CHAPTER I

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Indian society is characterised predominantly by caste system. Caste in India is an important structural and functional institution and it has a close linkage with religious, economic, political and social sub-systems. The system as such comprises of mutually distinct clusters of people called castes. Caste system said Berman, "is a hierarchy of groups in a society, membership in which is determined by birth". This makes very clear of the two fundamental characteristics of the caste system, castes are ranked and membership in them is ascribed.

If one were to analyse the Indian caste system, one could see a number of lines that separate the castes by their rank. Some of these lines are clear and distinct as in the case of low ranking castes. But there is one line that stands thick and clear i.e. the line that devides the so called untouchables from the rest of the society who form the bulk of the Scheduled Castes (Agarwal, 1976). Bailey (1958) has called it the pollution barrier.

The Scheduled Castes are kept apart from the rest of the society due to the prevalent practice of
untouchability. One significant feature of Indian caste system is the notion of purity and pollution. As it was believed that Scheduled Castes were impure and polluted, they were forced to live in isolation, away from the village proper. Various terms were used to denote the sections of the people who suffered from discrimination.

The term Harijan was first used by the Gujarathi Saint Narasimha Mehata and later was adopted by Mahatma Gandhi to refer a group of people who were traditionally considered untouchables. Many terms were used by many persons in different contexts for denoting Harijans. Harijans are widely referred to as Scheduled Castes. The usage has come into existence for the first time in 1935, when lowest ranking Hindus were listed in a schedule appended to the Government of India Act 1935, for the purpose of statutory safeguards with respect to political representation and other benefits (Jayaram, 1981) later.

The constituent Assembly used the word Scheduled Castes, while drafting the constitution. Dr. Ambedkar has earlier opposed to use of the word 'Harijan' (Khan, 1980). The word Scheduled Castes has not been defined anywhere in the constitution. Article 341 of the constitution of
India reads as follows:

"Scheduled Castes means such castes, races or tribes, parts or groups within such castes, races or tribes, parts or groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 340 to be Scheduled Castes for the purpose of Constitution of India" (Constitution of India).

Before being Scheduled, these castes were classified as "exterior" or "depressed". A caste was classified exterior or depressed when it was found subject to a set of social restrictions.

All the castes that receive protective discrimination and safeguards are generally treated as Scheduled Castes. However, it must be noted that all of them were not subjected to untouchability. Untouchability is the major disability of majority of the Scheduled Castes. The notion that the Scheduled Castes cause pollution by contact or proximity kept the Scheduled Castes away from the main stream of the society. It is difficult to define untouchability. "The untouchable castes are those" said, Majumdar (1961), "which suffer from various social and political disabilities, many of which are traditionally prescribed and socially
enforced by higher castes". Some sociologists think instead of defining untouchability it is better to take into consideration the disabilities which the untouchables suffer, and those castes that suffer from these disabilities can be safely termed as untouchable castes. The 1931 Census has listed out the disabilities as follows:

- Inability to be served by clean Brahmins;
- inability to be served by barbers, water carriers, tailors etc., who serve the Caste Hindus;
- inability to enter Hindu temples;
- inability to use public conveniences such as roads, ferries, wells or schools;
- and inability to disassociate oneself from despersed occupation,

(Census of India, 1931), Volume, Part-I, p.472.

Several leaders tried to their best to brings about change in the degrading practising of untouchability and tried to uplift the Scheduled Castes by their teachings and works. The founding of Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj and the teachings of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Kesav Chandra Sen, Sri Ramakrishna and Swamy Vivekananda, all had one common aim to purify Hinduism of the evils of caste communities. The Indian National Congress which crystallised the social thinking of the time officially took up the work of uplifting the depressed classes on a national scale (Murthy, 1972 : 45).
However, it was only after Mahatma Gandhi took up the work of redeeming the untouchable that the matter received any momentum. Gandhiji called them "Harijans"—children of God and organised a net work of agencies to work for their cause. He also carried out campaigns against untouchability through the press, the pulpit and the platform. He edited a weekly journal called the 'Harijan' to highlight the magnitude of the problem and to channelize popular opinion and effort in uplifting the untouchables (Murthy, 1972 : 45).

