CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The statutory privileges accorded to the Scheduled Castes after independence gave rise to resentment which has been sharpened with the passage of time. Initially, such resentment was expressed by the non-Scheduled Castes verbally, but as they began to experience the adverse effects of this policy, their protest assumed agitational and even violent forms. Everyone is familiar with the recent violent occurrences in Gujarat. A society in which a large number of its members are treated as outcastes, denied even human status, the question of helping such a population would invariably emerge as the priority issue for liberal-democratic leaders. It is really a laudable objective to emancipate the oppressed, but the methods adopted to achieve this objective should be such as to arouse minimal conflict and resentment among those who have, over the centuries, enjoyed privileges at the cost of the deprived and the exploited. Since the age-old religiously sanctioned caste barriers have been sought to be demolished by law, it is quite natural for the privileged and the superior castes to resist transformation of society. No wonder the imposition of such vital social changes has given rise to strong resistance. The attempt to abolish inequalities and disparities sanctified by tradition, by law, has evoked strong reaction and resistance from those sections of society
who are bound to lose by the enforcement of this policy. It is a truism that no one voluntarily foregoes advantages and privileges, however, reprehensible and even immoral they may be. Naturally, the reaction against the policy of conferring statutory privileges on the unprivileged section of the society, has found expression in protest movements some of which have turned violent. This is evident from the increase in the rate of demonstrations being organised, and the increasing incidence of violence that this policy has evoked.

The present study is an attempt to explore the responses of the non-Scheduled Castes (privileged from the caste perspective) towards the statutory privileges devised for the Scheduled Castes. No doubt, a large number of studies have been conducted on the caste system and the problems of the Scheduled Castes, there is hardly a study that deals with the responses of the non-Scheduled Castes towards the policy of reservation for the Scheduled Castes.

One common feature of all societies, past and present, has been the prevalence of inequality of various types. Every society has sought to legitimise these inequalities by various devices. Sociological literature is full of treatises on inequality and it is beyond the scope of the present study to discuss all of them. However, the purpose of a brief discussion of two theories of inequality, namely, the functional theory and the conflict theory is undertaken here as it is relevant to the present study.
The underlying assumption of the functional school is that unequal distribution of resources is justified and acceptable to all the members of the society. It further assumes that there are different criteria which can be used to identify different types of inequalities in a society, and it is not necessary that in the case of the other criterion, the individuals or groups occupy the same position which they have been occupying on the basis of the first criterion.

Weber (1947) argues that three kinds of inequalities exist in any society. First is economic inequality. It is based on property relations and individuals' capacity to dispose of their skills in the market situation. The two attributes of economic inequality determine the positions they occupy. The second kind of social inequality is due to hierarchical structure of society which gives rise to status differences. By status Weber means the esteem given to the individuals because of their status by the society. Third sort is political inequality which is based on power relations. By power, he means the realisation of one's will even against the resistance of others.

The main thrust of Weberian thesis is towards the presence of divergent trends if one tries to analyse social inequality, i.e., the prestige as the basis of identification of different classes in a society, has been pointed out by Warner et al. (1941). Inequality due to prestige is taken as an attributional criterion according to which the members
of a given community differentiate among themselves as having unequal status in their society. Besides inequality, the other ramifications of such a system are that the inequalities are regarded as inevitable and acceptable to all. Such theorists believe that society as a unitary whole has numerous autonomous subsystems which function to maintain the social system. Equilibrium in a society is achieved through consensus of values. Following this premise, Davis and Moore (1945) have expounded a theory of stratification. According to them, there is a hierarchy of functions in terms of their significance for the maintenance of society. Some functions are more important than others. To perform these functions what is needed is skill and to get skill one has to undergo training and to make sacrifices. Therefore, those persons who have acquired these skills are better rewarded than the unskilled. The system of rewards gives rise to the socio-economic inequalities which are embodied in the system of stratification of a society. Similarly, other functionalists, like Parsons (1975) and Tumin (1978), have contributed markedly to the consensus approach.

The functional viewpoint on social inequality, in spite of its wide acceptance among sociologists, has been challenged by those who believe that inequality can be eliminated. The functional theory has been attacked in the following ways:

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i) It makes social inequality inevitable and absolute;

ii) it justifies inequality; and

iii) most of arguments put forward are characterised by tautological reasoning.

On the other hand, the conflict school rejects the idea of consensus of values. Theorists belonging to this school of thought see conflict as an inherent feature of society which, according to them, occurs due to unequal distribution of power. According to Marx, a society is divided into two classes in terms of their ownership and non-ownership of means of production, which, ultimately, decide the position of individuals in a given social structure. In capitalist society, they constitute the classes of capitalists and workers. The relationship between the capitalists and the workers is characterised by zero sum situation, i.e., the gain of one is the loss of the other. Therefore, conflict between the two is inevitable. Working class is an ever-increasing social group due to pauperisation process which is a result of competition in society. With time, the entire society gets polarised into two hostile classes. The working class, which according to Marx, is an agent of social transformation, overthrows the capitalist class, through class struggle after achieving class consciousness (Marx and Engels, 1975). The significant thing about Marxist theory is that it treats society as a dynamic process, inequality as not inevitable and it does not justify the existing inequalities. It tries to find out the bases of inequality which divide an
entire society into different classes. In the process it sees ownership of means of production as the major determinant of social inequalities in human society.

Later sociological writings especially those which made attempts at repudiating Marxist analysis of class conflict, stated that Marxian definition of class was incomplete because it was not the ownership of means of production but authority which played significant role (Dahrendorf, 1968). By authority, Dahrendorf meant the probability that the command given by one will be obeyed by others. Thus, by definition there are only two possible positions, namely, domination, i.e., occupied by those who give command; and subjection, i.e., those who obey the command. He further argues that a society is divided into different imperatively coordinated associations in which these authority relations can be found. Nevertheless, it also treats conflict as inherent in society, but the relationship between conflict and change is not inevitable and determined. First, the nature of change may be radical but the suddenness and violence of change may vary. Second, conflict may be regulated by some processes like collective bargaining. Third, the presence of conflict in one imperatively coordinated association may remain confined to it.

Though Dahrendorf belongs to the school of conflict theorists, yet his conclusions are not different from those of the functionalist theorists. His contribution, however,
lies in his recognition of authority as the basis of inequality. In conclusion, it may be stated that power plays a major role in the unequal distribution of resources.

Since in India caste has been a major form of social inequality, it is essential to discuss various features of caste. According to the traditional theory of Varna, the whole society is divided into four categories: (1) Brahmins, (2) Kshatryas, (3) Vaishyas, and (4) Shudras.

To give divine sanction to the caste system, a myth was fabricated. According to this myth, the Brahmins sprang from the mouth of Brahma (the Creator), the Kshatryas from His arms, the Vaishyas from His thighs and the lowly Shudras from His feet. As the Shudras were supposed to have sprung from the lowest part of the body, they were relegated to the lowest position in the Varna hierarchy.

It is accepted by scholars of ancient India that the fourfold division of Aryan society was functional grouping rather than closed endogamous birth-descent formation, i.e., the original Varnas were not jatis or castes, for there is evidence that people could and did change their Varna identity. Furthermore, marriages between persons of different Varnas also took place and were allowed in those times (Basham, 1954; Ghurye, 1961).

The fixity of caste membership came about later, possibly with the development and acceptance of the Hindu belief of purity and pollution. It is generally known that
the caste system in its entirety constitutes a status hierarchy with the Brahmins at the pinnacle and the Scheduled Castes or the so-called Untouchables, Pariah, exterior castes, outcastes, etc. at the base. Thus, the Scheduled Castes occupy a low, in fact, the lowest, social or ritual status, in the caste hierarchy and, consequently, their socio-economic condition is the worst in Hindu society.

The principle of purity-impurity pervades and partly explains the hierarchy of castes, gods, people and social groups. Thus, things may be ranked in a hierarchy on the basis of degree of their purity and impurity. Every member of each of these categories possesses an individual "attribute", some capacity to pollute others. Each, however, may become more polluted, either temporarily or permanently, through transactions with more polluted beings, things or happenings. In recent decades a number of anthropologists have contributed to the theory of purity-impurity (Hocart, 1950; Srinivas, 1952; Stevenson, 1954; Gould, 1958; Dumont, 1970).

Dumont (1970 : 61) defines impurity as "the eruption of the biological into social life". A Hindu is temporarily impure when in contact with twelve polluting secretions of the body. Castes are separate, but are interdependent hereditary groups of occupational specialists. It is the principle of purity-impurity which operates to keep the segments separate from one another. Each jati closes its boundaries to the next lower jatis, refusing them the privileges of intermarriage and
other contacts defined as polluting to the highest jati. Each jati, in turn, is excluded by the jatis ranked above it in a local caste hierarchy. Thus, differences in degrees of pollution create closed segments, as each segment tries to preserve its own degree of purity by being excluded as a contaminator by caste above (Dumont, 1970).

The purity-pollution principle highlighted by Dumont as the central element in the caste system comes in for serious critical appraisal at the hands of sociologists who believe that besides ritual dimension the secular aspect needs to be looked into when analysis of caste system is made. This is what Dumont's analysis lacks. He, rather, deliberately overlooks the inequalities and exploitative attributes of the caste system (D'Souza, 1981). In fact, many early theories of caste, according to D'Souza, have ignored one important tendency of intergenerational perpetuation of inequalities, which is a very crucial aspect of the caste system. This observation has rather historical pedestal to rest upon.

The exclusiveness of caste groups developed at a historical juncture when certain groups tried to protect their status monopoly in the Indian society (Thapar, 1966). As a matter of fact, ritual status of a caste itself has been bolstered up by power and wealth it possessed (Gough, 1960; Berreman, 1971).
Basically, Das (1977) points out, that Dumont relied on the ritual procedures mentioned in Griha Sutra of Gobhila, according to which, the 'right hand represents pure and the left hand, impure'. Similarly, in certain ritual performances the right hand is placed above the left, but this opposition is not followed throughout. At certain stages mediations do occur between the left and the right when the former is placed above the latter. Thus, to treat pure and impure as unmediated categories in the context of caste system is a fallacious conception. It is from such analysis that caste system becomes a unique form of social inequality for Dumont. Lastly, Dumont's analysis has also been termed historically inadequate and, thus, misleading (Gupta, 1981).

