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HARIJANS IN PARLIAMENT :
A SOCIO-POLITICAL STUDY

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Philosophy of the Jawaharlal Nehru University. I certify that no portion of this dissertation has previously been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma of this or any other University.


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Preface

This study attempts to examine the effects of the system of 'special protection' and 'special representation' for the Scheduled Castes and analyse the participation and role of the Scheduled Caste 'special' representatives in Parliament in effecting the amelioration and integration of the untouchables.

I am thankful to the Centre for Political Studies and the faculty members for all the help that I received during the preparation of this essay. I must also express my profound gratitude to my supervisor Professor Imtiaz Ahmad who has been a constant source of inspiration, help and encouragement in my work.

Introduction

It would seem paradoxical to talk of untouchability in the modern world. Even so, the issue is highly relevant in the Indian context. The untouchables, forming the lowest stratum of Hindu society, comprise nearly 15 per cent of the total population, i.e. 80 million people according to the 1971 census. The practice of untouchability by high caste Hindus against this section of the population has been rooted in the social and religious life of India for more than two thousand years and a critical problem facing the country is the amelioration of this section of the population.

After the attainment of independence in 1947, the Republic of India undertook the task of reordering society on the basis of what the Preamble to the Constitution declares in unequivocal terms -- "... to secure to all its citizens; Justice, social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of status and opportunity and to promote among them all fraternity assuming the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation ...". In pursuance of these objectives a major break with tradition was expressed in Article 17 of the Constitution which abolished untouchability and declared its practice an offence punishable by law. Along with this

legal abolition of untouchability, constitutional safeguards and guarantees were also accorded to weaker and backward sections of the population. These constitutional and legal safeguards were expected to bring about the amelioration and eventual integration of the untouchables with the rest of the population.

The social disabilities traditionally imposed upon the untouchables were both severe and numerous. Their touch, shadow, and even their voice, were deemed by caste Hindus to be polluting. The untouchables were denied the use of public wells, and their children were not admitted to schools attended by caste Hindu children. All temples were closed to them and they had no access to public services, hospitals, recreation parks and so on. Elaborate conditions of social segregation were imposed governing the conditions of their separation from the rest of the people. Writing about the practice of untouchability in Kerala State, Ayyappan¹ noted that they were required to live in a separate colony outside the village, and "... to avoid upper caste being polluted, the distance at which the polluting caste have to remain, has been fixed and prescribed by traditions."

1 Ayyappan, A., *Social Revolution in a Kerala village* (1965), cited by B. Kuppaswamy, *Social Change in India*, Delhi (1972), pp. 138.

Similarly, in Maharashtra,² the Harijans suffered from ritual, social and economic disabilities through the centuries. They could not enter temples; no priest officiated for them and they were denied access to wells; their children were denied education; the barber would not serve them. Thus, being deprived of social, religious and civic rights, the untouchables had no means for improving their conditions and certain economic sanctions further limited their prospects. They lived in miserable surroundings of social segregation within the system of caste stratification and with its attendant patterns of social immobility and economic exploitation.

Against this background of severe deprivation and social segregation, the system of special representation accorded by the Constitution was of vital and far-reaching socio-political significance. Political scientists and sociologists have paid little attention to the socio-political implications and relevance of the system of special representation in bringing about change among India's

2 Patwardhan, S., Change Among India's Harijans, (1973) p. 33.

Harijans.³ The object of this essay is to study the effect of 'special protection' and 'special representation' of the so-called 'ex-untouchables' in Parliament and to determine the extent of success of the system as an effective tool in the amelioration and integration of the community into the wider Indian society. It tries to probe into the nature of recruitment of the scheduled caste members, the type of candidates who successfully get elected to these reserved seats in the Parliament, their social background and finally, the extent of their participation and role in parliament. These serve as the basis for assessing the success of the system of political representation itself.

3. On the one hand, some have been tempted to see the provision of safeguards and representation as the very essence of social amelioration and have assumed that they would eventually bring about the eradication of untouchability. See, Owen Lynch: Politics of Untouchability N.Y.; London (1969); S. Patwardhan, Change Among India's Harijans, Orient Longmans (1973). Others, on the other hand, have dismissed the system as wholly ineffective and suggested that the amelioration of the social conditions of the untouchables calls for more radical measures. See, LELAH DUSHKIN Special Reservation Policy in Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XIII (1968-69). There has been little effort to analyse the working of this system and to assess its impact upon the untouchables.

Since very little has been done on the subject, and published literature is scarce, the major source of material used for this essay are Government Reports and publications and the available literature on the scheduled castes. The essay and the conclusions presented should be taken as largely tentative. It is hoped that this preliminary exercise will show the gaps in our knowledge about the problem and contribute toward the development of an approach that may be utilized in the larger study.

Historical Background

The evil of untouchability is rooted in the Indian social system. Historically, it can be said to be an offshoot of the Hindu social stratification based on caste. There is some confusion in the literature as to the fundamental character of the institution of caste and some scholars have argued that the original stratification system was not characterized by the rigidities that accompany the system today. Panikkar has, for instance, argued that the original social organization of Hinduism was founded on the basis of 'varna-ashram', a four-fold functional division of the population. According to this scheme, the population was divided into four broad classes, viz., priests, warriors, merchants and servitors. Panikkar maintains that the boundaries of these four broad strata were not immutable. On the

contrary considerable mobility occurred and people passed on from one stratum to another with changes in their work. Sanskrit scholars have adduced several instances of individuals who changed their status in this way and the fact of their birth did not stand in their social mobility. The contention of the proponents of this view claim that the caste system as it evolved constitutes a vitiation of this highly 'scientific' classification and it would be misleading to suggest that untouchability is traceable to Hindu social organization principles.

Even if it were conceded that the 'varnashram' was a relatively open system, this does not by itself justify the suggestion that untouchability has no historical roots with Hinduism. As the Indian social system developed and became increasingly more complex, the four social strata broke up into large number of social groups and an elaborate ideology was set forth to regulate their interactions. Social groups identifying themselves with the top three strata were entitled to wear the sacred thread and admitted to the study of the Vedas, and, in effect recognized as more or less fully privileged Hindus. The groups identifying themselves as 'Shudras', who form the fourth varna of Hindu society, were, by tradition, forbidden to share in the knowledge of the holy writings or any of the other benefits of religion. The 'Shudras' were present to serve the upper castes, so that,

while they were kept low they were also kept touchable. The untouchables constituted the fifth and the lowest strata of Hindu society. It is, thus, that they have also been referred to as the 'Panchamas' or the 'Avarvas' (as they exist outside the four-fold division of the varna scheme.

The untouchables, however, comprised of a number of distinct groups, people belonging to whom were either 'untouchables', 'unapproachables' or 'unseables'. What underlies untouchability,⁴ is the notion of defilement, pollution, contamination and the ways and means of getting rid of that defilement. ^{Such} The people or groups regarded as untouchables are so described because they are so ordained to be in a permanent state of pollution.⁵

4. Ambedkar, B.R., The Untouchables, 1948, p. 3.

5. Various theories have been advanced with regard to the origin of untouchability. There is the 'Racial' theory which traces its beginnings to racial difference. See: Stanley Rice, Hindu Customs and their Origin, cited by Ambedkar: Untouchables, (1948), p. 43. The racial theory holds that the untouchables were non-Aryan, non-Dravidian aboriginals who were conquered and subjugated by the Dravidians. The other is the occupational theory. See, Ghurye, G.S., Caste and Class in India, (1959), According to this theory, because the untouchables were following occupations like scavenging, leather work, removing dead cattle from the village, and so on, they were looked upon as a profoul group, contact with whom was defiling.

Despite its strong base in Hindu social system sanctioned by custom and tradition, the evil of untouchability did not remain unchallenged. In the course of history, several energetic attempts were made from time to time to free Hindu society from this deep-rooted malaise. Initially, efforts of saints like Ramaniya, Chokamela, Kabir and others were mainly directed towards establishing equality in matters of their Bakti cult. Then followed the socio-religious revival inaugurated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati and others. The most vital role was played by Mahatma Phooley who started in Poona in 1848, the first school in India for the untouchables.

*THE impact of European civilization and the advent of British imperialist rule in India did not improve the lot of the untouchables. The socio-economic conditions of the untouchables remained stagnant and continued to be vitiated by caste during the early years of British rule. Initially, the mental attitude of the alien government together with their policy of non-interference in social and religious matters which they pursued did not improve the lot of the untouchables, on the contrary, it provided a negative support to caste Hindus as education remained the monopoly of the upper classes.*⁶ However, the British could not

6. Kuber; Ambedkar - A Critical Study, P.P.H., New Delhi, 1973, p. 8.

remain entirely indifferent to the socio-economic conditions of the people more especially to backward classes, viz. Untouchables. They introduced legislation like the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850 which provided that a person does not forfeit his ordinary rights of property by loss of caste or change of religion.⁷

The question of removing the disabilities of the untouchables and placing them on a footing of civic equality came up for consideration before the British administrators. According to a Press note of 1858, "All schools maintained at the sole cost of government shall be open to all classes of its subjects without distinction."⁸ In 1923 the Government of Bombay issued a resolution that no grants would be paid to any aided educational institutions which refused admission to the children of the 'Depressed Classes'.⁹

7 Kuber, Ibid. p. 8

8. Ghurye, G.S.: Caste and Class in India, (1957), p. 166.

9. The term 'Depressed Classes' was introduced in the British official parlance late last century. And in 1932 the term 'Depressed Classes' was officially defined as meaning only the untouchables.

The democratic awakening of the 'Depressed classes', the increasing consciousness of their basic human rights was a part of the general national democratic awakening that had taken place among the Indian people during the twilight of the British rule. The introduction of railways, road transport, modern industries, resulting in their labour, were some of the factors that helped to liquidate caste inequalities and caste distinction. The spread of education accelerated this process. These, however, did not occur in a vacuum but were the result of deliberate effort on the part of a group intellectuals and passionate fighters for their human rights and political demands. Among them were men like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and M.K. Gandhi. Both Gandhi and Ambedkar are known to different groups as the 'saviour of the untouchables'. Gandhi was a caste Hindu, the 'Father of the Nation' who is said to have spoken and written more on untouchability than on any other subject. He also made popular the term 'Harijan' (children of God) for the untouchables. Ambedkar, was the most highly educated untouchable in India recognized by many as the untouchables' chief spokesman, the founder of a political party, for the untouchables, and the moving spirit behind organization, schools and colleges, established for their uplift. One of Ambedkar's final acts was the initiation of a Buddhist conversion movement that ultimately attracted more than

eight million untouchables adherents.

Despite their common concern, Ambedkar and Gandhi were often at odds in their programmes for the abolition of untouchability. There exists a controversy which ranks Gandhi and Ambedkar's line of thinking in the context of the origin of untouchability itself. The controversy concerned the relationship of the caste system *via-a-vis* untouchability. Gandhi believed that there was a marked distinction between 'varnashram' (caste system) and untouchability.¹⁰ He defined one as a rational scientific fact and condemned the other as an excrescence, an unmitigated evil. He regards the caste system as a healthy division of work based on birth. The 'Panchama' or the 'untouchable, he holds, does the work of a shudra and he should, therefore, naturally be classified as such when he ceases to be regarded as a 'Panchama'. And he holds that all progress of reform regarding untouchability is retarded mainly by this constant confusion between untouchability and the caste system and the consequent attack on the caste system simultaneously with an attack on untouchability.

Ambedkar, on the other hand, argued that the heart of the problem of untouchability was the caste system itself.

