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CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Weaker Sections in Rural Contexts:

A study group on the welfare of the weaker sections of village community was set up in 1960 by the then ministry of community development. In its classification those who constitute weaker sections in the rural communities were:

1) Families that have uneconomic agricultural land holdings.

2) Landless agricultural labourers and other labourers.

3) Village artisans and workers engaged in small crafts, fishermen, tanners, tile potters, basket makers, etc.

4) Groups forced by historical and other reasons to live in backward and unproductive regions.

5) Sections of the village community, such as scheduled castes who, on account of special circumstances, are forced to engage themselves in hereditary occupations which are not very remunerative and entail risks in matters of health and sanitation, and are also subjected to low social status; the 'lowest and the lost'.

6) Sections that are weak economically though their social status may be high.
7) Women.

8) Nomadic tribes living on mendicancy, small trades, etc.

9) Destitutes (widows, orphans, old people and unemployed persons with no means of livelihood), physically handicapped, members of ex-criminal tribes, etc.

The study group stated in its report that about 30 per cent of the rural households had an income of less than Rs.1000/- per annum and 50 per cent, who formed the lower rung of the ladder, had an income of less than Rs.500/- per annum. This lower rung comprises agricultural labourers and cultivators with very small craftsmen and at the lowest level, destitutes with no means of livelihood at all.

One such weaker section in the Indian context is the scheduled caste group which is also a highly socially disadvantaged group.

Terms of Social disadvantage:

Social disadvantage includes factors which adversely affect the development of individuals in the society. It afflicts the society like a curse which is much more harmful than inborn biological disadvantages of a race or a group.
Poverty and prejudice are the two most important components of social disadvantage in India. The former being economic and the latter socio-psychological.

Social disadvantages for the scheduled castes include:

A) low income,
B) low caste status,
C) low potential education,
D) rural residence for the majority,
E) unfavourable attitudes and discriminatory behaviour to these groups on the basis of income, ethnicity and caste.

The socially disadvantaged groups, the world over, are found to be representing either of the two attitudinal dispositions: (i) social disadvantage adversely influencing positive personality and attitudinal disposition with traces of intelligence, aspiration and modernity, or (ii) conversely, social disadvantage inculcating negative personality traits such as anxiety, alienation and prejudice. The victims of social disadvantage therefore develop apathy, fatalism and even indifference.

Objectives of the Study:

The present study titled 'Development of weaker sections - a study in the Medak district of Andhra Pradesh'.
has the following objectives:

1. to study the socioeconomic background of the weaker sections namely the rural scheduled caste groups in particular;

2. to know the extent of their problems in the social development context;

3. to have an appraisal of the ongoing welfare programmes meant for them;

4. to study the awareness and responses related to development programmes;

5. to compare the efforts of the State and voluntary agencies in the development of scheduled caste group's awareness and action for development;

6. to study the perceptions of development and utilization of the programme due to Urban and Metropolitan influences on the rural scheduled castes.

Universe and locus of the Study:

The present study pertains to a rural area. Country
statement of rural to urban population suggests that the rural population to urban population is 76.27 per cent. In the state of Andhra Pradesh, rural population to that of the state of Andhra Pradesh is 76.75 per cent. Similarly in the district of Nadek, the rural population to that of its total population is 88.16 per cent. A statement of the figures of the state and district at a glance is given here:

Comparative figures : A.P. State and Nadek District:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Andhra Pradesh</th>
<th>Nadek District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persons</td>
<td>53,592,608</td>
<td>1,327,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27,116,061</td>
<td>922,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>26,476,547</td>
<td>905,135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decennial Growth Rate (1971-81) + 23.19 24.50

Area in Sq.Km. 275,066 9,699

Density of population per Sq.Km. 195 160

Sex-ratio (Females per 1000 Males) 976 960

Literacy-rate (including 0-4 age group)

| Persons    | 23.72          | 21.36          |
| Male       | 39.03          | 31.60          |
| Female     | 20.18          | 10.96          |