The role played by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, himself an untouchable, in the cause of Harijan uplift was specially significant. Unlike Gandhiji, Ambedkar's emphasis was not social but political, even though he did not ignore the social aspect. He declared that unless the untouchables enjoy political power, they will not be able to raise themselves up. He argued that the depressed classes should be entitled to special protection more than any other religious minority in the country.

While framing the constitution of India, Ambedkar, who was one of its architects, secured necessary constitutional guarantees for the uplift of Harijans—(Shanta Kumari : 6). The constitution of
India prescribed protection and safeguards for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes and other backward classes either specially or by way of insisting on their general rights as citizens with the object of promoting their educational and economic interests and removing the social disabilities.

The responsibility of the state in promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Castes have been clearly spelled out in the various provisions of the constitution as seen in the preamble, fundamental rights, and the directive principles of State policy. The Government of India is therefore committed for the betterment of the conditions of the Scheduled Castes since 1950. As a result, untouchability was abolished. The untouchability Act of 1955 was enacted by the Parliament under Article 35 of the Constitution. The Act was amended by the "untouchability amendment and miscellaneous provisions Act," 1976 and came into force with effect from 19th November, 1976. Further introduction of universal suffrage, adult franchise, compulsory elementary education and provision of social justice, equality and freedom, prevention of exploitation and so on are expected to benefit the Scheduled Castes more than any other group of citizens (Khan, M.A. :1980 p.46).
Role of Education:

It is significant to note that the Scheduled Castes, many of whom had been subjected to various social disabilities of extreme form were exploited and kept subservient mainly because they were illiterate. It is a well known fact that education is a dynamic agent and instrument of social change and social mobility. It may be mentioned here that social science literature in India and abroad acknowledges education as the most important correlate of development (Singh, Y. S. 1973; Inkles and Smith, 1974; Sharma, 1979; Singh, S.N. 1979; Raghuvanshi, 1984; Singh, A.K. 1984).

Similarly numerous publications have proclaimed positive association of education with social change (Majumdar, 1972; Rudolph & Rudolph, 1972; Goel, 1975; World Bank, 1979; Chaudari, 1979; Bhatia & Gupta, 1980; United Nations, 1983) and social mobility (Uma Mohan, 1980, 1985).

Education has been regarded as a primary factor of social mobility. The educational progress of the Scheduled Castes can be regarded as the most important index of their growth and development (Victor D'Souza, 1980). Some studies (Chitnis, S. 1974; Laxmannna and Innaiah, 1977; D'Souza, 1980 etc.,) revealed that during
the decade (1960-70) and afterwards there is a slow but steady growth in the enrolment of the Scheduled Castes students at school. Suma Chitnis (1974) revealed that the enrolment of Scheduled Castes students increased by 16.88 per cent during the period 1969-70. However the disappointing trends of progress of educational development among the Harijans was also noted and is largely due to their poor socio-economic conditions. Most Indian studies have found that social disadvantage adversely affect the cognitive development of the students (Hatia, 1982; Das & Singh, 1975; Dube and Sachdev, 1985; Singh A.K. 1980; Singh & Jaiswal, 1981). As observed by Thekkamalai (1989) Educational mobility of Harijans is still controlled by their home, environment and motivation. Beteille (1966); Alexander (1966); Singh (1968); Jha (1973); Abbasayulu (1978); Pimpley (1980) among others have found that the educational efforts of the Government and some other agencies have contributed positively to uplift the status of Scheduled Castes.

The Scheduled Castes most of whom had been subjected to various social disabilities of extreme forms were exploited and kept subservient mainly because they were illiterates. Until recently the caste Hindus were not prepared to allow the Scheduled Caste children to sit
along with their children in the schools (Khan, 1980). It has been noticed that education provides for social mobility (Banks, 1954). It promotes occupational mobility (R. Centres, 1940). It also reduced social distance observed in the relationship between the Scheduled Castes and Caste Hindus (Alexander, 1978).

