CHAPTER THREE

The Impact of Economic Policies.
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The position of women rests as everything in our complex society, on an economic basis.¹ This depends to a very great extent on the concepts that go into the policy making, which decides the path of the economic development in a country. The location of the patriarchy within the state apparatus goes into the country's economic policy and strengthens the already existing patriarchy. This in turn destabilizes the position of woman and increases her dependency. "Gender in sum is a bivalent mode of collectivity. It contains a political-economic face and a cultural-valuational face. The two faces are not neatly separated from each other. Rather they intertwine to reinforce one another dialectically, as sexist and androcentric cultural norms are institutionalized in the state and the economy. Women's economic disadvantage restricts women's voice, impeding equal participation in the making of culture in public spheres and in everyday life. The result is a vicious circle of cultural and economic subornation. Redressing gender injustice therefore requires changing both political economy and culture" (Fraser Nancy 1994). Ester Boserup and other feminist critics have argued that women's economic dependency on men was in many cases exacerbated by changes that development policy makers saw only as progressive. All too ready to perceive women as dependents, the mainstream theorists did not notice that technology, geographical mobility and the conversion from subsistence to market economy were not from the female point of view. Unalloyed benefits, but processes that cut women out from their traditional economic and social roles and thrust them into the modern sector where they are discriminated against and exploited often receiving cash incomes below subsistence level....... in turn increasing female dependency.²
The critique of the state is yet incomplete without taking its class and caste compositions and identifications seriously enough. The state may thus respond at times with alacrity to the claims made by the women’s movement whose spokeswomen are invariably middle class and upper caste women who are also familiar with its structures. The story is quite different when it comes to implementing policies or laws in favour of a woman of a different class and caste especially when it involves opposing those with whom the state identifies. Just like patriarchy has gone deep into the state structure, caste as well as class biases and prejudices have also percolated very deep into it. Therefore gender, caste and class problems which a dalit woman is already facing, get intensified due to these drastic economic changes which are setting in a very fast pace in these days of liberalization. One has to address the enduring question “what difference do cultural factors make in shaping socio-economic development and adjusting to changes induced by development.”

In addition to that as Prof. Amartya Sen points out while formulating economic policy, family is taken as the basic unit. He says that the family centered attitude is problematic because, given the greater political voice of men, public decisions affecting the poor in poor countries are often guided by male preferences not (frequently conflicting) female needs. The maximization of well being as a model for explaining household behaviour must be rejected. Even though it is often difficult to design and effect it, the target of public policy should be persons, not households.

The absence of women’s perspective in the overall development process and the indifference of policy makers and planning has been mind boggling to all those who are concerned with the well being of women who constitute at least 50% of this country’s population. As Neera Desai and Maitreyi Krishnaraj put it “Three decades after independence and after
three decades of planned development, the picture of women’s position that emerged was startling in its grimness.\textsuperscript{6}

Now our central problematic has to do with the transformed context of the 1990’s. However the trends of changes taking place today - of which globalization is the most visible indication - demand a rethinking of the very terms in which women’s issues are initially raised and the modes in which they are being reconstituted today. In the wake of the new economic policy, liberalization, privatization, and structural adjustment programs the role of the government is decreasing and market is becoming the deciding force. The market forces have a major say in deciding the economic policies of the state rather than concept of social justice and such other considerations. Development is one area of economics where even at the height of the neo liberal upsurge in economic thinking associated with rational expectations and irrelevance of government policies it was recognised that governments have a major role to play and that policies do make a difference. Underdevelopment meant not just low per capita income, but lack of institutions, missing markets, structural rigidities, information failures and widespread externalities, none of which was conducive to the equilibrating function of the market. Government would necessarily have to move in and design policies that would allow the economic agents to interact appropriately to push the economies to a path of sustained growth and development.

Should development be primarily concerned with the growth of per capita income or should it aim at growth that is associated with the reduction in the inequality of incomes? Should it choose among different growth paths the one that eradicates poverty faster, even if it was lower than the feasible maximum? Inequalities need not be confined only to income inequality. They may be much more significant in other dimensions affecting capabilities, such as education, health, nutrition,
sanitation, housing and food security, all of which require use of economic resources and therefore are dependent on the growth path of GDP. A development process that reduces the inequalities in social areas, affecting the dignity of life and basic freedoms, in addition to inequalities in income and capabilities would have substantial implications for the use of economic, technological and institutional resources and would call for policies very different from the ones aimed simply at maximising the growth of GDPs. So development goals inevitably involve trade-offs, since all goals cannot be achieved to the same extent and at the same time, given the overall constraints of resources and technology. The Human development Reports and also studies done by Amartya Sen show that social goals like spreading literacy, reducing malnutrition or infant mortality or extending primary education or health care in many developing countries depend more on institutional factors and organisational changes rather than on any substantial additional expenditure of resources. Therefore the trade-off between these social goals and increasing GDP and their consumption does not appear very large. And development policies that focussed on the realisation of these social goals seemed not to conflict with policies aimed at maximizing GDP over a period. Most of the Human development Reports of the 1990's and the latest World Development Report of World Bank (2000 on 'Attacking Poverty') try to establish that if development policies primarily aim at maximising economic growth, they should be supplemented by social policies, and such policies can be implemented without detracting from the effectiveness of those development policies if there is sufficient political will and good governance.

One consequence of focussing on the growth of GDP is that development policy would necessarily have to be designed on the concept of efficiency. Efficiency meant an arrangement of the production system.
where the maximum values of outputs can be obtained from any given stock of resources and technologies. And any policy that was not based on efficiency resulted in avoidable waste of resources and therefore of possibilities of improving upon the realization of development objectives. This allows policies to be designed around promoting competition and removing obstacles from the free operation of market forces. This brings development policies closer to the main stream economics. But still development policies based on efficiency do not necessarily mean 'minimal state' or 'limited government intervention.' The state may not only have a major role in conducting monetary, fiscal, foreign trade and exchange rate policies, it may also have to engage in large public investments and actively participate in the production and provision of goods and services. But whatever the state does, it has to do efficiently. It has to organize its activities in such a manner that there is no waste of resources.

If we adopt the human rights approach to development then the right to development is regarded as a human right. The concept of equality that is being talked about here as the foundation of human rights is, however, much broader than income equality. It is a concept derived from the notion of equality of man in human dignity and is ultimately based on some theory of justice. When the issues of inequalities are viewed in the broader context of human rights, the policy choices become even more limited. For example now India is opening up the trade barriers in many consumer goods after April 2001. Consider the case of the matches industry, which employs a very large number of extremely poor and mainly women workers at very low wages. This industry is not mechanized and is almost certain to be destroyed by foreign competition after 2001. No doubt these are inefficient units and their disappearance will probably increase the country's overall efficiency, however minutely
and consumers will get cheaper matches. But women who would lose their jobs would starve, and probably die if not of hunger and then of malnutrition. But there is very little market-related way by which they can be protected or trained up for other jobs. A human right approach would require first instituting compensatory public policies to protect them before the market is opened. The gains from such opening up should be large enough to finance such compensation, even if it is difficult to capture those gains directly through taxes. Another example is the Narmada dam issue. It would no doubt be very beneficial for the growth of several States in western India, but so long as schemes have not been fully worked out to rehabilitate those who are unsettled, and persuade them to accept the rehabilitation package, and so long as steps are not taken to protect the environments that look after the interest of future generations and no human rights policy would support the construction of the dam.9

Hence the question if social justice and globalization are compatible, becomes very important. If we agree that a minimum precondition for any notion of Social Justice is the extension of people's democratic ability to shape their lives; this certainly reinforces skepticism about globalization's compatibility with social justice. If we see globalization as being largely about establishing global rules that act as a constitution for investor rights and which are beyond any parliamentary challenges. And going slightly further if we define a socially just world as one that supported the full and mutual development of the potential capacities of every individual then again globalization is inconsistent with that ideal.10 Where growth has come due to globalization has not come with a general improvement in social justice but with costs in terms of internal democracy, human rights and equality. In the mid fifties a Latin American general, when asked about the economic development in his country, responded with words that still capture so much of the present reality in third world the so-called
success stories like Brazil and Mexico: "The economy is doing great, but the people in it aren't." It is feared that the real costs of adjustment will be borne primarily by the most disadvantaged and vulnerable sections of society while the benefits would be limited to a small section. These changes have a very serious impact on the dalits because Dalits in India, in general are the most disadvantaged section in all respects – socially, economically, and politically. In addition to that they have staked a lot on state intervention for improving their lot, as society on the whole is either indifferent or hostile to their plight. The following tables furnish some sample information about their condition. It is presented comparatively with other groups in society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Scheduled Castes</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>34.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>38.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table – 2 Scheduled Caste households with Electricity – 1991, (Percentage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Scheduled castes</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>28.23</td>
<td>54.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>21.84</td>
<td>56.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table – 3 People suffering from Poverty 1991 (Percentage)

134
Table -4 Composition of Per Capita Consumption

Expenditure for Population Groups – Rural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Rural poverty 1993-1994 (percentage below Poverty line)</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>Muslims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>21.19</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table -5 Births attended by Health Professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>NFHS 1992-93</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the tables presented above bring out the pathetic and the marginalized condition of the Scheduled castes both in the rural and urban area.

