<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Groups</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Statement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Appraisal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origins in Caste Society</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Freedom Movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Anxieties</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandhian Alternatives</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing Upper Caste Ethos</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanskritization Effect</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ameliorative Measures</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Strategies</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contours of Discrimination</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter Group Relations</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicts and Social Change</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrating 'Minority Groups'</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Concern</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The poverty groups:

The poor in society constitute a significant client group of social work. The frequency with which a concern for poverty is expressed both in professional and popular writings has now reached a point where all kinds of programmes are justified in the name of eradicating it. Virtually every government amongst the third world countries has made a commitment to abolish it.

Interest in poverty groups both in urban and rural contexts has been engaging social scientists, planners, politicians, bureaucrats and welfare persons in a continuous search for ameliorative measures to meet the problems presented to them by the members of these poverty groups. Interest in these groups has not come about as an accidental phenomenon. People in need, distress and deprivation have always been central to the issues in welfare planning that the state is committed to, as a consequence of this, concern about socioeconomic uplift of those who are weak and poor assumes significance.

Democratic societies like India wherein popular governments are voted to power at regular intervals,
politicians and others connected with the establishment are obliged to champion the cause of the electorate, a majority of which is rural in habitat, agricultural by occupation and is also to be noted for substantial numbers of Hindu outcaste substratum.

Scientific studies on Poverty Groups in India began in the early sixties. (Ministry of Community Development, Government of India, 1962; Dardha, 1970; Arora, 1970; Fonseca, 1971; Himans, 1971; Cjha, 1971; Chandran, 1972; Da Costa, 1971; Das Amirthamadu, 1974.) Official bodies such as the Planning Commission, the Reserve Bank of India, the National Sample Survey Organisation, the National Council for Agricultural and Economic Research were all involved in studying the standards of life in Urban and Rural Contexts. Studies of the extent and degree of Poverty in India and Macro-level Surveys, Studies on Special Poverty Groups, mainly the landless Labour, and Weaker Sections within the Caste System, attempted at pointing the number of poor and determining their rural and urban background. In spite of several limitations and contradictions within their findings, these have been the first Social Studies of this massive problem Poverty. In unmistakable terms they brought forward the fact that there exists widespread Poverty in India.
India does not have a total programme of Social Security covering her population. Also she does not have a Programme of Income maintenance for its lower groups in the population. Yet there are programmes of development which if fully implemented, would provide some measures of Economic Security to a substantial section of the Poor. These programmes do not bear an apparent similarity to the Social Security provisions of the developed countries. But if they are properly implemented, they will have the consequence of providing additional income to the low income families in the rural areas and will in this sense serve as measures of social security.

While it is not within the purview of this study to review all the anti-poverty programmes in the Indian context, a discussion on certain measures created by the Government to meet the problems of the vulnerable groups will serve as a background for the study. The anti-poverty programmes in India can be considered to have started on a systematic basis with the first Five Year Plan. The Plan Document declare the object of Planning as provision of the basic necessities to all persons within the community and at the same time, to emphasise the place of human values in economic and social development. Pandhanami (1975) feels that 'where economic and social factors have such an intimate bearing
on one another, it is difficult to draw too sharp a
distinction between programmes for promoting economic and
social development'. Restricting the scope of this
enquiry to rural poverty situation, an examination of the
opportunities created for the underprivileged people
reveals that the Rural Banks Programme was offered throughout
the country. Programme Evaluation Organisation of the
Planning Commission attributed the failure of this
programme to a number of reasons among which red-tapism,
lack of availability of funds in time, lack of proper
co-ordination, absence of forethought in selection of the
projects etc. are the more important ones. Amongst the
formalities for a village body to initiate action under
this programme were as many as 71 forms which need to be
filled before initiating a project. Consequently as
against the planned outlay of Rs.150 crores, only Rs.19
crores were spent. (Panchami, 1975; 62)

The main occupation in Rural India is agriculture.
Some
There has been a breakthrough and innovation in the Indian
Agricultural Technology. However, this has not brought
down any satisfactory solutions to the problems of poverty
and wide economic disparities in the rural sector. This
agricultural technology was confined to areas which had
perennial and assured sources of irrigation, while vast
waste lands could not be cultured and made cultivable.

The Fourth Five Year Plan admitted that this technology added further dimension to disparity between those who have the resources to make use of it, and those who have not. A polarisation emerged between the more privileged and the less privileged in the rural sector; the privilege in this instance relating to the tools of development, the Plan contended. (Planning Commission, 1970: 149.) This new agricultural technology did produce striking results but often these results were achieved by larger landholders who would have continued to be prosperous relatively at any point of time, with or without the technological inputs, than those who are marginal and small holders of land and those of them who do not possess the essential requirements of a viable cultivator.

This leads us to a further question as to what constitutes a viable cultivator’s profile? Three essential requirements of a viable cultivator are:

1) Know-how of the latest technological developments.
2) The availability of inputs such as water, seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and machinery.
3) Credit to obtain required inputs. While farmers with medium and large holdings have resources to invest in modern inputs, and have the capacity to take the production risks, the
farmers who have small and scattered holdings with meagre or no resources at their command are in a disadvantaged position in this development situation and many amongst these sections of people belong to the outcaste stratum of the Hindu society.

