



A STUDY ON SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION OF SCHEDULED CASTES IN BELLARY TALUKA



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ABSTRACT

Scheduled Castes are subject to various offenses, indignities, humiliations and harassment. Serious crimes have been committed against them for various historical, social, cultural and economic reasons. The Scheduled Castes had to perform such unclean occupations as carrying night soil and dead animals, cleaning urinals and cattle shed, washing clothes and performing certain duties at places of cremation. These occupations were treated as polluted or impure. So, people performing these occupations were treated as

untouchables. On account of the practice of untouchability the Scheduled Castes had to suffer from the following types of disabilities viz., no physical contact, ban on the use of common wells and tanks, prohibited from entering the temple, did not receive service from other occupational castes, non-acceptance of cooked food, status incongruence and dependence proneness and so on. The Scheduled Castes were deprived of their economic rights. So they remained poor and dependent on others.

RESEARCH PAPER

Introduction

Scheduled Castes are subject to various offenses, indignities, humiliations and harassment. Serious crimes have been committed against them for various historical, social, cultural and economic reasons. The Scheduled Castes had to perform such unclean occupations as carrying night soil and dead animals, cleaning urinals and cattle shed, washing clothes and performing certain duties at places of cremation. These occupations were treated as polluted or impure. So, people performing these occupations were treated as untouchables. On account of the practice of untouchability the Scheduled Castes had to suffer from the following types of disabilities viz., no physical contact, ban on the use of common wells and tanks, prohibited from entering the temple, did not receive service from other occupational castes, non-acceptance of cooked food, status incongruence and dependence proneness and so on. The Scheduled Castes were deprived of their economic rights. So they remained poor and dependent on others. The problems associated with the poverty of the Scheduled Castes are as follows: material deprivation, landlessness, educational backwardness, low employment and government service opportunities, indebtedness and bonded labor, health and nutrition etc. The Scheduled Castes have to face the problem of atrocities. Their houses are burnt, their animals are snatched away, and women are subjected to humiliation. They are beaten mercilessly and are also murdered and killed in groups till date in various parts of rural India, which are highlighted by media frequently, are some of the forms of atrocities to which they are subjected to and when they dare to resist and demand their social, economic or political rights in our country.

Objectives of the study

The present study has the following objectives:

1. To study about the atrocities committed on SCs under the umbrella of Panchayat Raj Institutions in Bellary taluk with special reference to Bellary Zilla Panchayat.
2. To identify the loopholes in the effective implementation of the measures to overcome the atrocities on Scheduled Castes within the jurisdiction of Bellary Zilla Panchayat.
3. To suggest suitable measures for the effective, efficient and transparent implementation of various welfare schemes to improve the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes in Bellary taluk through Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Methodology

The methodology of the study involves a mix of **questionnaires** and formats, discussions and personal visits to the wards and households of the Scheduled Castes in the study area. The study draws on both quantitative and qualitative data. Questionnaires, open and oral interviews, **interview schedules** and focus group discussions were the main methods of data collection. The study has been carried out based on primary data collected from cluster of Scheduled Castes residing in SC colonies and also, all the relevant available secondary data has been utilized effectively i.e., from the offices of Bellary Zilla Panchayat, National Informatics Center of Bellary district, data from the seven taluka panchayats of Bellary district, women and child development department, SC/ST corporation, Social welfare office, District Industries Center and so on.

Primary method of data collection

Primary data has been collected by face-to-face interview, with the Scheduled Caste people residing in the selected talukas and villages because of the nature of the study. The questionnaire and interview schedule method has been used effectively to collect primary information from the Scheduled Caste households keeping in view of the objectives. The semi-structured interview was also used especially for the panchayat members and officials. Besides this, participatory and non-participatory observation techniques were used to bring out the insights of the beneficiaries and their perception to the programmes implemented by the Bellary Zilla Panchayat.

Secondary method of data collection

Secondary data was collected by referring various related works, text books, journals, annual reports, government official records-both published and un-published, NGO reports which are related to the study, office records in the district social welfare office, internet browsing which includes official sites of Bellary district; Karnataka government; census reports of India; official records of rural development panchayat raj department, reports of various research projects, magazines and daily news papers.

