socially, economically, educationally and politically empowered.

One of the respondents is of the view that the change of place or change in
residence is one way to conceal their identity. As in her case, her father who is in a
good post and is in urban area, is given respect and is called for every occasion by
others. They interdine with others and interact freely. She feels at least the other caste
do not openly come out with caste feelings or express any thing in front of them.

As reported earlier, most of the respondents feel that inter-caste marriage is an
important way to diminish the caste feelings. So, one should encourage inter-caste
marriages.

ATTITUDES ON RESERVATIONS-

Reservations or protective discrimination has been an issue of debate from the
beginning. There are some who are in favor of reservations and some who are against
the reservations. Obviously those who are benefited may be in favor of reservation and
those who are not i.e., the forward castes may be against it. In the present study, the SC
University students, who have been and are going to avail reservations were asked about
their attitudes on the issue of reservation.

First they were questioned whether they want privileges inspite of abolishing the
caste. From the discussion, it was found that most of them are in favor of abolishing
caste, yet they wanted the privileges and reservations provided for them, because they
feel that the conditions of SCs are still very miserable. They are socially, economically
and educationally still very backward. If they are not given any privileges, there is no
chance of their upliftment. They don't have any other resources to come up. Only the
education and employment can ameliorate their poor conditions. Therefore, they wish
that these privileges should continue, till they attain a better position.

Table 4.1 gives the sex wise distribution of students who wish to abolish caste
and still want privileges and safeguards. 58.2 percent (57) respondents wants the
constitutional safeguards and privileges meant for them, even if the caste system is
abolished completely. 63.6 percent (42) of males and 46.9 percent (15) females wants
the privilege inspite of abolishing of caste system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WISH TO ABOLISH CASTE AND STILL WANT PRIVILEGES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>42 (63.6)</td>
<td>15 (46.9)</td>
<td>57 (58.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>24 (36.4)</td>
<td>17 (53.1)</td>
<td>41 (41.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

41.8 percent (41) respondents, mostly urban, do not want any safeguards and privileges if the caste system is abolished. They are ready to forego the facilities provided for them. 53.1 percent (17) females do not want any safeguards and privileges if the caste system is removed whereas 36.4 percent (24) males wish so.

Secondly, it was questioned on what basis the reservation should be given, whether it should be solely based on caste (SC, ST, BC) as prevalent now or should it be based on the economic position without considering the caste status at all. Whether reservations should be given to poor people irrespective of caste, or poor families from the forward caste too should be given reservations. Majority of the respondents opined that the reservation should be based on economic criteria. In the present study, even though the sample population being from SCs still expressed that the reservations to educational institutions and job facilities should be based on economic criteria.

The reasons given by some of the respondents are that, the reservations based on caste are creating barriers. Because of reservations, one has to mention caste in the application forms and thus, the caste is revealed, thereby giving a chance for identification and hence ill-treatment. One of the respondents, reported that because of reservations they stand against those who do not have reservation thereby creating a gap. He feels, because of reservations, the forward caste people have started forming a negative attitude towards the SC people and have started hating them. He feels that reservations have thus created barriers and have created a sort of social distance.

Another female respondent from an urban background, whose father is a
gazetted officer, too feels that reservations have widened the gap between SC and non-SC, even among the educated lot. She feels that due to reservations, sometimes a SC person who is not so intelligent with average marks gets a seat whereas sometimes a good and intelligent forward caste student does not get the seat. She feels that this system is not fare, and that there should not be any reservations based on caste.

Figure 4.3 shows that as large as 66.7 percent of the respondents opined that the reservations should be based on economic position and only 33.33 percent wanted the reservations to be based on caste.

Those respondents who are in favor of reservations based on caste argued that the SC are not just economically backward but they are socially and educationally deprived. They are given an inferior status, which put together makes their position miserable. Whereas upper caste people, especially Brahmans, even though poor are not socially and educationally backward. They are still given a superior position in the hierarchy. If they are poor, they are just economically deprived.

Another question was raised with regard to the SC population only. It was asked whether the reservation should be given to all the SCs, as is practised now, or to poor SC or to the rural SC. Majority of the respondents wish that the reservations should be given to the poor SCs only, thereby again confirming to the economic criteria.

CLASS FORMATION WITHIN THE SCs-

Most of the respondents opined that a kind of class formation has occurred within the Scheduled Castes. Earlier, almost all the SCs were backward. After providing reservations and privileges, only a section of SCs have availed the opportunities and they have improved their position. They have acquired a new position where they are economically sound, equipped with knowledge and some are even politically powerful. The respondents reported that these people who comes under middle class or upper middle class are making use of these benefits. Whereas, the genuinely poor and rural SC people are still deprived and backward. They are largely ignorant of these privileges. And are not able to harness the opportunities.

One of the female respondents, expressed that the rich SC people mingle with the rich people only. She gave an example of some political leaders, who belongs to
SCs. She expressed that these politicians are politically and educationally empowered. They can do a lot to improve the position of SCs. But she feels that these people are not bothered about the welfare of the SCs but are much bothered about consolidating their own position. She cited an e.g. of BSP leaders as to how they have joined hands with the BJP, just to be in power in total antithesis to their ideology.

Another rural respondent gave an example of the SCs who have become bureaucrats. He opined that once a SC man becomes an IAS, IPS or IFS, he does not care for the people of his own community. He only looks for his own benefits. He mingle[s] with people of his own status. The respondent then expressed that humans are selfish by nature and looks only for self-interest.

One respondent, on the other hand, tried to explain why a SC man, even though in a better position, is not able to help his own community people. He pointed out some of the pressures under which he has to work, thereby not able to support others. He expressed that now a days one should have money and social contacts to achieve something and that most of the SC people are poor and do not have any backup. Even if a well placed SC person wants to help others, he cannot do much because he himself is the first person to come up. Next, he tries to bring up his immediate family members, that too through educating them. But he cannot help others in any way, who are poor and are illiterate.

Another respondent expressed that even though a SC person is in a higher position, there will be some or the other forward caste person above him. If the SC person shows keen interest or favors his own community people, he will be identified and his own position will become vulnerable. Sometimes he may not like to reveal his identity by closely associating himself with his own community people.

Another respondent reported that once the SC person moves up in the social ladder, i.e., becomes economically well-off, his lifestyles changes as well. He lives like any other caste person who is well off. Thereby his lifestyle becomes elite and different from those who are poor. Hence, the class formation.

CREAMY LAYER-

Many respondents who are in favor of giving reservations, only to the poor SC
are in favor of the creamy layer policy. According to them, only a few SC are availing the benefits of the protective discrimination. A large majority of them are not utilizing it. In order to distribute these privileges to the ones who are more needy, certain measures have to be taken up.

