

**SCHEDULED CASTES AND TRIBES—  
A SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY**

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# SCHEDULED CASTES AND TRIBES

—A SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

*In Karnataka*

C. PARVATHAMMA

Foreword

V.K.R.V. Rao

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**TO MY MOTHER**

***SHIVARUDRAMMA SYAGALI***

**The endless tribulations convinced  
her the value of education which  
she was denied.**

## **FOREWORD**

This objective study of the conditions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Karnataka State in early 70s has been made by Prof C Parvathamma, who is the Head of the Department of Post-graduate Studies in Sociology and Social Work of the University of Mysore on the suggestion of the Parliamentary Committee for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and at the instance of the State Government. It has covered all the 19 districts of the State and is based on a stratified sample. The number of households covered for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were 2583 in rural areas and 748 in urban areas. The study covered the various aspects of their social and economic conditions including demographic characteristics, caste and sub-caste composition, educational background, residential pattern, economic conditions, occupational structures, political consciousness and awareness of constitutional benefits, and the magnitude of untouchability. The study was undertaken and completed in the mid-seventies and give a detailed account of the socio-economic conditions of these backward sections of the population.

Though a number of years has elapsed since the completion of this study, much of the findings it contains still hold good. In particular, I am glad that her suggestions include a constitutional abolition of caste categories, even as the Constitution contains a clause for abolition of untouchability. While this may not lead to any immediate practical results on the working of the caste system with which untouchability is so closely associated, nevertheless, a formal abolition of caste will indicate in categorical terms the objective of bringing about a casteless society in the India of the future.

Though it would have been better if this study could have been published immediately after it was completed, nevertheless, I am glad that it has been found possible to get it published even though several years have elapsed since its completion.

I would like to congratulate the author for the care with which she has undertaken this study and expressed her findings, and the objectivity which she has brought to bear on the problem. The long list of suggestions that she has made for remedial action also show both the intensity of her concern and the objective and national character of her outlook. As an eminent sociologist of the country and an intellectual representative of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, to which she belongs, Dr Parvathamma's study, findings, and suggestions deserve great weight and respectful attention and need to be taken into account when dealing with these still existing problems of these most backward sections of the Indian community.

I commend Dr Parvathamma's study to all those who are interested in getting an objective birds-eye-view of the social and economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in the State, their perceived difficulties, and some practical suggestions for dealing with these problems.

**V K R V Rao**

**Bangalore**  
**21st June 1984**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

On the recommendation by the study group-I of the Parliamentary Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) the Government of Karnataka is perhaps the first in the country to initiate an objective study on the socio-economic conditions of the SCs and STs in the State. This was done in order to fix specific priorities with target dates to improve the living conditions of SCs and STs. The responsibility of undertaking such a survey was entrusted to the Department of the Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sociology, University of Mysore, Mysore, on submission of a project proposal. This report is the outcome of a scientific investigation on the Social and Economic conditions of SCs and STs in Karnataka.

I thank the Government of Karnataka, the sponsors and financiers of this study. As director of the study, I take the responsibility of interpreting and analysing the responses which are presented as findings. I also wish to admit here that the opinion and conclusions arrived at will not in any form, represent the policies and views of the government.

I record my sincere thanks to Shri G.V.K. Rao, the then Development Commissioner and later Chief Secretary to the State Government. He is known for his ability, both as a planner and administrator. His undertaking of complex human problems and efforts to find solutions are indications of keen foresight. Before assuming the office as the Chief Secretary Shri Rao, as the Development Commissioner was instrumental in implementing many schemes involving objective investigations, including the present one.

It is needless to mention the importance of the role played by administrative machinery in studies of this nature. My thanks are due to the Department of Planning and the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Karnataka, for extending their

valuable help at different stages of work. Special mention has to be made of the Planning department, the sponsors of this scheme. They have been very helpful in expediting administrative clarifications including financial sanctions.

It is appropriate to record here the co-operation and assistance I have been receiving from the University of Mysore specially with regard to the Research Programmes. I record my sincere thanks to the several officers across the hierarchy of the University for having given me many opportunities to direct as many as four research projects so far.

The Government computer centre at the State Capital, Bangalore helped us in working out statistical tables on the computer. Manual processing of such voluminous data would have been tedious and time consuming. Although there was a delay of nearly three months in giving the final output, the Centre was helpful in its own way. Shri R. Parthasarathy, the Manager at the Centre, was very cordial and extended his co-operation at the crucial stage of data processing. The two programmers—A. Bheema Rao and R. Shankar—who were assigned the task of processing the survey data showed special interest and helped in solving many problems that arose during different stages of data analysis. I express my sincere thanks to all of them.

The work in the initial stages had to be based on certain preliminary data like the Census reports, District Statistical Abstracts and Topo-sheets of the State. Each one of these had to be obtained from different agencies. The population figures were collected from the Office of the State Census Commissioner. Maps were purchased from the Survey of India Office, Southern Circle, Bangalore. Information regarding the districts' main features was obtained from the District Statistical Officers. I thank all of them for their timely compliance.

In spite of difficult field situations due to prolonged stay in villages and also to drought and varying weather conditions like heavy monsoon in certain parts of the State, the Research Investigators took pains in collecting the necessary information from the respondents. Displaying much skill and patience, the research investigators succeeded in establishing friendly rapport with the

rural people, particularly the respondents when some were difficult initially. But for their talent, enthusiasm and zeal it would have been difficult to complete the work successfully. While most of the investigators left one after another by December 1975, Mr. Satyanarayana stayed on to assist me to complete the writing up. Since he had earlier worked on another project commissioned by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, on the problems of education of SC, ST College students in Karnataka, his experience became an asset to the present study. I thank the investigators in general and Satyanarayana in particular for the assistance given to me in completing the study.

I also thank the non-officials and officials of all the village panchayats where our staff went for data collection. We were deeply moved by their sense of co-operation and hospitality. Village India in spite of changing circumstances still retains some of its traditional characters, particularly welcoming the visitors with love and affection. The study covers many interior villages in the State wherein it is difficult for a stranger to get his basic necessities including shelter. In addition to their encouraging responses, the rural respondents at times were very hospitable.

I am deeply indebted to the innumerable respondents of this study, who despite their own personal inconveniences came forward with all enthusiasm and spared quite a lot of their precious time, specially those who preferred to forego their work and thus their daily wages. As the length of each interview extended between 1-2 hours, it is really an appreciable gesture on the part of the rural SCs and STs to have sat with the investigators answering questions which did not bring immediate relief to any of their problems. Social science research of this type is new to them and field work becomes a fascinating experience since many facts which are latent become manifest. The rural respondents should get all appreciation as they were not deterred from associating themselves with the study even under explosive conditions *i.e.*, when some upper caste people in the village disliked them responding as they were suspicious of the purpose of the study or somehow thought that they would be exposed by the SCs.

It is well known that the percentage of educated among SCs and STs is very less. Those who are fortunate enough to get

higher education are generally concentrated in urban centres. Because of the relatively advantageous position it was our expectation that the urban respondents would give more details about the living conditions of SCs and STs in the State than their rural counterparts. In fact some of the questions in the schedule were more understandable and interesting to urban dwellers than to their rural brethren. But the urban dwelling SC and ST elites viewed the objectives of the study with suspicion. The research staff were put to innumerable difficulties of calling on the respondents repeatedly. Some of them responded hesitatingly even after prolonged and numerous visits. But this is not to say that all urban residents were non-co-operative. In fact some of them took extra interest to understand the problems faced by us in getting responses. They also suggested some urgent remedial measures to be taken up by the government for the improvement of the conditions of their brethren. I once again express my sense of appreciation for their efforts.

For several reasons, the report could not be submitted on time. But many of these exigencies were out of my control and anyway, these are expected kind of problems in research. Yet, I hope, the research findings are of interest to the government which has borne the entire cost, patiently waiting even when there was some delay.

I thank the government of Karnataka, the Dept. of Social Welfare which showed some interest in the findings of the study. The publication of the report is a fitting reward. For now the findings will become available to reading public, policy makers and administrators alike. The factual information presented in the original report is retained but clarifications are given wherever necessary. I have taken time to go through the report once again and made some verbal corrections.

The publication of the report I hope, will certainly meet the needs of the anxious readers both academic and otherwise. While I do not claim that I hold the key to the persisting problems of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, the findings should serve as eye-openers. Suggestions and recommendations might focus the attention of both my admirers and critiques for good or bad. I only hope it will set a healthy trend to tackle the problem

in the best interest of the nation in a most scientific manner. The human concern for inhuman problems should continue endlessly.

I record my thanks to Shri Satyanarayana, for all kinds of assistance he has extended to prepare the script for publication and Shri R. Nagaraju for the pains he took to type and get it ready.

Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao readily agreed to write a foreword and he has always been helpful and encouraging me to publish the book. I am grateful to him.

Finally, Dr. G. Thimmaiah of ISEC, Bangalore put me across to Messers Ashish Publishers who took up the publication in record time. I am highly thankful to both.

**C. PARVATHAMMA**

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# Introduction

The Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) wherever they live, are faced with many and diverse problems, which are of Social, economic, political and educational in nature. It is common knowledge how the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes suffer from times immemorial for no fault of theirs. These problems have aggravated the situation over years and pushed the unfortunate SC/ST masses to total subjugation and exploitation. One thing is certain, that in a caste-ridden society like ours, social and economic status are the necessary prerequisites for any individual to progress. These variables buttress each other in development of a community or caste. Any analysis of Indian society without taking caste into consideration is not complete. Almost all activities—economic, political, educational and socio-cultural—revolve around the notions of caste. The structural form and relationships in rural areas have continued almost in tact in post-independence India, although some changes have come about in urban setting.

The SCs and STs, throughout the country occupy the lowest rank in the caste hierarchy. In a hierarchy of unequal relationships, the SCs and STs are at the bottom and hence socially inferior to all others in the community. Further among themselves also there is further stratification and ranking.

The country's economy is preponderantly agriculture-oriented even today. Industrialisation and urbanization processes are rather slow. It is estimated that 75% to 80% of India's population still live in rural parts and nearly as many are stated to be illiterate. Agriculture is the main vocation for most of the villagers either as owner-cultivator or as labourer. They have very little scope for occupational mobility. Traditional occupations persist in the absence of economic diversification.

The village social structure influences and colours all aspects of life. A mere look at the structural relations in villages also

reveal the economic and political sub-structures. Occupation and land holding pattern often indicate politico-strong-holds through certain in-roads in them are visible in recent years.

The formation of linguistic States in 1956 though not intended but it has lead to the emergence of locally preponderant groups as dominant caste groups throughout the country *viz.*, the Lingayats and Vokkaligas in Karnataka, the Reddies and Kammas in Andhra Pradesh, the Jats and Thakurs of Uttar Pradesh, the Mudaliars of Tamil Nadu and the Marathas of Maharashtra are only a few instances, where the aspirations of all other caste groups have been largely thwarted.

In the absence of rapid industrialization, agriculture and agro-industries are encouraged in the country in recent years. Import of food grains for other countries over the years has continued thus making the country dependant on others. The policy of the Government has been to encourage agriculture to meet the needs of ever increasing population in the sub-continent. River vally projects were commissioned and irrigation incentives were given to farmers. These policies, however, in a way directly helped those who are already dominant and possess agriculture land.

The SCs and STs, by and large, are landless agricultural and casual labourers. They are mostly engaged in menial jobs which adds to lower their social and ritual status further. The social milieu in villages simply do not favour changes. So not many can own land despite constitutional provisions and come up. From times immemorial, they have been serving the upper castes and are economically dependant on them. It is anybody's guess, that once dependent, it becomes almost impossible to extricate themselves from the clutches of exploiters.

The democratic political system and protective discrimination have not made much headway nor are they very meaningful in the case of these communities. Representative government in India has come to mean and is dominated by political parties filled with people of upper and the dominant caste groups. Equality, equal opportunity and similar democratic values over the years have all been relatively interpreted, with the result those who are economically poor and socially and ritually inferior have remained backward and continue to be considered inferior by others. This

has been confirmed by the numerous studies carried out by professional and government bodies and also by voluntary organizations.

Efforts made by government, by implementing the statutory provisions of 'protective discrimination' enshrined in the Constitution to the SCs and STs, have not yielded desired or expected results. Further, reports of the Commissioner for SCs and STs in the country, suggested remedial measures from time to time. However, there has been an extension of constitutional provisions till 1990. If this is of any indication, the conditions of SCs and STs have not improved, in spite of 33 years of constitutional benefits. In 1969 the Committee on Untouchability, economic and educational development of the SCs under the chairmanship of Sri L. Bhalaperumal submitted a report to "accelerate the process of improvement of the inhuman and miserable economic, social and educational conditions of these people."<sup>1</sup> It was hoped that implementation of the recommendations of the commission would help eradication of the stigma of untouchability from the society and give the SCs human status. But experience in recent years show a different situation where exploitation of the weaker sections, especially, the SCs and STs has increased considerably.

The Parliamentary Committee for SCs and STs suggested to the Government of Karnataka (erstwhile Mysore State) to make an impartial (objective) study of the conditions of SCs and STs in the State in early 1970's suggest that the problem still persists. At the instance of the State Government, the Department of Post-graduate Studies and Research in Sociology, University of Mysore, accepted to carry out a scientific investigation of the social and economic conditions of SCs and STs in Karnataka. As mentioned earlier, the inter-relationship of economic and social aspects in the Indian context should be viewed in correlation and not in isolation. Naturally, the study had to be based on a representative sample.

The major aspects covered in the study are as follows :

1. To know the demographic characteristics of the SCs and STs in the State.

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1. Report of the Committee on Untouchability, Economic and Educational development of the Scheduled Castes and connected documents, Government of India, Dept. of Social Welfare, 1969, New Delhi, pp XX

2. The religious and caste/sub-caste composition of them.
3. Their educational background, residential pattern.
4. The economic conditions as determined by their land holdings and professions, awareness and use of modern agricultural techniques.
5. The occupational structure-occupational mobility, employment/unemployment—family income, expenditure and indebtedness.
6. Panchayat Raj and Co-operative institutions ; their meaning and utility to the betterment of SCs and STs.
7. Political consciousness—leadership awareness at local, regional and national levels, extent of political participation and voting pattern.
8. Awareness and opinion on constitutional benefits.
9. Untouchability—its magnitude, legal abolition of untouchability, opinion of SCs and STs on its effects and removal.
10. Caste system—its necessity, legal abolition.
11. Beliefs and practices in relation to caste and religion.
12. Education—its advantages and drawbacks with reference to SCs and STs and
13. Their food habits and health conditions.

Apart from having a sample survey, the study is designed to suggest suitable remedies and guidelines for improving the living conditions of SCs and STs in Karnataka.

## **THE BACKGROUND**

### **The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**

“The terms ‘Scheduled Caste’ and ‘Scheduled Tribe’ are only legal fictions and Constitutional myth.”<sup>2</sup> Nowhere in the Indian Constitution are they defined even though it is the lengthiest legal document of nations in contemporary world. This has actually led to confusion and with the result the Constitution is amended rather frequently.

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2. Parvathamma C, 1974 ‘The Crisis of Scheduled Caste Leadership and Karnataka Politics ; interplay of Constitution, caste, religion and politics’ Paper presented to VIII World Congress of Sociology, Toronto, Canada.

The historical background of the term 'Scheduled Caste' could be traced to the Government of India Act, 1935. For the first time the British government issued the Government of India (Scheduled Caste) Order in 1936 specifying certain castes as SCs in some of the provinces. Prior to that the SCs were generally known as 'the Depressed Classes'. Dr. Hutton, the then Census Commissioner of India, had categorised the depressed classes systematically and the list of SCs issued under the Government Order of 1936 was a continuation of the earlier list prepared by Dr. Hutton. Further, the list drawn in 1950—the Constitution 'Scheduled Caste' order—was a revised version of the 1936 order.

After the Constitution came into force the classification of STs was made. Even in the case of Tribes the first ever serious attempt to classify them is attributable to 1931 census. However, a reference has been made in the Government of India Act, 1935 to the 'Backward Tribes'. According to the thirteenth schedule of the Government of India (Provincial Legislative Assemblies) Order, 1936, certain tribes were specified as backward in some provinces.

In accordance with the provision of Arts. 341 and 342 of the Constitution the President will notify the list of SCs and STs. These are public notifications in nature. In order to avoid disputes, the President consults the Governors of the States as to the castes and tribes that constitute 'Scheduled Castes' and 'Scheduled Tribes'. The list of SCs and STs are contained in the Schedules appended to the following order issued by the President.

1. The Constitution (Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe) Order, 1950.
2. The Constitution (Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes) (Part 'C' States) Order, 1951.
3. The Constitution (Jammu and Kashmir) Scheduled Castes, Order 1956.
4. The Constitution (Andaman & Nicobar Islands) Scheduled Tribes Order, 1959.

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3. Source : Govt. of India, 1968, Hand Book on SC and ST compiled by Shri Vimal Chandra, Deputy Commissioner.

5. The Constitution (Dadra and Nagar Haveli) Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes Order, 1962.
6. The Constitution (Pondicherry) Scheduled Caste Order, 1964.
7. The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) (Uttar Pradesh) Order, 1967.
8. The Constitution (Goa, Daman and Diu) Scheduled Caste Order, 1968.

The powers exercised by the President under Arts. 341 and 342 in identifying the castes and tribes as SCs and STs cannot be extended either to include or exclude any caste or tribe from the list of SCs and STs by him. Therefore, only the Parliament vide Art. 341(2) and Art. 343(2) may by law include or exclude from the list of these castes and tribes issued by the President.

The need for such contingency arose when State of Andhra Pradesh was created in 1953. Thereafter, on the re-organisation of the States in 1956, creation of the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1960 and when Punjab and Haryana States were created in 1966 further revisions were made.

On the basis of recommendations made by the Lokur Committee and views of States, Ministers and SC and ST Parliament Members, as well as Social Scientists, a Bill was moved in the Parliament in 1967 to provide for the inclusion and exclusion of certain castes and tribes from the list of SCs and STs. This was done in the wake of readjustment, representation and re-delineation of parliamentary and Assembly Constituencies. Nevertheless, no action was taken and the *status-quo* is maintained.

### **Criteria for Scheduling**

The principles of 'Modern Democratic Government' presupposes equal opportunities to all, irrespective of race, caste, religion and so forth. A unique feature of Hindu social structure is the stratification based on caste. An individual's status in society is determined by his birth into a particular caste. This process led to the practice of social discrimination followed by other disabilities. The practice of untouchability with ascribed low status to the downtrodden is the inhuman practice found in village

India even to this day. Further notion of pollution brought not only social degradation but also economic dependence for certain groups of people.

In order to safeguard the interests of these people who suffered from all sorts of discrimination, the Constitution provided special concessions to enable them to catch up with the rest of the Indian people in process of development. In this connection, certain castes and tribes have been included in the schedule on the basis of social and economic disabilities suffered by them. These are known as 'Scheduled Castes' and 'Scheduled Tribes'.

The SCs and STs form a significant proportion of the Indian population. In the absence of a standard definition, it becomes necessary to know the criteria for considering only certain section of the population for purposes of protective discrimination. The test applied to list some castes in the schedule was the social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of the traditional custom of the practice of untouchability. In so far as STs are concerned, the main characteristics common to all are their tribal origin, primitive way of life, habitation in remote or not easily accessible areas and general backwardness in all respect.

The Presidential order traces the reasons for determining certain groups of people socially, economically and educationally backward to the Government of India Act, 1935. The criteria for determining economic and social backwardness may be identified on the basis that :—

1. They are occupying a low position in the Hindu social structure and caste hierarchy of Hindu social organisation,
2. There is lack of general educational development amongst the major section of this community,
3. Their representation in Government service is inadequate,
4. They are inadequately represented in the field of trade, commerce and industry, and
5. They also suffer from social and physical isolation from the rest of the community.

### **General Disabilities and Efforts for Improvement**

Disabilities could be in the nature of economic, educational, political, social or a combination of several of these factors. For a given community backwardness is a relative phenomenon. But in a developing country like ours where large sections of the population are economically poor, the other disabilities provide additional points in determining backwardness.

The SCs and to some extent STs are the people who occupy the lowest rung of Hindu social ladder. From times immemorial, the privileged groups in Hindu society have discriminated. The magnitude of discrimination is very great in social life and institutionalized for centuries especially in the rural parts of the country. Similarly, economic disparities and deprivations are deep rooted and their dependence on upper castes is proverbial. Though the SCs and STs cannot be synonymous with untouchables, in fact a large number of SCs are discriminated as untouchables.

The social stigma and ritual pollution is so great that SCs and STs cannot engage themselves in many gainful employments and they are caught in the traditional whirlpool of occupations. The very fact that majority of rural SCs remain landless agricultural labourers confirms this point although there are equally weighty economic and educational factors which militate against them.

In the case of STs also, it has been observed that those who have settled in close proximity to Hindus receive treatment similar to that of SCs. Though the tribals do not have the stigma of untouchability, they are equated with untouchables for all practical purposes. They might have escaped discrimination from caste dominated groups because of their physical and social isolation from the rest of the society as they are settled in forests and hilly regions. But poverty and backwardness have been haunting the few STs who have stayed away from the rest of Hindu Society. It is sometimes argued that exploitation of the tribals from the plains people is a major obstruction for the development of tribal people.

The reformation movements within the Hindu social order have not made any impact in overcoming the disabilities faced by

SCs. and STs. Therefore, such movements cannot be considered as remedies in this particular case.

Economic backwardness is common to all SCs and STs while social, religious and disabilities vary. Similarly, their problems vary according to place and time. While social problems of SCs are tackled by voluntary organisations like the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Servants of India Society, only Ramakrishna Mission and some Christian Missionaries took extra interest in tribal rehabilitation.

During British rule, few efforts were made to improve the conditions of SCs and STs. This is natural, since the British as alien rulers were interested in consolidating their position. Except for providing provision under the Government of India Act, 1935, there is no reference to the measures taken up by the Government. While the voluntary organisations were active in North India and areas of tribal concentration, Southern India remained largely outside the pale of these efforts.

In Karnataka, during 12th century, Basaveswara, a social reformer, made efforts to fight caste rigidities and untouchability by recruiting people from different caste to Veerasaivism. But the latter developments failed and Veerasaivism ended up adding more castes with more or less same attitudes of traditional system. The only other evidence of reformation through religious conversion was the attempt made by the Christian missionaries in the State. Though banned now, this was active in some districts of the State till recently. To some extent untouchables were able to gain social status by converting to Christianity. When mass conversion become the order of the day and converts stayed on in the same surroundings, there was no difference in the social status of converted Christians and untouchables. Under the present Constitution in spite of freedom to profess any religion, there is no scope for religious conversion to SCs and STs if they need constitutional benefits. The rule clearly prescribes that the concessions will be given only to Hindus and Sikhs. In a way what is given as a fundamental right to others under Art. 25 is denied to SCs and STs.

A detailed discussion of the policies of the Govt. for the upliftment of SCs and STs will be covered under the sub-heading 'Governmental policies for the welfare of SCs and STs'.

**Constitutional Provisions**

The Constitution of India provides a number of safeguards for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who between them 21.53% of the total population of India.<sup>4</sup> All these safeguards have apparently, been provided to facilitate the implementation of the Directives Principles of State Policy contained in Art. 46 of the Constitution which reads as follows :

“The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and in particular of the SCs and STs and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.”

These safeguards provide for political representation in Parliament and State Legislature, appointment of Ministers in-charge of Tribal Welfare in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, appointment of a Minister specially incharge of the welfare of the autonomous districts and regions in Assam, representation in the Central and State services, abolition of the practice of untouchability, throwing open of Hindu religious institutions, admission to educational institutions, special provision for social, educational and economic advancement, banning of traffic in human beings and “Begar” and similar forms of forced labour, appointment of a special officer to investigate all matters relating to safeguards provided for SCs and STs, the development of the Scheduled and Tribal areas.

The relevant articles from the Constitution are reproduced below :

**Art. 15. Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race caste, sex or place of birth.**

- (1) The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.
- (2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to :
  - (a) access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainment ; or

<sup>4</sup>. Census of India, 1971.

(b) the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of general public.

- (3) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children.
- (4) Nothing in this article or in clause (2) or article 29 shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the SCs and STs.

**Art. 16. Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.**

- (1) There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.
- (2) No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, descent, sex, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against, in respect of any employment, or office of the State.
- (3) Nothing in this article shall prevent Parliament from making any law prescribing in regard to a class or classes or employment or appointment to an office under the Govt. or any local or any other authority, within a State, or Union Territory, any requirement as to residence within that State or Union Territory prior to such employment or appointment.
- (4) Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any backward classes of citizens, which, in the opinion of the State, is not adequately represented in the services under the State.
- (5) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any law which provides that the incumbent of an office in connection with the affairs of any religious or denominational institution or any member of the governing body thereof shall be a person, professing a particular religion or belonging to a particular denomination.

**Art. 17. Abolition of Untouchability.**

“Untouchability” is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of [any disability arising out of untouchability shall be [an offence [punishable in accordance with law.

**Art. 19. Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech.****1. All citizens shall have the right :**

- (a) to freedom of speech and expression
- (b) to assemble peacefully and without arms ;
- (c) to form associations or unions ;
- (d) to move freely throughout the territory of India ;
- (e) to reside and settle in any part of the territory of India;
- (f) to acquire, hold and dispose of property; and,
- (g) to practice any profession or carry on any occupation, trade or business.

2. Nothing in sub-clause (a) of clause (1) shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law, in so far as such law imposes reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred by the said sub-clause in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.

3. Nothing in sub-clause (b) of the said clause shall affect the operation of any existing law in so far as it imposes or prevents the State from making any law imposing in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India or public order or morality, reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred by the said sub-clause.

4. Nothing in sub-clause (c) of the said clause shall affect the operation of any existing law, in so far as it imposes or prevents the State from making any law imposing in the interest of the sovereignty and integrity of India or public order or morality, reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the right conferred by the said sub-clause.

5. Nothing in sub-clauses (d), (e) and (f) of the said clause shall affect the operation of any existing law in so far as it imposes or prevents the State from making any law imposing, reasonable restrictions on the exercise of any of the rights conferred by the said sub-clauses either in the interest of the general public or for the protection of the interests of any Scheduled Tribe.
6. Nothing in sub-clause (g) of the said clause shall affect the operation of any existing law in so far as it imposes or prevents the State from making any law imposing in the interests of the general public, reasonable restrictions on the exercise of the rights conferred by the said sub-clause, and, in particular, nothing in the said sub-clause shall affect the operation of any existing law in-so-far as it relates to, or prevents the State from making any law relating to :
  - (i) the professional or technical qualifications necessary for practicing any profession or carrying on any occupation, trade or business, or,
  - (ii) the carrying on by the State, or by a corporation-owned or controlled by the State, of any trade, business industry or service, whether to the exclusion, complete or partial, of citizens or otherwise.

**Art. 23. Prohibition of traffic in human beings and 'Begar' and forced labour.**

1. Traffic in human beings and 'Begar' and other similar forms of forced labour are prohibited and any contravention of this provision shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.
2. Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from imposing compulsory service for public purposes, and in imposing such services the State shall not make any discrimination on grounds only of religion, race, caste or class or any of them.

**Art. 25. Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.**

1. Subject to public order, morality and health and to other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion.
2. Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law,
  - (i) regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may associate with religious practice ;
  - (ii) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindus.

**Explanation-1.** The wearing and carrying of Kirpans shall be deemed to be included in the profession of Sikh religion.

**Explanation-2.** In sub-clause (b) of clause (2) the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religions and reference to Hindu religious institutions shall be construed accordingly.

**Art. 29.** Protection of interest of minorities.

1. Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.
2. No citizen shall be denied admission to any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of the State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

**Art. 35.** Legislation to give effect to the provisions of this part,

Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution :

1. Parliament shall have, and the Legislature of a State shall not have, power to make laws,
  - (i) .....

(ii) for prescribing punishment for those acts which are declared to be offences under this part and Parliament shall, as soon as may be after the commencement of this Constitution, make laws for prescribing punishment for the acts referred to in sub-clause (ii).

**Art. 38.** State to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people—

The State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of National life.

**Art. 46.** Promotion of educational and economic interests SCs, STs and other weaker sections.

The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and in particular, of the SCs and STs and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitations.

**Art. 164.** Other provisions as to Ministers.

1. The Chief Minister shall be appointed by the Governor and other Ministers shall be appointed by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister and the Ministers shall hold office during the pleasure of the Governor.

Provided that in the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a minister in-charge of tribal welfare who may, in addition, be in-charge of the welfare of SCs and BCs or any other work.

2. The Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the legislative assembly of the State.

**Art. 224.** Administration of Scheduled Areas and Tribal Areas.

1. The Provisions of the fifth schedule shall apply to the administration and control of the Scheduled areas and Scheduled tribes in any State other than the State of Assam.

2. The provisions of the sixth schedule shall apply to the administration of the Tribal Areas in the State of Assam.

#### **FIFTH SCHEDULE : [Art. 244 (1)]**

Provisions as to the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes :

#### **PART A—GENERAL**

1. **Interpretation :** In this schedule, unless the context otherwise requires, the expression 'State' does not include the State of Assam.
2. **Executive Power of a State in scheduled areas—**subject to the provisions of this schedule, the executive power of a State extends to the scheduled areas therein.
3. **Report by the Governor to the President regarding the administration of Scheduled Areas.**

The Governor of each State having scheduled areas therein shall annually, or whenever so required by the President, make a report to the President regarding the administration of the scheduled areas in that State and the executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of directions to the State as to the administration of the said areas.

#### **PART B—ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF SCHEDULED AREAS AND SCHEDULED TRIBES**

#### **4. Tribes Advisory Council (TAC)**

(1) There shall be established in each State having Scheduled Areas therein and, if the President so directs, also in any State having Scheduled Tribes but not Scheduled Areas therein, a Tribes Advisory Council consisting of not more than twenty members of whom, as nearly as may be  $\frac{1}{2}$  shall be the representatives of the STs in the Legislative Assembly of the State ;

Provided that if the number of representatives of the STs in the Legislative Assembly of the State is less than the number of seats in the Tribes Advisory Council to be filled by such representatives, the remaining seats shall be filled by other members of those tribes.

(2) It shall be the duty of the TAC to advise on such matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the STs in the State as may be referred to them by the Governor.

(3) The Governor may make rules prescribing or regulating, as the case may be—

- (i) the number of members of the council, the mode of their appointment and appointment of the Chairman of the Council and of the officers and servants thereof ;
- (ii) the conduct of its meetings and its procedure in general ; and,
- (iii) all other incidental matters.

### **5. Law applicable in Scheduled Areas**

(1) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, the Governor, may by public notification direct that any particular act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State or shall apply to a Scheduled Area or any part thereof in the State subject to such exceptions and modifications as he may specify in the notification and any direction given under this sub paragraph may be given so as to have retrospective effect.

(2) The Governor may make regulations for the peace and good government of any area in a State which is for the time being Scheduled Area.

In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the forgoing power, such regulations may—

- (i) prohibit or restrict the transfer of land by or among members of the STs in such areas ;
- (ii) regulate the allotment of land to members of the STs in such areas ;
- (iii) regulate the carrying on of business as moneylender by persons who lend money to members of the STs in such area.

(3) In making any such regulation as is referred to in subparagraph (2) of this paragraph, the Governor may repeal or

amend any Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State or any existing law which is for the time being applicable to the area in question.

(4) All regulations may under this paragraph shall be submitted forthwith to the President and, until assented to by him shall have no effect.

(5) No regulation shall be made under this paragraph unless the Governor making the regulation has, in the case where there is a TASC for the State, constituted such Council.

**Art. 330. Reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the House of the People.**

(1) Seats shall be reserved in the House of the People :

- (i) the SCs ;
- (ii) the STs ; (except SCs in the Tribal areas of Assam),
- (iii) the STs in the autonomous districts of Assam.

(2) The number of seats reserved in any State or Union Territory for the SCs or STs under clause (1) shall bear as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats allotted to that State or Union Territory in the House of the People as the population of the SCs in the State or Union Territory or part of the State or Union Territory, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are so reserved, bears to the total population of the State or Union Territory.

**Art. 332. Reservation of seats for SCs and STs in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.**

- (1) Seats shall be reserved for the SCs and STs, except the STs in the tribal areas of Assam, in the Legislative Assembly of every State.
- (2) Seats shall be reserved also for the autonomous districts in the Legislative Assembly of the State of Assam.
- (3) The number of seats reserved for SCs and STs in the Legislative Assembly of any State under clause (1) shall bear as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total

number of seats in the Assembly, as the population of the SCs in the State or of the STs in the State or part of the State, as the case may be, in respect of which seats are so reserved, bears to the total population of the State.

**Art. 334.** Reservation of seats and special representation shall cease after 20 years.

Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this part, the provisions, of this Constitution relating to (a) the reservation of seats for the SCs and STs in the House of the people and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States; (b)..... shall cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of 20 years from the commencement of this Constitution :—

Provided that nothing in this article shall affect any representation in the House of the People or in the Legislative Assembly of the State until the dissolution of the then existing House or Assembly, as the case may be.

**Art. 335.** Claims of SCs and STs to services and posts.

The claims of the members of the SCs and STs shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of State.

**Art. 338.** Special Officer for SCs and STs etc.,

- (1) There shall be a special officer for the SCs and STs to be appointed by the President.
- (2) It shall be the duty of the special officer to investigate all matters relating to the safe-guards provided for SCs and STs under the Constitution and report to the President upon the working of those safeguards at such intervals as the President may direct and the President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament.
- (3) In this article, reference to the SCs and STs shall be construed as including reference to such other backward classes as the President may, on receipt of the report of a Commission appointed under clause (1) of Art. 340 by order specify and also to the Anglo-Indian Community.

**Art. 339. Control of the Union over the Administration of Scheduled Areas and Welfare of STs.**

- (1) The President may at any time and shall, at the expiration of 10 years from the commencement of this Constitution, by order appoint a commission to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and Welfare of the STs in the State.

The order may define the composition, powers and procedure of the commission and may contain such incidental or ancillary provisions as the President consider necessary or desirable.

- (2) The executive power of the Union shall extend to the giving of directions to a State as to the drawing up and execution of the schemes specified in the direction to be essential for the welfare of the STs in the State.

**Arts. 341. and 342 Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.**

- (1) The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the castes, races or tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes to tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be SCs/STs in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be.
- (2) Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of SCs and STs specified in the notification issued under clause (1) any caste, race, tribal community or part of or group within any caste tribe or tribal community but save as aforesaid notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

**Governmental Policies towards Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes**

In post-independence India, the policies of the Government have been in the nature of 'Protective Discrimination' towards the weaker sections of Indian Society. Earlier it was stated that for

the first time, during 1931 census, a systematic classification of 'Depressed classes' was made. Many of the castes classified as 'Depressed' have been listed in the schedule for Purposes of protective discrimination.

The British government recognized the need for the development of backward classes as far back as in 1934. Backwardness in relation to social, economic and educational conditions was kept in view and representation in several services was provided in a small measure which acted as an incentive to these people.

One of the important incentives was the inclusion of members of backward classes in governmental services. But this posed certain problems. Mere provisions for persons who are economically and socially discriminated to compete with relatively advantageous groups will not help the backwards to come forward. This could be avoided only by reserving certain number of posts in the services of Govt. to the backward classes and by avoiding competition from the advanced sections. In addition to reservation of jobs relaxation of upper age limit helped them to become eligible for public service.

Then came 'The Quota System' wherein a certain percentage of posts in relation to population or available posts was categorically reserved for the backward classes. The quota system also was introduced by the British Government. The remarkable fight given in winning the concessions to backwards by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar will go a long way in the history of emancipation of Indian backward classes (classes and castes). In the first instance, the quota system began with 8½% and progressively increased to 15% as of today. However, reservation for STs (3%) is not included under this.

Another concession, rather measure, taken by the British government was by way of providing for the representation of backward classes in Provincial Legislative Assemblies through the system of separate electorates for minorities under the Government of India Act, 1932. But, this was vehemently opposed by the nationalist leaders especially of Congress. One of the reasons for opposition is that this provision was attributed to the so-called 'divide and rule' policy pursued by the British. However, the provisions of separate electorate were withdrawn subsequently.

After independence, the policy of the government is guided by the constitutional provisions to the SCs and STs. Here again, the extent of concerted efforts made by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution cannot be underestimated. Though much of his efforts are diluted in the discussions, whatever little that is introduced in the Constitution for the Welfare of SCs and STs should have a reference to that noble man. This is not to suggest that others' efforts are of no significance.

The policy of the government after independence has been influenced to a great extent by the ideas and ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. The public was, to some extent, guided by his views, and actions in advocating for social equality by way of allowing the backwards (untouchables) to temples and places of worship. 'Harijan' (Children of God) the nomenclature given by Gandhi to untouchables has been accepted by others in the society, though not necessarily by the affected groups themselves.

One of the conditional clauses stipulates (Art. 334) that the concessions or constitutional provisions (Protective Discrimination) would cease after a period of 20 years *i.e.*, by 1970. But this has been further extended by 10 years twice *i.e.*, upto 1990.

Another positive step in this direction is the achievement of social equality as contained in Art. 17 of the Constitution. This article prohibits discrimination against citizens on grounds of caste, creed, race, language, place of birth or any of them, and the practice of untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is made punishable by law. The article got further rejuvenated by passing the Untouchability (Offence) Act. of 1955, where severe punishment including imprisonment is prescribed to those who practice it. The recent Bill in Parliament concerning the practice of untouchability is yet another step in eradicating this social stigma.

In the field of economic measures to uplift the downtrodden though the provisions are not obligatory on the part of the government in power, (Art. 46) certain benefits like allotment of land, house site, building material and monetary aid have been extended to them. All these together are expected to help the SCs and STs to improve their economic condition. Economic provisions are in the nature of Directive Principles of State Policy which are not enforceable in a court of law as a right. Then the nature of these

provisions are not obligatory on the part of the government but are concessions.

The government rightly recognised the needs of SCs and STs in the field of education. In fact, one of the criteria in considering them as backwards is connected with their educational backwardness. Formal education, money and power go hand in hand, the latter buttress the former. But both money and power lacking in the case of the downtrodden, the policy of Protective Discrimination by the State is, therefore, necessary to provide educational opportunities to the downtrodden.

Education is a State subject. But the Union government has a national policy in implementing certain measures in favour of SCs and STs. Accordingly, reservation facilities are extended in the institutions of higher education. Financial incentives are given to the children of SCs and STs in schools. Scholarships are given to the students from these communities for their post-matric education. In addition, hostel facilities and reimbursement of extra boarding charges are met by the State. Also schools and Balaman-dirs are opened very near to Tribal habitations. These facilities in recent years are given only to those SC and ST children whose parents' income is Rs. 500/- or less per month.

Reservation of certain number of posts in the public service provided in the Government of India Act, 1935 to the people from backward classes have been extended in the Constitution after 1950 through the provision of reservation of employments in various services. The relevant articles have been dealt within the sub-heading 'Constitutional Provisions' in this report.

Political reservation to SCs and STs in various democratic institutions under the Indian Constitution replaced the earlier provisions of separate electorate. Accordingly, reservation of seats right from village panchayat upto the level of Parliament is provided. The percentage of seats broadly coincide with percentage of SC and ST population in relation to general population. This is statutory obligation on the part of the Govt. and there is very little scope for any kind of interference. Political reservation is construed to help these people to develop leadership qualities and leaders even at grass-root levels. The SC and ST political leaders who get elected to different political bodies in the long run are expected to work for the betterment of these groups.

**Area of Karnataka, its Population and SC and ST Population**

The erstwhile Mysore State, has been renamed in 1974 as Karnataka. It is situated in the southern part of Indian peninsula stretching from 11° to 19° north latitude and 74° to 78° east longitude. The total area of the State is 1,91,773 sq. kms. It has a population of 2,92,99,014 of which 1,49,71,900 are males and 1,43,27,114 are females<sup>5</sup> with an average density of 153 per sq. km. For purposes of administrative convenience, the State has been divided into four divisions with headquarters at Bangalore, Belgaum, Gulberga and Mysore. Further, the entire State is divided into 19 districts and 175 talukas. Karnataka has 245 towns and 26,826 inhabited villages. Table 1 refers.

**TABLE 1 : Towns and Inhabited/Uninhabited Villages in Karnataka and Districts.<sup>6</sup>**

<i>S. No.</i>	<i>Districts/Headquarters</i>	<i>Town</i>	<i>Inhabited</i>	<i>Uninhabited</i>
	<b>KARNATAKA</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>26,826</b>	<b>2,707</b>
1.	Bangalore	22	2,470	258
2.	Belgaum	19	1,158	6
3.	Bellary	11	589	34
4.	Bidar	5	591	31
5.	Bijapur	17	1,239	29
6.	Chikmagalur	9	984	126
7.	Chitradurga	12	1,250	231
8.	Coorg	11	291	13
9.	Dharwar	18	1,337	22
10.	Gulbarga	12	1,304	82
11.	Hassan	11	2,316	260
12.	Kolar	14	2,828	489
13.	Mandya	10	1,339	144
14.	Mysore	13	1,593	259
15.	North Kanara	8	1,295	61
16.	Raichur	10	1,387	129
17.	Shimoga	13	1,741	259
18.	South Kanara	18	662	1
19.	Tumkur	12	2,452	273

5. 'Karnataka at a glance', Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore.

6. Census of India, 1971, District Hand Book for Karnataka.

The State is the 3rd largest in terms of population in South India and occupies the 8th place in the country.

<i>South Indian States</i>		<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. Andhra Pradesh	...	43,502,708	1
2. Karnataka	...	29,299,314	3
3. Kerala	...	1,347,375	4
4. Tamil Nadu	...	41,199,168	2

Like other parts of the country the State has more rural population than urban. There are 2,21,76,921 persons living in rural areas and about 71,22,093 in urban areas.

Since the State is located very near to the equator, the climatic condition is, essentially a tropical one. The year can be divided into four seasons as follows :

1. Cold and dry season from January to February.
2. Hot and Dry season from March to May
3. Rainy Season from June to September, and
4. Subsidiary rainy season from October to December.

The State as a whole receives moderate rainfall, though it is unpredictable both in terms of time and space. Because of the varying climatic conditions people were and are exposed frequently to draughts and famines especially in the past. The average annual rainfall is 112 cms. It ranges from 762 cms in the Western ghats to 38 cms in the eastern parts of the State.

The SC population of the country in 1971 was 79.9 millions as against 64.4 millions in 1961. Similarly, STs were 38.0 million in 1971 as against 30.1 million in 1961. Thus, we find 25.18 per cent and 25.99 per cent SC, ST population increase in a decade.

The SCs and STs constitute, roughly 1/7 of the total population of the State according to 1971 census. There were 38,50,034 and 2,31,268 SCs and STs respectively, in the State in 1971.

Tables showing the growth in the population of SCs and STs in the State during the last 20 years are given in Table 2.

Detailed analysis indicates a slight decline in the SC/ST population of the State. The SCs constituted 13.31 per cent of the

TABLE 2 : Distribution of SC and ST Population in Karnataka

Sl. No.	Districts	Percentage of Total Population		Percentage of Scheduled Caste		Percentage of Scheduled Tribes		Ratio to Total Population								
		1951	1961	1951	1961	1951	1961	1951	1961							
		1971	1971	1971	1971	1971	1971	1971	1971							
1.	Bangalore	10.96	10.61	11.30	14.24	13.49	13.13	3.09	2.41	4.46	17.29	16.70	15.02	0.11	0.18	0.30
2.	Belgaum	8.40	8.41	8.24	5.39	5.59	5.79	2.02	26.90	23.46	8.36	8.74	9.20	0.09	2.51	2.19
3.	Bellary	3.98	3.88	3.80	4.21	4.00	4.34	0.51	0.34	1.84	14.40	13.60	14.01	0.05	0.07	0.37
4.	Bidar	2.84	2.81	2.78	3.17	3.34	3.22	0.01	0.35	0.30	14.80	15.21	0.15	—	0.15	0.08
5.	Bijapur	7.18	7.04	6.72	4.70	5.24	5.19	0.25	4.90	2.80	8.70	9.84	1.00	0.01	0.56	0.32
6.	Chikmagalur	2.15	2.53	2.28	2.86	2.17	3.10	4.91	3.74	4.37	17.84	16.73	1.77	0.94	1.20	1.49
7.	Chitradurga	4.47	4.63	5.74	6.27	6.54	6.60	0.01	0.08	0.33	18.65	18.62	14.98	—	0.13	0.04
8.	Coorg	1.18	1.36	1.26	1.17	0.98	0.96	26.23	14.11	11.52	13.15	9.48	9.82	9.19	8.21	7.03
9.	Dharwar	8.12	8.26	7.92	3.08	3.51	4.84	0.29	5.55	5.34	5.04	5.66	7.95	0.01	0.54	0.62
10.	Gulbarga	6.24	5.93	6.56	6.36	6.91	0.80	0.05	0.70	0.81	13.55	15.56	15.11	—	0.09	0.10
11.	Hassan	3.68	3.79	3.73	4.54	4.65	4.40	0.65	0.48	0.70	16.39	16.17	15.38	0.07	0.10	0.14
12.	Kolar	5.82	5.46	5.13	0.94	10.23	9.43	0.20	0.19	0.83	25.01	24.72	23.94	0.01	0.02	0.12
13.	Mandya	3.69	3.81	3.91	3.54	3.73	3.67	0.11	0.29	1.04	12.73	12.92	12.25	0.01	0.06	0.20
14.	Mysore	7.33	7.08	7.03	9.66	9.38	9.25	8.66	8.75	8.47	17.52	17.49	17.11	0.49	1.00	0.94
15.	North Kanara	2.66	2.92	2.87	1.67	1.01	0.89	2.30	2.19	0.94	8.35	4.57	4.10	0.37	0.61	0.25
16.	Raichur	4.91	4.66	4.79	3.84	3.66	3.95	—	0.02	0.50	10.09	10.36	1.76	—	—	0.08
17.	Shimoga	3.41	4.31	4.40	3.75	4.66	4.81	3.74	3.25	3.27	14.62	14.29	14.17	0.45	0.61	0.58
18.	South Kanara	6.86	6.63	6.56	2.99	2.48	2.58	46.72	25.34	27.55	5.79	4.91	5.14	2.82	3.11	3.27
19.	Tumkur	5.93	5.79	5.51	7.66	7.46	6.95	0.16	0.21	0.90	17.18	17.01	16.47	0.11	0.02	0.13
TOTAL		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	13.31	13.21	13.03	0.41	0.81	0.78

State's population in 1951. In 1961 it came down to 13.21 per cent and in 1971 it was 13.03 per cent. This clearly indicates that there is a decline in the SC population. However, when it comes to Tribal population there was a phenomenal increase between the years 1951 and 1961. The population of Tribals went up from 0.41 per cent in 1951 to 0.81 per cent in 1961. Again, it showed a downward trend in 1971 with a decrease of 0.03 per cent over the previous decade. The increase of Tribal population between 1951 and 1961 can be attributed to the States reorganisation in 1956, when certain Kannada speaking areas were transferred from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Coorg. This led to large influx of Tribal population.

Compared to the growth of general population in the State, barring the tribal exodus between 1951 and 1961, the rate of growth of SC and ST population remained slightly lower. While the population of the State rose by 25.23 per cent between 1961 and 1971, that the SCs and STs increased only by 23.51 per cent and 20.18 per cent respectively.

A look at 1951 census shows that the SC population in Karnataka is concentrated in four districts of the State. They are Bangalore, Kolar, Mysore and Tumkur Districts. The same trend continues even in 1971. While the remaining 15 districts consist of 61.24 per cent, the above four districts account for 38.76 per cent.

As regards STs, the decade 1951-1961 witnessed an increase of 139 per cent in their population, of which 72 per cent was from four districts of Belgaum, Bijapur, Dharwar and Mysore. These four districts along with South Karnataka and Coorg account for 85.55 per cent of ST population of the State in 1961. In 1971, 71 per cent of ST population was concentrated in the four districts of South Kanara, Coorg and Mysore. While Dharwar, Bangalore and Chikmagalur districts had 14 per cent of the State's ST population, the remaining were scattered in the other 12 districts.

With regard to rural-urban break up of SC and ST population of Karnataka, 1961 census show that 83.68 per cent and 94.82 per cent of SCs and STs respectively, lived in rural areas. The figures for 1971 show that 83.18 and 89.10% of SCs and STs respectively, live in rural areas. This means that there is little difference between SCs

TABLE 3 : Rural-Urban Population in Karnataka—1971

Sl. No.	Districts	Population			Scheduled Caste			Scheduled Tribe		
		Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
	<b>KARNATAKA</b>	29299014	22176921	7122093	3850034	3202756	647278	231268	206067	25201
1.	Bangalore	3365515	1499761	1865754	505644	312969	192675	10287	5758	4529
2.	Belgaum	2423342	1925549	497793	222952	190310	32642	53150	48020	5130
3.	Bellary	1122686	817914	304772	167378	138797	28581	4246	1898	2348
4.	Bidar	824059	704928	119131	123963	113974	9989	699	466	233
5.	Bijapur	1985591	1564416	421175	200000	172297	27703	6524	5544	980
6.	Chikmagalur	736647	621569	115078	119733	109680	10053	10271	9758	513
7.	Chitradurga	1397456	1114504	282952	254290	226270	28020	762	573	189
8.	Coorg	378291	319600	58691	36971	32467	4504	26596	26316	280
9.	Dharwar	2342213	1604240	737973	186358	143471	42887	14632	12267	2365
10.	Gulbarga	1739220	1429944	309276	261922	233624	28298	1871	1210	661
11.	Hassan	1102370	952959	149411	169594	155608	13986	1606	1533	73
12.	Kolar	1516646	1203531	313115	363092	292001	71091	1921	775	1146
13.	Mandya	1154374	995786	158788	141439	123274	18165	2795	1888	907
14.	Mysore	2077238	1548120	529118	356466	298845	57621	19547	18703	844
15.	North Kanara	849105	698608	150497	34863	29291	5572	2175	1630	545
16.	Raichur	1415740	1198269	217471	152328	131395	20933	1148	745	403
17.	Shimoga	1301485	994172	307313	185465	161818	23647	7540	7027	513
18.	South Kanara	1939315	1546137	393178	99687	85587	14100	63596	59966	3630
19.	Tumkur	1627721	1437114	190607	267889	251078	16811	2081	1990	91

Source : Census of India, 1971

and STs as far as intensity and concentration is concerned with regard to general population. However, in the case of Tribals the extent of their urbanization is very negligible. The very nature of the way of life perhaps confines them to hills and forests. The cultural traits and economic activity of Tribal people general depends on forests and related products. Table 3. refers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Universe of the Study**

Karnataka has an approximate population of 2.98 crores, out of which 38 lakhs constitute Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They are distributed in all parts of the State, though not uniformly. Except two districts—Coorg and North Kanara, all others have over 1 lakh SC/ST population. The STs are concentrated in the districts of Mysore, Coorg and South Kanara. The SCs are seen in great numbers in the districts of Belgaum, Kolar, Mysore and Tumkur.