Statistical design of the study

The sample selected for the study is presented below:

Coverage of sample SCs in the study area :

| Bellary taluka | | |
|----------------|---------------------|------------|
| Sl. No. | Name of the village | No. of SCs |
| 1. | Parama Devanahalli | 25 |
| 2. | Rampur | 25 |
| 3. | Sangankal | 25 |
| 4. | Kudithini | 25 |
| | TOTAL | 100 |

In the above table four villages are selected for the study and from each village 25 SCs are interviewed to collect the required data for the study.

Review of literature

An attempt is made to review a few important studies on Panchayat Raj Institutions and Scheduled Castes in India and Karnataka with respect to the concerned study and a few important have been presented below:

Rajawat, Mamta (2005) *Development of Dalits*, deals with development of Dalits while analyzing in detail their socio-economic conditions in a manner which gives us a clear picture of their earlier status and modern status.

Rajeshwar Prasad Singh Chhapra, (2007) *Rural Development & Panchayati Raj in India*, attempts to examine the concept of rural development and also people's participation through the medium of Panchayati Raj. It provides an in-depth study of the impact of both on each other. It also analyzes various other issues necessary for ensuring proper and effective rural development and also the participation of all the sections of the rural population. It deals with the issues of weaker section women in the functioning of Panchayati Raj. It even provides suggestions for an effective development of rural areas.

Ghosh, Ratna & Pramanik, Alok Kumar (2007) in their book *Panchayat System in India- Historical, Constitutional And Financial Analysis*, have highlighted that the Constitution (73rd) Amendment Act, endowing PRIs with constitutional status, constitute a significant landmark in the evolution of grass root democratic institutions in India. It ensures full freedom to plan, according to the local needs and potentials. The comprehensive framework provided now, will truly transform the rural economy and give a practical shape to people's participation in the process of economic development with social justice.

Sudha.V.Menon, (2007) in her book *Panchayati Raj- Perspectives and Experiences*, has said that the panchayats have always from time immemorial, been the backbone of Indian villages. Gandhiji, the father of the nation, in 1946 had aptly remarked that Indian independence must begin at the bottom and every village ought to be a republic or panchayat having powers. Gandhiji's dream has been translated into reality with the introduction of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system to ensure people's participation in rural reconstruction. The passage of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992, marks a new era in the federal democratic set-up of the country and provides constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). This book attempts to capture the dynamics of Panchayati Raj experience in India since the 73rd constitutional amendment, taking stock of devolution of powers, extent of de-bureaucratization and availability of finances. The book analyses and critically evaluates the effectiveness of PRI as a system of governance for securing people's participation in the decision-making process, women empowerment, local leadership creation, social capital formation and poverty alleviation. It attempts to explore the possibility of making PRI an effective tool for participatory development, empowerment of marginalized classes and management of local resources. Above all, the book examines the impact of Information and Communication Technology [ICT] on PRIs and its effect on rural people.

Rao, Yagati Chinna (2007) *Writing Dalit History and other Essays*, in this book the author has discussed, that the history of these 'untouchables' has yet become a part of Indian historiography, though the study is of immense relevance and significance on account of the inherent radical democratic identity of their movement and their role as productive communities. Available scholarship on these oppressed communities suffers from lack of historical and written documentation.

Swain, Pratap Chandra (2008) in their book *Panchayati Raj*, have elaborately discussed that the Panchayati Raj is a traditional concept with a modern philosophy. As a modern political institution, it combines representative democracy, bureaucracy and technocracy at the grassroots level. However, the indigenous tribal society in Arunachal Pradesh fails to accommodate itself with a modern complex bureaucratic culture. The present work studies the Panchayati Raj in the tribal situation of Arunachal Pradesh and examines the problem of adjustment of modern Panchayati Raj institutions into an indigenous tribal framework.