However, while Dumont has emphasised the ritual aspect of caste system, a large number of scholars have considered secular aspect of caste as important but not without its ritual dimension (Nesfield, 1885; Kroeber, 1930; Weber, 1952; Marriot, 1955; Bailey, 1957; Leach, 1960; Srinivas, 1965; Beteille, 1965, 1969; Dubois, 1973). Briefly, most of these scholars made an attempt to synthesise the ritual and secular explanations. For example, Leach (1967) confuses these two factors of status determination. He has not been able to state finally whether it is the ritual status or caste status which matters in determining one's position in the social hierarchy. On the one hand, the subcastes are ranked according to their ritual dimensions which place Brahmins at the top. On the other hand,
in the feudal order, in which political and economic factors have important roles, it is the landlord caste which occupies the highest place in the social hierarchy. What these theories try to present are two different societies with two different systems. As such, Leach himself raises a question as to how to rank the Brahmins in a community in which, despite their high ritual status, they have a low economic and political status. Such a confusion can only be removed by the realisation of the fact that it is not ritual but secular dimension which determines the rank of a caste in the society. According to D'Souza (1967), had the ritual status been the sole determinant of caste status, the Jats, who occupy the highest status in Punjab, would have been at a relatively low position in the caste hierarchy, but it is not so. Since they own land and have economic and political power, they are also ranked quite high in the social hierarchy which is not in consonance with their ritual status. It has also been argued that even the Brahmins cannot maintain their ritual dominance for a long time unless they are able to maintain equivalent levels in the power and economic structure (Sinha, 1967).

In a way, the scholars referred to above, conducted their studies under the influence of purity-pollution principle of caste system which explains their ambivalence about the factor which determines caste status. The consequence of such ambivalence on the part of sociologists has been that for long, the question whether it is purity-
pollution principle or power-privilege principle which determines the caste status, has remained unsolved. The basic reason for such a state of affairs, as noted by leading Indian scholars, has been the lack of systematic and penetrating analysis of caste system (Singh, 1977; D'Souza, 1981).

Berreman, however, considers caste as a system of power and privileges and asserts that a pluralistic society is held together by power rather than consensus. For the sake of cross cultural comparison, to view caste in its true perspective, "We must use the three dimensions, viz., stratification, pluralism and interaction" (Berreman, 1979). In a cross-cultural sense he defines caste system as follows:

"A caste system occurs where a society is made up of birth ascribed groups which are hierarchically ordered and culturally distinct. The hierarchy entails different evaluation, rewards and association" (Berreman, 1979 : 73).

While discussing the caste system he focuses attention on the functioning of the caste system in the society rather than its origin, though he has dealt with the problem of the caste system in his other writings (1979). When he discusses how caste organisations affect the society, among other things, he suggests that caste system (1) perpetuates and enforces social and cultural diversity, (2) articulates that diversity, and (3) protects privileges through the exercise of power.

According to Berreman, the crux of the caste system is that it perpetuates the privileged positions. Once a group
has been placed in the hierarchy, stability is sought through limiting the group's power to that which is regarded as consistent with its status. He further comments that, "Ideally every group is socially insulated, yet every group is dependent upon other groups in society, and decisive power is firmly in the hands of those at the top. Caste is, thus a conservative system whereby a status-quo can be maintained so long as the system is operation" (Berreman, 1979 : 102). Any change in the caste system, i.e., in the distribution of power, leads to a "Shake up in the hierarchy", i.e., in the relations if not in the very system itself. If any caste threatens to assume power to which is not entitled, sanctions are available to re-establish the status-quo (Berreman, 1979 : 102). Therefore, from this discussion it is clear that power is the most important factor in determining and maintaining any system of stratification. Power, in this context, is expressed physically, economically, politically and socially.

Pimpley (1980) notes that no group of people is content to remain low in a caste hierarchy for ever. There are instances when people belonging to the lower castes have raised their status with the help of power. According to him, as also said by Berreman, there are only two means by which a low caste can acquire privileges: (1) by emulation of high status group, and (2) by organised power which implies validating a claim to privilege through exercise of political, economic, physical or other power.
Berreman points out that the caste system must be analysed in terms of stratification, pluralism and interaction. The Scheduled Castes exhibit remarkably distinct social characteristics than the non-Scheduled Castes (Aggarwal, 1976; Pimpley, 1980). By whatever name we call them, the stigma will stick to them in one form or the other, since stigma is hereditary and cannot be ritually or socially eliminated. Berreman (1979) argues that the Pariah are stigmatised people whose stigma is derived from their birth ascribed group membership and is shared by their group as a whole. Their stigma is believed to be intrinsic to them and, like their caste membership, immutable.

When we visualise the place of the Scheduled Castes and the non-Scheduled Castes in the caste system, there is one line which stands out thick and clear and divides the harijans, or the so-called Untouchables from the rest of the society. This line is called the Pariah line. Bailey (1957) calls it the pollution barrier. On this basis, the members of all the castes below this line are the Pariahs, i.e., the Scheduled Castes (Aggarwal, 1976) and those above it are the non-Scheduled Castes. The place of the Scheduled Castes in the caste hierarchy is considered to be the lowest not only in terms of inferiority (pollution) but also in terms of power and privileges (politically and economically).

Because of their poor economic conditions and fear of pollution, they have been treated very badly by the caste
Hindus. That is why they were not, and to some extent even now, are not, supposed to touch the high castes, as their touch was considered defiling by the caste Hindus. On the religious side, they were neither allowed to study the sacred scriptures nor to worship at the temples of the caste Hindus. As a corollary of the same attitude, they were not allowed to use tanks and wells of the latter. Extreme forms of discriminations existed in Kerala. There was not only touch pollution but also distance pollution. Their women were obliged not to cover their breasts (Isaacs, 1965: 27-28).

In short, their social, political, religious and educational conditions were most wretched and deplorable. These strata of Hindu society, on account of their low status from all angles, had been subjected to a variety of disabilities under the traditional system which we have already discussed above. For thousand of years, the Untouchables were victims of injustice and were heartlessly exploited and prevented from rising above the social status fixed for them. Any attempt on the part of any one belonging to the Scheduled Caste to improve his position, or, to behave in a manner prescribed by the Hindu society, attracted severe punishment of inhuman nature. Even now, in spite of the provisions in the Indian Constitution pertaining to the security of the Scheduled Castes, they continue to face persecution at the hands of the high castes almost everywhere in the country. Even now, newspapers carry stories about attacks on the
Harijans who demand higher wages. When they protest, their huts are burnt, their goods looted and often their womenfolk are molested and raped. The most horrifying part is that the police consisting of high caste Hindus joins hands with the landlords to teach the Harijans a lesson for daring to defy the Thakur landlord (Indian Express, dated 25 January 1987).

Dr. Ambedkar, who was very much against the caste system, experienced humiliation throughout his life, as a child, in school, in college and in his first job when he joined as Professor at Sydenham College of Commerce, Bombay. His university-educated colleagues objected to his drinking water from the common pot, when he joined the Baroda Civil Service, the peons would not handle his files and the clerks kept themselves at a safe distance. The evidence for this is provided by Kamble:

"When he was made Dewan of Baroda, the Chapprasis flung office papers and files at him instead of handing them over to him for fear of being polluted. They rolled the mats when he got up to go. Drinking water was not available to him in office. This mortifying atmosphere drove him to seek refuge in the public library. Early in his boyhood, his teachers at school would not touch his notebooks. He was whipped and beaten for drinking at a public water fountain. He was not allowed to take Sanskrit at the high school. It was the key to the study of Vedas which were neither to be heard nor to be read, by the Shudras. In times to come hate became the passion of Dr. Ambedkar's life" (1979 : 15).

He could not get a place to live in Baroda when he was posted there because he was an Untouchable. He tried to live in a Parsi hotel without disclosing his caste, but on
discovery he was humiliated and thrown out. He sent a note to the Maharaja who referred him to the Dewan but the Dewan could not do anything. He spent the night without shelter. "Tired, hungry and fagged out, he sat under a tree and burst into a flood of tears" (Kaamble, 1979 : 15).

Being in a minority, economically weak and socially oppressed, they cannot retaliate (for greater details the reader is referred to Kaamble, 1981). Berreman (1979 : 108) remarks, "The only hope that a minority has of moving up in a caste hierarchy or of challenging the system is in the acquisition and exercise of power relative to other groups or relative to society at large. This is true of castes in India just as it is of Negroes in America".

Our contention is that the Scheduled Castes, being in a minority, exploited socially, politically and economically, constitute a group whose exploitation is deep-rooted in the system. The very basis of this problem is political and not social. As Dr. Ambedkar (1946, quoted in Kaamble, 1979 : 157) has said:

"It is wrong to say that the problem of the untouchables is a social problem. For, it is quite unlike the problem of dowry, widow remarriage, age of consent etc., which are illustrations of what are called social problems. Essentially, it is a problem of quite a different nature ... the problem of the untouchability is fundamentally a political problem ... of minority versus majority groups".

To define minority-majority the importance of power will be taken into consideration and not numbers. Wirth (1945) and Schermerhorn (1970) acknowledge the importance of power in
their definitions. Similarly, Edward Sagarin prefers to view minority in power framework and avoids placing the minority into a numerical framework. He (1971 : 1) writes:

"In a pluralistic society, when an ethnic group or several of them is kept in a subordinate position and its members are judged collectively rather than individually the subordinate ethnic collectivity is called a minority group. The superordinate is generally called the dominant or majority group, for which the former terminology is preferable because it expresses power relationship and avoids placing the minority into a numerical framework".

This concept of minority was formulated by Wirth (1945 : 337), thus:

"We may define a minority as a group of people who because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment and who, therefore, regard themselves as object of collective discrimination".