In order to avoid discrimination with regard to areas having SC and ST population, it was decided to include all the districts of the State for purposes of study. However, the second and the final stages of sample selection had to be restricted in order to meet the requirements of scientific investigation. Nevertheless, the final stage of investigation, *i.e.*, meeting the respondents was extended to all the SC/ST households in the selected villages.

### **Sample Selection**

Social science surveys involving large number of people and areas have to be carried out on the basis of sampling procedure. Though total coverage is a welcome effort, time factor and resources at one's disposal makes it difficult to go in for study of the entire population distributed over a wide area. The sampling and survey methods are in use precisely to enable objective investigation of any given phenomenon. Depending on the type of data required, sampling can be drawn using certain statistical guidelines. With systematic sampling it is possible to arrive at meaningful results.

It should be borne in mind that no procedure is full or fool proof. According to convenience and requirements, the different

TABLE 4 : Selected Talukas and Villages in Districts of Karnataka

S. No.	District	Selected Talukas	Selected Villages	Selected Talukas	Selected Villages
1.	Bangalore	1. Bangalore North	(1) Srigandadakaval (2) Settaballi	2. Kanakapura	(1) Anamanahalli (2) Bijjali
2.	Belgaum	1. Belgaum	(1) Badas (2) Mavinakatti	2. Ramadurga	(1) Halolli (2) Hanamapura
3.	Bellary	1. Bellary	(1) Thimmalapur (2) Tegginabudihal	2. Hadagali	(1) Helagundi (2) Dombarahalli
4.	Bidar	1. Aurad	(1) Bhavanibijalgaoo (2) Muthked	2. Humnabad	(1) Kallur (2) Alura
5.	Bijapur	1. Bagalkote	(1) Bhyramatti (2) Honaralli	2. Indi	(1) Margur (2) Inchigere
6.	Chikmagalur	1. Kadur	(1) Maravanji (2) Mallidevihalli	2. Mudigere	(1) Mandipur (2) Tripura
7.	Chitradurga	1. Davangera	(1) Tubigere (2) Jampannanahalli	2. Hiriyur	(1) Hulugalakunte (2) Adivala
8.	Coorg	1. Somvarpet	(1) Kumarhalli (2) Bambloor	2. Virajpet	(1) Guyya (2) Kirgoor
9.	Dharwar	1. Hubli	(1) Mantur (2) Kardikop	2. Hanagal	(1) Balambeed (2) Kelavar Kopa
10.	Gulbarga	1. Kalburgi	(1) Bhimnal (2) Melkunda	2. Chiocholi	(1) Shivarreddipalli (2) Kanchanal

(Contd)

(Contd.)

S. No.	District	Selected Talukas	Selected Villages	Selected Talukas	Selected Villages
11.	Hassan	1. Arakalgud	(1) Kenchanahalli (2) Boodanur	2. Arasikere	(1) Narayanaghattalli (2) Geejihalli
12.	Kolar	1. Bangarpet (KGF)	(1) Hunsanahalli (2) Pillagundarahalli	2. Chickaballapur	(1) Andaralahalli (2) Hirenagarvalli
13.	Mandya	1. Maddur	(1) Dundanahalli (2) Marangere	2. Nagamangala	(1) Anchebunahalli (2) Karadya
14.	Mysore	1. Heggadadevana Kote	(1) G. B. Sargur (2) Kurnagal	2. Kollegal	(1) Changadi (2) Setbegal
15.	North Kanara	1. Haliyal	(1) Tegginalli (2) Hampehalli	2. Siddapur	(1) Kelaginamane (2) Balgod
16.	Raichur	1. Deodurga	(1) Huligud (2) Arasangi	2. Yelburga	(1) Hiremayageri (2) Budur
17.	Shimoga	1. Shikaripur	(1) Bannur (2) Maloor	2. Tirthahalli	(1) Nerthor (2) Thudur
18.	South Kanara	1. Coondapur	(1) Anagalli (2) Chittor	2. Puttur	(1) Kolphige (2) Kuntur
19.	Tumkur	1. Madhugiri	(1) Gundahalli (2) Jakkenahalli	2. Tiptur	(1) Beluvaneralu (2) Gungaramale

stages of investigation have to be based on different sampling techniques. It is unnecessary to cover all the units in the universe which will be time-consuming.

The present study is based on a stratified sample. Stratification, here is done at four levels—district, Taluka, Village and the respondent. Though district is taken as the first level of stratification, for practical reasons, all the 19 districts of the State have been selected. Recognising the fact that the SCs and STs are distributed in all the districts, to choose only some districts would have led to a lacunae in the sampling technique. To avoid this, it was decided to extend the investigation to all the districts.

At the second stage of sampling of the talukas—the analogy applied to the selection of districts could not be extended to the selection of talukas. Karnataka has 175 talukas. It is impossible to cover all of them. Therefore, a convincing rationale had to be applied. In this direction a reference was made to determine relatively forward and backward talukas in each district, to the districts statistical abstracts. For the purpose of this study, district abstracts for 1971, have been taken. After giving score for different items in the abstract, the level of forward and backward talukas was arrived at. After determining the degree of each taluka, by arranging all the talukas in the district in ascending order, placing the most backward taluka at the bottom. From each such list (district) the most forward and most backward (first and last) talukas were selected. In all 38 talukas in the State were taken for purposes of investigation. Table 4. refers.

The next stage of sampling is concerned with the selection of villages. Much of the interaction of people in rural areas depends on the caste composition of each village. There will be difference in villages with relatively large and small population. This is true of even SCs and STs. In understanding the living conditions of SCs and STs, in two different situations—villages with large and villages with small population—were considered suitable for study. In this connection, to determine villages with large and small population, the selected talukas, SC/ST population was arrived at. A point for clarification here is that STs were taken on par with SCs. Though tribals are concentrated only in certain pockets of the State, their assimilation with the people of the plains is given

due-weightage. It is for this reason, study of tribal colonies and areas were excluded from the scope of the present survey. By referring to a random number table, two villages from each taluka — one above the average SC/ST population and one below it were selected. As far as possible, villages with both SC/ST population were preferred.

At the final stage of sampling—the selection of the respondents—there was little scope to apply any sensible criterion in determining the households to be covered. One of the reasons for deciding in favour of interviewing all the SC/ST households in selected was due to the mortality of provisional census figures of 1971. Also there was no substitute showing population projections over the previous census figures. Above all the Indian village community includes various castes and sub-castes, interacting at different levels. Any study aimed at knowing their living conditions will have to be structured taking into consideration different caste cleavages. The terms SCs and STs are only blanket terms. They include a number of sub-castes and tribes within themselves. Hence mere investigation of a particular sub-caste among SCs or STs would only give us a partial picture of their problems.

In view of all these, inclusion of all the SC/ST households in the selected villages is justified.

It is a known thing that the living conditions of urban SCs and STs are different from that of their rural counterparts due to many reasons. Hence, the study of urban SCs and STs was also included. As the urban SCs/STs live in a relatively open society, where opportunities are theoretically open to all, without reference to caste or creed. The urban SCs and STs being generally educated, are employed, it was believed that they will react in a different way to these enquiries. In Karnataka, the percentage of urban SCs works out to 14 and for STs it is 3. Accordingly, 14% of the districts' SC population was taken as a guideline for all urban SCs. Three per cent of STs in towns and cities were included for study. However, there was some difficulty in recognizing SC/ST households in towns and cities.

Totally the study covered 76 village 38 urban centres and 33306 households.

**Tools and Techniques of Data Collection**

The next stage in the survey deals with the task of data collection. Proper tools and techniques had to be designed before setting out for field work. Keeping in view the composition of the universe of investigation, it was decided to use interviewing and observation techniques. The population living in rural areas is largely illiterate and not well conversant with social science surveys. An interview guide was prepared after pretesting the same through a pilot study. The unit of study was determined to be the household. The interview guide/schedule covers aspects regarding the demographic feature of the SC/ST household members, their residential pattern, ownership of landed property, occupational details including mobility, if any, material possessions, awareness and use of bank, co-operative society and modern agricultural techniques, income and indebtedness, problems of untouchability and opinion on caste. It also covers details regarding the influence of Panchayati Raj, its utility, level of SC/STs' politicization, involvement in disputes, awareness and use of constitutional benefits and opinion about them, education of children, beliefs and practices, food habits, health conditions and so forth.

Apart from all these, a separate schedule was prepared to collect details concerning the village infra-structure and its location, which includes basic information regarding the position of the village in terms of various means of communication and other civil facilities available in the village. It also contains data on the social structure of the village, the land holding pattern in terms of different castes residing in the village. There is provision to collect information regarding residential pattern of the entire village based on castes. The village schedule includes the history of the village Panchayat, its membership—caste-wise—a brief history also of the village co-operative society, number of students in schools and other public utility institutions.

Along with these two main tools of data collection, statistical reports published by the Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of Karnataka, Census reports, topographic maps of the State obtained from the Survey of India and the district gazetteer were also used at different stages of the survey.

**Interviewing the Respondents and Problem of Contact**

As indicated already, interview technique was adopted in the survey to get responses from both literate and illiterate rural and

urban respondents. The respondents, in large number, were illiterate and ignorant of such enquiries. Added to these, the interview guide or schedule was designed to get comprehensive information from the respondents. Each interview extended for 90-120 minutes easily and it required careful attention and certain clarifications by both interviewer and the interviewee.

The art of interviewing cannot be under-estimated. The person who interviews should have a thorough knowledge of both the problem that is on hand and the situation in which he is placed at the field. In addition to inter-viewing, the investigator has to conduct himself, upto the expectations of his respondents. All significant points of the information have to be recorded mostly by observation. This requires skilled personnel. To meet all these requirements ; the staff who were entrusted with the task of inter-viewing had to be selected and trained carefully. Therefore, post-graduates in different social sciences like Sociology, Economics and political Science were recruited. In order to give them an opportunity before sending them to field, a pilot study was undertaken. All of them were given training in the technique of interviewing and observation.

As a general guideline, and for practical reasons, it was decided to interview the eldest male member of the household collect data on various items. In his absence, the eldest earning male member was preferred. Where there were no male member in the household to give required information, any person who could understand the implications of study was chosen as the respondent.

The interview guide was administered as questionnaire to those respondents in urban centres who could read and understand the significance of the survey. Formal education enabled them to do so.

To elicit all the relevant information, it was estimated that normally each interview would take an hour or two. The investigators stayed in the selected villages and participated in the activities of the village community. This enabled them to record events in a systematic way. Considering the spontaneous response from the rural SCs and STs, it could be concluded that the urban SCs and STs took more time to respond. One of the general observation by the investigators was that the educated urban dwelling SCs and STs

viewed the study with some kind of suspicion and hence reservation. One of the main objectives of the investigation was to have an on the spot account of SCs and STs and their economic, political and socio-religious interaction with the larger community in rural areas. This was done in order to understand the actual conditions and the extent to which the downtrodden depend on others in the villages. This consumed more time and the staff had to stay for long in the villages.

Almost all surveys of this type will have to face certain problems during the field work. One of the main problems is connected with contracting the respondents. The respondents in this study are largely landless agricultural labourers. The employers exploit the working force by making them work for long hours and agricultural labour force in India is largely unorganised. The agricultural labourers will have very little time to spare for other activities since they work from dawn to dusk. Economic necessity forces them to accept these conditions. Almost every able bodied person, irrespective of sex and age works as agricultural or casual labourer. While women of upper caste groups, usually do not go out to work in fields, SC/ST womenfolk have traditionally worked both at home and in the fields. Child labour is common amongst them.

In view of all these, it was often difficult to meet the respondents in the homes and sometimes in villages. The investigators had to visit the SC and ST households repeatedly and to adjust to their leisure time which generally was to be either late in the evening or during night times.

It was felt desirable and necessary not to seek any help of the official machinery for data collection. Voluntary co-operation and objectivity are thus maintained. A circular or instructions from the administration, would have helped but affected the reaction of the SCs and STs in the villages to give distorted picture. The investigators had to convince the village elders—panchayat Chairman or Headman and establish rapport. This took sometime, but all these were done in order to maintain objectivity of the study. No one had advance information in the village before the investigators visited the place.

In certain parts of the State, the people in the villages mistook

the investigation for the work of Christian missionaries. It is true that in the districts of Kolar, Bangalore and Tumkur missionary work by the Church of South India was/is active. Perhaps, the villagers suspected that such propaganda would affect the integrity of the village community as a whole.

As mentioned elsewhere, the rural people in the interior are not generally familiar with social surveys of this nature. Whatever little done, is confined to urban areas concerning consumer goods and marketing agencies. The knowledge of the rural people centres around census enumeration visits and family planning propaganda. To some of the questions on developmental programmes the reaction of the villagers was stereotype and investigators were sometimes mistaken for family planning personnel.

Another experience of the field study was that the people expected some benefits and assurances in return for information. They formed an opinion that such visits by the administration will be followed by implementation of project like schools, post offices, health centres and so forth. They did mention that they had thought this as one such survey and enquired the investigators about it.

Yet in some villages the caste Hindus after understanding the purpose of the investigation made sarcastic remarks showing their displeasure to the policy of 'protective Discrimination'. Some of them were of the opinion that SCs and STs cannot be improved. They are prone to all sorts of vices, hence according to them whatever help extended to improve them would be waste.

On some occasions the SC and ST respondents were suspicious and created embarrassing scenes. They criticized the village leaders when they were asked to give their opinion on village leaders, but spied against the research group, giving scope for some delay in field work. It is really a problem for any investigator to avoid group responses during the time of interviewing in rural areas. People gathered round the interviewer and the interviewee often answered indiscriminately, questions not concerned with them. The rural housing pattern is a hindrance for enquiries in confidence. It was also observed that the respondents were mostly interested in knowing what answers others would give. Very often they accompanied the investigators wherever the latter went. Further, to some of the delicate questions, the respondents depended on their leaders

in the village. As the only way open for making the interview relatively fruitful, the staff had to cross verify the answers given at different levels.

It is a known fact that rural SCs and STs depend on agricultural families of dominant castes. All their basic requirements are nearly met by them. In such cases, the SCs and STs when asked to describe their relationship with and disabilities caused by their patrons, gave vague and irrelevant answers. Obviously, they were afraid of their masters. To some extent this posed a problem and made the field work difficult.

All these problems encountered by the research staff in rural areas had to be viewed in the light of the social, economic and political background of rural SCs and STs. Almost all of them are illiterate and are ignorant of many things including the constitutional provisions. Apart from their ignorance, most of them are caught in the whirlpool of debts and perpetual dependence of caste was astonishing. Even after convincingly explaining the objectives of the study, their responses were not upto the expectation, despite of their education and urban residence. Very often they dodged our staff unnecessarily. Mention may be made of those SCs/STs in government jobs who hesitated to disclose some important details crucial to the survey. Another contrast observed in the case of urban SCs and STs is that they did not like their caste identity to be disclosed to others. In all such cases, the investigators had a difficult problem in identifying them. Though the answers to questions were optional, the value carried by the educated urban population is not encouraging. Once economic status is achieved those who are fortunate tend to disassociate with their fellow caste men, consider them as inferior and backward.

Field work in urban centres, especially, in the metropolitan city of Bangalore, the State's capital, posed many hurdles. It was rather challenging to our staff. Much to our surprise, the reaction of lady respondents working mostly in government organisations was that of apathy and suspicion. Though all respondents cannot be equated, field work in urban centres, unlike rural areas, was much more time-consuming and strenuous. Though villagers usually do not accept outsiders, once the rapport is established, they become very intimate. To that extent, the survey was a success.

**Time Schedule**

In the first instance, the investigation was planned to be completed within two years and final report submitted to government. The time schedule by and large went on according to plans, except in the case of data processing. The different stages of work are enunciated as follows :

The work on the survey was started with the appointment of two research staff on 1st July 1973. As and when necessity arose, additional staff were recruited. During the first two months—July and August, the staff were engaged in collection of preliminary data like census population figures, district statistical abstracts and so fourth. Apart from these, the staff were also engaged in studying the relevant literature. Simultaneously, work on designing the tools of data collection was in progress.

September 1973 was used for carrying out a 'pilot study' in two Bogadi and Inakal villages near the city of Mysore. Some more research staff were recruited and they surveyed the SC and ST households in the two villages with the help of an interview guide/schedule. This pilot study helped the staff in gaining research and field work experience. The information obtained through the pilot survey helped in redesigning the interview guide and the village schedule prepared earlier. Meanwhile a sample design was finalised and the number of respondents to be covered in the study was determined during October.

During the first week of November 1973 the interview guide and the village schedule were finalised. After getting the same printed, a detailed plan for field work was prepared. The staff were again briefed about the problems they would probably encounter during field work. Most of them had participated in the pilot study and had intensive training in the art of interviewing. It may be recalled that all the field staff were post-graduates in social sciences.

By the middle of November, seven investigators were in the field. Data collection extended till the end of May 1974. At least once in a month, the staff were called to the headquarters and their field problems, both in rural and urban areas, were discussed

elaborately and suitable measures were suggested. During the month of June, a certain percentage of filled-in schedules were cross checked. Gaps in the information and details regarding some village schedules were collected during the months of July and August 1974.

Initially, when the project was conceived the data obtained was designed to be tabulated manually. But, when the field work was completed, the number of interviews exceeded 3000. The volume of information obtained from each interview crossed 30 pages in the schedule. In addition, rich field diary of each investigator had to be surveyed. There were 76 village schedules to be analysed. All this put together made it impossible to think of analysing the data manually. Therefore, it was decided to get the data tabulated mechanically.

A systematic input formula had to be prepared before feeding the data to computer. After approaching various sources of mechanical tabulation, the Government computer centre at the State capital, agreed to process the data. Necessary code book and code sheets were designed and the work on coding was started during the middle of September 1974. When the coding work was completed we were in the middle of December 1974. As and when the code sheets were ready they were transferred to the computer centre. It took nearly 3 months for the centre to prepare the desired tables and the output was received by the end of April 1975.

The original plan was that the report should be finalised by June 1975. But, because of change in the tabulation process the final stage *i.e.*, report writing was delayed by 6 months. However, the government acceded to the request for an extension of project's duration by 8 months.

# 1

## Demographic Features

All Social Surveys include certain basic details regarding the demographic features of the people under study. These particulars include Age, Sex, Numerical and Linguistic Composition of the household members, their Civil conditions, Rural-Urban Distribution of the population Occupational Distribution, Density and Literacy Levels. These details help in unearthing many facts about the nature and content of interpersonal interaction in the society. Further, they provide answers to many questions that may arise in the course of scientific investigation.

In addition to the above demographic features, Religious, Caste and Sub-Caste composition of the population also serve as basic variables for all social science surveys in the Indian context. Almost all the studies, be they focussed on Economic or on Political aspects, have emphasized the important role played by one's Religion and Caste in determining their economic, political and social interactions.

In view of the above, the present study starts with an analysis of the Religious composition of the SCs and STs in Karnataka. After this, an effort is made to understand the caste/sub-caste and Tribal cleavages, before embarking upon the demographic features of our respondents.

### 1. The People and Their Religion

India is a land of multi-religious groups. Though Hinduism is practiced by majority of Indians, there are other faiths having followers in good number. Hinduism is considered to be the most

ancient and the remaining are offshoots of protests movements at different stages of history. To mention some of them, a reference may be made to Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Veerasaivism.

The country was under foreign rule for quite a long period, during which two alien religious faiths—Islam and Christianity—were introduced. The former is believed to have come into practice in India because of the force used by some militant muslim rulers on the natives for conversion. On the other hand the latter is considered to be product of active and systematic missionary work throughout the country, specially in areas of Tribal concentration.

Of late, the country has witnessed the mushroom-like growth of religious sects, each claiming a different ideal of life and being preached by various Gurus, Yogis, Sanyasi/Sanyasinis. These faiths, however, have succeeded in retaining their connection with Hinduism.

**Religious distribution of Population in India and Karnataka  
(1971 Census)**

	<i>India</i>	<i>Karnataka</i>
Hindus	453292086	25332388
Muslims	61417934	3113298
Christians	14223382	613026
Sikhs	10378797	6830
Buddhists	3812235	14139
Jains	2604646	118862
Other Religions & Persuasions	2184556	380
Religion not stated	36083	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>547949809</b>	<b>29299014</b>

As mentioned already, Hindus top the list with highest percentage. Muslims and Christians follow in that order numerically.

The religious representation of the respondents in the study is given in Table 5.

It could be seen from the Table that 98.5% respondents in the study are Hindus, while only 1.0% are Christians. The reasons for such a large representation of Hindus are obvious. While the

TABLE 5 : Religious Composition of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes

Religion	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Hinduism	2427	99.59	142	97.93	2569	99.50	713	100.00	3282	98.55
Christianity	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34	1.02
Hinduism but not SC/ST	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.04
No response	10	0.41	3	2.07	13	0.50	—	—	13	0.39
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	713	100.00	3330	100.00

Constitution of India guarantees, as one of the fundamental rights, the practice and preaching of any faith to all the citizens, the same is denied to SCs if they prefer to avail the constitutional benefits. One of the essential pre-requisites of eligibility for constitutional benefits is that one should be a Hindu or a Sikh. Therefore, our sample had to be based only on Hindu respondents. The 35 families under Christianity including a caste Hindu have been inadvertently interviewed by the investigators.

Another 13 respondents have not respond to the question of their religion and are mostly people from rural areas (10 SCs and 3 STs). A popular situation had to be faced by the Research Staff at the time of field work in certain areas of the State (Kolar district), wherein there were SC households in which Christianity was followed by their parents or siblings. In such circumstances it was difficult to identify the religion of the respondents. Although tribal communities in India do not practice any one of the religions mentioned above, the research staff failed to identify any tribal religion at the time of enquiry. Instead all the tribal respondents have declared themselves as Hindus.

A point for reference is pertinent here. The study has no respondents in the category 'Neo-Buddhists', though certain northern districts of Karnataka bordered with Maharashtra have seen an exodus of Neo-Buddhist population during the past two decades. It is true that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the celebrated leader of the downtrodden, wished as his last desire to die as a non-Hindu. True to his conscience he embraced Buddhism only three months before his death in August 1956. Along with Ambedkar an estimated number of 5 lakh SCs of Maharashtra adopted Buddhism. But this seems to have made no impact on the religious identification of SCs in Karnataka.

## **2. People, their family size**

Enumeration of data for this survey takes the household as the unit. In other words family is the starting point here.

Kinship network is yet another landmark achieved by the human society. Though this society sustains the stresses and strains in an amicable way. Like family kinship is also universal in character.

The size of the family explains the social, economic and political prospects of any society. The earlier family structure was mostly economy oriented. Aborigines and Tribal communities lived and moved in groups. Agricultural communities preferred large families to meet the labour force required. However, as civilization progressed, the idea of individualism promoted nuclear families. To some extent Industrialisation, Urbanisation and Education supported small families. Population influx and immigration are also contributing factors in reducing the family size.

The economy of the society and the size of the family as indicated already are having bearing on each other. India's economy especially in villages is predominantly agricultural. Even the industry of the country, by and large, depends on the raw materials produced through agriculture. Traditional industry requires large amount of human force since mechanisation has not made any dent in this field. Nearly 80% of the country's population lives in rural areas and an equal percentage is illiterate. In a developing economy, education and employment are interlinked. Therefore, those who are uneducated have no access to employment other than menial and manual.

In this survey an attempt is also made to correlate the family structure of SCs and STs with their kinship affinity. Therefore, details of the number of household members and their relationship to the head of the household is in view. From this, it becomes clear that about 47.1% of the SCs and STs under investigation have by and large small families while in urban areas about 47.3% families consist of 6 to 10 members. About 44.4% families in rural and urban areas have 6 to 10 members. While 5.0% in the sample are households with 11 to 15 members, 2.8% families, if they could be so called at 'all one member'.

The small size of SC and ST families, contrary to the expectations, may be due to the fact that majority of them are rural based and landless agricultural labourers. Land ownership is prestigious in village India, but agricultural labourers get a meagre income because of seasonal employment, hence only small families can subsist on it. During slack seasons people have to look for other ways of earning. Sometimes, they have to migrate in search of jobs. This may lead some members of the family to set out and form a separate family.

The SCs and STs are traditional and superstitious and practice child and early marriages which lead to division of households and further reduction in the family size. Even constitutional benefits specially, economic and educational incentives may said to have had an influence on the size of the families. Persons who get education and employment under reservation will have to set up households since they will be normally based on urban centres. Table 6 refers.

The kinship pattern of SCs and STs in the study was not extended beyond their primary relationship. For purposes of this study, family is defined as one consisting of parents, their children. As many as 89.2% have mentioned that their households include people with primary relationship. There is no difference in this pattern even with urban SCs. Households with primary and second degree relatives constitute just 7.4% in the sample, which is negligible. Kin-groups and consolidation of facilities within a small circle is absent.

Since the size of SC and ST households is comparatively small, the pattern of relationship mentioned above, mostly consisting of primary group members is not a strange phenomenon. The 2.8% under the category 'not applicable' are households with single member. Table 7 refers.

Despite the fact agriculture demands and favours bigger families, the respondent could not run the risk of maintaining large households as majority of them are landless agricultural/casual labourers. This may be one of the strongest factors inhibiting formation of large kin-groups.

### 3. People and Their Languages

Religious and cultural differences in our country are relatively less emotionally charged as compared with the linguistic differences now-a-days. As castes and sub-castes divide people into various groups, languages and linguistic divisions of the country have divided the people into segments. Historically, India has been a country with diversity. For the first time, British rule ushered in administrative unity in areas under its control. After independence people achieved certain amount of emotional integration. But in 1956

TABLE 6 : Size of the Households

Number of Members in each household.	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One	58	2.38	2	1.38	60	2.32	34	4.55	93	2.82
Between 2 and 5	1191	48.87	67	46.21	1258	48.72	312	41.72	1570	47.15
Between 6 and 10	1056	43.33	69	47.59	1125	43.57	354	47.32	1479	44.41
Between 11 and 15	116	4.76	6	4.14	122	4.73	46	1.15	168	5.05
Between 16 and 20	14	0.57	1	0.69	15	0.58	1	0.13	16	0.48
21 or more	2	0.08	—	—	3	0.08	1	0.13	3	0.09
Total	2437	99.99	145	100.01	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

TABLE 7 : Kinship Network of the Households

Relationship to the head of the household	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Primary	2203	90.40	131	90.34	2334	90.40	637	85.17	2971	89.22
Secondary	6	0.25	—	—	6	0.23	—	—	6	0.18
Tertiary	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Primary and Secondary	162	6.65	12	8.28	174	6.74	74	9.89	248	7.45
Primary and Tertiary	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	1	0.13	3	0.09
Primary, Secondary and Tertiary	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
Primary/Secondary/ Servants	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	1	0.13	5	0.15
Not applicable	58	2.38	2	1.38	60	2.32	34	4.55	94	2.82
No Response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

the reorganisation of States on language basis brought in disintegrating forces to the surface.

The basic idea of grouping together all areas having people speaking a particular language, though desired to achieve emotional integration and cultural development, has become self-defeating. If the problems created after the formation of linguistic States is any indication, all the right thinking people now oppose any such move.

The problem has been aggravated in recent times because of the shortcomings in the educational policies and the unsettled issues regarding official language. Many regional and local language/dialects are clamouring for recognition and separate statehood. Even now linguistic States are not a closed chapter or all is well settled. The problem of linguistic minorities, transfer of areas from one State to another are so emotionally charged issues that leaders encourage people to defy law and order.

Language is an important tool in human interaction. Considering this and the place Karnataka has after the formation of linguistic States it was decided to ascertain the respondent's mothertongue and his ability to learn and speak other languages. As mentioned elsewhere, the State was reconstituted by merging areas from the neighbouring States of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. It is possible that not all people from the incoming areas speak Kannada. Also in border areas there is enormous scope for linguistic minorities. The language composition of the SCs and STs in the study is indicated in Table 8. Naturally the regional language, *i.e.*, Kannada tops the list with 66.5% respondents speaking it. Teluga language with 14.1% comes second. Tamil and Tulu with 5.1% each and Marathi with 5.2% follow respectively. However, 3.7% households have people speaking tribal language. The prevalence of other regional languages could be linked to the areas that merged from the neighbouring States.

In the case of urban SCs and STs, Tamil speaking respondents (with 16.4%) come next only to Kannada speakers. A different situation arise with STs living in rural areas. With them, Marathi language (with 55.1%) tops the list. There are only 24.1% Kannada speakers among them. Tulu, a dialect language without script is

TABLE 8 : Language Composition

Mother Tongue	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Kannada	1678	68.86	35	24.14	1713	66.34	503	67.25	2216	66.55
Telugu	401	16.45	—	—	401	15.53	69	9.23	470	14.10
Marathi	70	2.87	80	55.17	150	5.81	24	3.20	174	5.23
Tamil	48	1.97	—	—	48	1.86	123	16.46	171	5.14
Tulu	136	5.58	18	12.41	154	5.96	17	2.28	171	5.14
Tribal language	104	4.27	12	8.28	116	4.49	10	1.33	126	3.78
Konkani	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
No response	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

spoken by 12.4% of the rural STs. Tribal language also accounts for 8.2% respondents. People from SC and ST communities fall in line with the general population of the State as far as linguistic affinities are concerned.

Though the regional language is Kannada, Hindi being the National Language and English being used as administrative media are taught in schools and colleges. Therefore, there is scope for people to know more than one language. As expected, large percentage among the respondents whose mother tongue is not Kannada know the regional language. Nearly 6.8% households have people speaking languages which are not regional or Hindi or English. Those who can speak in Hindi, English, Regional and other than regional languages constitute 4.4%. Truly 14.8% urban SCs and STs know some English. In the case of tribals residing in rural areas the knowledge of regional language is 22.0% while 52.4 households have people who speak other languages and not Hindi or English. Even here, we have to take into consideration regional variations in border districts.

#### **4. The People—their Castes and Tribes**

The caste is as a kind of stratification in the Hindu social system, is peculiar in many ways. Superior and inferior status runs right through, so that different castes and sub-castes form an hierarchy. The practice of endogamy in matters of marriage and notions of ritual purity and pollution in interpersonal and inter-group relations with others obtains. Birth decides one's status and so ascriptive rather than achieved values prevail here. Therefore, a person born in a particular caste group carries all the socio-religious, politico-economic advantages and disadvantages till his death. The influence of caste is apparent in village life. An individual's occupation, education, politicization, beliefs and practices are all influenced by the phenomenon of caste.

A descriptive analysis of caste and its implications on the life of SCs and STs is made in the Chapter dealing with their social conditions. According to 1961 census there are 127 castes under SCs in Karnataka, 63 Tribes coming under STs.

The Presidential order vide Constitution (SCs and STs) order 1950 included certain castes and tribes in the State under SCs and

STs. A revision of the lists is pending before the Parliament from 1967.

The survey covers 76 villages, 38 towns and cities in all the 19 districts of the State includes 25 castes and sub-castes and 13 tribes under SCs and STs respectively. Among SCs, just 6 caste groups account for about 85.9% respondents. However, 2 caste groups namely Madiga and Holeya (25.4% and 23.5% respectively) dominate the scene. Similarly, among STs 5 tribes account for 84.1% respondents and amongst them Marathi Nayaks constitute 54.4% of the total sample. Table 9 refers.

The interview guide deliberately included an enquiry on the sub-castes of the respondents. This was designed with an idea to know the extent to which different castes and tribes have been benefited by the constitutional provisions and which is lagging behind. But, unfortunately, sub-caste names of the respondents were often not made known. On the other hand, it was observed that there was so much distortion in giving the caste names by the respondents. It was very difficult to identify them even with the help of other SCs. Many a times the investigators had to confirm the caste names of SCs by enquiring other caste people in the villages. In a way this helped to cross verify the data collected.

Though there are 127 castes under SCs and 63 tribes under STs<sup>1</sup> the present study could cover only 25 sub-castes and 13 tribes under SCs and STs respectively. There may be good cause of sub-caste/tribe identity. Firstly, some caste and tribe names though very backward in all respects are not included in the schedule vide Arts. 341 and 342 of the Constitution. The moment such caste names are given they become ineligible for concession. Therefore, such people resort to blanket terms when their caste/tribe names is asked for.

Yet another reason, common in avoiding real sub-caste names, is attributable to the social hierarchy of castes in different parts of the State. In spite of acceptance of ritually high and low status in general, there is, specifically further hierarchy among SCs themselves. In such circumstances, those who are ritually inferior avoid giving their real sub-caste names.

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1. Census of India, 1961, Vol. I, Part V-A (ii), pp. xxvii.

TABLE 9 : Caste and Sub-caste Composition of the Households

Caste Classification	Scheduled Castes				Scheduled Tribes				Scheduled castes & Scheduled Tribes			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Adi Dravida	4	0.16	127	21.86	—	—	—	—	—	—	131	3.93
Adi Jambava	1	0.04	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	0.06
Adi Karnataka	167	6.85	170	29.26	—	—	—	—	—	—	337	10.12
Arunthathiar	—	—	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Bhovi-Mannuvodda	307	12.60	18	3.10	—	—	—	—	—	—	325	9.76
Cheluvadi	113	4.64	27	4.65	—	—	—	—	—	—	140	4.20
Hasala	21	0.86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	0.63
Holeya-Bellikula	728	29.87	55	9.47	—	—	—	—	—	—	783	23.51
Jadamalji	—	—	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Karaji	6	0.25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	0.18
Kusa-Koosa	27	1.11	4	0.69	—	—	—	—	—	—	31	0.93
Karava-Korama-Koracha	38	1.56	42	7.23	—	—	—	—	—	—	80	2.40
Lambani-Lambadi	141	5.79	14	2.41	—	—	—	—	—	—	155	4.65
Madiga-Chikkeelya	740	30.37	108	18.59	—	—	—	—	—	—	848	25.47
Mahar	28	1.15	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	29	0.87
Mera	14	0.57	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	0.42
Mochi-Muchi	1	0.04	2	0.34	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	0.09
Mandala	—	—	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Nalkedavaru	1	0.04	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	0.06

*Demographic Features*

Padiya-Paduvar	6	0.25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	0.18
Pale	16	0.66	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	0.48
Samagar	4	0.16	2	0.34	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	0.18
Sudugadu Sidda	—	—	1	0.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Talawar-Valmiki Naik	39	1.60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	39	1.17
Tboti	11	0.45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	0.33
Bettakuruba	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	0.09
Budubudike	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	0.12
Dhor	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	0.18
Golle	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19	0.57
Jenu Kuruba	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	0.63
Koraga	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	0.63
Kudiya	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19	0.57
Maberu	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Marati Nayak	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	95	2.85
Meda	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	0.12
Nayaka	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	59	1.77
Soliga	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	0.36
Yerava	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	0.39
Others	24	0.98	5	0.86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	29	0.87
Christians Non SCs/STs	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	35	1.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>99.97</b>

In a sense rigid rules often lead to incumabation. According to Constitution, the power to include a caste or tribe or exclude it from the schedule rests with the Parliament. The fact that a revision of the castes/tribes included in the schedule is pending since a long time (1967) explains this.

For reasons not known enumeration of caste/tribe name was discontinued after the 1931 census. The same list prepared by the then census commissioner Dr. Hutton, in identifying backward castes and tribe was adopted with little modifications and included in the schedule. It became very difficult to probe further why the respondents were reluctant to disclose their sub-caste names in the present study. The reasons are very mucy both for revealing and not revealing the facts.

It is observed that administrative lancunae sometimes force the people to be dishonest. Since the caste/tribe names included in the schedule delimits the area of habitation, people with single caste names have to take shelter under some blanket caste terms—Adi-karnataka, Adi-dravida, Lambani, Bovi, Holeya, Harijan and soforth. The Indian Constitution guarantees a citizen the right to reside and own property in any part of the country but in the case of SCs and STs it acts as a hindrance to their development. The moment they go out of their habitation they face the danger of losing the constitutional benefits as some castes included in the schedule based on the criteria of geographical boundaries. Unless something is done to this problem the present condition persists leading to more confusion.

### **5. Age and Sex Composition of Household Members**

Sex and age exert considerable influence on aspects of the composition and structure of the population. Age influences other factors like education, employment, marriage retirement, occupational composition, death rate and certain social and cultural activities of the community.

The sex ratio has equally important social and economic bearings. It is affected by past fertility, mortality and migration and plays an important role in brith and death rates of the community. The Sex ratio also affects the marriage and the number of legitimate births.

Usually the sex ratio is defined by the Indian census as the 'number of females per 1000 males'. There has been a shortage of females in India and if applied the same criterion holds good for SCs and STs also. The Table below indicates the sex ratio of general population and SC and ST population according to 1961 and 1971 censuses.

	<u>General Population</u>		<u>SC population</u>		<u>ST Population</u>	
	1961	1971	1961	1971	1961	1971
Number of Females per 1000 males.	941	930	956	948	987	979

While recording household data it was planned to group the households depending on the number of males and females in each of them. Therefore, in the analysis of the sex composition of household members, households having 1 to 9 males/females were grouped as separate frequencies. Further, the usual bifurcation of rural/urban was also maintained.

It could be seen from the Table that not much significant variation is observed in the sex ratio of SCs and STs. By and large, there are males and females ranging from 1-4 in each household of the sample. This is more or less common with rural and urban population.

The sample accounts for about 24.2% and 24.3% households with 2 male and 2 female members respectively. Similarly, about 22.6% and 23.0% households consist of 3 male and 3 female members respectively. As the number of males and females increases in each household, the percentage drops.

In order to have a detailed understanding of the distribution of SC and ST population by age at different levels, it was decided to stratify the age group of SCs and STs in the survey as follows. Further, in each age group the number of households with 1-9 members were recorded. Table 10 refers.

About 48.0% households have 1 to 2 members in the age group of 6 or less years. About 38.8% households have no members in

TABLE 10 : Age Composition of the Members of the Household

Age Group	One		Two		Three		Four		Five		Six		Total			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Six or less years	862	25.89	753	22.61	326	9.79	71	2.13	20	0.60	4	0.12	1294	38.86	3330	100.00
Seven & Ten years	1067	32.04	586	17.60	58	1.74	7	0.21	1	0.03	—	—	1611	48.38	3330	100.00
Eleven and fifteen years	1010	30.33	435	13.06	69	2.08	8	0.24	1	0.03	—	—	1807	54.26	3330	100.00
Sixteen and twenty years	977	29.34	408	12.25	101	3.03	21	0.63	4	0.12	—	—	1819	54.63	3330	100.00
Twentyone and Thirty years	1451	43.58	592	17.78	131	3.93	48	1.44	20	0.60	6	0.18	1082	32.49	3330	100.00
Thirtyone and Forty years	1577	47.36	306	9.19	26	0.78	7	0.21	—	—	—	—	1414	42.46	3330	100.00
Fortyone and Fifty years	1333	40.03	158	4.74	6	0.18	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	1832	55.02	3330	100.00
Fiftyone and Sixty years	854	25.65	63	1.89	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	2412	72.43	3330	100.00
Sixtyone and more years	487	14.62	42	1.26	2	0.06	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	2798	84.02	3330	99.99

Not applicable!

No one in

this group

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

F

%

this category which is rather strange. However, this figure includes the 2.2% single member households. No significant difference is observed between rural and urban population. Almost all households record not more than 6 children coming under this group. By referring to the family size, which is predominantly smaller, the above fact could be substantiated.

In the case of members in the age group of 7-10 years, approximately one half (48.3%) of the sample has no one in this category. Of the remaining, 49.6% have 1 or 2 members in this age group. Compared to rural population urban respondents have less number in this age group.

As many as 54.2% households have no member in the age group of 11-15 years. Of the remaining, 43.3% have one or two members in this category. But, 30.3% represent one member households in this age group. Nevertheless, very little difference is observed between rural and urban population.

Almost a similar situation obtains for households with member under 16 and 20 years of age. On an average about 54.6% have no one in this age group. Those households with one individual in this age group account for 29.0% approximately.

A point to note here is that girls between the age group of 11 and 20 years are generally given away in marriage. This could be considered as one important reason for the low percentage of members in age group of 11-20 years in SC/ST households.

But, when it comes to adults in the age group of 21 and 30 years, more than 60.0%—except in the case of rural STs (51.6%)—have one or two members in this age group. Less than 35.0% in category (43.4% for rural STs) have no members in this category. This explains the fact that the SC/ST population in this study is represented by more adults.

Though not encouraging, the figures for members in the age group of 31-40 years also show SC and ST population's predominance of adulthood. There are about 56.0% households with 1 or 2 members in this category. The remaining (about 42.0%) have no members at all in this group. One significant factor in this regard is that very few households have more than three members in this

category. No SC and ST households had 5 or more members aged between 31 to 40 years.

As age advances very few SC/ST people are found in the sample. This is clear from the figures in the age group of 41 and 50 years. Approximately 55.0% (73.0% in the case of rural SCs) have no one in this age group. Even here very few households represent more than 3 members. About 40.0% (25% rural SCs) households have one member each in this age group. As obtained earlier no household has more than five members in this age group. But rural STs stand as a unique group representing 48% households with one member in this age group and an equal percentage having no members.

Very few SCs /STs have survived beyond 50 years of age and this is confirmed when over 72% households have no member in this age group. Whenever represented, it is confined to a single person in each household. Comparatively in the case of rural SCs and STs people in this age group have lived long. It is found that 38.0% SC and 33.0% ST households have one member in this category. Here again not more than 2 persons in each household are accounted for.

More than 84.0% SC and ST households do not have people living beyond 60 years. What is represented is households each having, by and large, only one member (14.0%).

To conclude, the age structure of SCs and STs in this study follows a peculiar pattern. The population is child and adult dominated. While people in the age group of 6 or less years account for 60% in the sample, it is reduced approximately to 50.0% for 7-10 years. Further, the figures drop to about 45.0% for 11-20 years of age group.

But when it comes to adults, a steep increase is noticed when approximately 68.0% households account for persons in 21-30 years age group. Again, a downward trend is observed for households in the age composition of 31-40 years. The figures drop from 68.0% to 58.0% here. As is usual with all demographic features, the population of SCs and STs keeps dropping from 45.0% to 28.0% and finally to 15.0% with regard to age groups 41-50 years, 51-60 years and 61 years and above.

The percentage of adolescents accounts for less than 50.0% and the same thing is true of people beyond 40 years of age. A word on infant mortality is necessary because the general population faces this problem. When nearly 40.0% households are without a child in the age group of 6 or less years, the above fact becomes clear. Infant mortality rates in India have come down from 215 per 1000 in 1901 to 98 per 1000 in 1961.<sup>2</sup> This factor requires further probe in the case of SCs and STs. What is true of others is also true of SCs and STs. The same analogy could be extended for old age groups also. The expectation life at birth in India has increased from 23.6 in 1901 to 46.6 in 1961.<sup>3</sup> For SCs and STs in this study it is something different since few people amongst them have survived beyond 50 years.

## 6. People—their Civil Conditions

The following paras describe civil conditions of SC and ST people in the study. Being one of the important aspects in demographic stratification, marital composition helps in understanding the social conditions of the population. In this study the marital status is enumerated on the basis of households. Accordingly, barring about 9.0% the rest (91.0%) households have 1 to 9 members under unmarried category. However, households with 2 or 3 members constitute the majority with 37.4%. Those households having one and four unmarried person constitute 14.0% each in the sample. This is more or less uniform for rural and urban population.

Regarding married people 89.0% households have 1 to 9 married members. However, 62.7% households represent 2 married persons each. The next highest percentage is represented by those households having 4 married persons (14.6%). Here again no significant difference is observed between rural and urban population. A notable point here is the 11.0% households without having married individuals. From the Table it could be seen that 3.6% households have 3 married members. This could be explained by saying that in some households daughters and sons married early in their age were found living with their parents and sometimes the spouses who were absent at the time of enumeration

2. Chandrasekar S. (1970) *India's Population-facts, Problem and Policy*, Meenakshi Prakashan, Meerut, p. 27.

3. *Ibid.* p. 18.

could not be included. As already explained large percentage under households with two married members ■ attributable to the predominance nuclear families—small households in the study. The same situation obtains with SCs and STs living in both rural and urban areas.

Though 31.0% sample households have widows/widowers as many as 27.0% have only one such member. We have already observed that people in their advanced age are not represented in sufficient numbers in the study. Perhaps the single widow/widower may be living with her/his children.

Instances of separation and divorce are not significantly reported, and 99.0% households have no such member at all. It could be noted that the rural STs have equally no one living single after separating from the partner in their households.

These Tables explain the degree of cohesion among the family members and usually people are encouraged to live in family bond. The statement that lower the status of caste, higher the degree of divorce and separation has been disproved by this factual analysis.

Similarly, widow remarriage is also a rare phenomenon among the SCs and STs in the study. Only three households have reported such instances.

Considering the practice of the institution of 'Basavi'—a practice prevailing among some low caste families in certain parts of North Karnataka, it is found that a girl from the family is dedicated in the name of a goddess in order to beget a male issue or to appease the deity. It was believed that in the early days, this practice meant that dedicated girls were disciples of the goddess. But later on certain economic and social factors forced them to become concubines to rich and high caste men in the village. Over a period of time, children specially daughters born to such women could not be married, hence the practice still prevails in spite of legal abolition. Cultural changes are slow to come in the society and law cannot order about.

The survey at the time of enumeration of household details included a question of the institution of 'Basavi' under the civil

conditions of the respondents. It was found that people generally hesitated to identify themselves as one such person. But if one stays for a long time and observes people in rural areas many such cases come to light. Though not significant in terms of number of people, there are 69 households in the study with one or more ladies covered by the institution of 'Basavi'. Urban centres account for a very small number of basavis.

Since the essential pre-requisites for practice of this institution are superstition and ignorance, rural population which is devoid of education and influence of modern secular ideas perpetuates such practices. Therefore, 57 out of 69 households having basavis are from rural areas and those in urban areas are generally migrants from rural parts. Table 11. refers.

### **7. The People—Their Educational Level**

Education, in general, is discussed in detail in the later part of the report and an attempt is made here to analyse the educational composition of the SC and ST household members in the study. Though education do not form part of demographic features of a population, for purposes of convenience it was decided to discuss the level of education in each household under this Chapter. In a way such analysis helps to correlate many other socio-economic and political problems faced by the people under study.

Government policy after the third Five-Year's Plan, lays stress on this aspect than any other. In a way an analysis of educational level of any group of people could be taken as an indicator in its developmental activities. Keeping this point in view, we have analysed the educational attainments of SC and ST household members at different levels—primary, middle, secondary, college, graduation, post-graduation, technical degree or diploma and professional courses.

The fact that illiteracy is rampant among the down-trodden in India clearly substantiated when 52% households have all illiterate members. Of the remaining almost all households have as many as 1 to 8 illiterate members ranging from 2.0% to 7.0%. Nevertheless, the SCs and STs in the study residing in towns and cities are better placed than their rural brethren.

TABLE 11: Marital Status of the Members of the Household

Marital Status	Number of Members										Not applicable	
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight or more	no one in this group		TOTAL	
	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F	%
Unmarried	498 14.95	635 19.07	613 18.41	495 14.86	345 10.36	230 6.91	121 3.63	95 2.85	298 8.95	3330 99.99		
Married	54 1.62	2088 62.70	120 3.60	488 14.65	36 1.08	109 3.27	16 0.48	31 0.90	388 11.65	3330 99.98		
Widowed	921 27.66	107 3.21	6 0.18	4 0.12	—	—	—	—	2292 68.83	3330 100.00		
Divorced	21 0.63	1 0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	3308 99.34	3330 100.00		
Separated	2 0.06	1 0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	3327 99.91	3330 100.00		
Widow Remarried	1 0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3329 99.97	3330 100.00		
Basavi	47 1.41	15 0.45	4 0.12	3 0.09	—	—	—	—	3261 97.93	3330 100.00		

As regards primary/adult education of the respondents, all those members who can read and write their names, is recorded. As many as 69% households have no one who could read and write. But the 31% households with one or more individuals having primary or adult education cannot be construed as educated. This is only to emphasize the magnitude of illiteracy among SCs and STs. However, the 69% households under 'Not applicable' category include children who are not of school going age. Even then about 20% households have only member with primary or adult education. Nevertheless, the situation is better in the case of urban-dwellers, where more than 50% households have members with primary education. Surprisingly, the rural STs show relatively good percentage were about 41% households have one to five members in this group.

Middle school education is very limited if not popular among the respondents and their household members. Barring those who are living in urban areas, all others in the study have only 20% households consisting of members with middle school education. Even among them as many as 14% households constitute one member each. However, for urban population 40% households have one to five members with middle school education. The rural SCs are the worst affected. Only 13% households among them have members with middle school education, while their tribal counterparts score about 22%.

As far as secondary school education is concerned, the figures are not encouraging. On the whole, only 17% SC and ST households in the study have members with secondary school education, out of which as many as 10% households accounts for one member in this group. Here again naturally urban situation is better than the one, wherein 46% households are returned with one or more members with secondary education. For rural SCs and STs it is 9% and 7% respectively, having members with secondary school education.

When it comes to college education, more than 92% SC/ST households come under negative category. Here again town and city SC/ST population fair better with household members going upto college level of education.

Only 3.0 households in the study have members who are

graduates and mostly they are urban dwellers. Again only 18 households have members with postgraduate education, out of which 15 are located in urban areas. No ST member is a post-graduate.

Coming to technical courses like Engineering Degree or Diploma, perhaps, some members among SCs considering the utility of the courses in employment market must have preferred such courses. As many as 43 households (40 being located in urban centres) have people with technical degree/diploma. Even here no ST is represented. As far as professional degree is concerned, only 23 individuals all being urban dwellers, have been lucky to undergo that course. Table 12 refers.

### Summary

Under demographic features of the population information regarding the religious, caste and sub-caste composition, language and family size [of SCs and STs their age and sex composition, Civil conditions and educational attainments have been analysed.

The people in this survey, by and large, follow Hinduism as their religion. In a sense they have been deprived of what is guaranteed as a fundamental right to practice and preach any religion or faith.

The SCs and STs in the study are not in favour of disclosing their sub-caste/tribe identity and hence only 25 sub-caste and 13 tribe names as against 127 SCs and 63 STs covered by the Census of India 1961 are represented here. Perhaps, defective enumeration at the time of finalising the eligible caste names for constitutional benefits must have prompted them to give only blanket caste names and not their sub-caste names. In this sense, only 6 castes and 5 tribes dominate the number of respondents in this study.

