CHAPTER - VI

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
AND SUGGESTIONS
The study began by stating some of the changes that have taken place in Indian society which have affected the Scheduled Castes favourably. It also examined some of the ways in which the Scheduled Castes responded to these changes and began to assert their rights. In this process they are also forging a new identity and a new vision for themselves. The very change of their name is indication of this. The degrading term 'Untouchables' was changed by the British Administration into 'Depressed Classes'. M.K. Gandhi called them 'Harijans'. The British Indian Government defined them as the 'Scheduled Castes'. Finally it was left for the 'Untouchables' themselves to coin a new name for themselves, 'Dalits'. They think of themselves as 'Dalit Panthers' (Wounded Tigers) which reminds them of the Black Panthers of the United States. One hears of Dalit literature, Dalit Sahitya Academies, Dalit Organizations, Dalit Women and Dalit periodicals to mention only a few. The term Dalit is no more another name for untouchables. It connotes dignity, pride and the self-identity of people.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the doyen of downtrodden sections of the society, taught untouchables of India to rise to full stature of their growth. For the social, economic and educational upliftment of the Scheduled Castes, he established 'Bahiskrit Hitakarins Sabha' in 1924. At Mahad Conference in 1927, he questioned the rationality behind
showing discrimination towards downtrodden section of the society by the caste Hindus.

To repair the damage caused by old age tradition of untouchability, the framers of Indian Constitution inserted a special Article (17) to abolish untouchability. Apart from this, the fathers of the Indian Constitution also inserted a number of provisions in various parts of the Constitution to safeguard the interests the Scheduled Castes. The most important among them were reservations in public services, representative bodies and so on. With these safeguards, the conditions of Scheduled Caste people improved to a certain extent and much is needed to be done.

As per 2001 Census the total population of Scheduled Castes in India is 166.6 million. They constitute 16.2 percent of the total population of India. But the proportion of Scheduled Castes population had been declined from 16.48 percent in 1991 to 16.2 percent in 2001. Among 28 States of India, 11 States have more than 6 millions of SC population. The highest number of Scheduled Caste people was living in Uttar Pradesh State, which was followed by West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. In case Scheduled Castes population proportion, Punjab tops the list with 28.9 percent, which was followed by Himachal Pradesh with 24.7 percent.

Along with the ever growing complexity of the society, the magnitude of social problems are also increasing day to day. Hence
the importance of social welfare agencies becoming very crucial to promote the well-being of the different sections of the society. Initially, social welfare began as a religious and humanitarian activity to provide relief to the poor, under-privileged and handicapped sections of the society. Gradually social welfare emerged as a systematic and organized service and ultimately social welfare became a profession to some individuals and Non-Governmental Organisations. The sense of professionalisation of social welfare was started in Britain by Charity Organisation Society.

In a narrow sense, social welfare is considered the amelioration of the handicapped, the deprived, the poor, the orphan, the destitute, the neglected and the unfortunate victims of unfavourable circumstances. In a broader sense, social welfare includes organized activity aimed at helping individuals or communities to meet their basic needs and at promoting their well-being in harmony with the interests of their families and communities. The only state-run institutions were statutory agencies in the field of social defence.

Before Independence, the government's role in social welfare was chiefly restricted to the provision of legislative framework. As the colonial rulers limited themselves to revenue collection and maintaining law and order, social welfare was primarily left to voluntary action. During the freedom movement, the realm of social reform and
social action were merged and the very same persons were engaged in both.

In post-independent period the national leaders felt the unevenness of voluntary performance and the need of governmental support for social welfare. The fundamental law of the land became the basis for carrying social welfare programmes for the upliftment of various sections of the society. It is generally assumed that social welfare is a state subject and Union Government has a peripheral role. But a close observation of the seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution makes it clear that social welfare subjects are scattered between the centre and state governments. Some subjects are under the responsibility of both.