Most of the rural respondents expressed that once the father is at a good position, e.g. doctor, lecturer, bureaucrat, he should not avail reservation for his children as they might have studied in good schools. They might have got good study environment, encouragement and inspiration from the parents. But the other SC person from poor socio-economic background, with not so good educational background, cannot compete with the privileged among them. According to the respondent, the better off SC person should forego reservation in favor of the more needy SC. Another respondent says that once a SC person gets a job and settles well, he/she should not claim reservation for their children and should give opportunity for economically poor SCs.

The respondent feels that even the SC families where the parents are earning around ten thousand per month, should not avail the reservation. They should leave the space for other needy persons.

When asked about why the creamy layer proposal is not being implemented, one of the respondents, reported that it may be because of the reasons that the people who comes under the creamy layer are the politicians, bureaucrats and higher officials. These are the people who are the policy makers and run the government. They do not want to forego the benefits they are getting. Even if it is implemented by the government, these people will not be motivated to support the government.

Few respondents suggested that in order to improve the position of SCs, the only way is to implement the creamy layer. Once the better lot among the SCs, leave space for the other needy SCs, slowly all the SCs can come at par with the others and gradually the reservation too can be removed. To achieve this, the awareness has to be created among the rural SCs.

Figure 4.3, confirms that as large as 74.3 percent of the respondents opines that the poor SC persons should get the reservations, when compared to 21 percent of the respondents who wants the reservation for all the SCs. Another 4.8 percent wish that the rural SC people should get reservations. Since most of the rural SC are poor, it
again confirms that the poor SC should get the reservations.

Rural urban wise distribution of the respondents and their opinion on the reservations was also found out.

Though a large percent of sample respondents in the present study belong to the rural areas, a very small percentage (5.1%) of rural students want the reservation to be given to rural SC’s A high percentage, 76.9% and 78.9% of rural and urban SC students respectively, want that the reservations to be given to poor SC, giving weightage to economic criteria

FIGURE-4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduled Caste Students Opinion about Reservation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cast</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOW MANY YEARS SHOULD RESERVATIONS CONTINUE-

Another question was posed to the respondents as to how many years the reservations should continue in order to uplift the SCs. During the course of interviews, majority of the respondents especially from rural areas, wanted the reservations to continue forever, i.e., for an indefinite period. They want the
reservations to continue until all the SCs achieve a respectable position. They wanted reservations for an indefinite period because they expressed that inspite of fifty years of Independence and the commencement of the positive discrimination the position of the scheduled castes has not improved much. Very small percent of the SC’s have come out of the socio economic backwardness. Majority of them are still poor and are suffering from socio economic disabilities. To uplift them the reservations are needed for an indefinite period.

One female respondent expressed that the reservation are not privileges, they should be given for many more years, because the SC ancestors had suffered nearly for some hundreds of years in the past. This loss has to be made up by the government. She argues that the reservations are infact very less as compare to the population of SCs. She says that the reservations are given on the basis of population ratio. Though 15% reservations to SCs, 7% reservation to STs and 27% to BCs are given, but the remaining percentage of seats are there for forward castes. Even though SCs can come in merit, most of the time, is not given a seat under merit. He is again placed under reserved category. Only in few places they are admitted under merit. In most of the cases the remaining 50% seats are exclusively for FC. She regards this 50% remaining seats as the fifty percent reservation for the FCs.

Another respondent feels that reservation should be done away within 20-30 years, provided the people are made aware of these things. Already there is an improvement, but still with the help of media, the rural poor SC should be made aware of the privileges.

Another respondent is not optimistic about the whole situation, as he feels that even if the reservation is continued for 40-50 years, the situation won’t change because it is not reaching to the right person. There is a problem in implementation.

Table 4.2 provides information on Sex and rural and urban wise distribution of students. It explains the opinion of the respondents in the number of years that reservation should continue. A fairly large, 64.2 percent respondents wish that the reservations should continue forever. A large per cent of males, 72.2 percent compared to 47.1 percent females wish that the reservation should continue forever. Comparatively, high percentage of rural respondents, i.e., 71.8% wish that the
reservations should continue forever, as compared to 45 percent of urban respondents.

Table 4.2

Opinion About How Many Years Reservation Should Continue
(Sex and Rural Urban Wise Distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>21 Above</th>
<th>For Ever</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4 (5.6)</td>
<td>9 (12.5)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (4.2)</td>
<td>4 (5.6)</td>
<td>52 (72.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3 (8.8)</td>
<td>8 (23.5)</td>
<td>1 (2.9)</td>
<td>3 (8.8)</td>
<td>3 (8.8)</td>
<td>16 (47.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7 (6.6)</td>
<td>17 (16.0)</td>
<td>1 (9)</td>
<td>6 (5.7)</td>
<td>7 (6.6)</td>
<td>68 (64.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>6 (7.7)</td>
<td>9 (11.5)</td>
<td>1 (1.3)</td>
<td>3 (3.8)</td>
<td>3 (3.8)</td>
<td>56 (71.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (30.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (10.0)</td>
<td>3 (15.0)</td>
<td>9 (45.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Urban</td>
<td>1 (12.5)</td>
<td>2 (25.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (12.5)</td>
<td>1 (12.5)</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7 (6.6)</td>
<td>17 (16.0)</td>
<td>1 (9)</td>
<td>6 (5.7)</td>
<td>7 (6.6)</td>
<td>68 (64.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistically, as large as 64.2% wants the reservations to continue forever, whereas only 6.6% of them want for a minimum of 5 years. Another 16% want for 6 to 10 years, and a small percentage of 5.7 and 6.6 want the reservation to continue for 16-20 years and 21 years and above respectively.

CATEGORIZATION OF SCHEDULED CASTES FOR RESERVATIONS-

Among Scheduled Castes, Madigas are considered to be untouchables. Out of the two major jatis- Malas and Madigas, Mala is considered to be superior in status. The Madigas, who eat beef and are associated with leatherwork, are considered to be impure, even by the Malas.

Malas are the predominant SC in the Circars whereas the Madigas dominate in Telangana. In the case of Rayalseema, the proportion of Malas and Madigas is about the same. It is rare to find these two castes equally represented in different areas even within a region.

From the literature and through interviews and discussions it was found that there were no inter marriages between Mala and Madiga. There isn’t much social interaction also. The Mala are in a better social status when compared to Madigas. The
Mala relations are better with backward caste. Now the B.C. people are liberal and call the Malas to their houses, dine together, call for marriages, and serve food along with others. But the B.C. people do not entertain the Madiga in the same manner. They maintain a social distance. Likewise, Malas too maintain distance with Madigas. Malas do not call the Madigas to their houses, to the marriages, etc. Even if they are called, they are served separately. In another village the kammas come to the Malas house, sit and dine, etc but does not go to Madigas house. Thereby creating distance among Mala and Madiga. Now if a problem comes to Mala, Madigas do not join them to solve or vice versa.