Our respondents, generally speak the regional language *i.e.*, Kannada but those living in the border district speak regional language of the neighbouring States among which Telugu and Marathi top the list.

As the State was re-organised in 1956 some areas of the neighbouring States were merged with Karnatak and therefore, people who speak other regional languages are to be considered as a normal phenomenon here.

TABLE 12 : Education of Members of the Household

Education	Number of Members												Not applica- ble no one in this group		Total			
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six or more	All Members	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
Illiterates	158	4.74	197	5.92	242	7.27	249	7.48	207	6.22	425	12.76	1750	52.55	102	3.06	3330	100.00
Read &																		
Write/Primary	680	20.42	243	7.30	83	2.49	16	0.48	4	0.12	6	0.18	—	—	2298	69.01	3330	100.00
Middle School	475	14.26	116	3.48	43	1.29	10	0.30	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	2685	80.63	3330	99.99
Secondary																		
School	353	10.60	126	3.78	48	1.44	16	0.48	6	0.18	4	0.12	—	—	2777	83.39	3330	99.99
College	198	5.95	30	0.90	12	0.36	1	0.03	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	3088	92.73	3330	100.00
Graduate	95	2.85	13	0.39	—	—	2	0.06	—	—	—	—	—	—	3220	96.70	3330	100.00
Post-graduate	18	0.54	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3312	99.46	3330	100.00
Technical De- gree/Diploma	40	1.20	3	0.09	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3287	98.71	3330	100.00
Professional																		
Degree	23	0.69	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3307	99.31	3330	100.00

Family size of the SCs and STs is relatively small. This feature is contrary to the usual pattern wherein agricultural households in rural areas would be generally large in size. However, our respondents are not agriculture based, in the real sense, since majority of them do not own land and are landless agricultural or casual labourers. Wherever the economy of the household cannot support large families the division of the family according to convenience obtains as natural corollary.

The two important demographic features, age and sex composition have been analysed and it is observed that the SCs and STs in the survey are not significantly different from that of the general population in so far as their age and sex compositions go. Their sex ratio show male predominance and the age composition is slightly in favour of adults.

While the number of children of SCs and STs in the age group of six or less years is small, those aged between seven and ten years constitute a higher percentage. But when it comes to the aged the percentage drops rapidly. In a sense the SC and ST population in the study is adult dominated. Almost all households have adult members and their representation, generally, accounts for a higher percentage. Very few people in India have survived beyond the age of 50 and this is amply illustrated in this study and in fact their representation is meagre.

Barring a few instances of the practice of the institution of Basavi, the SCs and STs in the study follow the same cultural and social traits of the larger community in matters concerning marriage, divorce, separation and widow-remarriage. While large number of children are unmarried, very few cases of child marriage are reported. Almost a negligible percentage constitute divorced and separated cases.

As expected not many SCs and STs in this investigation are educated. This is borne by the facts where as many as 50% households represent members having no education at all. Except in urban centres the impact of education is absolutely nil. With all the benefits and incentives very few households have graduates, post-graduates and degree holders in technical courses.

## Housing

Housing condition sometimes reflects the economic status and the living standard of people. Of late, importance is given to adopting improved designs of house construction. However, whatever little changes have come about are largely confined to towns and cities. Except in Industrial suburbs, which are again located at urban centres, other areas have remained without much change, in so far as, the housing and the environment are concerned. The impact of modern housing on nearly 80% of India's population living in rural areas is negligible.

This is not to say that all those people residing in towns and cities are living in modern buildings. Almost all Indian urban centres were, once villages. Planned urban centres is a recent and new phenomenon, example the city of Chandigarh. With cities having such background we observe that even today residential areas being mostly anonymous. Along with this, certain modern forces like industrialisation and consequent urbanisation have led to class-wise residential distribution. Hence, both caste and class differentiation are meaningful, in so far as, location of the households is concerned. The 'Agraharams' and the 'Cheris' of different castes in hierarchy are cases in point.

With this background, a consideration of the SCs' and STs' housing pattern in relation to the location, type, area, value, and the year of construction along with the essential facilities like water sources, bathroom and lavatory are in place. Also details regarding the facilities of cattle shed, thrashing yard and extra space are being discussed in this Chapter.

In Karnataka, villages are generally, of clustered or nucleated type with households being built continuously in a limited area. The Coorg district, coastal districts of north and south Kanara and some parts of Shimoga and Chikmagalur districts identified as Malnad area, there are, what are known as dispersed villages. Several single or 3-4 households built on farms and estates over wide area are put together as village for purposes of collecting revenue.

The SC population is distributed in all the districts and therefore, found in almost all villages of the State. But the tribal population, as mentioned elsewhere, is concentrated only in the western parts of the State, though, some STs also live in villages along with the general population. But strangely they live in separate area demarcated from the rest of the population. Interaction between the high caste people and the rural dwelling tribal people is similar to that of SCs and caste Hindus.

The housing pattern in villages is generally a reflection of social status by caste. Therefore, people belonging to a particular caste group, generally, reside in a particular area of the village often occupying a particular street. While social norms do not obstruct people from the upper castes to occupy any part of the village, an untouchable cannot even aspire to live in the midst of other caste localities. It is a common feature in almost all villages that the untouchables live on the outskirts of the main village. As has been said before the same is true of rural tribals also. The so called modern forces are, however, now able to alter the eponymous residential pattern in villages.

Another feature of the residential style in villages is often connected with sub-castewise segregation of different caste groups and the SCs are no exception to this. Since they are different segments and the fact that differential treatment is meted out at the hands of caste Hindus, location - nearness, farther away—is an indication of SCs *vis-a-vis* caste Hindu treatment. The inferior castes among the SCs/untouchable—*Madigas, Jadmalis* and so forth are living farther away from the village and from the area of so-called superior SC (*A.K., A.D., Bhovi*) settlements. The different residential areas usually have different wells in most of the villages. In many villages the different sub-castes among SCs do not draw

water from a common well or tank constructed by the government for their use in general.

### 1. Location

The SCs and STs in the survey are socially segregated and economically suppressed. They mostly live in separate localities outside the village, town or city. In cities, they are mostly confined to slums because of their poor economic position. Such a segregation, very often, is demarcated by lanes or roads even in urban areas. The whole area is identified after by the name of the caste settled there.

The severity of segregation is high for rural population, especially, for SCs than STs. On the whole, there are about 65.4% SC/ST households living outside the village in a separate area. This separation extends to about 81.7% of rural SCs and STs, while it is 5.0% for urban SCs and STs. But the worst affected are the SCs living in rural areas with 85.3% being discriminated residentially.

In a way, urban dwellers are free from such discrimination when 67.0% SCs and STs live inside the town/city. Nearly half of the sample for STs do not have any such stigma, in so far residential area is concerned. About 53.7% ST households are inside the village. About 3.1% SC/ST houses in the study are scattered mostly representing the coastal districts. For about 11.5% SCs and STs no discrimination is shown as they live inside or in the middle of the village. A reference here is necessary to the effect that all castes under SCs are not untouchables. For instance the Lambanis and Bhovis are not treated as untouchables. The 11.5% SC/ST houses inside/middle of the village include such non-untouchables and STs though they are classified as SCs by the Government. Table 13 refer.

All the 60 households under the category 'slum' are from the city of Bangalore and therefore, constitute urban SCs.

The constitutional provisions and the implementation of welfare schemes for the improvement of SCs and STs, it is alleged, have helped perpetuating the social segregation of the downtrod-

TABLE 13 : Location of the Scheduled Castes &amp; Scheduled Tribe Households

Location	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Inside/Middle of the village	289	11.86	78	53.79	367	14.21	19	2.54	386	11.59
Outside the village— separate colony	2079	85.31	31	21.38	2110	81.72	70	9.36	2180	65.47
In town	—	—	—	—	—	—	481	64.30	481	14.44
Outside the town— separate colony	—	—	—	—	—	—	118	15.78	118	3.54
Scattered household	69	2.83	36	24.83	105	4.07	—	—	105	3.15
Slum in city/town	—	—	—	—	—	—	60	8.02	60	1.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

den. Many ambitious schemes like housing, water facilities, and so fourth are helping further segregation of the untouchables. Construction of SC/ST colonies, digging of wells for exclusive use by SCs and STs are examples. However, failure to provide such facilities, it is argued, would have resulted in much more hardships to these communities.

Whatever may be the intention of the government, it would have been better that secular ideals instead of compassionate outlook is needed and would have gone a long way in solving many social ills of the society.

## **2. Dwelling**

One of the basic necessities of human life is a house to live in. Ownership of such necessities give a psychological satisfaction. The present survey reveals that the SCs and STs in the State, by and large, live in their own houses though small and contrary to general notions, very few are without a house.

The five-year plans saw that certain sums were earmarked to help the SCs and STs to acquire land for house construction and to provide a roof to live under.

While it is very difficult to assess the extent of government help in acquiring and providing house sites or houses, the general conditions of SCs and STs, in so far as dwellings are concerned is somewhat encouraging. But this is not to say that they live in good apartments. The type of houses, its area, value and other connected amenities are highlighted in the following pages.

In all, about 82.3% SCs and STs own their houses. As many as 292 families (8.7%) live in rented houses followed by 251 households (7.5%) accommodated in rent free houses. Naturally, those who live in rented houses constitute 33.8% in urban centres. However, about 52.4% urban SCs and STs also own houses. The highest percentage to live in rent free houses accounted for from rural ST sample. About 32.4% rural STs mentioned as living in rent free houses. This is mainly because some landlords have allowed few tribal families to live in the farm houses, to help cultivating the land and do watch and ward jobs. Similarly, 127 rural SC families (5.2%) live in rent-free houses.

Due to changes in law regarding landholdings, the families depending upon their employers and living in the farm houses are facing a constant threat of eviction. Also about 18 families in the study, are having no place to live in. Table 14 refers.

### 3. *Type of House*

The house structure is an indicator of the economic background of the people who live in it. Due to lack of modern building materials and technical know-how the dwellings in rural areas of the country have been very old. Poverty is one of the major reasons for this. Rarely one witnesses modern style house construction in abundance in rural areas. Till recently even economic affluence had made little impact on the styles of construction of residential buildings. But, the scene is gradually changing, though not all can aspire to live in or construct good houses because of implicit limitations.

Barring a small percentage of SCs and STs for whom government has allotted houses, the rest live in shabby shackles of pathetic nature.

The classification of the type of houses in this survey is based on the houses in which the respondents are living irrespective of ownership. The 18 families who are not having a house to live-in but live under the sky are grouped under 'Not applicable' category.

The type of house structures represented in the study shows a definite trend wherein we find that as the cost of the building goes up, the percentage of people owning such houses drops. Table 15 refers. It could be seen from the Table that about 47.4 per cent families live in thatched hutments. The percentage for rural respondents is 53.2% and for rural STs it is as much as 78.6%. The only difference is that in urban areas, those who are living in huts constitute 27.5 and they are essentially slum dwellers.

One of whole 14.8% houses are made up of mud walls and country tiles. In terms of cost and design this is only slightly superior to thatched huts. Except in urban areas next to hutments the SCs and STs in the study live in great number in mud wall-country tile houses.

TABLE 14 : Scheduled Castes &amp; Scheduled Tribe Dwelling

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Own house	2257	92.61	93	64.14	2350	91.01	392	52.41	2742	82.34
Rent free house	127	5.21	47	32.41	174	6.74	77	10.30	251	7.54
Rented house (pvt. owner)	35	1.44	4	2.76	39	1.51	253	33.83	292	8.77
Govt/Employer's quarters	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	2.68	20	0.60
Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	0.26	2	0.06
Not applicable/No house/ Live in the streets/ friends/relatives	15	0.62	1	0.69	16	0.62	2	0.26	18	0.54
No response	3	0.12	—	—	3	0.12	2	0.26	5	0.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 15 : Type of Homes of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
R.C.C.	7	0.29	—	—	7	0.27	128	17.12	135	4.05
Brick wall & Country tiles	22	0.90	2	1.38	24	0.93	37	4.95	61	1.83
Brick wall & Mangalore tiles	124	5.09	3	2.07	127	4.92	127	16.97	254	7.63
Mud wall & country tiles	396	16.25	8	5.52	404	15.65	90	12.03	494	14.83
Mud wall & Mangalore tiles	193	7.92	14	9.66	207	8.02	71	9.49	278	8.35
Mud wall & mud roof	325	13.34	2	1.38	327	12.66	23	3.07	350	10.51
Stone wall & Stone/ mud roof	72	2.95	—	—	72	2.79	17	2.27	89	2.67
Thatched hut	1261	51.74	114	78.62	1375	53.25	206	27.55	1581	47.48
Others	24	0.98	1	0.69	25	0.97	42	5.62	67	2.01
No Response	13	0.53	1	0.69	25	0.54	7	0.93	21	0.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

The material used for the construction of thatched huts is the cheapest and construction does not involve any skill. Often, palm leaves or coconut squirrel are spread over bamboo sticks. Normally, there will be 4 mud walls of waist height. In some parts of the State where palm leaves are not available, hay is used to cover the roof. These types of houses are popular in the areas where rainfall is relatively high. A significant factor in this regard is the availability of cheap raw materials.

One of the findings of this research is that in rural parts of Karnataka, the SCs/STs condition is related to the type of house structures they live in. Greater the number of thatched huts, larger the size of SC population in the village and *vice-versa*. This is supported by the figures in the Table showing against the item 'hutments'.

Houses with country tiles and mud walls are no better than hutments. While the walls are of mud, the roof is generally covered with tiles made locally. The nature and size of the country tiles differ from place to place.

The study suggests that some 13.1% houses as having mud or stone walls and mud or stone slab roofs. These types of houses are mostly found in the northern districts of Karnataka where average rainfall is less, but the velocity of the wind is supposed to be very high.

The next type of dwelling which is popular among the SCs and STs in this study made up of brick walls and Mangalore tiles and constitute 7.6%. These types of houses are usually found in urban areas with 16.9% SCs and STs residing in such houses. A point for clarification here is that sometime ago the policy of the government was to encourage SCs and STs to construct their dwellings by assisting them with the supply of bricks and tiles. It is also true that in urban centres some low cost tenements were allotted to the SCs and STs.

Out of 135 RCC buildings, 128 are in urban areas. This is not to say that all the 128 houses are owned by their residents. As explained already, the survey did not take into account the question of ownership and type of house structure simultaneously.

Considering the type of house structures of SCs and STs it could be concluded that the respondents are necessarily poor. This is substantiated by the 47.4% huts. Except those living in urban areas others are either living in mud wall/country tile or mud wall/mud roof tenements.

#### 4. *Area of the House*

Merely owning a house or having a roof over head will not solve the problem since all that depends on the space or built area. Again area in terms of the number of people to dwell-in will make some meaning. Irrespective of house structure, the area is compiled in squares, in this investigation. Then it should not be confused that the data was collected meticulously. The staff had instructions and training to assess the area of the houses excluding kitchen, bath room and lavatory. Whatever given here is only an approximation and should not be mistaken as actuals.

Though 82.3% respondents own houses most of them live in congested homes. Very often the hutments having single room meet all the necessities of a house. The average family size being 2 to 6 members all of them live in such single room huts. It is a general features in villages that members of the family having no privacy squeeze in small areas along with livestock.

The Table explains the area of SC and ST houses in the study. More than 54.0% houses are less than 4 squares in area. As far as rural ST families are concerned, houses with 2-4 squares account for 63.4%. Another 16.5% houses on the whole measures approximately 5-7 squares. Those who are having houses with 11 or more squares are generally SCs living in rural areas (18.7%). But it should not be taken for granted that they are living comfortably. Village houses would generally be large in size both in terms of members and area. Perhaps large families under joint or extended family systems may be living in big houses. Table 16 refers.

#### 5. *Year of Construction*

Area and the type of houses is followed by the approximate year of its construction. By and large, the investigation depends upon the knowledge of the respondents. Many houses were built well over 25 years ago, though some residents could not recollect the year of construction of their houses.

TABLE 16 : Area of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Houses

Area of the house	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Less than a square	50	2.05	3	2.07	53	2.05	8	1.06	61	1.83
One square	242	9.93	18	12.41	260	10.07	68	9.09	328	9.85
2-4 squares	1094	44.89	92	63.45	1186	45.93	300	40.10	1486	44.62
5-7 squares	411	16.86	19	13.10	430	16.65	122	16.32	552	16.58
8-10 squares	167	6.85	8	5.52	175	6.78	64	8.56	239	7.18
Eleven or more squares	457	18.75	4	2.76	461	17.85	171	22.86	632	18.98
Not applicable/No house	13	0.53	1	0.69	14	0.54	1	0.13	15	0.45
No respons	3	0.12	—	—	3	0.12	14	1.87	17	0.51
Total	2437	99.98	145	100.00	2582	99.99	748	99.99	3330	100.00

To about 7.8% households, the question is not applicable since they live in rented houses. About 32.1% SCs and STs live in houses which were constructed 21 or more years ago. Those who replied as 1-5 and 11-15 years constitute 12.0% each approximately. About 18.8% houses were constructed 6-10 years ago. Some 6.3% respondents come under 'no response' category. Table 17 refers.

### 6. *Value of the House*

The problem faced while collecting information regarding the year of construction of houses by the respondents repeated itself with regard to the approximate value of the house. Since it was thought that the value of the house to some extent, determines the economic condition of persons residing there, such an enquiry was made. But the respondents could not give any reliable information in this regard. It was also not safe to depend on the figures arrived at by the research staff since the market value of land and building varied from place to place and at the same place from time to time. Therefore, only an approximation which is very near to the actual figures is made here. Table 18 refers.

About 66.0% houses cost less than Rs. 1000/-. It is already observed that 47.0% of the SC/ST houses are thatched huts and their value in any case cannot exceed Rs. 1000/-. Of the remaining, 14.0% houses cost between Rs. 1000/- and 3000/-. There are 12.0% respondents—4.0% in each category—who are living in rented, rent free houses and "no response" cases.

The predominance of low cost houses reflects the poor condition of respondents. Whatever little they own is again sub-divided and fragmented. If the same trend continues, in the next generation their economic conditions will deteriorate furthermore.

### 7. *Accommodation*

The area and type of house decides its bifurcation. The plans to record the number of rooms in each house could not materialise because the actual position in rural areas was different. The type of houses being mostly thatched huts and the area being 2-4 squares, there is hardly any scope for more than one room.

TABLE 17 : Year of Construction of Houses

House built	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Less than a year of ago	19	0.78	2	1.38	21	0.80	7	0.93	28	0.84
Between 1—5 years ago	333	13.66	32	22.07	365	14.14	63	8.42	428	12.85
Between 6—10 years ago	501	20.56	20	13.79	521	20.18	105	14.03	626	18.80
Between 11—15 years ago	302	12.39	19	13.10	321	12.43	92	12.29	413	12.40
Between 16—20 years ago	234	9.60	12	8.28	246	9.53	55	7.35	301	9.04
21 years or more years	869	35.66	24	16.55	893	34.59	179	23.93	1072	32.19
Do not know—live in rented house	106	4.35	34	23.45	140	5.42	122	16.32	262	7.87
Not applicable—No house	16	0.66	1	0.69	17	0.66	1	0.13	18	0.54
No Response	57	2.34	1	0.69	58	2.25	124	16.58	182	5.47
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	99.98	3330	100.00

TABLE 18 : Approximate value of the Houses

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Rs. 200 or less	529	21.71	21	14.48	550	21.30	52	6.96	602	18.08
Rs. 200—500	764	31.35	41	28.28	805	31.18	101	13.50	906	27.21
Rs. 501—1000	545	22.36	30	20.69	575	22.27	126	16.84	701	21.06
Rs. 1001—3000	352	14.44	12	8.28	364	14.10	115	15.38	479	14.38
Rs. 3001—5000	70	2.87	4	2.76	74	2.87	33	4.42	107	3.22
Rs. 5001—10000	14	0.57	1	0.69	15	0.58	27	3.60	42	1.26
Rs. 10000 or more	3	0.12	—	—	—3	0.12	54	7.22	57	1.71
Do not know—live in rented house	24	0.98	—	—	24	0.93	122	16.32	146	4.38
Not applicable—No house (rent free house)	97	3.98	36	24.83	133	5.15	8	1.06	141	4.23
No response	39	1.60	—	—	39	1.51	110	14.70	149	4.47
Total	2437	99.98	145	100.00	2582	100.01	748	100.00	3330	100.00

As planned houses with rooms are rare, it was decided to collect information that was available depending on the local conditions. Therefore, in many cases even compartments with scope for privacy are taken as rooms for purposes of this survey. However, kitchen and bathrooms were excluded from this enumeration. Seventyfour per cent of houses have 1 to 2 rooms. About 30.3% houses are single room apartments. Houses with 3 rooms account for 14.7% in the survey. Urban areas have houses with more rooms than rural areas. Accordingly about 25.9 urban SC/ST houses account for 3-5 rooms each. The housing condition of SCs and STs in the State is in no way conducive for the health and happiness of the family members who live in them. Due to lack of space, 4-5 people along with the livestock, and other possessions are huddled together in small room which exposes them to hundreds of health hazards. However, this situation is not unique to SCs and STs only but common with majority of rural families. Table 19 refers.

#### 8. *Extra space*

The respondents in this study, it is clear, lack many facilities including housing and allied amenities. Agricultural families always need some land either around the house or near it. It may be used to accommodate their livestock or to store agricultural produce and hay and other fodder for livestock. For purposes of husking and cleaning the grains, they require a thrashing yard. But the situation in the case of SCs and STs is not encouraging. Even the little percentage of respondents who own land do not generally possess a thrashing yard.

About 90.0 SC and ST houses having no extra space at all. This is true for thrashing yard and kitchen garden also. However, some urban dweller have small plot of land for kitchen garden. This, however, can be correlated with ownership of landed property.

Majority of SCs and STs in the study do not own any land but are only landless agricultural or casual labourers. Therefore, the need for thrashing yard and extra space does not arise. At the same time majority of them about 74.9% do not have cattle sheds. Further, only about 18.5% SCs and STs in the study possess a

TABLE 19 : Number of Rooms in the Houses

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SC & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Single room	838	34.39	33	22.76	871	33.73	138	18.45	1009	30.30
Two rooms	1140	46.78	74	51.03	1214	47.02	243	32.48	1457	43.75
Three rooms	309	12.68	23	15.86	332	12.86	158	21.12	490	14.71
Five rooms	15	0.62	2	1.38	17	0.66	36	4.82	53	1.59
Six rooms	8	0.33	2	1.38	10	0.39	23	3.08	33	0.99
Seven or more rooms	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	22	2.94	24	0.72
Not applicable	11	0.45	1	0.69	12	0.46	5	0.66	17	0.51
No response	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	11	1.47	15	0.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

cattle shed and another 5.6% have stated that they keep their animals inside the home which is mostly a single room apartment.

### *9. Bath and Other Facilities*

Along with the house goes provisions for bathroom and lavatory. The significance of these facilities suggests certain kinds and levels of practices. Caste, cleanliness and notions of purity and pollution are all interlinked.

Generally bathroom and lavatory provisions in the house depend on the water sources in the area. In the absence of perennial water supply it is too much to expect any community to maintain cleanliness in this regard.

A word on bathing in rural areas becomes necessary here. There is no room as such in the houses not only of rural SCs and STs but also in the houses of majority of general population of the villages. The research staff recorded that very often people (specially women and children) use the open space by the side of the houses for bathing, with some temporary arrangement for privacy. Often the bathroom will be indicated by a stone slab lying by the side of the house/hut and people take bath here causing great many health hazards particularly in the absence of any drainage system.

It is normal practice in villages for people to use the village pond or tank to clean themselves, the livestock and also household utensils. But the SCs and STs in the villages are normally denied access to the water sources since their touch would pollute the water and render them unfit for use by caste Hindus. A detailed note on discrimination with regard to water facilities to SCs and STs is discussed separately. Such discrimination coupled with the low economic standard, forces them to remain unclean for long. Most of the rural respondents in this study have stated that they do not even have a spare set of clothes to wear after bathing. Majority of them are landless agricultural labourers and they hardly find time and resources to clean themselves. Therefore, bathing is considered to be a luxury which they can indulge in occasionally and not regularly. Above all ignorance about health and hygiene and indifference to diseases on the part of these

uneducated rural SCs and STs drives them to believe firmly in fate and survive amidst all dirt.

The 51.0% urban dwelling SCs and STs who have separate bathroom shows that with economic and educational betterment there is scope for adoption of healthy practices. This rules out the traditional belief that lower the level of caste, poorer are the standards of cleanliness. One important point here is that only 2.5% SCs and STs living in urban areas share the bathroom with their neighbours. Again 47.0% urban SCs and STs have no bathroom facility at all. On the whole more than 70.7% SCs and STs reported that they have no exclusive bathroom inside the house. Table 20 refers.

The study has about 91.7% respondents who do not have lavatory facilities in home. However, the situation is slightly better for urban dwellers, who have independent lavatories (28.2%) and share with others (5.4).

In rural India generally people do not have lavatories near their houses. Open fields and manure pits are often used for this purpose and so SCs and STs fall in line with general pattern.

To conclude, our respondents, as compared to the general population who have better access to water resources, live in unhealthy environment. The survey has brought to light many cases wherein SC and ST women walk miles to fetch a potful of water to cook their food. When such is the case, one cannot expect them to have daily bath.

#### 10. Sources of water—Domestic and Non-domestic

Water is one area in which the SCs and STs are very much troubled. Dumont rightly concluded 'that water is the beginning of withdrawal in the caste system<sup>1</sup> and thus water plays an important role in determining superior and inferior statuses of different caste groups in the hierarchy

1. Dumont Louis, 1966, *Homo Hierarchicus*, Vikas Publications, New Delhi, pp. 141.

TABLE 10 : Number of SCs/SITs Who

	Rural SCs		Rural SITs		Rural SCs & SITs		Urban SCs & SITs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Own Cattle sheds</b>										
Yes	490	20.11	74	51.03	564	21.84	55	7.36	619	18.59
No	1760	72.22	69	47.59	1829	70.84	666	89.04	2495	74.93
Inside the house	178	7.30	—	—	178	6.89	10	1.33	188	5.65
Not applicable	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	16	2.13	18	0.54
No Response	7	0.29	2	1.38	9	0.35	1	0.13	10	0.30
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.01</b>
<b>Have Bathrooms</b>										
Separate (self)	464	19.04	51	35.17	557	21.57	371	49.59	928	27.87
Shared	9	0.37	—	—	9	0.35	18	2.41	27	0.81
No bathroom	1954	80.18	93	64.14	2005	77.65	352	47.06	2357	70.78
No response	10	0.41	1	0.69	11	0.43	7	0.93	18	0.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Have Lavatory</b>										
Separate (self)	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	211	28.21	212	6.37
Shared	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	41	5.48	46	1.38
No lavatory	2421	99.34	143	98.62	2564	99.30	490	65.51	3054	91.71
Not applicable	10	0.41	2	1.38	12	0.46	6	0.80	18	0.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The magnitude of the practice of untouchability and the link between water and notions of purity pollution is being discussed later in this report but it could only be said here that water facilities has been a burning problem for SCs in villages although all of them are not untouchables.

Housing and water go together and therefore, domestic and non-domestic water supply to the respondents is dealt within this Chapter. Along with this the SCs and STs were asked whether they can have access to the common source of water in villages, towns and cities. For STs and to some of the urban dwelling SC people, this will not apply because the former are not untouchables and the latter have better amenities and the urban environment minimises the degree of practice of untouchability.

On the whole 45.6% respondents replied that they depend on the separate well provided for them to meet their domestic water requirements. Those who depend on tank/pond constitute 12.3%. Only 21.7% SCs and STs in the survey are using water from public well/tap. The worst affected are the SCs living in rural areas. This is but natural since caste dominates all activities of village life. Nearly 58.8% rural SC respondents have separate well. Another 14.2% take water from the village tank or Pond. A substantial number (11.3%) depend on river/stream/canal. Only 11.0% go for public wells to draw water while about 2.7% respondents reported that they have separate tap for the community.

Coming to STs, though they are not discriminated, only 15.1% avail public well sources for their water needs, perhaps the place of habitation mostly forest areas probably have influenced them to use (40.6%) for their domestic needs. Another 13.1% STs depend on river stream/canal. Table 21 refers.

The respondents, by and large, depend on river/stream/canal/tank/pond water for non-domestic puposes. However, a good number also use the same sources for both demestic and non-domestic requirements. Here again, the rural SCs suffer more when 64.0% of them have to go out of the village to fetch water. As explained already, large number of rural SCs depend on river/tank/canal/stream water for domestic needs and the same is

TABLE 21 : Source of water to SCs &amp; STs

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Domestic</b>										
Public well	268	11.00	22	15.17	290	11.23	50	6.68	340	10.21
Private well	40	1.64	42	28.97	82	3.18	45	6.02	127	0.81
Public tap	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	385	51.48	386	11.59
Private tap	—	—	—	—	—	—	162	21.66	162	4.86
Separate well for SCs/STs	1433	58.80	3	2.07	1436	55.62	84	11.23	1520	45.65
Separate tap for SCs/STs	67	2.75	—	—	67	2.59	7	0.93	74	2.22
River/Stream/Channel	276	11.33	19	13.10	295	11.43	7	0.93	302	9.07
Tank/pond	346	14.20	59	40.69	405	15.69	6	0.80	411	12.34
Others	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	1	0.13	6	0.18
No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>
<b>Non-domestic</b>										
Public well	183	7.51	18	12.41	201	7.78	44	5.88	245	7.36
Private well	17	0.70	30	20.69	47	1.82	41	5.48	88	2.64
Public tap	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	372	49.74	373	11.20
Private tap	—	—	—	—	—	—	156	20.86	156	4.68
Separate well for SCs/STs	617	25.32	1	0.69	618	23.93	52	6.96	670	20.12
Separate tap for SCs/STs	56	2.30	—	—	56	2.17	8	1.06	64	1.92
River/Stream/Channel	745	30.57	30	20.69	775	30.02	53	7.08	828	24.86
Tank/pond	817	33.52	65	44.83	882	34.16	21	2.80	903	27.12
No response	1	0.04	1	0.69	2	0.08	1	0.13	3	0.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

applicable for non-domestic purposes also. As usual, public/private taps serve all the needs of SCs and STs residing in urban areas.

Further problems in this connection analysed later in this report.

A word on rural SCs and STs and their accessibility to water sources is appropriate here. Even-to-day SCs are not allowed to draw water from common well in majority of villages. About 43.4% respondents in the study and 56.3% in the case of rural SCs have stated that they are not at all allowed, while on the whole another 16.3% (19.5% for rural SCs) are discriminated. However, Tribal population and urban SCs free from this stigma to an appreciable degree. Table 22 refers.

While there is discrimination for SCs and STs in general, inter and inter-caste cleavages, as they exist among the upper castes, are also found among SCs and STs.

### 11. *Rented House*

(a) *Owner's Caste* : The 9.0% SCs and STs in the study living in rented house are mostly urban dwellers. But among the urban respondents 33.8% are in rented houses. The myth of 'open society' in towns and cities is not always true. A person of low caste finds it difficult to get accommodation. Since caste plays a crucial role in interpersonal relations, caste identity is asked for before renting a house or even a room. Though a low caste person is prepared to pay more rent, he may not be able to secure accommodation in an upper caste locality especially in rural areas or house owned by caste-Hindus. The respondents in this study stated that many a time they had to conceal their caste identity in order to rent a house. Some of urban residents in the survey often hesitated to give the caste identity of the owner of their house.

Though 11.0% SCs and STs say that their houses are owned by non-SCs and STs, majority of them were not prepared to disclose their house-owner's caste identity because of the above reasons. About 9.4% among the urban respondents in fact come

**TABLE II : Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes can take water from the village Common Tap/Well/Tank/Pond**

<i>Avail common source of water</i>	<i>Rural SCs</i>		<i>Rural STs</i>		<i>Rural SCs &amp; STs</i>		<i>Urban SCs &amp; STs</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	577	23.68	129	88.97	706	27.34	195	26.07	901	27.06
No. not at all	1373	56.34	14	9.66	1387	53.72	59	7.89	1446	43.42
Discriminated—water poured	477	19.57	2	1.38	479	18.55	66	8.83	545	16.37
Discriminated—can't draw simultaneously	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	5	0.66	9	0.27
Others	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable	—	—	—	—	—	—	420	56.15	420	12.60
No response	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	3	0.40	8	0.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

under 'No response' category in this context. For 5.7% people the owner is a fellow caste/tribal person.

Compared to the total SC and ST population in the State, those living in urban areas form a negligible percentage. The same is true of SCs and STs living in rented houses. In their case, urban-ward migration depends on either economic or educational important leading to job opportunities in such areas. The 9.0% households living in rented houses largely constitute such immigrated people who were able to achieve occupational mobility.

This is not to say that all immigrants to urban centres are economically strong, nor it should be assumed that they are educated and have migrated in search of salaried jobs. Towns and cities attract people from suburban areas who, generally, come with their families in search of some work and finally prefer to settle in urban centres. Economic necessity drives them to reside in slums which are generally unhealthy. The study also accounts for such areas where SCs and STs lived in rented houses.

(b) *Monthly rent* : The small percentage of respondents living in rented houses are paying rents at different rates. But, majority of them (7.3%) pay less than Rs.75/- per month. The study has 2.2% SCs and STs paying Rs. 5/- or less per month towards house rent. Another 2.1% live in houses with a monthly rent between Rs. 26/- and Rs. 50/-. Only 19 households come in the range of Rs. 100/- or above.

The figures for urban SCs and STs living in rented houses differ from that of the rural population. Among them 9.6% SCs and STs stay in houses on monthly rent of Rs. 26/- and Rs. 50/-. About 8.1% pay Rs. 5/- or less. The 19 households accounted above under Rs. 100/- or more are from urban areas.

## 12. *Government Aid*

One of the provisions made by the Constitution of India for the betterment of the living conditions of the SCs and STs in the country is in terms of nominally priced house sites, loans for house construction, building materials and allotment of constructed houses

at concessional rates. Apart from these, the government also built tribal colonies to rehabilitate displaced tribal communities because of conservation of forests and construction of river valley project. The extent and utility of such benefits to the [downtrodden] is not readily assessable. In the present study attempts are made to obtain information from the respondents on these scores.

Provisions made towards education, economic health, housing and other scheme for the development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country are given below :

	(Rupees in Crores)
First Five-Year Plan	29.62
Second Five-Year Plan	36.53
Third Five-Year Plan	61.15
Fourth Five-Year Plan	77.43

Further, annual allocation of funds towards housing SCs and STs during 1971-72 and 1972-73 by the State Government is appended below :

	<i>Scheduled Caste</i>		<i>Scheduled Tribes</i>	
	(Rupees in lakhs)			
	1971-72	1972-73	1971-72	1972-73
1. Acquisition of land	2.40	5.00	—	—
2. Construction of houses	1.50	3.00	—	—
3. Subsidy for construction of houses	—	—	0.45	0.94

The Study shows that less than 11.0% Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have availed concessions like free house sites, building materials and monetary assistance. Regarding site for home construction, on the whole only 10.6% respondents have utilised the benefit under special provisions, while 89.1% replied in the negative. The situation is slightly better in the case of urban residents, wherein about 14.9% have got house sites.

Those who have taken building materials as aid account for 6.1% in the study. There is no difference between rural and urban

SCs regarding this aid except in the case of rural STs among whom only 2 households have availed such aid.

Monetary aid also has not made much impact and therefore, only 5.2% SCs and STs are reported to have availed it. Table 23 refers.

Illiteracy and ignorance on the part of the respondents coupled with cumbersome bureaucratic procedure and the apathy of the officials in power, it is said, deter them from making use of constitutional benefits.

### Summary

On the whole, it could be concluded that the location of SC and ST houses especially in rural areas follows a traditional pattern. About 65.4% respondents live in separate colonies which are usually outside the village demarcated by a road or lane. But the housing condition of the respondents, in so far as ownership is concerned, is encouraging whereby nearly 82.3% have own houses.

The study also covers 9.0% respondents living in rented houses and majority of them are in urban centres. Amongst them as many as 7.0% occupy houses with a monthly rent of Rs. 7/- or less which indicates that they are in urban areas. Another 127 families are reported to have been living in rent free houses—mostly rural landless, agricultural labourers and are under the constant threat of eviction due to the recent land reform laws.

As regards the type of houses, the condition of SC and ST houses is pathetic. As many as 47.0% are thatched huts. Very few respondents are living in good houses and most of them are usually urban dwellers. More than 50.0% houses are having a plinth area of less than 2-4 squares. The situation could be imagined when large number among them are thatched huts. Many houses are valued less than Rs. 1000/- and year of construction is normally more than 2 decades. Thus in terms of cost and the year of construction, the SC and ST houses are both poor and old.

Large number of SC and ST houses do not have provision for privacy and constitute single room apartments. More than

TABLE 23 : Scheduled Castes and Tribes who have availed Government aid Like

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
<b>Sites for House construction</b>											
Yes, Under special provision for SCs/STs	234	9.60	7	4.83	241	9.33	112	14.97	353	10.60	
No	2200	90.27	137	94.48	2337	90.51	630	84.23	2967	89.10	
No Response/Do not know	3	0.12	1	0.69	4	0.15	6	0.80	10	0.30	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Building material</b>											
Yes, Under special provision for SCs and STs	147	6.03	2	1.38	149	5.77	55	7.36	204	6.13	
No	2287	93.84	142	97.93	2429	94.07	688	91.98	3117	93.60	
No Response/Do not know	3	0.12	1	0.69	4	0.15	5	0.66	9	0.27	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	
<b>Monetary aid</b>											
Yes, Under special provision for SCs & STs	106	4.35	8	5.52	114	4.42	59	7.88	173	5.20	
No	2328	95.53	136	93.79	2464	95.43	684	91.45	3148	94.53	
No Response/Do not know	3	0.12	1	0.69	4	0.15	5	0.66	9	0.27	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

90.0% houses neither have extra space, nor place to accommodate livestock. Almost 99.0% have no kitchen garden and thrashing yard.

Facilities like bathroom and lavatory are almost nil in the case of majority of the respondents here. Water facilities are also not very encouraging and more than 50.0% depend on separate sources of water for both domestic and non-domestic use. They are not allowed to use the village common well.

The amount spent on SCs and STs housing by the government has not reached the needy people. Excepting a few urban dwelling SCs and STs, many do not seem to have even heard of it. More than 90.0% in the study have stated that they have not utilised such concessions like sites, building material and monetary assistance.

## Possessions.

Property, both movable and immovable serves as an indices in determining the economic position of a person. A person's economic soundness could be measured with reference to land holdings, possessions of equipments like tractor, pumpset, cart, livestock and so forth especially in village India. Greater the number and value of material goods higher will be his economic and social status in society though there are some exceptions. A person with good financial background could possess luxurious items like automobiles, wireless sets, watch/clock and bicycle and many other material goods.

A farmer should possess the essential tools for cultivation without which he will be unable to apply his skill and money effectively. For example, a pair of bullocks plough and certain basic implements of agriculture are a must for him. Ownership and effective utilization of these will stabilize his economic conditions. It is but natural that financial stability stimulates longing better amenities both productive and non-productive, possession of which is often associated with status and prestige.

Further, rearing of domestic animal like cow, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig, even keeping poultry contributes much to the agrarian economy since these animals, birds and their products add to the family income and also act as an insurance during times of economic crisis.

In the light of the above, it was decided to take into account all the possessions of the respondents both in rural and urban areas in the study to assess their economic conditions. Therefore, the

possessions were generally classified into livestock, material and agricultural. An item wise analysis of these possessions of the SC and ST respondents is given below.

### 1. *Livestock possessions*

(a) *Bullocks* : Nearly 80.6% of SC and ST households in this study have no bullocks. Of the remaining, 14.9% possess one pair each. Another 2.2% households reported that they have only one animal. Perhaps the other ox was dead or sold to meet family exigencies. Only 1.8% households have two pairs of bullocks. The reason for such limited number of households possessing bullocks is attributable to the meage percentage of them possessing agricultural land. However, not all households which own land have bullocks, although the latter are a necessity. Similarly, there are respondents owning bullocks but no land. For such households hiring out bullocks as plough cattle and manual labour constitute the chief source of earning livelihood. In fact the research staff met many households eking out a living on such contingency. Table 24 refers.

(b) *Cattle* : Next to bullocks, cattle have economic and other values. As milk and its products are commercial commodities many families, both in rural and urban areas, keep cattle as a source of earing to supplement their income. Farmers usually rear cattle to serve many purposes. They are reared for their milk and milk products, used for ploughing, and to draw carts. The manure is a very useful natural fertiliser. Farmers thus value cattle for the multiple uses to which they can be put.

India is presumbaly having the highest number of cattle in the world. But from the point of view of quality, the country's cattle rank very poor. Cow and oxen are considered sacred. Slaughtering them or eating beef is taboo to Hindus. A large quantity of fodder and other cattle feed is wasted to maintain old and decrepit animals which are least productive. Quality cattle has yet to replace the country variety.

Compared to bullocks, in this study the rural respondents possess more cattle. Nearly 10.6% of them own two cows each. About 8.8% have one cow. As could be expected, more than 90.0% urban respondents do not own any cattle.

TABLE II: Scheduled Castes and Tribes who Possess

Number Possessed	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Bullocks</b>										
Single animal	61	2.50	5	3.45	66	2.56	8	1.08	74	2.22
One pair	446	18.30	29	20.00	475	18.40	24	3.21	499	14.98
Two pairs	52	2.13	4	2.76	56	2.17	4	0.53	60	1.80
Three pairs	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	1	0.13	6	0.18
Four-six pairs/or more pairs	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.14	3	0.39	4	0.12
Not applicable-No bullocks	1871	76.77	107	73.79	1978	76.61	708	94.66	2686	80.66
No response / Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.08</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>
<b>Cattle</b>										
One	219	8.99	10	6.90	229	8.87	99	3.88	258	7.75
Two	256	10.50	18	12.41	274	10.61	24	3.21	298	8.95
Three	71	2.91	4	2.76	75	2.90	5	0.66	80	2.40
Four	58	2.38	8	5.52	66	2.56	5	0.66	71	2.13
Five	23	0.94	2	1.38	25	0.97	2	0.26	27	0.81
Six	15	0.62	4	2.76	19	0.74	1	0.13	20	0.60
Seven or more	26	1.07	—	—	26	1.01	6	0.80	32	0.96
Not applicable/No cattle	1768	72.55	99	68.28	1867	72.31	676	90.38	2543	76.37
No response/Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.98</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

With regard to the tribals in the study, the situation is slightly better in that about 26.0% own one to six cows. Their habitation in forest and hilly areas with plenty of grazing ground seem to be rather conducive to cattle rearing.

Rearing of cattle necessarily requires man power in plenty and cheap source of fodder. Our respondents, though agricultural labourers, are predominantly landless workers. As every able member of the family has to contribute to its income, cattle rearing becomes an additional burden. Moreover, when they are not of good quality and only one or two are reared, it becomes uneconomical. Further, huge sums are required to purchase good quality and productive cows. The financial condition of our respondents is detrimental to own quality cattle. The 34.0% households possessing mostly 1 to 6 cows do not constitute a significant number. The welfare schemes sponsored by the government to finance SCs and STs to purchase cattle and other livestock and thereby improve their economic conditions has not made any impact. Not even a single respondent has stated that he/she utilised the government help in this regard. Whereas many government officials including the village Panchayat office bearers did indicate that whatever was given in terms of aid by the government to SCs and STs it has been either misused or sold by the recipients. This may be true, although it cannot be conclusively proved in this study. In order to meet many economic and social needs, some people from the downtrodden communities, in the absence of any other alternatives, often raise money by selling their belongings; may be cattle, land, utensils, jewellery and so forth.

(c) *Sheep/Goat* : Caste is associated traditionally with some or the other occupations. Caste occupations are passed on from one generation to another. Occupational mobility is only a recent phenomenon.

Sheep and goat rearing are attributed traditionally to a particular caste group called 'Kurubas' in Karnataka. (Nevertheless, we do find people from castes other than Kurubas being engaged in such occupations in recent times). The above fact seems to be apparent, when over 90.0% SCs and STs do not have sheep or goat. Among those who possess them only 2.1% have 7 or more

animals. The remaining households have either 1 or 2. It could be seen from Table that SCs and STs in the study are very poor in terms of their sheep/goat possessions. Table 25 refers.

(d) *Pig* : Pig is considered to be a 'dirty' scavenging animal. People eating pork, thus have low status with certain exceptions. The respondents in the present study disclaimed ownership of pigs. Though pigs were seen in the localities, the respondents, in large number of cases, disowned them. This could be attributed to two factors. One people might have done so in their effort to claim high ritual and economic status or with the intention of depicting themselves to be too poor to keep quality pigs. They often considered the research staff as government agents and expected material benefits from the government through their good offices. Thus, the sample contains as many as 99.5% households with no pigs. Only 8 households own one animal. Due to the reasons stated above and perhaps many other social factors, the figures do not reflect the actual situation. Among the 8 households having one pig, seven are SCs and one is ST, all from rural areas.

(e) *Poultry* : Poultry keeping as a source of income is new to people living in villages. Except in the outskirts of towns and cities large scale poultry is not seen in any part of the State. Though this vocation is considered as a feeder to agricultural activities, lack of marketing facilities and know-how regarding the maintenance of birds, has not made this vocation popular least in rural areas.

Scientific way of rearing birds is a recent phenomenon and as stated earlier it is confined only to urban centres. In terms of investment, naturally, a poultry farm cost not less than Rs. 15000/-.

Along with the above facts, the conditions in villages does not encourage this. While the feeds and feeding techniques are rather complex and so not encouraging, there are no veterinary staff to help poultry farms when the need arises.

Whoever owns poultry farm should necessarily be capable of investing large sums for such vocation. It is too much to expect our poor rural respondents to possess such farms. Some house-

TABLE 25 : Scheduled Castes and Tribes who Possess

No. possessed	Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total SCs/STs	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<i>Sheep/Goats</i>						
One	56	2.17	12	1.60	68	2.04
Two	77	2.98	9	1.20	86	2.58
Three	28	1.08	11	1.47	39	1.16
Four	29	1.12	13	1.73	42	1.26
Five	10	0.39	1	0.13	11	0.33
Six	17	0.66	—	—	17	0.51
Seven or more	68	2.63	2	0.26	71	2.13
Not applicable-No Sheep/Goat	2296	88.92	710	94.91	3005	90.24
No response/Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>
<i>Pigs</i>						
One	8	0.31	—	—	8	0.24
Two	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Three	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Four	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.06
Five	—	—	—	—	—	—
Six	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Seven or more	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable-No Pigs	2567	99.42	748	100.00	3315	99.55
No response/Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>2528</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<i>Poultry</i>						
5 or less birds	460	17.82	65	8.68	525	15.77
Between 6 & 10 Birds	84	3.25	12	1.60	96	2.88
Between 11 and 20 birds	20	0.77	3	0.40	23	0.69
Between 21 and 30 birds	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Between 31 and 50 Birds	2	0.08	1	0.13	3	0.09
51 or more birds	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable-no poultry	2012	77.92	667	89.19	2679	80.45
No response/Do not know	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

holds are having one or two birds (15.7%). Mostly this figure is drawn out of rural SC and ST households in the study. Added to the stigma of caste, the cost of eggs and chicken forbids SC/ST people from making them regular items of food. Among those SCs and STs who are somewhat economically prosperous, the limited number of birds possessed by them are generally reserved to be eaten on festive and other special occasions.

Government help in the form of money in this connection, has not been utilised by the SCs and STs. The same reasons stated with regard to other livestock possessions, house sites building materials, agricultural land and implements holds good here also. The only significant point here is that only some rural ST households possess 1 to 10 birds. Apart from this no other difference is observed between SCs and STs, in this study.

## *2. Material possessions*

Economic goods could be classified into necessities, comforts and luxuries. However, it is difficult to put any goods into a definite category since it depends on the level of the users as such, especially on the economic level of the people concerned. Keeping this point in view it was decided to include possessions of such material goods like tractor, pumpset, watch/clock, cycle, transistor, furniture, motorcycle, scooter, car and so forth to assess the economic conditions of SC and ST households in the study.

Electricity is included here as an item along with the material possessions. Though many villages in the State are electrified, the SC and ST population living in these villages have not been able to take advantage of this facility. About 92.8% on the whole and over 99.0% in the case of rural respondents have no electricity in their homes. Surprisingly, even in towns and cities as many as 70.0% households do not have electricity. This highlights the economic status of the downtrodden and the housing conditions.

Goods usually classified as semi-luxury like bicycle, watch and clock normally seen with urban respondents in the study. These articles are valued for their utility in such places where time and distance are felt consciously. While there are only 5.6% households in the study having bicycles, about 18.6% urban respondents possess them. However, watch or clock is slightly

popular compared to bicycle. Even here town/city dwellers fare better, *i.e.*, with 39.3% as against 3.3% for rural respondents. Table 26 refers.

Furniture items like chair, table, cot, bench, stool and sofa accounted in the survey are mostly confined to urban households. It is a fact that with their changed outlook, education and better living conditions—both in terms of housing and economic status—the urban respondents could possess some of these items. By contrast, the rural respondents mostly living in huts and sub-standard apartments under grinding poverty cannot think of possessing such furniture. In fact most of them do not have even a mat to sleep, but use gunny sacks.

Over 98.0% rural households do not possess chairs. However, 34.3 urban households have one or two chairs. The same pattern obtains for tables, cots, stools, bench and sofa.

Instruments of mass media like radio and transistor are not in a reach of SCs and STs in the study. Here again respondents having radios or transistors are mostly urban dwellers. Since 99.0% of the rural sample households do not have electricity, there is some justification in the figures with less percentage of radios and transistors. Maintaining them with other modes like dry cells involves high cost. Perhaps, these factors facilitates in continuing the ignorance of SCs and STs.

Just 21 households in the survey stated that they possess either a scooter or motor cycle. Similarly, 17 respondents are owning a car or lorry. Incidentally, all of them are urban dwellers. This explains that the SCs and STs residing in towns and cities are having better living conditions and possessions than their rural counterparts.