How do the Scheduled Castes fit into this definition of minority? The concept of power is vast and controversial. For the purpose of the present study, Berreman's concept of power has been adopted. According to him (1979 : 78) power is expressed, "physically, economically, politically and socially". The place of a group in the caste hierarchy is assigned to each group according to the power it actually or potentially wields in the society (Berreman, 1979 : 102). The characteristics which are included in Wirth's definition generally seem to be applicable to the Scheduled Castes. Wirth's criteria for a minority group include:
1) Treatment of physical or cultural characteristics as distinctive;

2) consequent differential and unequal treatment;

3) consideration of oneself as the object of collective discrimination; and

4) the presence of a corresponding dominant group with higher social status and greater privileges.

All these four criteria seem applicable to the Scheduled Castes. Quite obviously, the Scheduled Castes have been singled out from others for differential and unequal treatment as well as for their cultural characteristics. We have already admitted in the foregoing discussion that the Scheduled Castes' culture is a distinct sub-culture considered impure and even not deserving the name of culture. These unfortunate people have been considered by the high caste Hindus as less than human. Being polluted and stigmatised, they have been the victims of collective discrimination for ages. Because of the presence of a corresponding dominant group with greater privileges, they experience all sorts of disabilities which are the manifestations of their minority status, e.g., loss of esteem, hatred, violence, spatial segregation, restricted educational and occupational opportunities and limited property rights.

Hblalock (1967) outlines the essentials of a power framework which is applicable to the analysis of minority group relations. Undeniably different groups in a society differ from each other in proportion to the power they wield. According to Blalock (1967), the possession of power is conceived in terms of the actual exercised power rather than
potential. The only difference between Berreman's and Blalock's approaches is that the former includes potential power in his definition while the latter lays emphasis on power actually exercised.

Further, this power is primarily derived from resources. Blalock (1967) notes that primary resources include money, property, prestige, authority, control of resources, access to supernatural powers, physical strength and voting rights. He, in his thorough review of power, however, does not list number as a primary resource although he recognises its importance.

Possession of any of these resources may be countered by the resources that others possess. The Scheduled Castes, who possess few resources, find it difficult to wrest power from the non-Scheduled Castes, who possess greater resources like money, property, control over political, religious institutions and the like. Power enjoyed by different groups rests on the amount of control exercised by each group on primary resources. However, the group which controls the reins of political power, has the advantage over groups which control economic resources. Consequently, groups which lack access to the primary resources are powerless and this fact is driven home to them by all the social devices: social, political, economic, legal and religious institutions. As the very survival of these groups depends on their acceptance of and conformity with the norms of behaviour prescribed by them, these powerless and unprivileged groups, reconcile themselves to their lot. Thus, inequalities become perpetuated.
Religious Factor

Blalock and some other theorists of power have ignored religion as a source of power. Bertrand Russell (1938), in his book, Power, devotes a full chapter to Priestly Power and traces from prehistoric times onward how the priestly class used religious beliefs to accumulate power and use it in the interest of the ruling class or dominant groups in their respective societies. The Brahmin priests created the myth that religious powers depended upon the assistance of super-human beings and made use of the theory of Karma to sanctify and perpetuate the caste system. They propounded the myth that the Brahmins, the highest caste, sprang from the mouth of the Creator Brahma; the next higher caste, the Kshatriyas, from His arms; the Vaishyas from Brahma's belly; and the lowest caste, the Untouchables from the feet of Brahma. This myth became a part of the religious tradition and was unquestioningly accepted by the people, including the Untouchables.

The theory of Karma, one of the basic tenets of Hinduism, too, was utilized to justify the caste system, particularly the wretched lot of the Untouchables, on moral basis. The birth of a person in a higher caste family or a lower caste family, according to the theory of Karma, is determined by the actions and deeds performed in the previous birth. Those who had failed to live according to their prescribed Dharma in their previous existence, were born "Shudras". However, to make the existence of the 'Shudras' bearable, a
hope was held out to them that if they, in their present existence performed the duties of their 'dharma' conscientiously, they would be re-washed in their next birth. In the Bhagavad Gita, the Lord Krishna himself promises full salvation to those Shudras who turn to him (BHG, IX, 39).

Discrimination and/or Segregation

If the purpose of creation of myth is to generate and foster voluntary acceptance of their inferior status among the minority groups, then the aim of the majority groups is to perpetuate their control over other groups by the exploitation of the ideology of consent and by the exercise of power of coercion.

Most of the writers on minority groups include discrimination as the essential element in their definition (Wirth, 1945; Yinger, 1966; Blalock, 1967; Yetman and Steele, 1971; Breytenbach, 1978; Kinlock, 1979), but none of them has explicitly regarded it as manifestation of power in its naked form.

In some societies they are completely segregated and are not allowed to mix with the higher caste or superior racial groups. Till recently, the negroes in USA could not gain admittance to restaurants. In South Africa, this segregation has been carried to its logical extreme. But the discrimination against the Scheduled Castes and their segregation from the rest of the population has no parallel in human history. Even the shadow of an untouchable was considered to pollute a high caste who had to wash himself and his clothes before entering his
home. They were forbidden from reading and even listening to the holy scriptures. Ecologically the untouchables have always been confined in areas away from the residential quarters of the high castes. Even today the localities inhabited by the Scheduled Castes exist at the periphery of every village.

**Emancipation of the Scheduled Castes:**

**A Brief Historical Survey**

The Hindu society, during the course of time, devised almost foolproof mechanisms, social, economic, political and religious, which made it almost impossible for the Scheduled Castes to free themselves from the shackles which kept them in almost permanent bondage for centuries. Basham in his book (The Wonder That Was India, 1954, reprinted 1982) writes: "He (the sudra) was to wait on the three classes. He was to eat the remnants of his master's food, wear his cast-off clothing, and use his old furniture. Even when he had the opportunity of becoming wealthy he might not do so, 'for a sudra who makes money is distressing to the brahmins'. He had few rights, and little value was set on his life in law. A brahmin killing a sudra performed the same penance as for killing a cat or dog. The sudra was not allowed to hear or repeat the Vedas. A land where sudras were numerous would suffer great misery" (p. 145).

In spite of the most inhuman treatment meted to the Scheduled Castes throughout the history of this land, the Sudras as a body never raised even a voice of protest and seem to have reconciled themselves to their lot with extreme resignation. Perhaps, they did protest, now and then, in
various ways but there is no evidence in religious or secular literature that they did attempt to emancipate themselves. Nor do we find any evidence that any rishi, muni or sage took pity on their wretched lot and tried to help them. This fact seems very baffling in view of the fact that Hinduism accords a central place to guilt and atonement. The Dharma Shastras contain elaborate instructions as to how to atone for different kinds of guilt. According to Nirad C. Chauduri (Hinduism, 1979):

"The basic feature of Hinduism is that in it the notion of sin is not confined to matters which the West regards as religious or moral (showing as the Hindu thinks a narrowness of outlook on life), but covers almost everything that canbefall a householder or be done by him, e.g., the accidental death of a cow, being bitten by a dog, or sexual intercourse during the day. All conceivable transgressions from the murder of a Brahmin, incest, or robbery to those just referred to are classified in order of gravity, with due regard to justice and the degree of responsibility. In doing so, the treatises on sacred law (Dharma Shastras or Smriti) display that relentless logic which makes all Hindu reasoning the height of irrationality" (p. 198).

However, what is most surprising is the fact that inhumanity and atrocities perpetrated on the Scheduled Castes by the high castes find no mention in these voluminous law books. The only obvious interpretation of this omission seems to be that the cruel treatment inflicted on the Scheduled Caste
The populace was not considered sinful. Even Budha, the compassionate, did not take up their cause though both Buddhism and Jainism made no class distinction in religious affairs.

It is only in the middle ages and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that serious efforts were made to ameliorate the lot of these wretched god-forsaken human beings. These efforts can be classified in two categories, namely, (i) efforts from below, and (ii) efforts from above.

Efforts from Below

In this section, focus will be on the efforts made by the Scheduled Castes themselves to raise their status. The Scheduled Castes adopted a two-pronged strategy to raise their social status. One strategy was to make efforts to raise their status by accepting the caste principles in essence and then try to devise methods to achieve their goal. These kinds of efforts are generally associated with the sanskritization process. The second strategy to raise their social status was through collective effort and this entailed the rejection of caste system and the assertion of their claim to be considered as human beings.

Sanskritization

Sanskritization as a process of status enhancement by the lower castes has been discussed by Srinivas. He (1966: 6) defines sanskritization as "the process by which a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently,
'twice-born' caste". Srinivas argues that these changes are usually accompanied by the claims of the lower caste for the higher caste status and these claims are made over a period of time. Thus, according to Srinivas, the sanskritization refers to positional changes in the status of lower castes rather than any structural changes. However, Yogendra Singh (1973 : 87) argues that "The phenomenon of dominance introduces the structural element in the sanskritization model of social change which is never fully made explicit by Srinivas".

Sanskritization as a model of status improvement for the Scheduled Castes seems to be relatively irrelevant. Srinivas (1966) himself accepts that the Scheduled Castes could not discard their Shudra status through sanskritization. According to Kolenda (1973), status improvement through sanskritization is a very slow process. In fact, if the economic and political power reinforces sanskritization, the possibility of status improvement seems to be quite high. If it is so, then, it will be difficult to assert whether sanskritization or acquiring of political and economic power leads to the improvement of status. It is, however, relevant to mention here that Jatavs of Agra (Lynch, 1974) and Mahars of Maharashtra (Zelliot, 1970) attempted to improve their status through sanskritization but they failed. Consequently they had to resort to political mobilization approach which will be the subject matter of the discussion that follows.
Political Mobilization

Certain Scheduled Caste groups have tried to improve their status through political mobilization and they have achieved success to a considerable extent. For example, the Nadars of Tamil Nad, the Mahars of Maharashtra and the Jatavs of Agra, have been quite successful in raising their social status by their own efforts. History of the efforts made by these three low-caste groups to emancipate themselves from their degraded social position is given below.