Mahi Pal in his book, *Decentralised Planning and Development in India*, (2008) highlights that the country, now has the experience of more than a decade in the working of

decentralised planning and Panchayati Raj under the new Act and at this juncture, it would seem like a good opportunity to take stock of the progress that has taken place towards decentralised planning in terms, inter-alia, of the issues as follows: whether planning process has really started from the Gram Panchayat level in consultation with the Gram Sabha, going up to the district Panchayat; whether planning has been prepared with the involvement of people, particularly women and marginalized sections; whether District Planning Committees have been constituted and what is their composition; whether spatial and temporal sequences of activities have been coordinated at different levels; whether adequate infrastructure in the form of planning machinery and requisite technical personnel are available at district and sub-district levels; whether proposals submitted by the Panchayats and Municipalities have been integrated with the departmental schemes with due regard to linkages and complementarities; whether projections were made and targets were set in the right perspective by the Panchayats, Municipalities and District Planning Committees; whether costs and estimates for the projects included in the plans were prepared; whether the requisite basic planning skills for preparation of local plans have been imparted to elected representatives through training programmes; whether adequate united funds have been devolved to rural and urban local bodies for the implementation of local plans keeping in view the felt needs of local people. It is well known that not much relevant literature on the progress of decentralized planning after the enactment of the 73rd and 74th amendment acts is available, on the basis of which one could judge as to what extent decentralized planning has been operationalised in various States and Union territories. This book therefore attempts to diagnose the malady from which the decentralized planning suffers and has also suggested the remedy for curing it.

Barik, et.al., (2008) in their book *Panchayati Raj Institutions and Rural Development- Narratives on Inclusion of Excluded*, have highlighted that the 73rd Constitutional Amendment provided space for the first time to the invisible and excluded categories in the society to participate in the decentralized democratic institutions like Panchayati Raj, which works at the grassroots level for the development of these people and left alone in the society at large. The papers presented in this volume, narrate about the micro-macro ground realities on a broad canvas of interdisciplinary approach. It also offers a comprehensive account of development dynamics, participatory governance and empowerment of excluded categories.

Rani, Neelam (2008) in the book *New Panchayati Raj Institutions- A Sociological Study*, has discussed, that the Panchayati Raj Institutions have been playing a pivotal role for rural development in general and especially upliftment of down-trodden people in rural areas in particular. This is a fact, that certain changes in the existing Panchayati Raj Institutions have taken place in the context of constitutional amendment. Some policy decisions and statutory changes would need early consideration by the State Government and political parties to remove the constraints, which have become obvious during the recent working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Biju, M.R. (2008) in his book, *Panchayati Raj System in India- A Symbol of Participatory Democracy and Decentralised Development*, has vividly explained that the rural development programmes are designed to facilitate a multi-faceted growth of the rural poor by extending the benefits of development to them. It aims at the improvement of their living standards by providing them opportunities for the fullest utilization of their potential through their active participation in the process of goal-oriented change. Rural development also tends to reduce migrational pressure on cities and towns. It also enables the use of human and national resources in the rural areas and to reduce area-wise differences and imbalances. The government has initiated a number of programmes to resolve the chronic problems faced by Indian villages. As we have

adopted policies of liberalization and globalization since 1991, we will have to look at rural development from a holistic angle rather than from the angle of compartmentalization between the urban and rural development, which particularly became a part of the fast changes that are taking place in all spheres of life with market driven economy.

Prakash Chandra Deogharia and Ashok Kumar Maji (2008) in their book, *Panchayati Raj and Mobilization of Weaker Sections*, have stressed that the role of PRIs in mobilization of weaker sections is crucial not only to strengthen the grassroot democracy but also for rural development of our country. PRIs ensure participation of masses in the process of development and it also mobilizes the weaker sections of rural India to actively participate in the developmental process. However, inspite of the constitutional provision, the PRIs act is not being implemented effectively in our country. It contains four important sections viz., Panchayat Raj Institutions, Panchayat Raj Institutions and Mobilization of Weaker sections, Role of PRIs in Rural Development, PRIs and Role of Women, which provides immense information about the role of PRIs in the development of weaker sections.

Singh.K.K. & Ali.S., (2009) in their book, *Role of Panchayat Raj Institutions for Rural Development*, have discussed that there are strong reasons for making the Panchayati Raj bodies directly responsible for planning of all the anti-poverty programmes and also for the overall monitoring of their implementation. Further, sometimes the power groups in panchayat bodies are represented by the vested interest in rural areas, who cannot be expected to be sympathetic to the needs of the poor. In considering these arguments it needs to be recognised that poverty alleviation is a political process involving the use of resources and technology for the benefit of the poor and there is a need for the poor to gain control over the institutions, vested with decision making at local level for such use.