### *3. Agricultural Possessions*

(a) *Land*: One way of recognising the family's financial stability is by looking at the ownership of landed property. In this analysis, land has been taken to mean as the area used for purposes of cultivation. A further classification is made between owner cultivated land from that of land cultivated on lease and

TABLE III : Number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Respondents Owning

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Watch/Clock	Yes	78	3.20	8	5.52	■	3.33	294	39.30	380	11.41
	No	2358	96.76	137	94.48	2495	96.63	447	59.75	2942	88.35
	No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	7	0.93	8	0.24
	Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	99.98	3330	100.00
Chairs	Yes	37	1.52	13	8.97	50	1.93	257	34.36	307	9.22
	No	2399	98.44	132	91.03	2531	98.02	489	65.38	3020	90.69
	No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	2	2.26	3	0.09
	Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
Radio/Transistor	Yes	46	1.89	4	2.76	50	1.04	250	33.43	300	9.01
	No	2390	98.07	141	97.24	2531	98.02	497	66.44	3028	90.93
	No response	1	0.40	—	—	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06
	Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
Carts	Yes	203	8.33	4	2.76	207	8.02	15	2.00	222	6.67
	No	2233	91.63	141	97.24	2374	91.94	732	97.87	3106	93.27
	No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06
	Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

share cropping. Further, agricultural land has been recognised in this study in terms of three types, viz., wet, dry and garden, plantation land. Wet or irrigated lands are those having perennial water supply. Dry lands depend mostly on rainfall for cultivation. Garden and plantation lands require water at different seasons—both rains and wells.

Data on these details was collected from the respondents and there was very little scope for verifying the facts. Recently, the State implemented a new policy by appointing village accountants in the place of traditional 'shambhogue' (one who keeps the revenue records of the village including the register of births and deaths). This change is not even and in many villages, the village accounts being new to place and job, expressed difficulty in giving details regarding caste-wise land possessions when the investigators approached them for these details. To this extent, the study is limited in its scope.

The country is predominantly agricultural, where more than 80% population are depending on this vocation for their livelihood. Land is considered a prestigious possession and people generally favour to invest their savings in purchasing land in rural India which is mainly agricultural and people almost totally dependent on it. Land has both economic and social value because of certain traditional values attached to it. In a way the value attached to land has contributed to many social evils in the society.

The land holding pattern in Karnataka at the moment is that the dominant castes the *Vokkaligas* and *Lingayats* own much of the cultivable lands in the villages. The most ambitious Bill on land-reforms is yet to be implemented and even when it is implemented the situation would not usher in radical changes. Even those who are cultivating land on lease or share cropping basis are mostly people drawn from dominant castes. Once the policy 'tiller is the owner of the soil' is given effect to the all pervasive control of dominant castes over others will naturally increase.

By any stretch of imagination, land cannot be owned by all as the cultivable area and the number of aspiring farmers are in an inverse proportion. Apart from this, social values, customs, traditions and social hierarchy influence all walks of life of the

people in India. In the name of tradition, certain groups of people are deprived of ownership of landed property and are thus forced to depend on upper castes for all the basic necessities. Sometimes, even the house in which they are living belonging to the owner of the agricultural land for whom they work.

The stratification based on caste system discourages individual mobility. Empirical evidence shows cases of only group mobility when some groups of people managed to achieve better social status. For instance the *Nadars* of Tamilnadu.

The position as regards wet land owned by the SCs and STs in the study is negligible. On the whole 87.0% SCs have no irrigated land. Even among the 13.0% who own wet land, most of them (5.5%) possess less than one acre while another 3.9% have 2 acres.

The urban SCs and STs in the study show that as many as 93.5% do not own land. Of the remaining 6.5%, 2.5% urban residents own only 2 acres of wet land.

The situation is slightly better for dry lands whereabout 35.0% SCs and STs own such lands. However, majority of the owners (17.4%) possess two acres or less. Those who own between three and four acres account for 9.8% in the sample. Here also urban population fare badly while rural SCs (42.0%) and STs (39.0%) own such lands. But, the size of holdings are generally small.

Regarding garden and plantation lands, less than 3.0% households under investigation stated that they own such lands. However, majority of them possess less than 1 acre and all are from rural areas. The 20.0% STs who are counted as owning one or less acre of such land are mostly from the districts of Coorg, North and South Kanara, where the pattern of households is scattered and located on farm lands, generally counted as garden. But this, however, cannot be equated with the actual economic value of garden or plantation land. Table 27 refers.

Instances of SCs and STs cultivating agricultural land on lease basis are very rare. Over 97% households, have stated that they do not cultivate any of the above categories of land on lease basis.

TABLE 28 : Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Land Particulars

	Wet Land				Dry Land				Garden/Plantation			
	Lease		Share Cropping		Lease		Share Cropping		Lease		Share Cropping	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One acre or less	27	0.81	6	0.18	10	0.30	4	0.12	3	0.09	6	0.18
Two acres	28	0.84	4	0.12	23	0.69	12	0.36	—	—	—	—
Three acres	13	0.39	2	0.06	9	0.27	13	0.39	1	0.03	—	—
Four acres	3	0.09	—	—	2	0.06	6	0.18	—	—	—	—
Five acres	2	0.06	—	—	3	0.09	4	0.12	—	—	1	0.03
Six acres	5	0.15	—	—	—	—	1	0.03	—	—	—	—
Seven acres	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Eight or more acres	3	0.09	1	0.03	4	0.12	1	0.03	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable —no land	3247	97.51	3316	99.58	3278	98.44	3288	98.74	3325	99.85	3320	99.70
No response/Do not know	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03
Total	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00

Table 29 : Source of Water to Agricultural Land

Source	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Rain	950	38.98	56	38.62	1006	38.96	69	9.23	1075	32.28
Tank	132	5.42	3	2.07	135	5.23	12	1.60	147	4.41
River	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	3	0.40	4	0.12
Stream	5	0.21	2	1.38	7	0.27	9	1.20	16	0.48
Well	46	1.89	10	6.90	56	2.17	5	0.66	61	1.83
Canal	144	5.91	4	2.76	148	5.73	19	2.55	167	5.02
Others	—	—	1	0.69	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable-No land	1117	45.84	65	44.83	1182	45.78	621	83.02	1803	54.14
No response/Do not know	42	1.72	4	2.76	46	1.78	10	1.33	56	1.68
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

productive capacity of SC and ST farmers with such tools. Here also the rural ST respondents fare better than their SC counterparts. Government aid, even in this connection, has not made any impact and in many cases has not reached them.

(d) *Pumpset and Tractor* : The country is said to have achieved green revolution atleast in small pockets. But this has no meaning to the 1/5 of population of the country constituting the downtrodden. Mechanical implements like tractor and pumpset are beyond the reach of majority of Indian farmers. These implements are of practical utility only to large land holdings, which is however, not the case in India because agricultural land is generally subjected to fragmentation and sub-division at each generation.

Data collected from the 76 villages in the State reflects the fact that only a very negligible percentage of SCs and STs own land. All those who own have one or two acres only. Apart from these, their land holdings are subjected to sub-division and fragmentation and thus making the use of tractors and improved implements to impracticable.

While 99.0% SC/ST households have no tractor of their own, 99.3% have no pumpset. Only 21 SC and ST households (20 rural and 1 urban) possess pumpsets. However, the 4 households under 'don't know/no response' category regarding tractor are doubtful since they did not want to disclose the same. Necessarily, three out of four such households are from rural areas. Table 31 refers.

### **Awareness and use of Modern Agricultural Techniques**

The country's major industry is agriculture dominated. Even its export are mostly in terms of raw materials and monopoly goods like cotton, jute, sugar, tea, coffee, tobacco, iron ore, manganese and so forth. Though agriculture is one of the important sectors in earning foreign exchange, it has not been modernised. The Indian farmer, in general, still uses the same old tools and techniques of cultivation.

Efforts on the part of the government in popularising modern methods of cultivation and use of modern techniques have not made much impact over the traditional system. One of the reasons for this is that the new techniques and methods could be economically viable when farmers use them in large proportions.

TABLE 31 : Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Households Possessing

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Pumps :</b>										
Yes	15	0.62	5	3.45	1	0.77	1	0.13	21	0.63
No	2421	99.34	140	96.55	2561	99.19	746	99.74	3307	99.31
No response/Do not know	1	0.04	-	-	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Tractors :</b>										
Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
No	2434	99.88	145	100.00	2579	99.87	747	99.87	3326	99.86
No response/Do not know	3	0.12	-	-	3	0.13	1	0.13	4	0.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>3437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Modern Agricultural Implements</b>										
Yes	212	8.70	35	24.14	247	9.57	34	4.54	281	8.44
No	1102	45.22	40	27.99	1142	44.23	106	14.17	1248	37.48
No response/Do not know	1123	46.08	70	48.28	1193	46.21	608	81.29	1801	54.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Secondly, Indian farmers, being uneducated, cannot easily follow the rational applications of modern cultivation. With their traditional and often superstitious outlook they are hesitant to follow such methods.

Since the knowledge and use of modern agricultural implements require sufficient expenditure, farmers who lack investing capacity cannot adopt them. For all these reasons and also due to uneconomic holdings, agriculture in India remains a traditional vocation based mostly on traditional pattern.

Planned change through CDP and the NBS has not been a success. Panchayats and co-operatives along with the CDP and NBS have helped only a few farmers who were and are dominant in the villages.

The so-called green revolution has been helpful only to some affluent farmers who can make use of the improved techniques and methods of cultivation to the best advantage of themselves.

Awareness is quite different from adoption and use. Being landless workers on others' fields, the rural respondents are aware of modern agricultural equipments like implements, fertilisers, high yielding varieties and pesticides. But they are not using the same because of obvious reasons. The study shows about 75.0% respondents are aware of such modern techniques as implements and fertiliser, while, 68.0% and 58.0% respectively are aware of high yielding varieties and pesticides.

When it comes to adoption and use, naturally our respondents fare very poor. Less than 11.0% say that they have adopted such modern agricultural techniques. As explained already the reasons are obvious. Adoption and use go with ownership of sizeable acres of cultivable land.

### **Summary**

Looking from the point of view of possessions the respondents are very poor. Firstly large number of them are landless agricultural labourers. This explains that they do not have agricultural accessories like bullocks, carts and implements which are used in the ploughing process.

Neither they have cattle, sheep, goat, pig poultry and soforth to supplement their family income to any applicable client.

The respondents here are mostly living in very poor economic conditions. Under these circumstances, one cannot expect them to own luxury goods. Naturally, goods like bicycle, watch clock, radio, transistor, scooter, car and furniture items are not found in about 95.0% respondents in the study.

The respondents equally are not fortunate enough with regard to ownership of any type of land. Only less than 13.0% own wet lands, while not more than 32.0% possess dry lands.

Government help by way of free agricultural land has not improved the lot of SCs and STs since majority of them have stated they did not get, or could not make use of, any such land or concessions.

Since their economic and social conditions do not permit them to take land from others either for lease or share cropping, their number in this category is also negligible. Usually, all the agricultural land of the village is found concentrated in the hands of dominant castes of the area.

The above facts force them to remain landless agricultural or casual labourers along with their traditional menial occupations.

# 4

## Occupation

Occupation and caste are interlinked in the traditional social structure. Boughle has rightly recognised occupational specialisation as one of the criteria in determining one's caste. Along with specialization, hierarchy and separation go together.

The main objective of the study is to understand the economic conditions of the SCs and STs in the State. In this connection, the role of occupation and employment opportunities of the people concerned had to be taken into consideration in all their perspectives since they constitute the important criterion in assessing the economic conditions.

By and large, the rural social structure is caste dominated. The occupational pattern in villages is still close to traditional system, despite some changes in recent years here and there. Accordingly, upper castes follow the so called 'clean occupations', while the inferior castes are entrusted with and forced to do menial and unclean jobs. As the rural economy still depends on this kind of symbolic occupational relationships very few changes are noticed.

The study intended to know whether the SCs and STs in the State have achieved occupational mobility, specially in rural areas. Therefore, the respondents were asked to give their caste occupations. In additions, information was collected on whether they were and are doing some of the services considered as menial, such as leather work, scavenging and soforth.

The study also envisages the present occupational structure of the respondents in relation to the utility of the same. In all, 20 occupations are given by our respondents as caste occupations. But amongst them some are not to be taken as caste occupations as such. Nevertheless, the sample got some occupations grouped under the menial category. These are Chappal making (7.9%), Drumbeating (2.0%), Pipers (1.5%), Shoe making (0.1%), Skinning (2.0%), Thoti (1.6%), Talvar (1.3%) and stone-cutting (1.7%).

The glaring absence of occupations like night-soil carrying and tanning is not to mean that they are not followed by these people. A detailed analysis of service occupations is given at the appropriate place.

About 67.0% respondents have stated agriculture and coolie as their caste occupation. This is due to the fact that not many families among these communities can depend on their traditional caste occupation. As the number of people performing such traditional occupations swell in course of time, they have to look for alternate employment opportunities, while one or two families would be enough to meet the required traditional services in the village. In the absence of skill and sources of achieving new occupations, the SCs and STs in the rural parts of the State had to adopt what was immediately and easily available. Agricultural and other manual casual work is the only avenue open to them. Agriculture being seasonal, they have to depend on casual labour during slack season. Since agricultural and/or casual labour have been followed for three or four generations, the respondents have considered them as their caste occupations.

Occupations like scavenging, removing the dead animal, drumbeating and so forth are not economically very rewarding as also they do not keep them engaged all-through the year. It was common experience that the respondents, though found engaged in menial jobs, evaded giving any details. The social stigma attached to such traditional menial jobs acted as an additional factor so that many respondents have taken to agriculture and casual labour which is easily available. The case of 7.0% 'no response and not applicable' category shows the respondents unwillingness to reveal their low occupational status. Table 32 refers.

TABLE 32 : Caste Occupation of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Households

Caste Occupation	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Agriculture and cooly	1771	72.67	113	77.93	1884	72.97	348	46.53	2232	67.03
Business	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	2	0.26	4	0.12
Barber (hair cutting)	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.06
Chappal making	212	8.70	—	—	212	8.21	52	6.96	264	7.93
Carpentry	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12
Crafts	40	1.64	18	12.41	58	2.25	47	6.28	105	3.15
Drumbeating	66	2.71	—	—	66	2.56	3	0.40	69	2.07
Fishing	7	0.29	—	—	7	0.27	—	—	7	0.21
Piper	47	1.93	—	—	47	1.82	5	0.66	52	1.56
Pottery	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	1	0.13	5	0.15
Priesthood	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Shoemaking	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	—	—	5	0.15
Skinning	63	2.59	—	—	63	2.44	4	0.54	67	2.01
Scavenging	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	0.94	7	0.21
Stone cutting/mud work	56	2.30	—	—	56	2.17	2	0.26	58	1.74
Thoti	46	1.89	—	—	46	1.78	9	1.20	55	1.65
Talwara	35	1.44	8	5.52	43	1.67	3	0.40	46	1.38
Weaving	42	1.72	—	—	42	1.63	8	1.06	50	1.50
Fortune Telling	—	—	4	2.76	4	0.15	2	0.26	6	0.18
Not applicable/No caste Occupation	10	0.41	—	—	10	0.39	145	19.39	155	4.65
Others	10	0.41	2	1.38	12	0.46	20	2.68	32	0.96
Do not know/No response	14	0.57	—	—	14	0.54	90	12.04	104	3.12
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	99.99	3330	99.99

On the whole, caste occupation did give security according to some of the respondents. It is sometimes found that rural SCs and STs favour the traditional occupational structure because of its economic advantages to them. It is true that under the old system the village functionaries, to some extent, were taken care of by the village community. But, now the changed occupational system is not giving enough even to meet their basic necessities. Almost all their problems centre around the economic problems faced by them now-a-days.

Though it is undesirable to go back and identify themselves with menial occupations, in order to survive against odds, the respondents favour the caste occupation as a source of security in the employment market. About 48.6% answered in the positive to this question. This percentage is as high as 84.8% in the case of rural STs. This shows that the aspirations for occupational mobility among these people at this stage is not encouraging. Table 33 refers.

There is clear link between occupation and caste if one wishes to understand the principle of which occupations are distributed. In the Hindu society, lower status occupations usually go with lower castes. Though economically rewarding, high caste people are seldom found engaged in such jobs because these are ritually inferior and polluting. Similarly, occupations and untouchability are interlinked. All those castes and people doing menial jobs like scavenging, drum beating, tanning and so on are identified as untouchables by the rest of the society. But when asked to give their opinion as to the relationship between caste occupation and untouchability, the rural respondents, more than 55.0% did not agree that these are linked. Since this enquiry is value loaded, perhaps, they thought it better to abstain from such involvement. However, about 48.9 urban respondents have stated that there is a link between caste occupation and untouchability. The fact though most of them have been able to achieve occupational mobility now their past experience might have prompted them to say so.

The SCs and STs in the study have either no answer or not having any idea (68.8%) whether following a new occupation could eradicate the social stigma attached to a particular untouchable community performing menial and traditional job. Their

TABLE 33 : Opinion of SCs &amp; STs Regarding Occupation

Opinion	Yes		No		No opinion		Not applicable/No		Total		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Caste Occupation gives security	Rural	1401	54.26	866	33.54	303	11.74	12	0.46	2582	100.00
	Urban	220	29.42	246	32.88	218	29.15	64	8.55	748	100.00
	Total	1621	48.68	1112	33.39	521	15.65	76	2.28	3330	100.00
Is there any link between caste occupation and untouchability?	Rural	765	29.63	1421	55.03	12	0.46	384	14.87	2582	99.99
	Urban	373	49.86	301	40.25	1	0.13	73	9.76	748	100.00
	Total	1138	34.17	1722	51.71	13	0.39	457	13.72	3330	99.00
Whether new occupation eradicates social stigma?	Rural	455	17.62	203	7.86	1912	74.08	12	0.46	2582	99.99
	Urban	290	38.78	76	10.16	382	51.06	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	745	22.37	279	8.38	2294	68.89	12	0.36	3330	100.00
Is your present occupation hereditary?	Rural	2242	86.83	330	12.78	—	—	10	0.39	2582	100.00
	Urban	666	89.05	77	10.29	—	—	5	0.66	748	100.00
	Total	2908	87.33	407	12.22	—	—	15	0.45	3330	100.00
Is there any occupational mobility?	Rural	363	14.06	2198	85.13	—	—	21	0.81	2582	100.00
	Urban	423	56.56	262	35.02	3	0.40	60	8.02	748	100.00
	Total	786	23.60	2460	73.87	3	0.09	81	2.43	3330	99.99

experience as agricultural workers like any other community has not changed their ritual status in the villages. Therefore, majority of them chose to peddle the safe way. The largest among those who answered positively to this question are from urban areas. It is true that some of them have attained occupational mobility and come to the conclusion that medial occupation is one of the strong hurdles in the upliftment of SC population and eradication of untouchability practice. This particular question was not applicable to the ST population in the sample.

Apart from the present occupation followed by the respondents, in order to find out if there was any occupational mobility or change, questions regarding previous generation and occupation were also put. All other aspects covering traditional and service jobs, their desirability in continuing and other social linkages of occupations are based on the respondents' opinion. These details and mobility over a period of time in the occupations of SCs and STs is analysed.

The respondents in the study are mostly agricultural workers. A further distinction is made for convenience sake and to understand the implications of poverty. There are agricultural labourers in the study possessing some land and the cultivate it. The other group which does not own any agricultural land but work on others' land for daily wages also depends on agricultural/casual labour. Those who are agriculturists constitute 45.2%. Agricultural and casual labourers without land form 39.0% in the study. Only 13.3% households are having people who are holding salaried jobs. As expected those working as employees on monthly wages are living in urban centres. Table 34 refers.

The occupations followed by majority of the respondents show continuity over generations. They are, therefore, hereditary in nature in the sense, the same vocation is being followed by the respondents, their parents and their grand parents. Due to lack of opportunities, the SC downtrodden people are rooted in the rural parts of the State and are engaged mostly in unskilled jobs. As explained earlier not many families could depend on traditional occupations. Many naturally, have to seek alternative jobs. The alternative is mostly agricultural operations, which are handy and locally available. To this extent occupational pattern is static.

TABLE 34 : Occupation of the Household

Occupation	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Agriculturist	1309	53.72	—	55.18	1389	53.80	118	15.78	1507	45.25
Agriculture & central labourer	1059	43.45	63	43.45	1122	43.46	177	23.66	1299	39.01
Govt. employees/factory/mill worker	25	1.03	—	—	25	0.97	346	46.26	371	11.14
Private employee	12	0.49	1	0.69	13	0.50	61	8.16	74	2.22
Craftsman/business	22	0.90	1	0.69	23	0.89	31	4.15	54	1.62
Others	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	3	0.40	5	0.15
Not applicable-Unemployed	7	0.29	—	—	7	0.27	10	1.33	17	0.51
Do not know/No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	2	0.26	3	0.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

Barring about 56.5% among the residents of towns and cities, the rest of the SCs and STs have no occupational mobility. Over 73.8% SCs and STs on the whole are following the same occupation as that of their parents. The figures for rural respondents are as high as 85.1%. The reasons for this are obvious. The urban respondents being mostly educated were able to get jobs in government and other organisations perhaps, by availing the constitutional guarantees. But this is not true of the poor, often superstitious, helpless illiterate and ignorant SC and ST masses living in rural areas.

Under the barter system of economy the traditional rural social structure had 'village functionaries' the artisans, carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, washermen, barbers, scavengers, watchmen, priests and so forth. These different functionaries are further divided into clean and unclean castes and occupations. All these are identified as service communities. To name some of the inferior and polluting services such as skinning, tanning, chappal and shoe making, carrying death message, grave digging, scavenging and night-soil carrying. Different strata among untouchable communities carry out these services, so there is a social hierarchy within the group, some being more inferior and low than others.

The responses to question regarding traditional occupations in the village, shows that majority of the SCs and STs are not doing inferior jobs. By contrast through cross verification with caste-Hindu people, it came to light, that such menial jobs are being undertaken by the untouchables and they still retain their position as village functionaries. The SC respondents might have felt bad to identify themselves with such unclean jobs. To this extent it could be argued that consciously or unconsciously they have come to identify low caste status and inferior jobs as twins although earlier they did not see that there is a necessary link between the two.

Each one of these traditional occupations generally found among rural communities were referred to the respondents and their reaction is being discussed below :

In the villages, more than 77.0% SCs and STs are not doing the services of removing the dead animal for their Hindu patrons.

The 13.4% respondents who are engaged in this job belonged to a particular sub-caste namely, Madigas among SCs. Also about 9.6% rural STs have reported that they remove the dead animal. This may be due to the fact that tribals as they live in separate habitats, away from the villages may have to do such jobs by and for themselves.

Over 80.0% of the sample have replied that they are not engaged in the service of skinning the dead animal. But when the question of tanning comes only 2.1% are engaged in this vocation. While a large number of people claim that they are not engaged in such occupations, at least to some of them including STs, this question is not applicable.

The respondents in the study are not familiar with the services of chappal and shoe making. Over 89.0% have stated that they are not engaged in such jobs. There are some reasons for this. Due to large scale manufacturing units and scientific techniques of shoe and chappal making, the village functionaries have lost the market for their goods. Revolution in communication has introduced many attractive products at more cheaper rates to the villages. Therefore, the village functionaries engaged in such vocations had to adjust to the new situations. People engaged in shoe and chappal making are one such.

When it comes to services of carrying death message and grave digging the SCs in the study affirm that they are engaged in running such errands. Though not a majority, the 11.3% who undertake these services, infact reflects their social status. The people from downtrodden communities are looked down and are said to symbolise all undesirable and profane events. There is a practice in this part of the country that a person from untouchable community is generally sent to convey all undesirable news like death to the kinsmen of his caste Hindu patrons in and outside the village.

Introduction of posts and telegraphs, transport and communication facilities have to a large extent influenced the process of elimination of such traditional means of communication. However, grave digging still continues to be the occupational of these unfortunante people.

The SC families in the study engaged in such menial jobs consider it an obligation and value their relationships with upper caste people as a social bond which is something beyond the scope of present investigation. Along with this, their economic dependence on upper castes is so striking that they continue to render these traditional services partly for economic and partly for social pressure. They seldom think of the degradation that is attached to these services.

Less than 2.0% of the respondents are engaged in scavenging and night-soil carrying. While there is a ban on the latter, scavenging is still the occupation reserved for the untouchables. Table 35 refers.

In all the above service occupations, majority of the SCs tried to disassociate themselves from them. The only explanation could be the social stigma attached to such vocations. Investigators have observed that the very respondents who stated that they are not rendering such services were sometimes seen engaged in such vocations by the same staff. The fact was also confirmed by others in the villages.

About 75.8% SCs and STs in the study are seen engaged in traditional occupations. Traditional occupations here means all those vocations transferred from father to son. Only less than 11.0% are doing service occupations like scavenging and night-soil carrying, removing the dead animal, skinning and tanning, chappal and shoe-making and grave digging and conveying the death messages which are considered traditional service occupations.

The 20.0% who were able to discontinue such occupations have given several reasons for the same. Only 2.6% among them have stated that education helped them in discontinuing the traditional caste occupation. Only 1.1% households have some members of the family who migrated and thus discontinued the traditional occupation. For about 3.9% households the traditional occupation was uneconomic and hence the members discarded it. While an equal number discontinued traditional service because they could not learn the occupation of their parents. Those who are not interested in these services account for 2.1%. Only house-

TABLE 35 : Particulars of Traditional Occupations

Are you doing the services of	Yes		No		Not applicable		No response		Total		
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
Removing the dead animal	Rural	430	16.65	2023	78.35	126	4.88	3	0.12	2582	100.00
	Urban	18	2.40	566	75.66	164	21.94	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	448	13.45	2589	77.75	290	8.71	3	0.09	3330	100.00
Skinning the dead animal	Rural	360	13.94	2093	81.06	126	4.88	3	0.12	2582	100.00
	Urban	14	1.87	571	76.33	163	21.79	—	—	748	99.99
	Total	374	11.23	2664	80.00	289	8.68	3	0.09	3330	100.00
Chappal making	Rural	61	2.36	2392	92.64	126	4.88	3	0.12	2582	100.00
	Urban	9	1.20	576	77.00	163	21.79	—	—	748	99.99
	Total	70	2.10	2968	89.13	289	8.68	3	0.09	3330	100.00
Shoe making	Rural	20	2.36	2433	92.68	126	4.84	3	0.12	2582	100.00
	Urban	2	0.26	583	77.95	163	21.79	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	22	0.66	3016	90.57	289	8.68	3	0.09	3330	100.00
Conveying death message	Rural	371	14.37	2082	80.64	126	4.88	3	0.12	2582	100.01
	Urban	7	0.94	578	77.27	163	21.79	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	378	11.35	2660	79.88	289	8.68	3	0.09	3330	100.00
Scavenging	Rural	29	1.12	2424	93.88	126	4.88	3	0.12	2582	100.00
	Urban	14	1.88	571	76.33	163	21.79	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	43	1.29	2995	89.94	289	8.68	3	0.09	3330	100.00
Night-soil carrying	Rural	5	0.19	2448	94.81	126	4.88	3	0.12	2582	100.00
	Urban	3	0.40	582	77.80	163	21.80	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	8	0.24	3030	90.99	289	8.68	3	0.09	3330	100.00

holds indicated that the social stigma attached to [the traditional occupations made them to give up same.

As expected occupation mobility is more in urban centres than in rural areas. While only 42.1% are engaged in traditional occupations in urban centres, nearly 85.5% account for rural people. In the case of rural STs 90.3% are still found rooted in traditional occupations. Table 36 refers.

The general feeling regarding change of occupations is not encouraging. When an hypothetical question whether they *i.e.*, those who are following the traditional services would like to give them up was put only 20.6% responded positively. This group mostly includes all those following menial services occupations in rural areas. While 29.0% are not engaged in such vocations, as many as 48.4% are not ready to change their occupations. Most of the rural SC and ST people have lost all hopes of improving their present position in the society.

The working force in the SC and ST households of the study consists, generally, of 1-4 members. However, households with two unemployed members are a majority except in urban area, where mostly one earns for the entire family. All those respondents who live in rural areas and in whose house two members are employed (36.8%) are cases in which both husband and wife work. It is already noted that majority of the SC and ST families are usually nuclear units. We cannot expect more than two or three working members in such households. Very rarely we find households with 5 or more employed members contributing to the family economy. The 13 families in the study having no working members are mostly consisting of widow and infirm people depending either on their offsprings or relatives for their livelihood. The children and adolescents are also counted as workers whenever they were found earning. The main criterion used here is the contribution of each member to the family's income. Table 37 refers.

As regards the sex composition of the employed, the number of males exceed that of the females. In 53.7% SC and ST households only one male member is earning. This is as high as 61.8% for urban SCs and STs. While 96.0% households have earning

TABLE 36 : If Traditional Services are

Discontinued Reasons	Rural SC/ST		Urban SCs and STs		Total SCs and STs	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Education	3	0.12	86	11.49	89	2.67
No land	20	0.77	77	10.29	97	2.91
Migration	2	0.08	37	4.95	39	1.17
Not economical	84	3.25	49	6.55	133	3.99
Not interested/ Ill health	51	1.98	20	2.68	71	2.13
Social stigma	18	0.70	6	0.80	24	0.72
Change in economic activity	40	1.55	73	9.76	113	3.39
Could not learn	110	4.26	22	2.94	132	3.96
Not applicable	2210	85.59	315	42.12	2525	75.83
No response	44	1.70	63	8.42	107	3.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.98</b>
<i>Would you like to give up</i>						
Yes	225	8.71	202	27.01	427	12.83
No.	1762	68.24	86	11.49	1848	55.58
Not applicable/No traditional occupation	529	20.49	439	58.69	968	29.06
No response/do not know/Can not say	66	2.56	21	2.81	87	2.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 37 : Number of Persons Employed from each Household

Number employed	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs and STs		Urban SCs and STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One	395	16.21	16	11.03	411	15.92	303	40.50	714	21.44
Two	934	38.33	63	43.45	997	38.61	229	30.62	1226	36.82
Three	549	22.53	30	20.69	579	22.42	109	14.58	688	20.66
Four	284	11.65	21	14.48	305	11.81	60	8.02	365	10.96
Five	154	6.32	9	6.21	163	6.31	26	3.48	189	5.68
Six or more	111	4.55	4	2.76	115	4.45	18	2.40	133	3.99
No one is employed	9	0.37	1	0.69	10	0.39	3	0.40	13	0.39
Do not know/No response	1	0.04	1	0.69	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.06
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	99.99	748	100.00	3330	100.00

male members ranging from 1-8 persons, only 68.0% have earning lady members ranging from 1-8 and their number dwindles to 43.0% in urban centres.

The reasons for such large percentage of lady workers in rural areas are, generally, economic. The fact that agriculture is the principal field of gainful employment in villages, requires manual labourers in large numbers. This large scale participation of rural women folk is unique to the downtrodden community. We will rarely come across people from upper caste communities who have their women working as agricultural/casual labourers in such large numbers.

Instances of child labour are reported among the SCs and STs. The study has about 3.0% households in which one or two children in the age group of 5-10 years are employed. They usually help their parents by way of tending the sheep and goat or serve as farm or household assistant in upper caste households. Majority of them are boys.

As many as 16.0% households are having children in the age group of 11-15 years working in various jobs. However, 13.5% among them are having one member in the job. Due to poverty the respondents especially in rural areas, are forced to send their children to work at an early age. Many a times boys in this age group are hired in upper caste households as labourers under the 'jeetha' system. But many respondents refused to identify such labour as 'jeetha' or 'bonded labour' because of the fear of legal consequences.

About 30.0% of the sample households have one or two persons working in the age group of 16-20 years.

The representation of employed persons in the above three age groups is significant from the point of view of child labour and the problems of education. The figures show that 1/3 of the employed would be from the age group of 5-20 years. This means that so many children are denied benefits of formal education obviously for reasons beyond their control.

The bulk of labour force is drawn from the age group 21-25 years and 26-45 years. Naturally in every community the working

force will be from this strata. About 31.0% households have 1-2 members working in the age group of 21-25 years. However, majority come from those who are aged between 26-45 years. This amounts to about 80.0% households in the study. As many as 46.0% households have one person in job in this age group. Another 28.6% households have two, while 3.6% account for 3 persons in this age group.

As the age advances, the labour force shows a decreasing tendency. This is observed even while analysing the demographic features of the sample population. It has already been stated that very few survive beyond 55 years of age.

Nevertheless, the study shows that even in old age people from SC and ST communities are found working. About 24.0% households have workers aged between 46-55 years. Those who are aged between 56-60 years and are still working come from 9.0% households in the study. There are about 111 households (3.3%) with people aged beyond 61-70 years who continue to work. Another 30 households have people working even at the age of 71 or more years. Table 38 refers.

Changes in agricultural economy in the villages have brought in series of changes in the activities of rural people. Land ownership and holdings changed from one system to another. In the earlier days it was the king, later on the feudal monarchs or zamindars and now the people of dominant castes who own most of cultivable land in villages.

These structural changes in the pattern of ownership of land have undermined and to some extent displaced the traditional patron-client relationship. In this process the worst affected are the people from the downtrodden communities. While all other communities like Brahmins and Kshatriyas were able to achieve economic progress, the SCs and STs remained where they were and are exploited by the dominant castes in the villages.

As explained already, not all the SCs and STs could practice their traditional caste occupation. The only way out for them was to work as agricultural and/or casual labourers. To some extent green revolution came in handy for SCs and STs so that

TABLE 38 : Age Composition of the Employed

Age group Years	Number of employed																				
	One		Two		Three		Four		Five		Six or more		Not applicable		No response		Total				
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
5 to 10	Rural	70	2.71	12	0.46	1	0.04	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	—	—	2497	96.71	1	0.04	2582	100.00
	Urban	3	0.40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	745	99.60	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	73	2.19	12	0.36	1	0.03	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	3242	97.36	1	0.03	3330	100.00
11 to 15	Rural	409	15.84	66	2.56	3	0.12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2103	81.45	1	0.04	2582	100.01
	Urban	43	5.75	5	0.66	1	0.13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	699	93.46	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	452	13.57	71	2.13	4	0.12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2802	84.14	1	0.03	3330	99.99
16 to 20	Rural	652	25.25	185	7.16	33	1.28	5	0.19	—	—	—	—	—	—	1706	66.07	1	0.04	2582	99.99
	Urban	96	12.83	36	4.82	3	0.40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	613	81.95	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	748	22.46	221	6.64	36	1.08	5	0.15	—	—	—	—	—	—	2319	69.64	1	0.03	3330	100.00
21 to 25	Rural	719	27.85	104	4.03	15	0.58	4	0.15	—	—	—	—	—	—	1739	67.35	1	0.04	2582	100.00
	Urban	208	27.80	26	3.48	1	0.13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	513	68.59	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	927	27.84	130	3.90	16	0.48	4	0.12	—	—	—	—	—	—	2252	67.63	1	0.03	3330	100.00
26 to 45	Rural	1146	44.38	812	31.45	94	3.64	25	0.97	6	0.23	5	0.19	—	—	493	19.09	1	0.04	2582	99.99
	Urban	387	51.74	142	18.98	29	3.88	5	0.66	3	0.40	—	—	—	—	182	24.33	—	—	748	99.99
	Total	1533	46.04	954	28.65	123	3.69	30	0.90	9	0.27	5	0.15	—	—	675	20.27	1	0.03	3330	100.00
46 to 55	Rural	576	22.31	36	1.39	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1968	76.22	1	0.04	2582	100.00
	Urban	174	23.26	9	1.20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	565	75.53	—	—	748	99.99
	Total	750	22.52	45	1.35	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2533	76.07	1	0.03	3330	100.00
56 to 60	Rural	228	8.83	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2352	91.09	1	0.04	2582	100.00
	Urban	61	8.16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	687	91.84	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	289	8.68	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3039	91.26	1	0.03	3330	100.00
61 to 70	Rural	82	3.18	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2498	96.75	1	0.04	2582	100.00
	Urban	29	3.87	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	719	96.13	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	111	3.33	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3217	96.61	1	0.03	3330	100.00
71 or more	Rural	21	0.81	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2560	99.15	1	0.04	2582	100.00
	Urban	9	1.21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	739	98.79	—	—	748	100.00
	Total	30	0.90	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3299	99.07	1	0.03	3330	100.00

they are able to survive from total poverty. But looking from the point of view of their living and working conditions, one can hardly entertain any hopes of bright future for them. As landless agricultural labourers majority of them are dependent, perpetually, on the upper caste people. Added to this they are socially discriminated and degraded.

Social status in preference to economic status is the traditional model upheld by Hindu society. Almost all avenues of progress depend on the social status of the individual. Also social status is ascribed and not achieved. Since SCs and STs cannot aspire to change themselves through any means, their future is gloomy.

Apart from agriculture labour, the other avenue open to SCs and STs is government jobs. There are nearly 16.0% households in the study who depend on government services. But for the constitutional provisions, it would not have been possible for the people from these communities to get into salaried jobs. However, the pattern of such representation is confined to educated, urban dwelling SCs and STs. Even among government employees, not more than one or two account in each household in the study. But in the case of rural STs only three persons are in government service.

Only 50 (1.5%) households in the study have members working in factories or mills. Necessarily majority of them are the residents of towns and cities. The same pattern obtains for private employees also.

Those who are engaged in basket making and those working as craftsman constitute less than 3.0% of the total population. The craftsmen referred to here are mostly basket makers and leather workers. Those who are engaged in such trades are not to be mistaken for any kind of big businessmen. Most of them are petty traders.

The most astonishing fact under occupational structure of SC/ST households is that nearly 6% households have stated that one or two of the family members are bonded labourers (Jeetha). This practice is unique to rural area in the State. The Constitution provides for certain social security measures. Practice of untouch-

ability is prohibited, so also bonded labour. As an apology to the inhuman practices, even today in villages, these continue unabated.

The regional term for bonded labour is 'Jeetha'. While its definition differs from place to place and time to time the form is the same all over the State. The sum and substance of jeetha is that a person agrees to work on terms very often through oral promises—to circumvent the law—in the houses of upper caste patrons for a period for the debts incurred. But the period of service by and by becomes nearly endless. When one comes to know of the magnitude of this practice it will be startling as some SC households are stated to have been bonded labourers for generations.

Credit facilities for the weaker sections is a problem, because they are usually without land or any material possessions. Agriculturally dominant families in the village will spare no chance to exploit the vulnerable sections. The result is those SCs who go to borrow money from them will be invariably caught in the vicious circle of bonded labour and the cycle continues.

Instances have been recorded where certain people from the downtrodden communities (SCs) are working right from their childhood. There are also families in the sample in which children are engaged as bonded labourers for meagre sums.

Many-a-time the respondents preferred to evade giving real facts about jeetha. Their apprehension may be that this study would hamper their economic and social status—whatever they had. But after prolonged enquiry assuring enough secrecy information was divulged. There are one or two persons from each of the 6% households working as bonded labourers. From the statistics, it is clear that this institution is peculiar to rural areas of the State. Only 4 households in towns and cities have one or two members coming under this category. The same thing is true of tribals also. Table 39 refers.

This inhuman practice, next, only to untouchability cannot be eradicated without improving the economic conditions of the SCs in rural areas. This system has no parallel in human history since slaves were treated better with some humanitarian consideration as they stayed with their masters and many-a-times were also taken

TABLE II : Nature of work of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes

Number of working	Agricultural labourer		Casual labourer		Govt. Service		Factories/ Mills		Private Employee		Craftsmen		Jeeetha	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One	445	13.36	415	12.46	391	11.74	41	1.23	77	2.31	62	1.86	128	3.84
Two	505	15.17	671	20.15	107	3.21	5	0.15	12	0.36	5	0.15	38	1.14
Three	252	7.57	300	9.01	20	0.60	3	0.09	2	0.06	1	0.03	9	0.27
Four	123	3.69	157	4.71	3	0.09	—	—	1	0.03	1	0.03	2	0.06
Five	64	1.92	66	1.98	3	0.09	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—
Six	25	0.75	32	0.96	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Seven	10	0.30	12	0.36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eight or more	2	0.06	4	0.12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not applicable														
No one in this group	1903	57.15	1671	50.18	2805	84.23	3279	98.47	3237	97.21	3260	97.90	3151	94.62
Do not know/														
No response	1	0.03	2	0.06	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03
Total	3330	100.00	3330	99.99	3330	99.99	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	99.99

as family members. By contrast, the condition of bonded labourers is pathetic. They are subjected to all social evils. They are neither family members nor have access to all parts of the house. Longer they serve, greater the chances of accumulation of debt, sounds a strange contradiction but very true. Experience in the past shows, that law is not a panacea for such social evils in the society.

### **Duration of Employment**

The type of work done by majority of the respondents is predominantly agricultural and little dry land owned by them. These together indicate answer to the question regarding the duration of work in a year.

Agriculture in India continues to be seasonal. In areas where there is no perennial water supply, the farmers will not be engaged in work althrough the year. The State is gradually implementing river project plans to bring larger areas under irrigation. Due to stringent economic position of the farmers, till recently even the ground water resources were not fully tapped. The result is that some districts in the State due to poor rainfall and absence of irrigation facilities are constantly exposed to droughts and famines.

Even when all the agricultural lands and irrigation potentials are fully exploited agricultural labourers still will not have work throughout the year.

Those who are having work throughout the year in the study constitute 43.0%. This group essentially includes all those employed as government servants, factory and mill workers, craftsmen, and businessmen, and to some extent those who are both agricultural and casual labourers. The figures are as high as 76% in the case of urban residents.

Majority of the working force in this study are engaged only for 9 months in a year (48.0%). While about 33.0% stated that they get employment for only 6 months in a year. About 9.0% households have members employed only for 3 months in a year. Obviously, the last two categories consist of children, women workers and aged persons in the family. Table 40 refers.

The stratification of duration of employment into four groups in a year here, is an arbitrary one. No rationale is applied except the possible expectation of agricultural work.

TABLE 40 : Duration of work of the Employed

Number of persons	Although the year		Nine months		Six months		Three months	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One	865	25.98	506	15.20	489	14.68	175	5.26
Two	379	11.38	534	16.04	335	10.06	61	1.83
Three	112	3.36	250	7.51	123	3.69	28	0.84
Four	31	1.14	157	4.71	73	2.19	16	0.45
Five	15	0.45	68	2.04	27	0.81	4	0.12
Six	4	0.12	33	0.99	12	0.36	—	—
Seven	1	0.03	11	0.33	6	0.18	1	0.03
Eight or more	—	—	11	0.33	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable/No one in this group	1914	57.48	1758	52.79	2263	67.96	3042	91.35
Do not know/No response	2	0.06	2	0.06	2	0.06	3	0.09
Total	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	99.99	3330	100.00

In all parts of the country, till recently agricultural labour was, generally, outside the purview of labour laws. Even now, only few States have implemented some laws covering them. The very nature of employment in their case keeps them unorganised. Daily working hours are not defined, but they work generally from morning till evening, while the peak periods, it may be prolonged further. Except for lunch which is carried to fields, very little time is allowed for rest. Since it is seasonal, agricultural labourer seldom work continuously with a particular employer. Further, these who work as agricultural labourers are generally illiterate. The nature of job being manual, it is tiresome. After the day's hard labour, it is but natural for them to have rest in order to feel fit for next day's task. In such a situation they hardly find any tie to come together with fellow workers to discuss their common problems.

Under these circumstances, holidays and payment during holidays to agricultural and casual labourers in the study is something not applicable and an heard of. The hard hit and the most exploited are those who are working as 'Jeetha' labourers. While others have atleast the liberty of living with their kith and kin, these unfortunate people are deprived of even this.

But this is not say that others are enjoying benefits. One of the essential facilities 'rest', leisure against odds is not given to them. If one is sick, he cannot earn his bread since there is no payment on such days. Perhaps, this is the main reason why people beyond 55 years of age are less represented and some even at their advanced age are found working.

All those 15.1% who have replied as having paid holidays are mostly government employees, factory and mill workers living in urban centres. Of the remaining, nearly 59.0% are not getting payment for the days they are not working. This means that they seldom have any paid holiday. The 26.0% households under not applicable/no response category mainly consist of owner cultivators and self-employed workers like craftsmen and businessmen.

There is no set pattern regarding the caste of the employers. Almost all castes in the village engage the SCs and STs for agri-

cultural operations. Sometimes, scarcity of labour force acts as criterion in discarding social discrimination. The fact whether segregation is maintained at the work spot will be discussed later under the Chapter on untouchability. The severity of social stigma is diminishing at least in areas where labour is in great demand. However, the stigma continues for all those who are engaged in traditional menial service occupations.

The study has 45.2% households who employed by almost all caste people. The 34.6% households under not applicable category consist of craftsmen, businessmen, owner cultivators, government employees and factory/mill workers. On the whole, it is a healthy trend that less discrimination is shown to SC and ST workers. Table 41 refers.

As nearly 80.0% SC and ST households in the study are agriculture based, the commodities produced by them will be mostly agricultural products. In this case, is not exactly real. This is, however, not applicable to 16% government employees and of course, to large percentage of casual labourers. The 4.0% households representing artisans are mostly leather workers and basket makers.

### Unemployment

The country with its huge population approximating to 66 crores is having a large labour force. If the same is, properly used for the development of various productive processes, it can achieve alround progress perhaps in a much shorter period of time. But such planning requires an infra-structure to train skilled and semi-skilled labour force and adequate number of industries to absorb the labour force.

The situation in India is quite different. Unlike the west or other advanced countries, here nearly 80.0% of the population are eking out their livelihood through agricultural and live in rural areas. The industrial growth of the country is not encouraging owing to a variety of reasons. The available technical knowhow cannot absorb all the labour force and therefore, some people are forced to remain unemployed.

TABLE 41 : Caste of Employer of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Workers

Caste	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs and STs		Urban SCs and STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
To my own caste/tribe	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
To other scheduled caste	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.06
To other scheduled tribe	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
To other castes—										
Non SCs/STs	514	21.09	72	49.66	586	22.70	46	6.15	632	18.98
To other religions—										
Non Hindu	9	0.37	—	—	9	0.35	4	0.53	13	0.39
Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not applicable	607	24.91	29	20.00	636	24.63	518	69.26	1154	34.65
Do not know the caste of the employer	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
All castes	1290	52.93	42	28.97	1332	51.59	175	23.39	1507	45.26
No response	13	0.53	2	1.38	15	0.58	5	0.66	20	0.60
Total	2437	99.99	145	100.01	2582	100.01	748	99.99	3330	100.00

As indicated already, much of the cultivable land is not brought under irrigation wherever feasible, the result, agriculture is seasonal. All persons engaged in this sector are mostly under-employed. Large number of people in rural India are unemployed and there is disguised unemployment. Actual unemployment obtains elsewhere. The live registers of job seekers is mostly limited to educated population who seek mostly executive and white collar occupations. There are already views which consider the present system of education in the country as being responsible for the employment problems of educated youth. But no serious thought is yet given to change the value system prevailing in the society. Very rarely, the educated young men go to their villages to take up challenging jobs or self-employment. This trend has continued for decades.

Coming to unemployment problems of the SCs and STs in the study, it is very difficult for people from these communities to survive without work. This is very true in the case of rural population. The survey has only 113 households (3.4%) in which one or two members are unemployed. Generally, urban SCs and STs are facing this problem as 11 out of 113 households are from urban areas. Only 25 households in rural areas have one member unemployed. Strangely, no ST households member from rural areas of this survey is found unemployed.

As many as 24 households—23 from urban areas—have members who did not respond to this question. The fact that most of them are educated in apparent when only one household in the study has a member who gave lack of education as the main reason for unemployment.

As regards the duration of unemployment 11 households are stated to have one or two persons unemployed for the past 4 years. Among them 27 households have people without job for one year. While 14 households have members unemployed for 5-7 years and those who are without job for more than 8 years come from 10 households. Again no response cases account for 19 households. Naturally, all these categories are having more members who are residing in towns and cities.

Men rather than women are accounted for largely as unemployed. This study has 94 households in which men are reported to

be unemployed. However, there are only 33 households wherein women have no job. Though population, by sex, is not having much variance, due to customary practice Hindu family represents less girls than boys. A girl in the family is given away in marriage. Many-a-time women are not counted as unemployed because they will be engaged in household work. But as an apology to this, we have observed almost all women in the SC/ST households in the study, specially rural areas, were seen engaged in agriculture and allied occupations. Perhaps, this may be the reason why there is less representation of womenfolk under unemployed category.

Most of the unemployed persons in the study are in the age group of 18 and 30 years. But majority among them belong to the age group of 18-21 years. Another 15 households have one person each, who is unemployed and in the age-group of 31-50 years. Incidentally half of this age-group lives in rural areas.

Comparatively, the unemployed people are better educated. Out of 113 households having such persons 92 represent them as educated till high school and some with post-graduation. Only 18 households have illiterate unemployed persons. Another 8 households have people without job with primary education and 5 households have middle school educated unemployed persons. The largest group (60 households) in the category are with high school education, and most of them live in urban centres. The 16 households are having one or two college educated unemployed persons. There are another 14 households in the sample having graduate unemployed members. The households having this category are located in urban areas. The 2 post graduates without a job are between urban and rural areas.

The only unemployed person with technical education reported in the study is in rural area. Further, the four individuals with professional degree or diploma and still unemployed are all concentrated in urban centres.

One possible reason for the preponderance of educated unemployed in this study may be due to competition among the educated youth for white collar jobs under constitutional provisions. As the vacancies to be filled are based on the 'quota

system' (15.0% for SCs and 3.0% for STs) those who are aspiring to get into public service have to try their luck and should be prepared to face any eventualities. Perhaps, the moderately educated but unemployed in this study represent such group of persons.

A healthy sign is observed when majority of the unemployed say that they are ready to do any job. But 'any job' here cannot be taken in its literal sense. It was observed that the educated unemployed, as saying that they are ready to accept jobs suitable for their education.

Nearly 32 households have unemployed members preferring clerical jobs and 31 out of 32 are living in urban centres. The 11 households have unemployed members wanting professional jobs than are also from towns and cities. Similarly, the 3 households in which the unemployed preferred executive posts and the one family having unemployed persons preferring to do business is also based in urban centre.

### **Summary**

The occupational structure of the respondents is traditional in the sense that the present occupation being mostly agriculture, is practiced, through generations. However, side by side, "menial occupations" are also being carried out by them. Not all families among the SCs and STs are solely depending on menial service occupations.

Still the respondents in the study consider caste occupation as a security against unemployment. Perhaps, insecure economic conditions in the present occupations in these hard days have influenced them. Only urban residents think that there is a link between caste occupation and the practice of untouchability but the same is not true with majority of rural population.

Our respondents have no idea whether new occupations would eradicate untouchability. Being mostly agricultural labourer with no hopes of improving their social and economic status they are forced to believe that change would be for disaster. To confirm this over 73.0% SCs and STs on the whole are following the same

occupation as that of their parents. It is true that large number (70.0%) of SCs and STs are not doing inferior jobs but still some are carrying on such occupations. Nevertheless, the respondents in the study, even those who are engaged in menial jobs, are found trying to disassociate themselves from such occupations.