According to one of the respondents, there was never a cohesion between Mala and Madiga jatis. They are separate in all spheres. In villages, as the Madiga people eat beef, make shoes or leather items from the skin of cow or buffalo, they are considered to be impure. The other castes prefer to interact with Malas rather than Madigas. Giving an example, one of the Madiga respondent reported that once in the village there was panchayat elections where the seat was meant for the SC candidate only. The Madiga stood against one Mala candidate. Forward caste people in the village preferred to vote for Mala than Madiga candidate. They commented, "Madigodu ki yente votu aedam, Madigodu cante Malodu melu". Meaning why vote for Madiga, Mala is better than Madiga. So, the Mala candidate won the election.

The sharp difference between these two castes can be explained in a number of ways. It is well known that social reform movements, aimed at the emancipation of weaker sections of society have been far more active in the coastal districts where malas predominate. They were also the recipients of preferential treatment under the British. In contrast, in Telangana, where the Madigas predominate, was a part of princely state where there was no comparable attempt at social reform or deliberate effort at improving their lot.

The Malas who had to compete for agricultural labor with several other castes, besides facing uncertainties inherent in this occupation, took more readily to formal education than the Madigas who were secure in leather work. Moreover, the Madigas were also involved in jajmani relationships with upper caste landlords which helped to keep in their traditional occupations.
There is a striking difference between Malas and Madigas in the exploitation of educational facilities. Malas have, by and large, done well for themselves and are educationally way ahead of the Madigas. Even in the rural areas where literacy is far less, there are twice as many literates among Malas, as among Madigas. This difference between the two castes is presumed at every level from primary to higher education. Indicative of this is the relative cornering of scholarships by Malas and certain numerically small SCs such as Adi-Andhras, who are offshoots of Malas (Uma Ramaswamy, 1974).

In wake of these differences among these two jatis, the Mala and the Madiga, there has been a proposal for classifying the different Scheduled Castes in Andhra Pradesh in to ABCD and provide apportion SC reserved quotas to them according to their socio-economic rank and population. That is, when Madigas are more in population their seats should be more as compared to the other jatis within the total seats reserved for the SCs.

Earlier, all the jatis of Scheduled Castes use to fight for the political gains and constitutional rights. Now because a section of them i.e., Malas have gone a way ahead, in the fields of education, employment and leadership, a drift has occurred among these jatis. Madigas sensed a feeling of deprivation, and realized the unequal sharing of benefits and leadership roles. They formed an association called ‘Madiga Dandora’ to fight for ABCD issue. Combating it a Mala association called ‘Mala Mahanadu’ was formed.

Among 97 respondents who answered whether they want ABCD categorization of reservations, 62.9 per cent of the respondents are against any categorization of SC’s. They are against the formation of separate quotas. Whereas 37 per cent of the respondents suggest that there should be separate quotas in the reservation for each jati among SC, as done among Backward Castes (ABCD). Among them rural respondents (40.5%) outnumber the urban and semi urban respondents.

Caste wise distribution of the respondents about the opinion on the categorization of SC’s is shown in figure 4.4. Most of the Madiga jati respondents (77.8 per cent), who would be benefited with the categorization of separate quotas are in favor of categorization. Whereas, only 18.3 percent of respondents who belong to Mala jati
are in favor of separate quotas. On the other hand as large as 81.7 percent of Mala respondents are against categorization. 60 per cent of the respondents from other castes (other than Mala and Madiga) are against the categorization of SC's.

Figure 4.4

Sub Caste-wise Distribution of Students on ABCD Categorization (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MADIGA</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALA</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHERS</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the Mala respondents feels that the issue of ABCD categorization is politically motivated. The ministers are involved in this kind of segregation where they want to grab the vote bank of that particular section Madigas. It is not of much interest to the group, but aimed at the self-interest of the politicians.

Another respondent too feels that the politicians are making use of this ABCD issue. They are applying divide and rule policy. The feud between Mala and Madiga is sustained by self-interest of Forward castes groups. They are dividing them and ruling them. Or else all SC and BC and ST can combine together to form a majority and FC will become a minority.

In A.P. there are some regions where Mala caste is dominating and well off and in other areas Madiga are well off and dominating. Though Madiga caste are still backward. But because of lack of education and awareness they have created a gap and
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In A P. there are some regions where Mala caste is dominating and well off and in other areas Madiga are well off and dominating. Though Madiga caste are still backward. But because of lack of education and awareness they have created a gap and
are making them to fight and watching the show. The forward caste feels that these communities do not have unity. The respondent suggests that the leaders from Mala and Madiga castes should first sit, discuss, come to consensus and then put forward the petition in the court and fight together. He witnessed the Mala Mahashba lathi charge at Tank Bund. After the incident, he saw thousands of chappals near Ambedkar statue. There were people who jumped from the Tank Bund and broke their bones. There was a stampede by the horses and the police had badly beaten the people. He feels that the government is provoking against each other and watching the show. The respondent feels they are exaggerating the things and they are developing vengeance against their own community people and moreover, this kind of division (categorization of ABCD) cannot be accepted by the state government. It has to be a central decision and if one state government decides such an issue, later all the states will fight for caste categorization.

Some of the students from Mala caste feel that what Madigas are agitating for is correct, but in times to come neither Mala nor Madiga are going to be benefited. They are split by forward caste politicians for their own interest. They suggest that instead let there be no ABCD reservation for few more years. Let some SC either, Mala or Madiga, who have come up, stop claiming reservations for his children and give opportunities to more disadvantaged groups. Malas came up just because of education, even Madigas can achieve better status.

One respondent though is a Mala by caste expresses that ABCD categorization should be there. He feels the Madiga caste people are really down trodden, illiterate and poor. They should be given preference. He further stated that though this may cause a split between the two communities but there is a need for upliftment of Madiga caste. Later, he suggested that in place of ABCD categorization in Madiga, it is better to consider socio-economic background for categorization into ABCD irrespective of Mala or Madiga, so that there won't be any conflict between the two communities.

Many respondents, who are from Madiga caste too, feel that there should be ABCD categorization as they are really down trodden. They are further discriminated by Malas in the same way as the other castes discriminate them. For them either Brahman or Mala, both are one and the same, as they face the social distance from both of them.
The respondent expressed that though there is a split now between the communities but it also existed in the past. They were never one. They don't have intercaste marriages, i.e., the Malas do not marry their daughters to Madigas and vice-versa. So, there is a difference between the two communities. Now the conflict, which has arisen due to ABCD issue, will slowly diminish according to him as in case of BCs, where there is ABCD categorization and they have consensus among them.