1) The Nadars of Tamil Nad

The following brief account of the efforts made by the Nadars to raise their social status is based on Hardgrave's (1970) systematic study of the Nadars of Tamil Nad.

In the early 19th century, the Nadars were considered to be among the most degraded castes. They were traditional toddy-tappers and they were forbidden entry into temples. Their women were not allowed to cover their breasts. These disabilities and some others had been imposed on them by the Brahmins.

The Nadars, to begin with, started aspiring for Kshatriya status and in pursuance of their objectives they attempted temple entries. But as their efforts met with fierce resistance from the upper caste Hindus, they embraced Christianity and started defying the age-old disabilities imposed upon them. This led to an upper caste backlash, and open violent clashes occurred between the two communities.
The Nadars were able to raise their social status by their own determined and organised effort. The Nadars now constitute a major political force in the state and one of them, Kamraj Nadar, rose to be the Chief Minister of the state and later became the President of the Indian National Congress.

11) The Mahars of Maharashtra
Zelliot (1970 : 29) writes, "Among all the Scheduled Castes in India, the Mahars of Maharashtra have used political means most consistently and unitedly in their attempt to better their condition". The Mahars began their attempt to improve their status by claiming Kshatriya status in the late 19th century. The real political mobilization occurred when Dr. B.R. Ambedkar became the leader of the Mahars. He began his activities by defying the disabilities imposed on the Mahars, such as taboo on their entry into Hindu temples.

After the attainment of independence, the Mahars under the guidance of Dr. Ambedkar formed a political party, namely, the Republican Party of India. In order to maintain their separate identity, the Mahars, enbloc, embraced Buddhism. The Mahars are no longer a depressed caste group in India.

iii) The Jatavs of Agra
The Jatavs of Agra are the traditional shoe-makers by occupation. Their attempts to improve their status have been discussed by Lynch (1974) by using the reference group perspective. Accordingly, Lynch (1974) has divided the efforts of the Jatavs into three stages.
In the beginning, the Jatavs made efforts to improve their status within the framework of the caste system. They aimed to achieve Kshatriya status and developed a whole set of rituals by imitating the ways of life of the Kshatriya castes. However, they were not recognised by the upper castes as a Kshatriya caste.

This led to their rejection of the caste system and the upper castes became their negative reference group. Consequently, they embraced Buddhism and to establish themselves as a separate political entity, they organised themselves politically and named their party the Republican Party of India. Now-a-days, the Jatavs are economically better off due to the thriving shoe business and they constitute a very cohesive political force. The Jatavs occupy important positions in the local political bodies in Agra city.

Efforts from Above

The efforts made by other than the Scheduled Castes to raise their social status can be broadly categorised into two parts. First, social and religious reformers attempted to improve the status of the down-trodden through their teachings. Second, after independence, the government tried to help the Scheduled Castes through protective discrimination policy.

Socio-Religious Reform Movements

The problem of caste-based social inequalities and the problem of practice of untouchability have been challenged by social and religious reformers from time to time in the history of
Indian society. The resentment and condemnation of the caste inequalities are observable in the teachings and writings of great saints like Namdev, Ravidas, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Kabir, Surdas, Guru Nanak Dev, Guru Gobind Singh, Sheikh Farid, Shah Bahu, Mohammad Buta Gujarati and others. It may also be stated that the teachings of these great men were basically directed against the practices and attitudes prevalent among the high caste Hindus vis-a-vis the Scheduled Castes. They preached that every human being, be he a high caste Hindu or a Shudra, were children of the same God, and as such they should be treated as equal. However, the high caste Hindus remained impervious to these appeals and maintained the rigidity of the caste system. The result of these teachings was the formation of various sects which, in the long run, adopted practices of Hinduism, and, thus, failed to emancipate the Scheduled Castes. Another reason which can be plausibly cited for the failure of the social and religious reformers is that they aroused a very limited response from those for whom they spoke, i.e., the down-trodden themselves. Moreover, these movements were not concerned with the improvement of social and economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes. These were mundane matters and could be ignored. The real objective of these bhakti movements was attainment of salvation by freeing the soul from the unending cycles of births and deaths. But the main reason for the failure of these movements to emancipate the miserable plight of the Scheduled Castes was the inherent strength of the caste
ideology. Basham observes: "Equalitarian religious reformers of the late Middle Ages, such as Basana, Ramanand and Kabir, tried to abolish caste among their followers; but their sects soon took on the characteristics of new castes, and in some cases divided into castes within themselves. The Sikhs, despite outspoken sentiments of their gurus and the adoption of rites such as the ritual meal eaten in common, deliberately intended to break down caste prejudices, did not overcome caste feeling. Even the Muslims, for all their equalitarian faith, formed caste groups" (Basham, p. 152).

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one comes across a large number of movements launched by the caste Hindus to purify Hinduism (Zacharia, 1933; Penikar, 1944; Natarajan, 1959; Heismaoth, 1964; Fuchs, 1965; Parquhar, 1967; Singh, 1968; Karunakaran, 1969; Gupta, 1974; Mazuadar, 1974). Among the most prominent religious movements were: Brahmo Samaj, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy; Ramakrishna Mission named after Swami Ram Krishan Param Hans, established by his most important disciple, Swami Vivekanand; Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati; to name only a few. Except the Arya Samaj no other religious movement was directly interested in the uplift and emancipation of the Scheduled Castes.

All the studies named above have shown that the movements like the Arya Samaj originated in a specific socio-historical conditions of the Indian society in which the primary concern of the Hindu elites was nationalism, protection of the Hindus, especially, the untouchables and
the down-trodden, from the efforts of the Christian missionaries, Islam and Sikhism in Punjab to convert the Hindus, particularly, the lower castes to their respective faiths. Thus, the Arya Samaj, an organisation of the caste Hindus, undertook in right earnest purification activities for the status deviation of untouchables (Pimpley and Sharma, 1985). Also this movement, basically being fundamentalist and revivalistic in nature, could not do much especially in breaking the Hindu social system which perpetuated caste system and inequalities inherent in it. Actually the impact of the Arya Samaj could only be seen in individual cases and failed to influence the Hindu society, by and large. Even though the influence of the Arya Samaj to emancipate the Scheduled Castes was felt only marginally, yet it aroused stiff opposition to its efforts to break the caste barriers. Its efforts were resented by the orthodox sections among Hindus. Most of the Arya Samajists were also declared untouchables and excommunicated from their caste communities. The violent reactions of the orthodox caste Hindus included burning of the huts and property of the purified untouchables in certain districts of Punjab (Sharma, 1985).

In sum, the efforts to improve the lot of the Scheduled Castes made by various social reformers did not achieve much. The reason was that these social and religious reform movements generally initiated by the caste Hindus to purify their ancient religion from various abuses that had crept into it over a long period of time, relied basically on
the cherished values of the caste Hindus. Emphasis was placed on the problems, such as Sati, child marriage, widow remarriage and reference was also made to the problem of untouchability and the status upliftment of untouchables. They fondly believed that the spread of education would help to bring about radical changes in the attitudes of the individuals towards the problems that faced the Hindu society, and the unenviable plight of the Scheduled Castes in particular. Unfortunately, they failed to comprehend the nature of the social and economic factors that had governed the relationship between the low and the high caste sections of the Hindu society. Therefore, it is not surprising that these movements fizzled out.

However, the real credit to emancipate and ameliorate the lot of the Scheduled Castes goes to Mahatma Gandhi, and also the influence of the West. We agree with the following observations of Basham: "Only in the last fifty years has the caste system shown real signs of breaking down, thanks to the many inventions of the West not designed for use in a society divided into water-tight compartments, the spread of Western education, growing national sentiment, and the intensive propaganda of enlightened leaders. The process is not yet complete, and it will take many years before all traces of caste feeling is eradicated; but when Mahatama Gandhi, in many ways socially conservative, persuaded his followers to sweep their own floors and clean their own latrines he sounded the death knell of the old Hindu social order, ..." (p. 152).
Mahatama Gandhi's efforts to emancipate the Scheduled Castes have often been exhaustively dealt with and here we will refer to his fast unto death to prevent the separation of the Scheduled Castes, whom he called Harijans, from the main body of the Hindus by the imposition of the Communal Award by the British rulers.

**Government Efforts**

The Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mahatama Gandhi was committed to confer the status of equality on the Scheduled Castes. Therefore, after the attainment of independence, the Congress government at the Centre adopted measures to redeem its promises given to the Scheduled Castes during the struggle for freedom. These promises were incorporated in the Indian Constitution which has outlawed the practice of untouchability and has made it a cognizable offence.

Before eliciting the statutory privileges accorded to the Scheduled Castes, a very pertinent question may be raised as to why special privileges were granted to the Scheduled Castes? Another related question could be that whether it was under the commitment made by Indian National Congress or were there other factors responsible for this constitutional action? It was, perhaps, keeping in view the sufferings of the Scheduled Castes and failure on the part of social reformers to free these underprivileged people from bondage, the chief architect of Indian Constitution, Dr. Ambedkar put forward concrete proposals for the uplift of these people from time to time.
He demanded separate electorates for the Scheduled Castes, which was granted by the British government in 1932, but Gandhi was opposed to it. He believed that the grant of separate electorates to the Scheduled Castes would further split the already divided India into factions, viz., touchables versus untouchables. Therefore, as a protest against the introduction of separate communal electorates, he started a fast unto death while in Poona jail. This step taken by Gandhi created a tense atmosphere in the whole country. Dr. Ambedkar relented from his demand and the Poona Pact was signed in 1932. As a consequence of this pact, the untouchables remained a part and parcel of Hindu community. Although a few more seats were assured to them in the legislatures, yet they remained, by and large, under the dominance of the non-Scheduled Castes who continued to influence the choice of the Scheduled Caste candidates.