Since the days of Nehru’s progressive socialism the project of modernization has never touched the question of caste. In turn, the question of caste has not gone very deep into the formulation of economic policies, as is the case with gender. Usually the economic policies and reforms in India are formulated and implemented without taking into consideration the class, caste and gender factors. Some of the primary data source, which goes into policy making like the census data, does not take up caste enumeration. Gender considerations also came very late in many
of the primary data of this country. But even there women are treated as a whole. As a result because of the mischief, which the statistical averages can play, these data do not bring out the true position of the dalit women among women. In the situations where caste is also one of the variables of measurement, gender factor is left out which again make the information incomplete and many a time faulty. For example in the National Human Development Report 2001, some data are furnished based on caste. But in those information gender aspect is totally absent. This in turn creates a big gap between policymaking and those who are at the receiving end of the fruits of those policies.

Now globalization and liberalization policies which in a way are a drastic continuation of the earlier project (but with the shrinking role of government) tow the same tradition. But there is a qualitative and quantitative difference in the enormity of this change. This has very disastrous and pernicious effect on all those who are already marginalized. This is more intense in case of dalit women because class, caste and gender and the convergence of all these play a crucial role in pushing her into further marginalization. This in turn changes the quality of her life. Her gendered position becomes economically much more vulnerable because of the caste factor.

Caste has very different cultural role to play in the lives of Indians and especially so in the life of Dalits. The role of caste is totally different in the lives of upper caste and that of lower castes. In the case of upper castes it becomes a gateway for acquiring jobs and other opportunities. It earns them recognition and status. It is interesting to note that for the high born caste attributes qualities like honesty, efficiency, sincerity and intelligence whether they posses it or not. So they need not struggle to prove that they possess these much-respected social values. In case of a lowborn, society attributes them qualities like inefficiency, corruption,
promiscuity, lack of academic excellence, etc. Hence they are placed in such a defensive position that even though they possess these values they have to keep proving it throughout their life. For a dalit woman it is much more so because gender bias also joins hands with the caste bias.

In case of a dalit woman, inside the community gender controls their opportunities. Within the community she loses all the opportunities because she is a woman. She has very little autonomy but very great responsibility of maintaining the family. Outside the community along with gender, caste controls her opportunities. The most recent example for the former is the case of Akshara Dasoha Program (Midday meal for school children) in Karnataka. Karnataka Government launched the program of providing midday meal in the school up to class 5. It decided to appoint dalit women for the post of cooks. An unprecedented opposition came from the public against this move. In many villages these women have been assaulted and the food is thrown out and vessels are damaged. Many upper caste people stopped sending their children to those schools, many gave strict instructions to their children not to eat the food provided in the school. While many parents carried out certain purification rituals for their children who had already eaten the food prepared by the dalit women. This is exactly where the difference between a poor dalit woman and a poor woman of other upper and middle caste. Poor women from other castes other than dalit caste have always been working as cooks or cooking assistants but never has such opposition come against it. This is elaborated further in this chapter.

Certain dalit intellectuals and writers in Karnataka present a strong argument that globalization has great possibilities in store for the dalits. It opens up a number of opportunities for the dalits, which they feel, helps them to transcend their caste. They feel that the dalits have the strength to withstand the onslaught of the changes due to globalization. They have an
enormous cultural strength, which will steer them through these transformations. Any attempt to resist globalization is seen as the brahminical conspiracy to keep the dalits away from the fruits of globalization. The dalits are capable of adapting themselves to the changing scenario. The question of gender and also the complex interlocking of the caste and gender in the case of dalit women do not seem to figure in these discussions. Therefore this chapter also tries to understand the validity of these opinions in the light of the fieldwork in selected villages.

This chapter tries to study the impact of economic changes and state policies on the dalit women and bring about the ways in which they affect the identity of the dalit women. Thus this chapter analyzes the way in which the changes and reforms in economic policy affect the gendered position of a dalit woman who is situated in the framework of a particular caste, which is at the lowest rung in the caste hierarchy. Even in terms of class too she belongs to the most disadvantaged class. The main stream economics and also most of the economists are caste blind. Scant attention is paid to the issues related to caste based economic inequalities and its link with economic discrimination as compared to the other social science disciplines which did substantial research work on economic inequalities and discrimination associated with caste, race, ethnicity, gender and other institutions. This has been true to some extent not only to the main stream neoclassical economics but even of Marxists who looked at caste only in the framework of the feudal mode of production. As Anne Phillips points out, now it is all too apparent that the practice of an exclusively class politics overrode crucial differences of experience associated with gender, ethnicity, or race in doing so it left class as an empty category, bereft of historical meaning or else elided it with the experiences and interests of the dominant sex or dominant ethnic group.
In the Indian context all this is true but only thing is that caste difference has to be included that list.

Therefore the impact of the economic reforms on Dalit women should be understood from three different angles. Firstly as a part of the class of have-nots, secondly from her gendered position and thirdly Dalit woman as a socially disadvantaged group in terms of caste. The problem of Dalit women mainly becomes the problem of rural Dalit women because only about 11 percent of the scheduled caste members live in urban areas. Majority of them live in rural area and are employed as agricultural labourers or marginal farmers. About three-fourths of the scheduled castes live in rural areas. According to 1991 census 138 million are SCs, which becomes the 15.8% of our population. A vast majority of the Dalits live in rural areas. It becomes nearly 84%. Of the 15.8% of the Dalit population 13% are agricultural labourers, sharecroppers and landless labourers. The work participation rate of SCs defined as the percentage of SC population participating in the work to total Scheduled Caste population is 39.25% as against 37.46% among general population in 1991. The high participation rate among SCs is due to very high participation rate among SC women (25.98%) as against 22.25% for the total women population of the country. The female work participation rate is much higher in AP than the all India level. As per the 1991 census 77% of the SC main workers are dependent on agriculture as against only 67% of the general workers depend on primary sector. More than 49% of the SC workers are reported to be agricultural labourers as against only 26% among the general workers. Their main sources of income are either cultivation, wage labour and non-farm employment. Table-1 gives the occupational distribution at all India level.
Even among Dalits the number of Dalit women agricultural labourers is more. Before going on to analyze the impact of the changes in economic policy it is essential to understand how dalit women are placed within the present rural agricultural scene. While taking up this task a researcher faces a serious problem. Most of the data one gets is either general or classified according to gender or rural-urban based. With a few exceptions like literacy, population and others, caste is not a parameter for data collections. Some data is collected with caste as one of the parameters but gender aspect is missing in them. Therefore while tracking the position of a dalit women a researcher faces this problem very frequently. So a possible way out is furnishing the data collected during the field survey. Though it is a micro-survey, these results may hold good with reference to larger part of India.

**Distribution of Female main workers in different sectors in India.** (in percentage)
Table-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PRIMARY</th>
<th>SECONDARY</th>
<th>TERTIARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>75.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1991, Provisional Population Totals, 2001

Table-2 gives the percentage of female work participation in the primary sector – agriculture. The table gives the percentage of women as a whole without any reference to caste. Using the field survey data one can arrive at the possible conjuncture that majority of the women participating in the activities of the primary sector are dalit women. All these years dalit women have been doing weeding, sowing, reaping, and threshing and such other agricultural activities. Way back in 1927 G.F.Paddison, the commissioner of Labour, Government of Madras records that ......... Weeding was mostly done by women labourers. Similarly, the District collector found in 1900 that the labourers engaged in weeding are mostly women. The situation is not much changed even today. Fieldwork in different villages in Karnataka corroborates this information. In Hosahalli nearly 100 dalit families were surveyed. But for some 15 families women from all other families went out and worked as
agricultural labourers. In Kanenoor also the number is more or less the same. So, on an average nearly 85% dalit women are agricultural labourers.

The concentration of dalit women in the Primary sector is disadvantageous for them because now all the recent five year plans which are formulated to suit the needs of globalization, the primary sector is the first casualty. The greatest concentration is on the service sector. (More details are to be furnished using the recent five-year plan layout) This is an area where very few dalit women are employed and hence, again, whatever may be the profit it is reaped only by the urban, educated elite women and to some extent even by the educated urban dalit groups. But even their number is less.