10. See, Gandhi: Young India, 23 April, 1925.

He held, there will be outcastes as long as there are castes. No progress will be possible unless a change is brought about in the social order itself. Ambedkar, categorically asserted that unless the caste system is removed from Hindu way of life, untouchability can never be wiped out.¹¹

Ambedkar's programmes were intended to integrate the untouchables into Indian society in modern, not traditional ways, and on as high a level as possible. This stood in marked contrast to Gandhi's 'Ideal Bhangi' (refer: 'Harijan'; November 28, 1936) who would continue to do sanitation work even though his status would equal that of a Brahmin. Ambedkar's idea was 'to raise their educational standard so that they may know their conditions, have aspirations to rise to the level of the highest Hindu and be in a position to use political power as a means to an end'. Both reformers had a vision of equality but for Ambedkar equality meant not status of the varnas, but equal social, political and economic opportunity for all. Ambedkar planned his programme to bring the untouchables from a state of 'dehumanization' and 'slavery' into one of equality through methods based on

11. Ambedkar, B.R.: Annihilation of Caste (1971), p. 75.

education and the exercise of legal and political rights.

Thus, in the year 1932, when the British were discussing the future of the backward classes in the Round Table Conference, the problem of representation of the untouchables was brought forth by Dr. Ambedkar. He wanted the representation of these untouchables in the government through special electorates. Gandhi staunchly expressed his opposition to the introduction of separate electorates for the untouchables. And he undertook a fast-unto-death campaign while he was imprisoned in the Yervada prison in Poona which was severely opposed by Ambedkar. Ambedkar argued that the untouchables were and always had been "separate" from the main body of Hinduism and that only separate political power would win for them rights that caste Hindus would never voluntarily yield to them. In the negotiated outcome which became known as the 'Poona Pact', Ambedkar yielded separate electorates and accepted in its place a system of reserved seats for the untouchables under a joint electorate with the effect of keeping the legislative representatives of the untouchables under the effective controlling and influence of the dominant Congress Party.¹¹

11. Isaacs. H. India's Ex-Untouchables (1964), p. 39.

This was the beginning of the "Reservation Policy" and constitutional safeguards for the 'Schedules Castes'¹³ heralded during the British regime. As a result of the 'Poona Pact', which came into effect on September 25, 1932 the 'Depressed Classes' gained the advantage of an increased number of reserved seats in the legislature. The Pact also formed the basis of representation in the government of India Act of 1935.

The Poona Pact stipulated that seats shall be reserved for the 'Depressed Classes' out of the general seats in the Provincial Legislatures as follows:¹⁴

State Legislative Assembly	Seats Reserved
Madras	30
Bombay with Sind	15
Punjab	8
Bihar & Orissa	18
Assam	7
Bengal	30
United Provinces	20
Total	148

13 This was the new official term for the Untouchables which emerged under the Government of India Act of 1935.

14 Quoted in Ambedkar, B.R., States and Minorities, (1947) Appendix II, pp. 54-55.

The Government of India Act of 1935 gave full expression to the terms and conditions laid down in the 'Poona Pact'. The Act carried forward the principle of communal representation much farther than that envisaged in the Act of 1919. However, in consonance with the 'Poona Pact', it replaced 'separate' electorates by a system of 'joint' electorates with reservation of seats. Under the Act, the Hindus were given 105 general seats in the Federal Assembly, which included 17 seats reserved for the 'Depressed Classes'.¹⁵

The aftermath of the 'Poona Pact' and the Government of India Act of 1935 gave the untouchables an opportunity to establish themselves and their identity away and apart from the Hindu orthodoxy. The movement gained further impetus when Dr. Ambedkar gave to it a specific focus by establishing the Independent Labour Party.¹⁶

15 Revankar, R.,: The Indian Constitution, 1971, p. 76.

16. The programme of the new party was mainly to advance the labouring classes (it contained little direct mention of what were by their called the Scheduled Castes). The Party adopted the principle of 'state management and state ownership of industry whenever it may become necessary in the interest of the people'. Aid to agriculturists through land mortgage, banks, cooperatives and marketing societies, free and fair primary education and a pledge to bring about a fair mixture of castes in the administration.

In the elections of 1937, the Independent Labour Party backed 14 and won 10 of the 15 reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes and 3 general seats in the Bombay Legislative Assembly, and 3 of Central Provinces and Berar's reserved seats. Although Ambedkar's party -- Independent Labour Party -- was successful in the elections, its position as a small minority in a Congress dominated Assembly was very weak. Hence, in 1942, Ambedkar formed a new party -- The Scheduled Caste Federation -- and limited it to the untouchables in the hope of uniting all untouchables in a new battle for political power.

Side by side with these efforts, the demand for a Constitutional Assembly, elected by the people of India, was affirmed from time to time by political leaders. After a series of deliberations, the Constituent Assembly of India was formed to draft the Constitution of the Republic of India and met for the first time on 9th December, 1946. Following the footsteps of the earlier Act, the Constituent Assembly accepted the proposal to guarantee certain political safeguards to minorities. "The Advisory Committee on Minorities" (1947), recommended certain percentage of reservation in Legislature to minorities. After prolonged deliberations, a motion was moved in the Constituent Assembly in May, 1949 for the dropping of the clause on communal reservation of seats in Legislature on the basis of population. An amendment was

moved and the resolution thus amended was passed on May 11, 1969 which read: "That the system of reservation for minorities other than Scheduled Castes in legislatures be abolished."¹⁷

The provision for representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislatures through the system of reservation has also been imbibed into the Constitution of independent India, heralded on January 26 in 1950. Although the Constitution provides for the reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House of the People and State Legislative Assemblies, yet, it placed a time limit on the period of reservation. Initially provided for a period of twenty years the system has already been extended twice (at present to last till 1980). Hence, with the twice-extended period of reservation, what is vital to the success of the system of political representation of the Scheduled Castes, is the extent to which they get elected to the representative institutions against unreserved seats. Commenting on the representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1961-62)

17 Constituent Assembly Debates, Vol. 8, 1949, Appendix A, Para 5, p. 311; as cited by Revankar, The Indian Constitution (1971), p. 30.

has observed: "If in the course of time, a sufficiently large number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes persons get elected to the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabhas from general constituencies there will be no need for continuing the reservation for them and the constitutional provision in this regard can be allowed to lapse. To bring about such situation, it is necessary that all the political parties in the country should consider this problem very carefully and endeavour to set up as many suitable Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe persons, as possible, from their parties for the general seats in the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabhas.¹⁸

Nature and Extent of Representation

Several studies have highlighted the crucial significance of competitive politics as a means in the search of the untouchables for a new status identity and for a better deal in society. They have shown that the untouchables are increasingly coming to utilize the path of competitive politics as a means of advancing themselves in society. The Parliament can be a very important instrument for this purpose. It would, therefore, be useful to begin a consideration of how for the system of 'protective' discrimination reserving seats for the

18 Report of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1961-62), Part I, pp. 124-25.

untouchables has helped in ameliorating their general condition by looking at the nature and extent of their representation at this highest legislative organ.

Articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution specifically provide for the reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Lok Sabha and in the Legislative Assemblies of India. The Constitution, however, does not lay down the specific number of seats that are to be reserved but only enunciates the principle on the basis of which reservation in favour of Scheduled Castes is to be made. According to this principle, the proportion between the total population of the Scheduled Castes should, as nearly as may be, equal the proportion between total number of seats and the total number of seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes in a particular state or Union territory. Table 1 indicates the total number of seats and the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes in Lok Sabha. It would be seen from this table that the ratio of representation accorded to the untouchables shows a wide disparity with the general Indian population. In most of the states, the untouchables have been allowed representation in the ratio of 1:7 or less. Even in those states with substantial untouchable population the representation of the untouchables remains low.

The extent of reservation accorded to the untouchables should not have been as low as it actually works out in practice

if the untouchables had been able to seek representation also through general seats. The framers of the Constitution had anticipated that this would increasingly come to be the case. The time-limit for the abolition of the system of reservation for the Scheduled Castes was precisely fixed under this anticipation. It was anticipated that in course of time the Scheduled Castes would be able to secure adequate representation through general seats and there would be no need for continuing special representation for them. This has not, however, happened. As the comment of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes cited earlier indicated, the untouchables have not been sponsored by parties from general seats and very few Scheduled Caste candidates have so far succeeded in winning from such general seats.

The overall impact of this trend has been that the representation of Scheduled Castes has been considerably low. Table 2 shows the number of Scheduled Caste candidates contesting election, number of elected Scheduled Caste members and total number of seats in the Lok Sabha.

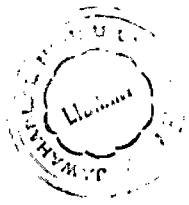


Table 1: Reservation of Seats in the Lok Sabha

S. No.	State/Union Territory	Total no. of Seats	Seats Reserved for S.C.	Proportion between total seats and seats reserved for S.C.
1.	Andhra Pradesh	41	6	7:1
2.	Assam	14	1	14:1
3.	Bihar	53	7	8:1
4.	Gujarat	24	2	12:1
5.	Haryana	9	2	5:1
6.	Himachal Pradesh	66	1	6:1
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	19	6	-
8.	Kerala	37	2	10:1
9.	Madhya Pradesh	37	5	7:1
10.	Maharashtra	45	3	15:1
11.	Mysore	27	4	7:1
12.	Nagaland	1	-	-
13.	Orissa	20	3	7:1
14.	Punjab	13	3	4:1
15.	Rahasthan	23	4	6:1
16.	Tamil Nadu	39	7	5:1
17.	Uttar Pradesh	85	18	5:1
18.	West Bengal	40	8	5:1
<u>Union Territories</u>				
19.	Andaman & Nicobar Island	1	-	-
20.	Chandigarh	1	-	-
21.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	1	-	-
22.	Delhi	7	-	-
23.	Goa, Daveer & Din	2	-	-
24.	Laccading & Minicoy & Aminidiv Islands	1	-	-
25.	Manipur	2	-	-
26.	NEFA	1	-	-
27.	Pondichary	1	-	-
28.	Tripura	2	-	-
Total		519	77	

Source: India: A Reference Annual, 1971.

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As can be seen from this table, there has been an increasing number of candidates contesting elections, but the proportion of those elected has declined. Such a trend could possibly be attributed to the fact that most Scheduled Caste candidates contest from reserved constituencies. This scramble for reserved seats results in increased candidature. But due to lack of corresponding increase of reserved seats, the decline in percentage of candidates elected.

Table 2: Scheduled Caste Candidates Contested and Elected to Lok Sabha - 1957-1971.