Verma, S.B., Empowerment of the Panchayat Raj Institutions in India (2009): This book has been designed to meet a long felt need and it provides a realistic picture of democratic decentralization of powers, which cannot be made a success unless the active participation of the people.

Hariprasad Chhetri., (2009): Panchayat Raj System & Development Planning, in this book the author has widely discussed that there has been utter lack of cohesion between the strong political will for decentralization of powers on the one hand and relatively weak and ineffective means of delivery mechanism to support the will at the grass-roots level, on the other hand.

Jagan Karade, (2009): in his study on Occupational *Mobility Among Scheduled Castes in India*, focuses on the nature of occupation and factors which are more related to Intergenerational as well as Intra- generational occupational Mobility in the society. After independence, the Constitution of India has made a provision of protective discrimination policy, especially the reservation policy. Therefore, following the constitutional provision of reservation policy in the post-independence period, many persons of Scheduled Castes left their traditional occupations and took responsibilities of new jobs or position, but those who have taken education and those who have developed skills are taking more benefit and a tremendous change is observed in connection with their family status in the society. The author has made a systematic attempt to establish a positive correlation between education and occupational mobility among the Scheduled Caste people of India. Karade in his study has found that even those who have secured higher education and obtained better positions in terms of economic and social status are also not able to overcome the prejudices at the hands of the upper castes and thus could not totally escape from the discrimination at the latter's hand. As far as intra-generational occupational mobility is concerned, Karade rightly observes that the successive generations of the Scheduled Caste

communities aspire for still better occupational positions as these impart social prestige along with material empowerment. Karade has also drawn attention to an erosion of the reservation policy due to a declining space of the State in the economic activities especially in the aftermath of the process of globalization, liberalization and privatization.

Mohammed Azam Khan & Tosib Alam, (2011): *Financial Decentralization Panchayati Raj Institutions PRIs and Rural Development in India*, in this book the authors explain about the amendment in acts for panchayats like according to the article 243G with eleventh schedule of the Indian Constitution explicitly requiring the States to devolve powers and authority on panchayats which may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self government.

Profile of Bellary Taluk

Origin of Bellary Taluk

Bellary taluk takes its name from its headquarters town which is also the district headquarters town. There are several stories in circulation regarding the origin of its name. In one such story it is believed that the name is connected with the defeat and death of a demon king by name Bala who was harassing devkanyas at the hands of Indra. This place came to be known as 'Bala - hari' which in the course of time was pronounced as 'Ballari / Bellary'.

Border taluk of Andhra Pradesh

This is a border taluk where a significant number of people speak Telugu. At Least 46 villages fall on the border of Andhra Pradesh. The Government of India at the time of formation of Andhra state announced that with the exception of Bellary taluk all other taluks viz, Harapanahalli, Hadagali, Hospet, Kudligi, Sandur and Siruguppa which had large number of kannada speaking people should form part of the Mysore state. However it was only after Mr. Justice Lakshmi Shankar Misra's visit to Bellary and on his recommendations to the Government the Bellary taluk had been merged with the then Mysore state. There is perfect harmony between Kannada and Telugu speaking people.

Its surrounding talukas

Bellary taluk is bounded on the north by the Siruguppa taluk on the south by the Alur taluk of Andhra Pradesh, on the east by the Anantapur and Kurnool districts of Andhra Pradesh and on the west by Sandur and Hospet taluks.

Its geographical area, population and revenue sub-divisions

Bellary taluk is the largest both in area and population among seven taluks. The geographical area of the taluk is 1689 sq.kms., and population is 625494 as per 2001 census. This accounts for 31 per cent of the district's population and its area accounts for 20 per cent. Bellary is revenue sub-division headquarters with 3 taluks. Bellary taluk has 5 Revenue Inspector circles.

Scheduled Castes Population

As per 2001 census report, the Scheduled Caste population in rural areas of Bellary taluk is 57289 and among them male population is 28746 and female population is 28543. In urban areas the total population is 43762 and among them male population is 22395 and the female population is 21367 as stated in the below table 1 respectively.