Proportion of rural/urban population to total population 76.75 88.16

Percentage of main workers to total population

| Persons    | 42.19          | 44.96          |
| Male       | 66.16          | 57.32          |
| Female     | 27.87          | 32.35          |
A Glance at Medak District:

Medak district is situated in the State of Andhra Pradesh between 17° 25' and 18° 19' North and 77° 23' and 77° 31' East with a total area of 9,700 square kilometres. It is bounded on the North by Nizamabad and Karimnagar districts, on the West by Bidar district, on the East by Warangal and Melgonda districts and on the South by Hyderabad district.

The most important river flowing through the district is the Nanjira, which enters Medak district from Bidar district and flows through its western and north-western taluks, its total length in the district being 60 miles.

Medak district formed part of the ancient kingdom of Warangal. In 1309, Ala-ud-din's general, Balik Kafur, marched with a large army against the King of Warangal and conquered Medak. In the fourteenth century, Medak formed a part of the Bahamani Kingdom and subsequently passed to the Qutub Shahi dynasty of Golconda. After the fall of Golconda, it was annexed to the Mughal empire from which it was detached in the early 18th century on the foundation of Hyderabad state.

The district has many places of archaeological interest. The old fort of Medak stands 300 feet above the
surrounding plain, overlooking the town of Medak, Patmoherru. 26 Kms. north-west of Hyderabad, contains some underground Hindu temples where ancient coins have recently been discovered. Andole and Komatur have old mosques, and Chatkur, Kolabgar, Nandikandi and Venkatapur ancient Hindu temples. At Yedupaitu, south-east of Medak, where the seven tributaries of the Hanjira meet, a large religious fair is held annually. The Cathedral also, with no claim to antiquity – (it was completed in 1925) – attracts many visitors.

Demographic Features:

The total population of Medak district is 1,827,500.
The total rural population of Medak district is 1,611,139.
The total percentage of literacy as per 1961 census stands at 21.36 per cent.

The state of Andhra Pradesh is divided into three regions: Coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema and Telangana. A glance at statistics reveals that Coastal Andhra is better in economic conditions than the other two regions. Telangana is the most backward region economically and Medak district is one of the most backward districts of the state. (See, FEB 1979, 7).
Development Indices:

Out of the 22 districts in the state it is the 16th in size and the 18th in total population. Density-wise it occupies the 10th place. In the percentage of urban population it is the 20th in the state. It has no city at all, and in fact has only one town with a population of over 25,000. In terms of the percentage of literacy it stands 18th, falling well below the state average. It occupies the 13th place in the number of Scheduled Caste population. It stands 12th among the districts as to the degree of rainfall. As regards forest land, it is the 17th. In the case of net area sown, it stands in the 14th place, but in irrigation only in the 18th place. It stands 19th in livestock population. It is the 16th in the case of the number of factories and electrification. It stands 14th in total road length and 17th in the number of post offices. Regarding the number of banks it occupies the 20th place. In the field of education it stands 15th as to primary and high schools and 19th as to upper primary schools.

Universe and selection of villages:

The locus of study is Keek district, relatively the most backward district in the state of Andhra Pradesh and
having a larger portion of Scheduled Caste population of the state itself. The district has eleven taluks and most of the community development blocks of this district stand co-terminus with the taluks in the district.

Three such taluk-blocks which have the highest Scheduled Caste population have been considered for the study based on the rationale that the larger the target client population the larger will be the thrust of development programmes.

These blocks which have been covered completely by vast development effort served as the first step in preparation of sampling plan. Three such blocks having maximum Scheduled Caste population and coverage of development programme were taken up for study area. The criteria chosen to study the Harijan hamlets in three of these blocks was based on the rationale that at least a minimum of 60% of the target groups in the village Harijan hamlet must have been covered by one or the other development programmes.