Year	Total no. of Seats	<u>Candidates Contested</u>		<u>Candidates Elected</u>	
		<u>No.</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>% of total</u>
1951	499	NA	NA	59	11.8
1957	500	223	44.6	76	15.2
1962	503	278	55.2	77	15.1
1967	523	329	62.9	77	14.7
1971	521	NA	NA	77	14.7

Scheduled Caste Candidature

The majority of the Scheduled Caste candidates who get elected belong to the party in power, i.e. the Congress Party. In the Second General Elections, as many as 82 per cent of the Scheduled Caste reserved seats belonged to the Congress Party. In the III and IV General Elections, the Congress

Scheduled Caste seats declined to 81.5 and 63.3 percent respectively. The Congress backing of the majority of the Scheduled Caste seats in the Lok Sabha could be attributed to the fact that (a) the Congress party which deminated the Indian nationalist struggle, continued to draw huge support from the masses even after independence. (b) The charisma of figures like Gandhi, Patel and Nehru, still held sway over the general masses as well as the Scheduled Caste voters. As has also been pointed out by Huggle Tinker, ".....the great majority of these reserved seats went to the nominee of the Congress, non-entities for the most part but returned by the wagic name of Nehru."¹⁹ (c) The Scheduled Caste fedaration which under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Ambedkar hoped to unite the Untouchable, gaired badly in the First general elections. In the Bombay state, which was its base and stronghold, four candidates contested for the Lok Sabha seats bent only one was elected. Ambedkar himself was defeaed by his long-time chamber opponent N.S. Kajrolkar in the Bombay North constituency. According to Kogekar and Park, "The alienation of Caste Hindus by Ambedkar's bitter denunciation of Nehru, the Congress, and Gandhian policies cost Ambedkar

19. Hugh Tinker: India and Pakistan - A Political Analysis (NY; 1962) p. 55, as cited by Eleanor Zelliot: Learning the Use of Political Means, in Rajni Kothari, Caste in Indian Politics, p. 57.

and the Scheduled caste Federation, the Cast Hindu votes." ²⁰

Though the position of the Congress as the spokesman of the untouchables is gradually on the decline, nevertheless, the Congress leadership groups yet hold a considerable majority in the representative chambers. Even though any untouchable can stand for election from any of the general seats, yet this ^{has} not _h been attempted or found fruitful for the Scheduled castes. The Report of the Election commission notes only three instances (two in the second, and one in the V general Elections) when Scheduled Caste candidates have been elected through general constituencies. Representation against unreserved seats is, however, better in the Legislative Assemblies than in the Lok Sabha.

Very little headway has been made among the untouchables by either the socialists or communists. Though the communists have won some Scheduled Caste seats, as in Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, ²¹ yet, this has been a product of local caste politics rather than as a process of serious political mobilization, of

20. Reports on the Indian General Elections (1951-'52):
Kooken and Park; (1956) p. 23.

21. Refer-Selig Harrison - India: The Most Dangerous
Decades Ch. IV,

Also refer- Isaacs: India's Ex-untouchables (1964)
P. 125.

any durability. So also, the Jan Sangh and the Swatentra, representing the Kshatriya and Bania interests have failed to attract any substantial following among the 'Backward' classes. ²²

Pattern of Nomination

Leaving aside these few Scheduled caste persons who stand as 'independent' candidates belonging to no political party, certain observations may be made with regard to the pattern of nomination of the various political parties-more especially the Congress - and the strategy they adopt in nominating Scheduled Caste candidates to the reserved seats. (a) Writing on the First General Election in Bihar, B.B. Mazumdar ²³ notes that Congress nomination was given not so much on merit as on the avowed principles of integrity and efficiency, as on the record of past service especially the length of terms of imprisonment suffered and the influence which one had with the Congress authorities. Political influence and linkages, therefore, play a very vital role in the choice of a candidate. Together with these, local influences and chances of success are also important considerations. (b) A study of the election results

22 Refer - Suri S., : New Perspectives in Seminar on 'The Untouchables', May 1974.

23. Refer - Reports on the Indian General Elections (1951-52), Kogekarand Park (1956), p. 23.

of the II, III, IV and V general Elections reveal the trend that Scheduled Castes women candidates have been put up in the weak constituencies wherever the chances of the party's success are slender. This is true not only of the Congress Party but also of some of the opposition parties. For instance, in the Mayuram Scheduled Caste constituency in Tamil Nadu, -- a stronghold of the D.M.K. -- in the IV General Elections, the Congress put up a woman Scheduled Caste candidate against the D.M.K. Scheduled Caste candidate. Similarly in the Rai Bareli Scheduled Caste constituency in Uttar Pradesh during the III General Elections -- a stronghold of the Congress -- the Jan Sangh nominated a woman Scheduled Caste and the contest was keen, though the Congress candidate wrested the seat. Again, in the Sagar constituency in Madhya Pradesh, a stronghold of the Jan Sangh -- in the IV General Elections, the Congress put up a woman candidate against a Jan Sangh candidate and the contest was a close one with victory to the Jan Sangh candidate.

Type of Contest

The type of contest determines not only the nature of the Scheduled Caste candidature but in the final analysis, also throws light on the political consciousness of the Scheduled Caste population. The contests, here, have been classified into four types -- 'remote', 'fair', 'close' and

'uncontested'.²⁴ The more 'remote' the contest the less the competitiveness among the candidates and in the final analysis might imply low political consciousness among the people. On the contrary, a 'close' contest indicates stiff opposition and wherein the chances of victory are equal to the contending parties. Table 3 shows the type of contest in respect of the various parties in the II, III, IV and V General Elections.

24 'Remote' contest means that in a constituency the percentage difference of valid votes polled between the elected candidate and runner candidate is more than 15%. 'Close' contest means that in a constituency the percentage difference of valid votes polled between the elected candidate and the Runner candidate is less than 5%. 'Fair' contest means that the difference between the elected candidate and the Runner candidate is between 5% and 15%.

Table 3: Type of Contest According to Parties

Year - Parties	National Parties	Regional Parties	SCF/HP	Independent	Other
1957-					
Close	16	-	-	1	1
Fair	30	-	1	1	-
Remote	16	-	1	-	-
Uncontested	3	-	1	-	-
Total	<u>65</u>	-	3	2	1
1962-					
Close	2	-	1	-	-
Fair	13	-	-	-	-
Remote	55	6	-	1	-
Uncontested	-	-	-	-	-
Total	70	6	1	1	-
1967-					
Close	13	1	-	-	1
Fair	21	3	-	2	2
Remote	26	3	-	-	-
Uncontested	-	-	-	-	-
Total	60	7	-	2	3
1971-					
Close	7	1	-	-	-
Fair	7	3	-	-	-
Remote	48	6	1	-	-
Uncontested	-	-	-	-	-
Total	62	10	1	-	-

The table clearly indicates the predominance of the national parties more especially the Congress Party. The Scheduled Caste Federation which had little backing in the II General Elections, has almost become non-existent since. It is to be seen from the table that the majority of the contests have been 'remote', even though the contests have been fairly widespread. Regional parties have come to play a considerably important role since the IV General Elections. A perusal of the election data in this respect brings to light the fact that contests have been close wherever the Congress held a strong position. Even against regional and other parties -- in their stronghold -- the Congress has put up a sufficiently stiff opposition resulting in a keen contest. Another significant factor which emerges from the above table is the fact that since the Second General Election there has not been any untouchable candidate who has been returned unopposed. This would point towards the healthy sign of increasing competitiveness amongst the Scheduled Caste population. What emerges most significantly in the final analysis, is the declining dominance of the Congress as a representative of the Scheduled Castes. This trend is evident despite the slackened position of the Scheduled Caste Federation and the Republican Party.

Furthermore, studies²⁵ have shown that Harijans are more

25 See Anil Bhatt - Caste, Class and Politics, Unpublished dissertation of the Univ. of Chicago. And also Caste, Race and Politics by Sidney Verba, B. Ahmed and Anil Bhatt, London, 1971.

active at the lower levels of participation like voting than at higher and more influential levels. This is, keeping in view the backwardness and consequent political apathy of the majority of the untouchables. They are also economically the weakest and poorest section of the society. The 1961 census records 10.3 per cent of the 6.6 million untouchables as literate in contrast to the national figure of 24 per cent. As a result, it is but natural that two-thirds of the Scheduled Castes hold menial jobs such as those of peons and attendants when education constitutes a major channel for upward mobility in employment. Thus, the Class I officers in Government service are only a small coterie forming the upper ranges of a sharply slped pyramid.²⁶

The Untouchable Politician

The founding fathers of the Indian Constitution envisaged the Parliament as a vital instrument in bringing about social change and social mobility in the existing system of Hindu society. The Constitution framed under the chairmanship of Dr. Ambedkar contained a number of references to the Scheduled

26. Figures regarding the percentage of scheduled Caste persons in services shows that Class I officers constituted 0.71 in 1957, and 2.58 in 1971. Whereas the Class III officers constituted 7.03 per cent in 1957 and 9.59 in 1971. This shows that even among those in services, majority of the Scheduled Caste members come under the Class III category. Refer 'Seminar' on 'The Untouchables', May, 1974.

Castes, scheduled Tribes and other 'backward' classes (Art. 17, 16 (4), 331, 334 and 335). The rationale behind the introduction of the system of "special representation" of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was the fulfilment of the objectives clearly spelt out in the Preamble to the Constitution. But, it also stipulated a discontinuance of the system after a specified period of time (twenty years) within which progress was to be achieved. Under the circumstances, with the already twice extended period of reservation, the part played by these 'special Scheduled Caste representatives' in promoting that end assumes vital importance.

An attempt has therefore been made in the present section to analyse the composition, nature, and social background of the Scheduled Caste members from the first to the fifth Lok Sabha. Mainly based on the Lok Sabha 'Who is Who', this will indicate the extent to which the Scheduled Caste MPs reflect the social base and cultural demands of their groups. The variables that have been taken to assess the nature of the Scheduled Caste members are those of (i) age - which is said to be the determinant which reflects the conservative or progressive outlook of the chamber; (ii) Education - The level of literacy of legislators has a considerable bearing on understanding the responsibilities accruing to them as legislators and the work of legislation itself; (iii) Occupation - The nature of occupation which one exercises before entering

Parliament is also very vital. It is so, because it can supplement training or be a substitute for it. An administrator or an organizer is more likely to become political material than a person engaged in a routine job; it is hence that the trade union movement has been held to be an almost essential channel for manual workers who want to enter politics.²⁷ (iv) Legislative experience - Prior legislative experience reflects the understanding of members with regard to the functioning of democracy; and (v) Party membership - This would go to show the ideological or other group affiliations and influences on the legislators.

In the organization of the Legislature, the member is the primary unit. He has deliberative electoral and legislative obligations.²⁸ The Legislatures in modern times are not merely law-making bodies or supervisory authorities of the executive, but they also reflect the varied interests and combined will of the people. A legislator, therefore, shoulders heavy responsibilities, since he has not only to represent the problems and aspiration of the constituency, but also to correlate them to the avowed principles of his party,

27. Blondel (Jean) - Voters, Parties and Leaders (U.K.); 1974, p. 132.

28. Finer, H. : Theory and Practice of Modern Governments (1956), p. 386.

to adjust himself to the norms of behaviour expected under parliamentary and above all, to uphold the Constitution and justify himself as a custodian of national interest. In addition to these, the Scheduled Caste members, as 'special representatives' of their group have also the responsibility to represent their special interests and ensure their welfare and progress.

Legislatures are often said to be the political mirrors of the society. Representation of different shades of socio-economic content generates a cross-current and interaction of ideas. The Lok Sabha is heterogenous in its composition. Members differ in their educational attainments, age groups, economic status and legislative experience.

Age

The minimum age laid down for the membership of the Lok Sabha is 25 years. An analysis of the age distribution of the Scheduled Caste members in the Lok Sabha evinces a great variation as is indicated by Table 4. An analysis of Table 4 drawn horizontally shows that Scheduled Caste members in the age group of 30 and below in the I Lok Sabha constituted as many as 22 per cent of the total strength of the Scheduled Caste members. But in the subsequent Lok Sabha there may be seen a sudden and sharp decline to 4, 5, 1 and 4 per cent (in the II, III, IV and V. Lok Sabha respectively). The age-group 40-49 which constitutes the golden mean between progressiveness

and conservatism, has had a moderately uniform and considerable representation since the III Lok Sabha. The extreme younger and older elements have formed a very small fry constituting barely between the range of 1 to 4 per cent and 2 to 9 per cent.