Though the Preamble of the Constitution of independent India assured the citizens of Indian Democratic Republic, social, economic and political justice, freedom of thought, expression, belief and worship, and equality of opportunity, yet Dr. Ambedkar argued that as the untouchables could not compete with the higher castes, being educationally and economically backward, concrete safeguards and guarantees should be incorporated in the Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar felt that before these provisions could be made meaningful, it was essential that the overall condition of the Scheduled
Castes be brought at par with the rest of the population. Therefore, he insisted on incorporating special privileges for the Scheduled Castes in the Constitution. His irrefutable arguments were welcomed and backed up by some eminent high caste Hindu personalities, such as Nehru, Sardar Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and others, who were also the members of the drafting committee of the Constitution.

The Government of India introduced these special provisions in the Constitution on the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly and directed the states to implement them accordingly. The government thought that by making these provisions legal and binding by the Constitution, it would be able to raise the position of the Scheduled Castes and bring them at par with the high caste Hindus in a short period of 10 years, i.e. by 1960. But it was quite unrealistic to expect that this onerous task could be accomplished in such a short span of time. Consequently, the government have been extending the period of statutory privileges from time to time.

Statutory Privileges for Scheduled Castes

Part XVI of the Constitution of India (1950) deals with special provisions relating to certain classes, and Article 330, the first in this Part, specifies the main classes, to which the provisions will apply. The term Scheduled Castes, initially formulated in 1935 by British government in India, appears there alongwith the Scheduled Tribes. The term Scheduled Castes does not stand for a particular caste but it is a group of such people from among the untouchables who have
been declared as Scheduled Castes by the President of India. According to the 1981 Census, the population of the Scheduled Castes in India was 104 million, that is, 15.75 per cent of the total, whereas in the Punjab State, the total population of the Scheduled Castes recorded in 1981 was 45,11,703, representing 26.87 per cent of the total population of the state.

The specific provisions which are provided in the Constitution can be grouped into two parts:

1) Abolition of Caste and Untouchability; and
2) special provisions relating to certain classes, i.e. for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

First part includes Articles 14, 15, 16, 17 and 46, whereas part second includes Articles 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 341, 342 and 366(24). Article 14: Right to Equality and Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination on the ground of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, are designed to protect all the people against discrimination, including the minority communities, by committing the nation to the idea of basic equality of all the citizens.

Article 16: Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment, states that all citizens will be treated equal in matters relating to the employment in the State. Nobody will be the victim of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex etc. As these articles were not considered adequate, Article 17, Abolition of Untouchability, was added in the interest of the untouchables. It declares:
"Untouchability is abolished; and its practice in any form is forbidden, the enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law".

This article refers to the practice of untouchability as it is found in the Indian society. It is not only abolished by Article 17 but it has been made a punishable offence. Later, in 1955, the Untouchability Offences Act was passed. Under this Act, any person accused of this offence can be tried and punished by the courts. In spite of the legal provisions against discrimination on the basis of caste, practice of untouchability and other forms of discrimination have not completely stopped (Galanter, 1972).

The other articles that seek to ameliorate the position of the Scheduled Castes are given below:

Article 46: **Promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections, applies equally to the states as it does to the Central government.**

Article 330: **Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in House of the People**

Article 332: **Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the states**

Both these articles, 330 and 332, are designed to provide special privileges to the underprivileged in terms of political representation in the House of the People, as well as in the legislative assemblies of the states.

Article 334: **Reservation of seats and special representation to cease after thirty years**

According to this article, special representation will cease on the expiry of a period of ten years from the commencement
of this Constitution, provided that nothing in this article shall affect any representation. Later this article was amended twice in order to extend the period of ten years to 20 and then 30.

It seems safe to assume that the system of reservation for these people is likely to be extended from time to time because of some obvious political considerations (Aggarwal, 1976: 38).

Article 335: Claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts:

This privilege is also of great importance to the Scheduled Castes as it aims at improving their status economically. The Central and the state governments are required to make special efforts to increase their representation in services. In the State of Punjab, 25 per cent of posts are reserved for the Scheduled Castes in all the four categories, namely, class I, II, III and IV.

Article 338: Special Officer for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, etc.:

Under this article, a special officer is appointed by the President, to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided to these underprivileged people in the Constitution.

Article 341: Scheduled Castes,
Article 342: Scheduled Tribes,
Article 366 (24): Definitions:

specify those castes, races, tribes, etc. be included in the list for the purpose of this Constitution. According to Article 366 (24), "Scheduled Caste" means such castes, races,
or tribes or parts or of groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 341 to be Scheduled Castes for the purpose of this Constitution. Article 341 reads as follows:

1) The President (may with respect of any State) or Union Territory and where it is a state after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within castes, races or tribes which shall for the purpose of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Castes in relation to that state (or the Union Territory as the case may be).

2) Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Castes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any caste, race or tribe or part of or group within any caste, race or tribe, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

History of Reservation in Punjab

In Punjab, restrictions regarding pollution by proximity have been far less stringent than in other parts of India, such as Kerala, U.P., Bihar and the states of the South. In Kerala, for instance, a sweeper has to shout out while passing through the streets of the higher castes.

This more tolerant attitude towards the Scheduled Castes in Punjab, particularly in the rural areas, has been due to the somewhat egalitarian outlook of Islam and due to Sikhism which denounced distinctions made on the basis of caste. But it must be admitted that there has always existed a marked difference between professions and practice of the followers of this religion. However, it cannot be denied that castes prejudices are not as virulent in Punjab as in other parts of India (Aggarwal and Ashraf, 1976 : 47-48).
The Constitution of India came into force in 1950 and from that time onwards the country has been governed according to the Constitution. Every state in the country became duty-bound to enforce the provisions of the Constitution conferring statutory privileges on the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the like. However, in Punjab, some benefits and privileges were conferred on the Scheduled Castes from 1949, that is, before the adoption of the Constitution of India.

On 19 October 1949, the Government of Punjab, in its notification, 13470-PG-49/65942, compendium 1977, for the first time declared that "15 per cent vacancies should be earmarked for Scheduled Castes - minimum qualifications prescribed not to be lowered". However, this notification was applicable for the recruitment of the Scheduled Castes in government service only. Another notification, 4368-PG-50/2951, compendium 1977, went further and laid down that "The qualified and suitable Scheduled Caste employees not to be brought under reduction so long as their total strength does not exceed prescribed percentage".

As these two notifications did not specify the procedure to be adopted for the recruitment of the Scheduled Caste candidates in the government service, another notification was issued on 26 October 1951, which laid down that, in the case of recruitment of the Scheduled Caste candidates, basic minimum qualification was to be considered sufficient (3010-G-51/1-6094, compendium 1977). As the 15 per cent
reservation was considered somewhat low, it was raised to 19 per cent vide notification, 4276-WG-52/2521, compendium 1977. However, 2 per cent of the seats were reserved for the backward classes (1945-WG-54/17246, dated 17 March 1954, compendium 1977).

On 8 December 1953, the government adopted 'Block System for Recruitment'. According to this system, the reservation was to be carried from vacancy to vacancy and not more than one reserved vacancy was to be carried forward from one block to another (9525-WG-53/94449, compendium 1977). Another notification relating to the block system was issued on 17 October 1957, in which it was laid down that "block systems are applicable to vacancies filled by transfer from one department to another department" (12674-WG-II-57/88443, compendium 1977). In this context, further instructions were issued on 6 March 1961, to the effect that "Posts vacated by Scheduled Caste employees should be filled on ad-hoc basis from amongst the Scheduled Castes and such vacancies should not be included in the normal pool of vacancies to be filled in accordance with block system. Earlier 'carry forward quota' to be given to these classes whenever suitable persons are available (WQ-II-13/(29)-61/5598, compendium 1977).

Further, it was also notified in the year 1963, March 22, that there should not be any reduction in the reservation quota of the case of Scheduled Castes during emergency even due to economy (2295/B&O-63/2231, compendium 1977).

In the year 1963, the reservation quota for the Scheduled Castes was made proportionate to their population.
A notification issued on 7 September in the same year, raised the percentage from 19 per cent to 20 per cent (808E-5WG II-63/1844, compendium 1977). After a few days another notification was issued, i.e. on 12 September 1963, which stated that "10 per cent of the higher posts to be filled by promotion should be reserved for Scheduled Castes/backward classes" (6486-5WG II-63/19193, compendium 1977). By another notification it was further clarified that the reserved vacancies were to be carried forward to the next block, if they could not be filled within any block of ten posts.

From time to time, various other notifications were issued to the effect that the reserved vacancies were to be filled only by the Scheduled Caste persons irrespective of their positions in the seniority list and a Scheduled Caste promoted against reserved vacancy would be senior to those promoted thereafter (2125-4-WG I-64/5213, dated March 1964 and 7219-4-WG II-64/10670, dated 18 June 1964). On 3 September 1964, instructions issued stated: "Twice the number of Scheduled Caste candidates for a single post reserved should be recommended even though they do not come within the seniority of the total number of officials who have to be recommended subject to fulfilling of minimum qualifications and experience" (4183-4-WG I-64/17314, compendium 1977). Another notification issued on 16 February 1966 assured protection to the Scheduled Caste candidates from reversion "so long as their total strength does not exceed the prescribed limit of reservation"

In this connection a notification issued on 19 July 1969 is of special importance as it contains a provision for the fixation of seniority. The provision states: "Fixation of seniority of members of Scheduled Castes in accordance with prescribed roster, i.e., 1, 6, 11, 16, and so on (719-GSD(W)-69/18194, compendium 1977). It further notified that action will be taken against those who violate the instructions on reservation for Scheduled Castes.

By another notification issued in 1964, provision for reservation at the time of new recruitment in the government services was made (2600-4 WG I-64/5542, compendium 1977). Also, relaxation in age of five years for the Scheduled Castes for gazetted and non-gazetted posts was permitted, according to the government notification of 16 February 1966 (10972-4 WG I-65/3205, compendium 1977). Powers to relax the provisions of rules also came into force on 4 May 1974. The reservation in class I and II services for promotions was fixed at 14 per cent for the Scheduled Castes and 2 per cent for the backward classes (1494-SW I-74/8105, compendium 1977). As far as reservation in services was concerned, it was increased on 6 June 1974. The notification issued stated as "increase in the percentage of reservation for members of Scheduled Castes and backward classes from 20 per cent to 25 per cent and 2 per cent to 5 per cent, respectively, in direct recruitment" (890-SWI-74/10619, compendium 1977). However, the total
number of vacancies reserved were not to exceed 50 per cent for Scheduled Castes, backward classes and army personnel in a year (4487-IS II-74, compendium 1977). Further, specifications were accounted in the recruitment pattern.