Scheduled Castes in rural and urban areas of Bellary taluk

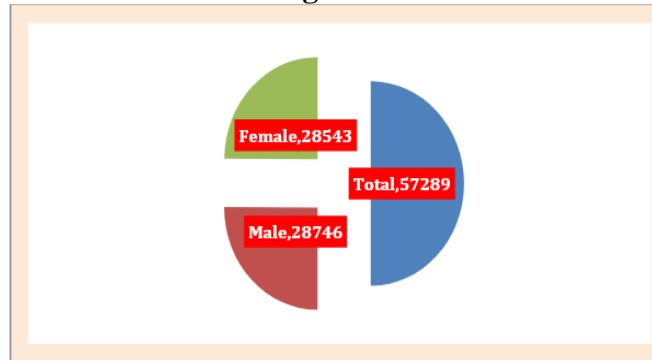
Table: 1

| Sl.No | Taluk | Scheduled Castes | | | | | |
|-------|---------|------------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| | | Rural | | | Urban | | |
| | | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| 1 | Bellary | 57289 | 28746 | 28543 | 43762 | 22395 | 21367 |

Source: Bellary Zilla Panchayat office, Bellary.

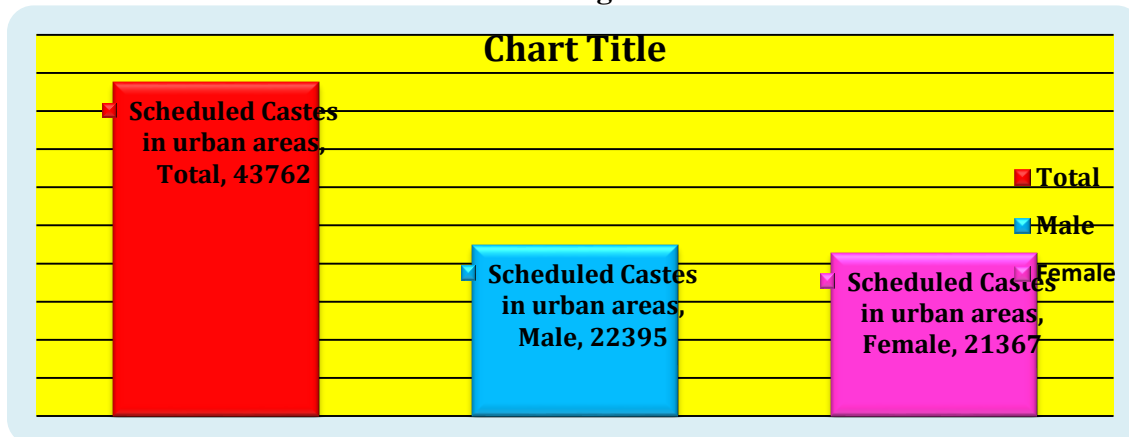
Scheduled Castes in rural areas

Figure :1



Scheduled Castes in urban areas

Figure :2



Cultivation Sector

There are only two tributaries of the Tungabhadra river viz., Hagari and Chikka Hagari which passes through two taluks - Bellary and Siruguppa. The normal rainfall is 525.4 mm. The major crops grown are paddy, maize, jowar, sunflower, cotton, and bengal gram. The net irrigated area constitutes only 61076 hectares (41 %). Being a border taluk many farmers from Andhra

Pradesh have migrated here and cultivate lands on lease basis. T.B. canals cover 59491 hectares (98 %) and other sources of irrigation are through wells and Borewells, as stated in the below table 3 respectively.