Scheduled Castes & Educational Progress:

Greater emphasis has been laid down on the provision of educational facilities to Harijans. For this purpose fee concessions and scholarships are offered at school and college levels; reservation of seats are made at all levels; free hostel facilities are provided; and books are supplied at free of cost.

An attempt is made here to review the studies pertained to the educational progress of Scheduled Castes. Some studies reveal that during the decade 1960-70 and afterwards there is a slow but steady increase in the enrolment of Scheduled Caste students at school level (Chitnis, 1974; Lakshman & Innaiah, 1977; D'Souza, 1980).

A study in Maharashtra by Suma Chitnis (1974) revealed that the Scheduled Caste students enrolment increased by 16.88 per cent during the period 1969-70. Lakshman and Innaiah (1977) in their study in
Andhra Pradesh observed that the total enrolment of scheduled caste students in all types of recognised educational institutions increased during the last few years in all the three regions of Andhra Pradesh. Their data reveals that during the period 1960-61 to 1967-68 the increase in the enrolment of scheduled caste students is from 1.1 per cent to 13.4 per cent in Coastal Andhra region; from 0.7 per cent to 12.4 per cent in Rayalaseema region; and in Telangana region from 2.4 per cent to 8.4 per cent. In his study of Punjab State Victor D'Souza (1980) noted that during the decade 1961-71 the percentage of literacy among the population of scheduled castes has increased from 10.31 per cent to 16.12 per cent.

On the other hand a few other studies point out that the educational development of the scheduled castes and tribes has been lower than that of general population. The literacy rate in the general population is 36.23, whereas in scheduled castes and tribes the corresponding figures are 21.38 and 16.35. The lower literacy in scheduled caste and tribes compared with general population is true for rural and urban population and also for males and females (Singh, A.K.1985).

The concept of coefficient of Educational Equality was used by Naik, J.P. (1971-a, 1971-b);
Lakshman a & Innaiah, (1977), Nautiyal & Sharma (1979) and Victor D'Souza (1980) to examine the relative educational progress of scheduled castes and tribes, vis-a-vis other communities. The relevant statistical formula takes into account percentage enrolment ratio and population ratio amongst scheduled castes, tribes vis-a-vis other communities. If the value of coefficient of equality is 100, it means that the educational performance of scheduled castes, tribes are on par with other communities. A value less than 100 indicates lower educational performance.

The educational performance of the scheduled caste and tribes has been analysed by Naik, Nautiyal & Sharma demonstrate that from 1960-61 to 1972-73 and found this lower than that of other communities in almost all levels of education from pre-primary to higher education. Based on his study in Punjab State Victor D'Souza (1980) observed that the educational gap between the scheduled castes and the rest of the society is still very wide and the rate of improvement is very slow. He found that the results of the special educational facilities provided by the state for the scheduled castes aimed at raising educational level to bring on par with that of the rest of the population are disappointing. He noted that there
has been a slight increase in the coefficient of equality on education between the scheduled castes and rest of society; when the required coefficients for attaining equality is 100, the score rose from 32 in 1961 to only 40 in 1971 (Victor D'Souza, 1980: p.56).

Lakshmanan and Innaiah (1977) from their study in Andhra Pradesh report that the overall coefficient of equality was as low as 9.32 in 1960-61 while it registered a considerable progress to 87.04 in 1967-68. According to them the main reason for the overall rise in the coefficient has been due to the rise in enrolment at primary and secondary levels (Lakshmanan & Innaiah, 1977, p.36).

The school dropouts found to be an important problem among scheduled castes. The educational system has not been able to cover and retain the lower strata of the population. The drop-out rates particularly in early education in India has been very massive. It is claimed that 99 per cent of boys and 66 per cent of girls are enrolled in Grade I. These figures are reduced to 52 and 27 in the middle school. Thus by the age 14 years, 60 per cent of the students enrolled are already out of the school (UNICEF, 1984).
The national document 'Challenge of Education' at of 100 enrolled in Class I only 23 children ss VIII (Ministry of Education, Govt. of 85, p.39).