Table –8 The number of Dalit women in chosen Government service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Service</th>
<th>No of women</th>
<th>No of Dalit women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indian Foreign Service</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Customs and Central Excise</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Audit And Accounts Service</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Tax Service</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Postal Dept</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Statistical Service</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Economic Service</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Forest Service</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Information Services</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Inadequate access to cultivable land and capital leaves no option for SC workers except to resort to unskilled manual wage labour. As a result it creates, an enormously high concentration of wage labour among SCs. During late 1980s the proportion of unskilled manual agricultural labour was 49 percent as compared to 21 percent among others. Taking both agricultural and non-agricultural labour in rural areas, the percentage of wage labour reached up to 60 percent as compared to 28 for others. Therefore as compared to others the percentage of wage labour among SCs is more than double in rural area. In 1982 NSS stated that about 85 percent of the SC rural households belonged to landless and marginal farmer group. This has increased to 86 percent during the last decade i.e. between 1982-92. Thus the dependence of this social group on weak economic base and continuation of such a trend even during the past decade is a matter of concern. But very few Dalits own land and more often than not the land they own involves protracted and tenacious struggle. Table-3 presents the data of land ownership among the dalits.

**Size Distribution of Ownership Holdings**

**Table-9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Scheduled Caste</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landless</td>
<td>12.61</td>
<td>13.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal</td>
<td>72.41</td>
<td>72.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>53.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>13.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Medium</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>10.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>11.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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In view of the heavy dependence of the SCs on agriculture it is worthwhile to examine the changes in agrarian structure and agrarian relations, in the context of agrarian reforms and agricultural growth with reference to Dalits. Table-4 shows that SC households constituted about 20% of total rural households but control only about 8% of the total land area owned while other households constitute about 70% of total rural households but control 82% of total area owned in 1982. By 1992 the percentage of SC rural households increased to more than 21% and their share in land also increased to 10%. While the percentage of other households declined to 67% and their share in area declined to 78%. It is also seen from the table that landlessness is more prevalent among SC households. The percentage of landless and semi-landless households was 12.6% and 48% respectively, while the corresponding percentages among the other rural households were 10.2% and 24.9% in 1982. By 1992 the landlessness among SC households increased 13.3% and semi landlessness declined to 47.5%, while in the case of other households landlessness remained the same at 10.2% and semi-landlessness increased to 27.4%. Thus the percentage of Scheduled Caste households in terms of their access to land, deteriorated in 1980s despite higher agricultural growth rate of 3.2% per annum over the same decade. It is also to be noted that among the SC cultivators, about 73% are marginal farmers while only 66% are marginal farmers among all social groups. This clearly indicates that Dalits particularly Scheduled Castes depend on agriculture mostly as agricultural labourers for their livelihood in 1992 also.

**Share of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Households in Total area Owned and Landlessness among them (Rural)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>All households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Percentage of distribution of households</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Percentage of Distribution of area owned</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Percentage of landless households (owning no land less than 0.02 ha)</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Percentage of semi-landless households</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Here again genderwise data is not available. But depending on earlier conjuncture it can be concluded that the number of dalit women engaged in agricultural activities is more. The pressure is also increasing gradually, and it can be inferred that their bargaining power is decreasing further. In the villages chosen for field survey in most of the households, women were agricultural labourers, while men went out as building construction labourers, or labourers working in road making, sometimes some menial labourer in some factory or some other odd job. They would of course do the farm work too but only once in a while ploughing the field.
There is wage disparity between the male and female wage labourers. Wage parity had never been an important demand of the peasant movement anywhere. Moreover it has not been a part of any agricultural reform implemented by the government. For example in most of the villages in Karnataka usually if men get Rs 50/- per day, for the similar work women get only Rs 30/- per day. In some semi urban areas where the small and medium industries have closed down the dalit women who constituted the unorganized workforce in those industries are again trying to find employment as agricultural labourers. It is interesting to note that these women were refused to be employed as agricultural labourers on the grounds that they will be lazy because they are more sophisticated when compared to other regular agricultural labourers. After much insistence they were employed but were paid very low wages. This situation affected the other female labourers too. In addition to that they are used as a shield to silence other dalit women from demanding higher wages.  

Now under TRIPS, TRIMS and WTO agriculture is affected and small and marginal farmers, together with agricultural labourers are losing out. Utsa Patnayak points out that liberalization will lead to a shift to commercial crops and therefore a contraction of the area under subsistence and food crops. In addition to that a greater and increased market for cash crops and plantation crops reflect on Dalit women in a different way. Crops like paddy are more labour intensive. Women do a greater share of work there. Weeding, sowing, reaping etc are usually done by dalit women. Now due to this shift they are losing their livelihood. The nature of work involved in plantations requires very few women labourers. Even if they are needed it is just once in a while. In the Wayanad district of Kerala it is a recent trend to shift over totally to the cash crops and avoid cultivating rice because it is labour intensive. A new trend is also
observed there. In most of the plantations, which are of medium size, two or more neighbouring families come together and turn by turn complete the work of all their farms. This minimizes the employment of labour to a very great extent. Moreover even the minimum labour force which is employed during unavoidable circumstances are not local people but the migrant labourers from Heggada Devana Kote area.

This employment of migrant labourer has its impact on dalit women in two ways. Firstly Dalit women who used to get seasonal employment in weeding, planting, reaping etc have almost lost that because of shift to plantation crops. Secondly, migration reduces the possibility of dalit women getting employment. Usually only those who are unmarried or single can go while the mobility of those with children is restricted. Even if they go they cannot stay in the place of work as men do. Especially among dalits, women headed families are more in number. Therefore migration is much more difficult for such women who head the family. Hence this reduces their possibilities of employment and pushes them further into a position of disadvantage.

In such families, where women cannot stay away from home during the night, they usually travel long distances and have a very tedious day and come back late in night and do the household chores. In many such families they light the domestic hearth only once a day; that is during night and cook something and eat and again get up early in the morning and go out for work. This tells very seriously on their health. Premature aging is very common among them. Much of their earning is spent on travelling alone. In addition to that, the children left at home live in very insecure situation. The chances of criminalization and rape are very high. This again tells on the education of the dalit girls in the age group between 10 and 14. They are entrusted with the responsibility of the younger children. The number of school dropouts is also is high. During the field survey the
school authorities told the researcher that the dalit girls studying in V and VI Standard stop coming to school because they have to work at home. Sometimes they stop coming because they have to go to work. They have mentioned these reasons in the village level compilation form sent to the Government.  

The entry of MNC’s in agro processing industries is going to affect women workers where their number is quite substantial. Mechanization that will accompany these new agricultural processing units is labour displacing especially in rice milling and cleaning. Since the combination of trade liberalization and devaluation would make labour relatively more expensive and machines relatively cheaper because of freer import. More mechanization and labour displacement mark future agricultural expansion with dangerous consequences for female wage labour.

Now threshing machines are also introduced in many villages resulting in the displacement of dalit women. These machines reduced the number of workers as well as the days of work too. This has resulted in the financial loss for the women who have to sit idly during the threshing season. Now with the introduction of anti weed most of the women who are especially Dalits have lost their jobs during the weeding season. The women so displaced are not engaged elsewhere as they are the most unskilled labourers who are unable to do any other type of work. With the introduction of reaping machines in the districts of South Canara most of the women who did that work earlier have become unemployed. Those in the age group of 18-30 have tried to rehabilitate themselves as sales girls. But these young girls have found it extremely difficult to adapt themselves to these newer jobs. The language they speak, their mannerisms, their looks and disposition prevent them from being successful in their new job. Because of lack of exposure they lack confidence and suffer from a feeling of inferiority. Secondly the money they get now as sales girls is
comparatively very less than what they used to get earlier as agricultural labourers. In addition to that both physical exertion and mental tension is more in the new job and it unnerves them. Besides the financial hardships they are exposed to stranger hardships including the sexual harassment.  ^{34}