The working force of each households in the sample is mostly comprising of 2-4 persons. Among SCs and STs unlike upper castes even women are equally engaged in agricultural and other allied occupations. The main reason is their poor economic conditions. As usual the number of males exceed that of female employees. Instances of child labour have come to light in the study. About 3.0% households have children in the age group of 5-10 years working as agricultural or bonded labourers. Because of ignorance many children are found outside the school, working for small sums day in and day out.

The bulk of rural working population in the investigation is from the age group of 21-45 years. Some are found working even at advanced age. Apart from agricultural labour the other arena open for them to earn a livelihood is government service. Artisans, businessmen and self-employed persons are least respondents in the study.

Though legally abolished, the 'Jeetha' system still persists. Despite the fact that many families evaded giving particulars of such instances, 6.0% of the sample households have one or two members working under this category. This practice is rampant in rural areas of the State. No other reason than property could be given for this.

Except the government servants and factory or mill workers the rest in the study are not employed throughout the year. Considerable number roughly 1/3 (33.0%) are getting work for only 6 months in a year. Absolutely almost all agricultural and casual workers are not having paid holiday facility. For them, there is no security against sickness or other calamities.

Though segregation is rampant with regard to menial occupations, one desirable outcome of agricultural economy in the country is that no discrimination is made with regard to SC and

ST labourers as workers in the field. Almost all caste people employ SC/ST labourers.

Unemployment and rural SCs and STs do not go together. In order to survive, all able-bodied persons in the family have to work. The households having unemployed persons in this study are from urban centres. One significant point is that no one in the study from the rural tribal sample is unemployed. Non-availability of job as the principal reason was stated by the respondents, as cause of unemployment. Mostly, all those without job have stated that they are unemployed for the past four years or little less period.

As expected, unemployed men are great in number than women. Majority of unemployed persons are in the age-group of 18-30 years. Large number of them are educated and some of them are post-graduates and persons having professional degrees and diplomas. However, when asked to give their preference for jobs, many unemployed persons have stated that they are ready to do any job. This is rather a healthy indication.

# 5

## Financial Position

### 1. *Monthly Income of the household.\**

The financial position of the SC/ST households in the study is reckoned by referring to their monthly income. Particular mechanism in assessing the family earnings could not be adopted in the present study because the factors involved in knowing the financial position of a family are complex and undependable. Some socio-economic surveys have adopted certain methods like the consumption level of the family, available labour force, income and the liquidity position of each family.

Since the present study aims at probing into both the social and economic conditions of the SCs and STs in the State, no particular method was found feasible. The respondents were asked to give the approximate monthly or yearly figures either in terms of cash or kind. There is no way of knowing the real figures, though some cross-checking was possible. Thus it has to be taken on the face value.

A uniform procedure was adopted after the field work. All figures were converted wherever necessary to monthly family earnings. Irrespective of the nature of the jobs, and the mode of earnings, the amount has been represented on monthly basis. However, even this method of arriving at the family income is not without drawbacks.

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\* Household and family are used interchangeably.

In the first place, since the assessment is based on voluntary disclosure by the respondents, the method adopted cannot be foolproof. Secondly, there is no scope for verifying the authenticity of the figures given by them. The people in the rural areas of the State, especially, the poor and the downtrodden have little idea of income and other such details. Many respondents—agricultural/casual labourers were surprised to answer such enquiries. Any kind of accounts keeping appeared to be new to them, though they could always have a rough idea of requirements and hence expenditure. As far as possible a balance is struck between income and expenditure. It was also observed by the research investigators that some of the SC/ST respondents, both in rural and urban areas, deliberately understated the real earnings of the family. They were afraid that the outcome of the study may influence the government to change its policy which may harm in many ways. As the constitutional benefits are given only to those families whose monthly income is less than Rs.500/- this probably is one of the main reasons for evasive replies. Although Rs.500/- as monthly income in these days is hardly sufficient, the problem is seen by respondents in a different perspective.

It was possible to observe and estimate the authenticity of the figures given by the respondents. In the case of urban SC/ST respondents, the picture is distorted. In quite a number of cases, the urban dwellers evaded the actual income. Observation of living conditions, material possessions, land and livestock, consumption pattern and expenditure including indebtedness still will not help to arrive at objective assessment.

As already seen, many respondents are landless agricultural/casual labourers (80.0%). They also do not get employment throughout the year. In addition to these facts, the wages paid to them differ from one area to another depending on the nature of job, season, sex and age of the labourers.

Considering all these factors, the study took approximate monthly income for each household and included all the responses received under various categories. Accordingly, the lowest monthly income of the households is represented by Rs.50/- or less. However, the strata has no ceiling except for a group who have an income of Rs. 451/- or more per month.

About 73.0% households in the study have a monthly income of Rs. 200/- or below. Highest number of SC/ST households (27.9%) have an income of Rs. 101/- to Rs. 150/- per month. Another 20.5% households come in the group of Rs. 51/- to Rs. 100/- per month. It is astonishing to note that 9.2% SC/ST households are living on a monthly income of only Rs. 50/- or less. As the income slab rises, the percentage of households in each category dwindles. However, as expected households with higher level of monthly income are mostly concentrated in towns and cities. About 402 out of 874 households with a monthly income of Rs. 201/- or more are from urban areas.

Since almost all the families in the sample depend on the earnings of the members, the financial position and the number of persons employed are interlinked. Though other variables like the liquidity position, consumption pattern and commitment to other social contingencies are equally important. Quantitative analysis is not feasible for most of them. The fact that nearly 58.0% SC/ST households are having one or two persons working as many as 90.0% of the sample are illiterates, about 73.0 households are having a monthly income of Rs.200/- or less and some 47.0% SCs and STs are living in thatched huts, consuming mostly cereals like ragi and jowar, reveals the poor economic conditions of the SC/ST families. Nevertheless, the 16.0% government and public sector employees are in a sense, better placed with assured source of income. Incidentally, they are the people who have higher monthly income and good education.

Coming to rural ST households in the study nearly 90.0% of them are having a monthly income of Rs. 200/- or less. Only 5 rural ST families are stated to have Rs 251/-or more as monthly income. This explains the gravity of their problem. Table 42 refers.

It is pertinent to refer here to the problems connected with employment and wages of SC and ST respondents. Rooted in rural areas majority of them are dependent on agriculturally dominant caste groups in the villages. In the village surroundings, it is difficult for these people to make any headway economically. Although economic changes have taken place the weaker sections in the villages are always at a disadvantageous position. Wages are not standardized in the case of agriculture, with the result

TABLE 42 : Monthly Income of the Household

Income range	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Rs. 50 or less	264	10.83	6	4.14	270	10.46	37	4.95	307	9.21
Rs. 51-100	589	24.16	36	24.82	625	24.20	59	7.88	684	20.54
Rs. 101-150	766	31.43	41	28.27	807	31.26	123	16.45	930	27.92
Rs. 151-200	360	14.78	48	33.10	408	15.80	127	16.98	535	16.07
Rs. 201-250	224	9.20	9	6.22	233	9.02	23	3.07	256	7.69
Rs. 251-300	90	3.70	2	1.38	92	3.57	61	8.16	153	4.60
Rs. 301-350	52	2.13	1	0.69	53	2.05	97	12.96	150	4.50
Rs. 351-400	36	1.48	—	—	36	1.40	34	4.55	70	2.10
Rs. 401-450	43	1.76	2	1.38	45	1.74	138	18.44	183	5.50
Rs. 451 or more	13	0.53	—	—	13	0.50	49	6.56	62	1.87
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

justice is not being done and reasonable payment is not made to them. The nature of agricultural operations coupled with illiteracy prevents the workers from coming together to fight for both social and economic betterment.

## **2. Financial Institutions**

Almost every Finance Commission appointed by the government and studies carried out by various professional organizations in the country have emphasized the need for proper agencies to cater to the monetary requirements of the rural people. They have also remarked critically about the functioning of various local agencies like the money-lenders and the sick co-operative institutions. To some extent the policy of the government regarding the development of banking industry is to be blamed for this state of affairs.

Till recently, banks were concentrated only in urban centres. Credit to agricultural sector was negligible. The criteria for granting loans were mostly favourable to big landholders. The nature of advance involved complicated administrative procedures. These factors deterred the rural uneducated and poor masses from approaching banks and other public financial institutions.

Further, the policy of credit creation by the commercial banks was not by investment on agricultural and allied industries but by advancing credits to middlemen controlling marketing institutions. Banks in the past engaged in severe competition, lent money on higher rate of interests to tenders who used to purchase bulk of the produce during harvest season from the farmer and earned more profit. Eventhough the financial institutions in the country are better controlled now than before, the situation is not very encouraging.

Though the nationalised banks have now shifted their emphasis to rural upliftment by opening branches in rural parts of the State, and by creating easy terms for loans to people it is feared that the unhealthy growth and competition among the nationalised banking institutions themselves would lead to great loss.

The other institutions catering in some measures to the needs of rural people are the co-operative societies and the land Develop-

ment Banks. While the latter is restricted only to those who are landowners, the former is also limited to its members. Mostly the village co-operatives deal with agricultural and consumer requirements. Being democratically managed, they are known for mismanagement and inefficiency. The recent observations of the State government shows that nearly 80.0% co-operatives are running under loss and in spite of government's aid they are still in reds. Amongst the major points, the dominance of only some caste leaders and lack of ability to management along with the fluid State of affairs as to the financial position is concerned, are to be mentioned. The village co-operatives, mostly deal in short and long-term loans, agricultural implements, fertilisers, pesticides and some consumer goods. Apart from these the co-operatives have not enlarged their activities and have remained underworked.

The Nijalingappa Commission on the Co-operative institutions in the country though critically evaluated the working conditions of the co-operatives and passed severe criticisms on the working of these institutions yet predicted a bright future for them in the country. The Commission hastened to conclude that the future of rural India is in the hands of the co-operatives, 'co-operatives in India have failed but they must succeed.' But, if the experience in the past is of any indication this institution should be thoroughly overhauled both in terms of membership and finance. Co-operatives, it is said are those where non-co-operation starts. Yet another reason for the poor performance of co-operatives in the country is stated to be that the model is alien (borrowed from USA) and therefore, cannot fit into the local conditions. Being democratic in nature, the offices are dominated by political parties in alliance with the dominant caste groups in the village. All the facilities are being utilised by a handful of people. The poor and uneducated have no access to such facilities except to items like ration.

The only other agency for meeting the financial needs of the rural people is the money-lender. Here the term money-lender does not refer to the 'pawn broker' or those who are permitted to trade in money. (Other than banks and co-operatives). Investigations have revealed that the money-lenders in the village are mostly flourishing landlords and some agricultural families who in addition control the economy of the village by accommodating other farming families and labourers through advancing either

money or grain during times of necessity. But, such help is accompanied with exorbitant rates of interest. Often, the village money-lender manages to lay hands and grab whatever possessions the victim may have. Of late, these families have been able to usurp power under the new democratic set up by way of entering local institutions, the co-operatives and panchayats. In this way, the economically weaker sections can seldom hope to rise above because of the several forces working mostly with vested interests.

While some of the caste groups have been able to come out from the clutches of dominant castes and families in the villages by remodelling their economy and life style either through new occupations or by migration to urban centres, the unfortunate SC and ST rural masses are being exploited by the flourishing agricultural castes and communities. For them it is not only an economic problem but also a social one.

Monetary institutions like banks and co-operatives are in no way helpful to the SCs and STs in the State. It was made clear that banks are only a recent phenomenon in rural areas. For the SCs and STs living in rural parts of the State (80.0%) they are of no help. Majority of the rural people have not heard of either banks or any other public financial agencies. As already stated, banks require material security or surity before advancing any loan. Though in recent years many concessions are reported to have been shown to the SCs and STs, they are of no help to them, for obvious reasons. Being economically very poor the SCs and STs in the State do not possess either landed property or influence to get monetary assistance from banks. They also do not have the required education to understand the various implications of banking transactions.

There are 118 households in the present study, who have some knowledge of banking (3.5%). Out of this as many as 81 households are located in urban centres. Leaving about 72 respondents who once had bank accounts and borrowed money, the rest do not have any idea of banks. Apparently only 3 rural ST households are having members with bank accounts. This shows that they are more backward in matters relating a knowledge of financial institutions. These figures give a birds-eye-view about the financial status of SCs and STs in the State. Table 43 refers.

TABLE 43 : Number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Having

Bank Account	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Yes	34	1.40	3	2.07	37	1.43	81	10.83	118	3.54
No	2347	96.31	141	97.24	2488	96.36	634	84.76	3122	93.75
Past debtor	48	1.96	1	0.69	49	1.90	23	3.07	72	2.16
Do not know/No response	8	0.33	—	—	8	0.31	10	1.33	18	0.54
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	99.99	3330	99.99
<i>Membership in the Co-operative Society</i>										
Yes	123	5.05	12	8.28	135	5.23	51	6.82	186	5.59
No	2219	91.05	112	77.24	2331	90.28	660	88.24	2991	89.82
Past debtor	93	3.82	21	14.48	114	4.41	29	3.88	143	4.29
Do not know/No response	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	8	1.06	10	0.30
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

The position of the SCs and STs in the study is not any better with regard to the co-operative institutions. Here also less than 6.0% respondents (186 households) are members of such institutions. While large number of SCs and STs having bank accounts are concentrated in urban areas, majority of SC/ST members in co-operative societies are rural residents. This could be attributed to the nature of co-operative institutions. Generally co-operatives deal with both agricultural and essential commodities and perhaps the respondents are making use of the co-operatives for either purposes. Since large number of our respondents are landless agricultural/casual labourers, agricultural implements, pesticides and fertilizers are of little utility to them. This is perhaps one of the important reasons for the fewer SC and ST membership in co-operative societies.

All those SCs and STs in the study who are connected with banks have maintained ordinary accounts, and do not hold any office in such organisations. However, there are 9 office bearers from the SC community in the co-operative societies. Among them four are holding the office of the President followed by three Vice-Presidents. One is a Secretary and another a Treasurer. One glaring factor here is that no ST member is holding any office in co-operative society.

As regards the facilities availed from either banks or society, as expected only 5 respondents (4 urban) have availed credit facilities from a bank. The rest have drawn a blank. Regarding co-operative societies, most of them frequent for purchasing essential commodities (28.17%). This is common both with rural and urban SC and ST population. Those who went for agricultural needs have generally taken such benefits as improved seeds and fertilizers. It is a fact that the farmers in rural areas are familiar with the use of modern fertilizers and seeds rather than modern and improved agricultural implements and pesticides.

Figures in the case of those who have availed the facilities either from a bank or a co-operative society is on the higher side because of the government policy to supply essential commodities through co-operatives. In times of food shortage, to curb black-marketing and hoarding by profiteers and businessmen, co-operative societies are authorised and made responsible for the sale of

food grains. Only in such cases membership is not an essential pre-requisite to avail the benefits. It is possible, therefore, that some SCs and STs in the study might have availed the benefits. A significant point here is that the rural STs have seldom availed agricultural equipments available through the co-operatives. Table 44 refers.

### **Opinion on the Sources of Borrowing**

The respondents in the study though not familiar with the banking institutions consider it profitable to avail credit facilities from them. The same thing is true even of co-operative institutions. However, except from money-lenders, it is not easy for the SCs and STs to draw loans from either bank or co-operative society. Only 19.3% respondents said that it is easy and profitable to borrow from a bank. About 12.9% consider it easy and profitable to borrow from a co-operative society.

It is but natural that after having tested the desirability of taking loans from money-lenders only 11.6% SC and ST respondents say that it is easy and profitable. The reasons for such a large number of respondents considering it easy to borrow from money-lenders are very many. The simple terms of borrowing, easy accessibility, immediate payment and accommodative nature at the time of repayment might have influenced them in this regard. By and large these are true. But what displeases them is the high rate of interest charged by the money-lenders. In spite of this, the very conditions of SCs' and STs' position in the village forces them to borrow from money-lenders.

For majority of the SCs and STs in the study, friends and relatives are of no help financially. Many do not favour their relatives and friends to know their financial position. Though it may be profitable to borrow from friends and relatives, the element of prestige might be withholding such transactions. In some cases, though the SCs and STs are willing to be helped by relatives and friends, the class structure operates and very rarely relationship and friendship, circle cuts across different class and caste cleavages. Table 45 refers.

**TABLE 44 : Number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who have Availed a Facilities from Bank/Co-operative Society**

Facilities	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Loan	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	4	0.53	5	4.15
Agricultural implements	4	1.16	—	—	4	0.15	7	0.93	11	0.33
Fertilisers	37	1.52	2	1.38	39	1.51	7	0.93	46	1.38
Seeds	26	1.07	—	—	26	1.01	—1	0.13	27	0.81
Pesticides	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Essential commodities	597	24.50	80	55.17	677	26.22	261	34.91	938	28.17
Others	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	2	0.26	3	0.09
Not applicable	1747	71.69	61	42.07	1808	70.02	445	59.51	2253	67.66
Seeds, Fertilisers, essential commodities pesticides, implements	22	0.90	2	1.38	24	0.93	16	2.13	40	1.20
Do not know/No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	5	0.66	6	0.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 45 : Opinion Regarding Borrowing From

Opinion	Bank		Co-operative Society		Money lender		Relative		Friends	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Easy	29	0.87	42	1.26	1330	39.94	252	7.57	161	4.83
Profitable	1132	33.99	715	21.47	73	2.19	25	0.75	32	0.96
Easy and Profitable	644	19.34	432	12.97	387	11.62	298	8.95	279	8.38
Not easy	3	0.09	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not profitable	1	0.03	—	—	37	1.11	—	—	—	—
Neither easy nor profitable	908	27.27	1527	45.86	890	26.73	2142	64.32	2245	67.42
Cannot say	16	0.48	16	0.48	16	0.48	16	0.48	16	0.48
Do not know/No response	597	17.93	597	17.93	597	17.93	597	17.93	597	17.93
Total	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00

### 3. *Indebtedness*

Those SCs and STs in need of money approach the money-lenders who are usually their employers or affluent landlords in the village (38.7%). Banks and co-operatives account for lending money to only 6.0% respondents in the present study. Friends are favoured better than relatives and about 2.5% prefer all sources from which they could borrow. The reasons for large number going to money-lenders have been explained above. The condition of about 45.9% respondents who are not having any loan is not all that satisfactory. Being what are majority of them cannot raise any loan from any source. They possess almost nothing nor they can fall back on their relatives and friends. Table 46 refers.

Nearly half of those *i.e.*, 25.0% who have borrowed money have not exceeded Rs.500/-. This explains the credit worthness of the SCs and STs in the State. In majority of cases, the initial borrowing would be very much less and due to high rate of interest the principle amount would increase manifold. Once caught in the whirlpool of debts, one could hardly free himself. Often fresh loans are raised to clear the earlier commitments. Since their dealings are confined mostly to money-lenders with whom the rate of interest is very high, many a times total repayment of loan remains a dream. There are instances wherein the SCs and STs work as labourers on their own land after throwing away their rights for paltry sums of the money-lender. Extreme cases where even the lands given by the government are pledged and sold are noted by the investigators. Table 47 refers.

Credit is obtained mostly on faith. There are 33.3% SC and ST respondents who have borrowed money on faith. Another 10.9% have pledged their lands as security against loan. While 2.4% respondents have executed promisory notes, the percentage of other items of security like house, jewellery and household articles is very negligible. The preponderance of those who have drawn loans on faith reflects their low economic condition. The amount borrowed and the security offered are inter-related. Those who borrowed small sums account for half of the people with credits. At the same time those who have not offered any security also constitute an high percentage. Perhaps the 10.0% respondents

TABLE 46 : Source of Borrowing

Source	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Bank	47	1.93	2	1.38	49	1.90	30	4.02	79	2.37
Co-operative Society	88	3.61	16	11.03	104	4.03	31	4.15	135	4.05
Money-lender	1064	43.66	53	36.55	1117	43.26	172	22.99	1289	38.71
Relatives	15	0.62	3	2.07	18	0.70	6	0.80	24	0.72
Friends	42	1.72	—	—	42	1.63	22	2.94	64	1.92
Others	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.08	13	1.73	15	0.45
Not applicable/No loan	1019	41.81	61	42.07	1080	41.83	451	60.31	1531	45.98
Land owner—for those who are land holders	95	3.90	4	2.76	99	3.83	6	0.80	105	3.15
Bank/Co-operative Society/Money lenders	64	2.63	6	4.14	70	2.71	16	2.13	86	2.58
No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	2582	100.01	748	100.00	3330	99.99

• TABLE 47: Amount Borrowed by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as Loans

Amount borrowed (in Rs)	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Rs. 100 or less	115	4.72	19	13.10	134	5.19	16	2.13	150	4.50
Between 101 and 200	186	7.63	18	12.40	204	7.90	23	3.07	227	6.82
Between 201 and 300	192	7.88	9	6.21	201	7.78	19	2.54	220	6.61
Between 301 and 400	100	4.10	3	2.07	103	3.99	20	2.67	123	3.69
Between 401 and 500	183	7.51	11	7.59	194	7.51	37	4.93	231	6.94
Between 501 and 1000	357	14.65	12	8.28	369	14.29	78	10.42	447	13.42
Between 1001 or more	279	11.45	12	8.28	291	11.27	103	13.78	394	11.83
Not applicable—No loan	1021	41.90	61	42.07	1082	41.92	450	60.18	1532	46.01
No Response	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	2	0.26	6	0.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

stated to have pledged their lands have borrowed more than Rs. 500/-

Therefore, it could be inferred that when the SCs and STs in the study are advanced money merely on faith, their position will be awkward and they will necessarily be exploited by their financiers. Though the borrowed sum is very small they will be perpetually indebted because the system is such that their manual labour which they pledge to creditors is so much under-rated. Table 48 refers.

Socio-religious reasons prevail over all others when we analyse the purposes of borrowing. Most of the SCs and STs in the study (43.2%) have borrowed money to meet certain social obligations like marriage and death. This clearly indicates the overwhelming influence of tradition over the SCs and STs. To some extent these figures substantiate the fact that the lower strata of the society is perhaps more prone to traditional values. At one end they have no savings since many of them have hand to mouth existence. At the other end they have to fulfill all social obligations for which spending become inevitable. Therefore, they are forced to go to money-lenders. Only 4.5% SCs and STs have drawn loans for purposes of land improvement. Those who have borrowed for purchasing bullocks and implements account for only 1.5%. In the case of 2.6% respondents debts were incurred over house construction and purchase of site. There are 11 households in the sample having members who borrowed money to educate their children. For 23 respondents ill-health of family members was the main reason to borrow. Table 49 refers.

From the above analysis it could be seen that the SCs and STs borrowed and spend money mostly towards meeting social and religious obligations and such occasions necessitate perhaps small amounts. Since they have no resources other than labour, repayment of loans becomes difficult and indeed a hard task. Many of them are striving hard to meet even the interest part of their loans and the clever landlords who are generally their financiers manipulate the poor SC and ST debtors for their interests.

A look at the time scale of borrowing shows that majority of SC and ST debtors (about 31.6%) have taken loans during the

TABLE 48 : Security Given Against Loans

Security given	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Land	315	12.93	13	8.97	328	12.07	38	5.08	366	10.99
House	9	0.37	—	—	9	0.35	15	2.00	24	0.72
Jewellery	3	0.12	1	0.69	4	0.15	1	0.13	5	0.15
Faith	877	35.99	56	38.62	933	36.13	179	23.95	1112	33.39
On demand pronote	69	2.83	3	2.07	72	2.79	10	1.33	82	2.46
Jeetha/Salary	16	0.66	—	—	16	0.62	2	0.26	18	0.54
Household articles	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12
Not applicable-No loan	1028	42.18	64	44.14	1092	42.29	439	58.69	1531	45.98
Land/Site/Faith/On demand pronote	14	0.57	3	2.07	17	0.66	9	1.20	26	0.78
No response	102	4.19	5	3.45	107	4.14	55	7.35	162	4.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.98</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

TABLE 49: Purpose of Borrowing

Purpose of borrowing	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SC & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Land improvement/ Digging well	122	5.01	12	8.28	134	5.19	19	2.55	153	4.59
Business	3	0.12	—	—	3	0.12	3	0.40	6	0.18
Purchasing bullocks & implements	47	1.93	1	0.69	48	1.86	5	0.66	53	1.59
Marriage/death, domestic difficulties	1157	47.48	67	46.21	1224	47.41	217	29.02	1441	43.27
Ill health	17	0.70	1	0.69	18	0.70	5	0.66	23	0.69
House construction/site purchasing	51	2.09	2	1.38	53	2.05	36	4.82	89	2.67
Education of children	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	6	0.80	11	0.33
Others	2	0.08	1	0.69	3	0.12	2	0.26	5	0.15
Not applicable-No loan	1022	41.94	61	42.07	1083	41.94	448	59.89	1531	45.98
No response	11	0.45	—	—	11	0.43	7	0.93	18	0.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

past three years. For about (13.6%) have taken loans during the past three years. For about 13.6% SC and ST respondents, the loan was contracted between 4-6 years back. The rest, about 6.0% are having outstandings loans for the past 7 or more years.

Generally money-lenders will not allow loans to be carried over for long. It is said that the SCs and STs and in the study have borrowed relatively small sums from money lenders and this tallies with the pattern of duration of outstandings. Perhaps, those in the category of 7 or more years are SCs and STs who have pledged their lands and are not in a position to repay the amount borrowed.

Coming to the rate of interest, SC and ST debtors are paying as many as half of them exorbitant interest which is often 19.0% or more. Another 12.0% SC and ST debtors are paying interests at 10-18%. A very negligible (1.1%) are among those paying 1-5% interest. The range between 6-9% is accounted 4.9% SC and ST respondents. Nevertheless, about 6.4 SC/ST debtors are not paying any interest for their loans. This is not to say that these 6.4% are blessed. Majority of them are working for their benefactors without being compensated for their labour. Table 50 refers.

The representation of high percentage of interest in the above Table is not something strange because majority are seen borrowing from money-lenders without giving anything as security. Naturally such loans would be given at a high percentage of interest.

The poor economic condition of SCs and STs in further emphasised when we look at the repayment structure. About 42.0% SC and ST debtors, out of 55.0% have stated that they could not repay anything so far. Only 4.3% respondents were able to clear one-fourth of the amount borrowed, while 2.3% debtors have cleared half the amount and about 1.4% have been able to clear three-fourth of their debts.

The high percentage of interest rates, the poor liquidity conditions of the SCs and STs in the sample and the unfavourable repayment terms of the money-lender makes the SCs and STs to remain perpetual debtors.

TABLE 50: Rate of Interest on Loans

Interest	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
No Interest	156	6.40	26	17.93	182	7.05	32	4.27	214	6.43
Between 1 and 3 %	4	0.16	1	0.69	5	0.19	7	0.93	12	0.36
Between 3 and 5 %	7	0.29	3	2.07	10	0.39	11	2.55	29	0.87
Between 6 and 9 %	111	4.55	9	6.21	120	4.65	45	6.02	165	4.95
Between 10 and 14 %	171	7.02	20	13.79	191	7.40	84	11.23	275	8.26
Between 15 and 18 %	107	4.39	3	2.07	110	4.26	19	2.54	129	3.87
19 % or more	734	30.12	10	6.90	744	28.81	62	8.28	806	24.20
Not applicable—No loan	1021	41.90	61	42.07	1082	41.91	449	60.03	1531	45.98
In kind	45	1.85	1	0.69	46	1.78	—	—	46	1.38
No response	81	3.32	11	7.59	92	3.56	31	1.14	123	3.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>98.99</b>

**Summary**

In determining the financial conditions of the SC and ST respondents the study largely depends on the monthly earnings and the extent of indebtedness of the household members. Information on these items are ascertained from the respondents and no quantitative figures are available other than this. In fact to depend on the assessment of people themselves is not a foolproof technique but in the absence of any other method, this is considered as more authentic. Nevertheless, sufficient care has been taken to verify the statements and the figures in relation to the respondents' living conditions, housing pattern, family expenditure and the nature of employment. By and large the test applied has certified what the respondents said as fairly correct.

On the whole, the economic condition of the respondents, especially the rural dwellers, is not encouraging. Almost all able bodied member in the household, as stated in the earlier Chapter, are found engaged in earning. Most of the households have two to four working members. But in terms of their monthly contribution to the family income, it is very low. As many as 77.0% households are said to have Rs. 200/- per month or below as income, among them 14.0% have only Rs. 50/- or less monthly income.

As expected households in urban centres are relatively better placed than their rural counterparts. Apparently many of them are government officials with fixed salary. But the situation regarding the 96.0% ST households is alarming. The reasons for the very low monthly income of the families in the study is the high percentage of agricultural labourers who are being exposed to exploitation by other caste people and vagaries of nature.

The SCs and STs in the study have no other place to go during times of economic distress except to the money-lenders. Though economically weak, about 45% among them are able to borrow, hence theoretically not indebted. But many among them have expressed that though they are in need of money and ready to borrow, there is no one to lend them some money. Since large percentage of them are not having lands or material possessions

to give security the money-lenders refuse to advance loan as it would be risky for them.

Banking and other public financial institutions are not within the reach of majority of the respondents. The very policy of banking institutions in the country for advancing money as loan eliminates people from downtrodden communities from making use of such facilities. The elaborate administrative and bureaucratic procedures are a case in a point. Further, lack of knowledge due to mass illiteracy have all combined in preventing the SCs and STs in the study from approaching such financial institutions.

Co-operatives and land development banks are in no way better than commercial banks. Many co-operatives are sick due to mismanagement and this is the phenomenon all over the State. The type of help extended is mostly helpful to farmers having agricultural lands. The poor SCs and STs in the villages cannot think of entering the competition to the offices of such agencies and therefore, avail only such facilities as essential commodities. Only 3.5% respondents in the sample have stated that they have a bank account and most of them are urban dwellers. The figures for those who are members in co-operative societies account for less than 6.0% SC and ST households in the study.

Though the people in this study consider it profitable to borrow money from banking institutions, only a small percentage have stated that it is easy. Kinship and Friendship circle has not been favourable to them to fall back during times of distress. While the social relationships follow caste and class lines some of them are found to be reluctant to go to their relatives and they do not want their kinsmen to know their financial condition.

Generally the amount needed by the SCs and STs in the study is small, mostly not exceeding Rs. 500/- required for the purposes of meeting urgent social obligations. Very rarely amounts borrowed as loan are found to be used for developmental purposes. These sums are obtained from money-lenders on faith. This indicates the vulnerable conditions in which most of the respondents are placed. By advancing small sums on faith, the agriculturally dominant rural families hold the downtrodden to ransom. The money-lenders never allow the loan to be carried over for more than 3-4

years, unless they are protected by an immovable security like land and the rate of interest charged is as high as 19.0% or more, for half of those SCs and STs who are debtors.

If these unfortunate people are to be relieved from the clutches of money-lenders and redeemed from poverty and debts, concerted efforts on the part of government are essential. Almost all concessions and welfare schemes so far implemented are channelised through the administrative machinery which is not above defects. Democratic institutions like the Panchayati Raj and local-self government are all in the hands of agriculturally and numerically dominant castes, whose interests will be jeopardized if the conditions of ignorant and illiterate SC and ST masses are improved.

The interests of dominant castes are banking on the cheap labour of the rural SCs and STs. It is too much to expect office bearers from the upper castes in the local-self governments and other such administrative bodies to implement the welfare schemes in the interests of the SCs and STs. By contrast, these office bearers with power under the new type of administration at village level were able to put down many attempts of the downtrodden to come up. The perpetual dependence of the SCs and STs firstly for livelihood and sometimes shelter as social and economic dependence leads to degradation and discrimination. If these have to be tackled satisfactorily, a different administrative set up which can help to bring about modifications is needed.

All efforts calling for a humanistic approach towards the downtrodden have failed mainly because of the political set up and the present system of administration. Therefore, if the government's intention of upliftment of the weaker sections is sincere, the infra-structure of Indian villages should be thoroughly modified. Agencies, other than local or non-local bodies should be made responsible for implementing the constitutional benefits. To be precise, the economic position of the SCs and STs should be strengthened as quickly as possible. Then only there will be some scope for independence and development on the part of these people.

As a first step proper control should be exercised in addition to legal enforcement. As more than 80.0% SCs and STs are

agricultural/casual labourers the wages in this field should be standardised. Side by side land acquired under the land reforms policy should be in the custody of the government and only those poor and SCs and STs willing to work must be rehabilitated over such surplus lands. The present system of granting lands to the landless is no solution because uneconomic land holdings will definitely come to market. The first to suffer would be the SCs and STs. Therefore, usufructuary rights and not private ownership is the solution to the problem of SCs and STs. When once the problem of filling the belly is solved, other changes would come about automatically as observed in the case of some non-brahmin communities who were once both socially and economically low placed and suffered discrimination. That the Nadars of Tamil Nadu in recent years have been able to raise both social and economic status with the help of economic stability is a case in point.

The recent extension of banking facilities to the rural people of Karnataka is not a solution to the problem. In fact it works against the interests of the weaker sections in the villages. The agriculturally dominant castes with the help of financial assistance from such banks will be better placed to control the illiterate and poor SC and ST population. Though desired to be in the interests of rural upliftment, the new economic opportunity will destroy a section of the rural population caught in the vicious circle. Since the administration in the country is usually biased with personal favouritism, nepotism, caste and communal considerations, those represented at the low strata of administrative machinery will never get their share. Therefore, the study recommends, for a change in the rural infra-structure.

The recent ordinances promulgating moratorium on rural indebtedness and the ban on bonded labour will not, however, provide permanent solution but on the other hand they can open up a new era of exploitation of the weaker sections. In the absence of alternate institutions or suitable action and follow up measures to protect the financial vulnerability of SCs and STs, who in fact constitute the bulk of the people covered under the scheme, they will be the worst affected group under the new situation. Law is not the only panacea for all the social and economic ills of the Indian society.

Mere sanctioning of loans, granting house sites, agricultural lands, educational concessions, employment opportunities and so forth will not solve the problem since majority of the SCs and STs are not in a position to safeguard such government assistance against the economic ills and evil designs of the dominant communities.

Along with providing all fringe benefits greater stress must be laid on education and rehabilitation of the SCs and STs as early as possible.

## Politicization, Panchayat Institutions and Awareness of Leadership

Unlike in the past, the activities of modern nation States have become more complex be that in trade, administration or international relations. In the past the chief concern of the State—usually monarchy—was to maintain internal security and fight external aggressions, which were very frequent. The modern trend ■ towards having a democratic type of Govt. where, in theory, the supreme power lies in the hands of people at large. Various types of governments are experimented under this system. Also, it should be admitted that the present day administration requires a complex machinery.

India accepted democratic type of Constitution by providing for the three organs Legislature, Executive and Judiciary each with defined role to play in the country's politics. It is a well known thing, that the representatives elected by the people make laws and pass it on to the executive to implement the same. Judiciary acts as an umpire in all matters where disputes arise either between people and government or between the executive and the legislature. The decision of court is accepted by both parties as final.

Under democratic type of government, as indicated already the law makers are people's representatives who are elected by the people according to the guidelines enshrined in the Constitution at frequent intervals. Provisions also obtains to recognise certain political parties which constitute important organs in all democratic Constitutions. But all these work more efficiently in countries

where the people are educated, politically conscious and have experience of efficient administration. Therefore, it comes back to people to choose their representatives who are both responsive and responsible.

A healthy administration in democracy depends upon the political awareness of people. A look at the Indian performance will reveal a disappointing scene insofar as the political activities are concerned. Its effects are echoed in the administration of the country. It is popularly believed that elections and political activities in the country are run as a show only a month or two on the eve of elections. People also consider voting as something like a burden and the moment they cast their votes they feel redeemed. This is often due to the cross-pressures exerted by different factors. In fact, the voter is pulled and pushed in different directions.

The main feature of the present day India election system is the scanty treatment given to the ideological aspects of parties. Seldom party manifestoes are discussed in election meetings. Every such meeting is full of promises and bargains. Very often supporters of the candidate resort to character assassination and use all tactics to defeat the rival by adopting foul means. It is a common scene that people at large discuss the credentials and the work done by the candidates than the parties to which they belong.

Parties and candidates have found it expedient in catering to the needs of dominant groups undermining the validity of good administration. It is also alleged that to survive in office and get re-elected, the party in power, uses all mechanisms, including corrupt practices. The situation is not different in the case of other political parties. None of them spared the remotest chances of appealing to the masses using all kinds of influences like, caste, community, language, area and so forth. Considering the number of election petitions brought before various courts, the reasons for challenging will throw light on such practices. No party is free from this. That the candidates belonging to dominant castes in the area are set up against each other is common knowledge in election. But the irony is that all parties swear in the name of secularism.

The ideal of Dr. Ambedkar when he demanded communal representation for SCs was different than the present system of reservation of seats in different political offices right from Panchayat to Parliament. Due to political situation prevailing in the country, his demand could not be realised though the then British government had conceded. In fact Ambedkar tried to revive the earlier demands, but in a refined way, he succeeded in introducing special provisions for SCs and STs.

The only provision which is fully implemented in letter and spirit as stipulated in the Constitution of India, to the benefits of SCs and STs, is the political reservation. The main objective of this reservation facility is to enable the downtrodden to send their representatives in turn they would act as their spokesmen in the several political bodies. Actually the spirit of Constitution has been diluted by the way in which such representatives are elected. The mode of selection and election of candidates is the same as of others. All the parties admit members from SCs/STs and set them up as candidates. A Scheduled Caste candidate though not from a particular constituency can get himself elected from any reserved constituency. Secondly, the SC/ST candidates are elected not merely by the SC/ST votes in the area, but by the total electorate and votes pooled in the constituency.

Those who get elected will not have any obligations to the SC and ST electorate as such. Further, since the parties set up candidates of the same caste, very often, the SC/ST candidates have to lose to their own castemen. Such contests breed enmity among the candidates. This happened in the case of no less person like Ambedkar who, after resigning from the Union Cabinet, when contested as an independent candidate, one of his close associates defeated him. One thing is clear from this study that the SCs and STs in the State are not united, nor are they politically conscious.

As many as 98.0% respondents in the sample are not members of any political party. As stated earlier, elections in the country are stage managed. Political parties become active only on the eve of election. There is no link between the voter and the party in between elections. Often people are huddled to voting booths for exercising franchise. Many cannot remember even the candidate's name for whom they voted.

Voting pattern in rural parts of the State, it is observed, in most cases, depends on the village headmen, religious/spiritual and caste leaders. Influence of big landlords cannot be under-estimated. In fact, many SC/ST respondents did say at the time of interview that they vote according to the advise of the village headmen. Also to some extent the traditional structure of the family influence the behaviour of the members. The authoritative position of the head of the household—who is generally the eldest male member—will go a long way in influencing the rest of the family members. Another important character of traditional family is that women are generally guided by their menfolk in all such aspects. They being mostly confined to work homes and fields, less educated, have limited or no knowledge of political activity of the nation. Compared to women of other castes in any village, women from SC/ST communities are exposed since they work outside the family. But they are found as subservient as any other, ignorant, illiterate and superstitious womenfolk in these matters. They follow the traditional values and are guided by their menfolk. Considering all these factors, the political parties often exploit the situation in capturing votes, by exploring and tapping some leaders in the village.

When the question of support and sympathy comes nearly 98% have mentioned Congress (R) as their option. This is amply supported by the figures when about 73.3% SC/ST respondents stated to have voted the same party in the last general election (1971). The parties other than Congress (R) favoured marginally when compared to others are Congress (O) and Communist Party. Table 51 refers.

Asked to specify why the respondents voted the party in question, it was noted that the Congress Party has helped them right from the days of freedom struggle and it continues to provide them with benefits. Further according to them other party candidates have approached them rarely and therefore, have no knowledge of them.

Strangely the Republican Party of India formed to cater to the welfare of the SCs and STs has not made any impact in 1971 general election. The Republican Party of India was founded by Ambedkar and has now very few SC/ST members. Perhaps events

TABLE 51 : Political Participation of SCs & STs

Party	Sympathy/support						Party Voted in 1971 Elections					
	Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Congress (R)	2545	98.57	704	94.12	3249	97.57	1969	76.26	473	63.24	2442	73.33
Congress (O)	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06	51	1.98	13	1.74	64	1.92
Janasangh	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06	25	0.97	5	0.66	30	0.90
Communist	—	—	6	0.80	6	0.18	39	1.51	4	0.53	43	1.29
Republican	1	0.04	8	1.06	9	0.27	—	—	31	4.15	31	0.93
Swatantra	—	—	—	—	—	—	29	1.12	1	0.13	30	0.90
Socialist	—	—	3	0.40	3	0.09	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12
DMK/ADMK	—2	0.08	2	0.26	4	0.12	—	—	9	1.20	9	0.27
Others	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03	14	0.54	20	2.68	34	1.02
No response/												
Not applicable	32	1.24	22	2.95	54	1.62	451	17.47	192	25.66	643	19.31
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.98</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

earlier and after independence have helped Congress Party to win the support of masses. Further when the manifesto comes, most of the guidelines enunciated by other political parties are found to be adopted by the ruling party. Also, leaders from SC/ST communities are absorbed in Congress. When a national party in power adopts such measures it is but natural to expect immediate results than all other aspiring political parties.

Participation in party activities requires certain amount of time and money. Since it is not always rewarding, those who have resources and time would like to invest the same for better and rewarding purposes. Those who do not possess these two basic elements cannot engage themselves in politics. It is already noted that bulk SCs and STs are very poor and are spending most part of their time in eking out their livelihood. It is meaningless then to think of them to be active political participants. The small number are only members and only one is reported as a president of the party of the area. Two are secretaries while three have stated as convenors. These posts are held at the lowest level of the party at taluka or village level. Beyond this the study did not register any active party members and workers among SCs and STs.

It is always not necessary that one should be a member of a political party and then only participate in its meetings, processions, rallies and so forth. It is a fact that the purpose and method of organising such meetings is confined to only some days, that too on the eve of elections. However, neither the SC/ST respondents nor their household members by and large, took part in various activities of the political party. Only about 4.9% respondents in the study have stated to have taken part in processions and public rallies. Another 3.6% respondents have mentioned that they attended meetings and morchas in addition to processions and rallies. Considering their economic and social conditions they have very little time and resources for political activities.

Although it is possible for all the people to directly involve themselves in political activities it may not be difficult for them, atleast to come in contact with such leaders. It is fact that they are approached by party leaders mostly during election times. The leaders may be from SC/ST communities or others. When compared to party membership here the respondents in the study are

better placed for nearly 48.0% said that they know one or the other party leaders be that an MLA/Ex. MLA, MP/Ex. MP or Minister/Ex. Minister.

While about 13.4% of respondents said that they know MLA/Ex-MLA, 11.5% have stated that there are Ministers/Ex-Ministers whom they know. Nevertheless, little over one half of respondents in the sample have no knowledge of any such member. This is a significant fact viewed from the point that political reservation is the only constitutional provision which is fully implemented in the cases of SCs and STs. Table 52 refers.

Political leaders—both SC/ST and others—by and large, according to the respondents, are mostly selfish and unmindful of SC/ST problems. In fact, they have stated that all the benefits are taken away by such leaders and their own kinsmen leaving the lot of SCs/STs where they are. This is, of course, a strong allegation against the entire political set up in the country. The feelings of the SC/ST population in villages is one of great concern to the research staff. According to the people each general election brings politicians to them with full of promises and stage-managed programmes. Once elections are over, the elected leaders return to people perhaps after five years. Very often it was reported by research staff that they had to convince the poor downtrodden in this regard as the SCs/STs were seen agitated over political leadership. Table 53 refers.

### **Village Panchayat**

‘Decentralisation of power is one of the essential characteristics of Democracy.’ Panchayat Raj aims at making democracy real, bringing the millions into the functioning of democracy, since it is here that the individual family in the remotest village is linked up with the government at the Centre. Thus Panchayat Raj works for the transfer of power and authority in bringing about a change in outlook among the rural people. This institution being responsible for local self-government is concerned with the administration of two or more villages.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Parvathamma, C (1975) 'Panchayati Raj and Weaker Sections' Paper presented at the Seminar on Panchayati Raj; retrospect and prospect, NICD, Hyderabad.

TABLE 52 : You Know Your Caste or other Caste

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
M.L.A./Ex. M.L.A.	333	13.66	28	19.31	361	13.98	88	11.76	449	13.48
Minister/Ex. Minister	298	12.23	3	2.07	301	11.66	78	10.96	383	11.50
M.P./Ex. M.P.	14	0.57	—	—	14	0.54	2	0.26	16	0.48
MLA·Ex. MLA/MP/Ex. MP	8	0.33	—	—	8	0.31	13	1.73	21	0.63
MLA·Ex. MLA/Minister- Ex. Minister	216	8.86	1	0.69	217	0.40	111	14.84	328	9.85
MLA (Ex ) Minister (Ex.) and MP (Ex.)	28	1.15	—	—	28	1.08	258	34.49	286	8.59
Political leaders	52	2.13	—	—	52	2.01	21	2.81	73	2.19
Do not know any political leader	1481	60.77	113	77.93	1594	61.74	173	22.61	1763	52.94
No response	7	0.2	—	—	7	0.27	4	0.53	11	0.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

TABLE 53 : Opinion About Political Leaders

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Helpful and genuine social worker	372	15.26	19	13.10	391	15.14	223	29.81	614	18.44
Selfish/Unmindful of problems	371	15.22	7	4.83	378	14.64	209	27.94	587	17.63
No leader/Mere politician	9	0.37	—	—	9	0.35	53	7.08	62	1.86
Not applicable/Do not know										
any body	1612	66.15	119	82.07	1731	67.04	193	25.80	1924	57.78
Cannot say/No opinion	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	6	0.80	7	0.21
Others	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Selfish/Unmindful/Lokleader/										
Mere politician	26	1.07	—	—	26	1.01	49	6.55	75	2.25
No Response	4	1.88	—	—	46	1.79	15	2.00	61	1.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.98</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As a pioneer in the development of rural India, the village Panchayat figures prominent in alround development. Civic amenities like drinking water, sanitation, electricity, road and communication facilities, economic programmes, like improvement of agriculture, health by preventive and curative medicines, education by starting of balwadis, and supervision of local schools, adult literacy classes. Also through the village panchayat, the government channel is its policies and programmes. The Community Development Programme and National Extension Service largely sought and depended on the co-operation of village panchayats. It is sometimes argued that the failure of Community Development Programme by and large due to inefficient panchayat administration. It could be recalled here that the schemes are also implemented through village panchayat.

The institution of Panchayat, meaning village council, was entrusted with all the authority including maintenance of justice, law and order issues. In a similar way, another parallel institution still prevailing in village community, is the caste panchayat. Though glorious tributes are paid to the panchayat system it served, very often, only the powerful in the village community. Studies have confirmed this statement.<sup>2</sup>

Gone are the days when village India was considered to be a 'Little Republic'.<sup>3</sup> Infact this opinion is true of any traditional society. In the past, communication was not developed as it is today. May be this played an important role in less integrated activities. This is true of India also. Perhaps, it is in this sense that Charles C. Metcalfe concluded that Indian villages are 'Little Republics'.

Now Statutory Panchayats replaced Village Panchayats but, caste Panchayats are still in vogue. While it has been the policy of the government to bring social change by directed planning, it avoids entering the personal area of people for instance the caste. The new concept of self-rule is to promote and mould local leadership. The same principle of election as in the case of Parliament

2. Parvathamma, C. 1978, *Under the Impact of Direct Changes*, National Publishing House, New Delhi.

3. Charles Metcalfe quoted by M.N. Srinivas, 1951.

and State legislature is implemented regarding Panchayats with reservation facilities to SCs and STs.

Almost all States in the country have implemented Panchayati Raj Institutions. This scheme is not to say that every village is having a statutory panchayat. However, the present system is single or grouping of some villages based on population.

To know the implications of the new administrative machinery on the development of the village in general and the SCs and STs in particular, certain specific enquiries are included in the study.

Membership for SCs and STs being made compulsory by statute almost every village panchayat in the study has SC/ST members representing the community. Only about 6.4% rural SC/ST respondents mentioned as 'No member'. This is apart from the urban population for whom panchayat scheme is not applicable. Mostly the 'No member' responses are cases where the vacancy is caused either because of death of a member or resignation. To this extent implementation of Panchayati Raj can be viewed as successful.

What really counts in the case of Panchayati Raj is not the ordinary membership but access to various offices like President, Vice-President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and so forth. Whoever gets such position will be in a position to command more power and respect both financial and administrative. Being a democratic institution only those who command social and economic respect in village can get into different offices of Panchayat. This process has actually helped dominant caste people to rule over village panchayat for years. As it is impossible under the present system to eradicate the hold of caste groups over many village functionaries, the new opportunities for gaining power through Panchayati Raj helped only some dominant castes.

At the outset, the village panchayat promises glorious future to the rural folk since it envisages the development of villages by involving all sections of the village population. Nevertheless, it is common knowledge that most village Panchayats are used as playgrounds for factional politics. These factions affect village unity and

homogeneity further hindering its development. The myth regarding the growth of leadership through electoral process right from the Panchayat level has suffered a severe set back. Panchayat elections are seldom held in time. Often the office bearers are continued by ordinances. Whenever elections are conducted, by and large, leadership rests, with the same persons.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that very few SC and ST members are holding office of Panchayat is confirmed when only about 5.1 respondents saying that the Vice-Chairman in their village panchayat is a SC/ST person.

As regards participation of SC and ST members in Panchayat activities, they do not seem to have much say in the Panchayat's deliberations. Very often, their presence is just nominal. Since panchayat is a representative body meetings should be held regularly once a month. But this seldom happens. Absence of members is not taken seriously. During the course of field work the research staff noted people stating that Panchayat meetings are not held regularly and often decisions are circulated and signatures obtained. The minimal representation of SC/ST members in various offices in Panchayats is because of their educational backwardness. Any office for that matter requires some education and since people from these communities are by and large uneducated they will find it difficult in occupying such offices. Nevertheless, the interplay of caste and economic superiority of dominant caste people, never allows other castes to exploit the situation. Hard hit are the SCs and STs in rural areas, both economically and socially. They are brought up in such a set up where there is no social equality and are virtually dependent for all their basic necessities on upper castes. It is superficial to think of democratic processes under such socio-economic structure.