With the establishment of Central Social Welfare Board in 1953 marked the beginning of the entry of the state in the field of social welfare. But its role in the field of social welfare is not up to the mark. In 1956 Central Advisory Board for Harijan Welfare was constituted, it continued to function up to 1969. In the meantime, the Department of Social Security was set up at the union level. Social welfare related subjects of Ministry of Education, Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Labour were brought under the purview of the new department. Within two years the Department of Social Security was renamed as the Department of Social Welfare. Upto late 1970s the social welfare was mostly confined to the welfare of women, children and physically
handicapped. On August 24, 1979, the Department of Social Welfare was elevated to the status of an independent Ministry. In the year 1985-86, the Ministry of Social Welfare was bifurcated into the Department of Women and Child Development and the Department of Welfare. In May 1988 the name of the Ministry was changed as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. The Ministry is responsible for all round development of Scheduled Castes.

With regard to state level machinery, the Social Welfare Department of Andhra Pradesh is responsible for overall development of Scheduled Castes. The Social Welfare Department of Andhra Pradesh is a well organized department. At the Secretariat level it is headed by Minister for Social Welfare. The Commission of Social Welfare is the administrative head of the department. He is assisted by the Additional Commissioner, Additional Director, six Zonal Joint Directors, seven Deputy Directors, three Assistant Directors, and two Accounts Officers etc.

At the district level the implementation of all social welfare schemes is under the supervision of District Collectors in the districts with the assistance of the Deputy Director (SW), District Social Welfare Officer and Assistant Accounts Officers. In addition, there are 165 Assistant Social Welfare Officers, who are assisting the Deputy Directors in the executive functions at the field level.
The State of Andhra Pradesh occupies fourth position, with regard to Scheduled Castes population. In terms of proportion of Scheduled Caste population the State stands at 11th position along with neighbouring Karnataka State. Of 23 districts of the state, 15 districts registered highest proportion of SC population. In terms of actual SC population East Godavari district registered highest SC population. In terms of percentage Nellore district tops the list. In case of literacy rates they are far beyond the state average literacy rates both in the case of males and females. As per 2001 census nearly 17.18 percent of SC population lives in the urban areas as against 27.3 percent of the general population living in urban areas. It means that more than 82 percent of the SC population living in rural areas. According to 2001 Census that, nearly half of the SC population are engaged in agriculture and allied activities.

As per the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment) Act, 1976, there are 61 communities, which are recognized as Scheduled Castes in Andhra Pradesh. While the Scheduled Castes comprise over 16.19 percent of the state population, their proportion among the poverty groups is much larger. More than two-thirds of the bonded labourers are Scheduled Castes. Keeping in view of their deplorable conditions various welfare schemes and programmes were implemented by union as well as State government.
For the comprehensive development of the Scheduled Castes, a special programme known as Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) was initiated during the Sixth Five-Year Plan period. The Plan later extended to urban areas in 1972. The SCSP is based on the philosophy that the efforts for the development of Scheduled Castes have to be made in every sector of the plan and every department and agency implementing the plan programmes.

It is widely recognized by the scholars that there is a close relationship between education and poverty. As most of the Scheduled Caste population living below poverty line, the Government of Andhra Pradesh framed and implementing various schemes for the educational upliftment of the Scheduled Castes. About 70 percent of hostel seats were reserved to Scheduled Caste students in Social Welfare Hostels. For the improvement of results in these hostels, the Government of Andhra Pradesh organizing special hostels in all the districts of the State since 1992. The special hostels scheme has yielded good results as the pass percentage of these hostel boarders is above the state average.

For the students, who are not availing hostel facilities, the State Government sanctioning different scholarship for the educational development of Scheduled Caste students. Besides general scholarships, the government sanctioning special scholarship under ‘Bright Students Scheme’ and ‘Scholarship to the children of those
engaged in unclean occupation’. To encourage the students of Scheduled Castes for higher education the government sanctioning Post-Matric Scholarships for day scholars as well as boarders. For Research Scholars belonging to Scheduled Castes the government providing stipends for data collection.