Another Madiga respondent, who is in favor of ABCD categorization, says that a Mala student with better socio-economic background is in competition to a Madiga from poor socio-economic background. More and more seats have been occupied by Malas. The reservations should be based according to the population ratio. In 1942, the Malas population was 2% less than Madigas. But now after the struggle for reservations, Malas claim to be more populated. According to the respondent, both Malas and Madigas had fought for reservations on the basis of poor socio-economic background, rather than on merit. Now when the Malas are in better socio-economic conditions and are better in merit compare to Madigas, they are talking about merit, thereby denying opportunities to Madigas. According to the respondent, the Malas are ill-treating the Madigas in the same way as the FC groups do to the SC. The Madigas are not allowed to enter into the Malas house and are not offered water and a chair to sit. The Malas dominate over Madigas. If the Malas continue to hold reservations and key post, the gap between the Mala and Madiga will grow. There will be much more oppressions and domination on Madigas by the Malas along with the other Forward castes.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS MARRIAGE-

Marriages in India are still endogamous. Definition of caste system as a hierarchy of endogamous divisions, in which membership is hereditary and permanent, itself shows the importance of endogamy. The matrimonial columns also show the importance of caste. Rarely does an advertisement say, 'caste no bar'. One of the respondents quoted from the advertisement, ‘Wanted Christian Mala boy’. He finds it ridiculous, since Christianity is a religion, without any caste' still some people after converting to other religion are not leaving their caste identity. He says true Christians does not associate with any caste.
In the present study too, most of the respondents want to marry within their jati. The female respondents are of the view that since their caste is considered to be the lowest they will not be accepted by the upper caste for marriage and most of them expressed that they won't be given respect in the family, hence, there may be an adjustment problem. If they marry within their jati, they will be respected and will be more comfortable. Yet, few of the male and female respondents are ready to go for intercaste marriages, provided the person of the other caste is willing to married.

Some of the female respondents expressed that nowadays if a SC person is in a respectable position, is getting married to a girl from the upper caste, mostly it is love marriage and seldom they are arranged marriages. But the SC girls even though highly educated and sometimes in a good position are not accepted by the upper caste men.

Few female respondents feel that the well-settled SC boys go out to marry forward caste girls, because of the latter being more educated, cultured and good looking. The other reasons may be there is a chance of social mobility and increase in ones status, or else it may be for economic reasons, etc. One of the respondent reported that the present trend is that these SC boys who are in a better position like, IAS, IPS, IFS services are marrying FC girls. The parents of the girls, mostly Kamma caste people approach the SC boys who are IAS, IPS, or IFS (mostly who are from average family background) for marrying their daughters. They want to marry their daughters to those who are in the jobs, which are considered to be respectable and powerful, here they are not much bothered about the caste of the boy. Only thing that they see is that, he is from a somewhat better family. Moreover, they feel that a SC boy, whatever background he may be coming from, will automatically change his lifestyles according to his status. By marrying, they want to gain through better connections. Similarly, a SC boy tries to marry a FC girl with an expectation of huge dowry and a chance to move up in the social ladder.

This is posing problem for the SC girls to get an eligible bachelors within their castes. When asked about the difficulty in getting groom for highly qualified SC girl in their own community, they opined it is a problem, which disturbs the ratio. On the contrary, the well-settled forward caste boys do not marry SC girls (except exceptional cases). So most of the times it becomes very difficult for well educated
and well settled SC girls get a better groom. Another respondent reported that her sister is an example. She was serious with her civil services. At 30 years of age, she got the service. Till then even her father too encouraged her in studies and after 30 years, when her father started looking for a groom, they didn't get suitable match. Now her sister is 35 years old and is still unmarried. But in some exceptional cases, she says that if the SC girl is better placed, she gets alliances from other castes as well. One of her elder sisters got married to a Kshatriya boy and another got married to a ST boy. She feels that the caste should not be a bar for marriage. Individual should be able to take care and support his wife. Also, she feels exogamous marriages can help, to some extent, in breaking the caste boundaries.

One of the female respondents, expressed that once the SC man is in a good position and is married to upper caste girls, they get along well as he is able to provide her with a comfortable living. She gave two examples, where the SC man in one case is a field officer and the other is an executive in Food Corporation of India. Both of their wives are happy and comfortable and are having good relations with them. But in another case, her own uncle who is a teacher, married a Brahmin girl. Since his economic position is not very good, both husband and wife are having misunderstanding and their relations have soured. She does not even care for her in-laws and relatives.

Few female respondents thus expressed that a forward caste girl is well accepted in the SC family as she comes from a better economic background, has a support of her family and is able to show her skills in managing the house and other activities. Where as the respondents feel that the SC girl married to an upper caste man may not get the same respect in his family. She may face problem, they may ill-treat her.

One of the respondents, expressed that she won't purposefully go and try for an inter-caste marriage but if some body is interested, she does not mind it. But at the same time, the respondent fears that the women as such are given an inferior status, and they are humiliated. And moreover, if a SC woman has to live with a forward caste man, he may take advantage to humiliate her more and more and may not respect her at all.
Another female respondent wish to marry a teacher, almost of her qualification, not too educated. She wants to go for an arranged marriage within her own caste. As she feels, love marriages do not succeed. Initially they compromise for everything but later they face problems with adjustment. She feels if she marries a forward caste man, he may be authoritative. She will face problem at every step because of being born in a lower caste.

**TABLE 4.3**

**Attitudes on Marriage by Sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefer to Marry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within the Caste</td>
<td>42 (62.7)</td>
<td>16 (59.3)</td>
<td>58 (61.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other SC</td>
<td>9 (13.4)</td>
<td>4 (14.8)</td>
<td>13 (13.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>3 (4.5)</td>
<td>1 (3.7)</td>
<td>4 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td>2 (3.0)</td>
<td>1 (3.7)</td>
<td>4 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>3 (4.5)</td>
<td>1 (3.7)</td>
<td>4 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of the above</td>
<td>8 (11.9)</td>
<td>4 (14.8)</td>
<td>12 (12.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marry with Qualities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>65 (95.6)</td>
<td>34 (100.0)</td>
<td>99 (97.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>3 (4.4)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (2.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marry from the Place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>38 (63.3)</td>
<td>8 (26.7)</td>
<td>46 (51.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>22 (36.7)</td>
<td>22 (73.3)</td>
<td>44 (48.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marry with Beauty Measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Looking</td>
<td>32 (53.3)</td>
<td>11 (34.4)</td>
<td>43 (46.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>28 (46.7)</td>
<td>21 (65.6)</td>
<td>49 (53.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>21 (32.3)</td>
<td>3 (9.4)</td>
<td>24 (24.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>36 (55.4)</td>
<td>14 (43.8)</td>
<td>50 (51.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark</td>
<td>2 (3.1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Complexion</td>
<td>6 (9.2)</td>
<td>15 (46.9)</td>
<td>21 (21.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another female respondent expressed that she wants to marry within her own...
caste or with any other SC, but he must be a Christian. Being a Christian she feels that one becomes more spiritual, forgiving, helping and God fearing. He should be preferably a lecturer, educated, understanding, loving and not money minded. She feels that her husband should give much time to the family and in bringing up the children.