The final picture which emerges from the table and its analysis, seems quite diverse and at great variation. Yet, an increasing trend towards an increase of membership in

Table 4: Age Distribution of Scheduled Caste Members of the I.-V Lok Sabha.

Age Group	I		II		III		IV		V	
	No.	%	No	%	No	%	No.	%	No	%
Below 30	13	22	3	4	4	5	1	1	3	4
30 - 39	23	39	43	55	16	21	17	22	24	31
40 - 49	11	19	19	24	34	45	26	34	25	32
50 - 59	6	10	10	15	14	18	22	29	15	20
60 - 69	1	3	1	1	5	7	3	4	7	9
70 & above	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
NA	5	8	2	3	3	4	7	9	3	4
Total	59	100	78	100	76	100	77	100	77	100

the age group of 30-39 and 40-49 may be noticed. Preference for the age group of 40-49 is presumably due to the fact that this age group provides the golden mean -- it avoids the immaturity of the youth and the conservatism of the old.

It would be worthwhile here, to compare this analysis of the age distribution of the Scheduled Caste members with those of the Lok Sabha taken as a whole. In Lok Sabha, the age-distribution has flattered out in the middle. It implies that even though the extremes of youth and old age remained weak, no age-group was dominant then. In the I Lok Sabha, the members in their forties constituted one-third of the total (31 per cent). In the II Lok Sabha this proportion went to members in their thirties. In the III Lok Sabha as in the First, the highest proportion went to the members in their forties. Similarly, in the IV and V Lok Sabha, they constituted 24 and 30 per cent respectively. Hence, an almost identical trend may be noticed in the age distribution of the Scheduled Caste members as well as the composition of the whole House.

Education and Occupation

Members elected to the Legislature represent their respective constituencies. The socio-political milieu of the constituencies and the relationship between the elected members and the constituency have a great bearing on the achievement of a legislator. The legislator's prime goal is to promote their

welfare, and voice the feelings of the electorate which returned him to the legislature. Keeping in view his role in relation to his constituency, it is necessary to take into account the educational and occupational status of the members; the experience of the members in state assemblies and preceding parliamentary sessions, cumulatively have a significant bearing on the efficiency and effectiveness of the members. Commenting on the members' qualities of a legislator, Finer observed, " ... he needs ... wisdom, shrewdness, logical power and general power of judgement and an insight into human nature ..." ²⁹ Some of these qualities are inborn, while others are imbibed through education, occupation and experience. Table 5 shows the educational level of the Scheduled Caste leadership. Viewing the educational standards of the Scheduled Caste members in the I Lok Sabha, it may be perceived that the high school category comprises the majority with 36 per cent. Graduates and post-graduates constitute 14 and 10 per cent respectively. The representation of professionals like lawyers and doctors has been declining sharply. Whereas they constituted 15 and 5 per cent respectively in the I Lok Sabha, they constitute but 6 and 1 per cent each in the V Lok Sabha. On the whole, the majority of the Scheduled Caste members until the V Lok Sabha belonged to the undergraduate (but high school passed) category.

Table 5: Level of Education of the Scheduled Caste Members in the I - V Lok Sabha.

Level of Education	I		II		III		IV		V	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Post-graduates	6	10	7	9	4	5	8	10	16	21
Graduates	8	14	13	17	7	9	11	14	16	21
High School	21	36	23	29	26	34	19	26	17	22
Primary & Middle school	5	8	8	10	4	5	4	5	2	3
Law	9	15	10	13	9	12	9	12	5	6
Medicine	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	5	1	1
Religious or Vernacular	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3
Private	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	1
NA	4	7	10	13	21	29	10	13	17	22
Total	59	100	78	100	76	100	77	100	77	100

The V Lok Sabha, however, presents an altogether different picture. The general educational level of the Scheduled Caste M.P.s seems to have taken an upward shift. Equally represented, the graduates and the post-graduates together constitute 42 per cent of the total Scheduled Caste membership. This is considerable considering the low level of literacy of the Scheduled Caste population (10.3 per cent according to the 1961 census).

This significant shift can be well assessed by a comparison with the general educational level of the members of the Lok Sabha, the graduates have held uniformly a majority position -- 49 in the First, 52 in the Second, 51, 50 and 60 in the III, IV and V Lok Sabha respectively. Thus, both reveal similar trends regarding the level of education of the members. However, the shift in the case of the Scheduled Caste members is, here, significant and noteworthy, keeping in view the backwardness and the low level of literacy among the Scheduled Caste population.

As for occupation, the Scheduled Caste members have been drawn from various walks of life. Nevertheless the representation of some are nominal while there considerable weightage has been accorded to others. Table 6 gives a classification of members according to their economic pursuits. An analysis of Table 6 brings to light the fact that the majority occupational group represented is that of the agriculturists. Their representation has been steadily increasing from 20 per cent in the First to nearly 30 per cent in the V Lok Sabha. Among the professional occupational groups the lawyers have continued to hold a steady representation ranging between 11 to 18 per cent. Journalists, teachers and medical practitioners constitute a meagre percentage. Though the group of 'political workers' constitute the second largest section, they have no defined occupation and may be called as professional politicians constituting 15 to 18 per cent of the total Scheduled Caste representation.

**Table 6: Occupation of Scheduled Caste Members
In the I - V Lok Sabha**

Occupation	I		II		III		IV		V	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Cultivation	7	13	5	7	5	7	5	6	2	3
Agriculture	12	20	18	23	18	33	19	25	22	29
Business, trade & Commerce	2	3	6	8	5	7	2	3	5	6
Law	7	12	9	11	10	13	14	18	10	13
Medicine	4	7	4	5	3	4	4	5	1	2
Teaching	4	7	7	9	3	4	2	3	6	8
Journalism	3	5	2	3	3	4	2	3	2	3
Political worker ^{**}	10	17	12	15	12	15	12	16	14	18
Social worker	5	8	11	14	10	13	6	9	7	9
Others	3	5	2	1	2	3	3	4	2	3
NA	2	3	2	4	5	7	8	10	6	7
Total	59	100	78	100	76	100	77	100	77	100

* In cases where Scheduled Caste members have given more than one occupation, the one given first has been taken into account.

** The term 'political worker', here, includes all those Scheduled Caste members who after being elected as members to Lok Sabha have either given up their prior occupation or else have no occupation other than as legislators.

Comparing this with the occupational pattern of the Lok Sabha members as a whole, it may be observed that agriculturists have shown an increasing representation in the latter as well. Thus we find that while in the provisional Parliament and the First Lok Sabha they were 6 and 19 per cent, in the IV and V Lok Sabha, their representation rose to 31 and 32 per cent respectively.

Thus the co-relationship of occupation and Scheduled Caste membership is similar to that of Lok Sabha membership as a whole, in as much as in both the agricultural groups have shown an increasing trend in representation. This, however, is not surprising keeping in view the fact that India is predominantly an agricultural country.

Legislative Experience

This constitutes an important variable in so far as it increases their efficiency and adds to their effectiveness in the House. Membership and participation in local and state level legislative organs, also constitutes a vital channel for entry into the highest legislative organ viz. the Parliament. Table 7 gives the legislative experiences of the Scheduled Caste members. As is indicated in the table, 59 per cent of the Schedules Caste M.P.s had no prior legislative experience, while 29 per cent had been members of state legislatures and 20 per cent had been members of the Constituent

Assembly and Provisional Parliament, in the I Lok Sabha. By the time the V Lok Sabha was constituted the Scheduled Caste members with no prior legislative experience declined to 29 per cent. And representation of Scheduled Caste representation of members with state legislative experience rose to 31 per cent. Another discernable trend has been that, majority of Scheduled Caste M.P.s elected to one Lok Sabha had been represented in the preceding Lok Sabha. Thus, 56 per cent of the Scheduled Caste M.P.s in the II Lok Sabha had been members of the First. Similarly, 54 per cent of Scheduled Caste M.P.s in the III Lok Sabha had been members of the Second Lok Sabha.

Table 7: Prior Legislative Experience of the S.C. M.P.s in the I-V Lok Sabha.

Legislative Experience	I		II		III		IV		V	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Constituent Assembly and Provisional Parliament	12	20	11	14	10	13	5	6	3	4
State Legislature	17	29	20	26	21	28	21	27	24	31
Ist Lok Sabha	-	-	44	56	39	45	17	22	9	12
2nd Lok Sabha	-	-	-	-	41	54	24	31	17	22
3rd Lok Sabha	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	46	21	27
4th Lok Sabha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	48
None	35	59	24	31	15	20	32	39	22	29

This analysis compares fairly well with the legislative experience of the Lok Sabha members taken as a whole. As in the case of the scheduled caste members, in the state legislative experience of the Lok Sabha members too has remained steady with slight variations ranging from 25 per cent in the first to 34 per cent in the Third and Fourth Lok Sabha.

Party Membership

Information regarding the membership of parties would reveal the ideological and other influences which accrue to a legislator belonging to a political party. A Scheduled Caste M.P. has not only to represent the interests of his constituency, and promote the welfare of his group, but has also to correlate them to the avowed principles of his party. As is indicated by Table 8, the majority of the Scheduled Caste M.P.s belong to the Congress. This is not surprising keeping in view the Congress Party's backing in the whole House. But the point to be noted, here, is the meagre representation of the Scheduled Castes in parties like the Scheduled Caste Federation and the Republican Party of India, specially formed to integrate and unify the Scheduled Castes. Again, other parties like the C.P.I. and Socialist Party, Jan Sangh and others have a bare representation constituting between 1 to 5 per cent.

**Tables-8 : Scheduled Caste M.Ps. Vis-a-Vis Partly
Membership in the I-V Lok Sabha**

Party	I		II		III		IV		V	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Congress	50	85	65	84	48	61	59	79	47	58
CPI	1	2	4	5	1	1	1	3	3	4
CPM	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	4
Jan Sangh	-	-	1	1	5	6	3	4	4	5
S.C.F.	2	3	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
P.S.P.	-	-	1	1	2	3	1	1	-	-
S.S.P.	-	-	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-
Swa.	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	1	2	3
Cong. (O)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
R.P.I.	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1
D.M.K.	-	-	-	-	6	9	1	1	6	9
Akali Dal	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	3	-	-
Forward Bloc	2	3	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-
Ind. & Others	4	7	4	9	1	1	1	1	3	4
N.A.	-	-	-	-	6	9	4	5	3	4
Total	59	100	78	100	76	100	77	100	77	100

A few observations may be made in regard to the party position of the Scheduled Caste members in the Lok Sabha. Firstly,

that a steady decline in the Scheduled Caste membership of the Congress Party may be noticed. The Congress position as the spokesman of the Scheduled Caste population is being threatened and competition has arisen. Secondly, which is largely a factor responsible for the first observation with the emergence of regional parties in the states, like D.M.K. in Tamil Nadu, Akali Dal in Punjab, and others, Scheduled Caste members have increasingly shown a tendency to greater allegiance with such regional parties. Like in the V general elections all the seats to Lok Sabha from Tamil Nadu went to the D.M.K. Thirdly, the Scheduled Caste members are increasingly becoming aligned to one party or the other. This is indicated by the declining percentage of independent candidates from 7 per cent in the I to 1 per cent in the IV. But there has been a slight shift when this percentage rose to 4 in the V Lok Sabha.