Very often the government schemes for the betterment of the predicament of the Dalits in general does not work out in case of Dalits and more so in case of Dalit women. These schemes are designed by those at the top with the motto of improving the condition of the dalits. But these schemes cannot be implemented successfully in the absence of certain basic minimum conditions. These involve in the first place, a sensitization among the employees who execute the projects for the Scheduled castes. They usually set out with a prejudice that the government is doing too much to help the dalits. Hence they are not very favorably disposed towards them. This feeling of displeasure also comes in the way of proper execution of the projects. Secondly the patriarchal attitude which is inherent within the government machinery also results in gender bias which has its implications on the dalit women, in whose life caste is already playing havoc. The red tapism and corruption deeply built into the bureaucracy is highly problematic to poor people of all castes. But for a dalit woman these problems are intensified because along with gender and poverty, the ill-will generated by the affirmative action creates a kind of vicarious persecution complex which make the matter worse for the dalit women. For instance the Karnataka Government under the Ganga Kalyana Scheme has dug bore wells in the lands, which belong to the Dalits. Ningamma of Hosahalli village near Malavalli told the researcher that there is both bore-well and also water in the bore well in her land but she cannot use it. Their economic condition is so bad that she says, she is unable to buy pumps, pay for electric poles, and wires and also the linemen who comes to do the wiring work etc.  ^{35} In addition to that, corruption is so
widespread in this bureaucracy that without bribing, nothing is going to get materialized. In order to get the things come through they have to fight a great deal. They have to go to those offices frequently and give petitions, etc. This is very difficult for a dalit woman because most dalit families are mainly women headed and they live below subsistence level. Hence they cannot afford to leave a day’s work and go to those offices. For them a day’s off from work means starving. Most of the dalit women are illiterate and ignorant. They do not know how to write a petition. Therefore they have to depend on somebody for everything. This is a very frustrating experience for them. Sometimes it may also be very risky because they might even be deceived. As a result they might even lose the piece of land which they own. Hence, these facilities which are provided without taking into consideration the real situation of a Dalit would be of no help to them. They will be in records but without bettering the life of those to whom it should reach. It will not reach the unreached.

Right to food is one of the basic rights of an individual in a democratic set up. Changes in the state policy affects the food security of the marginalized Dalit women in more than one ways. Shift to commercial crops, the rise in the prices of food grains, the break down of PDS system and subsidizing exports of food grains affect the food security of the Dalit women in different ways. New crops are being promoted under the garb of people's welfare (through self-help groups and other such methods) without looking at the totality of their possible impact on the ecology and economy of the region. The strategy fits in well with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's statement in Haryana a few months ago that the farmers have to adjust and respond to the growing pressures of the world market. They should do this by producing less food and more of other crops, especially with the removal of quantitative restrictions under the World Trade Organization regime. Only then, says the Prime Minister, people
will be able to benefit from the free market. Fieldwork at different villages brings out the plight of dalit woman because of the change in the economic policy where there is a shift towards the cash crops.

Shifting to commercial crops affects the food security in many ways too. In Kanenoor village before shifting to cotton cultivation they did grow everything which they needed in their day to day life except salt and spices. They used to cultivate different varieties of pulses and grams. One of the Dalit women expressed the impact of shifting to commercial crops in her own way. She told that earlier she never used to measure either the green gram or horse gram or any other gram, but used to put sufficient quantities for cooking. Even if she was the last one to dine, she always had sufficient quantity left for her. But now she thinks twice before placing the pulses for cooking because now everything should be purchased from the shop. Now she serves everybody and dares to eat at the end because she can always manage with whatever little that is left. Buying these provisions in the village also works out costlier for them because the retailer charges them more and it certainly tells upon their purse. Naturally this restricts the purchasing power of the people and the money at hand. The liquidity constraints force people to purchase food in very small quantities for which they pay much higher unit prices. This has implications for measures of poverty and inequality. This tells very seriously on the nutritional value of the Dalit women who are already suffering from high degree of malnutrition because of the economic changes which are moving at a great speed and also by the patriarchal set up prevalent within the household.

Shifting to commercial crops has its impact on the dalit women in other ways too. Most of the commercial crops are not labour intensive. Therefore the number of women getting employment in plantations is decreasing. In addition to that when food crops were being grown soon
after the harvest these women always got some bags of rice/jowar/millet, which sustained them round the year in its own way. Now with the shift to cash crops/commercial crops the big landlords have not stopped growing food crops in large quantities. They produce only a minimum quantity, which caters only to their domestic needs. Hence the practice of distributing food grains to the labourers is gradually vanishing. But most of the dalit women and men who own a very small plot of land cannot grow both food crops and commercial crops. The temptation to grow commercial crops is more because of the utter poverty they suffer from. This increases their inclination towards growing cash crops. But they fail to realize that it is a vicious circle, which pushes them to further poverty. It is like jumping from the frying pan to the fire. Table 5 gives the details of the SC population below poverty line in both rural and urban areas. Here again it is not given sex wise. There is room for a lot of conjuncture because in Indian families gender plays a very significant role culturally when it comes to the consumption of food.

Table-11, Population 1991 – Percent Below Poverty Line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mysore</td>
<td>21.19</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandya</td>
<td>18.26</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Human Development Report 2001. (Try to set right this table)

The Dalit women of Beechanahalli near Nanjanagood curiously brought out another interesting factor associated with irrigation, which in turn affects their food security. After the facility of canal irrigation was introduced in Beechanahalli the small and marginal farmers with a meager
land of half acre or so stopped growing cereals and took to the cultivation of paddy and sometimes sugarcane. To begin with it was profitable for them and they could buy all other provisions from the retail shops. In the recent years with the fall in prices of paddy and problems associated with marketing of sugarcane they are finding it extremely difficult to buy enough provision to keep them healthy. The women felt that very often very little is left by the time they sit to eat. Now they are not even in a position to cook more, so that they can have enough. Earlier even during financial crunch, they say that though they did not have money at their disposal, they never starved as they had enough cereals and millet at home. Of course they were unable to spend on luxuries but their nutrition level was not affected. Irrigation made them spendthrift providing them an opportunity to spend lavishly during festivals and on other occasions. But the women point out that it has failed in providing them quality nutrition in their day to day life. They suffer from such high degrees of malnutrition that most of them have grown old prematurely. Their skin is terribly dry and wrinkled. A forty-year-old woman looks as though she is sixty. They look highly emaciated. They told that it is just staying alive. Even during the so called affluent moments (rainy season when they get regular work and wages) they can afford to eat only Ragi balls and salt curry (Uppesaru) or else Ragi balls with green chillies. Usually the curry is prepared only with horse -gram because that is the cheapest cost-wise. It costs just four rupees a kg. They like to eat other cereals too, but they cannot afford to buy them. They rarely eat vegetables. They use them only during the festivals. The same is true of milk and curds. They do not have the habit of drinking coffee or tea. During summer they get some diluted buttermilk from the people who churn buttermilk and prepare butter. They usually get 30 rupees a day. Out of which they spend Rs 4 for Ragi flour, 12 rupees for rice and chillies and certain other basic
ingredients. When they go to far off villages in search of work they have to adjust even for the bus fare. Little money is left to buy anything else. They hardly use 100 grams oil per month. They do not use coconut, they told, not because they don’t like but because they are unable to buy it.  

Table-6 gives data about percentage of women suffering from anemia and among them the percentage of SC women suffering from anemia. This speaks about the deterioration of the nutritional level of women in general and dalit women in particular. In matters of nutrition and health care especially in the lives of women there is an intricate interplay of caste and gender making things highly miserable for her.

**Table-12 Women With Any Anemia 1998-99.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Family Health Survey, 1998-99  

It is felt that with the increase in cotton growing among the Dalits there is rise in the dowry. They have started celebrating the festivals in a big way and this is increasing their expenses. Moreover, in view of the profit they may get by selling cotton, they try to take more and more loans especially from the village money lender and their indebtedness has increased over the years especially in the last one decade.

Agriculture is not lucrative for most of the dalits. Firstly because most of their families are women headed as a result working in others’ fields to eke out their livelihood is inevitable. The small patch of land that they have cannot be given proper attention because their day’s work is over only in the evening. Compared to dalit men dalit women get lesser wages, which is enough only to maintain their family expenses like food.
and clothing. They are left with very little money, which they can invest, on their little piece of land. Working on their own land means additional physical and financial burden. Most of the time they are not in a position to bear and maintain that. The day for these dalit women begins early in the morning at around 5:30. They work in others' fields within the village till evening and come back dead tired and prepare the day's meal and go to bed. In the meanwhile they have to work in their own fields too. They are incapable of hiring any labour. They do all the work. They shared their experience with the researcher during the fieldwork in Hosahalli. They told that they took so much trouble to grow a little Ragi in their fields (a variety of millet). They borrow so much to buy the fertilizers, which have become costlier these days. Then they have to struggle so hard to repay the debt. They have never been provided any loan from the bank. The village doesn't have a bank. It is the rich people of their own village who give them money when they have problems. Because of the rampant corruption, which has crept into the marketing system these dalit women find it extremely difficult to market what they have grown. During the interview the participants told the researcher that in their families they have to look after everything. There are no male members to look after the commercial transactions. It is difficult to take what they have grown to the city and market them. They are always scared that they would be deceived. But still they cannot escape deception. The middlemen come to the fields during harvest and thrashing season. The buyers measure the grain in their instrument (seer—a local measuring unit). Their seer in fact measures more than the regular seer the villagers use. So, naturally they lose many measures of grain when it is measured in that. They know the deception. But they are helpless poor women. Let alone profit, what they get is not even enough to repay the debts. It is highly difficult to manage.
Secondly among the rural dalit women the number of women headed families is more. For the Dalit male the caste and class merge in subjecting them to the margins of India's political economy. In the case of dalit women gender too becomes another subjugating factor. All castes do not suffer equally from the iniquitous functioning of the caste system. Among them the caste system has produced the worst possible consequences for the deprived castes – low-caste untouchables, as they are divested of all possible sources of economic mobility. Under the prevailing form of caste system the occupations and economic activity are hereditary, compulsory and endogamous. These features force immobility in the factors of production particularly labour, across occupations and give rise segmentation in labour market.