Another female respondent opined that it so happens sometimes that even, if a FC man wants to marry a SC girl, he may not marry, as he has to face a problem of adjustment on one side with his SC wife and on the other hand with his parents. So, he avoids such a situation.

Very few of the respondents, both the boys and the girls expressed that they don’t mind going for inter-caste marriages (see table 4.3). One female respondent is open for marriage with no caste bar. She feels that there are eligible bachelors for her in her own community. Her mothers side, there are engineers and doctors, but she does not mind having an inter-caste marriage. Only thing she wants is an understanding and educated husband with atleast a good job. Her husband should encourage her endeavors. Another female respondent is also of similar view. She also wants an understanding husband who is in a good position. Another male respondent expressed that he would like to go for an inter-caste marriage. He wants to marry at least a post graduate qualified girl, so that his children can get good guidance.

Another male respondent too is in favor of an Inter-caste marriage. But he says, as India is patriarchal society, the caste of the father does matters. In that case, if a SC man even though marries a Brahmin girl, she herself will become a member of the SC community. And her children too will be given SC status. So, where is the chance of loosing one’s caste?

Table 4.3 gives the attitudes on the matrimonial issues. Out of 95 sample respondents, 61.7 percent of the respondents prefer to marry within their own caste and another 13.8 percent with other scheduled caste. This shows that in spite of higher education more than fifty percent of the respondents still prefer endogamy. Whereas very small percent 4.3 percent (4) of each of the respondents prefer to marry a person belonging to BC, FC, and Brahmin. Another 12.8 percent (12) reported that they do not
mind marrying a person from any of the above castes.

As high as 97.1 percent (99) of the respondents wants to marry an educated person and just 2.9 percent (3) males wants to marry an uneducated women. No females want to marry an uneducated man. Four respondents did not respond to this. The respondents themselves being highly qualified, wish to marry educated persons only.

Respondents are equally distributed in wishing to marry a person from rural and urban areas. Out of 90 respondents who replied, 51.1 percent (46) respondents wish to marry a rural person and another 48.9 percent (44) wish to marry an urban person. Sex wise distribution shows that more no of the female respondents 73.9 percent (22) wish to marry urban males than comparatively low 36.7 % (22) male respondents, who wish to marry an urban female. Inversely, more no. of the male respondents 63.3 percent (38) wish to marry a rural female than 26.7 percent (8) female respondents who wish to marry a rural person. Females wish for urban males because they have to go to her husband’s place and stay and they prefer urban areas than rural areas. Whereas, there are males who wish to marry rural females because even though the girls are from rural areas, they are going to stay along with the husband most probably in the urban areas.

Considering the beauty measures, out of the 92 respondents, 46.7 percent (43) respondents wish to marry a good looking person and another 53.3 percent (49) wish to marry an average person. Comparatively, more no. of the male respondents 53.3 percent (32) wish to marry a good looking girl when compared to 34.4 percent (11) female respondents who wish for a good looking man. More no of females wish to marry an average looking man.

Regarding the complexion of the would-be spouse, out of 97 respondents, maximum no of respondents i.e., 51.5 percent (50) prefer a spouse with a medium complexion, 24.7 percent (2) respondents wish to marry a person with a fair complexion and there are 2.1 percent (2) respondents who do not mind marrying a dark person. Another 21.6 percent (21) respondents do not have any choice of complexion of the spouse, they are ready to marry a person with any of these complexions. The negligible percentages who wish to marry a dark person are both males.
### TABLE 4.4
Attitudes on Marriage by Rural Urban Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
<th>SEMIURBAN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFER TO MARRY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WITHIN THE CASTE</td>
<td>45 (63.4)</td>
<td>9 (56.3)</td>
<td>4 (57.1)</td>
<td>58 (61.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SC</td>
<td>9 (12.7)</td>
<td>2 (12.5)</td>
<td>2 (28.6)</td>
<td>13 (13.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>3 (4.2)</td>
<td>1 (6.3)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td>3 (4.2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAHMIN</td>
<td>3 (4.2)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (14.3)</td>
<td>4 (4.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANY OF THE ABOVE</td>
<td>8 (11.3)</td>
<td>4 (25.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12 (12.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRY WITH QUALITIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATED</td>
<td>71 (95.9)</td>
<td>20 (100.0)</td>
<td>8 (100.0)</td>
<td>99 (97.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEDUCATED</td>
<td>3 (4.1)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (2.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRY FROM THE PLACE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td>42 (63.6)</td>
<td>1 (5.9)</td>
<td>3 (42.9)</td>
<td>46 (51.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td>24 (36.4)</td>
<td>16 (94.1)</td>
<td>4 (57.1)</td>
<td>44 (48.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARRY WITH BEAUTY MEASURES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOOD LOOKING</td>
<td>34 (51.5)</td>
<td>7 (38.9)</td>
<td>2 (25.0)</td>
<td>43 (46.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>32 (48.5)</td>
<td>11 (61.1)</td>
<td>6 (75.0)</td>
<td>49 (53.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPLEXION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIR</td>
<td>19 (26.8)</td>
<td>3 (16.7)</td>
<td>2 (25.0)</td>
<td>24 (24.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>36 (50.7)</td>
<td>11 (61.1)</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
<td>50 (51.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DARK</td>
<td>2 (2.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2 (2.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANY COMPLEXION</td>
<td>14 (19.7)</td>
<td>4 (22.2)</td>
<td>3 (37.5)</td>
<td>21 (21.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 gives the rural urban distribution of the respondents according to their opinion regarding the marriage. In this, the significant observation is that more no. of the rural respondents 63.6 percent (42) wish to marry a rural person when compared to very low 5.9 percent (1) urban respondents who wish to marry a rural person, which shows that once a person becomes urbanite they do not wish to go back to the village. So, an urban respondent prefers to marry an urban person only.
The negligible respondents who wish to marry an uneducated and rural person are the rural male respondents.

**ATTITUDES TOWARDS RELIGION**

Hindu religion confirms the hierarchical system where the SCs are given the lowest or the most inferior position based on ascribed status. It was hypothesized that the respondents who belong to different jatis, Mala, Madiga and others may not be believing in the Hindu religion. The Hindu religion has nothing to offer them but low rank in the hierarchy. Among the different jatis again, Madiga which is considered to be at the bottom of the hierarchy the respondents belonging to this jati may be more secular and may not have faith in Hindu religion.