J.P. Naik (1975) observed the illiteracy of the parents is the main reason for the enrolment and retention of children at school levels.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education in its document challenge of education noted that illiterate parents are prone to avoid enrolment of their children and also take them out, if it means any inconvenience to them (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1985, pp-3-19).

Due to the poor socio-economic status disappointing trends of progress of educational development among scheduled castes is noted. Most Indian studies have found that social disadvantage adversely influences the cognitive development and academic achievement of the student (Bhatia, 1982; Das and Singh, 1975; Dube and Sachdev, 1983; Misra & Tripathy, 1980; Rao, 1977, 1980; Rath, Dash & Dash, 1979; Singh, A.K. 1980; Singh & Jaiswal, 1981; Sinha, 1975, 1977; Sinha and Shukla, 1974 and others).
Similarly, there is a consensus in psychological researchers that social disadvantage rooted in the socio-economic and political structure, adversely affects personality development and academic development in particular (Singh, A.K. 1985).

Parental support is also found to be a more powerful correlate of academic achievement than intelligence (Singh, 1983). The socially disadvantaged students who get parental support for their education have better academic achievement than those who lack it (Singh & Jaiswal, 1981).

The problem thus essentially is poor socio-economic conditions of the scheduled castes. There are two broad approaches to the solution of this problem.

The first one of them is to improve the socio-economic conditions of the structurally disadvantaged sections. This is a Herculean task involving a long span of time. The other approach is that the scope of the aid administering policies should be enlarged so as to develop institutional structures for achieving the desired results. The state should accept the full responsibility for feeding, clothing and providing shelter for the students belonging to the scheduled castes (Victor D'Souza, 1980).
This was recognised by the committee appointed by the Ministry of Education Government of India in 1965 itself. The report of the committee says "An important requirement for spreading education among girls, specially in the middle and secondary schools, is the provision of hostels for girls. Similarly, in his report submitted to University Grants Commission, Kurien (1979) stated that hostels provide a conducive atmosphere for study specially to those students whose conditions for study specially to those students whose conditions at home are not suitable for study. Hostels are also expected to play an important role in promoting equality of opportunity for those groups who have limited access to institution of education such as women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and rural students (Kurien, 1979).

The Government of India has introduced a special scheme of hostels, known as "Centrally Sponsored Programme", in order to facilitate specially the scheduled caste and tribes education. This was followed by many other state Governments for the benefit of weaker sections.

Considering the poverty of the weaker sections and the parents inability to send their children to the
school, Andhra Pradesh Government has been providing free hostels for the students of weaker sections like scheduled castes and tribes and backward classes. Accordingly during the year 1960-61, there were 78 hostels with 4,677 beneficiaries. This number rose to 467 Government hostels and 784 subsidised private hostels during the year 1971-72. The number of students benefited by these institutions were 22,522 and 30,000 respectively. 54 out of the 467 Government hostels were meant for the girls exclusively with a strength of 2,390 girl students. In the subsequent years the subsidized hostels were abolished and were taken over by the state Government, and were entrusted to the Social Welfare Department. By the year 1985-86, the number of hostels in Andhra Pradesh has increased to 2,26,387. These hostels are meant for school students and for scheduled caste students. There are separate hostels for scheduled tribe students and for college students.

Statement of the Problem:

From the foregoing presentation the following points emerge.

Education is a powerful instrument for social change. For the progress and development of scheduled castes, education is imperative. Government of India
and the State Governments are keen in expanding educational facilities and extending total support for the development of Scheduled Castes.

There is slow but steady growth and progress in educational development of Scheduled Castes. Yet they are still far behind in terms of enrolment ratios and equality of educational opportunities.

Further the problem is accentuated with high rates of drop-outs in early education. The one of the many solutions is that provision of free hostels to encourage the spread of education among the weaker sections.