Problem Statement:

One of the major tasks confronting India as well as the third world countries is the problem of bringing about improvement in the lives of the weaker sections of society or the 'have-nots'. A unique problem faced in the Indian situation is that measures and means adopted should be acceptable to the vast majority of the people or the 'haves'. Any excessive zeal in tackling any problems pertaining to weaker sections, can have political and social repercussions, as those who control the means of development mostly belong to the higher castes in the caste hierarchy and owing to its ascriptions even as a class they come from better off sections in the society.

As a target group amongst the poor strata of India the scheduled caste group constitutes a little over one-fifth of the Indian population according to 1961 figures. In spite of constitutional guarantees, legislations and development programmes they are still the poorest among our
poor. Over the last 30 years, welfare programmes have been launched to meet the special needs of this group. They comprise reservations in educational institutions, preferential treatment in employment at recruitment and promotional levels, entrepreneurship development through economic assistance and other programmes like allotment of houses, housing loans and agricultural loans, subsidies, etc. The Constitution of India provides for a number of safeguards for the scheduled castes. All these safeguards have apparently been provided to facilitate the implementation of directive principles of state policy contained in the Article 46 of the Constitution which reads as follows:

"The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation."

These safeguards provide inter alia, for representation in Parliament and in state legislatures, appointments of ministers in charge of tribal welfare in a few states where the tribal population is substantial, appointment of a minister in charge of the welfare of the autonomous regions and districts in Assam, representation in the central and state services, abolition of untouchability,
throwing open of the Hindu religious institutions, special provisions for the social education and economic advancement, banning of traffic in human beings and forms of bonded labour, appointment of a special officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the scheduled castes, etc.

In order to assure a minimum standard of living, the foremost requirements of the weaker sections are full employment, housing, clean drinking water, education, health, protection from economic exploitation and freedom from social disabilities. The problems of the weaker sections are too big and complex; a gigantic task to be overcome within the span of a single Five Year Plan. But the compulsions of the present situation dictate that the country's development policies be so oriented as to speed up the process of development of these people and fulfill their expectations for a better standard of living.

The problems of the scheduled castes are different from those of the scheduled tribes for at least one reason, namely that the scheduled castes form an integral part of the Hindu and Sikh society and are distributed all over the country mixed up with their neighbours. In contrast, the tribes are more or less gathered together in some of the remote areas of the country and their economic,
social and cultural relationship with the peasant population of the rest of the country is more limited in character. As the scheduled castes form a part of the caste system, their problems can be appreciated or even solved only in relation to the other castes. 'Untouchability' is a custom by means of which the upper castes kept them away at a distance and yet gave them a place which is subordinate within the system. This custom was successfully attacked by reformers and social thinkers and remains abolished by law. However, it is in vogue in its overt and covert forms even today.

The scheduled castes live predominantly in rural India and a major thrust of the development programme is to bring about awareness of development as well as preparation for and participation in change. Many of the programmes for development during the last 50 years and over have been taken up to promote socioeconomic mobility of these groups.

Questions have been raised: How have these groups responded to their situations of deprivation? What significant measures have been taken up under the auspices of welfare planning? What ultimately has been the response to such welfare measures? To these questions we add: How strong has been the commitment of the larger society of the
Hindu caste majority to uplift the minority group of scheduled castes? How sincere has been the commitment of the state to the weaker sections in terms of the implementational activities of its manpower.

What has been and what could be the role of welfare personnel in this important development task? This work studies these questions and attempts to delineate the scope of each of these areas.

In the development context of the dimensions of the scheduled caste group's awareness, readiness and participation in social change and its impact on the amelioration of the client situation assumes critical significance for the profession of social work with its defined activities which often tackle the problem situations in terms of the "target groups" and deal with them at micro or grass root levels. An appraisal of the problem of the scheduled caste group assumes importance here.

Development appraisal:

As mentioned earlier, the programmes of development for the weaker sections have been going on for the last three decades and more. However, an appraisal in terms of the benefit reaped by the scheduled castes in India is not an easy task. The difficulties a researcher has to
face in understanding such a task are numerous.

First, there has not been any attempt so far to provide a comparative or summing up review of the development that has taken place in this field of development vis-a-vis the conditions that prevailed at the initial benchmark survey position (1946-1947). There are thus no references to fall back upon. The other difficulty relates to the validity of the data that one requires in order to arrive at the comparison of the two positions mentioned above, for there have been few studies in this field, and even if some data are available their validity is often questioned by the militant sections of the scheduled castes. Although this is not a historical review study, no treatment of the theme of scheduled caste development can be complete unless one makes some reference to the origin of the phenomenon known as scheduled castes.

Origins in Caste Society:

Hindu society subscribes to the Varna theory which divides the Hindus into four castes namely, the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras. Divided on the basis of their occupations, the Brahmans performed priestly and teaching functions, the Kshatriyas worked for
the defence of the state and kingdom, the Vaiyvas were involved in trading and merchandice and the Sudras performed the production line functions in the agricultural occupation. The Sudras in short, were the working classes in the ancient society. The first two were supposed to be the upper castes and as such elites also. The others, Vaiyvas and Sudras in particular, were supposed to be the oppressed.

Each caste group was autonomous, endogamous and a self-governing unit maintaining a scrupulous social distance, prescribed by scriptures, zealously guarded. Vertical integration of the Hindu society was rendered almost impossible. Though marriages across caste lines are mentioned in ancient Indian scriptures like the Puranas and Dharma Shastras, but they seem to have been the exception, rather than the rule. Apparently, such marriages did not usually carry positive sanctions.