The far-reaching consequences of this are firstly, lack of competition and failure of market mechanism. Caste wise job allocation affects the income distribution. In this situation since marginal product of a worker depends on his assigned job, the result is an income distribution skewed along caste lines. Since this involves less employment and wage payment to lower caste persons, the income distribution will be more skewed under the caste economy than without it. Because of caste the possibility of dalit women getting alternate employment is very bleak and remote. This is far more remote in closely-knit rural economies because of the familiarity. An exploration of the 1931 census data confirms two very interesting facts. Expect for domestic service, agricultural labour Sector such and a few organized industries, very few other occupations in Bengal had any significant proportion of women workers. Also wherever such employment occurred it was almost universally caste based. If some degree of flexibility was possible in cities, in villages a stricter correlation between earners and caste position was usually preserved. But this situation continues to exist even today. In Biravalli village the Dalit
women wanted to take up some work so that they can become economically independent. They thought that they could prepare papads because usually women are skilled in making papads as it is a part of their traditional domestic work. Nehru Yuva Kendra of Mandya was ready to give them the contract if they took the permission from the village panchayat. When they approached the village panchayat, the panchayat refused to give them the permit on the pretext that nobody would buy the papads prepared by Dalit women. Then they wanted to take the contract of supplying boiled eggs to the school children of the same village. The Village Panchayat strongly opposed their demand. They did not want their children to eat the eggs boiled by the Dalit women. When the dalit women tried to overlook their warning they were threatened of social boycott. Such a boycott would not only deprive them of their regular livelihood but also deprive them of regular social interaction and sources of water. That would be a very difficult situation. Finally those for them dalit women had to give up their idea and be satisfied with whatever they got. Finally the contract was given to some Gowda (they are one of the dominant middle caste of Karnataka) women. The Dalit women of Hosahalli in Malavalli Taluq made it very clear that they are not employed as maidservants in the houses of the upper and middle castes in villages. Usually they are not even allowed to enter the houses of these people. They were usually made to stay in the courtyard and backyard, which can be approached without entering into the house. Taking up catering work which traditionally done by women is also not a Dalit woman's cup of tea. So such possibilities are totally ruled out for the Dalit women. The culmination of the same can be seen in the furore raised by upper and middle caste people on the appointment of dalit women as cooks in the Akshara Dasoha Programs launched by the Karnataka Government.
The women of Kanenoor brought out another dimension of this caste based discrimination faced by the dalit women. A dalit woman in Kanenoor who was quite popular for her culinary talents thought of setting up a small teashop in the village. But after a few months she had to close down because it was not economically very viable for her because the teashop was frequented only by the dalit men, that too once in a while. Dalit women rarely come because in most of the dalit families they do not have the habit of drinking coffee/tea. People of other castes do not come to their shops and consume anything prepared by these dalit women.

The job of a domestic maidservant is another alternate source of livelihood open to most of the unskilled women of all castes. But this option is almost closed to the dalit women not only in rural nut also in the urban areas. In rural areas there is not possibility of hiding their caste identity and get the work. In the urban areas that possibility is there. But on the very moment their caste identity is revealed either by chance or deliberately, they lose that job.

Hence the convergence of caste and gender make life much more skewed for the dalit women. It is imperative that economic factors must be given full weightage in order to uplift Dalit women from their prevailing marginalized, dehumanized status. This requires consideration of all issues that have bearing on the development perspectives and strategies of our nation.

Though this chapter concentrates mainly on the agricultural sector in rural areas, a few details with regard to industry, education and health sectors in relation to dalit women are presented. These are some of the areas where very often gender is taken as one of the parameters and caste is seldom taken in to consideration. Gita Sen and others in their article ‘Structural Reforms and Health Equity’ point out that caste is obviously another major dimension of inequality. The NSS survey for the mid-1990s
provides some basic caste related data but comparative data for mid –
1980s is not available. The caste data for mid –1990s is difficult to
interpret. This throws some light on how one of the very important
dimensions like caste is totally neglected both in the policy formulation
and economic survey. Hence a lot of serious research has to be carried on
in this field. But the researcher is unable to do so within the purview of
this thesis. Therefore some references, which are based on the field data
are given and they are corroborated with similar data from different other
sources. The very purpose is to substantiate the subtle ways in which both
caste and gender play havoc in the lives of the dalit woman. Caste makes
a qualitative difference in the lives of dalit women as gender makes a
difference in the lives of women in general. The changes in the projects of
development may not always be positive. It can result negatively on some
sections of the society. One such section is the dalit women.

INDUSTRIES

Till the past decade, at least outwardly there seemed to be a
judicious mixture of the public and the private. But in the late 80’s the tilt
was more towards the private sector. During the 90’s the process got
speeded up. Of these the projects of globalization the Structural
Adjustment Programs (SAP) are instrumental in bringing about drastic
changes in the industrial sectors. The economists argue that SAP will
introduce flexibility in the organization of industry, in the production
process and in the labour market. It will therefore generate low paying
jobs, which will go to women thus increasing their work participation rates
and generally helping in the alleviation of poverty. Many of the data
provided by those who argue in favor of SAP list down the increase in the
recruitment of women in industries. But, such details without the
information as to which industries employ such large number of women
would not be very useful valid. For example in Bombay the chief
inspector of factories records that employment of women in industries has increased from 2.5% in 1981 to 3.1% in 1989. But such information becomes deceptive. There are several units in SEEPZ employing not more than 30-40 employees. Some of these are 90-95% female dominated. However just down the road Larsen&Toubro and Mahindras employ more than 6000-7000 workers with hardly any women workers among them. It is therefore important to know specifically which industries have increased the recruitment of women.

Those who speak of the employment generation due to structural adjustments and the opportunities they provide to women do forget one thing. Oppressed people have often internalized this oppression so well; that they have no sense of what they are entitled to as human beings. This is certainly the case with gender inequalities. As papanek writes, the clear perception of disadvantages requires conscious rejection of the social norms and the cultural ideals that perpetuate inequalities and the use of different criteria – perhaps from another actual or idealized society, as a prelude for action. People in seriously deprived conditions are sometimes not only accepting of them but relatively cheerful of the "small mercies" situation. Deprivations sometimes become gagged and muffled for reasons of deeply rooted ideology surely be ethically deeply mistaken to attach correspondingly small value to the loss of well being of such people because of their survival strategy. Hence it ends up in justifying one injustice using an argument which is equally unjust. Hence the changes which are initiated by the SAP and the opportunities created through changes are also to be understood with this in mind. Otherwise there is the danger of falling into the trap of brahminical attitude, which thinks that dalits did not have anything earlier and now they have this much and what else do they need now? Similar is the patriarchal attitude towards gender.
The work participation rate of women in relation to men in manufacturing industry is abysmally low. When assessments are made in terms of percentages, it is important to keep in mind that the relative position of male workers remains high and the increase in female workers in actual numbers is quite low. In the 700 largest public companies only two percent of top executives and only 0.5% of the highest paid officers and directors are women. The ‘glass ceiling’ is a transparent or invisible barrier that prohibits women from rising above a certain level in the organization’s rank. The proportion of women in total employment, which includes agriculture, manufacturing, the service sector and informal sector, has shown an increase. It is also necessary to specify what kinds of jobs are being done by women or are being taken over by them from men. Figures from Statistical Pocket Year Book of the Government of India shows that women’s employment has increased from 372,000 in 1961 to 461,000 in 1989 but their proportion in total manufacturing has declined from 11% to 9% or is almost at 9% from 1966 to 1989.