Confirming to the hypothesis it was found that three fourth of the sample respondents (100) are secular in their feelings and only one fourth of them expressed that they are religious. Among those who reported to be religious, it was seen that the Christian SC and the respondents from the Mala jati are more religious than the Madiga respondents. Table 4.5 shows that 66.7 percent (8) of the Christians are more religious as compared to the 18.2 percent (16) of Hindus. Whereas large percent 81.5 percent (72) of Hindus expressed that they are secular as compared to 33.3 percent (4) Christians. The respondents reported that they do not believe in Hindu religion and do not worship any Hindu Gods. They do not visit any temples and worship. Since the Hindu religion has accorded them socially and religiously an inferior position, they do not believe in this religion. Most of them reported that they worship and have reverence for Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who has done a remarkable service for uplifting the SCs. They reported that even Dr. B.R. Ambedkar too did not believe in Hindu religion and had motivated SC people to embrace Buddhism.

Out of 98 sample respondents, 19.3% of them are converted to other religion, out of them 10.6% (9) are Hindus. When asked whether the conversion is helpful in any way, Majority of the respondents i.e., 62.9% (34) out of 54 sample reported that the conversion to other religion is not helpful in any way. Whereas 37% of them feel that it is helpful in raising their status and among them, 18.5 percent (10) respondents feels that it helps in changing their social status, another 12.9 percent (7) feels it helps
in improving their educational status and another 5.1 percent (3) respondents feels that it helps in raising their economic status. More percentage of the Christians feels that the converted religion is helpful in raising their socio-economic and educational status as compared to the Hindus. And 65.9 percent (29) of the Hindus feel that the converted religion is not helpful as compared to 50.0 percent (5) of Christians who said so. A large percentage of the respondents did not responded to this query as mostly those who are converted and few others have responded.

**TABLE-4.5**

**Attitudes on Religion by the Religion of the Respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>HINDU</th>
<th>CHRISTIAN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARE YOU RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGIOUS</td>
<td>16 (18.2)</td>
<td>8 (66.7)</td>
<td>24 (24.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECULAR</td>
<td>72 (81.8)</td>
<td>4 (33.3)</td>
<td>76 (76.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>88 (87.1)</td>
<td>12 (11.9)</td>
<td>100 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARE YOU CONVERTED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>9 (10.6)</td>
<td>10 (76.9)</td>
<td>19 (19.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>76 (89.4)</td>
<td>3 (23.1)</td>
<td>79 (80.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGIOUS CONVERSION HELPFUL IN RAISING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL STATUS</td>
<td>8 (18.2)</td>
<td>2 (20.2)</td>
<td>10 (18.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATIONAL STATUS</td>
<td>5 (11.4)</td>
<td>2 (20.2)</td>
<td>7 (12.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECONOMIC STATUS</td>
<td>2 (4.5)</td>
<td>1 (10.0)</td>
<td>3 (5.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT HELPFUL</td>
<td>29 (65.9)</td>
<td>5 (50.0)</td>
<td>34 (62.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Caste wise distribution in table 4.6 shows that higher percent of Madiga jati people 89.7 percent (26) are secular than the 68.9 percent (42) Mala jati people. The reason may be that the Madiga jati students who come from more oppressed, rural based, with lower socio-economic family status loose faith in God and dissociates themselves from religious belief and do not expect any thing from God or Religion.

More percentage of Malas 20.6 percent (12) and other castes 42.9 percent (3) are converted compared to Madiga jati 17.2 percent (5). It is because the Malas who are predominant in the Circar district or coastal areas, where there was a social reform
movements and were given preferential treatment by the Britishers. Many of the Malas took to Christianity and were benefited educationally. The respondent feels that the Britishers helped the SCs by giving free food, education etc. It may be for their self interest but many of the scheduled castes families who took to Christianity at that time had improved their status.

Table 4.6

Distribution of Mala Madiga students according to their perception about religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>MADIGA</th>
<th>MALA</th>
<th>OTHERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARE YOU RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGIOUS</td>
<td>3 (10.3)</td>
<td>19 (31.1)</td>
<td>1 (16.7)</td>
<td>23 (24.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECULAR</td>
<td>26 (89.7)</td>
<td>42 (68.9)</td>
<td>5 (83.3)</td>
<td>73 (76.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>29 (30.2)</td>
<td>61 (63.5)</td>
<td>6 (6.3)</td>
<td>96 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARE YOU A CONVERT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>5 (17.2)</td>
<td>12 (20.6)</td>
<td>3 (42.9)</td>
<td>20 (21.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>24 (82.8)</td>
<td>47 (57.1)</td>
<td>4 (57.1)</td>
<td>75 (78.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVERTED RELIGION HELPFUL IN RAISING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL STATUS</td>
<td>4 (23.5)</td>
<td>7 (20.6)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>11 (20.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATIONAL</td>
<td>2 (11.8)</td>
<td>4 (11.8)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6 (11.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECONOMIC</td>
<td>3 (17.6)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (5.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT HELPFUL</td>
<td>8 (47.1)</td>
<td>23 (67.6)</td>
<td>2 (100.0)</td>
<td>33 (62.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conversion to Christianity is mainly done on the part of the respondent’s fathers and grand fathers. Very rarely a respondent has changed his religion. Infact, there are many of the respondents, who inspite of being Christian i.e., their parents and grand parents who have converted to Christianity, do not believe in God and feel that they have not been benefited in any way due to the conversion.

Similarly another respondent expressed that he is atheist, he never goes to church or pray, though his parents did convert to Christianity but the respondent perceives no benefit.
PERSONAL HABITS AND THEIR PARTICIPATION IN CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES-

Vegetarianism is considered to be the superior form of diet among the Hindu population, and in contemporary India it constitutes one of the essential norms relating to food and status. The opposition of pure and impure is applied in a social context in which the Brahman and the Untouchables are at opposite poles, the latter responsible for dead cattle and the former a paragon of purity, assimilated to the cow (Louis Dumont, 1980). It is regarded that eating vegetarian food is considered to be pure and eating non-vegetarian food is considered to be impure.