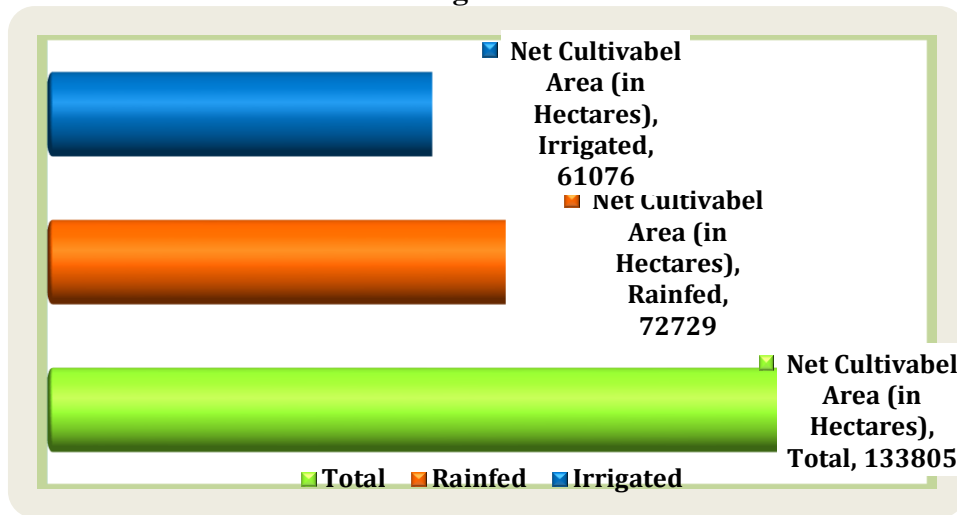
Details of irrigated land under different water sources in Bellary taluk

Table: 3

| Sl.No | Particulars | Area (Hectares) | Per cent |
|--|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Tungabhadra Project - High Level Canal | 51600 | 84.48 |
| 2 | Tungabhadra Project - Low Level Canal | | |
| | a. Perennial | 858 | 01.40 |
| | b.Wet | 2039 | 03.34 |
| | c.DCW | 4994 | 08.18 |
| | Total Tungabhadra Project | 59491 | 97.40 |
| 3 | Lift Irrigation | 534 | 00.87 |
| 4 | Tanks | - | - |
| 5 | Wells/Borewells | 1051 | 01.73 |
| | Total area under irrigation | 61076 | 100.00 |
| Net Cultivable Area (in Hectares) | | | |
| Irrigated | Rainfed | Total | |
| 61076 (46 p.c.) | 72729 (54 p.c.) | 133805 (100 p.c.) | |

Source: Bellary Zilla Panchayat office, Bellary.

Figure :3



Industrialisation Sector

Industrialization is one of the important means of promoting economic development of the country. Bellary is one of the important taluks in the district where industrialization is taking place rapidly. In this taluk there are 3136 industrial units with an investment of Rs. 8823.75 lakh. These units provide employment to 15484 persons. Among medium and large scale units, Bellary Steels and Alloys Ltd, (Sponge Iron), Sharada Veg Oil Limited (Solvent extraction), Mullangi Spintex

Limited (Cotton yarn), N.K.Steels (Billets and Sheet Products), Panyam Cement and Minerals, Hagari (Calcium Carbides and Acetylene Black), Krishna Stone tech Private Limited (Granite cutting and polishing), O.R.V. Casting (Alloy Casting Products) and Bellary Steel Rolling Mill (M.S.Flats and angles) are important enterprises in this sector.

There are 3472 rural artisans whose activity comprises Carpentry, Blacksmith, Cane and Bamboo, Leather, Tailoring, Goldsmith, Rope making, Pottery, Cotton weaving and Silk weaving etc.

Places of Interest

The important places in Bellary taluk are cited below:

Hill Fort: This is situated in the heart of Bellary City with more than two kms., in circumference. This attractive fort which will be illuminated on national festivals is 1976 feet above the sea level and 480 feet above the level of the town.

Durgamma Temple: This famous temple is situated in Parvathi Nagar of Bellary town. Goddess Durgamma is said to have cured diseases and people gather in large numbers during the annual festival in February every year.

Jeeva Smadhi of Yerri Thatha at Chellagurki village: The Yerri Thatha the great saint who came and lived for 25 years in Chellagurki village died there in 1922. The samadhi attracts people from all over the State and on every new moon day.

Kurugodu Temples: The Kurugodu village (declared as taluk headquarters for the newly declared Kurugodu taluk) is 28 kms., from Bellary town. Basaveshwara temple with modern gopura and large Nandi (12 feet height) attracts quite a good number of pilgrims. In old Kurugodu there are nine temples on one side and one temple on the other side of Hanumantha hill. No mortar was used and all had been constructed of granite.

Moka Farm: The Moka village, which stands on the bank of river Hagari, is 17 kilometers away from the Bellary city. It also has one agriculture farm and Malleswara Swamy temple.