Along with the provisions for reservation in services and promotion in different cadres and classes for the members of the Scheduled Castes, the government further accorded them facilities of reservation and special concession in educational sphere, as well. Reservations for the Scheduled Caste students were provided in professional institutions which included medical, engineering, teaching, etc., for the first time in the year 1954 (1946-WG-54/17248, compendium 1977). These concessions were further extended on 13 March 1964. Another notification issued in 1969, raised the income limit for educational facilities from Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 3,600 per annum (8451-ISW-69/26509, compendium 1977). Later, on 16 November 1973, the income limit was further enhanced from Rs. 3,600 to Rs. 6,000 per annum of the parents of Scheduled Caste students for educational facilities (6758-4 SW-73/27469, compendium 1977). The percentage of reservation was increased for admission in 1974 and 1976, respectively. Since then, no further concessions and facilities have been conferred on the Scheduled Castes in this area.

Reservation in Public Sector Undertakings and Other Autonomous Bodies

Under clause 4 of Article 16 of the Constitution of India, it is within the competence of the state government to make any provision for the reservation of appointments to posts
in favour of any citizen of backward classes, which, in the opinion of the state government, is not adequately represented in the services. In pursuance of this policy, the state government has introduced the policy of reservation for the Scheduled Castes and backward classes in public undertakings and corporations. All these undertakings provide growing opportunities for employment. According to the government's letter No. 4479-4 WGI-66/15019, dated 25 May 1966 (compendium 1977), the managements concerned were instructed to follow government's instructions in the matter of reservation, both at the time of initial recruitment and also at the time of promotion. To avoid legal complications, they have been advised to amend their Articles of Association, etc. The roster cell in the Department of Welfare also carries out periodical checks of roster to ascertain the reservation policy is being implemented by the corporations.

Reservations of Seats for Scheduled Castes in the House of People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States

Under Articles 330 and 332 discussed earlier, seats have been reserved for the Scheduled Castes in the Lok Sabha, as well as in the Legislative Assemblies in all states of India. But the quota of reservation in each state is based upon the Scheduled Caste population of each state. In the Punjab Legislative Assembly, out of 117 seats, 29 seats have been reserved for the Scheduled Castes, i.e., 24.7 per cent. Similarly, 13 members are taken from Punjab for the Lok Sabha. Out of these 13 seats, 3 seats have been reserved for the Scheduled Castes, i.e. 23 per cent.
Reservation in Educational Institutions and Other Benefits Provided to Scheduled Castes in Punjab

Under Article 46 of the Constitution discussed earlier, and keeping in view the importance of education, following benefits have been provided by the Punjab government to the Scheduled Castes. The Punjab government have reserved 20 per cent seats for the Scheduled Castes in educational, technical and professional institutions at the time of admission (1637-WSI-AS02-64/4289, dated 6/13 March 1964, compendium 1977). Keeping in view the latest population figures which have shown an increase of 5 per cent, the government decided to increase reservation quota in educational, technical and professional institutions, from 20 per cent to 25 per cent in the case of members of Scheduled Castes, for admission purposes in these institutions (4933-SWI-74/21145, dated 6 November 1974, compendium 1977).

The students are given scholarships at the rate of Rs. 5/- per month from 6th to 8th class, and Rs. 25/-, Rs. 22/- and Rs. 19/- per month to such students who obtain 1st division, 2nd division and 3rd division, respectively, from 9th to 11th class. In addition, Re. 1/- is given extra in case of girls and Aalmikis from 6th to 11th class.

Further, free books are given to the Scheduled Caste students studying in classes 6th to 8th. Pre-matric coaching in high and higher secondary schools is also provided to them. In professional and technical institutions, like law, engineering and medical, books are provided free to the Scheduled Castes. Students of Vimukt Jatis (denotified tribes)
are also given scholarships at the rate of Rs. 2/- per month. Travelling allowance is provided to the Scheduled Caste candidates called for interview and written test for various government jobs.

Besides all these concessions, the government has been providing various types of other facilities for these underprivileged people, e.g., interest free loans up to Rs. 2,000 for setting up various trades and professions, subsidies for purchasing pigs, agricultural implements, construction of houses and harijan chaupals.

Impact of Reservation Policy

The impact of the policy of reservation can be studied in two ways. First, one can examine the extent to which this policy has been able to improve the conditions of the Scheduled Castes. Secondly, the repercussions of this policy on the non-Scheduled Castes, i.e., those sections of society which have been excluded from these privileges, can be assessed. As the benefits have been provided to certain sections of the society, the other section, i.e., non-beneficiary sections which have been adversely affected by this policy are bound to be hostile to this policy. However, it is desirable here to examine the first way, i.e., the impact of this policy on the Scheduled Castes by seeking answers to the following questions: (1) Are the Scheduled Castes aware of the benefits provided to them by the government? (2) Have these people availed of the opportunities offered to them? To what extent have these
people availed themselves of the opportunities and facilities offered to them? (3) How far have they improved their status in terms of social, educational, political, economic and religious, etc.?

To study the impact of these privileges, many empirical studies have been conducted both by Indian and foreign scholars in the field of sociology of the underprivileged (Scheduled Castes). These studies broadly focussed on four major aspects of reservation and these have been grouped into four major categories, namely, education, reservation in services, reservation in legislative bodies, and economic benefits. Below is given briefly the summary of findings of these studies on the impact of reservation policy on the Scheduled Castes.

Education is an important factor in improving social and economic status in every society. Various scholars, like Chitnis (1972), Sachchidananda (1974), Aggarwal (1976), Saberwal (1976), Pimpley (1976), D'Souza (1979) and Malik (1979) have emphasised the importance of education in liberating the Scheduled Castes from their age-old bondage.

Regarding the utilization of the scholarships provided for the Scheduled Castes, Commen (1977) found that the actual beneficiaries were not the poorest or the most deserving among the Scheduled Castes but were those who were already economically better off among them. He found that the scholarships for higher studies were grabbed by these somewhat affluent sections among the Scheduled Castes.
D'Souza (1979), in his study of the Scheduled Castes in Punjab, found that it was only the relatively better off sections among the Scheduled Castes who were able to utilize the privileges provided in the field of education. His analysis showed that, on the one hand, the educational gap between the Scheduled Castes and the non-Scheduled Castes was still very wide, and, on the other hand, the educational gap among the Scheduled Castes themselves was progressively widening.

Pimpley (1976) arrived at identical conclusions. He found that the economically better off among the Scheduled Castes had been able to avail themselves of the educational opportunities more than the really impoverished. The studies carried out by Sachchidananda (1974), Aggarwal (1976), Chitnis (1977) and Kirpal (1978) also came to the conclusion that there are few castes among the Scheduled Castes who show much greater utilization of educational facilities than do others.

Studies reviewing the educational progress of the Scheduled Castes highlight two major deficiencies: First, the Scheduled Castes lag very much behind the rest of the population in their educational achievement (Naik, 1971). Second, among the Scheduled Castes themselves, some groups have made for more rapid progress than some others (Chitnis, 1972 : 1675). However, Aggarwal (1976) pointed out that in some cases, the reservation policy was a major factor in the upward mobility of those Scheduled Castes who belonged to very poor families. This, however, might be true in some
cases but, on the whole, the conclusion of Dushkin (1961) was pertinent. "Landless agricultural labour, village menials, unemployed artisans, urban slum dwellers - these are people for whom the post-matriculate scholarships, reserved seats and government jobs are meaningless concessions. The basic fact of their life is poverty, indebtedness, exploitation, malnutrition and other ills that go with it" (quoted in Seth, 1979 : 48).

The second dimension of protective discrimination policy for the Scheduled Castes is the job reservation in government service. The data in Table 1.1 shows that the Government of India have prescribed the fixed percentage of 15 per cent for the Scheduled Castes in promotion, whereas, at the time of initial recruitment, the reservations were based on the percentage of Scheduled Caste population in different states. This arrangement led to anomalies and adversely affected the interests of the Scheduled Castes. The Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes had specifically pointed out these anomalies and recommended that it was "desirable that these anomalies are removed by prescribing the same percentage in promotions as are applicable at the time of direct recruitment". But in states the percentages of reservations in recruitment and in promotion are decided by the state governments. Each state has its own quota of reservations for recruitment as well as for promotions. In Punjab, 25 per cent reservation is prescribed in the direct recruitment for all the four categories, i.e., class I, II, III and IV, respectively, and in promotions for class I and II (14%) and for class III and IV, it is (20%).
# Table 1.1
Percentage of Reservations Provided in the Central Government Establishments Located in Various Regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the state/union territory</th>
<th>Percentage of reservation for Scheduled Castes Direct Promotion</th>
<th>Population of Scheduled Castes (Census 1981)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>States</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assam</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bihar</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gujarat</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Haryana</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kerala</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Maharashtra</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Manipur</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Meghalaya</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Karnataka</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Nagaland</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Orissa</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Rajasthan</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Tripura</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. West Bengal</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Union Territories</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chandigarh</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dadra &amp; Nagar Haveli</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Delhi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recruitment Rules prescribed for recruitment on All India basis to be followed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To assess the impact of reservation in services, the data available for central services and the Punjab state depicted in the following tables (Table 1.2 and 1.3) shows that the representation of the Scheduled Castes in the higher jobs was still not appreciable, i.e., in Group A and Group B it represented 4.62 per cent and 7.06 per cent, respectively, for the central services, whereas, in the Punjab state for the same year, i.e., 1981, for class I and class II, it represented 7.81 per cent and 7.37 per cent though there was not much difference yet it was on the higher side in comparison with the central services which indicated that in the state the implementation was rather better than in the Central government services. However, the data on the representation of the Scheduled Castes in Punjab government services upto 1984 (Table 1.3), the prescribed limit of 25 per cent was not achieved by the Scheduled Castes in the first three categories, i.e., class I, II and III, respectively; whereas, in class IV jobs they were over-represented, that is, the Scheduled Castes' representation was in excess in the low status and less remunerative jobs.