(Greisenes, 1975: 116)

There was however a fifth group, the one that lay outside the four pillar ed structure of the Hindu society. It comprised the untouchables. They were considered impure and low. According to Edwin Olcott (1944), this outcastes substratum had an estimated 40-70 million persons categorised as outcastes, depressed classes and
untouchables around the year 1931. Those were forbidden to use schools, temples, hotels, theatres and even tax supported roads. Olcott believes that these groups mainly descended from ancient people that had inhabited India before the invasions of the Mediterranean and Aryan speaking people. (Olcott, 1944: 643). The touch of the untouchable was considered 'polluting'. A twelve-year-old Brahmin was considered equal in intellect to an 80-year-old untouchable. (Gupta, 1976: 85).

Sugata Bas Gupta (1976) eloquently says,

"A strange theory of pollution, of purity and impurity, of certain people living in segregation from others, of people being denied access to knowledge and human conditions of life, and a number of other fine principles of segregation, isolation, dominance, exploitation and control hold the five (sic) pillared Hindu social structure together in a strange relationship of ritual and hate; more, of the hate than of ritual."

The untouchables however did unclean jobs and were virtually non-citizens and held no political rights. Even today the (ex)untouchables attend to scavenging, leather tanning, chappal making, cattle sheds and manual labour of agriculture. Sugata Bas Gupta sees the caste system of the ancient Hindu society as a rare, sophisticated and definitive device for the maintenance of a vertically oppressive, elitist, political force that enabled the upper
castes to rule, by keeping all others at bay. Reduced to a position of poverty and serfdom even today a majority of the agricultural labour, who produce food and raw materials for the nation belong to this category.

There are theories that explain the origin of the castes. Some claim that caste system is a result of the confrontation that had taken place once upon a time between the Aryans and the Dravidians (Oloott, 1944). Others find the caste an extension of the guild system wherein occupations are attached to a group. At this juncture it is pertinent to discuss the dimensions of the caste system. Stratification, pluralism and interaction were essentially the bases upon which caste systems were defined in a cross-cultural context. A caste system according to Gerald D. Berreman (1967),

"Occurs where a society is made up of birth ascribed groups which are hierarchically ordered and culturally distinct."

The hierarchy entails differential evaluation rewards and association "In its interactional sense - the sense of differential association, a caste system is a system of birth ascribed groups, each of which comprises for its members the maximum limit of status - equal interaction between all, of which, interaction is consistently hierarchical" (Berreman, 1967: 51). To be a good Hindu,
a man may believe anything or nothing but he must fulfill his caste obligations (Gloott, 1944: 648), and this essentially leads us to the hierarchy based on birth and socioeconomic interdependence.

Indian Freedom Movement: Minority anxieties

Before India attained her independence three alternative policies were thought of: (1) Isolation, (2) Assimilation and (3) Integration. To the then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, the policies of Isolation and Assimilation appeared unfeasible after independence. He wanted the weaker sections to retain distinctive identity while becoming more fully integrated into larger society. (Shapar, 1977, viii)

The beginning of the freedom movement brought in a great deal of uncertainty to two important communities namely the Muslims as a minority religious group in a predominantly Hindu caste and religion dominated society on one hand, and the 'Untouchable substratum' which was evenly paying a heavy price for being a part of the Hindu caste system and continued to be burdened with unclean jobs in a state of virtual non-citizenship, devoid of any political rights on the other.

The upper caste Hindus and elite amongst the Muslims were in the fray. Together they represented a political
triangle in which the British played a most dominant role. Some of these members opposed the British and others supported them. Strangely enough this process of political development helped both of them to consolidate their own economic and social positions. Then arrived a stage when it became clear to the vocal Muslims, those of them led by Mohd. Ali Jinnah that a time might come when the British would quit India, and in the eventuality of the power being transferred to the majority of the Indians, the upper caste Hindus would rule the country.

It was on the basis of this developing feeling of insecurity that Jinnah claimed the establishment of a separate state for the Indian Muslims.

The Scheduled Caste too as a Hindu caste minority group at a certain stage of Indian Modern History became vocal in expressing their own concern about their community's future. The general poverty and fear of political dominance by the upper caste Hindus in the eventuality of the transfer of power from the British to the upper caste Hindu elite, and the fear of ostracisation inflicted by the varna society brought the scheduled caste groups into defensive postures.

"Only few people realise," said Ambedkar, "that a society can practice tyranny and oppression against
individuals in far greater degree than a government can", and that "the means and scope that are open to the society for oppression are more extensive than those that are open to the government; also they are more effective. Political tyranny is nothing compared to social tyranny." (Ambedkar, 1943). Alarmed by the prospect that this tyranny might well become systematic once the British leave India, the Scheduled Castes were at one stage almost opting for voluntary alienation from the mainstream had not Gandhi intervened in the process of this estrangement. It was he who stopped the tide and tried to nip the separatist tendencies in the bud. It is important at this point, to review the developing feelings within the Hindu ethos and mounting public opinion also in relation to the subjects of the minority outcaste substratum.

Gandhian alternatives:

Gandhi named the untouchables 'Harijans' – the children of God. The educated amongst the untouchables, particularly the militant ones did not take this new nomenclature very kindly. They wondered why they have been singled out to be the children of God. When the untouchables were specially mentioned, did it not merely mean that attempts were being made to make their conditions tolerable rather than destroy the system which brod
inequality? (Burnam, 1974; 62). Gandhi in 1921 wrote in Young India:

"I consider the removal of untouchability as a most powerful factor in the process of attainment of Swaraj."