Respondents were asked about their opinion on eating non-vegetarian foods that whether they consider eating non-vegetarian food as impure and eating vegetarian food as pure. Most of the respondents are of the opinion that they don’t feel that eating non-vegetarian food to be impure. Few of the respondents feels that meat is a rich source of proteins and beef is a cheapest of all the meats which is necessary for the poor SCs who cannot afford to buy the vegetables and other meat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>MADIGA</th>
<th>MALA</th>
<th>ANY OTHER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EATING VEG IS PURE AND NON VEG IS IMPURE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>9 (30.0)</td>
<td>11 (19.6)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20 (21.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>21 (70.0)</td>
<td>45 (80.4)</td>
<td>7 (100.0)</td>
<td>73 (78.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHETHER RESPONDENTS EAT BEEF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>14 (46.7)</td>
<td>16 (25.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30 (29.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>16 (53.3)</td>
<td>48 (75.0)</td>
<td>7 (100.0)</td>
<td>71 (70.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30 (29.7)</td>
<td>64 (63.4)</td>
<td>7 (6.9)</td>
<td>101 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBLEM IN ADJUSTMENT WITH FOOD IN HOSTEL</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>11 (37.9)</td>
<td>17 (30.4)</td>
<td>3 (42.8)</td>
<td>31 (33.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>18 (63.1)</td>
<td>39 (69.6)</td>
<td>4 (57.1)</td>
<td>61 (66.3)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Another respondent expressed that if eating beef is impure and considered to be an inferior food and if stigma of untouchability is attached to it, then what about
Americans and other Western countries where beef is a part of regular diet. Here the respondent is trying to compare the non-comparable as the concept of purty and pollution is unique to Hindu religion, which is not there for American culture or western culture.

Table 4.7 shows that as large as 78.5% (73) out of 93 respondents do not consider meat eating as impure. Whereas only 21.5% (20) of them still believe that eating vegetarian is pure. 30 percent (9) of Madiga caste students and 19.6 percent (11) of Mala caste students feel that eating vegetarian food means one is pure and eating non-vegetarian food means impure.

Table 4.7 shows that in the total sample only one third (29.7 percent) of the respondents eat beef whereas, as large as 70.3 percent (71) of the respondents are non-beef-eaters. Madiga caste which occupies a lower position in the hierarchy is considered to be impure caste because of its defiling occupations and beef eating habits. Table 4.7 shows that comparatively higher percentage 46.7 percent (14) of the Madigas eat beef compared to 25 percent (16) of the Malas.

Table 4.7 further shows that 33.7% of the students face problem in adjusting with food in the hostels. They feel that the food is monotonous and they do not get curds many times. If they are late for the meals, the food may get over. Though in the hostels they prepare non-vegetarian, but do not prepare beef. The respondents reported that they can cook beef in the hostel rooms, but this is quite cumbersome.

Information was gathered on their personal habits like smoking and drinking alcohol. Further, information on their participation in co-curricular activities was also sought.

Table 4.8 shows that 11 percent of the respondents smoke and another 21.5 percent (17) respondents consume alcohol occasionally. More no of the rural students i.e., 12 percent (9) and 22.8 percent (13) smoke and drink respectively as compared to urban students. 45.6 percent (47) of the respondents participate in the co-curricular activities like sports, games, cultural activities etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARI</th>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
<th>SEMI URBAN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>SMOKES</td>
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<td>YES</td>
<td>9 (12.0)</td>
<td>1 (5.9)</td>
<td>1 (12.5)</td>
<td>11 (11.0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>16 (94.1)</td>
<td>7 (87.5)</td>
<td>89 (89.0)</td>
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<td>TAKE ALCOHOL</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>13 (22.8)</td>
<td>3 (18.8)</td>
<td>1 (16.7)</td>
<td>17 (21.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>44 (77.2)</td>
<td>13 (81.3)</td>
<td>5 (83.3)</td>
<td>62 (78.5)</td>
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<td>PARTICIPATE IN CO CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>31 (41.3)</td>
<td>10 (50.0)</td>
<td>6 (75.0)</td>
<td>47 (45.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>44 (58.7)</td>
<td>10 (50.0)</td>
<td>2 (25.0)</td>
<td>56 (54.4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ATTITUDES OF THE TEACHERS TOWARDS THE SC STUDENTS AS PERCEIVED BY THE RESPONDENTS-

In the literature, it was given that the society at large and the upper caste people in particular, try to stereotype the SCs in many ways. In the present study, the respondents were asked about their opinion as to what the teachers in the university think about the SC students or what image or opinion they have formed about the SC students. It was found that according to the respondents the teachers have a poor image of the SC students.

It is given in the literature that self-esteem is essentially a matter of self-concept, one's opinion and perception of oneself, as an individual. A favorable opinion of the self results in positive self-esteem, whereas a poor self-concept culminates in itself feelings of inferiority and incompetence.

Self concept develops as a consequence of what the children feel others think of them which may include their parents, teachers and peers. If this 'core' individuals regard the child as capable and important, the child's self-concept will reflect these characteristics. If they feel the child is stupid or useless these negative aspects will become part of his self-image. Setting very low ideals results in low standards and poor achievement levels. Their low self-esteem deters their scholastic achievement,
making them poor achievers in class.

From the discussion it shows that all the SCs in general are stereotyped to be dull and non intelligent. This opinion of others about the SC students indirectly effects their self esteem. They may develop low self esteem and inferiority complex, thereby affecting the performance of the SC students.

Two female respondents pursuing PhD reported the following comments from forward caste people: 'You are also doing PhD., now you'll become pundit'. Which means that Brahmins usually study to this level and not SCs. They feel that the SC students are given the seats but they are not worth it. But inturn, the respondents feels that these teachers do not understand from which background they are coming from and with how much efforts.

In Sciences some teachers feel the SC students gets admission free of cost or with out any efforts, or even they are worthless, and not fit for studies.

One respondent reported that some of the SC /ST students do not study or some who come from the rural background could not cope up with the studies. They get less marks or fail in the exams, because of those few students the teachers have got a general impression that all the SC students are not worth to be in these universities. He commented that the teachers do not have faith towards our merit. They give a second class treatment to all the SC students.

Few respondents report that the teachers carry an attitude, that the SC students are not intelligent, they are dull and just because of reservation they are getting the seats in the University They underestimate the SC students.

Another female respondent though feels normal for being born in this caste but at times, she used to wish she was not a SC because some people give importance to caste rather than capabilities of the person. For instance, she reported "When I tell somebody I have got to get into the civil services, they say its not a big deal as I have got reservation. It hurts some times. They should see that there are all type of students, meritorious, average, below average among the SCs and similarly meritorious, average and below average among the other castes, then why SC students are stereotyped. So the feelings that SC students are worthless should go out of the minds of the other people. They should understand from which background and from
which circumstances the SC person is coming and why the person is scoring less marks. They should not be pointed out, instead should help them out in troubles”.

Another respondent reports that the teachers carry an impression that the SC students are physically and mentally poor. They don't have knowledge. They don’t know anything about subjects. They come to universities only for food and shelter.