People in the study are of the opinion that the new administrative system, *i.e.*, the statutory panchayat has created more problems and inconveniences than village improvement. About 56.4% respondents think that the village panchayats have brought in more factions and increased tension. Only 3.1% SC/ST

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4. Parvatham, C., 1978, *Under the Impact of Directed Changes*, New Delhi, National Publishing House.

respondents said that village panchayats helped improvement of their village while another 6.8% said that village panchayats are helpful in solving their problems to some extent. Nevertheless, there seems to be a healthy trend in so far as their acceptance in panchayat meetings and sitting and eating together processes. About 64.0% respondents said that in Panchayats SC and ST members can sit and eat together with other members. However nearly 8.0% SC and ST respondents said that SC/ST members in panchayats can sit together only while discrimination is still maintained in matters of inter-dining. Other than these factors it is observed that Panchayats have no meaning for SCs and STs in rural parts of the State.

The image of SC/ST members in Village panchayat is very gloomy. The general complaint about them is that they are not different from caste Hindu members, least influential and often follow non-SC/ST members. Due to inherent social and economic drawbacks, village panchayat members from the downtrodden communities cannot exert any influence. Only 5.8% respondents in the study said that the SC/ST Panchayat members are more influential. Incidentally this response can be correlated with the 12.0% village panchayat office bearers from this community being Chairman and Vice-Chairman, some might have worked for the welfare of the downtrodden. Barring about 26.7% under 'not applicable' category the rest have either adverse or critical opinion on the SC/ST village panchayat members. Table 54 refers.

The picture obtains in villages today is most disappointing. Almost all Panchayats which were visited are faction ridden. This actually hampers not only village improvement but also results in misuse of the facilities. For instance in most of the villages covered in the study having electricity and tap water facility, the services were not maintained properly by the Panchayats. The reason given by the people is indicative of inefficient functioning of Panchayats. Further, economic benefits under the plan from Directorate of Social and Tribal Welfare are channelled through the village panchayats. Distribution of lands, house sites, building material and money is done for the betterment of the weaker sections in rural parts of the State. But very often, it is alleged, that these benefits are not reaching the deserving in time. Not

TABLE 54: Opinion on SC/ST Panchayat Members

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Like caste Hindu members	278	11.41	5	3.45	283	10.96	9	1.21	292	8.76
More influential	180	7.39	13	8.97	193	7.47	—	—	193	5.80
Least influential	602	24.70	26	17.92	628	24.32	5	0.66	933	19.01
Follow caste Hindu Members	446	18.30	31	21.38	477	18.47	10	1.34	487	14.62
Cannot say/No opinion	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Not applicable/No member	145	5.95	32	22.07	177	6.86	714	95.41	891	26.76
Like caste Hindu members least influential and follow caste Hindu members	607	24.91	8	5.52	15	23.82	7	09.98	622	18.68
No response	178	7.30	30	20.69	208	8.06	3	0.40	211	6.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

much is attributed to the Panchayat members regarding their work. The general opinion is that Panchayat members are selfish apathetic and do not command respect from all.

Village Panchayats have not made any progress in uplifting the weaker sections although the Constitution provided certain concessions to them. By contrast, what is seen today is a systematic exploitation of the weaker sections by the dominant groups in the village. Most of the social problems of the SCs and STs are multiplied because of panchayats taking sides with dominant castes. Many Panchayats even today could not work to bring about eradication of untouchability. Some of the practices still prevalent have been discussed already. Under the democratic decentralised administration panchayats are dominated by leaders from upper castes groups, whose interest in controlling the downtrodden and keeping them backward in all respects goes unabated.

### **Caste Panchayat**

The study noticed among the people of rural Karnataka, the existence of traditional caste panchayat. This institution still is a decisive factor in interactional process between various caste groups. Though the severity of caste panchayats' hold on individuals have undergone drastic changes, it is yet a deciding factor in solving inter and intra-caste conflicts in rural parts of the State.

People in village recognise this body and often abide by the decisions taken by elders in the caste panchayats. The Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the State are in no way different in this respect. Nearly 80.0% SC/ST respondents in the study have stated that they do have caste panchayats. Among them about 61.8% said that caste panchayats help to solve many disputes, and safeguard the interest of caste people. They also feel that it is traditional and hence should be respected. Table 55 refers.

This factor confirms that traditional values persist and are immune to change. To a large extent the nature of social interaction (face to face) prevalent in rural areas both influence and hinders rapid change. Only a limited number among the downtrodden are able to come out from this social circle. They being

TABLE 55: Caste Panchayat Solve

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	P	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Caste disputes	138	5.66	1	0.69	139	5.38	8	1.66	147	4.41
Safeguards caste interests	5	0.21	—	—	5	0.19	3	0.40	8	0.24
Traditional & hence we have	4	0.16	—	—	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12
Caste disputes & Traditional	216	8.86	1	0.69	217	8.40	9	1.20	226	6.78
Safeguards caste interest and caste disputes	81	3.32	1	0.69	82	3.18	9	1.20	91	2.73
Traditional & Safeguards caste interest	3	0.12	—	—	3	0.12	—	—	3	0.09
Caste disputes/Traditional & safeguards caste interests	1724	70.74	112	77.24	1836	71.11	224	29.95	2060	61.86
Not applicable/No caste Panchayat	241	9.89	29	20.00	270	10.46	489	65.38	759	22.79
No response	25	1.03	1	0.69	26	1.01	5	0.80	32	0.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

mostly sound in economic matters are confined to urban centres where the relationship is one of unanimity.

### **Awareness of National Leadership**

Among all those who strived for upliftment of the down-trodden in recent years in the country, the names of two leaders come to the forefront. They are M.K. Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar. The former was a caste Hindu and the latter an untouchable. Historical incidents that followed and preceded the country's independence, including the assassination of the father of the nation, the emergence of the Indian National Congress as the ruling political party in free India resulted in giving a martyr status to Mahatma Gandhi. No doubt, the Mahatma preached and expressed his agony towards the inhuman practice of untouchability and strived hard to bring about what he called "change of heart." Unfortunately, all his ideals were buried with his death.

However, on November 29, nine months after the death of the Mahatma, the Constituent Assembly accepted Art. 17 making a provision for legal abolition of untouchability "As the measure was approved the house resounded with cries 'Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai', a tribute to Gandhi's 30 years effort to remove the practice of untouchability from the Indian scene. Present at the session of the Constituent Assembly was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Chairman of drafting committee for the Constitution and an untouchable. Three years before he has ended his book 'What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables' with the Bitter words "the untouchables...have ground to say; Good God ! is this man Gandhi our saviour."

It is hard to imagine the feelings and frustrations of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the father of Indian Constitution at the time when the Constituent Assembly approved Art. 17 and roared in praise of Mahatma. By contrast, it is Ambedkar, who time and again, stoutly protested and represented consistently, the cause of the India's depressed classes and masses. It is he who nearly got them the political weapon under limited democracy, sponsored by the British in 1930s as a communal representation.

Being the only western educated local leader of depressed classes of his time, Ambedkar had to often face testing time. The way he represented the cause of 1/5th of India's population, in Round Table Conferences and defended their right by way of submission to various commissions will go down as a landmark in the history of India's so-called untouchables.

The leadership of both Gandhi and Ambedkar, in terms of the country's freedom movement and their efforts in getting social status to the downtrodden, in their own way is unique. Gandhiji, being a caste Hindu, felt the seriousness of the evils emanating from the practice of untouchability as an outsider. But for Ambedkar, it was an injustice by the Caste Hindus.

Gandhiji's approach in eradicating this social evil was one of reformation oriented, within the Hindu Varna System. Being a staunch supporter of Varnasharma Dharma, he thought, he could seek social change through the process of 'Change of Heart'. But Ambedkar believed in rebellious action—application of force—as a solution to eradicate this stigma.

Ambedkar by application of rational thinking described all irrational acts of Hindu social philosophy especially the exploitation of weaker sections. He condemned the caste system based on Varna divisions and advocated that unless caste is destroyed, the social evil of untouchability cannot be eradicated.

Being the Chairman for drafting free India's Constitution, Ambedkar was instrumental in Providing many safety valves (measures) in the interest of the downtrodden. But for him the cause of Indian SCs and STs would not have been taken care of so effectively by any one else. To his utter disappointment the implementation of various measures after 1947 for the upliftment of SCs and STs were self-defeating due to obvious reasons. Though he served as a law minister in the country's first cabinet his hand were tied and could not bring about any meaningful change. He disagreed on many measures sponsored by the government on valid grounds and finally resigned.

The political situation in the country baffled him when he contested in 1952 to the Parliament and was defeated. He was astonished when the Congress Party chose to set up against him

one of his close associates and succeeded in defeating him. He could not sustain this shock. True to his conviction and his deeds when he wrote as early as 1935 that he will not die as a Hindu, Dr. Ambedkar converted himself to Buddhism, only three months before his death. One can imagine the amount of frustration in his efforts in getting better social status to the unfortunate masses of this sub-continent. Along with him (on 14th October, 1956 it is estimated that nearly five lakhs SCs of the State of Maharashtra embraced Buddhism. The magnitude of conversion is so high that the number of Buddhists between 1951 and 1961 census increased phenomenally. This shows the extent to which Dr. Ambedkar was a leader of the downtrodden.

For common men, Ambedkar is not so well known as Gandhi is. In order to know the extent to which SCs and STs in Karnataka are aware of these two important National leaders and their efforts for the upliftment of the downtrodden certain enquiries were made and are analysed hereunder.

On the whole, about 31.5% SC and ST respondents in the study said that they have not heard the name of either Gandhi or Ambedkar. The name of Gandhiji is more popular than Ambedkar in the State. Those who know the name of Ambedkar are also those who are aware of Gandhi (36.2%). The same is not the case when about 30.4% respondents said they know Gandhi's name but not heard of Ambedkar. However, about 1.1% SC and ST respondents who mentioned only Ambedkar's name are mostly from the Kolar district in the State, from where the States Republican Party (RPI) Chief (Mr. C M. Armugam) hails. It may be recalled that Ambedkar was instrumental in starting this political party and perhaps people in this district (Kolar) are aware of this fact. Table 56 refers.

Gandhiji's name is associated more than Ambedkar when the respondents were asked to identify in uplifting the SCs and STs. While about 27.3% SC and ST respondents mentioned Gandhi's name another 27.1% answered as both Gandhi and Ambedkar. Only 7.0% said in exclusive favour of Ambedkar.

Barring the above, the SC and ST respondents peddled safe to some of the questions inviting their considered opinion. With

TABLE 56 : Have You Heard of

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Mahatma Gandhi	799	32.79	66	45.52	865	33.50	148	19.79	1013	30.42
Dr. Ambedkar	30	1.23	—	—	30	1.16	8	1.06	38	1.14
Gandhi & Ambedkar	643	26.38	15	10.34	658	25.48	518	73.27	1206	36.22
Not applicable-No heard	945	38.78	64	44.14	1009	39.08	43	5.75	1052	31.59
No response	20	0.82	—	—	20	0.78	1	0.13	1	0.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

31.5% having to knowledge of these two leaders, 25.2% have no opinion as to who is instrumental for getting them constitutional benefits. However, 17.0% said as Gandhi, while 15.8% mentioned Ambedkar's name.

Even as 'real leader/sympathiser of downtrodden' Gandhi scored over Ambedkar. Here again those who preferred to stay away from answering the question account for as many as 33.1% in the sample. Often it is too much to expect the illiterate masses (who constitute majority) to understand the various implications of the qualities of National leaders. Therefore, many have said that they have 'no opinion' or 'cannot say' when asked to comment on the two leaders. It was rather a difficult task for the research staff to make the rural respondents understand the question. For some who can follow the question (mostly educated urban SCs and STs) it was embarrassing to support any one since according to them, both Gandhi and Ambedkar took leading part in the country's freedom movement and upliftment of the downtrodden in the country.

The same pattern of response was offered when the SC and ST respondents were asked to say on these two leaders whether one was a great scholar but poor politician, Gandhi was only a caste Hindu, and that Ambedkar belonged to a particular SC group so forth. Left to themselves, people are often found to be caught in between whenever such questions are asked. On the whole, it is observed, the fundamental defect is lack of knowledge of national leadership and political issues at all stages, which in turn is the result of lack of education.

What is strange is that 25 years of constitutional benefits has very little impact on the people concerned. Historical reasons have made comparison of these two leaders inevitable. As these two great men are unique in their own way, in winning equality of opportunities and social status and protective policy within the democratic framework of the country, to decide in any one's favour for any credential amounts to suggesting our answer to the question.

The above analysis makes it clear that grouping of equal personalities in matters of political activities is not desirable. In all such combinations, there tends to be answers without commitment to any particular person or value. Such decisions become

more complicated, if they were to concern persons belonging to one's own community and leaders of national stature.

Nevertheless, all through the enquiry it is observed that Gandhiji's name is very popular than Ambedkar's. There are many reasons for this phenomenon.

Firstly, Gandhiji adopted his thoughts within the Hindu religious framework, whereas Ambedkar being a rationalist could not impress the traditional society as such. Secondly, Ambedkar wrote and spoke in a language which was understandable only to the educated elites of Indian society. By contrast the Mahatma wrote and appealed in a simple tongue. His living influenced the poor including the downtrodden. But Ambedkar kept on to his western style of living at least in dress and was appealing to those who had like mindedness. It is said that untimely resignation of Ambedkar also worked greatly against his popularity as a national leader. Since he was not shrewd politician but only scholar and Barrister, perhaps he could not follow all the implications of political manoeuvrability. In fact he had less opportunity in politics.

What he wrote and spoke was purely on economic and social problems, both in terms of their practical and academic interests. But this is not to say that he was only a theoretician. Some of his conclusions are prophetic and pragmatic when he said that "political democracy....is not a panacea for all the social ills of Indian Society."<sup>5</sup>

The other visible limitations of Ambedkar may be that he was not having the support of any political party except being in the first cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru till 1951. It is anybody's guess that political backing prevails over all other virtues of any leader in a democratic set up.

Though Ambedkar was undoubtedly leader of the Indian depressed classes and masses he never had any political affinity

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5. Parvathamma C., 'Ambedkar and After, the position and future of Indian Scheduled Caste Masses and Classes' *Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol. 26, No. 3, July-September 73, pp. 221.

until 1951 when he resigned from Cabinet as Law Minister and was instrumental in starting a new party called 'Republican Party' which succeeded the Scheduled Caste Federation.

This party had a premature death when many factions among the SCs developed immediately after it came into being. True to his convictions Ambedkar could not adjust to the techniques of political wire pulling and finally became a victim of congress manipulations when he was defeated in 1952 elections.

Another factor that worked against Dr. Ambedkar is said to be that he belonged to a particular sub-caste of Maharashtra (Mahar). Since the country is very vast, inhabited by people belonging to different castes and sub-castes; various linguistic groups different in many respects, it is difficult to unite them even for common purpose. This actually hinders the interest of Indian SCs and STs. It is said that this peculiar phenomenon of the Indian Society took no less a person than Ambedkar a victim.

# 7

## Education of Children and Constitutional Benefits

Education is one of the important variables with the help of which social change could be achieved. The country had in the past only traditional method of educational system imparted mostly by religious institutions. Formal education was introduced by the British. Initially their interest was to recruit the natives in administrative developments of the East India Company. Those who took advantage of formal education were mostly people from upper castes. Since employment is linked with education, high caste people were able to get into civil services and reap the benefits for quite sometime.

In a way, the new opportunities helped only some groups of educated elites in the society to come forward. Apart from this, they were able to occupy important positions both in rural and urban areas. Obviously, this was possible because they could also achieve economic stability. The British government in contrast to peoples welfare was very much concerned with filling up British coffers. However, some British administrators who had academic interest have done good work in identifying the different caste and tribal groups of the country and classifying them. The pioneer work in this regard is by E. Thurston, who for the first time took up the task of identifying different castes, sub-castes, and tribes of South India. As an improvement over this, Dr. Hutton, an Anthropologist and Census Commissioner in 1930s, classified the castes and tribes in a systematic way using some rationale in grouping them as relatively forward and backward. One such criterion employed

in determining backwardness was education. Later classifications followed Dr. Hutton's formulae.

The country, after independence, continued to adopt some of the guidelines of the previous administration. Formal education is one such field. Recognising the importance of this variable, the planners framed the educational policy of the country. To meet the aspirations and to promote the cultural heritage of various linguistic areas in the Union, certain amount of autonomy was granted in the field of education to State government under the broad framework of national interest.

While doing so, the framers of the Constitution took note of the wide gap between various groups of people—forward and backward castes and tribes. Therefore, to help those caste and tribes who are very backward in education, special concessions in the form of providing incentives were extended so that they can catch up with the rest of the society.

The government followed the policy of protective discrimination for the welfare of SCs and STs. To mention some of them, in the field of education certain number of seats  $15+3=18\%$  or percentage of seats based on SC/ST population are reserved in institutions of higher education. Similarly, as job and education are interlinked, reservation in job opportunities are extended to SCs and STs. Further, to promote education among them scholarships and hostel facilities are provided. Right from the primary level financial assistance along with free distribution of books, uniforms and so forth are given to the students of SC and ST community.

In the first two five-year plans, not much emphasis was laid on education. The policy of government then emphasised on providing the immediate basic necessities like food, and shelter to people. It was only during the third five-year plan the States were allotted good amount of money towards education of SCs and STs. Accordingly, State governments were directed to implement all the schemes connected with education of SC and ST children. In order to fulfil the constitutional guarantees for the amelioration of the downtrodden, various measures have been taken. The

following Table will indicate the provisions made and the amount spent in this regard in Karnataka under various plan periods.

(Rupees in lakhs)

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Plan Period</i>	<i>Provision made</i>	<i>Amount spent</i>
1.	I Plan	115.90	83.94
2.	II Plan	296.38	270.92
3.	III Plan	339.00	301.98
4.	IV Plan	500.00	221.65*

\* (for three year from 1st April 69 to 31st March '72)

It could be seen from the Table, that there is a steady increase in the plan amount sanctioned. At the same time in non-plan period, the entire amount is fully utilised. In the first instance, the children of SCs and STs in the elementary schools are encouraged, with the result there are good number of SC/ST children in elementary schools, now both in rural and urban areas. As the student goes up in education ladder, the financial aid also increases. To meet the expenses towards maintenance of students at the centres of education, the State provides for reimbursement of boarding and lodging in authorized hostels. Also, separate hostels for SC and ST students are being maintained by the government in almost all the district headquarters. Further, for the benefit of tribal students, certain Ashram Schools are opened very near to their habitation. Along with government hostels, some private organisations are also encouraged to run hostels to accommodate SC/ST students. Naturally their expenses in this connection are reimbursed by the government.

The number of SC students in various levels of education in the State and districts during 1971 is given in Table 57.

A comparison of figures from primary to college level show that many students drop-out between primary and secondary and

Source : Social Welfare Probation and After care Services Dept. reports, Govt. of Karnataka, Director of Printing, Stationery and Publications, Government Press, Bangalore.

**TABLE 57 : Educational level of scheduled caste student population in Karnataka and districts—1970-71**

<i>District</i>	<i>Primary School</i>	<i>High School</i>	<i>College level</i>	<i>P.G. &amp; Professional</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>KARNATAKA</b>	<b>342791</b>	<b>31078</b>	<b>6068</b>	<b>1487</b>	<b>381424</b>
1. Bangalore	48262	7794	917	733	57706
2. Belgaum	26648	1813	560	50	29071
3. Bellary	16136	698	173	—	17007
4. Bidar	7399	1024	177	2	8602
5. Bijapur	18665	1639	454	2	20760
6. Chikmagalur	8316	551	23	—	8890
7. Chitradurga	22825	1412	407	42	24686
8. Coorg	3998	243	16	—	4257
9. Dharwar	15706	1426	364	117	17613
10. Gulbarga	15442	1359	257	46	17104
11. Hassan	12142	529	200	—	12871
12. Kolar	39997	3787	836	—	44620
13. Mandya	12799	1579	180	1	14559
14. Mysore	32106	3279	778	291	36454
15. North Kanara	3276	362	89	—	3727
16. Raichur	9192	541	73	47	9853
17. Shimoga	17896	1043	134	6	19079
18. South Kanara	9114	564	17	18	9713
19. Tumkur	22872	1435	413	132	24852

Source : Director of Public Instruction in Karnataka, Bangalore.

between secondary and college levels. One possible answer to this is, that the schools and higher educational institutions are not located in or near rural areas. Secondly, all cannot afford to seek college education. Though government provides subsidy in the form of hostel facilities, books and incidentals, other expenses which are connected with their maintenance the students have to meet themselves, these expenses also will invariably be high and not within their reach. Courses like medicine and engineering require better equipment and hence poor SC and ST parents cannot afford such a costly education for their wards.

Of late the government have started hostels wherein students of other communities are also given certain concessions and

are admitted. This is actually working well and to some extent help eradicating social stigma attributed to the SCs and STs.

The study includes certain questions to probe the educational level of SC and ST children in the State. Therefore, an enumeration of all SC/ST children between the age group of 5 and 18 is included in the study. Information regarding the number of students in each family at various levels of schooling is also collected. The respondents knowledge as to the educational benefits are ascertained. If the children are not in school, the reasons for no schooling have been asked. These are being analysed in the following pages.

The SC and ST children in the study are not attending the educational institutions as expected at different levels of schooling. Only 22.0% respondents are reported to have children who are in primary school. When it comes to middle school education only 11.0% SC and ST respondents are sending their children to middle school. Those having children studying in secondary schools constitute only about 7.0% in the sample. The figures for college works out on an average to less than one per cent in the study. Table 58 refers.

The breakdown, age-wise, shows that about 45.5% respondents in the sample have no children in the 5-9 age-group. This includes the 14.0% households mentioned already who have no children of schools going age. About 56.6% households have no children who are attending schools in the age group of 10-12 years. Similarly about 72.6% households have no children who are attending schools in the age group of 10-12 years. Similarly about 72.6% respondents have no one at schools in the age group of 13-15 years. The same trend prevails in 16-18 years age group also. Table 59 refers.

Barring primary education, as observed already, very few are in institutions of higher learning. By and large, boys and girls are represented equally at primary schools. But beyond this as usual and common with others, only boys rather than girls are found in large numbers in educational institutions.

TABLE 58: Children in Educational Institutions

Number of students in each household	Primary School		Middle School		High/Secondary School		Junior College		College		Post- graduate	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One	517	15.53	287	8.62	201	6.04	43	1.29	10	0.30	—	—
Two	186	5.59	64	1.92	25	0.75	5	0.15	—	—	—	—
Three	31	0.93	14	0.42	7	0.21	—	—	—	—	—	—
Four	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not applicable/No one in this group	2592	77.84	2963	88.98	3095	92.94	3280	98.50	3318	99.64	3328	99.94
All students are in this group	3	0.09	2	0.06	2	0.06	2	0.06	2	0.06	2	0.06
Total	3330	100.01	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00	3330	100.00

TABLE 59 : Age Composition of Children in Education

Number of Children between	5-9 years		10-12 years		13-15 years		16-18 years	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
One	1040	31.23	1059	31.80	794	23.84	749	22.49
Two	632	18.98	365	10.96	102	3.06	143	4.29
Three	111	3.33	16	0.48	7	0.21	10	0.30
Four	23	0.69	—	—	1	0.03	2	0.06
Five	6	0.18	1	0.03	—	—	—	—
Not applicable/No one in this age group	1516	45.53	1886	56.64	2423	72.76	2423	72.76
No response	■	0.06	3	0.09	3	0.09	3	0.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

If these figures are indices of education among SCs and STs, it is clear that the efforts made by the State in popularising education by means of introducing incentives to the children of the downtrodden, has not made any marked impact. Primary education has been expanded manifold since the country attained independence but the figures above show that people from SC and ST communities are not utilising the benefits of education. However, the village school maintains a census of all the children coming under the primary education age group. Attendance registers in the schools carried the names of such children, but the actual attendance of students is very poor. The teachers in villages explained to the research staff when they visited the village schools that since primary education is not compulsory though it is,—they cannot interfere with the rights of the people. In order to safeguard their interests the teachers often, it is observed, inflate figures regarding the attendance of students in the village primary schools.

It is a strange phenomenon that children of SCs and STs are not in schools while other communities take advantage of education and try to send their wards to schools. The teachers' explanation for the mortality of number of SC and ST children in schools is that the parents are not aware of the benefits of education. Whatever may be the reason, the percentage of drop-outs from primary to secondary is very high among the SCs and STs in the State. In each of the age groups analysed above sufficiently large number are not going to schools. The reasons and explanation will be given later.

Out of 2.0% respondents who have children in colleges only 1.0% have children in pre-university, and less than 0.5% households in the sample accounted for students in post-graduate and professional courses. As the level of education goes up, percentage of SC and ST students decreases.

The reasons for no schooling of children from the weaker sections are many and varied. But most of them centre around economic problems of SCs and STs. Children are either to stay at home or to work along with elders and parents to supplement the family income and in both the cases have to forgo their education. To substantiate this there are 30.5% respondents who have given that their children are staying at home while they go for work.

Obviously, the children may either look after their youngsters or cook food by the time parents return home or simply stay at home. Majority of the children of this category are invariably girls. Similarly about 23.2% respondents have stated that their children work as casual or agricultural labourers. Usually, majority of this group constitute boys. To a large extent value system prevalent in the society plays a dominant role in linking occupation with sex. Therefore, girls generally stay at home or engage themselves in jobs like taking care of young and doing household work. Though explicitly seen, some of the respondents avoided giving details of boys in school-going age working as jetha labourers in others houses. Table 60 refers.

Out of the 22.0% respondents whose children attend schools and colleges, about 12.0% have availed educational benefites *viz.*, scholarships, hostel facilities, books, extra boarding concessions and soforth, during the pre-matric education. The financial help so availed ranges from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 400/- annually for each student. The scholarship amount and other monetary assistance ranges from Rs. 5/- per month per student in elementary schools, to Rs. 45/- per month per student in matriculation. It is seen that after pre-matric education, majority of these students discontinue their education. About 3.0% respondents said that their children have received Rs. 50/- or less monthly scholarships. Another 2.7% respondents have children who got financial assistance from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 100/- and only 2.0% respondents say that their children got Rs. 101/- to Rs. 200/- as assistance. However, majority of the pre-matric students got Rs. 201/- to Rs. 400/-. The amount of financial aid cannot be measured since it is given both in the form of cash and kind. Table 61 refers.

Coming to financial benefits at post-matric levels, the study has about 5.5% respondents whose children have received such concessions. This is not a strange phenomenon since we have already observed that less than 2.0% SC and ST children are in college and professional courses. Among those who availed a educational concessions during their college education majority (2.7%) got financial aid of Rs. 900/- of more.

There is marked difference between urban and rural SC and ST respondents. This is not a strange phenomenon since bulk of the

TABLE 60 : If not Studying Alternative Work to the Children

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	P	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Stay at home	645	26.47	29	20.00	674	26.10	92	12.28	766	23.00
Cattle herding	63	2.59	—	—	63	2.44	—	0.26	63	1.95
Household work	160	6.57	8	5.52	168	6.51	82	10.96	250	7.51
Casual/Agricultural work	639	26.22	54	37.24	693	26.84	—	10.97	775	23.27
Jeetha	74	3.04	2	1.38	76	2.94	2	0.26	78	2.34
Petty business/craftsmen	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.04	1	0.13	2	0.06
No children/not applicable	321	13.17	26	17.93	347	13.44	131	17.52	478	14.35
No Studying	358	14.69	21	14.48	379	14.68	330	44.14	709	21.29
No response	176	7.22	5	3.45	181	7.01	26	3.48	207	6.22
Total	2437	100.01	145	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	99.99

TABLE 61 : Scholarship Benefits Availed

Amount in	Pre-matric Education						Post-matric Education						
	Rapees	Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	Rapees	Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
		F	%	F	%			F	%	F	%		
Rs. 50 or less	64	2.48	36	4.82	100	3.00	Rs. 500 or less	16	0.62	37	4.95	53	1.59
Rs. 51 and 100	50	1.94	43	5.74	93	2.79	Rs. 501-600	3	0.12	6	0.80	9	0.27
Rs. 101 and 200	31	1.20	36	4.82	67	2.01	Rs. 601-700	2	0.80	3	0.40	5	0.15
Rs. 201 and 400	121	4.69	75	10.03	196	5.89	Rs. 701-800	2	0.08	3	0.40	5	0.15
Rs. 401 and 600	—	—	—	—	—	—	Rs. 801-900	1	0.04	3	0.40	4	0.12
Not applicable/ No children	—	—	—	—	—	—	Rs. 901 or more	40	1.55	52	6.96	92	2.76
in school	1969	76.26	368	49.19	2337	70.18	Not applicable/No one in college	2504	96.98	608	81.29	3112	93.45
Not availed/Joined only this year	326	12.63	176	23.52	502	15.08	Not availed	11	0.45	27	3.60	38	1.14
No response/Do not know	21	0.81	14	1.88	35	1.05	No response/Do not know	3	0.12	9	1.20	12	0.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.02</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

urban residents are educated and employed hence economically better when compared to their rural counterparts who have answered questions connected with education and its advantages to SCs and STs. To a large number of rural SCs and STs, eking out a living itself poses a problem, hence formal education and its benefits are not viewed in proper perspectives. There are many more formidable reasons which prevent the rural folk from sending their children to schools.

### **Constitutional Benefits**

Recognising the grave necessity of improving the living conditions of people who were subjected to all kinds of discrimination from times immemorial, the Constitution of India provides for certain statutory obligations for the government in power for uplifting the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country. These provisions have been discussed in detail in the earlier part of the book.

Accordingly special budgetary provision is made in each plan period in order to improve the overall economic and educational conditions of the SCs and STs in the State. As described elsewhere political representation for SCs and STs is a special feature of the Indian Parliamentary system. Similarly certain social disabilities of the people of downtrodden communities are legally abolished. Further more, to assess and report the progress made in the task of welfare of SCs and STs to the Parliament and to suggest guidelines in hastening the improvement of these sections, an office of the Commissioner for SCs and STs is created. Annual reports covering all aspects of SCs and STs are being submitted by the Commissioner to the Parliament accordingly.

While the reports of the Commissioner for SCs and STs carried comprehensive data on the progress made by these people and the implementation of the constitutional guarantees with certain observations wherever necessary, it is not within the scope of such documents to know from the people who are affected by the provisions. It is needless to mention here that provision is one thing and its implementation is quite another.

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the survey by and large are aware of the political provisions from Panchayat to

Parliament on the basis of reservation. Those who are aware of all facilities in political field account for about 39.0% respondents in the sample. While another 32.0% SC and ST respondents say that they are aware of such concessions only at village Panchayat level, a relatively significant number about 26.0% are totally unaware of such provisions. Table 62 refers.

More or less the same trend can be seen the when the respondents' attention was drawn to educational benefits. Though education of the children of SCs and STs is stressed in order to hasten the alround improvement, as many as 30.1% respondents in the study say that they are ignorant of such concessions. As mentioned already, due to grinding poverty people from these communities are forced to induct their children of school-going age to work in order to supplement their family income. This is one of the most important reasons for continued educational backwardness of people from the weaker sections. However, it is encouraging when nearly 57.5% SC and ST respondents said that they are aware of such concessions both at pre-matric and post-matric levels.

When it comes to the question of awareness of provisions regarding reservation of jobs and promotions to SCs and STs in government and other public sector institutions about one-half of the respondents in the study are not aware of these facilities. Being rooted in rural areas and mostly illiterates the SCs and STs in the State are ill-informed and least knowledgeable in these respects.

It is evident that the lot of the downtrodden in the States are very poor and their basic necessities are essentially economic in nature. Therefore, as many as 80.0% SC and ST respondents in the sample say that they are aware of the concessions extended by the government like house-sites, houses, building materials, monetary aid, agricultural land and so forth. Leaving this apart, the leaders who seek their support during election period do mention these in their effort to win the support of SCs and STs. Perhaps this propaganda helped when majority of SCs and STs are favourably disposed towards it. However, about 19.0% SC and ST respondents say that they are not aware of these concessions. This is not strange when there is mass illiteracy and supression in rural parts of the State. Table 63 refers.

TABLE 62: Constitutional Provisions—Political Reservations

	Awareness						Avalied					
	Scheduled Castes / Scheduled Tribes			Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe			Rural			Urban		
	F	%	Total	F	%	Total	F	%	Total	F	%	Total
Village Panchayat (VP)	964	37.34	103	13.77	1067	32.04	4	0.15	2	0.26	6	0.18
Taluka Board (TB)	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.06	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
Assembly	8	0.31	36	4.82	44	1.32	—	—	—	—	—	—
Parliament	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03	—	—	—	—	—	—
Village Panchayat & Taluka Board	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Taluka Board & Assembly	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
VP/TB/Assembly & Parliament	793	30.71	508	67.92	1301	39.07	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unware	799	30.95	99	13.23	898	26.97	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not applicable — not availed	—	—	—	—	—	—	2545	98.57	744	99.48	3289	98.77
No response	15	0.58	2	0.26	17	0.51	33	1.28	1	0.13	34	1.02
Total	2582	100.01	748	100.00	3330	100.00	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

TABLE III : Constitutional Provisions - Economic Concessions

Concessions Like	Awareness						Avalled					
	Rural		Urban		Total		Rural		Urban		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Sites	36	1.39	7	0.93	43	1.29	120	4.65	42	5.62	162	4.86
House	—	—	—	—	—	—	100	3.87	25	3.48	126	3.78
Land	96	3.72	3	0.40	99	2.97	—	3.41	5	0.66	93	2.79
Site and House	159	6.16	9	1.20	168	5.05	2	0.08	1	0.13	3	0.09
House and Land	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12	15	0.58	—	—	15	0.45
Site, House & Land	1651	63.94	644	86.10	2295	68.92	16	0.62	17	2.27	33	0.99
Site and Land	—	—	2	0.26	60	1.80	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unaware/Not applicable/ Not availed	555	21.49	79	10.57	634	19.04	2182	84.51	634	84.78	2816	84.56
Material	—	—	—	—	—	—	49	1.90	7	0.93	56	1.68
No response	23	0.89	4	0.53	27	0.81	10	0.39	16	2.12	26	0.78
Total	2582	99.99	748	99.99	3330	100.00	2582	100.00	748	99.99	3330	99.99

Awareness of constitutional provision is quite different from actually getting them. The situation is not all that good in the State. When compared to the amount spent on various welfare schemes for the benefit of SCs and STs all these years, the position obtaining in respect of their social economic conditions is a story fully of agony.

On the whole over 80.0% SC and ST households in the study reported that they did not avail any facility or incentive, be that political, educational, employment or economic in nature. As regards reservation facility for political office at different levels as many as 98.7% SC and ST respondents say that they have not availed. The same situation obtains in matters of employment opportunities where 97.0% households have not availed this facility.

The position is relatively better in the spheres of educational and economic concessions where about 15.0% SC and ST respondents admitted that they did avail such benefits. While the educational concessions availed are quantified in terms of money ranging from Rs. 50/- to Rs. 301/- or more, economic incentives are grouped under various types.

The above analysis depicts a dismal picture of the living conditions of SCs and STs in the State. Nearly onehalf of the sample are not aware of the constitutional provisions meant for the development of the downtrodden. At the same time even those with such knowledge have not availed them as expected.

The reasons for not availing these benefits are very many. According to the people in the study, officials in the administration are apathetic and are not sincere in implementing the provisions. The SCs and STs are critical of their so-called leaders, who according to them are selfish. They are of the opinion that the educated urban based SC and ST elites have used the new opportunity for themselves in narrow circle and thus made the entire provisions a family issue. It is true that the apprehension of the SC and ST masses is correct when only certain families coming from particular sub-castes are taking away the lion's share leaving the rest of the deserving SCs and STs where they are.

TABLE-64 : Opinion about Constitutional Benefit

	Helpful in uplifting SC/ST		Damage self respect of SC/ST		Reduce SC/ST to Perpetual dependency		Detrimental to SC/ST initiative	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Yes	2415	72.52	81	2.43	125	3.75	120	3.60
No	512	15.38	2778	83.42	2692	80.84	2682	80.54
Cannot say/No opinion	41	1.23	70	2.10	89	2.67	92	2.76
No response/Do not know	362	10.87	401	12.04	424	12.73	436	13.09
Total	3330	100.00	3330	99.99	3330	99.99	3330	99.99

Finally large number of SC and ST respondents think that the constitutional guarantees help solve most of their social and economic provisions in spite of severe drawbacks in implementing them. However, majority feel that these benefits have not been implemented properly with the result people from these communities remain illiterate, ignorant and vulnerable to all sorts of exploitation by others in the community. Table 64 refers.

Majority of the SC and ST respondents in the survey do not agree to the suggestion that constitutional benefits damage their self respect, reduce them to a level of perpetual dependency and also detrimental to their initiative. On the other hand they feel that except for the statutory provisions their lot would not have improved but remain as the same to be exploited for all time to come. What is wanting, according to them is selfless leadership among the SCs and STs along with sincere efforts in implementing the socio-economic measures propounded time and again by the government.

# 8

## Caste and Untouchability

Caste system in India is one kind of stratification based on inequality among human beings in matters of social interaction. Inequality in general leads to discrimination, may be racial, linguistic, religious or sexual. While stratification of society is not unique to India, caste system and its manifold divisions are peculiar to Hindu society.

Louie Dumont, gave a working definition of caste system in India and recognised its four characteristics which separate this institution from other forms. They are; the hierarchical order, the concepts of purity and pollution, the practice of endogamy in marriage alliances and the act of repulsion.

Caste is continued on the basis of statuses and roles based on birth, thus ascribed to the individual. Membership is held through recruitment on the basis of birth in a particular caste. The interaction of persons is based on the thematic approach in which they are socialized. A person born in a particular caste group is inculcated to develop a set pattern of behaviour towards others.

It is very difficult and perhaps a futile effort to embark upon tracing the origin of caste system in Hindu society and it is not contemplated to go deep into this aspect in the study. The main concern in this study is to probe whether caste as such has certain function in Hindu social structure. Apart from this, the interplay of the social structure with the economic and political sub-structures in relation to the SCs and STs in the State is discussed in this study.

Caste domination is observed in all aspects of the society including the secular organisations of the government. Caste controls economic and administrative machinery. This has been verified and proved by many social scientists both Indian and foreign. It is sometimes said that instead of discouraging caste and political system in the country after independence noursed and buttressed this traditional social order and allowed it to grow monstrously. Of course, changes did occur in some aspects of caste system in the country. The changes where have occurred are mostly confined to the secular aspects only. The directed changes have not made any inroads since they are not enforceable. As human society has not developed any alternative to the religious code of conduct, it cannot think now to eradicate all the evils that crop up in this regard. The only possible remedy that can be thought of is perhaps, by evolving a moral code without religion.

There are many religious movement in India. The numerous movements both revolutionary and reformatory from within and without have not been able to overcome a discrimination and inequality that prevails in Indian society. But surprisingly, at one point of history or another these religious movements have been subsumed by Hinduism. Even opposite and sometimes contradictory principles are accommodated by Hinduism. While these movements were mass based in the past, they are now confined only to the elite sections of the society.

The necessity of caste to a Hindu is important as it concerns his daily life and immediate needs. It is true that there is no other institution which can replace caste and fulfil needs of the people. It is a common scene that when one is asked to identify himself/herself, he will come out first with his caste name. Though not openly preached, caste system in India is practiced in all spheres of life. This institution, it is said is responsible for many social and economic ills of the society.

The Constitution of India, though a bulky record, in a sense has not clarified many aspects of stipulations affecting the social life of the people, hence not an effective instrument in bringing about social change. While in the preamble it professes the secular ideas, elsewhere individual liberty and policy of 'protective

discrimination have been enshrined. It is a known fact that these two factors cannot go together.

The policy of protective discrimination for the hitherto socially and economically very backward communities has remained by and large an unfulfilled goal. In a way constitutional protection to SCs and STs by the government has brought about unsympathetic and unhealthy treatment to the downtrodden by the caste Hindus under one pretext or the other.

In this study, it was planned to know what the SCs and STs think of the caste system and its various implications, both good and bad. Questions relating to this and how deep rooted is the hierarchy of relationships among untouchables themselves were important points of investigation. Opinions were also elicited as to the ways and means of eradicating caste system and the role inter-caste marriages play in this process.

Needless to say the SCs and STs are at the bottom of the hierarchy of caste system. Further, there are sub-caste and sub-sub-castes within each caste. The respondents were asked whether caste system should continue. About 60.7% opposed caste system and wanted it to be eradicated. However, 34.8% have stated that it should continue. One may wonder why such a large percentage have preferred caste system to continue. The reasons are obvious. Majority of them may not be antagonistic to caste system. They are only critical of the practice of untouchability which they want should be eradicated as early as possible by any means (through government action and caste Hindu support). The pragmatic approach of such respondents under the present circumstances needs to be appreciated because eradication of caste is a far fetched idea. In the meanwhile they also think that it will be prudent to favour the actions of government in eradicating the evils of untouchability practice.

The fact that untouchability exists even among the untouchable has been proved beyond doubt. As indicated 34.8% preferred caste system to continue, 36.7% are not prepared to treat their inferior caste people as their equals. However, nearly 90.0% expect equal treatment to them from all castes both above and below them. For having born in a caste lower in the social strata it is but natural for

them to aspire to move upwards. This can be taken as a natural inclination. The differential treatment and discrimination that they receive from the upper castes is being shown towards those who come below them in the caste hierarchy. The only significant reaction of our respondents is to be referred to the 4.6% SCs and STs who observed that all are equal and no one is superior or inferior to others.

As explained earlier, one of the important features of caste system is the notion of ritual purity and pollution. Essentially this revolves round physical proximity, water sources and food habits. The first two aspects have been dealt with separately while dealing with the problem of untouchability. It was decided to ask, specifically, whether caste Hindus and untouchables observe any rules regarding acceptance of food cooked at each others place. Being the basic factors of discrimination, food and water and food cooked with water are accepted from one another where people have the same social status or between equal castes but not by superior castes from the hands of inferior castes. In fact food is one factor used to determine the ritual status of any caste. The castes from whom cooked food is accepted are considered, necessarily, superior.

The respondents in the study generally accept cooked food (hereinafter called food) from caste Hindus (76.2%). Those who accept food from all castes account for 21.3%. Only 34 respondents mentioned that they will not accept food from any one outside their caste. When the question of those who accept food from the respondents comes, about 55.0% say that no one accepts food from them excepting their own caste people. However, 34.2% have answered that the castes below them take food from them. In the case of 45 respondents some caste Hindus take food from them. They may be essentially living in urban areas and economically sound. Along with them, we have 5.7% SCs and STs coming out with the answer that people from all castes accept food from them.

A point for consideration in the above analysis is that when almost all respondents do not discriminate in accepting food, they are not ready to treat their inferior or lowercaste people as their equals. The only tentative explanation that could be offered at

the moment is that the respondents seemed to prefer to follow a rather safe path in answering all questions connected with the caste system.

The SCs and STs in the study, by and large, favour legal abolition of caste system (63.5%). They consider caste as a hindrance for the development of the nation. It is also their opinion that in villages, menial occupations have been thrust on them and therefore, they have less chances of mobility. The only apparent change is that the traditional jobs have given place to manual labour. One reason for this is the development of agriculture in the country. Apart from this there do not seem to be much change in rural life. Dr. Epstein rightly concludes that 'the living conditions of the backward and the depressed castes and classes have been worsened over a period of time'. She substantiates her statement by saying that 'the rate of consumption of basic necessities has gone down though production of agricultural commodities has been doubled in the past two decades. The worst affected are the poor.'<sup>1</sup> The answer is clear when the land owner gets maximum benefits by exploiting the unorganised SC and ST labour force.

Studies conducted by several social scientists show that caste plays a dominant role in all walks of life. It has been observed that the lower position of a caste in the social hierarchy, the extent of economic and political exploitation are more. This aspect has influenced majority of respondents greatly and it is for these reasons they say that caste system is the starting point of all evils haunting them, hence should be abolished legally. Their views must be taken in the right perspective. Being socially and economically oppressed from times immemorial, the SCs and STs have every right to look for an effective machinery which could do away with this kind of oppressive institution. Nevertheless, about 9.0% respondents either disagreed with legal abolition of caste or considered it as bad. It is also possible that these respondents consider government action in such matters nearly a failure. This is because legal abolition of untouchability has not brought about the desired

1. Epstein Scarlett (1973) *South India Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Macmillan, London

changes. These people are afraid that once caste system is legally abolished, they may be deprived of all constitutional benefits. However, one should see the point and appreciate their stand.

The respondents when asked to give their opinion on caste system seemed to be rather full of contempt. As many as 44.8% viewed it as a means for suppressing lower castes, decisive force and man made wrong. Another 32.2% SCs and STs in the sample are moderate critics of the system as a whole. They consider caste system as 'traditional', where everyone belonging to one or the other caste. It brings 'divinely ordained' gives security to some extent. The study has some people who consider caste system as right because it is traditionally practiced (4.6%) and divinely ordained (4.6%). It was observed that during the time of interview; the respondents, specially the rural based, being innocent, ignorant illiterate and superstitious, found to accept all values attached to religion and caste as something sacred and any deviation was considered by them to result in disaster. It is surprising to find the SCs and STs, though exploited, still willingly considering caste system as something natural, and do not want to protest against its continuance. It is observed that their attitude is not in favour of immediate change in the structure of Indian society. Table 65 refers.

Nearly 99.0% respondents have no cases of inter-caste marriages in their households. Another 48.7% do not consider it as a means of eradication of caste and untouchability. This in a way substantiates their opinion regarding caste.

The SCs and STs in the study do not conceive of any particular caste as a model on the basis of which they wish to improve themselves (90.3%). Of the remaining, these who preferred to take Vokkaligas as their caste model top the percentage (3.5%), followed by those who prefer Brahmins (2.6%). There are 41 respondents who have favoured Veerasaivism. The reasons for preference of caste models are very many. While some consider the hard working nature of Lingayats and Vokkaligas, some have viewed that Brahmins with their intelligence will provide them with a model. Apart from these, no other caste has impressed them in the State.

TABLE 65 : Opinion About Caste System

Opinion	Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Should caste continue</i>						
Yes	1000	38.73	160	21.39	1159	34.80
No	1452	56.24	572	76.37	2024	60.78
Cannot say/No opinion	35	1.36	7	0.98	43	1.29
Do not know/No response	95	3.68	9	1.26	104	3.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>
<i>Treat inferior caste people</i>						
Yes	1392	53.91	448	59.89	1840	55.26
No	1080	41.83	143	19.12	1223	36.73
Cannot say/No opinion	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
Not applicable-Inferior caste	25	0.97	—	—	25	0.75
All are equal	13	0.50	142	18.98	155	4.65
Do not know/No response	72	2.79	14	1.88	86	2.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<i>Consider legal abolition of caste as</i>						
Good	1668	64.60	448	59.89	2116	63.54
Bad	247	9.57	59	7.88	306	9.19
Cannot say/No opinion	272	10.53	31	4.15	303	9.10
Do not know/No response	361	13.98	56	7.49	417	12.52
Others	34	1.32	154	20.59	188	5.65
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Right-traditional practised	138	5.34	17	2.28	155	4.65
Every one belongs to one or the some caste	42	1.63	9	1.20	51	1.53

(Contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Divinely ordained	137	5.31	17	2.28	154	4.62
Traditionally practised & divinely ordained	29	1.12	6	0.80	35	1.05
Divinely ordained & every one belongs to one or the other caste	32	1.24	15	2.00	47	1.41
Everyone belongs to one or the other caste & traditionally practised	248	9.60	39	5.22	287	8.62
Traditionally practised, Divinely ordained, every-one or the other caste and it gives security	840	32.53	168	22.45	1008	30.27
Means for suppressing lower castes, decisive force, & man made wrong	1026	39.74	469	62.70	1495	44.89
Cannot say/No opinion	62	2.40	4	0.53	66	1.98
No response/Do not know	28	1.08	4	0.53	32	0.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.98</b>

### Untouchability

As mentioned earlier the main characteristics of caste centres round the principle of social discrimination at all levels of interactional process. The hierarchical order determines the place of each constituent caste group of people. The notions of purity and pollution helps in demarcating the distance of each group and finally the endogamous practice in matters of marriage alliances helps the maintenance of social order. Since caste is determined by the birth an individual's socialisation is largely influenced by caste values. Therefore, for Hindus caste rather than religion, is an effective instrument of social control. The principles of caste system negate the concept of equality at all levels. Even within a caste not all are equal. Sub-castes thus give room for further hierarchy of relationships. Many traditional occupations are usually associated with one or the other caste.

The burning problem haunting the country's 1/5 of the population is that of untouchability practice. Definitions of untouchability depending upon the context are several, but there is a common premise that untouchability is a stigma attached to some people because of their ritually impure status and are of eternal source of pollution to another. It is estimated that this practice is rooted in the social and religious life of India for over two thousand years. Historically untouchables figured beyond the four fold varna division *v/z.*, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra as explained in the Rigvedic hymn. The fifth order constitutes the exterior caste group and are called now as Harijans (Children of God) by Mahatma Gandhi. The new nomenclature, however, is not appreciated or welcomed by the group thus named change of name has not given them desired status, but perhaps has adversely affected them, polemical argument equate, with children of god.

The SCs and STs as a group were recognized by the British administration in India for purposes of preferential treatment. The census commissioners earlier to 1935 have systematically classified them as backward/depressed classes. The enumeration of caste-wise census is discontinued after 1931. After the country's independence, under the new Constitution, the castes identified as depressed castes vide Government of India Act 1935 were continued and included as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, the terms SCs and untouchables are not synonymous. There are Scheduled Castes without the stigma of untouchability, the Lambanis and Bhovis in the State are cases in point.

The varieties of terms used to designate a segment of society reflects the nature of untouchability practice as a social and cultural phenomenon and the diversity of groups combined under such labels. Defined in relation to behaviour, untouchability refers to the 'set of practices followed by the rest of the society to protect itself from the pollution conveyed by the untouchable.'<sup>2</sup>

It is also believed by the people that the untouchables are untouchables because of their deeds in the previous birth and

2. Desai, I.P., (1973) 'Untouchability in Rural Gujarat' Unpublished report, Centre for Regional Development Studies, Surat.

they are born outside the pale of traditional chaturvarna but belong to untouchable caste. Both the caste Hindus and the untouchable are socialized in this sort of belief. This belief was and still is sustained by written and oral traditions, of the social stratification of the caste system, the village community and by the Hindu-monarchical political system. It has thus both religious and secular sanctions. The sum total of untouchables' position in society is that he has a number of duties and hardly any rights for himself. What are called rights are condescensions or rewards for obedience. Everything was so well continued to justify untouchability and to see that the untouchables continued to remain untouchables. Consequently, both the caste Hindus and the untouchables continued to believe in untouchability.<sup>3</sup>

The concern of pollution with the untouchables also served to keep them in an inferior economic and political position through enforcement of symptuory laws and physical separation. "The high proportion of untouchables among the ranks of agricultural workers links their common fate to the economic forces generated by over-population and the increasing pressure on the land."<sup>4</sup>

After the attainment of independence, the Republic of India heralded a most ambitious programme and ventured to abolish the practice of untouchability. Article 17 of the Constitution adopted in 1950, ushered in a new era in Indian social life by legally striking a blow at the practice of untouchability which was in vogue for over two thousand years. Further, the laws concerning anti-untouchability were strengthened by making the practice of untouchability a punishable offence in 1955.<sup>5</sup>

That laws are not the only penacea for all social problems is a historical fact. Very often laws are violated than honoured in matters of traditional social inter-action. The problem of Indian untouchables and the colour discrimination of the Negroes in America and South Africa are cases in point.