Uplift of the untouchables entered as an important item in Bardoli Programme of constructive work drawn up in 1922.

Changing upper caste ethos:

In the same period Gandhi wrote in Navjivan as follows:

"To destroy the caste system and adopt the Western European social system means that Hindus must give up the principle of hereditary occupation which is the soul of the caste system. Hereditary principle is an eternal principle. To change it is to create disorder. I have no use for a Brahmin if I cannot call him a Brahmin for my life. It will be a chaos if every day a Brahmin is to be changed into a Sudra and a Sudra into a Brahmin."

Gandhi went further and wrote:

"The caste system is a natural order of society. In India it has been given a religious coating." (Quoted in 'What Congress and Gandhi have done to the untouchables'. Ambedkar, 1946; 237)

Even regarding the specific aspects of the disabilities suffered by the untouchable castes, Gandhi's utterances are
open to various interpretations.

"Inter-dining and inter-caste marriages are in no way essential for the promotion of the spirit of brotherhood or for the removal of untouchability." (Harajan, 28-1-33:2). Thirteen years later Gandhi seems to have shifted his position considerably. In his own words:

"At one time I did say that inter-dining was not essential part of the campaign for the removal of untouchability. Personally I was for it. Today I encourage it. In fact today I even go further." (Harajan, 28-7-46, 376). It cannot, however, be stated that Gandhi's shifts of position have uniformly been in the direction of an assertion of greater rights for the untouchables. He wrote in 1930, "Temple entry is one spiritual act that could constitute the message of the freedom to the 'untouchables' and assure them that they are not outcasts before God." (Harajan, 11.2.33, 8).

But in 1934 he wrote:

"I have absolutely no desire that the temple should be opened to Harijans, until caste Hindu opinion is ripe for the opening. It is not a question of Harijans asserting their right of temple entry or claiming it. But it is the bounden duty of every caste Hindu to secure that opening for Harijans." (Harajan 25-2-34, 10).
This suggests that the majority opinion was in no way favouring the total acceptance of the untouchables into the main fold of the Hindu society nor to accord them such of those privileges which for centuries were withheld from them at the behest of scriptures and shastras. Gandhi perhaps was reflecting the popular sentiments, at the same time emphasizing their public duty to fellow citizens. It is not difficult to understand why some sections of the untouchable elite consider that in this orientation the functional equivalent of the 'children of God' is the ornamentation of their position as the helpless creatures at the mercy of men.

Looked at in a different way, Ambedkar's critique of Gandhi was a critique of Hindu society as a whole. When the untouchables are considered to be the Children of God, whose position is to be retrieved within the framework of the caste system, two courses of action follow: Action by the group or action for the benefit of the group as part of social concern.

Sanskritisation Effect:

The untouchable castes spend their social energy in the alley of Sanskritisation. They accept one of the economically and politically dominant castes which also enjoys a high ritual status, as the reference group and
emulate its life style. They give up widow re-marriage, go in for child marriage, give up non-vegetarian food and keep their women indoors. But what do they gain? They do not have the economic resources at their command, nor do they have the aura of history behind them; consequently, the process of Sanskritization too does not affect their development in any appreciable manner.

The Sanskritization as a process did create a new unrest credited to the middle class and intelligentsia amongst the scheduled castes. These persons saw the caste system as a highly oppressive structure, Untouchability as a by-product of the system. Though during that time the economic conditions of most people were deplorable and the country as it is was backward, the scheduled caste saw a special dimension of their problem which was economic as well as political. Ostracised and mutilated, the scheduled castes themselves, as a whole, had an agglomeration of unequal units and a hierarchy of castes, a few of them certainly better off than the rest, which made them even see the relative deprivation within the "Outcaste substratum".

Ameliorative measures:

Ameliorative and welfare programmes were launched, but the magnitude of the effort is frequently determined by the social and political pressures. Ambedkar termed such activities as 'political charity'. 
Before independence, the ameliorative and welfare programmes by the voluntary agencies set up on Gandhi's initiative mainly related to the provision of source of drinking water, eradication of illiteracy and inculcation of hygienic habits. It is only in free India that weaker section development received an obligatory and statutory priority.

The untouchable substratum of the caste Hindu society is considered as a weaker section in the society's disadvantaged, deprived, oppressed, backward and exploited group. (Oomen, 1968; Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Tribes; a. 1969; b. 1974; c. 1976-1977; Rushkin, 1972; Galanter, 1972; Naik, 1972; Chitnis, 1972; 1977; Premi, 1974; Rath, 1974; Rao, 1974). Indian Untouchables are not alone for the treatment meted out to them. If a cross-national perspective is taken, we find several studies of such groups, oppressed and kept backward or continuously discouraged. (Wugley and Harris, 1968; Degler, 1969; Berghe, 1965; Lofchie, 1969; Graham and Curt, 1969; Wilcox, 1970; Scherkerhorn, 1970; Luboy, 1971; Gruber, 1973; Justus, 1973; Noel, 1973; Friedman, 1973; Grinshaw, 1975). To exclude or admit other individuals on the basis of group identity is not unique to human behaviour. Even animals and insects accept certain members and reject others. They form autonomous groups
...showing preference to their own species and systematically exclude others. (Greisman, 1975, 16).

Etc. in Japanese Society, has been held subhuman in existence. Okinawan is considered relatively slightly better. The Northern Japanese Eta are the untouchables of Japan. They once dealt in dead animals, served as butchers and tanners. Interestingly a single trace of Eta blood could contaminate an entire upper caste Japanese family, just as it was in the case of untouchables of Caste Hindu Society.

