PREFACE

The caste system in India, whatever its genesis and its original justification, created a highly stratified societal structure with a hierarchy of caste and communities separated by barriers of exclusiveness and social inequality. It manifested itself in its most reprehensive form in relation to certain backward classes. Some of whom were treated as untouchables by the higher caste. These unfortunate people (now included in the category of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes) were usually landless labourer serving to the so-called higher castes in various ways in their field, home, and elsewhere. They were denied even basic civil rights for thousands of year and subjected to the worst kind of discrimination and deprivation and custom bred inequalities and serial disabilities. Theirs was a condition of economic poverty made more miserable by social injustices. They had no house to live in, generally not, enough clothes to wear, or food to eat and often no sanitary or drinking water facilities.

With the dawn of independence it was realized that freedom would be futile, if the fruits there of were not made available equally to every citizen of India. The basic concept of democracy inducted in the preamble to the Constitution of India, which strives to secure to all its citizens, "justice, social, economic and political" and "equality, of status and opportunity". The aim as reflected in the preamble, is to bring social and economic changes. So as to correct the imbalance existing in the society. The Constitution guarantees also some fundamental rights to the citizens and includes specific provision to safeguard the rights and interests of backward classes and for the protection of the weaker sections of the society. The disparity between developed and underdeveloped existence of social inequalities obstruct the purpose of social and cultural advancement. The persistence of obsolete social institutions all these and many other symptoms of backwardness existing in the society in India, necessitated the inclusions of provisions relating to the upliftment of such classes in the constitution itself. These inequalities in the society persisted since centuries and after independence it attracted the attention of the makers of the constitution, who decided that special provisions should be included in the constitution for the protection of these classes.

Out of then existing backward classes, the most prominent were scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. There have been and are classes other than scheduled caste and scheduled tribes who can be considered as backward at the social level. Such classes have been referred also in constitution as
'backward classes' in Article 15 (4), 16 (4), 338 (3), 340 (1). Article 46 of the Constitution enjoins upon the state government to promote with special care the educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the people and particularly of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

With a view of socialistic pattern of society as enshrined in to the constitution of India, along with the basic principles of equality, fraternity, freedom, and justice for all, governments at central level as well as state level established a number of corporations which were meant to work as catalyst agents of economic development of backward classes by providing finance to them.

Keeping in mind, the Constitutional responsibility, Government of Maharashtra established several corporations for backward class development such as MPBCDC, LASDC, VNVJNTDC, LIDCOM, etc. These corporations are playing very important role for the development of backward classes by providing finance and there by creating self employment opportunities and entrepreneurial environment among backward classes. Therefore, the researcher felt that it would be interesting to asses and evaluate the effects of efforts made by state level special corporations in developing entrepreneurial habit among backward class. Hence the study was undertaken with reference to Latur District of Maharashtra state.

...No doubt this is a micro-level study but the situation does not differ very much at the national level. I hope this study will be fruitful if active steps are taken by Government of Maharashtra and Special Corporations established by the Government of Maharashtra and concerning banks to adopt the suggestions and recommendations propounded as a result of this study.

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