Status of Scheduled Castes

If one carefully examines the Constitutional and legal provisions and some of the plans, programmes and schemes that have been started for the welfare, development and empowerment of Scheduled Castes since independence, it becomes clear that these people have not only been made equal citizens of India but have also been given special privileges, preferences and concessions to come out of their traditional, lower, inhumane and deplorable position.

At the same time if we look at the overall conditions of the Scheduled Castes, particularly in rural areas, we find that in spite of constitutional provisions and various schemes to overcome their poverty, illiteracy, destitution, oppression and bondage of these sections in large areas remain intact. Untouchability, though banned under the law, continues to be widely practiced. India's bonded laborers are almost exclusively drawn from SCs and ST families. Only an elite class amongst SCs has benefited from the government policies and welfare measures.

The reasons for this apathetic status of SCs are many. First of all the problem is that provisions and plans for the welfare of the SCs are strong at the constitutional and planning levels, but weak in the implementation. In many reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the Planning Commission and other bodies, it has been pointed out that the staff and administrative machinery provided by the States is not adequate to carry out the policy of welfare, even if necessary funds are voted by the Parliament, hence, resulting a drastic failure in implementation of the schemes.

Another problem is inadequate funds and corruption. To begin with, either adequate funds are not allocated for the plans/programmes or the allocated funds are not made available. Frequently, a significant proportion of funds do not reach the beneficiaries — for instance a glaring example of the failure of land reforms in spite of various measures undertaken in this direction. This failure has kept SCs in particular, deprived of land and dependent on landlords and big land holding farmers in our country.

The problems of administrative apathy and lack of funds is very much linked with problems in planning itself. The planning in general has been lopsided, piecemeal and middle class or even elite oriented rather than mass oriented. At the political level, decisions are taken more keeping in view the immediate concern for votes and not the long-term visions. One result of this is that while law has established commissions and enacted laws for preventing untouchability and other offenses against SCs, these provisions lack teeth and an effective machinery for imparting justice. They, therefore, formulate plans with their own assumptions and as parts of national plans.

A serious matter that has emerged during the last decade or so with regard to the status of SCs is upper caste backlash in some areas. Reacting to emerging consciousness among these castes and their struggle for rights in some rural areas upper castes have begun coercing them violently including killing the activists and raping of the women. In view of the nature and orientation of bureaucracy and police, this backlash is not crushed with that heavy hand as it is required. Infact, in many cases there is connivance of police and other authorities in such cases of oppression.

Thus, in spite of Article 17 of the Constitution, which abolishes untouchability, untouchability offenses Act, which speaks about untouchability and Protection of Civil Rights Act, which protects civil rights, untouchability is practiced openly in many places not only in villages but also in cities. All this is resulting in alienation of those SC groups and emergence of *dalit* movements. These movements are using both constitutional and extra-constitutional methods to seek justice thereby posing new challenges in India's political system.

SURVEY REPORT ON SCs in the study area
Social discrimination of SCs in the study area

Table:4

| Type of discrimination | Rate of scaling |
|--|-----------------|
| Ill-treatment in hotels, group gatherings, meeting places, public transport, etc. | Medium |
| Partly denying access to Public facilities like temples, wells, ceremonies etc. | Medium |
| Using unparliamentary language | High |
| Discrimination and ill-treatment of intercaste marriages and married couple | High |
| Low addressing while Conversation | High |
| Ill informed about the provisions provided by the government | High |
| Poor response by the government officials | High |

The aspect of social discrimination which was practiced in ancient, medieval and British period is present in one or the other form which may be termed as 'hidden apartheid' especially in case of dalits. In the above table 4, it is stated that discrimination in ill treatment in hotels, group gatherings, meeting places, public transport, etc. is at a medium pace, discrimination in denying

access to public facilities like temples, wells, ceremonies etc., is medium, discrimination in using bad language while in conversation with SCs is high, discrimination and ill-treatment of intercaste marriages and married couple is high, discrimination with respect to addressing and conversation with SCs is high, discrimination with respect to providing information about the provisions by the government is high especially in the panchayat offices and there is a poor response to the queries of SCs to the programmes especially in various sectors of Bellary Zilla Panchayat is also at a high rate.