The Malaysian experience suggests that the Ibundayak, Sundanese or Amounice - the native ethnic groups who, being economically weak, had the conservative traditional social system as a barrier to their upward social mobility. (Justus, 1973: 230).

In Zanzibar Island in Africa, Zanzibaricos of different races and ethnic origins did not share sufficient common occupational or economic interests to create politically meaningful bonds of solidarity across racial lines and as such easily afforded the opportunities for exploitation. The main land people, the Arabs and the Indians used to run their economy. (Kofchle, 1969: 293-306).
Negroes for instance were not slaves initially, but were actually reduced to a position of slavery over several decades. (Bagler, 1959; 43-66).

Concomitantly with the Negroes' descent to slavery, the white servants gained increasingly liberal terms of indenture and ultimately freedom. The origin of slavery for one group led to the growth of freedom for the other. (Soci, 1973; 26).

Ethnic group boundaries may force certain subordinate groups to develop an institutional structure parallel to those of the dominant groups. The Jews in the USA, for instance, learned quickly that obtaining admission for Jewish students to medical schools was difficult. They thus developed their own superior medical schools. Rejected by Christian country clubs, they formed exclusive Jewish country clubs. Social conflicts and discriminations that a few groups have encountered have made it possible for the group ties to be strong, as such affording development. (Freidman, 1973; 132, Zitzen, 1973; 140). voices played a very important role in the development of modern Kenya, especially its commerce. But the response to this development is native ethnic distrust. Harris (1969) notes
the increasing realization among the Asians that their dominant position in commercial fields must decline and that many of them will have to leave Kenya, pointing to yet another emerging nationalist ethnic group pressure, which brought in several calamities on the alien yet economically dominant groups.

Minority strategies:

A group affected by the withdrawal of status-respect may be demoralized, but it may also be prompted to find alternative means of righting itself with the disparaging wider society. A minority group may then assume a commanding role in the technological and economic innovation, thus promoting growth in a non-changing society. Waley and Harris (1959) view the adaptive capacity of a minority group in terms of its effect upon the span and duration of ethnic stratification. They suggest that the cultural heritage of a minority provides it with a basis for competing more or less effectively with the dominant group. It affords protection against exploitation, and may stimulate or retard its adaptation to the total social environment, and may facilitate its upward advance within the existing socio-economic hierarchy. (Waley and Harris, 1959: 264). On application of this view, we find that once a people have become a minority, flexibility on their part is essential
if they are to effectively adjust and effectively compete within two established systems of ethnic stratification and thereby facilitate achievement of equality.

Contours of discrimination

What has been lucidly sketched out in the above para is the case of discrimination in a multi-caste multi-social world. This discrimination took many forms. Peter I. Rose (1964) listed three distinctive modes of discrimination as:

1. Exogation.

2. Denial (establishing and maintaining some measure of physical and social distance from minorities) through
   (a) avoidance
   (b) restriction
   (c) segregation.

3. Violence through
   (a) mob aggression
   (b) genocide.

The forms used in each society depend upon the internal conflicts, the power bases of the subjugating majority groups, and vary from time to time and place to place.

The universal problem of majority-minority group
relations has been the focus of recent research. Most studies of this phenomenon have dealt with the groups within a particular society, or with a particular group that faces prejudice and discrimination in many societies. The literature comparing different minorities cross-culturally is generally lacking.

Louis Wirth (1945) defined a minority as a group of people who are discriminated against and who regard themselves as objects of discrimination. Wagley and Harris (1958) attempting a cross-cultural analysis of the minority problems provided a detailed definition of a minority group. The elements they stress include:

(1) the relationship between the group and the state;
(2) its physical and cultural characteristics;
(3) the ties that develop between the group members because of these characteristics;
(4) the transmission of membership in the group;
(5) the group's marriage patterns; and
(6) the life styles that distinguish a minority group in a society from others within the society.

The above definition (Wagley and Harris, 1958; Wirth, 1945) contains important elements including emphasis
on the self-appraisal of their situation by the minority
groups themselves. Neither of these commonly cited defi-
nitions deals with the question of numbers although this
is certainly implied in the terms: minority and majority.

Schermerhorn (1970) in his attempt of comparative
approach to ethnic relations, perceives the dilemma that
ensues from the uses of this terminology. His solution
is to restrict the usage of the term 'minority' to groups
that are small in size and lacking in power, while
utilizing the term 'majority' to refer to large groups
that are dominant in the society.

Inter group relations:

These groups having competing interests in society
attempt to have the best of the position/status and life
styles in accordance with their desires, during the process
of which conflicting situations emerge. Goulding (1982)
argues that conflict may be defined as a situation of 'Inter-
group' competition in which the parties are aware of the
incompatibility of potential future positions and in which
each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible
with the wishes of the other. (Cited from Goulding.) This
perspective devotes its attention to the ability of groups
to secure and maintain their relative position of dominance
vis-a-vis other groups within the society. At its most extreme position, this perspective views society as being held together not by shared norms and values that form a basis for consensus, but by coercion. Coser (1956) believes that these social conflicts can produce positive effects. These positive functions, he cites, are numerous. By bringing groups into contact and establishing their relative strength, conflicts help to establish boundaries between these groups. Only by coming into actual conflict can groups really gauge their power. Coser points out, that development of a conflict situation may reduce the need for further and more heightened conflict. The initial contact produced by the conflict may make these groups aware of mutual grievances. This can produce attempts to develop new relationships between these groups and a shift in the power. From the social work point of view the ability to release hostility is important for all groups.