Rehana Jhabvala and Mira Savara have documented the decline of female employment in the textile mill sector in Ahmedabad and Bombay over the past few decades due to automation. Other case studies in the city of Bombay show how many large scale industries which employ women in large numbers have replaced their women workers by either men or machines or both. Case studies of particular companies indicate that expansion of production facilities in the 1980’s have not resulted in an increase in the employment of women. For example Hindustan Lever had only two large plants in Bombay and Calcutta for over 60 years. From 1982 Levers decentralized itself to have 20 other plants besides a network of smaller units which were subcontracted. In the 1960’s the Bombay plant employed a substantial proportion of women employees; about 600 women out of a workforce of 1,500. However in 1990 there were only 3
women left. None of the Lever’s other plants employ women in any substantial numbers except in the garment plant at the Export Promoting Zone in Kandla, Gujarat (Gothoskar 1992). A similar process is seen in the mining sector, the chemical sector, and various sectors in engineering, toiletries, particularly affecting jobs such as packing where women are employed. A study done by Sharma and Sengupta in SEEPZ (1984) the export promotion zone in Bombay showed that 98 per cent of its workers were women. However, in a recent interview the labour commissioner said that this proportion has been reduced to about 60 per cent in 1991. In complimentary units or subsidiaries to large industries such as the powerloom industry in Bhiwandi and Surat, women are completely absent. While the handloom sector where the wage levels are much lower, women constituted 44 per cent. Here women are paid piece-rates, which were very low. While in the large and organized industries even contract workers are mostly always men. However the smaller units which are exempt from the labour regulations do tend to employ women as studies of chemical industrial estates in Ambernath and Kalyan have indicated. Within the completely unorganized sector, women are employed only in jobs with are seen as women-oriented such as garments or food processing.

A major recommendation of SAP is privatization to make industry more efficient and profitable. Privatization would have significant implications for women’s employment. Figures of 1974 and 1988 show that the increase in women’s employment in the public sector is more in comparison to the private sector. It has increased in electricity, construction, trade, transport, communication finance and insurance and community services. State owned units are now under pressure to re-organize. Nationalized banks, in which 20 per cent employees are women, have declared 4 lakh people as surplus. Railways have stopped recruitment. The Post and Telegraph Department intends to retrench
2,00,000 workers. Privatization when it does take place will result in a drastic cut in the workforce and women will be the most potential targets.

Modern technology favours capital, which, in turn needs technological up-gradation. This will increase the demand for skilled labour. Since women have fewer skills as compared to men it is likely that there is an increased exclusion of women for the production. Lack of skill among women workers in due to various socio-economic and cultural reasons. Women as a whole are affected by the gender bias prevalent in our society and the state machinery. Usually they are not provided with skilled technical education. This trend is a common trend everywhere. Of late there is a gradual change in this attitude among the upper castes and classes in urban areas. But in rural areas it is still in operation. For in rural areas in addition to patriarchy and gender bias, caste bias is also very strongly prevalent. So both biases manifest itself in more than one ways in this set up. Women in general suffer from a feeling of inferiority for various historical reasons. This feeling is more among the dalit women because of the segregation they experience both within the community (gender) and outside (gender and caste). This often kills the spirit in them and creates apathy in them. School set up is one basic area where the girls have a devastating experience of this bias which expresses itself in various forms – through the body language, the suggestive smiles, secretive whispers which are exchanged behind their back and the prejudice expressed by the teachers themselves. This very often makes them ill at ease. This is further intensified by factors like poverty, family responsibility and superstitious beliefs. As a result the number of school dropouts among dalit girls is more.

Because of these factors with every change in the economic policy and also structural reforms and adjustments the dalit woman is cast into new roles. It is noteworthy that though these roles seem to change, there is
no qualitative change because the content remains the same. That is to say that the marginalization continues without any hindrance. It is like old wine in the new bottle. The jobs are low paid, unyielding, tedious, less lucrative and more menial. One intensifies the other. With every change they are being pushed into more low paid jobs which in turn intensifies their poverty. Poverty in turn again prevents them from acquiring the kind of education, which is needed to make them skilled. It becomes a vicious circle. Lack of education in turn provides mere confirmation to an already existing image about the dalit women that they are backward, unintelligent, stupid, and incapable of any intellectual and skilled activity.

Since colonial period there has always been mechanization and also changes in the economic policy. It has of course always affected the manpower. The female labour-force especially which is in the lowest rung of the economy is the worst hit by these changes. Usually these changes involve a lot of mechanization where workers are retrenched. As it involves a lot of technical skill. Those who are unskilled are retrenched first. Usually in almost all the industries the unskilled labour force is constituted by women. Usually most of these women are dalits. Even during these changes service sector seems to be less affected but dalit women do not constitute a major part of the service sector (Table-8). Therefore, they cannot avail of those advantages. A very strong conjuncture about the relationship between dalit women and lowest paid jobs is possible. But accurate data with regard to this is not available. Therefore much work needs to be done in this field. With every change in the economy usually the most disadvantaged are hit. Time and again profit falls into the lap of those who are already in the advantaged position. SAP makes a greater difference than all earlier changes because the role of the government has shrunk considerably. The government intervention has always tried to balance the inequalities prevalent in the society with the
concept of social justice and now it is thrown into air. This has proved very
costly for the disadvantaged and deprived sections of the society especially
dalit women.

A few such examples can be cited which to some extent substantiate
this development. One such example is the installation of the power looms.
Before the introduction of machinery into the weaving industries women
faced different kind of problems. Earlier mostly women had to roll the
yarn to the bobbin. Because they start doing it at an early age the
forefinger grows thin. When they used to work with handlooms they had
to sprinkle water to the cotton yarn. As a result their hands used to decay.
Even now while winding the yard the fingers get cut and bleed. But now
machines have been employed to wind the yarn and consequently women
have lost work. Now the government has reduced tax on the printed and
nylon saris. This has affected the income of the weavers. Increase in the
electricity rates per unit has adversely affected the weavers. Buying
provisions itself has become a problem now. The power-looms have
increased the child labour. Similarly rice mills too usually have more
number of dalit women employees and child labour is also very common.
Firework manufacturing industry and incense stick manufacturing
industries are some such industries. Of late girls are becoming more and
more school dropouts when compared to boys. They leave school between
5th and 7th class and start going to the factory. In the following table, the
statistics show that the dropout rate of girls is more when compared to the
boys in 1991. And the reduction in the drop out rate of girls from 1981 to
1991 is marginal; while the reduction in the drop out rate of the boys from
1981 to 1991 is substantial. This is true both at the all India as well as
Karnataka level.
Table-13 Working Children in the age Group of 5 to 14 – Rural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>1981</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1991</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table gives details in general about the child labour in the age group of 5 and 14. But if it is analyzed with the data of the SC girls who are enrolled in various school stages and also the data collected by the researcher during the field survey in the village one can at least get a feeble idea about the predicament of the SC girls. The table-14 58 gives a picture of the decreasing number of admission of SC girls to the school.

Table-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>SC girls</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SC girls</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table-9 below gives the percentage of SC girl students enrolled in various school stages at the All India and Karnataka level.

Table-15 Girls Enrolled in Various School Stages, 1993 – Rural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>I-V</th>
<th>VI-VII</th>
<th>IX-X</th>
<th>XI-XII</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>ST</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>46.15</td>
<td>44.71</td>
<td>43.45</td>
<td>40.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>41.96</td>
<td>40.47</td>
<td>40.96</td>
<td>36.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sixth all India Educational Survey, NCERT, 1999, vol 4, Table 15132, Pages 127-130. 59
The above table displays the sharp decline in the enrollment rate of the SC girls from one stage of schooling to the other. The deterioration in the enrollment can be interpreted as the other face of the drop out process. Child Labour is not the only cause for the rise in the drop out rate of the SC girls but it is one of the major causes, while other causes are discussed later in this same chapter.

With higher incidence of wage labour associated with high rate of under employment, it is naturally expected that this should culminate in low income and consumption, and hence a greater level of poverty among SCs as compared to non-SCs, both in rural and urban areas. Table-10 shows the lower status of the dalits in the monthly per capita consumption expenditure.