The Scheduled Caste M.Ps. form nearly 15 per cent of the total strength of the House at present. Of these, the majority of them are drawn from the strata of the educated, professionally agriculturists and have had legislature experience in the states and local bodies. Again, taking 'political activity' itself as a variable, it may be seen that in the I Lok Sabha 32 per cent of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps. were politically active.³⁰ In this second Lok Sabha, this section constituted 38 per cent and in

30. Political activity, here refers to the activity of members in trade-union movements and so on.

the III, IV and V Lok Sabha further increased 39, 41 and 42 per cent respectively.

The Scheduled Caste M.Ps. who are educated, with legislative experience and a majority of whom belong to the party in power i.e. the Congress Party, raises the question of firmness in representation. Do they represent the 16 million Scheduled Caste population, 90 per cent of whom are illiterates? Or has the system of 'special representation' only resulted in a further division of the society among the Scheduled Castes themselves - between the educated, the better off and the influential, and the still poor, illiterate and the backward? Again, once elected to the highest legislative organ do they represent the interests of the 16 million population of their group and promote their cause? Or, once elected, themselves coming out of the shackles of backwardness they form a part of the elite cut off from the mass of the Scheduled Caste population and their interests. Before attempting an answer to these questions, it would be relevant to quote here, an extract of the extremist view of an oppositionist, to this system of 'special representation', himself an Ambedkarite harijan from U.P. who held not a reserved but a general seat -

"This system does the Scheduled Castes no good because the people in the reserved seats belong to the party in power..... Although they are educated, they dared not speak out against the party in power. They do not represent their people to the party and government but represent the party in power to the

people....."³¹

Scheduled Caste Members: Participation and Role

The primary function of legislatures in a democratic set up is the enactment of laws. Viewed in a wider perspective, Legislatures are also agencies for interest articulation and grievance ventilation. In the long run, the Legislatures are intended to provide dynamic stability, implying changes within society by exchange and formulation of views and agreed decisions thereon.³²

For this, the Legislatures are to become a reservoir of political leadership so that variegated phases of social thinking may be reflected in Legislatures giving scope to conflicts in a creative manner and paving way for eventual change.³³ It is in the present context of change amongst India's ex-touchables - through the parliamentary machine and its effective employment that the participation and role of the Scheduled Caste in Parliament assumes vital importance.

The question of assessing them the role and pattern of participation in Parliament presents some difficulties. It

31. Cited by Isaacs: Op.Cit.....(1964) p. 125

32. Jain, C.M. & State Legislatures in India (1972) N.D.; P. 200

33. Seminar - Parliament: A Symposium 'editorial'; Feb. 1965 p. 12.

is difficult to evolve a very direct and accurate measure of ^{participation.}
However, the participation of the Scheduled Caste members may be analysed
by viewing the following - (i) questions subject-wise and
member-wise analysis; (ii) Legislation - volume of Legislation
passed in the subject and Scheduled Caste Members' participation
in the introduction of bills; (iii) Motions - Resolutions; (iv)
Exercise of power - i.e. those holding ministerial and other
higher posts in Government; (v) Committees - Activities of the
Committee on the welfare of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Caste
participation in the Committee.³⁴ A sample has been taken in
order to assess the participation of the Members in all the
five Lok Sabhas. For the purpose, one day has been chosen
randomly from all the sessions of the hitherto five Parliaments-
till Dec. 1973. On the basis of the study of these 64 days of
Lok Sabha sittings since independence, a fairly accurate assess-
ment may be made in regard to the Scheduled Caste Members' role
and participation in Parliament.

Questions

The question hour in Parliament is considered the most
effective safeguard of parliamentary democracy. Through it, the
members raise-questions on governmental policies and programmes
and also try to bring to the notice of the government the
grievances of the public. Table-9 shows the quantum of Schedu-
led Caste M.P's participation in 'Questions'. And Table 10

34. Data is based mainly on the Lok Sabha debates, Reports
of Committees, Lok Sabha souvenirs published by Lok
Sabha Secretariat and so on.

brings to light the extent of participation of Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Caste M.Ps. The tables reveal that a major proportion of the questions asked by the Scheduled Caste Members come under that category of questions, answers to which are given in a "written" form. Such category of questions do not involve any discussion but are purely information-seeking or fact-finding. 'Oral' questions are, on the other hand prone to lead to discussion and to which 'supplementary' questions may also be asked. Scheduled Caste Members' participation in this regard has been nominal. The percentage of 'supplementary' questions asked by Scheduled Caste Members has also been low - with barely 7 per cent in the Second, 6 in the Third and 7 and 8 per cent in the Fourth and the Fifth Lok Sabha. On the subject of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes-itself, the Scheduled Caste Members have been active and participating. As is evident from Table 10, a major proportion of questions on the subject have been put forward by the Scheduled Caste Members themselves.

Table-9: Scheduled Caste participation in 'Questions'

Lok Sabha	Oral		Written		Supple- mentary		Total	
	S.C.	General	SC	Gen.	SC	Gen.	SC	Gen.
I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
II	-	8	10	23	-	3	-	44
III	-	22	4	5	1	5	-	83
IV	1	13	10	29	-	4	-	57
V	-	2	5	16	-	2	-	25

Thus in the II Lok Sabha 72 per cent of the questions have been put forward by the Scheduled Caste M.Ps. However, a steady decline in the predominance of Scheduled Caste M.Ps. in this regard may be noticed - 69 per cent in the IV Lok Sabha and 42 in the fifth. Since 1967, this problem of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has received much attention from even non-scheduled caste members, who had hitherto regarded it more or less a field of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps.

Table-10: Scheduled Caste Vis-à-Vis non-Scheduled Caste participation with to the subject of Scheduled Caste Welfare in Questions.

Lok Sabha	Scheduled Caste			Non-Scheduled Caste		
	Oral	Written	Suppl.	Oral	Written	Suppl.
I	-	-	-	-	-	-
II	-	10	-	-	4	-
III	-	4	1	-	-	-
IV	1	10	-	1	4	-
V	-	5	-	2	5	-

A noteworthy observation which may be made in this regard is that which concerns the quantum of participation by the Scheduled Caste M.Ps. with regard to 'Questions' in Parliament. (See, Appendix). Here, we find that nearly 13 per cent of the Scheduled

Caste M.Ps. have not put forward any 'question' in the span of the second, Third and Fourth Lok Sabha. Again, only 28 to 30 per cent of the Scheduled Caste Members have been active and participating in all the five Lok Sabha sittings. Furthermore, most of these Scheduled Caste Members have been those who had been members of the preceding Lok Sabha and who had legislative experience.

A third aspect which needs to be examined here is the type of questions that have been asked relating ^{to} the welfare of the Scheduled Castes. Table 11 indicates the type of question, by whom introduced - Scheduled Caste or non-Scheduled Caste - and the nature of the questions asked - oral, written, or supplementary. Table 11 also shows (as already indicated by Tables 9 and 10) that almost 90 per cent of the questions asked on the subject of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes were 'written' - i.e. purely fact-finding and information-seeking questions. Secondly, non-Scheduled Caste members have increasingly shown interest and concern toward Scheduled Caste Welfare and progress. Thus, a very significant question was raised by a non-Scheduled Caste member in the span of the Fourth Lok Sabha. This concerned the extent of progress made in the economic and social uplift of the Harijans. In the discussion, the member stressed on the fact that all sections of the Haryana population were not getting the benefits due to their existence but that only certain groups were availing themselves of such special benefits and opportunities. In this regard, the member stressed on the role of voluntarily organisation to make available such benefits to all sections of

Table 11: Nature and Characteristics of Questions asked in II-V Lok Sabha on the Children of the Scheduled Caste.

Subject	Lok Sabha	Introduced by S.C./N.Sc.	Oral/Written Supplementary
1. Labours of money allotted to the welfare of S.C. in Punjab	II	HSC	Written
2. Spending of money allotted to SC/ST under I Plan	"	SC	"
3. Steps taken to bring SC into Community Development Projects	"	"	"
4. Post-Matric Scholarships to SC students	"	"	"
5. Colonies for Scheduled Caste	"	"	"
6. Houses for Scheduled Caste	"	"	"
7. Houses for S.C. in Punjab	"	HSC	"
8. Commissioner for SC and ST	"	HSC	"
9. Commissioner for SC and ST	"	HSC	"
10. Colonies for SC in UP	"	SC	"
11. Number of employees in the office of commissioner for SC/ST	"	SC	"
12. Submission of Report of Commissioner for SC/ST	"	"	"
13. Reservation of posts in Finance Ministry for SC Persons	"	"	"
14. Amount spent on SC agriculturists in Punjab	"	"	"
15. Horizontal quota in recruitment rules in public undertakings	III	SC	Supplementary
16. Reservation vacancies for SC created by UPSC as unreserved	"	SC	Written

Table II continued.

Subject	Lot Sched.	Introduced by DC/N.SG	Oral/written Supplementary
17. Employment position in Punjab and number of SC placed in employment.	III	SC	Written
18. Appointment of SC as teachers in Delhi schools	"	NSC	"
19. Number of SC employees in research schools and Standard Organization Design, Lucknow	"	"	"
20. SC/ST working in the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting	IV	SC	"
21. Commissioner for SC/ST	"	"	"
22. Number of SC in Finance Ministry	"	"	"
23. Atrocities on Harijans in H.P.	"	"	"
24. Scholarship for SC/ST students in Schools	"	"	"
25. Reservation of vacancies for SC/ST in Railways	"	"	"
26. Reservation in promotion for SC/ST Railway employees	"	"	"
27. Facilities due to SC not being accorded to them	"	"	Oral
28. Extent of progress made in the economic and social uplift of Harijans - future plans	"	NSC	"
29. Social welfare schemes for SC/ST in H.P.	"	"	Written
30. Overseas scholarships for SC/ST students.	"	"	"
31. Report of Commissioner on Recruitment of SC/ST in public undertakings	"	"	"
32. Appointment of new commissioner for SC/ST	"	SC	"
33. Post-Matric scholarships to SC/ST in each state/union Territory	"	"	"

Subject	LoK Sabha	Introduced by SC/SSC	Oral/Written Supplementary
34. Appointment of SC/ST in various posts in Indian Airlines	"	NSC	"
35. Appointment of SC/ST as Hindi lecturers in Delhi University	"		"
36. Admissions reservation of seats for SC/ST in Sainik schools	V	SC	"
37. Reservation of seats for SC/ST in Law college, Delhi	"	"	"
38. Admission of SC/ST to All India Institute of Speech & Hearing Lycero	"	"	"
39. Constitutional Benefits to various committees of SC/ST	"	NSC	"
40. Allocation of funds for welfare of Harijans in Punjab	"	"	Oral
41. Delay in re-introduction of SC/ST Ordinance Amendment Bill in Parliament	"	"	"
42. Coaching centres for I.A.S. and other competitive exams. for SC/ST persons.	"	"	"
43. Recommendation of Commissioner for SC/ST to increase scholarships	V	NSC	Written
44. Torture of Harijans in Punjab and U.P.	"	"	"
45. Benefit of Land Referral to Harijans in UP	"	"	"
46. Staff strength in Delhi Public Libraries and number of SC/ST employees	"	SC	"
47. Staff strength in Central Secretariat Library and number of SC/ST persons	"	"	"

population.

Looking into Scheduled Caste participation in 'general issues' - i.e. matters other than those concerning the Scheduled Castes' Welfare - it may be noted that their participation has been limited to a few Scheduled Caste members. It has been 20 to 30 per cent of the Scheduled Caste members who have been active and participating on general issues in Parliament.