Galanter (1984) pointed out that the reservations were confined to the current appointments and 'are not of the full complement of posts', and, thus, to reach the percentage of appointments reserved, it would take approximately 33 years. Another dimension of job reservation policy is its limited scope. It was estimated that of the total labour force in Punjab, the labour force in public sector continued only 5 per
cent (Pimpley, 1980; Singh, 1985). Therefore, the reservation of posts in the public sector, in fact, constituted 25 per cent of the 5 per cent jobs in Punjab.

Table 1.2
Reservation of Scheduled Castes in the Central Services as on 1.1.1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group A</th>
<th>Group B</th>
<th>Group C</th>
<th>Group D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>17.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>18.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>10.71</td>
<td>18.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>12.55</td>
<td>19.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>8.07</td>
<td>11.54</td>
<td>19.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>12.68</td>
<td>23.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The representation of the Scheduled Castes in the Parliament was approximately in proportion to the proportion of the Scheduled Caste population to the total population in different states. Notably, reservation in legislatures had not achieved that importance as the reservation for the Scheduled Castes in the field of education and government services. Pakhidiy (1982: 17) argues that:
## Table 1.3

### Representation of Scheduled Castes in Punjab Government Services as on 1st January 1972 - 1984

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sanctioned posts in general class-wise</th>
<th>Filled posts by Scheduled Castes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class I (1)</td>
<td>Class II (2)</td>
<td>Class III (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>4,121</td>
<td>150,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1,268</td>
<td>4,622</td>
<td>160,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1,333</td>
<td>4,926</td>
<td>167,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1,575</td>
<td>6,449</td>
<td>181,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>1,845</td>
<td>7,462</td>
<td>191,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2,037</td>
<td>7,861</td>
<td>198,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2,202</td>
<td>8,416</td>
<td>205,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>2,830</td>
<td>9,482</td>
<td>222,653</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Figures within brackets are percentages to columns 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively.

**Source:** Economic and Statistical Organisation Punjab.
"Substantial and secure representation in legislature for any section of society should bring desired results. But nothing of this sort has happened to the Scheduled Castes in India for whom reservation of seats in the House of People as well as in the Legislative Assemblies of the states, exists, now for more than 40 years, i.e., since the Government of India Act of 1935."

He further remarked that reservation was a trap devised by the major political parties to send their own nominees in legislatures and thereby creating division in their ranks. A review of available literature in this area further leads to the conclusion that the elected Scheduled Caste candidates from these reserved constituencies did not truly represent their Scheduled Caste brethren. Kamble (1982) also shared this view. He further pointed out that the political parties selected such candidates for the reserved seats who were acceptable to the caste Hindus rather than to the Untouchables. By and large, they represented the vested interests of the higher non-Scheduled Castes. Some studies have brought out the fact that to maintain their power base the Scheduled Caste legislators invariably maintained close links with men of higher castes who wielded influence in their communities. Generally these high castes represented landlords, businessmen, higher officials, etc. (Pimpley, et al., 1984).

Sachchidananda (1977 : 40), in his study of the Harijan elite in Bihar, showed that the Harijan legislators belonged to those sections who had high economic status. "By and large, the economic status of the legislators appears to be highest". This implies that the legislators are either drawn from high
income brackets or have amassed sizeable assets during their tenure.

Further, within the Scheduled Castes, only those persons could contest elections who either belonged to an affluent family or were extremely loyal to their party. Party politics, with few exceptions, often came into clash with their personal interests. Singh (1985) came to the conclusion that this aspect of the reservation policy benefitted only a thin crust of elite among the Scheduled Castes. It has also been demonstrated that the Scheduled Caste candidates usually fare badly when they seek election from the non-reserved constituencies. The data in the following table (Table 1.4) substantiates this assumption.

Table 1.4
Position of Scheduled Caste Candidates in Non-Reserved Seats of Various Legislatures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vidhan Sabha elections</th>
<th>Total non-reserved seats</th>
<th>Filled by Scheduled Castes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>2,571</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>2,798</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>2,853</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-73</td>
<td>2,943</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Those Scheduled Caste candidates who had been elected from the open constituencies were those who were either supported by the ruling party or by the vested interests of
Dedicated To
My Parents
Kamble (1979: 278) also shared this view and advocated the abolition of reservation in the legislative bodies.

"The author is of the view that the seats in the legislatures and Parliament reserved for the Scheduled Castes must be abolished. It perpetuates class division and postulates hatred. The experience of the last 19 years has been that these Harijan M.L.As. and M.Ps. have been silent spectators and yes-men of the party in power".

Dushkin (1961), while commenting on the disappointing results that had accrued from the special privileges given to the Scheduled Castes, stated that whatever be the importance of the big three (education, job and representation in legislative bodies) in the present policy of the protective discrimination of the government, they did not affect the lives of the great majority of the Harijans.

Finally, it seems that the provisions of economic benefits for the Scheduled Castes had met the same fate. Aggarwal and Ashraf (1976) pointed out that economic benefits had failed to percolate to the poor Scheduled Castes. Even the Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP) which have been specifically meant to help the poorest among the Scheduled Castes to cross the poverty line had failed to reach the poor. In fact, it is the better off among them who had mainly benefitted from the IRDP (Bandopadhyay, 1984; Aiyar, 1985; Jain, et al., 1985; Parthasarthy, 1985).
The second way of assessing the impact of the reservation policy is to find out the reactions, responses and attitudes of the people towards it. Do all the sections of society favour the continuation of the policy? Or, is it only those groups who stand to benefit from this policy who favour the continuation of policy? To find answers to these questions, it was essential to obtain the opinions both of the non-Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Castes about this policy. This issue can be dealt with in three parts.

First, the visible agitative reaction of the non-Scheduled Castes against the reservation policy would indicate that the non-Scheduled Castes wanted the end of this policy, as was demonstrated by the Gujarat agitation against the reservation policy. In Gujarat, anti-reservation agitation was spearheaded by the medical students at the beginning of 1981. This agitation became quite violent and engulfed the entire state and was supported, directly or indirectly, by the people belonging to the non-Scheduled Castes (Bhan, 1982; Pandya, 1982; Desai, 1985). The main objective of the Non-Scheduled Castes Welfare Association formed in Chandigarh was to mobilize the non-Scheduled Castes against the policy of reservation.

Another way of assessing the impact of reservation policy is to find out the attitudes of the people in general, including the Scheduled Castes and the non-Scheduled Castes, towards the reservation policy. Naturally, the Scheduled Castes were bound to favour the continuation of the policy.
(Anant, 1972; Aggarwal and Ashraf, 1976; Chitnis, 1977; Pimpley, 1980). But the attitudes of the non-Scheduled Castes towards the policy had, at best, been casually studied. Galanter (1984: 75) rightly commented, "There is no comprehensive study from which we might gauge the extent of public approval or disapproval of preferential treatment". However, here an attempt has been made to put together the findings about the attitudes of the non-Scheduled Castes towards the policy of reservation from some studies conducted on the subject.

Upmanyu and Singh (1981) in their study established that a majority of the non-Scheduled Caste respondents, irrespective of their socio-economic and demographic characteristics, had shown unfavourable attitude towards the privileges conferred on the Scheduled Castes though did not disapprove of extending financial help to them. Regarding non-Scheduled castes' interaction with the Scheduled Castes, the former's attitude was quite sympathetic. The non-Scheduled Castes' unfavourable attitude towards the privileges certainly reflects some doubts of hostility and resentment.

Anant (1972) studied the attitudes of different caste groups towards the special privileges conferred upon the depressed classes. He found that the attitudes of the non-Scheduled Castes varied according to their caste backgrounds. The attitudes of the three high castes (Brahmins, Kashtriya and Vaishya) were definitely negative. Majority of the non-Scheduled Castes were in favour of the termination in toto of the policy of reservation (Brahmins, 82.9%; Kashtriya, 66.9%; Vaishya,
71.3%; Shudras, 69%). On the other hand, 70.8 per cent of the Scheduled Castes favoured the continuation of the policy of reservations in government employment. Also a majority of the three non-Scheduled Caste respondents considered the policy of reservation in government employment as "ruinous".

Similarly, Ramchander (1982) studied the elite's attitudes towards the reservation policy in Karim Nagar district of Andhra Pradesh. He found that the elites belonging to the dominant castes were strongly against the reservation policy. In yet another study, Khan (1982) explored the attitudes of the Muslims towards the reservation policy. He found that the Muslims were evenly divided in their attitudes towards the reservation policy. In fact, some of the Muslims thought that the reservation policy should also include Muslims because their socio-economic conditions were almost similar to those of the depressed classes among the Hindu community.

Thirdly, the attitudes of a specific social group among the non-Scheduled Castes, i.e., government employees, towards the reservation policy is an important issue from the perspective of the present study. Since this study is an attempt to examine the views of the non-Scheduled Caste government employees towards the statutory privileges, it was felt necessary to explore the available literature on this issue. The researcher could not find any systematic study in this area. However, the following two studies mention the attitudes of the non-Scheduled Castes in government
services not only towards the reservation policy but also towards their Scheduled Caste colleagues.

Taub's study (1969) of Bureaucrats in Orissa came to the conclusion that "there is a strong relationship between attitudes towards religion and attitudes towards reserved seats" (p. 182). Those who opposed religion were actually in favour of uplifting the Scheduled Castes in the social hierarchy. Though bureaucrats were against any kind of discrimination on the basis of caste, creed and religion, yet they revealed a negative attitude towards the reservation of seats in the services. The study also mentioned that a Brahmin bureaucrat expressed the view that the Scheduled Castes could not make good bureaucrats, but they could excel in their traditional occupational activities which did not involve "brain" but "brawn".