Table-16, Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure by social Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RURAL</th>
<th>URBAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1983-84</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1987-88</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The effects of SAP in developing countries have pointed out that even where SAP leads to growth it does not necessarily imply development. Due to liberalization big firms start dominating the economic scene. They try to cut the costs. There will be substantial increase in unemployment in both the organized and unorganized sectors of Industrial manufacturing. This will affect women both directly and indirectly. Because of liberalization cheaper imported substitutes for
indigenously manufactured goods appear. This echoes a gloomy scenario for unorganized sector. The unorganized sector is the biggest source of female employment.\textit{(Statistics should be furnished)} The census evidence points out that women are sliding down to low paying or unpaid work even in the higher paying sectors. The advancement of women is rather slow as compared to men. Many studies analyzing the patterns of women's employment in the manufacturing industries have shown that women are being excluded from most skilled jobs and are concentrated in lower paid jobs and industries. This development has two major repercussions on the Dalit women. On the one hand the pressure on the unorganized sector where majority of dalit women are employed increases resulting in further reduction in their wages. On the other hand comparatively better skilled women who, very often hail from upper castes slide down to jobs in unorganized sector due to liberalization resulting in the ousting of the Dalit women who are already marginalized and make them unemployed. This results basically from two developments. Firstly most of the Multi-Nationals are not very keen on employing women. In general their policy is to reduce the workforce, which affects the men too. But it affects the dalit woman in an unexpected manner altogether. Though dalit women have never been employed in the MNCs the women who are retrenched by the MNCs slide down to the unorganized sector and increase the already existing pressure on the unorganized sector.

In 1980’s UNICEF began to express concern at the detrimental effects of SAP on women and children and put forward the proposal for adjustment with a human face. The World Bank suggests protective policies; it does not question the Marco economic policy itself. The overall framework within which these ameliorative measures are proposed are paternalistic, treating women only as victims lacks the potential to change the subordination that women face in the economy and society.
EDUCATION

The relationship between education, caste and gender has to be interrogated in order to understand the relationship between a dalit woman, education and being unskilled. Very often caste lies at the root of these things. Caste factors run as an undercurrent in the lives of dalit women. They play an invisible havoc in shaping their decisions and choices and in shaping their temperament. It is a highly powerful cultural factor, which is deeply ingrained in the psyche of upper castes and also in the consciousness of dalits. It is more so with the dalit women who lack exposure. It breeds a feeling of superiority among the upper caste and instills a strong feeling of confidence in them. It works in an exactly opposite way with the dalits. It creates a feeling of inferiority and thereby results in lack of confidence in them.

Till India became independent Dalits were pushed regularly into occupations like scavenging, sanitation, and types of manual labour which had inherent limitations preventing them from doing anything extraordinary in terms of creating knowledge. They were not included in the differentiated spheres of production that offer the context for imagination. In other words, ghettoisation into inferiorised manual spheres, reflecting the closed character of society, resulted in the loss of confidence which is so important in developing the potential in both science and social science fields. Dalits in rural areas (undoubtedly majority of dalits even in the urban areas) are completely trapped in the ceaseless struggle for survival. The dwindling livelihood opportunities due to drastic economic changes push them more and more to the margins, which tell more on dalit women and female child.

Compared to a dalit male, a dalit female's exposure to education is comparatively very late. The dalit male's exposure itself is very recent and that too it was achieved with great difficulty.60 Because of the patriarchal
mode prevalent within the dalit mode of life, the inevitability of the female work participation due to utter poverty and the late exposure of dalit male to modernity, the exposure of a dalit female to education was inordinately delayed. In addition to it their life world, which is deeply steeped in superstitions had greater ramifications on the lives and education of a dalit female. Therefore, when the question of a dalit female's education comes, both caste and gender converge to make things problematic. For the men as well as women of other communities, the resources of the community with historically accumulated intellectual resources assured a congenial cultural context. The dalit men lacked these community resources. This doubly affected the dalit women. She could neither compete with men of her own community nor could she with the women of other communities. She is doubly handicapped. She is deprived of education because of her caste as well as gender. In this situation the concept of social security is very important and protective discrimination and affirmative action are very crucial. These are closely linked with the government or state intervention.

The password of today's economic reforms is privatization. The recent changes taking place in the field of education, which is a result of the economic paradigm of globalization and liberalization is very subtle. These changes intensify the disadvantages of a dalit woman's position in relation to education. Its impact is far reaching. More and more areas of higher education are being privatized and the concept of social justice itself is brushed aside. These are in fact the courses, which are lucrative and promising. With the role of the government shrinking enormously, the concept of social justice is relegated to oblivion. Even the policy of Reservation becomes meaningless in this context. Recently, the Supreme Court exempted the private unaided Engineering and Medical colleges from following the Roster designed by the Government regarding
admission. Consequently, the areas left for the dalits and the poor are the areas of humanities and social sciences. The idea here is not to suggest that the study of social sciences is inferior and that of professional courses is superior. But it is to suggest that, in the race between the dalits and the non-dalits the gap is really yawning and appalling and the dalits have miles to go. Very often they get only the left over.

Recently the Directorate of collegiate Education, Karnataka sent a notice. The notice has asked the Colleges running science courses in subjects like Computer Science, Bio-Technology, etc to collect Rs. 3000 from the students, apart from the regular fee. This is a real blow to the students from the depressed classes. Because of the withdrawal of subsidy, higher education has become costlier for the dalits. Dalits being lower in caste and also poor the only option left for them is social sciences. In addition to that all over Karnataka most of the government colleges in rural and semi-urban areas offer courses in humanities. And only in the urban area science, commerce and other courses are offered. In any case the dalits are late comers to the process of appropriating such opportunities. ‘They were excluded from the benefits, as they could not pass the modernist test. Now when they are ready to compete the entry, the rules of the entry have been changed from the modern to the traditional and the parochial at institutes of higher learning.’

In the case of a dalit female in addition to caste and poverty, patriarchy also contributes. Now that education has become so costly usually it is the girl who is withdrawn from the school. Sometimes there are other reasons also which force this kind of withdrawal. Sometimes it is for socio-cultural reasons. For example when a girl attains puberty she is withdrawn from the school because in rural areas they are to be sent to far off places. During the fieldwork the researcher found that absence of schools in the vicinity of the village was also one of the reasons for
increase in the drop out rate of dalit girls. Though the location of the schools in far off areas results in the withdrawal of girls from the school, the real reason is not just the distance but the day to day experience of rape and molestation experienced by dalit women and girls. The chances of dalit girls getting exposed to sexual abuse are very high. In one of the villages, during fieldwork, the researcher was told by the elderly dalit women that they were scared to send their daughters to the school in the next village because they have to pass through the agricultural fields which are remote and deserted and hence extremely unsafe. A few days ago the Karnataka Government was contemplating to close down some of the government schools in the rural areas because the strength was not substantial. They thought of retaining one-school for every two villages, which are neighbouring. In the light of the experience shared by the dalit women one can very well understand the implications of such a move on the dalit girls. During migrations also the dalit girls are withdrawn from the school while boys are left either in the hostel or in some relatives house or with the aged grand parents in the village itself.

For problems of distance and migration the Ashram schools established by the Government for the SC and ST children is presented as a solution. These Schools are of course one very important measure taken by the Karnataka Government in providing education facilities to the Dalit children who are denied of that privilege. The Report of Guruswamy Committee set up by the Government of Karnataka to study the conditions of these Ashram schools is really shocking. All the details of the committee are not furnished here. One important information highlighted in the report is quoted here. "These Ashram school hostels do not have proper facilities to protect the girl students. Safety is one missing principle there. There was an attempt to molest a girl student in Surapura village in Gulberg district. In many hostels the sanitation facilities are highly
inadequate. Very often the students have no other go but to go out to the fields for the morning ablutions which is really pathetic and leads to a lot of problems which are highly specific to the girls.66 These are of course not very big problems but certainly the ones, which prevent the girls from going to school. Very schools become very unsafe places for the dalits. In the gap of just fifteen days the daily news papers in Karnataka reported the molestation and rape of two dalit girls aged twelve and fourteen in two different villages.

These details bring out the relationship between socio-cultural factors and the economic changes. Very often economic changes aggravate the already existing socio-cultural situations and speed up the withdrawal of the girl child from the school. These economic changes intensify all the negative effects of caste (cultural) and patriarchy (gender).