Dahrendorf (1959) held the position that conflict arises as a result of distribution of authority in associations. The legitimate power held by elite professionals is an example of conflict invoking situations. "Authority," Dahrendorf says, "is a universal element of social structure" and conflict is thus inherent in any society. (Dahrendorf, 1959: 168). Both Coser's and Dahrendorf's works have a
direct relevance for the study of ethnic minorities and racial tensions. Acceptance of ethnic pluralism within a society implies production of conflict resolution not through destruction of groups but by accepting them into the society. These intense ethnic conflicts have aimed at changing dominant subordinate relationships and the distribution or re-allocation of power within the society. The literature dealing with the concept of power is vacillating and variant. For the purpose of this discussion, power is considered as "the capacity to mobilise resources for the accomplishment of intended effects with recourse to some type of sanction(s) to encourage compliance." (Walton, 1963: 449). There have been attempts to distinguish the bases of power. A classification provided by French and Raven (1959) distinguishes between five such bases of power: (1) Attraction power, (2) Expert power, (3) Reward power, (4) Coercive power, and (5) Legitimate power.

Attraction power is power based on a group's inter-interesting for another group. This closely parallels Mann's (1945) and Merton's (1957) interest in reference groups. The dominant Whites may thus be able to exert power over Blacks because their appearance and life style appear rewarding and valuable. This form of power has been
apparent not only in the United States but in African countries where colonial rulers destroyed the traditional cultures. At times it may backfire as it did in Africa against the colonialists and those alien Asian ethnic groups which possessed economic knowhow and business acumen.

Blacks in South Africa are now demanding equality and democracy instead of giving respect to the traditional chiefs who have been appointed by the Nationalist regimes. This shift in values threatens the stability of the apartheid structure that the Afrikaners have attempted to impose. (Von den Berghe, 1968; Morris, 1966; Lofchie, 1969; Fred Nami, 1975; Sitasen, 1975).

In the caste Hindu society the upper castes may thus be able to exert power over the lower castes because their own life styles appear rewarding and valuable. Westernisation on one hand, for the upper caste Hindus and Sanskritisation for the lower ones proved at one point the symbols of attraction.

The roots of 'expert power' lie in the ability of one group to provide specialised knowledge and information for another. The upper caste Hindu groups have been able to maintain this power by controlling admissions to several
occupations like temple, service, law, medicine and even higher education.

"Reward power" refers to a group's ability to provide another group with gains of either a material or spiritual nature. Control of the economic structure has provided the higher castes in India, dominant ethnic groups in America and Whites in South Africa with enormous ability to dispense rewards to low castes in India, the Blacks in America, and other subordinate ethnic groups in Africa. By developing new religious identities, groups such as the untouchables in India and the Black Muslims in America have attempted to destroy dominant group control over spiritual rewards. Embracing of Buddhism by a large segment of untouchable population in India and of Islam by the Blacks of America are striking examples of this phenomenon.

The opposite "coercive power" refers to the ability of a group to mediate punishment for another group. Blacks in the Ghetto areas of the central cities of the United States possess "coercive power" over Whites working or travelling through those areas. This power continues to increase as Blacks become numerically dominant in these central cities. Similarities of such situations are noticed in urban residential areas in metropolitan cities like...
Bombay, such as D.D. Chawls wherein the Scheduled Castes are a majority (Yesudian/Sharma, 1963: 419-421).

The full potential of this coercive power is being counteracted by metropolitan planning which forces the central cities to be merely a component part of larger units controlled by numerically superior suburban areas where, generally, the dominant castes and classes live.

The dominant higher castes of India and the American whites also possess coercive control by virtue of their domination of the judicial, police and military systems. Finally, legitimate power is based on the acceptance of a group’s right to prescribe opinions and behaviour. This legitimacy may be obtained by elected officials such as the Scheduled Caste Members of the Legislative Assemblies and Members of Parliament, Black Senators and African Tribal Leaders. These forms of power are obviously not mutually exclusive. Control over different components of the social structure may provide groups with access to more than one base of power. Thus control over mass media that Ross (1960) cites as a power base may provide whites in the United States with both reward power and coercive power. Finally, groups and individuals who possess one structural base of power may eventually attempt to extend the scope of their power. The once untouchable substratum
of the Hindu caste society, which still lives in near
homogenous hamlets in rural areas, due to their concen-
tration in one single location, are gaining 'reward power'
over legislative candidates by franchising as an organised
block for one party candidate who is believed to be having
an orientation to advance programmes and policies beneficial
to the interests of these groups.

Basically, a person exerces power when he has
resources such as money, property, prestige, authority,
access, physical strength, voting rights achieved by
formal education, apprenticeship or membership in certain
organisations. Possession of one of the above resources
may be countered by the resources that others possess.
(Birstedt, 1950; Malock, 1967a; 1967b; Gelfand, 1973; 14).

Blacks in south Africa find it difficult to wrest power
from the whites who possess superior organisation, money,
property and a host of privileges legally available only
for the whites.

The Chinese in Malaysia, despite the traditional
Malayan society, could advance and virtually control the
economy.