The Government of India had sanctioned the 'Integrated Scheme of Book Banks' during the year 1978-79, for the use of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe students. As per the norms of Government of India allotting one set of books within a cost of Rs.7500/- per set per course is provided to two students of Medical and Engineering Colleges. Later the scheme has been extended to the students in Veterinary, Agriculture, Polytechnic and all Post-Graduate Courses. In order to prepare the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students and scholars to face the competitive examinations A.P. Study Circle was established to give coaching for competitive examinations. In every district headquarter these Study Circles were established and they are selecting meritorious students for giving coaching. Last but not least is the scheme of Special Public Libraries for Scheduled Castes. At present there are 100 SCP Libraries in the State, which are providing all types of competitive nature of reading material to the Scheduled Caste students.

In rural areas large number of Scheduled Castes was dependent on agriculture and allied activities. As such the State
Government implementing various schemes for the well-being Scheduled Caste farmers. The Work Plan on Macro Management Basis is a centrally sponsored scheme, which is intended to improve production technology, technology dissemination, reclamation of Alkali soils etc. The other agricultural development schemes implementing in the state were Integrated Scheme of Oil Seeds, Pulses, Oil Palm, Maize (ISOPOM); Intensive Cotton Development Programme (ICDP-Cotton) Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme etc. In these schemes top most priority has been given to Scheduled Caste farmers.

The Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) scheme was initiated in 1999, with the objective of bringing poor families above the poverty line, by providing them income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy. Under this scheme forty percent of allocations were earmarked for Scheduled Castes. Under the National Old Age Pensions Scheme the government is providing pensions to the old age persons of 65 years and above, destitutes having little or no mean subsistence at Rs.200 per month. At present 6, 21,360 Scheduled Caste people are benefiting by the scheme. The SC families in the state are getting benefits under National Family Benefit Scheme. In the year 2006-2007 about 11,200 Scheduled Caste families were benefited by the Scheme.

For the entrepreneurial development of the Scheduled Castes the State Government is providing various incentives in the
form of subsidies, loans etc. The role of the Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Castes Co-operative Finance Corporation (APSFC) is laudable in the overall development of Scheduled Castes in the state. The Corporation is functioning through 23 District Scheduled Castes Service Cooperative Societies. It is implementing various schemes for social and economic development of the Scheduled Castes.

For the removal of the old age tradition of untouchability a separate cell in the police department known as 'Inspector General of Police, Protection Civil Rights Cell' (IGP PCR) is functioning in the state to enquire into the cases of untouchability and for proper implementation of Protection of Civil Rights Act 1956 and SC ST (POA) Act of 1989. The State Government is providing monetary relief and free legal aid to the victims of atrocities. The State Government is also encouraging inter-caste marriages for social integration and social reform with an objective of eradication of caste system in the society. For the furtherance of the interests of Scheduled Castes community the State Government appointed A.P. State Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in 2003.

The conditions of Scheduled Castes in the district are same as it exists in other districts of Rayalaseema, Telangana and Coastal regions of the State. Majority of them are agricultural labourers and small farmers. Very few of them are labourers in industrial and construction sectors.
According to 2001 Census, the Scheduled Caste population in the district was 514,896. Out of them 2,63,291 were males and 2,51,605 females. The Scheduled Castes form 14.19 percent to the total population of the district. Among the various Scheduled Castes, the Madigas constitute 84.7 percent (435,746), it was followed by Malas they constitute 12.5 percent (64,747) and the other generic castes constitute 2.8 percent (14,403). More than 70 percent of the Scheduled Castes people living in rural areas. As per the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) reports that nearly 95 percent of Scheduled Caste families were living Below Poverty Line (BPL).

There are untouchability cases reported in the district. Almost all dalit organizations are fighting for this cause of untouchability and they are bringing the cases to the notice of the concerned officials. Factionism is an important feature in the district. The Scheduled Castes living in faction villages many a time are becoming victims of the faction politics. It is important to note that Jogini system existed in some parts of the district.