SC victims of atrocities committed by upper castes

Table: 5

| Type of atrocities | Percentage of victims |
|---|-----------------------|
| Insulting in public places | 67 |
| Threatening | 43 |
| Severely beaten up for major and minor reasons | 29 |
| Eve-teasing | 78 |
| Scolding in the name of caste | 89 |
| Harassment in different ways | 56 |
| Ill-treatment during ceremonies viz., marriages, festivals and so on. | 71 |

In 1989, the Government of India passed the Prevention of Atrocities Act (POA), which delineates specific crimes against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as 'atrocities' and describes strategies and prescribes punishments to counter these acts. The Act attempts to curb and punish violence against Dalits through three broad means. Firstly, it identifies what acts constitute 'atrocities.' These include both particular incidents of harm and humiliation such as the forced consumption of noxious substances, as well as the systemic violence still faced by many Dalits, especially in rural areas. Such systemic violence includes forced labor, denial of access to water and other public amenities, and sexual abuse of Dalit women. Secondly, the Act calls upon all the states to convert an existing session's court in each district into a Special Court to try cases registered under the POA. Thirdly, the Act creates provisions for states to declare areas with high levels of caste violence to be 'atrocities-prone' and to appoint qualified officers to monitor and maintain law and order. But in spite of all the measures taken up by the government it is witnessed that even today the atrocities on Scheduled Castes is being committed in one or the other form especially in the study area due to their poverty and social stigma since centuries. Well the above table 5, reveals that 67% of the SCs are being insulted in public places in one or the other form, 43% of the SCs are threatened for various reasons, 29% of SCs are severely beaten up for major and minor reasons, 78% of SCs face eve-teasing in the name of caste, 89% of them are being scolded for various reasons, 56% of them face harassment by upper castes and officials in various ways, 71% of them experience Ill-treatment during ceremonies like., marriages, festivals, fairs and so on and so forth.

Findings in the study area

It has been identified that there has been **continued lapses** in developing the SCs in the fields of health, education, occupation, living conditions, infrastructure in their dwelling places,

discrimination, ill-utilization of the schemes, which are meant only for their development through the social welfare wing of the Zilla Panchayat and such other services and evaluate why various schemes for the development of the Scheduled Castes have not worked upto the mark in improving the conditions of this section socially and economically.

Suggestions

Development and Atrocities: While crafting the multi-pronged strategy of the upliftment of Scheduled Castes, it would be assumed by policy makers that development measures would exercise a profound influence in eliminating disability/discrimination and other conditions of Scheduled Castes which are responsible for caste violence against them. While this may actually have happened in many situations, there are no studies on whether departmental activities to benefit Scheduled Castes have led to a reduction in the cases of atrocities against them. This can only be measured/evaluated with reference to specific areas and groups through longitudinal studies. There is a need therefore to get adequate feedback on the impact of development measures on untouchability related practices as well as the level of physical violence inflicted on scheduled castes particularly from atrocities prone areas identified on the basis of incidence of crime on Scheduled Castes. These researches could be carried out by ICSSR institutions as a part of their ongoing research activities and specifically through Ambedkar chairs set up by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in some prestigious Universities/Research Centres to provide authentic feedback on such aspects. It is necessary in this context that the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment develops a mechanism of getting adequately researched feedback on impact of various development programmes on:

- (a) Breaking of age-old discriminatory practices
- (b) Incidence of violence on SCs
- (c) Shifting balance in social and power relations
- (d) Self assertion by Scheduled Castes against acts of exploitation
- (e) Access to social services
- (f) Conditions of the most marginalized groups among Scheduled Castes
- (g) Pattern of upward mobility among SCs
- (h) Changing pattern of labour absorption and unemployment
- (i) Impact of migration on Status of SCs in their residential village.

CONCLUSION

To conclude the schedule caste in order to overcome their low socio economic status and to avoid discrimination of all kinds should actively involve them self in almost all the schemes meant for their development and also the upper caste should change their attitude towards people of schedule caste so that they too can lead a normal life as their upper caste counter parts and development themselves to such an extent that nobody discourages them and discriminate them in any situation in the indian society.

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