Differentials in power may also cause subordinate
the
groups to mute their hostility, because of fears of
repression. Instead, this hostility may get directed at the group itself and not at members of other groups. Members of subordinate groups may also accept the arguments of dominant group members that their failure to achieve social mobility is related to their own inadequacies. (Gelfand, 1974: 8-18). The controversial Hymnihan Report of 1965 stressed, breakdown of the black family as a primary cause of the retarded development of the black community. This report was regarded by the black leaders as a blatant attempt to turn the attention of American whites and blacks away from patterns of discrimination towards the personal behaviour of Blacks. (Gelfand 1974: 8-18). Similar have been the attacks of the scheduled castes, through organised movements and writings, on issues of beef eating or lack of personal hygiene, when referred to by dominant casteist writers.

The historical exclusion of most racial and ethnic minority groups from access to economic, political and social rewards underscores the structural difficulties in initiating and promoting social change. Institutions, which have traditionally served to enforce the unequal distribution of wealth and power, do not alter their policies easily. A broadening of the base of support for the upward mobility of oppressed ethnic and
Racial groups may be essential for dissolving the right boundaries of a purely ethnic stratification. According to Simmel (1955: 98-99) conflict may not only heighten the concentration of an existing unit, radically eliminating all elements which might blur the distinctness of its boundaries against the enemy; it may also bring persons and groups together which have otherwise nothing to do with each other."

"These alliances even if they are only tenuous, may occur at crucial moments in the history of the future of inter-group relations. At one time in the modern history of India, the Muslims and the scheduled castes were almost together, in their cause of separating themselves from the upper caste Hindu domination.

Conflicts and social change:

Daniel Katz (1969: 127), in his essay on grass root movements in United States, pointed out the limitations of a 'minority' group, acting alone to create forces for social change.

"The majority group still has power of superior resources and an entrenched position in the social hierarchy. Moreover if the struggle is confined to mobilisation of black power rather than generalised to embrace broad values, it produces repercussions in certain sections of white population."
Lostie Pickory Hill, in his article 'What the Negro wants and how to get it: The inward power of the masses', concluded on the lines of Katz. According to Hill, blacks must demonstrate cooperativeness and non-violence to attract members of the white majority to their cause.

Gandhi used and advocated the very same principle of non-violence and cooperativeness with great effect in the Indian liberation movement. His suggested approach for the untouchable substratum to fight against the upper caste Hindus' discriminatory practices also took the same tone.

Conflicting situations do bring in changes in society. Sometimes those changes are advantageous and at times disadvantageous to the minority groups. Conflicting situations do result in too many important social reforms also.

The majority groups, which set cultural patterns, attempt to guarantee the stability of a society, expect conformity, penalise deviation, sanction, approve and remain the custodians of mores and defend against innovation. At times the majority groups' inertia may even retard the process of social change. (Graham and Gurr, 1969: 784; Grinshaw, 1975: 17; Dierstadt: 1948: 709).
Integrating 'Minority Groups':

Schermerhorn (1970) looks at the integration of minority groups as a continuous process. Integration is to be viewed not as an end state but as a process whereby units or elements of a society are brought into an active and coordinated compliance with the ongoing activities and objectives of the dominant group in that society.

Schermerhorn has presented a theoretical framework for analysing the social contexts of the process of national integration in a given society. According to him, the problem of the process of achieving national integration in a given nation society ought to be analysed in three contexts:

1) Integration as a problem of legitimation
2) Integration as a problem of cultural congruence
3) Integration as a problem for reciprocal goal definition.

Authority of power in a complex society may range from legitimate to illegitimate. The power relation may be legitimate, illegitimate or partly legitimate. A proper analysis requires understanding of the exercise of this power by dominant or majority groups and subordinate or minority groups as well. To analyse the Hindu Society in Indian context the dominant groups may consist of two subgroups:
1) Majority group which has both greater size and greater power than any other group; (The upper castes such as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas.)

2) Elite group which has a great deal of power but which is of a small size. (Few dominant subcastes of the above upper castes)

The subordinate group may consist of two groups. (Sadras and the untouchables):

1) Mass subjects (minority groups) which have great size but little power;

2) Minority group which has neither much size nor any power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A (Majority group of upper castes)</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Dominant or majority groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group B (Elite group) (Some subcastes of the upper castes)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group C (Mass subjects) (Untouchables)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Subordinate or minority groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D (Minority group) (Backward classes)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sohmerhernorn expects the following nine forms of integration to emerge in society when both dominant and
minority groups view their authority of power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L-L</td>
<td>L-PL</td>
<td>L-I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL-L</td>
<td>PL-PL</td>
<td>PL-I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-L</td>
<td>I-PL</td>
<td>I-I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L = Legitimate  
PL = Partly Legitimate  
I = Illegitimate

First view—Authority as viewed by the majority group. Second view—Authority as viewed by the minority group. Cell I represents a highly stable form as it is based on consensus of the views of both groups.

Cell 6 represents the next most likely form of integration as it is based on the mutual compromise of the groups.

Cells 2, 3 and 6 represent likely forms of integration.

Cells 7, 8 and 9, are literally empty; they represent doubtful forms of integration as in them, minorities assign more legitimacy to the authority relation than the majorities which is a very improbable, if not impossible situation.
Hardly would the dominant groups be totally convinced that their role is completely illegitimate. At any rate if 'legitimacy' is the sole variable in integration analysis, the most likely form of integration is based on reciprocal compromises.