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3. *Ibid.*

4. Michael Mahar (ed) 1972, 'Untouchables in Contemporary India, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona.

5. Untouchability Offences Act, 1955.

The continued exploitation of the untouchables in India has been proved by many studies and commissions appointed by the government. The committee on economic and educational development of the SCs and connected documents under the Chairmanship of Mr. Eleya Perumal on untouchability gave a comprehensive report about this inhuman practice in different parts of the country suggested remedial measures. The committee also touched upon the dependent variables like economic and educational conditions of the untouchables and came to the conclusion immediate improvement in the economic level of the untouchables holds the key to eradicate this evil practices.

Untouchability generally does not apply to the Scheduled Tribes who live apart and in isolation. But when they come out of their habitat and develop contact with the people of plains they are equated with the SCs and untouchables. This indicates that untouchability is not restricted to particular caste groups but all those who are inferior culturally and ritually.

Efforts, in the past, to ameliorate the lot of the untouchables were mostly religion-based. Sikhism and Kabir panth made some impact in solving social aspects of untouchability in the North. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar laid stress on the betterment of the downtrodden. Though both tried to win dignity and honour to the untouchables within the Hindu-fold Dr. Ambedkar, for most part of his life concentrated on around improvement of the SCs and STs. He even suggested change of religion as a measure to combat this evil. The constitutional means are the products of hardwork and forethought of Dr. Ambedkar. Infact, he was instrumental in demanding scheme for the upliftment of the SCs right from the British period in India and represented the cause of the downtrodden on many occasions. He was also a leading political force on the eve of India's independence. But for his untiring efforts, the future of 1/5 of India's population would have been disastrous. The shape of things after independence disheartened this great man—the saviour of untouchables and he was the victim of power politics. Towards the fag end of his life he had to revive his earlier beliefs and thus advocated religious conversion as the only solution to escape from discrimination and wanted to teach a lesson to the caste Hindus. He embraced Buddhism along with some followers and died as a Buddhist.

The revolutionary idea if that can be termed so sought by Dr. Ambedkar cannot be questioned under the new development when all the converts are nearly deprived of constitutional benefits. It is hard to believe that a man with such forethought would have erred by asking millions of his followers to suffer hardships because of and even after conversion to Buddhism. Unfortunately he is not alive to give answer to such fundamental questions affecting the life of crores of untouchables today in the country. Whatever is given as answers will be interpretations of Ambedkar's possible line of solution to the problems.

Apart from the efforts of these two great national leaders—Gandhi and Ambedkar—the other reformist movements did not bring about the eradication of untouchability, though they are had it directly or indirectly in their programme “Notwithstanding that the practice is not observed as severely as it was 25-30 years back, though untouchability has largely continued as a blackmarket activity.”<sup>6</sup>

The untouchables, even now, are found engaged in unclean jobs and in this way they are very useful to both urban and rural communities and to the people of ■■■ religions including Muslims, Christians and all other non-Hindus. Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Sikhism do not believe in Hindu theology and practice. Therefore, barring Jainism other religions gave hopes of spiritual and social salvation to the untouchables. There are no means of knowing whether or not untouchables converted to other religions achieved spiritual salvation. But unfortunately both the Hindus and the members of some of these other religions remained untouchables in practice. Therefore, religious conversion did not help the untouchables much in improving their social position, particularly with reference to the Hindus.<sup>7</sup>

The present enquiry focuses its attention on the practice of untouchability and its relationship to the social and economic spheres of life. The entire interactional process in this regard is

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6. Desai, I.P., 'Untouchability ■ Rural Gujarat', Unpublished Report, Centre for Regional Development Studies, Surat.

7. Desai, I.P., 'Untouchability in Rural Gujarat', Unpublished Report, Centre for Regional Development Studies, Surat.

divided into two—public and private. All matters connected with daily life of the respondents are observed and analysed in this study. The private sphere is bifurcated further into conventional and personal. The areas of convention could be identified as drawing water from the common well, entry into the village temple, movement of SCs and STs in upper caste locality, their entry into local shops and tea stalls, the services available to them like those of the village Barber, Washerman, Priest, Tailor, Blacksmith, Carpenter, Country Doctor and Country Nurse, milling the grain soforth. The interaction observed in the public sphere include the services of government doctor and nurse, secular institutions like the school and post office, health and village panchayat institutions.

As indicated untouchability is not applicable to all the respondents covered in this study, since some castes among the SCs do not come under this category. Further, majority of SC population living in urban areas are nearly free from this stigma especially in public sphere. To overcome the problem of identification, it was decided to ask the respondents themselves whether they belong to an untouchable caste. The enquiry also attempted to know whether the SCs and STs had any knowledge about the abolition of untouchability practice. Due weightage is also given to their opinion about this practice and the desirability of its retention and the cultural traits attributed to the community.

On the whole 73.6% respondents in the study have considered themselves as untouchables. Another 13 respondents among the rural STs are facing this stigma. Fairly good number of people have not responded to this question.

Nearly half of the sample are not aware of the legal abolition of untouchability. This is true partly because from the beginning the people are not well conversant with the legal implications in the society. The administrative and bureaucratic structure of the government is not understandable to the SCs and STs who are mostly illiterates. This has actually helped other castes to continue exploitation of the downtrodden. Only 44.8% SCs and STs have indicated that they are aware of the legal abolition. The relationship between education, awareness and urbanisation becomes self evident when 72.0% among the urban SCs and STs have answered

positively regarding legal abolition of untouchability. Likewise 71.7% rural STs have not responded to this question. Table 66 refers.

Among those who have the knowledge of legal abolition of untouchability, majority have stated that it has not been implemented properly. About 15.0% respondents have mentioned that it has not been implemented and about 20.3% are of the opinion that though implemented, it has not been properly adhered to. The reaction of the people towards this has been confirmed by the studies conducted including the present one. Only 5.3% respondents have considered legal abolition as being properly implemented.

Besides this, the study has touched upon the two spheres of SC/ST interaction in both rural and urban areas with other caste people. Firstly it is a well known fact that water sources and connected matters are the starting points of discrimination. Despite the fact that the country was able to achieve a total ban on the practice of untouchability, 54.0% of the respondents are not allowed to draw water from the public well in the village. Another 6.4% are facing discrimination in this regard. This indicates the effective implementation of the rules regarding abolition of untouchability. The SCs in the State are still controlled by the village community to a greater extent for their basic necessities like water, shelter and employment. The magnitude of this problem, though not usually practiced in all the urban centres, is still found in some towns and cities. The proof of this is that about 14.9% respondents living in urban areas have stated that they are not allowed to draw water from the public water sources. Another 4.6% have stated that they are being discriminated.

The severity of the practice of untouchability is at its peak in matters of access to sacred places such as temples. Therefore, almost all reformative movements have emphasised the importance of gaining temple entry to the untouchables. Social reformers like Mahatma Gandhi and even Dr. Ambedkar first stressed the need for the social and cultural upliftment of the untouchables. All earlier efforts were resented by the caste Hindus and culminated in violence. The position is not any better now. In a way the leaders themselves are to be blamed for the present State of affairs. Instead of educating the masses to think in a rational way by

TABLE 66 : Knowledge of Legal Abolition of Untouchability

Aware of legal abolition of untouchability	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Yes	937	38.45	18	12.41	955	36.99	539	72.06	1494	44.86
No	1220	50.06	23	15.86	1243	48.14	171	22.86	1414	42.46
Not applicable	20	0.82	—	—	20	0.77	—	—	20	0.60
No response	260	10.67	104	71.72	364	14.10	38	5.08	402	12.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

disassociating the significance of blind beliefs practiced by the people, which would have helped fighting against untouchability, separate temples (Rama Mandirs) were advocated to the down-trodden. As a result, all the cultural possessions and common requirements of caste Hindus are provided to the SCs and STs also, without redeeming them from the snobbaries of caste and Hindu religion. Similarly providing separate wells and taps for SCs and STs schools and hostels for their children, instead of combating against the evil, have in a way enhanced discrimination and evoke no sympathy from caste Hindus.

About 59.5% respondents have stated that they are not allowed to enter the village temple. This problem like the problem of water supply, is mostly confined to the rural parts of the State where tradition is still very strong.

There was a time when SC/ST people and other low castes were not allowed to walk on roads and move about in upper caste locality freely. In the case of the former the restrictions were that the low caste people should not wear chappals or shoes and cannot walk with umbrellas open. The reports of many investigations have referred to this practice in all parts of the State. To some extent this is true even today, atleast in villages. The SCs and STs involved in this study, however, have reluctantly answered this question and seemed to be afraid of local caste Hindus who are their masters. The efforts to know and understand the extent of control exercised by the caste Hindus did not go in vain. Though the respondents hesitated to come out, in actual practice untouchables are facing all kinds of difficulties and stigma based on caste though not to the same magnitude as in the past atleast in the field of convention. However, the figures for movement of the SCs and STs in the village and its surroundings show no discrimination in a large number of cases. Over 98.0% have stated that they can walk freely on village roads and in upper caste locality, without fear of punishment. But the actual situation is quite different from what they say.

The important sphere of interpersonal interaction is the access to one another's households especially kitchen and family diety room. All are not allowed to the dwellings of people except family members and close kinsmen, caste fellows and others of the

same social rank. Upper castes are no exception to this. Within the house, observance of purity and pollution is a common phenomenon. The members of the family cannot enter the place where the family diety is kept and worshipped, without a purifying bath.

The superior and inferior status of caste hierarchy is dependent on the fact whether or not a person is allowed to have access to the dwelling place of the other. While the upper castes in the Hindu social order do not have many problems in this regard, the lower ones, specially the untouchables are totally forbidden from entry to caste Hindu houses. There were cases in the past which never tolerated even the shadow of an untouchable and the saying that a Brahmin for apprehending pollution from an untouchable while walking on the road, it is said, used to make announcement of his arrival by sounding 'HAA'. Though not observed to-day in such detail, the people from downtrodden communities are not allowed to enter caste Hindu houses. This is amply illustrated when 63.2% SCs and STs say that they cannot enter upper caste houses. Therefore, the SCs and STs are forced to accept their inferior ritual status by keeping away from the caste Hindus, even though they are equal to other human beings.

Untouchability practice was not confined to only private or conventional spheres. The SCs and STs have no access even to such public utility places like the hotel (tea shop) and grocery. But things have changed a lot since independence. This is one area in which a test could be applied as to the effect of legal sanctions. More than this, changes in the value system of the people, due to economic necessities, the rigid application of the practice has been relaxed to some extent. Again, cultural traits still control over large area of human interaction. While the untouchables are allowed to enter local grocery shops the same thing is not true of local tea shops. There is no objection to their approach physically but not in the field of interdining at public eating places.

About 78.2% mostly rural dwelling respondents are allowed to enter local shops. But for about 7.6% respondents some kind of discrimination in allowing them to local shops is maintained. It may be maintenance of distance in order to avoid pollution. However, 11.0% have mentioned that they are not allowed to

local shops. Incidentally 7 respondents each constituting urban SCs and STs and rural STs have not been allowed to enter local shops.

Tea shops in villages are maintained mostly by caste Hindus and are located either in the front portion of the dwelling house/residence or on main roads or at certain strategic points in the village. Upper caste people, generally menfolk, use the tea shops as a place of gossip and entertainment in the sense that they discuss political and personal matters concerning the village and, if knowledgeable, of the State. No doubt, such places in theory are open to all castes and communities but not to the socially and ritually inferior local castes. As the concept of pollution centres round water and food, hostel and local tea shops are still not within the reach of 43.0% SC and ST respondents in the study. Only 52.0% are allowed to such places of eating. Thanks to the process of urbanisation 94.0% urban SCs and STs are not having any problem in this regard. The 10.5% on the whole say that they are discriminated and so are not allowed to enter the tea shops and sit along with other customers but are given access to a relatively inferior corner place in the shop.

The same thing is true of the facilities whereby SCs and STs are served coffee or tea in common cups used by others. While 51.0% have stated that they have no such experience of discrimination but are allowed and treated on par with other caste people, about 10.5% say that they are discriminated and usually served in separate containers kept outside the tea shop. The container is usually made out of cigarette tin, coconut shell or earthen pot. While there is no discrimination with regard to the cost of coffee or tea, the untouchables have to bear the humiliation of not only physical separation but cleaning the container after use. The logic is when the metal coins are accepted by the caste Hindu tea shop owner often without any purification, unfortunately the person who gives the coin is not allowed to enter the tea shop and drink in common cups. This contradiction beyond imagination is seldom realised. Table 67 refers.

Having accepted Hinduism as a way of life, the SCs and STs have all the 'virtues and vices' of Hindus in matters of religious practices. It is already said that over 90.0% respondents keep

TABLE 67 : Scheduled Castes and Tribes Can

Opinion	Rural SCs & STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Take Water from Public Well</i>						
Yes	712	27.58	601	80.34	1313	39.43
No	1688	65.38	112	14.98	1800	54.05
Discriminated	181	7.01	35	4.68	216	6.49
No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Total	2582	100.01	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Enter temples</i>						
Yes	533	20.64	586	78.34	1119	33.60
No	1855	71.84	129	17.25	1984	59.58
Discriminated	194	7.51	32	4.28	226	6.79
No response	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
Total	2582	99.99	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Walk freely on roads</i>						
Yes	2549	98.72	747	99.87	3296	98.98
No	22	0.85	—	—	22	0.66
Discriminated	11	0.43	1	0.13	12	0.36
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Move freely in upper caste locality</i>						
Yes	2534	98.14	747	99.87	3281	98.53
No	29	1.12	—	—	29	0.87
Discriminated	19	0.74	1	0.13	20	0.60
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Enter caste Hindu houses</i>						
Yes	430	16.65	465	62.16	895	26.88
No	1899	73.55	207	27.68	2106	63.24
Discriminated	253	9.80	76	10.16	329	9.88
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

(Contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Enter local tea shops</i>						
Yes	1025	39.70	708	94.66	1733	52.04
No	1052	40.74	35	4.68	1087	32.64
Discriminated	347	13.44	5	0.66	352	10.57
Not applicable	158	6.12	—	—	158	4.74
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	99.99
<i>Drink in common cups in tea shops</i>						
Yes	996	38.57	704	94.12	1700	51.05
No	1087	42.10	37	4.95	1124	33.75
Discriminated	343	13.28	7	0.93	350	10.51
Not applicable	156	6.04	—	—	156	4.68
Total	2582	99.99	748	100.00	3330	99.99

family deities. This shows their belief in the supernatural powers and Hindu mythology. Similarly, rituals connected with the life cycle of Hindus are also observed by the SCs and STs. The people have also accepted the institution of priesthood as a media between the God and themselves. Due to specialisation in rituals and their conduct, the role of the priest becomes inevitable on special occasions relating to birth, death and other ritual contingency in the family. The complicated rituals and ceremonies are conducted according to the prescriptions of the Vedas. The language of the prayer is not always the common man's. This necessitated the services of a priest—a man qualified to officiate during times of religious contingency.

The low ritual status of the SCs and STs deprives them of many facilities. One such is the services of a priest. This phenomenon is substantiated when 70.6% SCs and STs in the study say that they never get caste Hindu priestly services. However, nearly 27.9% are getting such services both during auspicious and inauspicious occasions. Again economic constraints of priestly community have forced them to relax rigidity in their approach towards the low castes. In this process they have given a new interpretation to their occupation. Side by side, the process of Sanskritization among the lower castes has supported this new interpretation. Unfortunately, this new phenomenon is applicable only to the economically better placed SCs and STs.

Certain occupations are traditionally associated with some caste groups. These occupations and the caste groups following them, came to be recognised and serve as functionaries. To mention some of these, they are the Barber, Washerman, Blacksmith, Carpenter, Potter, Scavenger and others. Over a period of time all these services have been commercialised leaving many such traditional functionaries displaced. Like the SCs and STs the service communities were also under the mercy of upper castes and agricultural communities. Therefore, most of the services except the menial jobs were not available to the SCs and STs. The value conceived by the services castes, not to pollute themselves by touching the lower caste people and their belongings which are matters for pollution, is also a strong point for them to refuse their services. In either case the SCs and STs are the most affected.

There are 50.3% respondents who say that they do not get the services of Barber in the village. Alternatively these people are either depending on a Barber from their own community and in many cases they learn it themselves or go to nearby urban centres where such services are available. The 44.0% who answered positively, mostly constitute urban SCs and STs and those rural SCs who do not suffer from the stigma of untouchability plus all the rural STs in the sample. This shows that in rural parts of the State the SCs and STs are still faced with the problem of untouchability especially for essential services.

The washerman's services to the SCs and STs in the study is showing similar trend. This is yet another important area of practice of untouchability which is very much still in vogue especially in rural areas. Almost all reasons applicable in the case of Barber's service are extended to this sphere also. The caste Hindus will definitely disapprove the barber who serves the untouchables in the village. Economic necessities have not made any impact on these service communities since the amount of profit derived by serving the untouchables will not be worth the risk taken. It is too much to expect the poor SCs and STs in the villages dressed scantily to avail the benefit of washerman. Since much emphasis is not laid upon the ritual aspects, nothing else necessitates the respondents to seek the services of Barber or a washerman frequently.

About 52.0% SCs and STs in the study have replied that they do not get the services of washerman and those who say that they do get are (41.2%) are mostly urban dwellers and STs.

In all such areas where the interaction between the untouchables and village functionaries involves less pollution, such services are not denied to the untouchables now. In these areas of interaction comes the services of the smith and carpenter. Wood and metal are not polluting in the same sense as water and food. Therefore, nearly 95.0% SCs and STs are not denied of these facilities. This has been so perhaps traditionally.

The SCs and STs in the State are not having any problem with regard to the availability of tailor's services, as the study indicates in contrast to rural Gujarat. The value behind pollution is not applicable to new clothes. Therefore, there is relatively less degree of pollution observance in this case. However, some respondents complained that the tailors in the village do not take measurement while accepting new clothes for stitching. It is usual with the villagers, specially the SCs and STs, that some approximate size would suit them. Another form of discrimination shown to the SCs and STs by the tailors is that they do not accept from them used clothes for restitching. Barring this about 91.4% SCs and STs have stated that they avail the services of the tailor. In the case of rural STs no one has stated as being discriminated by the tailors.

The intensity of the practice of untouchability is almost lessening in those spheres where the government is involved directly like the employees in the department of public services such as the Posts and Telegraphs, health, education and Community Development Programme and National Extension Service Organisations. Majority of SC and ST households are getting the services of postman. Nearly (98.3%) said that there is no discrimination although letters are not delivered in time by postman in villages, and for SCs he usually sends it through other persons. The 49 respondents who stated that they are being discriminated have been verified by the research staff while in the field. The type of discrimination is that usually postmen from upper castes avoid entering the residential areas of the untouchables but hand over all the letters to a person of the locality for further distribution

among the untouchables. However, in majority of cases, the problem of the postman is automatically solved since very rarely the SCs and STs in rural areas get letters. The fact is not confined only to a particular village or area in the State and much depends on the postman.

The SCs and STs in the study have stated that they have no problem with regard to the services of doctor and nurses in government service. But significant number of respondents have remarked (4.0%) that they do not get their services. By their professional training, doctors and nurses are expected to serve humanity without any discrimination to the best of their ability. But it is very difficult to coerce them at every stage, if one resorts to selective treatment. The 10.0% SCs and STs for whom the question is not applicable are those who have no doctor/nurse facility in their places.

In the absence of qualified doctor and nurses rural India is still in the grip of unqualified traditional quacks. Since there is no scope for drastic improvement in employing the qualified medical staff due to the limited number of such personnel, there is no alternative but to accept the available services in this regard. Barring a few, most of the local so-called physicians, do not have formal training and are practicing their family vocation. These people are mostly from upper castes. Being traditional, both in their values and vocation, the country doctor and the country nurse do not normally, treat people from downtrodden communities. This is mainly because of the stigma of untouchability. The study supports this on the basis that only 55.9% respondents, on the whole, have said that they get the services of a country doctor. More than the country doctor's services, the necessity of the country nurse is important. Especially at the time of deliveries, the rural womenfolk require the help of such nurses. Since they are less aware and do not make use of hospitals and health centres, partly due to economic and partly due to absence of such facilities locally, they are compelled to seek and depend on available local knowledge and service. Even here the SCs and STs are not fairly treated when less than half of (47.6%) the respondents are getting the services of country nurses. Table 68 refers.

TABLE 68 : Scheduled Castes and Tribes can get

1	Rural		Urban		Total	
	SCs & STs		SCs & STs			
	F	%	F	%	F	%
	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Caste Hindu Priestly Services</b>						
Yes, both auspicious/inauspicious	460	17.82	469	62.72	929	27.90
No	2089	80.91	265	35.43	2354	70.69
Only auspicious	24	0.93	8	1.06	32	0.96
Only inauspicious	—	—	4	0.53	4	0.12
No response	9	0.35	2	0.26	11	0.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Barber's Service</b>						
Yes, Normal & Ritual occasion	784	30.36	684	91.45	1468	44.08
No	1622	62.82	56	7.49	1678	50.39
Only normal occasion	17	0.66	4	0.53	21	0.63
Only ritual occasion	—	—	4	0.53	4	0.12
Not applicable	124	4.80	—	—	124	3.72
No response	35	1.36	—	—	35	1.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>
<b>Washerman's services</b>						
Yes, both normal & ritual occasions	689	26.68	583	91.32	1372	41.20
No	1674	64.83	60	8.02	1734	52.07
Discriminated	3	0.12	5	0.66	8	0.24
Not applicable	216	8.37	—	—	216	6.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Blacksmith's/Carpenters services</b>						
Yes	2421	93.66	747	99.87	3168	95.14
No	15	0.58	—	—	15	0.45
Discriminated	9	0.35	1	0.33	10	0.30
Not applicable/Do not know	136	5.37	—	—	136	4.08
No response	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>2582</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

(Contd.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Tailor's services</i>						
Yes	2299	89.04	747	99.87	3046	91.47
No	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12
Discriminated	53	2.05	1	0.13	54	1.62
Not applicable	20	0.77	—	—	20	0.60
No response	206	7.98	—	—	206	6.19
Total	2582	99.99	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Postman's services</i>						
Yes	2529	97.95	747	99.87	3276	98.38
No	4	0.15	—	—	4	0.12
Discriminated	48	1.86	1	0.13	49	1.47
Not applicable/Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.03
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Services of Doctor and Nurses</i>						
Yes	2111	81.76	741	99.07	2852	85.65
No	132	5.11	3	0.40	135	4.05
Discriminated	—	—	4	0.53	4	0.12
Not applicable	339	13.13	—	—	339	10.18
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Services of country Doctors</i>						
Yes	1231	47.48	631	84.36	1862	55.92
No	490	18.78	83	11.09	573	17.21
Discriminated	85	3.29	21	2.81	106	3.18
Not applicable/Do not know	775	30.41	10	1.34	785	23.57
No response	1	0.04	3	0.40	4	0.12
Total	2582	100.01	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Services of country nurses</i>						
Yes	967	37.45	620	82.89	1587	47.66
No	607	23.51	71	9.49	678	20.36
Discriminated	91	3.52	23	3.07	114	3.42
Not applicable	916	35.38	28	3.75	944	28.35
No response	1	0.14	6	0.80	7	0.21
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

These two spheres of local interaction are not free from discrimination. In fact the magnitude of untouchability practice is more than what is reported here. Approximately less than 4.0% SC and ST respondents have said that they are discriminated by the village medical men/women. But in reality the figures would have been much more. The research staff has observed that many respondents who are getting the services of country doctor/nurse reluctantly agreed when they were probed regarding the nature of treatment they receive. Based on oral explanation of the symptom of the disease by the SCs and STs, many a time medicine is given without touching or examining the patient. Nearly one-fourth of the respondents have stated that there is no country doctor/nurse in their villages.

School is other public utility institution found in every village. There was a time when admissions to SC and ST children were denied in the villages schools purely because of their birth in low castes. But now the situation has changed. The success of law prohibiting this inhuman practice is in a sense complete in schools. There are 97.2 respondents whose children are allowed to enter the village school. The 85 respondents under the category 'discriminated' are those in whole villages separate schools for SC and ST children are maintained and thus their entry to the village common school is not there.

While in the case of those SC and ST children, there is no discrimination in being admitted to village schools, but in the pattern of seating arrangements, discrimination is found. The children of 8.4% respondents are not allowed to sit with caste Hindu children in the village school. In this manner the fact that the village community is still traditional and gives more importance to such things as discrimination based on caste, is proved beyond doubts. However, the teachers are to be blamed for this because it is they who are expected to be the torchbearers of social change in the Indian context. But often the social existence of teachers in villages depends upon the willingness of larger community and not untouchables, hence teachers find themselves helpless.

Wherever mills to grind grain are available, the SCs and STs are not prohibited from their use, except in the case of 35 (1.3%)

rural respondents. No social stigma is attached to touchability of grains and therefore, in this sphere the practice of untouchability is not found.

A glaring contrast is noticed in rural areas when 95.0% SC and ST respondents working hand-in-hand in agricultural fields with caste Hindus are not allowed to mix freely with others during festive occasions. Only about 53.8% have stated that they can mix with caste Hindus during village festive occasions. This denotes that in the spheres of sacred social activities, conventional and traditional practices prevail over the necessities like labour during the season of intensive cultivation. The caste Hindus still try to exercise control over the poor SCs and STs in keeping them segregated and looking down upon them as low and inferior. They have succeeded in forcing the downtrodden to accept all enforcement by the upper castes.

The control of caste Hindus could be assessed when we observe the social and personal activities of the SCs and STs. Even to this day, in some villages the marriage processions of SCs and STs cannot enter the caste Hindu locality (13.6%). Many village disputes between the caste Hindus and the untouchables revolve around the trespassing of such rules and regulations. Quite a number of SCs and STs in the study have stated that though such processions are allowed these days still certain restrictions remain imposed. The processions cannot go near the village temple but, should follow a restricted route.

The extent of prejudice and discrimination against the untouchables has even touched their personal desires. About 13.0% rural respondents cannot wear good dresses or ornaments even today. The caste Hindus simply cannot tolerate the SCs and STs from becoming economically sound as fine dress and jewellery imply this. About 87.0% stated as having no problem regarding the freedom to wear good dresses and ornaments, however, it is not all that true. In many cases the respondents have given positive answers to enquires only to please the caste Hindus who were present during the course of the interview. Table 69 refers.

The SCs and STs in Karnataka are of the opinion that the practice of untouchability is a burden on them, for no fault of

TABLE 69 : Scheduled Caste and Tribe Opinion Regarding

Opinion	Rural		Urban		Total	
	SCs & STs		SCs & STs			
	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Children can enter school</i>						
Yes	2491	96.48	747	99.87	3238	97.24
No	7	0.27	—	—	7	0.21
Discriminated	84	3.25	1	0.13	85	2.55
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Children can sit together with caste Hindu children at schools</i>						
Yes	2303	89.19	746	99.74	3049	91.56
No	279	10.80	1	0.13	280	8.41
No response	—	—	1	0.13	1	0.03
Total	2582	99.99	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Can get grains milled in the village</i>						
Yes	2300	89.08	747	99.87	3047	91.50
No	35	1.36	—	—	35	1.05
Not applicable	247	9.57	1	0.13	248	7.45
Total	2582	100.01	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Can mix with caste Hindus while working in the field</i>						
Yes	2430	94.11	735	98.26	3165	95.05
No	24	0.93	2	0.26	26	0.78
Discriminated	128	4.96	11	1.48	139	4.17
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Can mix with caste Hindus on festive Occasions</i>						
Yes	1244	48.18	549	73.39	1793	53.84
No	983	30.07	159	21.26	1142	34.29
Discriminated	353	13.67	39	5.22	392	11.77
No response	2	0.08	1	0.13	3	0.09
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	99.99

(Contd)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Marriage procession</i>						
<i>Can enter caste Hindu locality</i>						
Yes	1897	73.47	698	93.32	2595	77.93
No	414	16.03	41	5.48	455	13.66
Discriminated	271	10.50	9	1.20	280	8.41
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Can wear good dress/ornaments</i>						
Yes	2248	87.06	719	96.13	2967	89.10
No	142	5.50	4	0.53	146	4.38
Discriminated	192	7.44	25	3.34	217	6.59
Total	2582	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

theirs. The survey in order to feel the pulse of the respondents regarding this social problem has sought their opinion through some suggestive remarks. By and large the SCs and STs are traditional because they live in rural parts of the State, largely uneducated and follow unskilled jobs like agriculture. But when asked to evaluate the practice of untouchability nearly half of them did not agree that this practice is traditional and hence it is right. Those who did not agree account for 48.7% while 46.0 have accepted their low status as right because it is traditionally practiced. The pattern has something to do with rural and urban residents. While majority of the former accepts the practice since it is traditional, the latter do not agree.

However, in matters of divinity regarding the practice of untouchability, surprisingly majority of SCs and STs (64.1%) are not prepared to accept that the practice is right because it is divinely ordained. Only 30.6% respondents have favoured this proposition. Most of them are necessarily rural dwellers.

When the suggestion to the effect that this is an inhuman practice is made majority of the respondents have spontaneously agreed (62.0%). The same is true of the suggestion that this practice is a means of exploitation. Rightly 67.6% have agreed with this. They are also aware that the practice of untouchability is wrong on the part of human beings and that it would be rectified. Table 70 refers.

TABLE 70 : Opinion on Untouchability Practice

Opinion	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<i>Right—Traditionally Practised</i>								
Yes	1181	48.46	109	75.17	243	32.48	1533	46.04
No	1112	45.63	23	15.86	489	65.38	1624	48.77
Cannot say/No opinion	31	1.27	9	6.21	8	1.06	48	1.44
Do not know	3	0.12	—	—	1	0.13	4	0.12
No response	110	4.51	4	2.76	7	0.95	121	3.63
Total	2437	99.99	145	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Right—Divinely ordained</i>								
Yes	804	32.99	59	40.69	122	16.32	1020	30.63
No	1488	61.06	75	51.72	607	81.14	2135	64.11
Cannot say/No opinion	31	1.27	7	4.83	7	0.93	93	2.81
Do not know	4	0.16	—	—	1	0.13	5	0.15
No response	110	4.51	4	2.76	11	1.47	125	3.75
Total	2437	99.99	145	100.00	748	99.99	3330	99.99
<i>Inhuman practice</i>								
Yes	678	27.82	52	35.86	375	50.14	1105	33.18
No	1621	66.52	85	58.62	360	48.13	2066	62.04
Cannot say/No opinion	32	1.31	4	2.76	5	0.66	41	1.23
Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.13	2	0.06
No response	105	4.31	4	2.76	7	0.93	116	3.48
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	748	99.99	3330	99.99
<i>Means of Exploitation</i>								
Yes	533	22.69	34	23.45	332	44.38	919	27.60
No	1746	71.65	102	70.34	404	54.02	2252	67.63
Cannot say/No opinion	32	1.31	5	3.45	4	0.53	41	1.23
Do not know	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.13	2	0.06
No response	105	4.31	4	2.76	7	0.93	116	3.48
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	748	99.99	3330	100.00

The above analysis shows that the SCs and STs are well aware of the magnitude of the horror and inconveniences caused by the man made institutions and discrimination hindering their development. Above all other disqualifications, untouchability stands as the prime obstacle for the downtrodden in the present context. Whether economic prosperity or social equality that should precede for the betterment of SCs and STs debatable issue. But mere debates will not help the already oppressed communities. What is necessary is the practical approach to eradicate this social malady from the society. It may be through social awareness or by enforcement of the already existing laws strictly or by both that desired results could be achieved.

As the practice of untouchability is closely linked with the traditional cultural traits, the study was designed to understand the respondents' awareness and opinion on such matters. Of the many cultural traits food habits play an important role in identifying the ritual status of a Hindu. It is usual from the upper caste view point to attribute all bad habits and evil practices to lower castes. Very often attributes distinguish a particular caste identity. One such is the association between alcoholism and low castes. But now things have changed. People of all castes drink alcohol and therefore, it is very difficult to attribute any status to them these days.

Rightly, 62.5% respondents say that there is no link between untouchability and alcoholism. Drinks like food items are also graded and are associated with the caste and economic status of persons who take a particular kind of drink. In any case things are changing and gradually such attributes are on the wane.

But this is not the case when 47.1% respondents agree with the statement that untouchability and beef and beef carrion eating interlinked. The discrimination starts here because cow and ox are considered sacred by Hindus and are worshipped by them. Those who eat the flesh of such sacred animals are considered to be inferior, particularly those who eat the dead animal and not slaughter the stock for table as muslims and christians do. This fact has been accepted by majority of SC and ST respondents except the urban dwellers. Table 71 refers.

TABLE 71 : Opinion of SCs and Tribes on Untouchability

Opinion	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs and STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<i>Is there any link between Untouchability and Alcoholism ?</i>								
Yes	711	29.18	5	3.45	223	29.82	939	28.20
No	1449	59.46	135	93.10	499	66.72	2083	62.55
Cannot say/No opinion	8	0.33	—	—	1	0.13	9	0.27
Do not know	173	7.10	3	2.09	13	1.73	189	5.68
No response	96	3.94	2	1.36	12	1.60	110	3.30
Total	2437	100.01	145	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00
<i>Is there any relation between Beef/Beef carrion eating and Untouchability ?</i>								
Yes	1152	47.27	106	73.10	312	41.71	1570	47.15
No	753	30.90	14	9.66	378	50.53	1145	34.38
Cannot say/No opinion	14	0.57	—	—	—	—	14	0.42
Do not know	368	15.10	23	15.86	32	4.28	423	12.70
No response	150	6.16	2	1.38	26	3.48	178	5.35
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.00	748	100.00	3330	100.00

It is an accepted fact that untouchability should be eradicated and the socio-economic problems of the untouchables be improved at the earliest. There are measures undertaken both by government and voluntary organisations in this direction. But they have not made the desired changes in the life pattern of the downtrodden. Therefore, it was decided to ask the people involved in the study to identify what measures are to be taken and whether the remedies are of any help.

Majority of the respondents *i.e.*, 49.3% think that the constitutional benefits given to them will be of much help in solving their problems. For them economic stability is of prime importance and precedes all other necessities. Constitutional benefits are mostly oriented towards the upliftment of the SCs and STs economically. Granting of free house sites, houses, agricultural lands, building materials and monetary aid are all direct efforts by the government. Reservation of seats in Legislative Assemblies and Parliament enables them to have a voice in the governmental activities which is of much significance in the present democratic set up. Finally social change is being introduced indirectly by educating the SC and ST masses through various schemes and policies. The children of the SCs and STs are now-a-days getting both monetary aid and reservation facilities in the institutions of higher education. Perhaps this view has been strengthened by the fact that "protective discrimination" since extended twice in the past and may end in the year 1990.

By experience the respondents have come to know that education will, to some extent, solve the problem of untouchables. This is true of not only SCs and STs but of others also. Another reason for considering education as a means to achieve economic development and social equality is that it is related to employment in the country. Added to this, real education will make a person view human problems in a rational and objective perspective. After observing the caste Hindu treatment of the educated persons of low castes, the respondents seem prompted to think that if education is given to all SCs and STs they could achieve what the educated SCs and STs have gained. In support of this argument there are about 38.2% SCs and STs who State that education solves their problems, while 30.0% view that it will solve only to some extent.

Of late, there is much talk about intercaste marriage as the only possible weapon to check the practice of untouchability. It is also being suggested that, if adopted, inter-caste marriage would put an end to the menace of caste system. But in actual practice such marriages are mostly love marriages. Moreover, they are usually found to occur in urban places which are constantly in flux and have secondary relationships. The respondents in this study, however, are mostly rural based living in traditional surroundings. The practice of untouchability among untouchables strengthens the fact that caste is still a deciding factor in all matters of interaction. Therefore, the respondents are not ready to accept the suggestion that inter-caste marriages provide axis to eradicate untouchability. Over 48.0% of them answered that it will not help in the eradication of untouchability. Sufficiently large number (13.2%) come under the 'do not know/no response category'. Table 72 refers.

### **Summary**

The institution of caste in the Hindu social order has done more harm than good to the Indian society. The Constitution of India has failed to exert its influence on secular ideals because of the intriguing interplay of caste, economic and political structure. In a sense the democratic political set up in the country consisting representatives of people is largely dependent on the caste identity. Traditional areas of interaction are deliberately continued because they serve the interests of certain castes. The practice of untouchability is one such and the SCs being socially degraded, ritually impure, economically poor, continue to live a pitiable life.

Those having knowledge and access to power are successful in keeping the bulk of the downtrodden under the constant threat of violence, if the latter chose to act independently. This fact can be substantiated by just looking at the living conditions of SCs and STs in the State.

The policy of prospective discrimination has brought more miseries to SCs and STs because of the displeasure of the caste Hindus. In fact it increased the exploitation of SCs and STs by others. All remedial measures outside the constitutional guarantees have failed to change the attitude of the caste Hindus.

TABLE 72 : Opinions of SCs and STs

Opinion	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs and STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<i>Constitution benefits solve all problems of untouchables</i>								
Yes	1173	48.13	90	62.07	381	50.93	1644	49.37
No	840	34.47	38	26.21	288	38.50	1166	35.02
Cannot say/No opinion	80	3.28	1	0.69	4	0.53	85	2.55
Do not know/No response	344	14.12	16	11.03	75	10.03	435	13.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<i>Will education solve problem of untouchability</i>								
Yes	852	34.96	33	22.76	390	52.13	1275	38.29
No	217	8.90	6	4.14	43	5.75	266	7.99
To some extent	721	29.59	—	57.24	197	26.34	1001	30.06
Cannot say/No opinion	172	7.06	2	1.38	37	4.95	211	6.34
Do not know/No response	475	19.49	21	14.48	81	10.83	577	17.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.01</b>
<i>Will inter-caste Marriage eradicate untouchability and caste ?</i>								
Yes	695	28.52	38	26.21	386	51.61	1119	33.60
No	1251	51.33	81	55.86	292	39.03	1624	48.77
To some extent	7	0.29	—	—	4	0.53	11	0.33
Cannot say/No opinion	1166	4.76	1	0.69	19	2.54	136	4.08
Do not know/No response	368	15.10	25	17.24	47	6.28	440	13.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

Leaving a very small percentage of SCs/STs who are able to get education and enter government service to improve their economic condition, the rest of the downtrodden, being what they are, have not favoured any change in the present order. The apathy is believed to be due to many disappointments. For them all suggestions and propositions have no meaning. They feel that no one can improve their condition. Experience seems to force them to remain resigned and accept it as their fate for all the earthly problems which confront them.

One healthy trend is that these people are able to recognise the institution of caste as bad and agree to the suggestion that it should be abolished as quickly as possible. According to them inter-caste marriage is not a practical solution, though seems a ideal and well suited to present times. Upper castes as models for change or continuity are not accepted by the SCs and STs in the State.

One of the worst ways of exploitation of downtrodden in rural India is through the practice of untouchability. This has been proved by many studies and commissions from time to time. Untouchability is not synonymous with SCs but most of the castes grouped under SCs are suffering from this stigma. Untouchability usually does not apply to STs living in isolation. But when they come in contact with the people from plains they are equated with untouchables.

Due to changes in the occupational structure in rural parts of the State, a high proportion of SCs and STs are now landless agricultural workers. This inhuman practice, in a way, served to keep them in an inferior economic and political position through enforcement of discriminatory laws and physical separation.

Legal abolition of untouchability practice remained only on paper. The practice is common in villages and is specially observed by caste Hindus. The revolutionary idea of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in promoting protective policy through constitutional provisions has been defeated largely because of faulty implementation of the concessions. This is amply proved by the prevalence of the practice untouchability in almost all parts of rural Karnataka.

The study indicates the preponderance of untouchability practice mostly in villages and that too in the private sphere of interaction. Within the above sphere, convention plays a vital role in determining the ritual purity and pollution. While many changes have occurred in public sphere like government institutions, schools and health units, travelling in public conveyance, conventional and personal areas are still untouched by the agencies of change. Water is still a problem to SCs and STs in the villages throughout the State. Entry into village temple, Coffee/Tea shop and Upper caste houses are denied in large number of villages. Except services which do not involve pollution essential ones like barber and washerman facilities are not available to people from the downtrodden communities. Since 73.0% respondents are untouchables, the problem is very serious. Even after 34 years of independence about one half of the sample are not aware of the legal abolition of untouchability practice. Only those who know, state that it has not been implemented properly.

The general observation is that the SCs and STs are being controlled by the caste Hindus in most parts of rural Karnataka in all respects. The low ritual status, poor economic condition and illiteracy have also contributed to the perpetuation of many social stigmas prevailing against these unfortunate people.

## Living Condition

### Beliefs and Practices

The two important aspects of religion-beliefs and practices are effective instruments of social control. Being a dominant variable in the social milieu, religion determines and influence both economic and behaviour and activities in a given society. Human society so far has not been able to find an alternate to this powerful tool of social control. Many wars were fought in the past. Elaborate rituals are common with all the communities professing different religions. Even the totalitarian countries like the USSR and China could not achieve total disassociation of religious beliefs and practices from the life of people.

The influence of religion on the economic activities in the society has been clearly brought out by Max Weber in 'Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism'. Weber in this treatise characteristically analyses the protestant christian movement in Europe and America with a set of religious values, different from all other world religions as responsible in the material development of Western society.<sup>1</sup>

It is common knowledge and a historical phenomenon that Hinduism has complex doctrinal and cultic aspects. Sometimes it is argued that this traditional outlook of people has really discouraged productive process thereby exerting great strains on the economy

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1. Weber Max (Tr. by Talcott Parsons, 1956) 'Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism', London, George Allen and Unwin, p. 35.

of the nation. Belief and practices never remained confined to family. They are often extended to secular institutions. We are aware that people's representatives participating in elaborate ceremonies connected with inaugural and valedictory functions, often with religious tints costing huge sums to the State treasury and loss of man hours.

This apart, the rural scene is filled with traditionalism. The difficulties encountered by the Community Development Programme and National Extension Service in village India have been clearly analysed by Dr. S.C. Dube.<sup>2</sup> Things have not changed much even now and very few farmers believe in the modern technological development and its application in the improvement of crops. No farmer is found carrying on his agricultural activities without offering initial prayers. Still they follow the traditional calendar in identifying rainy season. Instances abound of illiterate superstitious agriculturists arguing with the research staff that local manure is more effective than fertilisers though the latter is easily available in abundance.

When the entire society is dominated by people with supernatural beliefs and religious practices, the SCs and STs in this study are not an exception to this. They being Hindus necessarily believe and practice the complicated rituals beginning from birth to death. The 80.0% rural SCs and STs in the study have stated that the social and cultural commitments as main sources of expenditure. Also about 3/4 of those having debts have given social and cultural obligations like marriage, mortuary rites and so forth as principal reasons.

Despite the social and economic suppression and oppression, the SCs and STs have accepted the working of unfavourable beliefs and practices of the Hindu social order. This is indeed surprising. Some of the sub-castes among them like caste Hindu people have chosen to extend the same treatment to the castes still below them in the hierarchy. Perhaps the 'Karma Theory' has exerted great pressure than anything else with the SCs people.

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2. Dube, S.C. (1958), 'India's Changing Villages', Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. London, pp. 132-146.

Questions regarding some aspects of SC and ST personal life including their beliefs and practices were part of the enquiry. Overwhelming number of respondents believe in the theory of 'Karma'. Nearly 81.4% on the whole said that they did believe in 'Karma'. For about 80.0% SC and ST respondents the present deed of a person is a determinant of future and present position or status is the result of past happenings. In these aspects there is a clear demarcation between residents. While urban SC and ST respondents are relatively unfavourably disposed to such beliefs, the rural folk stoutly believe and practice them.

By and large they have similar belief regarding the existence of hell and heaven. Since most of them are Hindus they are in a way socialised according to the pattern followed by larger society. Only 7 respondents have reported as not having any such beliefs.

In support of this analysis, it was planned to include material evidences and therefore, respondents were further enquired. The practice of worship of family deity as common to all Hindus. Every family usually will have a particular God as family deity. About 96.5% declared that they do have such a deity. Strangely it was gathered that the people in this study have two such reference to make god and goddess. The SCs and STs in the study often identified the same gods/goddesses as their family deity equally worshipped by the caste Hindus, except in the two districts of Coorg and South Kanara, where some names connected with 'demon' gods were given. It may be mentioned here that in this part of the State (districts of Coorg and South Kanara) there are some communities where people are named after some spirits.

Surprisingly the practice of having family or caste guru is not in vogue with the people from downtrodden communities. They have no common religious head or mutt to enforce authority as is found with other caste Hindus. It is one of the points to which attributes of inferiority are tagged. Only 11.2% SC and ST respondents have stated a having family or caste guru. While nearly 67.0% have denied having any such, 21.6% have not responded to this question. Perhaps they have very little knowledge about it.

While 96.5% have stated as having a family deity, the respondents do not have separate place of worship at their residences

Among those with positive answer, majority are living in urban areas. Those without any such place accounted for 81.0% in the sample. However, nearly 10.7% have kept photographs of Hindu gods and goddesses on the walls and shown them to the research staff at the time of their interview.

In a way the rural housing conditions of SCs and STs and the occupational pattern do not permit them to venture into such elaborate practices. It is already known that majority of them are living in thatched huts and dwellings which are hardly suited for human habitation. They are, by and large, single room apartments. Also by profession 80.0% of SCs and STs are landless agricultural/casual labourers working from dawn to dusk for meagre wages. It is too much to think and expect these people to find time for prayer and place to worship. In fact they have been barred from getting such thoughts right from the beginning. Vedas are quoted as references to show these people are profane and hence cannot indulge in sacred activity.

The SCs and STs do believe in Karma theory as a determinant of present and future life. Majority of them also agree that they are born in a low caste because of past karma. However, about 42.0% have not agreed with this proposition which is rather a healthy trend. Because they feel that in the name of Karma theory they and their brethren have been cheated and exploited by the caste Hindus which has resulted in the untold miseries down the centuries.

When it comes to continuation of the present social order the respondents by and large are not in favour. Though many think and believe in the 'Theory of Karma,' 79.8% are not in favour of maintaining the *Status quo*, because it is against their interests. To this extent, the SCs and STs in the study have become conscious of their continued suppression. But many expressed their helplessness in improving their social and economic conditions. Table 73 refers.

The people in the survey looked at the supernatural power as an important source in the upliftment of them when about 42.3% gave first preference to God. Those who consider self-effort come next with 35.7%. The disappointment of State's efforts is exposed

TABLE 73: Opinion of SCs and STs

	Do you believe in Karma		Present and Future life is due to 'Karma'		Believe in Hell and Heaven		Have Family Dely		Have Family Caste Gura worship at home		Born in low caste because of Karma		Believe in Status-quo as Dharma			
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Yes	2712	81.44	2664	80.00	2597	77.99	3214	96.52	376	11.29	249	7.48	1836	55.14	623	18.41
No	568	17.06	601	18.05	664	19.94	73	2.19	2229	66.94	2712	81.44	1406	42.22	2658	79.82
Cannot say/No opinion	23	0.69	19	0.57	39	1.17	—	—	—	—	—	—	36	1.08	20	0.60
Photos on the wall	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	359	10.78	—	—	—	—
Not applicable/Do not believe	7	0.21	7	0.21	7	0.21	10	0.30	5	0.15	4	0.12	7	0.21	7	0.21
No response	20	0.60	39	1.17	23	0.69	33	0.99	720	21.62	6	0.18	45	1.35	22	0.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

when only 20.6% respondents preferred government as their first choice in the efforts for upliftment of SCs and STs in the State.

On the whole, the respondents believe in self-effort as the only proposition which can remedy their problems. They also view govt's help as important next to their own efforts, followed by the support of god.

It is observed during the course of the field work that the respondents are tired of viewing any agency as important for the upliftment of the downtrodden in the order of gradation. Very often they were puzzled to select in preference between given alternatives. Their experience might have forced them to opt for supernatural power as the first preference. For them self-effort has less significance in the competitive world, where only people who are economically sound would win the race. While constitutional benefits are available to those who are educationally and politically strong and can move the concerned in the government, the poor rural SCs and STs are helpless. When they fail to get the concessions and do not have resources to improve, it is but natural for them to believe in an unknown power. The lot of them would, no doubt, be improved if a helping hand is extended by the Government in all sincerity.

The conditions of SCs and STs is deplorable by all standards because of exploitation of these masses from times immemorial. Their desire to improve will be hastened if proper support is forthcoming from responsive government. Though democratic society should uphold principles of equality, it cannot be made real in a society where certain sections of the population are kept on unequal footings. One cannot force people with unequal strength to run together. The strong will definitely win. Therefore, there is need to bring the weaker and exploited sections on par with others who are relatively forward.

Naturally the respondents opted for agricultural land as their first choice when asked to identify the areas in which government should attach importance in helping SCs and STs. Being largely landless agricultural/casual labourers their preference is reasonable. About 51.7% respondents emphasized this as their immediate need. Since they are rural based, it is but natural for them to

prefer land which is prestigious and gives security for an Indian. The difference is between rural and urban population. While the rural SCs and STs favour agricultural land their urban counterparts stress on employment and education.

Next comes employment and regular wages as a principal requirement recognised by about 19.1% people in the sample. The only other area in which government action is sought for is through giving education to SCs and STs in the State. As explained earlier, employment is their common problem. Many do not get jobs all through the year or month. Further, wages are not standardised thus giving scope for exploitation. Hence the choice for employment and proper wages is a must for them.

Overwhelming option in the case of urban respondents is in favour of education. The reasons are obvious. The enlightened SCs and STs have rightly recognised education as a means to avail jobs and constitutional provisions. They are the quickest means for their economic betterment. Very rarely one will find people from these communities unemployed. But their main problem is full employment and reasonable wages. Therefore, government is the only authority which the poor respondents can think and bank upon. Unless the laws enacted from time to time are enforced strictly, the economic problems of SC and ST population cannot be solved. Leaving these three main areas no other measures attracted the SC/ST respondents significantly. Table 74 refers.