Kirpal and Kelkar (1976) came to a similar conclusion. According to them the non-Scheduled Caste employees called their Scheduled Caste colleagues as "government Brahmins" and "sons-in-law" of the government. They also discovered that the non-Scheduled Caste government employees not only harboured strong prejudices against the Scheduled Castes but also discovered that the non-Scheduled Caste officers became instrumental in not allowing the Scheduled Caste employees to get promotions by writing negative Annual Confidential Reports (A.C.R.) about their performance.
In short, the above discussion on the alternative strategies for the status upliftment of the Scheduled Castes suggest that the efforts made from above had not been very effective. The efforts made by social reformers and the government by using different strategies had failed in their primary objective. On the other hand, in the case of the efforts made by the Scheduled Castes themselves seemed to suggest that the Scheduled Castes could improve their status by politically mobilizing themselves by rejecting the caste values. Since the scope of the present study is to examine the responses of the non-Scheduled Castes, the review of the literature on the impact of the reservation policy clearly highlights the fact that there was a strong resentment among the non-Scheduled Castes about the reservation policy which, in fact, had not proved quite a successful strategy for the status improvement of the Scheduled Castes. This leads us to examine one question, whether such type of preferential treatment has ever been given to a section in any other society? And if it has been, then, what was the reactions of the majority community towards the preferential treatment given to any minority group?

With regard to the questions raised in the previous para, the case of United States of America, where the government also granted certain rights to blacks (the minority group) can be discussed briefly. It has already been pointed out in this chapter that the position of the Negroes in the USA has been, in certain respects, quite similar to the Scheduled Castes in
India. Furthermore, as a result of a strong Civil Rights movement of the Negroes in the United States and the decisions of the Supreme Court about the racial discrimination in the USA, certain changes have occurred towards the desegregation of the Negroes. Though there is no constitutional provision for the special rights for the Negroes in the USA as it can be observed in the case of the Scheduled Castes in India, yet the proportional equality among various races has become a guiding principle in the USA (Singh, 1982). Since the U.S. experience seems to be parallel, though not exactly similar, it is relevant to illustrate some of the areas in which the attempts (legal) have been made to integrate and desegregate the Negroes in U.S.A. But, at the same time, it is necessary to point out that some successes in desegregation have occurred mainly as a result of the efforts made by the Negroes themselves (Board of Education, 1964; Lincoln, 1966; Morris, 1981).

Various rights given to the Negroes in the United States are aimed at giving them a status equal to bring them at par with the whites in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Supreme Court decision.

One such right is the freedom to travel (Board of Education, 1964; Motley, 1966). Segregation in public transportation was ended by a series of Supreme Court decisions from 1941 onwards. Similarly, the freedom of residence and equal educational opportunities are yet other dimensions where the Negroes were given equal rights. However, the Negroes face stern resistance from the Whites. This was particularly
so in the case of the southern states of the USA. The opposition of the Whites to the Negro students entering the schools, earlier meant for the Whites, resulted into violence and murder of some Negroes. In certain cases the President of the USA had to intervene by sending the National Guards in order to protect the Negro students (Morris, 1981).

The right to vote and fight elections are important areas where the Negroes must assert themselves (Motley, 1966). In fact, after the voting rights were granted to the Negroes, the issues about desegregation and integration of the Negroes acquired great political importance because their votes could play a decisive role in elections. In the South, the Whites, particularly the Ku Klux Klan, started using force to prevent Negro participation in elections which was checked through state intervention.

The Negroes fought against their segregation at the lunch counters by organising sit-in movements (Board of Education, 1964). Great deal of success was achieved through these movements which were primarily non-violent in nature.

The most important dimension has been equal opportunity for employment. The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States provides that there would be no discrimination in employment because of race or colour (Motley, 1966). This is applicable to both the Government employment and private employment. Consequently, a trend could be observed towards the introduction of quota system to achieve racial balance in
the employment structure in the United States. While dealing with the problem of the equality for all citizens of the USA, Singh (1982 : 54) comments, thus:

"Soon the language used in the equal protection clause expressed in the individualistic terms came to be used to defend a group, the blacks and by an activist Supreme Court this very language came to be interpreted as designed to defend the rights of Chinese, Japanese, Mexican-Americans, Celtic Irishmen, Indians aliens and many others. By 1964, the United States witnessed the emergence of busing to achieve racial balance, quotas in employment and public housing and inclusionary admission standards for colleges and universities. These developments signified the relevance of 'race' as a factor to achieve actual equality for Negroes and other disadvantaged groups".

However, Singh (1982) points out that it is wrong to see this attempt of the US Government as a parallel attempt to the Indian reservation policy. This can be observed from the decision of the US Supreme Court on the Bakke Case. Allan Bakke was a White student who was denied admission twice by the California Medical School at Davis. Davis had 16 per cent of the seats reserved for minorities. In addition to these 16 per cent seats, the minority applicants could also compete for the open seats. Bakke filed a case on the plea that he had been denied admission on racial grounds and won the case in the Supreme Court. Thus, an appropriate approach to understand proportional equality should not be to consider the US experience as equivalent to the Indian situation where protective discrimination policy is the basis of achievement of desegregation and integration of the Scheduled Castes. But, at the same time, it is very important to understand this experience as a parallel one.
Finally, it is worthwhile to know whether the disparities have decreased between the Whites and the Negroes. According to Farley (1977), disparity has declined in education, occupation and income. Similarly, the claims made by the Board of Education, New York (1964), was that a considerable degree of desegregation and integration of the Negroes had occurred up to 1964. But despite all these changes, the conditions of the Negroes had not radically improved. In the words of Farley (1970: 106): "A continuation of the trends of the 1960s and 1970s offers no hope that racial differences will be eliminated soon". A contrary view to this claim, that the racial differences have reduced, has been advanced by Bulhan (1985). He has given data about the income distribution of the Whites and the Blacks. According to the data, the income of the Whites has continued to be two times more than the income of the Blacks for the last five decades.

Keeping in view the measures adopted by the Government of the United States to raise the status of the Negroes, by offering to them equality of opportunities in the fields of education, employment and the like, some studies were conducted to discover the attitudes of the Whites towards the steps taken by the Government in these directions. However, in the Indian context, the privileges granted to the Scheduled Castes have been much more and vigorous in nature than the privileges to the Negroes in the United States. Since smaller grant of rights could give rise to lot of controversy in the United States, then it is also desirable to look into the Indian situation.
Purpose and Objective of the Study

After being neglected till 1950s, the sociology of the unprivileged generated a new interest among various scholars, social scientists and sociologists. The notable among these scholars are Dushkin, 1967; Galanter, 1972; Lynch, 1969; Aggarwal and Ashraf, 1976; Chitnis, 1972; Sachchidananda, 1974; Pimpley, 1976; D'Souza, 1979; Sharma, 1985; etc.

Studies by these scholars primarily dealt with the problems faced by the Scheduled Castes, the privileges conferred on them by the government, their awareness of these privileges and how far they had improved their social and economic status with the help of these privileges. While focusing their attention on these aspects, they neglected the reaction of the rest of the population which had been affected adversely by the policy of reservation owing to their position in the society.

Before granting these privileges the government did not conduct any survey to assess public opinion. It is very essential to gauge the feelings of the public before touching any social, political problem and eradicating the long-existing evil of untouchability from the caste ridden society. Pimpley (1980 : ii) argues that "As long as an upper-caste person sees the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes to be without power or influence, without property and education, and engaged in debasing occupations and jobs, it is futile to expect that he will treat these lowly and unfortunate people as equal to him".
Unless and until the privileged section shows any positive elements in their attitudes towards the underprivileged, the problem will remain unsolved. The Scheduled Castes can only improve their status if the non-Scheduled Castes allow them to do so. Murthy also shared this view when he (n.d.: 86) wrote:

"If mere legislation could confer on an untouchable all that he needed to become touchable, and this was acceptable to the society, the existing legislation would have proved more than enough. But it is a recognised fact that law will remain a dead letter or a scrap of paper unless it is backed strongly by public opinion. To create a new society, therefore, legislation alone is not enough. People have also to be changed, or in the long run, no government is any better than the people who comprise it. Unless there is purposeful reorientation of people's mental attitudes, it is doubtful whether a status by itself could work a miracle."

Similarly, Sachchidananda (1977: 172) wrote:

"Much depends on the change in the attitude of the larger Hindu community. It has also been discovered that the so-called middle range backward castes offer a stiffer resistance to the rising status of the Harijan than the very high castes. It is the former who feel that their position is threatened by the growing power of the Scheduled Castes. They are also jealous of the benefits and advantages available to the Scheduled Castes under the Constitution."

In view of the above referred studies, it is imperative to assume that besides legislations, there is a need for the change in high caste people's attitude towards the Scheduled Castes. Since these studies pertained to a period more than a decade ago, can we say that people's attitude has now changed
towards the Scheduled Castes? This study will focus on this aspect while analysing the relationship between majority (NSC) and the minority (SC) from the former's point of view. The recent resentment and heart-burning demonstrated by the non-Scheduled Castes through various organisations and associations has given further impetus to my desire to study this burning issue of the present era. In the present study, an attempt will be made to examine the attitudes of the non-Scheduled Caste government employees towards statutory privileges for the Scheduled Castes, i.e., why they are against this policy of reservation? Which part of the policy affects them directly? Do they want to improve the social and economic status of these unfortunate people? If the answers to these questions are in the affirmative, what concrete measures can they suggest to ameliorate their position in society?

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it is proposed to test the following hypotheses:

1. The greater the utilization of reserved posts, the greater the antagonism among the non-Scheduled Castes towards (a) the reservation policy, and (b) the Scheduled Castes, in general.

2. The lower the SES of the non-Scheduled Castes, the greater the antagonism.
3. The greater the antatonism, the greater the probability of organised opposition to the policy of reservation.

4. The greater the participation in organised opposition to the policy, the greater the antagonism towards the Scheduled Castes.

The research procedure for this study is discussed in the next chapter.