Bills and Legislation

This has an important bearing not only on the success and effectiveness of Scheduled Caste representation in Parliament but also on the success of Parliament itself, as an instrument of social change. 'Change through Legislation' is the basic premise of parliamentary democracy. Through legislation, attempts have been made to effect the integration of untouchable into society. Table 12 shows the nature of Bills introduced in

Table 12: Bills introduced in Parliament on the welfare of S.C.

Name of Mover	SC/NSC	Lok Sabha	Subject	Decision of the House
Smt. Minimata	SC	I	Untouchability offences Bill.	Adopted
S.B. Chaudhary	NSC	I	Establishment of a Department for the welfare of SC/ST.	Withdrawn by leave of the House.
P. Govinda Menon	NSC	IV	Establishment of a Parl. Comm. for the welfare of SC/ST.	-do-

(Subsequently adopted)

Lok Sabha on the subject of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes, by whom introduced and the final outcome of the Bill. The emphasis, throughout, has been on enabling the Scheduled Castes to enjoy effectively the same rights in civil, social and religious matters as are enjoyed by others. This was the essence behind both the Untouchability Offences Bill and the Bill which sought the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As was pointed out by a Scheduled Caste member in the debate on the latter Bill, that the Committee should be empowered to (a) examine cases of injustice (b) suggest additional measures to be taken by the Union Government for the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, (c) to conduct a survey of economic and social status of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of some selected places, both rural and urban throughout the country.

Secondly, through the debates may be traced another line of argument wherein it has been stressed that the cause of the untouchables can only be tackled by the Scheduled Caste persons alone. As pointed out by a Scheduled Caste member, "nothing else can satisfy them, unless they themselves have a hand in the running and administration of the Government at the centre and the states".³⁶

35. Lok Sabha Debates, Vol. XX P.3486-3542.

36. Ibid. P.3486-3542.

Motion

Discussions on motions on matters of public importance form a very important part of parliamentary proceedings. Several discussions are held on such matters which are raised in Lok Sabha through motions under Rule 191 (i.e. No-day-yet-named motions), Rule 193 (i.e. short duration discussion on matters of urgent public importance), Rule 342 (for taking into consideration a policy or a situation or a statement on any other matter) and Rule 55 (half-an-hour discussion on a matter of sufficient public importance arising out of the answer to a question put by a member). Table 13 shows the number of motions-Resolutions introduced in Parliament and Scheduled Caste participation. Table 13 clearly shows that a major portion of the discussion on the subject of the welfare of Scheduled Castes was in regard to the periodical debate on the Reports of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. And the motions under Rule 191 and 342 have been by Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Caste members in the ratio of 4:7. The subject of Scheduled Caste welfare has never been brought up during the half-hour discussion.

The Harijan problem, however, came up for discussion under the 'calling attention motions' to matters of urgent public importance, twice, during the span of the IV Lok Sabha. Both were initiated by Scheduled Caste members. The first was on the reported inhuman incidents relating to Harijans in Andhra Pradesh was moved on 26th March, 68. The member called the attention of the Minister of Home Affairs to the reported ugly

Table 13: Motions-Resolutions on Scheduled Caste Welfare in Parliament.

Year	Subject	Mover	Nature of Motion	Discussion of the House
1957	Report of Commissioner for SC & ST (1957-58)	NSC	Motion under Rule 191&342	Adopted
1957	Extension of constitutional safeguards to Budhist converts	SC	Private member resolution	Negatived
1958	Extension of constitutional period of reservation of seats in Lok Sabha and State Legislature for SC and ST.	SC	-do-	Withdrawn
1960-61	Report of Commissioner for SC & ST (1958-59, 1959-60)	NSC	Motion under Rule 191& 342	Adopted
1962-63	Report of Commissioner for SC/ST (11th Report)	NSC	-do-	-do-
1964	12th Report of Commissioner for SC& ST	SC	-do-	-do-
1966	13th Report of Commissioner for SC & ST	SC	-do-	-do-
1962	Removal of untouchability	SC	Private member resolution	Withdrawn
1965	Uplift of Harijans	SC	-do-	-do-
1967	14th & 15th Reports of Commissioner for SC and ST.	NSC	Motion under rule 191	Negatived
1968	Committee on Welfare of SC & ST	NSC	-do-	Adopted as amended
1970	16th, 17th & 18th Reports of Commissioner for SC & ST	NSC	-do-	Adopted
1970	Report of Committee on untouchability, economic and educational development of SC & ST.	SC	Motion under rule 342	-do-

and inhuman incidents relating to Harijan women in a village and the burning alive of a Harijan boy in Andhra Pradesh. The other calling attention motion was regarding the revised scholarship scheme for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students on 12th August, 69.

A noteworthy discussion which took place on the floor of the House during the span of the IV Lok Sabha was the Report of the Committee on untouchability, economic and educational development of the Scheduled Castes. This, otherwise called the Elayaperumal Committee Report, was a much discussed resolution in the parliament. During the course of the debate, different aspects of the problem were brought before the House. One Scheduled Caste member advocated proportional representation in parliament to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes on the basis of population. The member also wanted the government to reserve posts in the armed forces for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Another member pointed out that the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students aspiring for All India Service were facing unequal competition. He held that they should not be asked to compete with students belonging to advanced communities but that their merits should be judged from among students belonging to their own communities. This suggestion of the member, however, is only a superficial remedy and does not provide for the uplift of the Harijans. On the contrary, it seems that 'reservation' is being used as an effect and convenient tool in their hands to get their demands conceded. As has been put aptly by a newspaper editorial- "..... it is not wise to fill a government department

with Harijans without taking their efficiency into account, or to create a separate regiment for them in the army, nor is it advisable to lower the pass number for Harijan students in examinations. Reservation of jobs in the government and the seats in the legislatures should no doubt, go on, but educational, social and economic facilities for these are more important.³⁷

Exercise of Power

Another important factor which considerably enhances the status and role of the Scheduled Caste members is the holding of key ministerial positions. This would bring the Scheduled Caste persons closer to the governmental fabric and being persons of authority and power, thereby provide greater appointments to herald the drive towards the abolition of untouchability. Two aspects need to be considered in this regard.

a) Is there a type or pattern of members who are appointed Ministers; and b) what is their background? Table 14 indicates the ministerial position held in the government by Scheduled Caste members and their background with regard to education and prior legislative experience. As is indicated by the table, most of the Scheduled Caste members appointed ministers have been educated and who have had prior legislative experience. Even so, it should be mentioned that this fact is not peculiar to the Scheduled Caste members but is also true of the other ministers.³⁸

37. National Herald, Editorial, 15th August, 70.

38. See. Eco & Pol. weekly, Annual Number, 1972. Art..

TABLE - 14

S.C. Members, background, and Ministerial position held

S.No.	Name of Members	Educa- tion	Prior Legisla- tive experience	Position held			
				II Lok Sabha	III Lok Sabha	IV Lok Sabha	V Lok Sabha
1)	Jagjivan Ram	B.Sc	✓	Min.-Railways	Min.-Transport & Communication; Labour, Employ- ment and Rehabi- litation	Min.-Food & Agriculture; Labour & Rehabilitation	....
2)	B.S. Murthy	M.A.B.L.	✓	Dep.Min.-Commu- nity Development and Cooperation	Dep.Min.-Comm. Development and Panchayati Raj; Health & Family Planning	Dep.Min.-Health and Family Planning	.....
3)	Dr. M.M. Das	M.B.B.S.	✓	Dep.Min.-Educa- tion and Scien- tific Research	Dep.Min-Scienti- fic Research and Cultural Affairs	...	.....
4)	Smt.M.Chandra- sekhar	B.Sc.L.T	✓	...	Dep.Min.-Home, Social Security and Deptt.of Social Welfare	.....	Member C.W.C.
5)	P.J. Naskar	M.A.	✓	.....	Dep.Min.-Works Housing and Supply; Rehabilitation	.....	.....

Contd....

Contd.

S.No.	Name of Members	Educa- tion	Prior Legisla- tive exp- erience	Position held			
				II Lok Sabha	III Lok Sabha	IV Lok Sabha	V Lok Sabha
6)	R. Sabu	M.A.B.L.	✓	....	Dep.Min.-Finance	.....	....
7)	M.R. Krishna	H.S	✓	....	Parl.Sect.attached to the ministry of education	.....	....
8)	D. Thimoniah	B.A.B.L.	✓	.....	Parl.Sec.attached to the min. of Mines and Fuel; Steel Mines and Heavy Engineering	.....	.....
9)	J.B. Muthyal Rao	.....	✓	.....	.....	Dep.Min.-Deptt. of Social Wel- fare; Petroleum and Chemicals	....

The ministers, once having been aligned to the governmental fabric at its apex are governed by an altogether different set of rules and obligations than those of an ordinary M.P. He is bound by the network of official policies and programmes. This, as a result, through on the one hand, vests him with official power and authority, on the other hand, representing the nation at large, alleviates him from his group, realisation of the problems of whom requires a closer network of relationship and a closer identification betwixt them.

Committees

Membership of Parliamentary Committees constitutes a very vital factor in assessing the role and participation of the Scheduled Caste members in Parliament. Scheduled Caste participation with regard to Parliamentary Committees in general, has been very nominal. For instance, during the IV Lok Sabha, they formed 9 per cent in the Public Accounts Committee 10 per cent in Estimates Committee and 7 per cent in the Committee on Public undertakings in 1970. In marked contrast to this, Scheduled Caste affiliation in the Committee on the welfare of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes has been considerable. This Committee was constituted on December 18, 1968 by a motion adopted by the House. The term of office of the members of the Committee was fixed for two years which came to an end on Dec. 17th, 1970. The Committee was again reconstituted just prior to the dissolution of the IV Lok Sabha.

In the span of the IV Lok Sabha, during the period that it functioned, the Committee held 74 sittings, constituted 12 sub-committees and sub-groups and presented 19 reports.

In this Committee, as many as 74 percent of the Scheduled Caste members have been active and participating. Ever since the Committee was constituted in 1968, it has probed into a number of problems regarding the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. On the basis of its study it has also made a number of recommendations and further reports have been published on the action taken by the Government on their recommendations. Table 15 indicates the total number of recommendations made by the Committee in its reports and the action taken by the government during the IV and V Lok Sabha. The table shows that majority of the recommendations of the Committee have been accepted by the government. In the V Lok Sabha too, almost 65 per cent of the Scheduled Caste members have been associated with the committee. So far 24 reports have been published by the committee.

The Committee, thus constituted has functioned under the various ministries-Education, Works, Housing, and Social Welfare, Railways, Tourism and Civil Aviation and so on. The I Report of the Committee was on the re-organization of the offices of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Director-General Backward Classes Welfare. Herein the Committee expressed the firm opinion that the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should not be called

TABLE - 15

Recommendations made by Committee and action taken by government.