Social work concerns

'Power' implies the potential ability of one group to influence another. When this is unevenly distributed it causes wide disparities and deprivation among the dispossessed, weaker sections. In such situations poverty of these sections becomes an enforced condition. The concept of reaching these minority groups through proper state support, legislation, social services and other ameliorative measures emerges from the philosophy of welfare that the state is committed to.

Professional social work theory and concepts posit that client conditions and their attitudes can be altered, improved and transformed through different methods of social work. Social work methods are found appropriate and effective at a level of generality and also at particular levels. They can be and are being used in specific rural contexts of development and change.
At the gross root level, the Government is providing different services through packages of welfare programmes for the scheduled castes. Services for the purpose of this study have been classified as normative and need-oriented services. Normative services are sought to be planned, organised and implemented as part of the welfare-planning-philosophy of the state expressing commitment to alter and ameliorate the conditions of the disadvantaged and deprived groups of the society.

These programmes and services for target client groups in particular are intended to generate awareness of the desirable standards of living for them and in turn, probably impel them to desire and strive for the realisation of the 'normative' through the organisation of like-minded client groups to solve their individual as well as group problems and needs.

In other words the process is such that the awareness of the desirable standards of living will lead them into action, relevant to their own needs and need situations, the full attainment of which leads to self-reliance and self-sufficiency among the target client groups. In their attempt to solve their problems and fulfil their needs and goals the target client groups as any others engage themselves in need-oriented actions. In the fulfilment of the
existing needs and/or in the awareness of the newly generated needs, the clients throw up further demands for provision and orchestration of the services to meet the new-born needs.

To this universally acceptable subscription, the rural scheduled caste client groups and families are not likely to be exceptions. In short, the scheduled caste individual families and groups who are the intended beneficiaries of normative services become claimants of need-oriented services, cumulating the process of resolving their problems or crisis situations.

The present study in the rural context attempts to see the target group's development from the point of view of their need-oriented actions. Do they fulfil their existing needs? Does this process create awareness of new needs? As clients, do they throw up further demands? As beneficiaries of normative services, do they become claimants of need-oriented services?

It may be briefly re-stated that the present study attempts an appraisal of the ongoing Welfare Programmes organized by the Government or the State agencies as well as Voluntary agencies meant for Scheduled Caste Groups in rural areas. It studies the programme related response of
the scheduled castes as also a client group of social work profession. In this chapter a broad review of the situation of the poverty groups in the third world countries is presented, a brief cross-national perspective of the disadvantaged groups undertaken in this introduction afforded, identification of the forms of discriminatory practices exercised against the minority groups. The majority-minority conflict situation leading to changes in social relationships and strategies open for minorities to integrate into the society were illustrated with minority group's action in several societies.

As the micro study deals with an Indian minority group of the scheduled castes, a concise historical treatment of the problems of this group was included in the Introductory Chapter.

The next chapter deals with the research design and methodology adopted in the study.

Notes:
1. Different estimates of the number and percentage of the poor emerge from the poverty studies which we referred to earlier. Ojha (1971) classifies 7.6 per cent of the Indian urban population in the year 1961 as below poverty line. Dandekar and Nath (1971) classify 50 per cent of the urban population for the same period, i.e., 1961, as below poverty line. At any given point of time it must be noted that slight variations in calculating food expenses (hitherto the main criterion for calculations) would
transfer millions of people from one category to another. 
Ojha (1971) also used nutritional norms in rural areas and estimated 52 per cent of the total rural population as below poverty line. Da Costa (1971) divided the poverty-stricken population into 1. The poor; 2. The destitute; and 3. The seriously destitute. According to his calculations, there were 81 million destitute in the rural areas and 22 million in the urban areas of India.

2. Programmes for economic security are: 1. Rural works programme; 2. Unemployment allowance; 3. Economic assistance to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes under the special component programme; 4. Khadi and village industries programmes; 5. Programmes of assistance to marginal farmers, artisans, and landless labour.

3. Srinivas (1966) studied collective mobility orientation among backward classes in terms of what he called 'sanskritization' or the process by which a low Hindu caste or tribal or other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and the ways of life in the direction of a higher caste.

4. Before independence, voluntary agencies like Ramakrishna Mission, Bharatiya Adimjati, Savarkar Sangh, Servants of India Society, All India Women's Conference, Janri, Savarkar Sangh, Indian Red Cross Society, Bharatiya Depressed Classes League, and Hind Desege Sangh were working in the upliftment programmes for the untouchables.

5. Conceptual clarity on what is meant by the 'weaker sections', 'exploited' and 'disadvantaged' group or the 'deprived', 'backward' and 'oppressed' group has not been attempted at in this study as what concerns us in this study is only the effect of such practices.

6. Bta is a minority group found in the northern parts of Japan. The treatment meted out to this group is no different from the one which the Indian Scheduled Castes have to face.

7. Okinawan also is considered to be an untouchable community, though relatively superior to Bta. It is believed by the mainland Japanese that Bta and Okinawan tribes have migrated to Hawaii and assumed traditional Japanese names to hide their identities. (See 'Sanskritization' process, Note 3.)
8. Ibans, Sandese or Ambonese are some of the ethnic groups in Malaysia. The Malayan experience suggests that the reservation system along with the preservation of traditional royal authority in customs and religious matters and the subsequent inclusion of such protection as a constitutional obligation of the state have not succeeded in bringing about the desired quantum of social mobility among these groups. Justus, quoting Baja Vivaha and Bajnuddin's article in Intisari (Vol.1, 1902), says that these provisions have, in the words of a native writer, not in 'a cycle of dependency'.