One of the respondent writes that university teachers think that because of reservations, university standards are coming down. They do not consider the social and economic background of the SC students and under which circumstances they are studying. Few of the teachers seem to be considerate towards SC problem and do not carry such an attitude but mostly the teachers are indifferent towards SC problem.

Another respondent writes, that some of our teachers and students think that the SC students are worst, they do not make use of their opportunities (reservation) and some think that they don’t know about the society or the subject or what is happening in the world.

As reported by some of the respondents in the university, they feel that few teachers are partial, especially from upper caste and of Brahmin caste who treat the SC as low standard fellows and not worthy of anything. They feel SC students are foolish fellows and they do not use the reservations in a proper way, but it is noted there are some liberal teachers who help the SC students and give equal treatment to all the students.

ATTITUDES OF THE FC STUDENTS TOWARDS THE SC STUDENTS AS PERCEIVED BY THE RESPONDENTS-

Similarly, the respondents were asked to write, what their classmates or peer group, especially the students from upper caste feel about them.

One of the respondents wrote that the forward caste students treat them in cheap manner, abuse them as parasites. Another reported that some are formal and some are discriminative. Some of the forward caste students think that the SCs have lot of opportunities and feel jealous about their reservation facilities. Some FC students think that the SC students are waste candidates and carry a negative attitude. They feel that SCs are worthless and still are getting benefits.
Another respondent feels that some of the forward caste students are quite good and matured. Another respondent expressed that some of the FC though talk to us in a friendly manner but still they have that caste barrier in their minds. Some of them carry an attitude that SC students are just average and are misusing the reservation.

One of the respondent writes that others have a feeling that these reservation category people need not worry or work hard to get seats, if they get just the pass marks also, they can get seats. It is some times true, he agrees with that but some work hard and get in to merit list then also they get the label that they got seat because they are in the reservation category, and thus underestimating their hard work, which the respondent do not like.

One of the respondent expressed that the FC students feel they were superior than the SC students, compare to SC students they are economically, educationally, socially and religiously forward and hence they feel great and they under estimate the SC students and his knowledge.

But some of the respondents feel that the FC students treat them well and do not carry any kind of negative attitude.

**SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the attitudes of the SC students on various issues, related to them are explored. They were asked to write about the origin of caste system as per their knowledge. Very few respondents were able to provide with the information regarding the origin of the caste system. Their views were similar to three theories of origin of caste system, the Divine Plan Theory, Theory of Racial Antipathy and the Occupational- Functional theory but most of them did not believe in these theories. They feel that caste system is not created by God, and that it is created by the Brahmins for their own benefits. Many of the respondents expressed different kinds of feelings- feelings of pain, agony, anger, anxiety, anguish and hatred for experiencing the caste prejudices.

From the interviews, discussions and observation it can be said that students did not imitate the Brahminical culture but a ‘modern western culture’ and its attendant
features of equality, homogeneity and this worldly pragmatism. The respondents did not believe in the Hindu caste system. They rejected the Hindu values and the caste codes. There are no signs of sanscritisation, instead they are adopting western lifestyles and value system. They do not feel bad in beef eating and feels it is good and nutritious. They are becoming more independent and are taking pride in revealing their caste identity. They no more feel shy or try to hide their caste, instead with the growing political awareness and their rights and privileges, they are asserting themselves in the society under their own ‘dalit identity’. By forming dalit organization, and affiliating themselves to local, state and national politics they are creating their own niche.

Few respondents are in favour of abolishing the whole of the caste system but majority of them wants to improve their position. They expressed that they would feel happy, if they are not ill-treated or humiliated and are just treated as any other human being. With regard to the attitudes related to the present status of SC and their future, most of the respondents feel that the position of SC has improved but is still inferior in many ways. They feel that even today large majority of the SCs are illiterate, backward and poverty stricken. Only very few, urban respondents feel that the Status of SC is now equal to the forward castes.

Regarding the future of the SCs, majority of the respondents are optimistic in their view. They foresee that, with the help of reservations and other welfare measures, the position of the SC will improve but some of them feel that their position will remain the same. Few of the rural respondents feel that the position of SC has not improved at all. Especially in the villages and that their position in future will still deteriorate, as they are seeing the growing crime against them.

Regarding the attitudes towards reservation policies, a large majority of the sample wants to continue the privileges even if the total caste system is abolished as they expressed that still 80% of SC population are ignorant, poor and backward and almost 50% of them are illiterate and below poverty line.

Most of the respondents expressed that the reservations should be based on economic criteria rather than caste, that is they want the reservation for all the poor SC’s. Most of the rural respondents expressed that till now only a section of SC’s have cornered all the benefits and they have formed a class of their own and they are
not bothered about the development of the whole community. They suggested to implement a creamy layer policy so that the well to do SCs can leave space for the more needy SC and gradually all the SCs could come at par with others. Once, all the SCs have come to a certain stage of development they can decrease or ban the reservations.

Most of the rural respondents want the reservations to continue for an indefinite period, as the conditions of SCs are still miserable and in disadvantaged position.

With regard to ABCD categorization, more no. of Madiga respondents are in favor of it and more number of Mala respondents are against it. Though most of the Mala respondents feel that this is a political game plan, where they are trying to split the two communities.

Regarding the attitudes towards marriage, inspite of higher education more than 60 percent respondents prefer endogamy. Very few wants to go for inter caste marriages but this is still not accepted in the society. Females have shown some kind of apprehension in marrying a FC man as the girls feel that her in-laws won’t give them respect and equal status. They cited some examples of inter-caste marriages, where mostly the SC boys are in a good position and has married a FC girl.

Further, it was found that most of the respondents both rural, urban, male or female like to marry an educated person only. More no of rural male respondents wish to marry a rural female when compared to urban male who wish to marry an urban girl only. Also most of the females wish to marry an urbanite.

For the choice of color and complexion, most of the respondents are not particular about color, complexion and beauty measures. They wish to go for an average looking person but most of them would prefer to marry educated and urban person.

With regard to the religious belief, more no. of respondents especially from Madigas are secular. Those who are religious, are mostly Christians and those who belong to Mala caste. Very few respondents are Christians and their parents had converted to this religion, not the respondents themselves. Though, most of them are non-Christians and Christians, too feel that the converted religion is not so useful.
Only few respondents feel that the converted religion is helpful in raising their educational, economic and social status.

With regard to pure and impure theory, most of the respondents do not believe that eating non-vegetarian food is impure and eating vegetarian is pure, though few of the sample respondents and mostly Madigas among them eat beef.

Further, the respondents reported that most of the University teachers and the upper caste peer group carries negative attitude towards the SC students in general. They feel that the SC students are not worthy enough to be in the University. And that they are dull and are coming for higher education, just because they have reservations. This kind of attitude may influence them to form a poor image of themselves and may effect their academic performance and their social interaction.