Study Report	Lok Sabha	Subject	Total No. of recommendations	Action taken report	Lok Sabha		Accepted by Govt.			Withdrawn by Committee			Recommn. requiring reiteration			No reply by Govt.		
					No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
I	4	Re-organization of the office Community for S.C.& S.T.	28	VI	4	9	-	32	10	-	36	5	-	18	-	-	-	-
II	4	Reservation in public undertakings	12	VII	4	7	-	59	5	-	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
III	4	Post-Matric Scholarships to SC/ST students in India	13	VIII	4	9	-	70	-	-	4	-	30	-	-	-	-	-
IV	4	Reservation in public services	43	XVIII	4	12	-	57	7	-	33.5	2	-	9.5	-	-	-	-
V	4	Employment in services	17	XI	4	21	-	49	7	-	16.5	14	-	32.5	1	-	2	-
IX	4	Reservation in Air India	21	I	5	13	-	61.9	2	-	9.5	6	-	28.6	-	-	-	-
X	4	Reservation in Indian Air Lines	21	II	5	20	-	95	1	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
XII	4	Reservation in Gauhati Oil Refinery	19	VI	5	10	-	52.6	2	-	10.5	3	-	15.8	4	-	21.1	-

Contd...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10								
XIII	4	Reservation in Heavy Engg. Corporation Ltd.	20	XII	5	10	-	50	7	-	35	2	-	10	1	-	5
XIV	4	Administrative Facilities in ed. institutions.	42	V	5	24	-	57.15	8	-	19.04	7	-	16.66	3	-	7.15
XV	4	Reservation in Indian Railways	42	XIII	5												
XVI	4	Housing Facilities	26	IV	5	10	-	38.6	7	-	26.93	5	-	19.23	4	-	15.38
XVII	4	Hostel Facilities	25	III	5	10	-	40	6	-	24	4	-	16	5	-	20
VII	5	Reservation for SC/ST in Defence Public Sector undertakings	23	XVII		19	-	82	3	-	13	1	-	5	-	-	-
VIII	5	Reservation and Employment of SC/ST in P&T Deptt.	18	XVII		9	-	50	5	-	28	2	-	11	1	-	4
IX	5	Reservation & Employment in State Bank of India & Subsidiaries	25														
XI	5	Tribal Development blocks in Gujarat	39														
XIV	5	Reservation and Employment in Hindustan Steel Ltd. etc.	30														

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
XV	5	Reservation & Employment in LIC & concession for SC/ST in LIC	25						
XI	5	Reservation and Employment in Selected or posts.	35						
XX	5	Place Allocation for SC/ST							
XXI	5	Admission & other facilities for SC/ST in IIT & Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.	30						
XXII	5	Tribal Dev. Blocks in M.P.	53						
XXIII	5	Socio-Economic condition of SC/ST in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.	44						
XXIV	5	Socio-Economic condition of SC/ST in Laccadive Minicoy and A Islands.	38						

upon by the government to express any opinion as to the suitability or otherwise of development schemes. The Commissioner has to function as an effective assessor of the government policies and action as enjoined on him under Act 338 of the constitution. It also stressed on the necessity of adequate field organization to enable him to discharge his constitutional obligation effectively and satisfactorily.

In the II Report concerning the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe in Public Undertakings, the Committee recommended that some percentage of seats as are reserved in public enterprises should also be reserved in training programmes being implemented within the public sector undertakings. The III Report dealt with the subject of post-matric scholarship schemes for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes students in India. In this context, the Committee recommended that the rate of scholarship should be linked with the cost of living and a revision of scholarships should be worked out, taking into consideration all prevailing conditions.

The Committee has thus been exploring and probing into issues such as, what measures have been provided and to what extent, to fulfill 'special protection' clause of the constitution. And there has been considerable participation in this regard by the Scheduled Caste members.

Conclusions

The constitution which abolished untouchability and legally brought to an end a practice which had been rooted in the social and religious life of India for more than two thousand years. The untouchables who had been relegated to the lowest position in society, in history, were accorded equal political rights with the rest of the population. Clearly anticipating that the absence of previous orientation and socialization for participation in political life of the country and the traditional disabilities that were likely to handicap the exercise of the political rights, the constitution framers provided for a system of representation as an interim measure to enable the untouchables to come up to the general level of society. This essay has been concerned with an analysis of the effectiveness of this system.

The system of reserved seats and reserved Scheduled Caste constituencies have been employed by the untouchables, to a large extent, in their elections to the highest legislative organ viz. Lok Sabha. What was envisaged as a stop-gap arrangement, finally culminating in the election of the untouchables through general seats, has become the major channel of representation for them. Furthermore, it is also a question worth considering whether the system of 'special representation' has brought about an integration of the untouchables with the society and provided full representation of all sections of the untouchables. As indicated by an analysis of the social

background of the Scheduled Caste members in Indian Parliament, the majority of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps come from the category of educated, politically persons with legislative experience. Moreover, the final picture which the social background of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps presents is not much different of that of the members of the Lok Sabha as a whole. This raises the doubt whether this category of Scheduled Caste M.Ps represent the mass of Scheduled Caste population, the majority of whom are illiterate and also socially and economically background. Furthermore, the extent of representation allowed to them has remained fixed, thereby raising the question whether the representation accorded to them is really adequate. Thus we find that with every successive elections there has been an increasing percentage of Scheduled Caste candidature but with no corresponding increase in representation.

The untouchables largely aligned themselves with the Congress Party after independence. With its transformation from a nationalist organisation in the pre-independence period to the position of the ruling party since independence, the Congress Party continued to draw huge support from the masses as well as the Scheduled Caste population. However, since the IV general elections a shift in the dominance of the Congress Party as the spokesman of the untouchables may be clearly discerned. This has largely been stimulated by the growth of regional parties and also the increasing political consciousness of the Scheduled Caste population.

The crux of the problem of emancipation through 'special representation' lies in the participation and role of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps in Parliament. The rationale behind the introduction of the system of 'special protection' and 'special representation' ought to be fully justified by the role of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps in promoting that goal. The untouchable M.Ps, by becoming a part of the governmental fabric, constitute an important instrument in the process of amelioration of the untouchables by highlighting the relevant issues and problems of their group in Parliament. The Scheduled Caste M.Ps may be found in this regard to be not very vocal and effective in voicing their problems in the correct perspective. This is to be seen from the weightage that has been given to the issues in the various organs of parliamentary procedure. However, the effectiveness of the working of the Parliamentary Committee on the welfare of Scheduled Castes should be mentioned as also the role of the untouchable M.P.s in the committee.

A significant trend which has emerged from the analysis of the role and participation of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps in Parliament is with regard to the increasing interest and concern expressed by the non-Scheduled Caste M.Ps in the welfare of the untouchables. Increasing concern is also being expressed over the subject of stabilization

of the system of representation and the ways and means of a discontinuance of the system.³⁹

Thus, the problem of the amelioration of the un-touchables and their integration with the society at large, as it exists today is threefold. Firstly, what has been the overall effect and success of the system of 'special protection' and 'special representation' as it has existed for the past twenty-four years. Here, the three most outstanding conclusions are- (a) That the system has brought about a further stratification among the Scheduled Castes themselves between those who are educated, politically active and influential, and more powerful groups of Scheduled Castes in society; and the mass of Scheduled Castes who are illiterate, backward and economically the weaker sections of the society. (b) This division amongst the un-touchable population largely leads to the second factor i.e. the elite-mass communication gap that may be found between the elected 'special' representatives and mass of the Scheduled Caste population. Thus, we find that the Scheduled Caste M.Ps once elected become a part of the ruling elite.

39. Much has been written expressing concern over this problem. See Leah Dushkin; Future of special Treatment Economic weekly, Vo. XIII Nov. pp.1729-38. She has pointed out that this system of 'protective discrimination' as she terms it-is getting rooted into the social and political system resulting in more and more difficulty in the discontinuance of the system.

and themselves try to come out of the shackles of backwardness.⁴⁰ And (c) what is significant here is the shift in the attitude of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps towards the system of special representation, held soon after independence and today, with the twice extended period of reservation. The vigour and the sense of urgency for its removal felt by the Scheduled Caste representatives at the initial stages has gradually weakened and increasingly giving rise to a certain apprehension in the minds of the Scheduled Caste M.Ps towards its removal. It is as a result of this that the system of special representation is becoming more and more stabilized, which in its turn has spread the growing concern over the strongholds, the system is gaining in the socio-political set up of the country.

Secondly, what is the criterion which is to be used in assessing the extent of progress made by the untouchables towards status enhancement. This would ultimately point towards the final discontinuance of the system of 'special protection' and 'special representation'. Here, the socio-economic progress of the various 'Scheduled Castes' is to be a vital consideration. Education and occupational mobility would also be important factors in assessing their progress. What is possible and desirable is not a sudden

40. Here H. Isaacs study of 'India's Ex-untouchables is interesting where he presents the views of various untouchables-persons of authority as well as the common view of the mass of untouchables.

discontinuance of the system but a slow and gradual 'de-scheduling' of the various untouchable castes.

Thirdly, what other means could be deployed in achieving the goal of amelioration and status enhancement of the untouchables. The political means is no doubt a very vital tool. Nevertheless, the system of representation as it has worked out in practice has not integrated and unified the untouchables amongst themselves as also with the larger society. Hence, what is essential here is the role of certain other organizations and voluntary associations which could properly reach up to the masses and effect a proper integration. Unfortunately, very little has been done in this field stressing the need for such voluntary organizations.

Perhaps what could probably be assessed from such a situation is that this apparent outlook of stability and continuance of the system is only superficial and underneath which struggles are going on against the present set up ultimately pointing towards socio-economic and occupational mobility leading to wider and fuller participation. Finally, certain aspects of the problem may be highlighted which might serve as guidelines serve as guidelines in conducting future studies in the field.

Firstly, studies should be undertaken to study the patterns of political participation amongst the untouchables. Such studies should not only be concerned with participation patterns, but should also try to relate them to the various

socio-economic variables to assess differences amongst the untouchables resulting from their different social milieu. It should also take into account factors like literacy, occupation and urbanization and correlate them to their political participation.

Secondly, as suggested by the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the various political parties should amongst themselves resolve to nominate Scheduled Caste persons to various general seats and thereby reduce the Scheduled Caste representation through the medium of reserved seats alone.

Thirdly, sufficient attention should also be paid to the process of socialization of the untouchables. The variation between the urban-rural complex is largely due to this orientation which the untouchable receives. This orientation could to a very large extent affect the individual's educational standards and also result in occupational mobility.

Lastly, the role played by voluntary organization should be given due prominence and be highlighted. The work of the 'Dalit Panthers'⁴¹ in this regard deserves mention. The organization of the Dalits, predominates in Maharashtra. This youth movement aims at embracing all the downtrodden irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Though surrounded by various drawbacks and pitfalls, nevertheless the Dalit movement

41. See, 'The Dalits' Article by Arun Sadhu, in 'Seminar on 'The Untouchables' May, 1974.

is significant in its motive force-being the cruelty and the rigidity of caste-ridden society-and its goal.

To an extent, the position of the untouchables may be compared to that of women in India. All the traditional ties and forces, though technically non-existent in both the cases, have in practice held them back from political involvement. And it is the more educated, with strong occupational leanings (holding non-traditional occupations in the case of untouchables), and the more progressive ones, who have an interest and take an active part in politics.

The problem of untouchability is a double-edged sword. The growing revolt strikes a blow not only to the hierachical and caste-ridden social structure of the Hindu society with all attendant patterns of social relationships and evil practices but it also strikes a death-knell to the oppression of the backward and weaker sections of the population by the more affluent and powerful groups of the society. A Few would deny the role of democratization and politicization in this process of integration of the Indian society.