### **Disputes**

The varied interests of individuals carry them towards conflicting ideals. Difference of opinion is the starting point for all disputes. But, human society has evolved some kind of mechanism to check the growth of such disputes which would have resulted in the destruction of the entire species. Every society has checks and balances in order to sustain from conflicting interests. In a way, difference act as incentives for the development of society, if it were to be directed towards healthy competition. On the contrary, many a time we can see people involved in wrangles which are not only detrimental to their interests but also spoil the health of the whole community. Almost all mechanisms of solving conflicts emphasize the importance of the larger interests of the people

TABLE 74 : Order of Importance For SCs and STs Upliftment

	I		II		III	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
<i>Order of importance attached for upliftment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes</i>						
God	1410	42.34	620	18.62	1117	33.54
Self effort	1189	35.71	1268	38.08	824	24.74
Government help	687	20.63	1383	41.53	1188	35.68
All the three are important	38	1.14	2	0.06	13	0.39
No order of importance	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cannot say/No opinion	1	0.03	1	0.03	1	0.03
Not applicable/No response/Do not know	5	0.15	56	1.68	187	5.62
<b>Total</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<i>Order of importance Govt. should attach for upliftment of SCs and STs</i>						
Removing practice of untouchability	59	1.77	32	0.96	64	1.92
Removing caste	89	2.67	73	2.19	152	4.56
Providing employment & Regular wages	639	19.19	814	24.44	1234	37.06
Distributing land	1722	51.71	865	25.98	227	6.82
Providing education	628	18.86	1177	35.35	883	26.52
Continuation of all constitutional benefits	114	3.42	232	6.97	541	16.25
Nationalisation of temple & temple property	1	0.03	3	0.09	9	0.27
All the above are equally important	50	1.50	1	0.03	1	0.03
Cannot say/No opinion/No reference	16	0.48	24	0.72	66	1.98
Not applicable/No response/Do not know	12	0.36	109	3.27	153	4.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

living in the society. In this direction, a new organization is created to act as umpire and give judgments without endangering the interests of the large community. Almost all types of governments, throughout the world have provided judiciary as an organization to deal with all such contingencies. Whatever is applicable ■ code of conduct to people living in a geographically defined areas have been codified and interpreted as 'laws of the land'.

People living in groups are necessarily prone to involve themselves in conflicts which differ in their nature and degree. It is an accepted fact that those who involve in disputes will have to suffer in some respects. Justice and fairplay are relative and subject to interplay of many forces.

With this background, an attempt is made here to consider the position of the SCs and STs living in different parts of Karnataka. As indicated already, disputes are not peculiar to the SCs and STs but what is unique in their case is the circumstances leading them to involve in conflict. In this regard the village social structure plays a dominant role. It is common knowledge that a person without a sound economic background cannot think of venturing to seek redressal from a court of law.

The social structure of the village has done more harm than good to the people of downtrodden communities. The extent of exploitation of the SCs and STs by the dominant castes in the village has already been pointed out. Social scientists and administrators of the past are also responsible in a way, in perpetuating the low status of certain castes and tribes. The classification of certain castes and tribes as "criminal castes and tribes" is a mistake which is very difficult to rectify.

Apart from the general causes for the rise of conflict between people, the SCs and STs are exposed to additional tensions. While the civil and criminal suits are common to all, in extraordinary situations like the practice of untouchability in its different forms and sources, ascriptive characteristics of associating theft in the village with lower castes and refusal to undertake traditional occupations by the SCs and STs, have all led to exploitation of these communities by the caste Hindus. The control of caste Hindus and dominant castes in matters relating to internal security

and matters connected with village conflicts are true even to this day. The interaction process of the SCs and STs with others in the village follows a set pattern of superordination-subordination which is institutionalized for centuries. Since these are part of traditional behaviour, they cannot be altered easily. Because of all these, the life of a downtrodden in village India has become miserable.

The problem in discussing the details regarding disputes with the respondents under study has to be viewed in two ways. Firstly, it is intended to know the extent of involvement of the SCs and STs in conflicts. Secondly it is very difficult and painful to extract information regarding such matters because, by nature, the respondents were reluctant, as it would affect adversely their position in the village if the upper and dominant castes were to know the intention of the study. This aspect is clear from the analysis when only less than 2 per cent SCs and STs have reported that they were able to approach a court of law to solve their disputes.

During formal interviews a majority of the SCs and STs—nearly 97.0% have stated that they are not involved in disputes of any kind within the village. But this is the distortion of the real situation which is brought home in information conversations. In almost all the villages in the sample SCs and STs were found to be involved in inter and intra caste disputes. Some of the inter caste disputes are entered around such facilities as seeking entry to the village temple, walking in caste Hindu street, access to village well or refusal to carry on traditional services like removal of the dead cattle from the caste Hindu patron houses. Still in some other cases the SCs were alleged to have committed thefts or as having indulged in sex crimes in the village.

In the face of severe economic limitations the SCs and STs quite often are compelled to keep their mouth shut and not report about the disputes. They cannot even think of seeking redressal from a court or other higher authorities in the event of them being involved in intra and inter caste disputes. In a way the figures are a reflection of a true picture of the silent suffering by the downtrodden who dare not openly tell the truth and incur the

displeasure of the village community and continue to live there. Table 75 refers.

Mostly, the disputes in this investigation are solved by courts of law. Police also contributed in the case of disputes of 12 respondents in finding solutions to them. The influence of caste leaders, village elders and panchayat members is not of much significance because very few have gone to them seeking redressal. But, it is feared that while disowning instances of conflicts, the respondents hesitated to give reference to village elders and leaders. Table 76 refers.

Regarding expenditure, for one half of the disputes reported, it is less than Rs. 100/- necessarily these cases should have taken (19 cases anything between Rs. 100/- and Rs. 500/-). Essentially these cases are solved in a court of law and are concerning property.

The role of police who are protectors of law and order is not that significant to the SCs and STs in the study. On many occasions the research staff have noted that the rural police generally take sides with the dominant communities and thereby are not of much help to the downtrodden. Only 25 respondents of those involved in disputes have stated that the police were helpful for them. Another 1/3 chose to remain silent. The remaining are critical of the attitude in that the police are not helpful but arrogant, careless, corrupt and apathetic.

A hypothetical questions are put to our respondents in order to know whether they can afford to go to court in case injustice is done to them. Surprisingly 38 per cent gave a positive reply. The remaining 58 per cent say that they cannot afford to go. Barring 2 per cent 'no response' cases, majority (33.9 per cent) have given poverty as the reason. For about 13.5% respondent, panchayats are coming in the way of their approaching a court of law, since the panchayats are very strong in the particular villages. While 6.5% are ignorant about a court of law, 3.4% are not interested in moving the courts. Table 77 refers.

The myth that the downtrodden are to be provided with some benefits like free legal assistance, exemption from court fee,

TABLE 75: Were YOU Involved in

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Caste disputes	10	0.41	—	—	6	0.80	16	0.48
Property disputes	29	1.19	8	5.52	10	1.33	47	1.41
Village disputes	6	0.25	5	3.45	1	0.13	12	0.36
Criminal dispute/Theft	11	0.45	2	1.38	—	—	13	0.39
Caste & Village disputes	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Caste & Criminal disputes/Theft	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Property and Criminal Disputes	3	0.12	—	—	—	—	3	0.09
Village and Criminal disputes	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Not applicable-No dispute	2376	97.50	130	89.66	731	97.74	3237	97.21
No response	2	0.08	—	—	—	—	2	0.06
Total	2437	100.00	145	100.01	748	100.00	3330	100.00

TABLE 76 : Who Solved the Disputes ?

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Caste leaders	1	0.04	—	—	1	0.13	2	0.06
Village headman/leaders	2	0.08	—	—	—	—	2	0.06
Panchayat	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.26	4	0.12
Police	10	0.41	1	0.69	1	0.13	12	0.36
Court	34	1.40	11	7.59	5	0.66	50	1.50
Not applicable/No dispute	2376	97.50	130	89.66	731	97.75	3237	97.21
Not solved yet	8	0.33	3	2.07	8	1.07	19	0.57
No response	4	0.16	—	—	—	—	4	0.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 77 : Cannot afford to seek redressal from court because of

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Poverty	948	38.90	11	7.59	171	22.88	1130	33.93
Insurance	194	7.69	4	2.76	20	2.68	218	6.55
No court nearby	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
Cannot get justice/Un-dependable	11	0.45	2	1.38	3	0.40	16	0.13
Time consuming	3	0.12	—	—	—	—	3	0.09
More Expensive	24	0.98	3	2.07	4	0.53	31	0.93
Not applicable/Can afford	750	30.78	96	66.21	431	57.58	1277	38.35
Not interested	83	3.41	1	0.69	31	4.15	115	3.45
Panchayat is strong	369	15.14	23	15.86	60	8.03	452	13.57
No response	54	2.22	5	3.45	28	3.75	87	2.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

monetary assistance and so forth is exploded when nearly half the respondents could not understand the alternatives suggested to them in this connection. As many as 52.6 per cent SCs and STs in the study turned out to be "no response" cases. Another 10.9% have no knowledge about the government's incentives in this regard. Those who have favoured free legal advice to SCs and STs account for just 13.0% in the sample. Since majority of them are poor their option for monetary assistance (15.6%) is reasonable. Ironically, only 37 respondents have stated that they do not need any help from the government. A bold answer that courts are not to be taken as places of justice and fairplay and therefore, government should set right things in order to get justice, is stated by 4 per cent of the respondents. Perhaps the past experience of SCs and STs might be disappointing. Table 78 refers.

It is common to all individuals to have one or two persons as intimate to fall back upon during times of family or personal crisis. Before taking decisions on any important issues one will have consultations with such close persons. Rightly, 76.5% SCs and STs in the sample have said that they have advisers, both in their private and public life.

The pattern of representation of advisers is mostly within the kin group. The 38.6% who represent as having their advisers from their own caste/tribe shows the strong bond of caste and kinship. The traditional family system encourages usually kinship affinity and extends to caste circle also. However, approximately 34.0% respondents have advisers outside the above two categories. But in the case of the SCs and STs in the study the outsiders necessarily mean their masters under whose mercy and control they are living. This statement is made after ascertaining the virtually dependence of majority of landless agricultural labourers living in rural areas. Whenever the respondents stated to have involved themselves in disputes, their masters, generally belonging to from non-SCs and STs are groups identified as advisers, Table 79 refers.

## **Health**

Economic backwardness acts as a hindrance in maintaining good and comfortable life. The same reason results in poor health

TABLE 78 : Government help to SC/ST to get Redressal from Court

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	P	%	P	%	P	%	P	%
Providing free legal advice	237	9.73	37	25.52	159	21.26	433	13.00
Exempting court fee	5	0.21	—	—	7	0.93	12	0.36
Giving monetary assistance	379	15.55	11	7.59	132	17.65	521	15.68
Police protection	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.26	4	0.12
Early disposal of cases	2	0.08	—	—	1	0.10	3	0.09
Not applicable/Can afford	5	0.21	—	—	32	4.28	37	1.11
Do not know	296	12.15	10	6.90	59	7.88	365	10.96
Expect good judgment	95	3.90	11	7.59	30	4.02	136	4.08
Others	49	2.01	4	2.76	12	1.60	65	1.95
No response	1367	56.09	72	49.66	314	41.98	1753	52.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.02</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

TABLE 79 : Advisers are From

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
My own caste/tribe	1042	42.76	13	8.97	232	31.02	1287	38.65
Other Scheduled Castes	3	0.12	2	1.38	2	0.26	7	0.21
Other Scheduled Tribe	2	0.08	—	—	2	0.26	4	0.12
Other castes—Non SCs/STs	899	36.89	119	82.07	125	16.72	1143	34.32
Other religions—Non-Hindu	48	1.97	1	0.69	11	1.48	60	1.80
Others	38	1.56	—	—	12	1.60	50	1.50
Not applicable—No advisers	402	16.50	10	6.90	359	47.99	771	23.15
Do not know the caste of the adviser	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
No response	2	0.08	—	—	5	0.66	7	0.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>99.99</b>

of the people. The conditions prevailing in the sphere of housing, food, clothing, sanitation, employment and education also are found in the sphere of health in respect of SCs and STs in the State. The influence of all the above factors on the health cannot be under estimated either.

Necessity makes them to work under difficult circumstances. They are forced to perform unclean jobs which cause health hazards. The living conditions and environment of SCs and STs are precarious. Illiteracy and ignorance resulted in their continued sufferings in all respects.

Though about 90.0% respondents said that no one is suffering from protracted illness in their houses, the study records the general health conditions among SCs and STs as poor. While discussing the demographic characteristics it was noted that the prevailing high rate of infant mortality among the children from downtrodden communities is alarming. Similarly, very few adults survived beyond 55 years of age.

Non-availability of modern medical facilities in rural parts of the State may be stated as one of the principal reasons for poor health of the people. Due to defective policy, doctors are concentrated in urban centres only, with the result the rural masses are exposed to the mercy of many quacks practicing in villages. Apart from these, the attitude of the people also acts as a hindrance in curing the disease. Often people in rural parts resort to folk medicine. The general complaint of the physicians in such areas is that people come to them only in the end as a last resort and this actually spoils their practice.

The public health schemes like improvement of sanitary conditions and providing protected drinking water executed through Community Development Programme and National Extension Service have not been properly administered. Since these schemes are oriented on the basis of co-operation of the villages, many such projects are allowed to become defunct. The SCs and STs being part of the village community are not free from these drawbacks.

Among those who suffer from protracted illness about 5.0% are men and the remaining 4.0% are women. Generally adults

(6.3%) are often reported as sick than children who account for 2.0% of those who are not doing well. Wherever reported, in majority of cases, only one member is suffering in a household. By and large, those stated to be ill are so for less than a year (4.8%). People who are sick for long time *i.e.*, past one to two years and three to five years constitute 1.2% each.

Among those who are suffering about 6.6% have been given treatment either in hospital or by private medical practitioners. Strangely 47 respondents have said that they have not taken their sick persons for treatment to a Doctor. For many of them lack of money is the principal reason. This is confirmed by the respondents and others in the family. When once they are sick and not given proper medical attention, there are less chances for their survival.

About 2.6% representing households having sick people stated that they could spent Rs. 100/- towards medicine. Large number (4.6%) as expected, met the expenditure towards medical treatment by raising loans. Only about 1.5% respondents have stated that they met the expenditure towards treatment of their sick, by savings. Those who incurred loan and partially draw on their savings for such contingency accounted for 1.2% in the sample.

If things are to improve, sincere efforts are needed in fighting out malnutrition especially among children and mothers. Along with this, medical facilities are to be made available to rural people on a massive scale. Training of para medical personnel will help in meeting immediate technically qualified persons. Health education must be given through audio visual media to villages. Education with health and hygiene as a regular curriculum will go a long way in improving the lot in villages.

### Clothing

Along with food and shelter, clothing has to be reckoned as an important factor and should be considered as one of the basic necessities of human life. Type of dress, of course, differs from area to area in the State. It is gathered here that economic stability is the determinant factor in assessing one's way of dress. To think people who do not have even two square meals a day, to

possess luxury clothing is something unreasonable. Their earnings are very meagre and hence cannot meet both ends.

The SCs and STs by and large in the study, are seen in scanty dresses and it is a pity that such a large population of agricultural workers are not protected against odd climatic conditions. Added to this, they are faced with problems like water and housing which forces them to remain usually less clean and ill dressed thus inviting the hazards of diseases and premature deaths.

Often the quality of cloth and the poor dress of people of weaker sections go together. The textile industry in the country till recently never bothered to produce clothes for economically poorer sections in the society. The cheap clothes were of poor quality and did not last long. On the one hand the poor cannot purchase expensive clothes, but at the same time cheap quality cloth is not durable. Between these, cost and durability, majority of them are torn.

The SC/ST respondents, in majority of cases, said that they have no spare clothes to change. Neither the family members are dressed properly. Majority of them are spending only small amount towards clothing of the family members. Apart from these, there is the problem of time to keep the clothes clean. Since even children are induced to work to supplement family income, there will be hardly anyone to take care of washing and cleaning the clothes. Hard manual labour requires sufficiently strong and comfortably stitched clothes both of which are lacking for large number of respondents and their family members in the study.

Further, in some cases social discrimination like intolerance by the caste Hindus if good clothes are worn by SCs and STs is also a reason for the poor dress habits. However, this reason is only given by marginal cases.

The poor living conditions of SCs and STs is amply illustrated when nearly 83.0% respondents in the study said that they spend less than Rs. 400/- towards family's clothing annually. About 15.0% respondents have mentioned that they spend Rs. 100/- only towards this item. Those who spend between Rs. 101/- and Rs. 200/- constitute 37.0% of the sample. Some of them have stated

that they go in for used clothes or take such items given as charity. Table 80 refers.

Like many other problems faced by SCs and STs, the problem of clothing is both a social and economic proposition. However, for majority it is due to lack of funds. Many of their basic problems could be solved if their economic condition is improved. Unless this achieved their lot will remain the same.

### **Food Habits and Consumption Pattern**

Ragi, Jowar and Paddy are the three principal food grains grown in the State. While the southern part of the State is known for Ragi cultivation North Karnataka grows more Jowar. Incidentally both are dry crops. Wherever perennial water source is available paddy is a popular grain along with cash crops like Sugar cane, cotton, Tobacco and Chillies. Ragi and Jowar together with rice constitute the staple food of the people in this part of the country. Rice become a luxury to certain sections—the poorer—of the population because of its higher cost. The SCs and STs in the State fall in line with the poorer sections of the population as far as food habits are concerned.

There are hardly 25.0% households which are self-sufficient and can have sumptuous meals throughout the year. The rest, it is stated, borrow money and grain to meet the contingency.

Coffee and Tea are popular drinks among the people of the State so also with SCs and STs when about 52.2% households prepare these drinks every day while about 29.0% have them occasionally. Table 81 refers.

Majority of SC and ST respondents (62.3%) consider alcoholic drinks as bad since it adversely affects and pinches both their body and purse. They also feel that such drinks will ruin the family in addition to lowering their social status. However, about 17.3% respondents are of the opinion that such 'drinks' are good. According to them, after the day's hard labour it enables them to keep fit for next day's work. Table 82 refers.

Though by and large the respondents in the study consider consumption of alcoholic drinks as bad, nearly onehalf of the

TABLE 80 : Amount Spent on Clothing

Amount in Rupees	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Ra. 100 or less	438	17.97	38	26.21	50	6.68	526	15.80
101 and 200	974	39.97	75	51.72	186	24.87	1235	37.09
201 and 400	752	30.86	24	16.55	237	31.68	1013	30.42
401 and 600	170	6.98	6	4.14	145	19.39	321	9.64
601 and 800	29	1.19	—	—	41	5.48	70	2.10
801 and 1000	24	0.98	1	0.69	50	6.69	75	2.25
1001 or more	11	0.45	—	—	32	4.28	43	1.29
Not applicable/Do not purchase cloth	23	0.94	1	0.69	1	0.13	25	0.75
Cannot Say	3	0.12	—	—	6	0.80	9	0.27
No response	13	0.53	—	—	—	—	13	0.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 81: Do you Prepare Coffee at Home ?

	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Yes—daily	1051	43.13	107	73.79	281	77.68	1739	52.22
Yes—Occasionally	840	34.47	26	17.93	106	14.17	972	29.19
No Never	542	22.24	12	8.28	59	7.88	613	18.41
No—response	4	0.16	—	—	2	0.26	6	0.18
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>99.99</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

TABLE 82 : Consider Drinking Alcohol as

Opinion	Rural SCs		Rural STs		Urban SCs & STs		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Good	432	17.73	40	27.59	107	14.30	579	17.39
Bad	1502	61.63	78	53.79	496	66.32	2076	62.34
Neither good nor bad	382	15.68	25	17.24	115	15.37	522	15.68
Cannot say/No opinion	5	0.21	—	—	1	0.13	6	0.18
Not applicable	1	0.04	—	—	—	—	1	0.03
No response/Do not know	115	4.72	2	1.38	29	3.88	146	4.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>2437</b>	<b>100.01</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>100.00</b>

households account for people who take such drinks occasionally. It could be seen from the Table that about 2.6% households admitted that some members in the household take such liquor daily. However, it is a healthy trend to admit with some reservations when 46.9% SC and ST respondents have stated that no one in their house consume alcoholic drinks.

People in the study are not always definite regarding their actual requirements of food articles. Very often the research staff had to clarify the points as to the requirements for the households in this behalf. Since large number of SCs and STs in the State are poor and have no assured source of income, the capacity to purchase basic needs necessarily depend on their daily earnings. In majority of cases they are found purchasing their food items daily. Therefore, expectation that people from these communities should lead a planned life is something untenable and least possible as majority of them eke out a living which is generally a hand-to-mouth existence.

The general trend among the respondents in the study, it is observed, is to inflate the figures with regard to their food requirements. The research staff were perhaps mistaken for government staff by them to portray their poverty. However, as far as possible proper checks were kept and the data verified wherever felt necessary.

Rice is a precious item of food in the case of SCs and STs in the State. The rather high price of this commodity drives the people from downtrodden communities to go in for cheap alternative items like Ragi and Jowar. Majority of the respondents in the study being landless agricultural labourers, cannot go in for expensive food grains for daily use. In fact many respondents said that they use rice only occasionally. In some households, it is reported that only children are given rice while the rest depend on either ragi or jowar. These facts are clearly brought out when only 10 Kgs of rice per month is consumed in about 26.2% households in the study. For another nearly 23.7% respondents it is difficult to say the quantity since they rarely use rice.

A comparative analysis shows, that the SCs and STs in the State generally depend on Ragi and Jowar as their staple diet. This

is substantiated when about 14.0% respondents said that they require 61 or more Kgs of Ragi or Jowar for their household every month. It could be seen from the Table that Wheat is not a popular food grain in this part of the country when about 70.0% said that they do not use wheat. Table 83 refers.

By and large, the SC and ST people in the study are not able to have nutritious food. Only very small quantity of vegetables are used by some. As many as 43.6% SC and ST households use less than 5 Kgs of vegetables per month followed by another 25.4% who use 6 to 10 KGs per month which is negligible. It would not surprise any one if majority of these people fall below the 'poverty line' and are often semi-fed if not starved.

Being non-vegetarians the SCs and STs use meat and fish. About 98.0% are said to be so. However, majority of the respondents stated that they use only small quantities as the prices of meat and fish have become prohibitive these days and hence they could hardly afford frequent and sumptuous use of these items. Table 84 refers.

All is not well in the case of milk or milk products. Little over one-half (52.5%) SC and ST households do not use this basic food item. In other words, children of SCs and STs by and large are not getting milk or milk products which are vital for babies. Even among those who are using milk about 30.0% households account for less than 6 litres per month which is abnormally below average by any standards.

Yet another essential item of consumption is cooking oil and fats. Even this is not used by the SCs and STs in the study of the required quantity. While 17.3% respondents are not at all using cooking oil, about 75.0% households reported that they use less than 2 litres of cooking oil per month. Table 85 refers.

It could be concluded that by all standards, the SCs and STs in the State are not having a balanced diet, the health hazards from this could be clearly seen. There is, therefore, great and urgent need to cater to these basic requirements by all available resources by any agency or machinery which is committed to uplift them.

TABLE 83 : Monthly Consumption of Food Grains

Quantity	Rice		Ragi		Jowar		Wheat	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
10 Kgs or less	873	26.22	201	6.04	221	6.64	601	18.05
11 and 20 Kgs	425	12.76	211	6.34	313	9.40	286	8.59
21 and 30 Kgs	315	9.46	248	7.45	315	9.46	43	1.29
31 and 40 Kgs	196	5.89	237	7.12	270	8.11	10	0.30
41 and 50 Kgs	192	5.77	197	5.92	184	5.53	14	0.42
51 and 60 Kgs	228	6.85	299	8.98	184	5.53	2	0.06
61 or more Kgs	301	9.04	457	13.72	473	14.20	3	0.09
Cannot say	790	23.72	1470	44.14	1360	40.84	2361	70.90
No response	10	0.30	10	0.30	10	0.30	10	0.30
Total	3330	100.01	3330	100.01	3330	100.01	3330	100.01

TABLE 84 : Consumption of Vegetables and Meat

Quantity	Vegetables		Quantity		Meat	
	F	%			F	%
5 or less Kgs	1455	43.69	Less than a Kg		257	7.72
6-10 Kgs	847	25.44	One and two Kgs		1327	39.85
11-15 Kgs	245	7.36	Three and six Kgs		962	28.89
16-20 Kgs	71	2.13	Seven and 10 Kgs		92	2.76
21-25 Kgs	20	0.60	Eleven or more Kgs		11	0.33
26-30 Kgs	44	1.32	Not applicable/Vegetarian		35	1.05
31-40 Kgs	9	0.27	Occasionally eat - cannot specify		480	14.41
41 or more Kgs	14	0.42	Cannot say		154	4.62
Not applicable/Cannot say/ Do not use	618	18.56	No response		12	0.37
No Response	7	0.21				
Total	3330	100.00	Total		3330	100.00

TABLE 85 : Monthly Consumption of Milk and Cooking Oil

Quantity	Milk		Quantity	Cooking Oil	
	F	%		F	%
Less than 3 litres	655	19.67	Less than a litre	1297	38.95
3 and 5 litres	374	11.23	1 and 2 litres	1229	36.91
6 and 8 litres	197	5.92	3 and 4 litres	131	3.93
9 and 11 litres	78	2.34	5 and 6 litres	45	1.35
12 and 14 litres	5	0.15	7 and 8 litres	6	0.18
15 and 17 litres	114	3.42	9 and 10 litres	13	0.39
18 and 20 litres	24	0.72	11 or more litres	2	0.06
21 or more litres	108	3.24	Not applicable/Do not use	578	17.36
Not applicable/Do not use	1750	52.55	Cannot specify	21	0.63
No response/Cannot say	25	0.75	No response	8	0.24
Total	3330	99.99	Total	3330	100.00

# 10

## Concluding Remarks and Suggestions

Before drawing a curtain on this study it is appropriate to mention some of the major findings and offer some suggestions. Though some of the explanations are obvious and not so new for those who are interested in the problems of SCs and STs, it is necessary to dwell on the points that emerge from the present survey carried out in all the districts of the State.

Through the constitutional measures and policy formulations systematic efforts have been made to create conditions for promoting equality between people, who were through the length and breadth of history got accustomed to institutional legitimation for their ascribed low status.

Several questions have been posed with reference to the special provisions for SCs and STs and their impact regarding ameliorating their conditions. One view has questioned the very need for protective legislation for SCs and STs considering it undemocratic and politically motivated. The second view is in favour of limiting such concessions by application of time factor.

Therefore, it is necessary to know the prevailing conditions among the SCs and STs. The major dimension is to understand the extent to which their economic and social conditions prevail over their continued exploitation. No doubt the problems are very many and difficult, and not so easy to combat within a short period of time. Policy formulation and proper implementation are chiefly attributable to the administration and so cannot be pointed to the past.

The upliftment of SCs and STs in the State has to be based on integrative approach and not in isolation in any one area. Their

economic development, educational advancement, shedding of traditional social disabilities and acceptance in the national mainstream are necessary aspects of development. Although each one of the above are not independent but interdependent, the scientific analysis of each factor separately can help in understanding the nature of its changing form.

The major findings are given hereunder :

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are predominantly residing in rural areas of Karnataka. They are mostly Hindus and follow myths and cults of the majority and speak Kannada, the regional language. The size of the family is relatively small and usually includes parents and children. The sex, age composition and marital status of SC and ST are showing the same trends as that of the general population.

The living conditions of the downtrodden in rural areas reflects their life of agony. Majority of the SCs and STs live in separate colonies outside the village, well demarcated either by a road or at a distance from the main village. Nearly 40 per cent are living in huts, an equal percentage in slightly better houses. Wherever there are more number of huts, the SC and ST population is also high. The only consolation here for them is that majority live in own houses. However, in the terms of area and other basic facilities they are in a deplorable condition. The houses are usually single room apartments without bath or lavatory conveniences. There is hardly any space to keep their material belongings and livestock. The tragedy is that even to this day, more than 50 per cent SC and ST are denied water from the village common water source. For many discrimination is still meted out when they seek public facilities.

More than 80 per cent of SCs and STs are landless agricultural labourers working on others' land in the village. Those among the downtrodden who own some land are usually dry land cultivators and the size of such holding is very small. The representation of SCs and STs as persons with land taken on lease or share cropping is negligible.

The social settings in the villages will not encourage the SCs and STs to cultivate land on lease or share cropping basis. A large

number of them are poor they do not possess the required implements and livestock for cultivation. Except a hutment or a dwelling place, majority of the SCs and STs in the State are living in abject poverty. Very rarely we find households with livestock, implements, carts, cycles, furniture and so forth. Modern conveniences like electricity, radio, watch, car and motor cycle are not found with them. While they are aware of modern agricultural techniques in getting better yield from land, they cannot dream of making use of them for their own betterment since they continue to work for others in the villages.

Though many denied doing menial and unclean jobs like removing the dead animal, scavenging skinning, tanning, grave digging, conveying the death message, shoe and chappal making and so forth in rural parts of the State, it is a fact that the SC families are still engaged in such vocations. Due to population explosion and limited opportunities not many can depend on traditional occupations. This forced large number of SCs and STs to take to agriculture as labourers and eke out their livelihood. Since almost all are engaged in agriculture they have given the same as the caste occupation.

Not many are unemployed among them, though most of them are terribly under-employed and otherwise exploited economically. In other words every able bodied, including grownup children are found supporting family by supplementing income from other sources. Wages being usually low, they lead hand to mouth existence.

By and large the downtrodden have lost all charm to lookout for good days. They consider that the present occupation is the only source of living and are not interested in changing, since they are not sure of alternate work and nor are they aware of any such avenues.

The pattern of SC and ST financial commitments revolve around their employers who are generally village upper caste families. For obvious reasons the SCs and STs have to depend on agriculturally flourishing families. By and large financial institutions like banks and co-operative societies have no meaning for the downtrodden. There are only a few SCs and STs having bank

accounts. Those who take benefit from co-operatives are generally consisting of families availing consumer items. Due to ignorance and illiteracy, the people from downtrodden communities are kept away from these financial institutions. Apart from these, the very nature of transactions deters them from approaching banks.

The reasons for borrowing money from moneylenders are generally social in nature. It may be to meet marriage expenditure of a son or a daughter or to meet the contingencies arising due to death at home or a near relative. Apart from these, daily expenditure towards food items forces them to borrow. Naturally banks and other financial institutions do not advance loans for these purposes. However, the SCs and STs did recognise the profitability of borrowing from all sources except moneylenders.

Though all SCs are not untouchables, this social evil is haunting more than 80 per cent of the downtrodden in the State. This is amply displayed when majority are not allowed to draw water from the village common wells. They cannot enter the village temple. Still majority of untouchables cannot move about freely in the village street. Often they are forbidden walking with chappals on or with an open umbrella. Similarly marriage processions of SCs and STs cannot go through the upper caste locality or near the village temple.

The severity of untouchability practice is more as one comes nearer the traditional and conventional spheres. For example the SCs are denied entry to public eating places in the rural areas. They are also not getting caste Hindu priestly services, barber and washerman services in the village. But no such restrictions are put in urban centres although these factors of discrimination operate very subtly.

Many SCs and STs are not aware of the fact that practice of untouchability is abolished legally. But majority of them consider this practice as inhuman, means of exploitation and man made wrong.

The level of politicization of SCs and STs in the State is alarmingly low. By and large they have knowledge of various constitutional provisions of the upliftment of the downtrodden

including the political reservation. But when it comes to utilization, more than 95 per cent have not availed. However, the SCs and STs consider constitutional guarantees as the only ray of hope for their improvement. Not many SCs and STs are holding office in village panchayat except being nominal members. Panchayat leadership has not changed for long. The general feeling of the weaker sections is that the panchayats, though essentially created for the village improvement are not so in fact. They are playgrounds of factional politics. The SC and ST panchayat members are least influential and generally follow caste Hindu members.

Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe membership in political parties is almost nil. Nevertheless, many know either an MLA (ex), Minister (ex) or such leaders. Majority have voted for Congress (R) in the 1971 general elections. The reaction of many downtrodden in the State regarding the political leadership is one of anger and have said that the so-called leaders are unmindful of SC and ST improvement. Since they are selfish they cannot do good to others, declared the SC and ST respondents.

While large number recognised the name of Mahatma Gandhi as a national leader who worked for the upliftment of the weaker sections, not many could identify the name of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Only educated urban residents have recalled Ambedkar's contributions to the cause of SCs and STs in the country.

Not many SC and ST children are in schools and colleges or in the institutions of higher education. Their number dwindles very rapidly as the level of education crosses primary and middle school. Poverty is the main reason for not sending their children to schools.

The people from the downtrodden communities in the State follow all ideosyncracies of Hindu population. Almost all are having family deity and believe in the theory of 'Karma', 'hell and heaven'. But the SC and ST do not attribute the same for maintaining the *status quo* in social sphere. Majority believe that with God's grace and governments' help their lot could be improved. By and large economic concessions like land, education and employment with regular wages to the downtrodden are recommended by them as solutions for improving their present condition.

Food habits and consumption pattern of SCs and STs in the State follow the same way as general population except they are underfed and undernourished. Not many can afford more clothes among them.

### **Suggestions**

By any standards it can be said that the SCs and STs in the State are very backward in all respects. Here are some suggestions if not recommendations emerging out of the above study, which if implemented, would reduce their misery and help improving their social and economic conditions. These include both the short term and long range policy matters on the part of the government as a committed agency particularly in the face of persistence of the problems. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the State and the country as a whole continues to be the most poor—if not the weakest—economically. In socio-religious and cultural matters they still face worst kind of discrimination and degradation.

Educationally and politically some progress has been registered, yet even here the path is beset with very many intricate problems. In both the fields people of this category can come up to a certain level. But beyond that, irrespective of their ability, achievements and excellence they are not tolerated to go up to commanding heights. This still remains a prerogative of the traditional, the neo-rich and influential upper castes.

The whole approach to the problem so far has been one of handing out doles in sympathy or more aptly out of pity for their plight. There is need to replace this attitude by a sense of responsibility and duty. If the government is willing to consider this as an internal problem, it has to be tackled on a war footing with multi-pronged attack.

Many social evils have been fought and nearly rooted out successfully in the past. Human sacrifice, the practice of Sati and child marriage are cases in point. Dowry is sorted out as a new evil for combat. The problems of successive waves of refugees flooding the country since 1947 and the good gestures like the Tibetan settlements, goes to show that if the government minds, matters can move fast and get resolved.

The favourable legislation and several concessions or 'preferential treatment' shown to these people have justly roused the suspicion and hatred of the people at large. Atrocities and humiliation heaped on these groups in many ways resemble the racial discrimination minus the luke-warm legislative measures which obtain in India. Legislative measures have to be matched by rigorous implementation to tackle this deep-rooted ancient malady. In the known history of the world such problems have been satisfactorily solved. The good lessons of history are always an asset and valuable guide for future.

The interplay of economic, educational, political, socio-religious and cultural matters does affect one another mutually. Hence, there is a good deal of over-lapping. Suggestions are made separately under each heading so as to enable clear perception at a glance. These, however, are not exhaustive and cannot be. New social problems arise out of certain policies and circumvention of the law has been the greatest source of danger all these years. The spirit and not the letter of law which could help to solve many social problems and review the new problems so as to devise new remedies.

The following suggestions are made on a pragmatic basis and if these should provide the new base-line of action both the people and the government in the country would have the satisfaction of not merely chasing the ghost but burying many inhuman social evils for which India and Indians so far have to hang their heads down in international community. Some of the measures might already be there in rudimentary or somewhat detailed form. Reference to them here is not a banal repetition but a re-emphasis which indicates the urgency. The entire range of problems have to be tackled at general and particular levels involving the total population. There should be no onesided emphasis so as to create imbalance and a plethora of new problems.

## **I. Economic**

Under any form of government, assuming that should the present form of parliamentary democracy undergo change, still the following factors should be taken as guidelines for good. Extraneous pressures should not prompt policy change :

1. Provision for house and house sites for all the houseless in which all Scheduled Castes and Tribes would be automatically covered. The most deserving receiving preferential treatment.
2. Care should be taken to avoid segregation of any kind based on caste, sub-caste, religion, tribe or such other categories.
3. In villages, towns and cities, the panchayats, municipal administration and other development corporation authorities which may be incharge of providing these facilities should develop 'mixed' housing complexes and not exclusive colonies to be promoted any more.
4. Any kind of assistance, money and material, in this connection should not be given directly to the party, but an agency which will be accountable to government and needy people. Loopholes like substandard material, constructions and corruption should be checked at all stages.
5. Surplus agricultural land, government land, land obtained after ceiling and land taken from temples or nationalisation of temple lands, should be converted into agricultural communes with agro-industries attached to them. Landless people willing to take to agriculture may be encouraged to take advantage of this scheme, if necessary, with the technical assistance from the government.

Emphasis ■ on the establishment of agricultural communes with agro-industries and marketing facilities and *not co-operative farming* that should be promoted.

6. Remuneration for work in Agricultural Communes should be based on work-point, thereby it promotes work philosophy and checks lethargy, perpetual dependance and parasitism.
7. Permanent usufructuary rights and not individual ownership should be given in all cases where houses, sites and agricultural lands are given in general and particularly where Scheduled Castes and Tribes are concerned. The government should be the owner of all national property in this category.

Given this, the scheme is capable of checking many of the adverse consequences that are traditionally associated, especially with agriculture.

Sub-division, fragmentation, alienation are the traditional banes of Indian peasants. The 'new peasants' would be much more vulnerable. Hence no individual ownership. Social tensions arising out of redistribution of land, fall in productions could be checked or contained by government ownership, while individual ownership makes it a perpetual problem particularly for these marginal groups.

It is neither necessary nor desirable to concentrate only on agricultural land its distribution among the landless as an end of all economic problems. While diversification of economic activities are essential as far as agriculture is concerned, families should be able to join or leave agricultural communes according to their convenience with minimum one year notice. Families which are able to save and acquire property/land of their own at certain stages should be encouraged to leave the communes when the needy ones could be accommodated.

Should the government consider the above suggestions radical, alternative methods of containing these problems can be thought of. One or two such alternatives are suggested here.

8. A minimum of 25 years ban (one generation) may be imposed compulsorily on any kind of alienation, house, site, land, given by government to individuals.

The registration of such alienated property should be strictly scrutinised at taluka levels and officers at taluka levels should be stripped of the authority of changing title deeds atleast in this connection.

9. Evolution and enforcement of a proper wage policy ; Minimum and equal wages for men and women should be fixed for different types of labourers, especially in agriculture.
10. Social security schemes like, Employees State Insurance, Workmen Compensation and Death Relief Schemes should be extended to agricultural labourers as a measure of self reliance.
11. Total ban on child labour particularly of the school going age groups.

12. Rehabilitation of all freed bonded labourers should be attended on a war-footing. Otherwise they will drift and create problems to themselves and the country.
13. Economic incentives in the form of small credit facilities or physical areas of trade, commerce and petty business should be provided to SCs and STs. Hotel industry both in public and private sectors should employ SCs and STs in different capacities and train them which may eventually help them to branch off into catering and other public utility industries.
14. Effort should be made to diversify the economic activities which would help eradicate the traditional stigma associated with certain occupations like scavenging, skinning, tanning and chappal making hitherto followed by the SCs. Scientific methods could be applied in the process of secularising these and allied essential services. The pay scale and technical skills should be matched to make these services attractive.
15. Large scale and small scale industries with development rebates should be started in rural parts, small towns and certain percentage of jobs can be reserved for SCs and STs. The same should be done with public and private sector industries.
16. Major civil works like river valley projects, road construction and other public works should be carried out by government sponsored agencies. Contractors should be avoided or eliminated from these so that exploitation of labourers and pressure on government can be checked.
17. Unemployed and underemployed rural people should be preferred for jobs which involved no technical skill and encouraged to migrate to places of major civil works.
18. Banks and co-operatives in village could help to cater to the urgent needs of SCs, STs and other weaker sections in cash and kind.

Special Finance corporations for SCs and STs located at State capital will serve very limited purpose and whether the benefits would reach the needy poor villagers in the State is doubtful. Bureaucratization of processes in this regard would be defeating the very purpose and exploitation of opportunities by the vested interest groups which are generally forward would continue.

19. Job reservations could be given for 3 generations in all government, semi-government, autonomous institutions and departments. Unfilled vacancies and promotions should be carried forward from 1-5 years until suitable candidates are found among SCs and STs.
20. Reservations and promotions should be applicable to available number of vacancies at a given time and not worked out against total percentage.
21. Expectant mothers and children upto 5 years from among the SCs, STs and other weaker sections (experimental basis) should be provided with nutritious food and a surrounding, which would be free of caste, communal and religious biases and superstitions.
22. Accurate information regarding the provisions made in the Constitution for the upliftment of the downtrodden be given wide publicity and not propaganda, through mass media like radio, television, newspaper bulletins and wallposters. Personnel across the administrative cadres from Deputy Commissioner to Village level worker, banks and co-operatives could play a useful role in this regard.
23. Above all, the role of the voluntary organisations including the State social welfare advisory board which will have a network of voluntary institutions spread in towns and villages, should be also involved in this. Men and women paid and unpaid social workers as well as political leaders should be able to act as catalytic agents on problems connected with these people particularly in creating awareness.
24. A handbook of constitutional provisions for SCs and STs with amendments, if any, should be brought out in multiple languages, English/Kannada, Tamil, Telugu; Urdu, Marathi and Malayalam by the government and supplied free of cost to village panchayats, schools, officials, non-officials, voluntary organisations, literate SCs and STs to further the awareness. This is an important step which could prove far more effective and quicken the pace of spread of knowledge in view of the limitations faced by mass media.

## **II. Educational**

1. **Compulsory free education upto matriculation should be introduced to cover all children of school going age in urban and rural parts. This has to be expedited to check the rate of illiteracy and propel one of the underlying principles of parliamentary democracy to be practised by literate intelligent people.**

All SC and ST children of school-going age would be automatically benefited under the above scheme. Some assistance, like books, clothes, hostel facilities and scholarships may be given to all the needy students of this category.

2. **Reservation of seats in the institutions of higher education for SCs and STs should be limited to three children in a family and upto three generations.**
3. **All SC and ST students having merit should not be counted against reserved seats but included in 'general pool'. The spirit behind reservation is to help average and slightly below average students.**
4. **Two attempts, if at all it is necessary, should be the maximum concession where a SC and ST candidate could be allowed to change from one course to another course provided he shows an academic aptitude for such a change.**
5. **Caste and tribe certificate should be recorded in the school/college like the 'cumulative record' and should not be insisted upon each time a concession is sought for.**
6. **Cast identity of SC and ST students should not be publicized especially at higher levels of education to avoid aptitude and vocational bias by teachers and fellow students. Only heads of institutions should keep such records and any violation of this secret deserve punishment.**
7. **Officials and politicians should cease to issue caste certificates as the same are fraught with many difficulties and misuse.**
8. **Facilities to train SC and ST students for Administrative, Central and State competitive examinations should be stepped up further. There should be one or two such centres in the State in suitable places with all facilities. This could initially last for 25 years.**

9. Government should takeover all private, sick and communal educational institutions and hostels and convert them into general ones. Also exclusive hostels, residential schools and Ashram Schools for SCs and STs should be discontinued for good at all levels. Students should be scattered in general hostels.
10. Cooks, bearers and other class IV employees in hostels can cut-cross castes. Segregation of any kind and exclusiveness should be broken up.
11. Education should be made the 'lever of social change' by opening adequate number of schools and colleges with hostel facilities in different strategic rural areas.
12. Vocation-oriented education and diversification of the same should be considered as a general proposition also applicable to SCs and STs.

Disengagement of education and white collar jobs, job-oriented education based on aptitude should be devised to check unemployment, underemployment and wastage.

13. Means-test applicable to award of scholarship (Rs. 6000 per annum) should be raised to the level of untaxed (free) basic income at any given time.
14. Rise in scholarship amount and its timely disbursement are of urgent need. Inadequate amount and undue delay have adversely affected the cause of education among these students.
15. English should be continued in addition to regional languages at all levels, for the general benefit and particularly for SCs and STs.

### III. Political

1. Minority communities including SCs and STs have to be 'politicised'. Lack of political conscience, mass exploitation by 'vote banks' has resulted in apathy and distrust. Rights, duties and obligations of citizens particularly in rural areas should be highlighted.
2. Like any other vocation, politics has become a vocation. To comprehend the political and other processes a minimum degree of formal education seems desirable in general and particularly among the SC and ST persons opting for politics.

3. Political roles and responsibilities should be fixed on those getting elected from reserved constituencies and linked to the problems of SCs and STs.

Political reservations minus concern for SC and ST problems has lead to serve personal and family interests so far. There is a wide cleavage.

SC and ST political leaders by a curious combination of factors built-in checks and personal limitations have not and cannot play the role expected of them. So there are only politicians and no leaders among them.

While reservations and 'preferential treatment' in any field are likely to accentuate the problems, create vested interests and the stigma continues. The fate of these groups have to revolve in this vicious circle until the conditions in general improve in the country.

4. SC and ST candidates seeking election through reserved constituencies should be given just two terms in any political party.
5. Growth of new leadership among the SC and ST youths which is terribly dwarfed so far should be encouraged. Both the older and aspiring young leaders should be charged with the responsibility of educating and creating awareness among the rural SCs and STs.

In general all MPs and MLAs should share the responsibility of working for the betterment of these groups in their respective constituencies.

6. SC and ST MLAs and MPs should be associated with village panchayats to study, correct and report the problems.

Pre-election padayatras put them under an obligation to their benefactors ; the leaders from dominant groups. This militates against working for the cause of SCs and STs.

Inaccessibility and unapproachability ; the cleavages that separate SC and ST masses from their political leaders should

be curbed. Since the masses cannot meet the leaders, it is obligatory that the leaders should meet the masses.

7. The village panchayats and other officers should be in direct contact with the nature of problems of the people in a given area, suggest remedial measures and in general work for the betterment of these groups.

Panchayats can connive at and thwart all measures enunciated by government. Housing, temple entry, access to village public wells, entry into tea-shops, services of priests and barbers are still not available to large sections of SCs and STs. Surprise checks by officials and non-officials and appropriate steps and actions to be initiated to curb this.

8. The village school teachers should be associated with both education and special duties of highlighting constitutional provisions to SCs and STs.
9. Cities, towns, villages need simultaneous attention. The variation in the range and depth of problems call for evolving appropriate measures.

While scavenging and leather work may be typical city, town problems, carrying the dead animal, skinning, tom-toming are village based. Both face segregation and discrimination.

Urbanisation and industrialization should be encouraged. Planned townships should emerge. These should act as levers of social change cutting across traditional barriers. SCs and STs should be encouraged to migrate to urban-industrial centres. The village, town, city link should culminate in the unification of tribe, caste and nation.

10. The police and law courts have a special responsibility in dealing with SC and ST cases and dispensing social justice. Legal protection should be given wide publicity. Dishonesty and circumvention on the part of police and judges in handling SC and ST cases should be made cognizable offence and so punishable.

The existing punitive measures suffice. The cumbersome legal processes and production of evidence should be liberalised.

11. Knowledge of free legal aid for cases of constitutional violation should be carried to villagers.

The mortal threat always hangs on the village SC and ST minorities in the hands of other majorities. The panchayats should be charged with all responsibility to protect the former in case of confrontation and promote co-operation.

12. SC and ST Commission at State level should be set up. It should be answerable to State legislature and central government on problems connected with SCs and STs including their development.
13. Recommendatory bodies should be independent of agencies that discharge duties connected with SC and ST problems. Ideally they should act as checks and balances.
14. Educated and officials among the SCs and STs, those specially benefited by the reservation quota should be deputed to villages to assess the conditions of SC and ST masses and suggest locally suitable measures or solutions.
15. Entry into govt. service, confirmation and promotion could be prefaced by 6, 3 and 3 months compulsory paid social service and submission of a field report on the lines indicated above.

#### **IV. Socio-Religious and Cultural**

1. The present SC and ST list is defective and not comprehensive. There is need to identify sub-castes and groups who are socially discriminated, economically very poor and educationally backward and differentiated from advanced sections after an intensive study or survey. Tapering of assistance to advanced groups, if not descheduling, should be introduced.
2. Scheduled Caste and Tribes converts to Christianity, Buddhism and other religions since 1900 should be extended all the constitutional benefits.

Freedom to profess a faith of choice should not be denied so long as the secular status indicates *status-quo-ante*, social discrimination, backwardness and low status.

3. To make the abolition of untouchability meaningful statutory abolition of caste system is necessary.
4. Caste and sub-caste names in all public institutions like hotels, hostels, dharmshalas, kalyan mantaps and other private organisations and institutions should be banned.
5. Affixing caste and sub-caste names after the proper names should be officially banned. This practice has carried the under-current of caste consciousness at all stages, particularly encouraged by political events. The currency gained in recent years of such surnames such as, Gupta, Jain, Reddy and Urs are only a few to mention.
6. An assessment, once every 5-10 years of the progress and prevailing conditions of SCs and STs in urban and rural areas may be made by an independent authority, other than the administration and party in power.
7. All big temples and temple property should be nationalised and lands converted into agricultural communes. Govt. should not involve itself with the responsibility of maintenance and given grants to temples or religious institutions.

Temples and religious centres like mutts controlled by caste and religious groups should be banned and State should cease to give any maintenance grants.

8. Communal and religious centres and organisation if not banned, should be converted into community centres with secular membership, participation and maintenance left to the discretion of the people themselves.
9. Religious prayers, pictures of deities, festivals and functions must be banned in secular institutions like schools, colleges, government offices and public gatherings.
10. Government should discourage propaganda of religious and mythological programmes in books, mass media like Radio, T.V. newspapers, magazines and so forth, which implicitly or explicitly highlights social degradation, abuse low status or portray ascriptive nobility and courage of upper castes.
11. Government should discourage organisations on national or regional caste, occupational and religious groups as these are on the increase.

Political leaders and religious heads should cease to patronize these organizations. These have become a nucleus to pressure groups whereby both the leaders and people are revolving in a vicious circle one buttressing the other in irrational matters.

12. All marriages must be registered. No incentives to inter-caste marriages. With education, urbanization, industrialization and gainful employment, increasing spatial and social mobility are expected.

There should be compulsory registration of births and deaths. Proper machinery at different levels of administration to make this an effective and dependable document around which all plans and programmes revolve.

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