The District SC Service Cooperative Society Ltd., Anantapur has been taking up schemes both in the Agriculture sector, Animal Husbandry sector as well as ISB (Industry, Service and Business) sectors. The Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Castes Cooperative Finance Corporation is implementing the scheme of purchase of Agricultural
land since 1982 for the benefit of landless agricultural labourers belonging to SC community. Government assigned waste lands are developing under land development programme. At least 10 mandals starting with the mandal having highest number of SC assigned lands will be short-listed and in each mandal at least 5 villages can be short-listed on the same basis. The allocations for the land development scheme are very meager and negligible in the district.

After merger of JRY scheme with SGSY the district authorities were implementing Minor Irrigation programs duly mobilizing resources in the form of Corporation subsidy. Bore wells are being dug in the lands of small and marginal SC farmers with electricity feasibility. The minimum extent to be considered under each bore well is 5 acres and above and minimum number of beneficiaries are 3 and above.

The socio-economic welfare programmes or schemes are essential for the overall growth and development of the SC people. It is essential to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of such programmes and schemes, which not only provide employment opportunities to the poor SC people during the lean period of employment in the rural areas, but also create and extend essential rural amenities to facilitate the development of SC Community. One of the most important objectives of these programmes is to bring them into mainstream of national life. The following are the major findings of the study.
The review of various SC welfare programmes reveals that nothing substantial has been done and that the daily wage giving programmes are not implemented properly.

Investigation also suggests that the largest number of beneficiaries have been provided non-productive assets under various welfare schemes.

It has been reported that while selecting the beneficiaries for various welfare schemes the prescribed procedure and norms have not been followed rigorously.

The study reveals that the welfare schemes have little impact or no impact on nearly 38 percent of the beneficiaries income generation.

In case of employment generation, the welfare programmes have profound influence. It means that, there is a wide ranging gap between income generation and employment generation.

About one-third beneficiaries reported that they are still living under the clutches of indebtedness, borrowed from money-lenders.

Fundamentally, the welfare schemes had been intended to provide a package of benefits related services and assets through guaranteed income, but this was not the case as seen in sample villages.

The assets given to the beneficiaries have not been able to uplift them to better standard of living.
SUGGESTIONS

• District administration must administer the programmes properly, whether it is question of the selection of beneficiaries or the problems are being faced in getting the loans under self-employment schemes, officers must provide adequate integrated support services to the beneficiaries. This will strengthen their monitoring mechanism also. They must not restrict themselves only up to achieving the targets.

• Daily wages oriented programmes, must be given priority and should be continued throughout the lean period in rural areas.

• As irrigation facilities are essential for assured cultivation relevant schemes must be given priority.

• Beneficiaries should also be supported with such programs that provide agricultural inputs especially machinery like tractors, power pillars and implements.

• Only such schemes that have business orientation and market base should be implemented or given priority. In general, schemes should be based on local needs and sustainability in local conditions, they must not be imposed from above.

• In order to reduce the gap between the income generation and employment opportunities, livable and minimum wages should be ensured.
• The areas where Scheduled Castes population is much higher than the national/state average at least some addition percentage needs to be increased, so that SC people can improve that income generation through bankable schemes and not to depend all the time on government assistance and sponsored programmes.

• Under some welfare schemes like daorifying land purchase scheme etc., if a unit is given, suitable integrated service packages also to be given.

• There is need to uplift those families, which are in bottom (poorest of the poor) as per their living conditions and resources available with them. The each village-wise target to be covered each year and by what time all the families would be covered a perspective village planning must be adopted without any further delay.

• There is a strong need of creating more awareness about SC welfare programmes amongst all beneficiaries, officers and elected members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions through conducted Workshops, Training Programmes and Camps in the villages from time to time.

The basic motto of welfare programmes is the greatest good of the greatest number who is not applicable in predicament society, become there is a lot of corruption, negligency towards marginalized people in general and Scheduled Castes in particular. After formulation of any welfare programme political executive should
give a sort of motivation to civil servants for effective implementation of these welfare programmes in the district of Anantapur for upliftment of Scheduled Castes. On the other hand the authenticated authorities concerned in Anantapur district should take appropriate steps and see that the programmes relating SCs should reach at their doorsteps without any delay, dilemma, difficult and difference.