Appendix - 1

Statement Regarding Questions of Scheduled Caste Members Admitted
During the XI Lok Sabha

Name of Member	Questions Admitted			Total
	Starred	Unstarred	Short Notice	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Anjappa	2	1	1	4
2. R.S. Arunghar	7	10	1	27
3. S.R. Arunghar	0	27	-	33
4. Ayyakkant	29	26	1	56
5. Bahadur Singh	110	90	-	100
6. B. C. Balakrishna	21	30	-	50
7. Balnikh	102	90	2	234
8. U. Ba rana	97	214	1	302
9. Borupal	-	-	-	-
10. Shathar	2	2	-	4
11. K.K. Das	-	-	-	-
12. H.H. Das	-	-	-	-
13. N.T. Das	-	1	-	1
14. R.D. Das	1	2	1	4
15. Shankar Das	7	0	-	12
16. D.K. Digo	32	97	1	60
17. V. Eecharan	25	200	1	272
18. Eloyaperumal	2	7	-	0
19. Ganga Devi	25	31	1	37
20. Ganpat Rao	130	90	-	210
21. K. Halder	-	-	-	-
22. J. Rao	31	60	1	60
23. Jangde	0	30	-	44
24. K.C. Jena	1	-	-	1
25. D.N.P. Kambho	-	2	-	2

Appendix -I 'Cont'd.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
26. Kayal	486	33	1	520
27. Kodiyam	86	71	3	162
28. M.R. Krishna	263	300	-	563
29. B. Kumbhar	3	19	1	23
30. B. Kunhan	6	12	-	17
31. B.N. Kureel	3	-	1	4
32. Lachchi Rao	90	241	1	332
33. N.C. Laskar	2	4	-	6
34. K.B. Malvia	17	32	-	49
35. M.C. Malvia	2	2	-	4
36. Manaij	1	-	-	1
37. Mandal	1	-	-	1
38. Masuriya Deu	17	49	-	66
39. Mafera	171	270	-	441
40. Sot. Minimata	1	-	-	1
41. Mullick	119	116	1	235
42. Muthukrishnan	3	22	-	25
43. B.S. Murthy	6	329	1	336
44. Mohan Nayak	122	91	1	219
45. Onkar Lal	4	5	-	9
46. Pahadia	-	-	-	-
47. Pannalal	6	16	-	21
48. Paragi Lal	34	48	-	82
49. D.B. Parmar	356	489	1	846
50. K. Parmer	2	1	-	3

Appendix - I Cont'd.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
51. N. Prabhakar	2	2	-	4
52. Mahadeo Prasad	1	1	-	2
53. Sahodrabai Rao	44	198	-	242
54. Kamaswamy	-	-	1	1
55. Ram Gorib	36	13	1	40
56. Rup Narain	6	45	-	52
57. Sadhu Ram	-	-	-	-
58. R. Sabu	3	4	-	7
59. B.D. Galunke	-	18	-	18
60. D. Shivadi	-	-	-	-
61. Siddiah	97	237	-	304
62. K.N. Singh	-	-	-	-
63. H.V. G. Dina	11	6	-	16
64. Sivaraj	7	1	-	8
65. Anatak	55	39	-	94
66. Senavane	28	22	-	45
67. Sunderlal	-	2	-	2
68. Surya Prasad	2	11	1	14
69. Thimiah	162	104	-	266
70. Tula Ram	2	1	-	3
71. Vishwanath Prasad	1	4	-	5
72. Vasak	21	20	2	44
73. Haskar	-	-	-	-
74. Daljit Singh	238	1580	2	1820
75. Guni Lal	152	274	1	427

**Statement Regarding Questions by S.C. Members
Admitted During the III Lok Sabha**

<u>Name of Member</u>	<u>Questions Admitted</u>			<u>Total</u>
	<u>Starred</u>	<u>Unstarred</u>	<u>Short-Notice</u>	
1. Achutan	2	4	-	6
2. Anjappa	26	12	-	38
3. Balekriehna	44	78	1	123
4. Balmiki	108	220	3	331
5. Barupal	94	286	-	360
6. O.L. Barwa	1208	1910	30	3148
7. N. Prabhekar	-	-	-	-
8. Bute Singh	196	272	15	481
9. M. Chaudrasekhar	-	-	-	-
10. Dr. Chowdhry	-	-	-	-
11. Chunilal	26	43	-	69
12. Daljit Singh	254	927	3	1184
13. M.M. Das	151	341	-	492
14. N.T. Das	1	1	-	2
15. R.D. Das	-	-	-	-
16. C. Dass	1	2	1	4
17. Elayaperumal	9	55	-	64
18. Ganpat Ram	1	2	-	3
19. Ganga Devi	5	14	-	19
20. Gokaran Prasad	85	115	2	202
21. Sardar Gulshan	314	459	11	784
22. Jagjwan Ram	-	-	-	-
23. A. Jayaraman	14	1	-	15
24. K.C. Jeva	17	57	-	74
25. Saroop Joti	3	8	-	11

<u>Name of Member</u>	<u>Starred</u>	<u>Unstarred</u>	<u>Short-notice</u>	<u>Total</u>
26. Kachmei	988	1926	38	2952
27. Kejrolkar	271	204	-	475
28. T.D. Kamble	9	28	-	37
29. Karjee	3	15	-	18
30. Kayel	4	18	-	22
31. Keser Lal	16	15	1	32
32. Kinder Lal	104	214	-	318
33. Kunchan	189	496	-	689
34. Kure Mate	10	26	-	189
35. Kureei	8	9	-	17
36. L.D. Choudhary	287	286	1	574
37. N.R. Lasker	16	176	2	194
38. Laxmi Des	4	8	1	13
39. Mahadev Prasad	5	816	-	21
40. Mallick	45	422	-	467
41. P. Mendel	6	9	-	15
42. Meruthiah	1	2	-	3
43. Mesuriye Div	-	-	-	-
44. Smt. Miminata	20	72	-	92
45. K.C. More	1	10	-	11
46. B.S. Murthy	-	-	-	-
47. P.S. Nasker	-	-	-	-
48. Mohan Nayak	4	39	1	44
49. Prata p Singh	13	32	1	46
50. N. Prabhakar	6	27	-	33
51. Ram Sewak Choudhary	115	220	1	336
52. Ram Sweroop	78	115	-	193
53. V.R. Ramaswamy	6	17	-	23
54. Bhole Rout	3	14	-	17

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<u>Name of Member</u>	<u>Starred</u>	<u>Unstarred</u>	<u>Short-Notice</u>	<u>Total</u>
55. Sadhu Ram	14	42	2	58
56. S.K. Saha	1	1	2	4
57. R. Saha	-	-	-	-
58. Swami Ramenand Sheetri	10	19	-	29
59. Sheo Narain	10	11	-	21

Appendix III

Statement Regarding Questions Admitted During the Fourth Lok
Sabha-Member-wise Analysis

Name of the Member	Questions admitted			Total
	Starred	Unstarred	Short Notice	
Adichan, Shri P.C. (Adoor)	183	847	4	1034
Ahirwar, Shri Nathu Ram (Tikamgarh)	40	332	-	372
Ajjanappa, Shri B. (Nollero)	-	-	-	-
Arumugam, Shri R.S. (Tonkaci)	-	4	-	4
Atua Das, Shri (Morena)	126	339	2	467
Ayarval, Shri Ram Singh (Sagar)	169	720	-	879
Barupal, Shri Panna Lal (Ganganagar)	43	0	1	44
Borwa, Shri Janna Lal (Tonk)	7	33	-	40
Bohra, Shri Baidhar (Jaipur)	10	63	..	73
Borwa, Shri Onkar (Lal Kota)	296	1702	0	2003
Bhagaban Das, Shri (Auzgram)	122	603	1	726
Buta Singh, Shri (Rupar)	0	47	..	47
Chakrapani, Shri C.K. (Poonnani)	152	599	1	752
Dalbir Singh, Shri (Sirsa)	..	..	..	..
Das, Shri N.T. (Farid)	1	3	1	5
Das, Shri Ram Dhani (Gaya)	..	..	..	..
Das, Shri C. (Tirupathi)	..	4	..	4
Dhandapani, Shri C.T. (Dharapuram)	77	307	..	384
Dipa, Shri A. (Phuibani)	41	189	..	230
Duraiarasu, Shri A. (Perambalur)	..	10	..	10

Appendix III--Contd.

Name of the Member	Questions admitted			Total
	Starred	Unstarred	Short Notice	
Ganga Devi, Shrimati (Mohanlalganj)	..	..	..	..
Jagjivan Ram, Shri (Saoran)	..	..	..	..
Jena Shri D.D. (Bhadrol)	3	21	-	24
Kachvai, Shri Hukan Chand (Ujjain)	364	2576	8	2928
Kamble, Shri T.D. (Latur)	..	10	..	10
Kanala Kumari, Kumari (Palanau)	33	115	..	148
Kasture, Shri A.S. (Kargaan)	..	25	..	25
Mandal, Dr. D. (Vishnupur)	17	71	..	88
Masuriya Din, Shri (Chail)	..	9	..	9
Minimata Agan Dass Guru, Shrimati (Janjgir)	3	20	1	24
Mikar Singh, Shri (Bhatinda)	60	153	1	204
Kindor Lal, Shri (Hardoi)	..	0	..	0
Krishna, Shri H.B. (Poddapalli)	11	33	1	45
Krishan, Shri G.Y. (Kolar)	40	233	..	273
Kucholar, Shri G. (Vellore)	3	11	..	14
Kurool, Shri B.N. (Ramesanahighat)	2	10	..	12
Lashar, Shri N.R. (Kavirganj)	257	964	4	1225
Molahu Prasad, Shri (Bansgaon)	162	1169	0	1331
Murthy, Shri B.G. (Amalapuram)	..	..	..	..
Pahadia, Shri Jagannath (Hindun)	6	10	..	16
Parmar, Shri D.R. (Patna)	73	358	..	431
Partap Singh, Shri (Simala)	3	17	..	20
Pawar, Shri Kedar (Rohara)	9	27	..	36
Pranik, Shri J.H. (Balurghat)	..	..	..	..

Appendix III--Contd.

Name of the Member	Questions admitted			Total
	Starred	Unstarred	Short Notice	
Ram Sotak, Chowdhary (Jalaun)	..	6	..	6
Ram Searup, Shri (Robertganj)	1	15	..	16
Ranji Ram, Shri (Akbarpur)	35	151	1	187
Rao, Shri J.B. Lathyal (Nagarhurool)	..	..	..	..
Raut, Shri Bhola (Bagaha)	..	1	..	1
Sadhu Ram, Shri (Phillaur)	..	8	..	8
Saha, Dr. S.K. (Birbhum)	..	..	..	..
Sankata Prasad, Dr. (Mirikh)	3	29	..	32
Shambhu Nath, Shri (Saidspur)	2	10	1	22
Shankaranand, Shri B. (Chikodi)	3	7	..	10
Shastri, Shri Ramenand (Bijnor)	..	8	..	8
Shco Narain, Shri (Basti)	19	102	..	121
Shiv Charan Lal, Shri (Ferozabad)	37	250	1	288
Siddappa, Shri S.M. (Channarajanagar)	8	167	1	176
Sivanankaran, Shri P. (Sriporembudur)	..	1	..	1
Sotak, Shri Nar Doo (Bathrao)	7	21	..	28
Solanki, Shri S.M. (Gandhinagar)	8	75	..	83
Conavane, Shri T.H. (Pondharpur)	2	21	..	23
Subravolu, Shri K. (Mayurao)	4	50	..	54
Sunder Lal, Shri (Gaharonpur)	0	52	..	52
Guraj Dhan, Shri (Ambala)	121	663	..	784
Thakur, Shri P.R. (Nabadwip)	12	266	..	278
Tala Ram, Shri (Ghatampur)	..	..	..	..
Vootappa, Shri Ramchandra (Bidar)	68	514	..	582
Venketanaray, Shri G. (Siddipet)	21	103	..	124
Vidyarthi, Shri Ram Searup (Karol Bagh)	270	1007	1	1278

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