It needs to be stressed here that most of the studies mentioned above were conducted during the decade 1979-80 and as such do not reveal the educational status of Scheduled Castes during the present decade during post 1980. Further most of these studies were concerned with the State/National level picture. Generally, in such attempts the realities at micro-level are not revealed. In other words there is a need to examine the trends of enrolment of Scheduled Caste students at least at the district level in the context of backward regions.
Secondly, the consideration of providing free hostels by the State is laudable and their growth in number is spectacular. To be sure these hostels might have contributed to the increased enrolment of students from the weaker sections. But what needs to be examined is whether hostels have succeeded in promoting equality of opportunity or not. Hostel has emerged as a institutional structure to be substitute for the home to provide care and motivation for the Scheduled Castes in their education advancement. The enormous expenditure on this institutional structure calls for an analysis as to what extent it has proved to be functional for the Scheduled Castes in terms of providing socialization. A study of the nature would give us the directions in which to reformulate the existing manners of welfare.

Therefore in the present study an attempt will be made to examine the educational progress of Scheduled Caste students and to examine the role of the free welfare hostels on Scheduled Castes.

Data Collection:

The data concerned with the present study were collected both from primary and secondary sources. For the purpose of eliciting information with regard
to enrolment and the distribution of hostels, secondary data were collected from the office records and published reports of District Education Officer, Office of the Deputy Director of Social Welfare, Chittoor and Office of the Deputy Director of Planning (Bureau of Economics and Statistics). Primary data on Scheduled Caste students under reference were collected by administering schedules by the author personally.

METHOD OF STUDY

To carry out the study, the following objectives are formulated.

1. To examine the enrolment and drop-out trends among Scheduled Castes.
2. To examine the socio-economic background of Scheduled Caste hostelers.
3. To study the function of hostels in the retention of students in the school system by analysing the number of years spent, the inmates perception of hostels and their hostel life.
4. To examine the socialization in the hostels in relation to formation of attitudes, awareness, value orientation and alienation.

Keeping in mind the objectives the following
hypotheses were formulated in line with the objectives, formulated above.

1. Scheduled Caste students have equal opportunity in enrolment into schools in relation to others.
2. Scheduled Caste students drop more in lower class than in the higher class of learning.
3. There is considerable variance among the Scheduled Caste students who joined hostels, residential schools and non-hostels.
4. Hostels are viewed as 'charity homes'.
5. Welfare hostels have not taken the place of family in socialization.

UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE:

The universe of the study consists of Scheduled Caste welfare hostels situated in the Tirupati division of Chittoor district and the inmates enrolled in them. Through the method of stratified random sampling, 20 inmates were selected from among the 15 per cent of the hostels in the district and from each of these hostels a 20 per cent sample of inmates in
classes 8th, 9th and 10th were chosen at random for detailed study. For purposes of comparison, 20 per cent of respondents each from a residential school and of non-hostelers from a school were also chosen for this study. Care has been taken to ensure girls included in the study in good number to give proper representation to them. The geographical distribution of hostels in all the divisions was also considered.

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected by interviewing respondents in hostels, residential schools, and non-hostelers from a school. The study was carried out with an interview schedule to elicit information for the objectives framed earlier. The secondary data was collected through official sources - Government records at the district level.

**ANALYSIS:**

The data collected from various sources were analysed and meaningful inferences are drawn by applying appropriate statistical tools like averages, and percentages. In the analysis of attitude, alienation, five point scales were constructed. To examine the socio-economic variance among hostlers, a socio-economic index was developed. To examine the extent of socialization, an index of socialization was constructed. These
tools are discussed in detail in the relevant chapters.

SCHEME OF PRESENTATION:

The study is presented in five chapters.

Chapter - I : "Introduction".

Chapter - II : "Social Welfare in Andhra Pradesh and Chittoor District".

Chapter - III : Socio-economic Profile of the Respondents".

Chapter - IV : "Hostelers - A Sociological analysis".

Chapter - V : "Hostel and Educational Development of the Scheduled Castes in Tirupathi Division in Chittoor District, A.P.".