Further criteria evolved in the selection of the village - Harijan hamlets - was that each of these villages should be nearer to the Block Revenue Head Quarters.
preferably within 6-15 Kms. radius so that the accessibility of welfare network is possible even though public transport facilities do not or may not exist and are not within the reach of the client 'Economic resources'. Village - Harijan Hamlets - chosen are from amongst the medium-sized in the block. Careful selection of the villages from amongst the blocks after due verification of data on the reach of development programmes has afforded the researcher to make an appraisal of the impact of the programme on the client groups awareness and development.

Welfare services for weaker sections at many points in rural areas are undertaken by non-governmental organisations (NGO's). A village-hamlet wherein an NGO has been working for the betterment of Scheduled Castes was included into the study. The objective for such inclusion into the study is to afford the researcher a comparative study of the effort, mechanics, approach and impact of the development programmes of Government and non-governmental organisations.

Medak district is the closest in distance to Hyderabad city. Purposively, one village-hamlet from one of the nearest taluks to Hyderabad city was included in the study for making a comparative analysis of the
metropolitan and urban influences of the Hyderabad city on the client sections in the hamlet. In all these village-hamlets, all the weaker section households were included in the study.

Pilot study:

A pilot study was conducted in order to have an overview of the nature of the problem. Existing secondary data base was used as the initial point of gaining insight into the problem area.

Every fourth household listed as a beneficiary under one programme or the other as per the Block-office data was included in the pilot study sample. Thus the pilot study covered 25% of the respondents in all the villages. The interview schedule, constructed for the purpose of pilot study, was largely open-ended. On the basis of the researcher's observations and the analysis of the responses, a paradigm of independent and dependent variables was made out.

The independent variables were the socio-economic background of respondents, awareness, and respondents' organisation of their group. The dependent variables were respondents' action, utilisation of/or participation in services.
Final Interview Schedule:

On the basis of the pilot study the interview schedule was re-formulated with more close-ended questions and in all it featured 89 questions apart from a provision for general observations. The structured final interview schedule was divided into the following sections:

- **Basic profile of the respondent with name, family type, age, caste, literacy, education, and respondent's household strength.**

- **Occupational profile of the respondents' categories:** Farming and non-farming, main and subsidiary occupations and derived annual income thereof.

- **Awareness of development programmes, the source and relevance of the programme.**

- **Individual action, benefit from the programme, contacts, initiative and moves thereof.**

- **Response of development functionaries, source contacts.**

- **Immediate needs of the household and any corresponding relationship to the development programme offered in that area specifically.**

- **Interest shown in the programme in-opito-of the programme not being a need and reasons thereof.**
- Extent of procedural knowledge to acquire the programmes.
- Expenses involved in arriving at the due benefit.
- Obstacles in arriving at the due benefit.
- Common needs and group action.
- Questions relating to attitudes, writing/reading skills, children's education, man's growth and development, empathy, aspirations and expectations.
- Questions related to the role of educated worker, client expectations of his expertise in tackling problems at individual, family, group and community levels.
- And finally general questions relating to small family norms, political parties, political awareness, migration and related aspects.

Units of Study and Units of Comparison:

The total number of respondents for this study is 194. All the respondents are heads of the households. As explained earlier, these respondents were divided into three units for the purpose of analysis. Unit one consists of three villages allowing the researcher to make permissible generalisations about the rural Scheduled Caste problems. Unit two consists of one village belonging to
the same district (i.e. Medak) which is very near to the city of Hyderabad. This was included into the study for perceiving Urban Influences and exposure to the network of better facilities. Unit three consists of all the respondents of yet another village being exposed to a Non-Governmental Organisation's continued intervention in the social development of those Groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Village</th>
<th>Respondent Number</th>
<th>Inclusion in the Study as</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Moqdoompyur</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Unit One (Rural Scheduled Caste Groups under the influence of Governmental programmes only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ilemmpur</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Girmagur</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rithangi</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Unit two (Rural SC Groups under the influence of Govt programmes in addition to urban influences etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Madilegar</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Unit three (Rural Scheduled Castes under the development intervention of an NGO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Units of Comparison:

The Study draws comparative analysis for the following variables.
### Data Analysis:

In order to have reasonable generalisations on the Medak rural district three village-hamlets belonging to the three taluks were brought together as one unit represented by a total of 97 households. The village-hamlet represented by the presence of the non-governmental organisation had a total coverage of 43 households. The village-hamlet purposively chosen for urban influences had a total coverage of 56 households. Based on the paradigm of independent and dependent variables, the data were analysed for all these units. The data were tabulated according to univariate and bivariate systems, using cross tabulation and statistical analysis. Appropriate statistical tools were constructed to enable meaningful interpretations and to offer permissible and scientific inferences and generalisations. Data processing was done at the computer centre of Osmania University, Hyderabad.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Dependent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic Background of the respondents.</td>
<td>Respondent's action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents' awareness</td>
<td>Utilization of/or participation in services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents' organization of the group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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It is a precondition of data processing by computer that the verbal responses be translated into numerical symbols.

Except a very few, all the questions in the interview schedule were precoded. Thus the precoded data were directly entered with some necessary re-classification, whereas the un-coded data were classified on the basis of commonness of the responses for making a comparable analysis of the material. The following statistical analysis was obtained through computer after classifying and coding of the data.

Tabulation of data:

Simple frequency tables were tabulated for information regarding respondents profile.

As mentioned earlier, apart from describing the socio-economic status of the scheduled casts respondents, the researcher has attempted to ascertain the changes brought about into their lives through their own initiative if any and to a larger extent through Government intervention.

Chi-Square Values were obtained in order to lend credibility to the significant association of attributes.

The following points regarding the data analysis and
interpretation should be noted.

1) Figures in the tables are approximated up to ± 0.50.

2) Percentages are shown in brackets.

3) While standard 'N' for the entire study would remain 194, for certain questions in the study, it stands differently and as such receives mention specifically in such tables.

4) The conventions for referencing and format of the tables and other research practices used in this thesis correspond to the style adopted and prescribed by the Indian Journal of Social Work.

Outline of the thesis:

The study attempts at an appraisal of the ongoing welfare programmes organised by governmental agencies for the scheduled castes. It studies the programme-related responses of the scheduled castes as one of the client groups of social work profession.

It may be restated that the study identifies the situation of disadvantaged groups, their awareness, the deprivation of those groups, the welfare schemes of the state, the predominant attitudes of these groups to such welfare schemes.
The research findings intermingled with theoretical perspectives are presented in six chapters as indicated below:

CHAPTER I broadly reviews the situation of poverty groups. In its attempt at a cross national perspective of disadvantaged and minority groups it discusses the forms of discrimination, the majority and minority conflict situations leading to social changes and strategies available for integration of minority groups into the society.

This chapter also traces a concise historical view of the problems of the weaker sections and their development, specifically for the scheduled castes/groups or the ex-untouchables in the caste Hindu society of India.

CHAPTER II deals with the methodology adopted for the study of the development of weaker sections in Medak district of Andhra Pradesh. This entails an outline presentation of the specific objectives of the study, the universe and the locus of the study, the methods of study and data collection, processing and analysis of the data.

CHAPTER III describes the profile of the respondents: the client group, the setting, education, income and occupation, familial details, and infrastructures.
available for development. It discusses the problems of weaker sections in the context of social development at individual, group and community levels and presents the need structure of the weaker section groups and the related awareness.

CHAPTER IV presents a perspective on need-oriented actions and available development programmes for the weaker sections to meet their needs. It critically examines the response of weaker sections to the development programmes organised under the aegis of the state and voluntary agencies. It also includes a perspective of self-development as perceived by the client groups.

CHAPTER V attempts at an appraisal of the problems of the Scheduled Caste groups from the Social Work viewpoint. It develops the role of social work in dealing with socially disadvantaged groups and communities.

CHAPTER VI discusses the various findings of the study and summarizes them.