**Globalization, Communalization and Dalit women.**

Whether Globalization has anything to do with communization is a very difficult question. The movements of any country – whether communist, socialist or nationalist – that aim to break out of the rules established by the globalization are ruthlessly crushed. And by destroying the secular opposition – opening the door to the alternative of religious mobilization and extremism. But Indian experience has very different tale to tell. And one such tale is the Gujarat carnage of February 2002. Different thinkers have made very significant observations about the ways through which the impact of globalization gets manifested. Or at least how different happenings of our society are indirectly speeded up and intensified by the factors created by globalization. It is extremely interesting to note that if benefits reach the weakest the last, the inconveniences and the loss first affect the weakest first. This is very true of the impact of globalization on Dalit women. The developments in Gujarat in the last one-decade make a very interesting reading in this light.
"Over the last two decades, deepening economic crisis, further accentuated by the globalisation process during the 1990's has led to the closure of over 50 textile mills only in Ahmedabad resulting in at least one-lakh workers becoming unemployed. Their struggle for survival has made them dependent on casual work. With no regular source of income and without any regular job, they, exceptions apart, have been swept by a wave of lumpenisation. The closure of textile mills has resulted in more than just massive loss of earnings and employment. Hardly less dramatic is the collapse of the social infrastructure that has accompanied it. It is certainly not a coincidence that the orgy of violence that has taken place in Ahmedabad since the end of February, seems to have reached a climax in ex-mill localities populated by social segments from which a major part of this industrial workforce used be recruited: subaltern Hindus mainly dalits and OBCs and Muslims. There has been hardly any discussion of what all this has meant for the large number of working class households who fully depend for their daily subsistence on the erratic and meager yield of their labour power. Even under the so-called normal circumstances steady employment is difficult to come by, but for more than three weeks at a stretch now these people have not been able to move around in their cumbersome search for gainful work. For many of them the regular state of deprivation in which they live has further deteriorated into destitution. Without any food reserve left and bereft of all creditworthiness, they have to survive on whatever private charities are willing dole them out. It comes as no surprise that the front organisations of the Sangh parivar were able to mobilize mercenaries from this lumpenised milieu of subaltern castes to assist in the operation of killing, burning and looting. It is the dalits who have suffered most in the little retaliation the Muslims have indulged in. The only non-Muslim relief camps are populated predominantly by dalits.
These economic changes as well as the communal clashes have affected the life of the Dalit woman very negatively. A survey from the alternative economic group shows that most of the dalit men who have lost their livelihood with the closure of the cotton mills in Ahmedabad have migrated to different other places in search of livelihood. Consequently their wives who have become the sole bread earners in the family have taken to prostitution out of helplessness and pressing burden of hunger and poverty. Now it seems a great irony that those who have always been outside the Hindu fold have been appropriated by the forces of Hindutva to protect the cause of Hinduism. These youth who had already been lumpenised are now criminalized. When these people had been reduced from deprivation to destitution due to economic factors, most of them had been forced to strengthen the economy of their household by bringing former dependents, women and also young children into the laboring process. As it has already been pointed out many of them have become sex workers with no other alternative left out. Now with the outbreak of communal violence they have been totally criminalized and have been turned into anti-social elements. Again the women bear the brunt of this because with their men in police custody they have to look after everything. The whole process apart from pushing dalits and dalit women in particular into further marginalization and impoverishment strengthens a cultural politics, which has always been prevalent. The greatest myths are always been in our society about the dalit men and women. Dalit men are supposed to be are bad, have greater tendencies of criminalization, and are of bad conduct. They are even supposed more prone to thieving and corruption. Similarly dalit women are supposed to be of loose morals. It is important that they are not born so, but are made because of various economic and socio-cultural factors. It becomes a vicious circle of the one strengthening the other. While it is useful and profitable for some people to
have them explained in this fashion. Several others take these ideas for granted because they appear self-evident. As a result an identity for the dalit is constructed which is neither his/her own making nor his/her choice, but which is forced upon them and over a period of time projected to be their nature in reality. In addition to that these economic factor encourage further ghettoization of dalit women within their communities, which are also patriarchal and oppressive. When they fall back more and more on their communities, the possibility of transcending their community identity and identifying with larger issue and thereby the possibility of choosing a different identity grows feeble. As a result the caste identity becomes primary to her than her gender. As a result instead of transcending caste and thereby identity politics, a dalit woman becomes more and more circumscribed within her community. This further reduces the possibilities of her emancipation because neither can she identify herself with other larger emancipatory struggles nor can she identify herself with the women’s movement.

Marx Eleanor and Edward Aveling, Quoted. in The Political Economy of Women’s Liberation, by Margaret Benston, Sep 1969, Monthly Review.

Boserup Ester, quoted in Gender Inequality and Cultural Differences, susan Moller Okin, June 94, Political Theory.


Dasgupta and Partha, An Enquiry into well being and destitution, oxford, clarendon.


Sengupta Arjun, Development Policy and the right to development, Frontline, March 2, 2002.
8. Sengupta Arjun, Development Policy and the right to development, Frontline, March 2, 2002
15. National Human Development Report 2001, NSS 38th round on Household Consumer Expenditure, Table 2.8
25. Field work in Hosahalli in Malavalli Taluq, Kanenoor in Heggadevana Kote, and Nanjanagood. One noteworthy information is that of late because of acute poverty and crop failure women of other castes who are also marginal farmers are taking up the work of sowing, weeding, etc. which so far only the dalit women used to do. But this is still not a very common phenomenon
26. Respective Ministries and Departments, quoted from Chauhan S. Poonam, Lengthening Shadows Status of Women in India , Manak Publication , Delhi, P 118, 1996
Fieldwork at Nanjangood, Interview with the dalit female labourers who have lost their livelihood as a result of the closure of the Sujata Textile Mills in Nanjanagood town.

Commercial crops have always been cultivated in our country. But in the last decade it has increased enormously due to various changes taking place in local and international markets. The process of total shift to commercial crop cultivation is much more visible in the last decade.

Village Level Compilation Form, 2002-2003, Hosalli Government Middle School,

Interview with the member of the Mahila Sangrama group who has worked intensively in the villages of Nanjanagood. 3-4-2001. Observations made during field work in Kanenoor in Nanjanagood Taluq, 22-9-2001.

Field Work in Hosahalli village in Malavilai Taluq.

Kanenoor is a village near Heggadadevana Kote area near Mysore District. It is one of the villages the researcher has chosen for fieldwork.

Rao Vijayendra, Experiments in Participatory Economics, Economic and Political weekly, May 18, 2002

The experience narrated by the dalit women of Kanenoor village during the fieldwork.

Beechanahalli is a village near Nanjanagood town.

Data gathered during fieldwork at Hosalli and Kanenoor.

Dalit women’s narrations gathered during fieldwork in Hosalli.


Fieldwork in Nanjanagood, ICRA – Purushottam, 4-12-2001.

Fieldwork, Hosahalli village,

Fieldwork, Hosahalli village.

Phillipes Ann, From Inequality to Difference. "Fraser Nancy, She claims that the most material economic institutions as having a constitutive irreducible cultural dimension and even the most discursive cultural practice having a constitutive irreducible political-economic dimension. Iris Young tells that they produce or reinforce one another."


Field Information gathered and provided by Venkatesh, Biravalli, (K.R.Pet Taluq, Mandya) 2-02-2002.


Susan Moller Okin, Gender Inequality and Cultural Differences.


Roy Mandira, Gender bias in the corporate world. The Hindu, October 22, 1997.

Gopal Singh, Shyam P Sharma and Prem Bharadwaj, Structural Adjustment and Marginalization of Female Workers in India, in 'Women and Globalization' (ed )Pam Rajput and Hemlata Swarup, 1994

Fieldwork in Dadadahalli near Nanjanagood taluq. Usually when the dalit girls attain puberty they are withdrawn from the school temporarily, and after a few weeks that becomes permanent. In addition to that the constant fear of sexual abuse which is more
common for a dalit girl because of her caste accelerate the process of becoming a school drop out.


58 Data collected during fieldwork in Hosahalli.


60 During the field work in the Hosahalli Village in Malavalli Taluq, an elderly man aged around 92 or so recounted his experience way back in 1924 when there was a school in the village where students could study up to third standard. The Scheduled castes were denied admission into that school. When some of the enterprising dalit young men including the narrator brought it to the notice of Sir Mirza Ismail who was then the Diwan of the Royal State of Mysore. Their intention was to educate at least their children even though they themselves were deprived of education. The Diwan ordered the authorities to allow the Scheduled Castes to the school. But the Lingayats (a dominant upper caste community in Karnataka) protested by closing the school. Finally through the interference of the Government the Dalits of the village were admitted to the school.

61 Fieldwork in Dadadahalli, Nanjanagood Taluq, Mysore District. The elderly women in the village told that usually girls are not sent to school and allowed to continue their education once they attain puberty. As a rule their education ends there. During the first three months of post-puberty period they are nursed like women soon after the childbirth.


63 Fieldwork in Beeravalli, a village near Pandavapura in Mandya District in Karnataka.

64 The Guruprasad Committee Report, Quoted in 'Sambuddha', Page 10, July 1995

65 Jan Breman, Communal upheaval as Resurgence of social Darwinism, EPW, April 20, 2002.

66 Balgopal K, Reflections on Gujarat Pradesh of Hindu Rastra, EPW, June 1, 2002.