

SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF DALIT WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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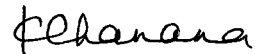
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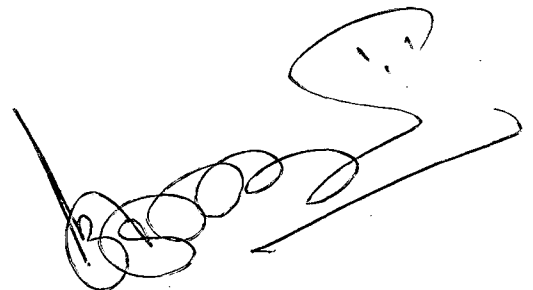
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A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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Chapter – 1

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

The 'Scheduled Castes' were at first officially known as the 'Depressed Classes' and the 'exterior Castes'. In 1861 the Depressed Classes, according to the Indian Legislative Council, included criminal and wandering tribes, aboriginals and untouchables. But soon, the criteria for inclusion in the depressed classes became 'untouchability'. In 1917 Sir Hanery Sharp, Education Commissioner, Government of India, stated that "the depressed classes form the unclean castes whose touch or even shadow is pollution" (India, 1932:109). Accordingly, he prepared a list of depressed classes. The Indian Franchise Commission emphasized in its report that aboriginal tribes should not be included in the list of depressed classes.

Later, B.R.Ambedkar felt the need to do away with the term 'depressed classes'. At the Second Round Table Conference (1931) he said

"the existing nomenclature of depressed classes is objected to by members of the depressed classes.... It is degrading and contemptuous and advantage may be taken of this occasion for drafting the new constitution to alter for official purposes the existing nomenclature" (Santhanam, 1946:45).

In response to this request the new term "Scheduled Caste" was introduced. The criteria adopted for inclusion in the Scheduled Caste list were

social, educational and economic backwardness arising out of the stigma of untouchability.

The term 'Dalit' is used only very recently which means subjugation-economic, political, social and cultural. The term 'Dalit' includes not only marginal status in economic sphere, but also similar marginal status in cultural, political, religious and other domains (Punalekar, 1999:8). Busi (1997) argues that the literal meaning of the word is 'downtrodden', 'depressed' or 'oppressed'. This word, although was in vogue in the past, was relegated to the background when the name Harijan and the phrase 'Scheduled Castes' had gained currency. However, the word 'Dalit' has bounced back in seventies of the 20th century with the emergence of a militant outfit by name 'Dalit Panthers'. Initially the word Dalit, was meant to include the untouchables only. But in due course, its scope has been widened, as Murlidharan puts,

"According to the manifesto of Dalit Panthers, members of Scheduled Castes and Tribes, Neo Buddhist, the working people, the landless and poor peasants, women and all those who are being exploited politically economically and in the name of religion are Dalits" (Muralidharan, 1997:1-2) .

Though the words 'poor' 'oppressed' and 'exploited' have a broad class connotation, the term Dalit is considered applicable more or less exclusively to the ex-untouchables, viz, the Scheduled Castes. In this paper the term 'Dalit' will be used interchangeably with Scheduled Caste.

Education and Social Mobility in the British Period

In pre-British Indian society, formal education was limited to the upper castes and it had a religious content. The modern system of education introduced by the British was theoretically open to all, and its content was secular. Education became an important avenue of social mobility as it opened the door to government services.

The social mobility movements of some untouchable castes during British period received an impetus from success obtained in the economic dimension, which made these castes to some extent, economically independent of the patron-client relationship prevailing in the villages. Many members of these castes were able to afford an education.

During the British period castes responded to education indifferent ways. The upper castes who had a tradition of learning, took enthusiastically to this avenue of mobility. The lower castes, at first kept out of the emerging system of education. Modern education stressed mental work, while they were largely engaged in occupations entailing manual labour. Moreover, the lower castes saw no relevance of education to their traditional skills. As Chauhan argues,

“To them agriculture rather than education provided the immediate alternative for meeting the challenge of the loss of their livelihood based on handicrafts” (Chauhan, 1967:232).

However, in later decades, there was a movement for spread of education to the lower castes, the first efforts were made by non-officials

agencies such as missionaries, private societies and individuals who set up a number of separate schools for the untouchables. Later the government took up the cause of education of the untouchables. In the province of Madras itself, there were 2934 institutions chiefly intended for the Panchamas (Chauhan, 1967).

In Maharashtra, Jyoti Rao Phule began the Satya Shodak Samaj and educational institutions for the untouchables. The response of the untouchable castes to education also varied. The newly acquired wealth of the upwardly mobile castes made it possible for them to afford an education. The Nadars of Tamilnadu received an education in schools set up by the Christian missionaries. Between the census of 1875 and 1891, literacy among Irava men in Kerala increased from 3.15 percent to 12.1 percent. The Mahars are regarded as one of the most educationally oriented castes in Maharashtra. Their leader B.R.Ambedkar, stressed the necessity of education in the social uplift of the untouchables.

“their association with the missionaries and their improving economic position allowed increasing numbers of Irava children to get a basic education” (Jeffery, 1976:147).

Westernization:

M.N.Srinivas uses the concept of westernization to “characterise and changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule, and the term subsumes changes occurring at various levels technology-institution, ideology, values” (Srinivas, 1966:47).

The upwardly mobile untouchable castes could afford to adopt the lifestyle implied in westernization which requires money, time and effort, and contacts with influential people. At the same time unlike the upper castes, they were not overly committed to the Sanskritic tradition. S.Patwardhan writes,

“The Mahars were the first people to serve the British officers and their wives as butlers, and ayahs. Being beef-eating themselves, the Mahars did not mind working for the foreign, beef-eating masters” (Patwardhan, 1973:20).

Thus, they could eat meat and drink liquor with impunity and were not pre-occupied with notion of purity and pollution. In the race for westernization as an avenue of cultural mobility , they had an edge over the upper castes. As Srinivas observes,

“Though the scholarly tradition of the Brahmans placed them in a favourable position for obtaining the new knowledge, in certain other matters they were most handicapped in the race for westernization. This was especially so in the south, where the large majority of them were vegetarian and abstained from alcoholic liquor. Also, the fear of being polluted prevented them from eating cooked food touched by others, and from taking up occupations considered defiling” (Srinivas, 1962:51).

The upwardly mobile untouchable castes had no such inhibitions. However, westernization was alien to the Hindu cultural ethos. Any social mobility within the Hindu cultural framework would have to take place through

the avenue of Sanskritization. This was a particularly sensitive issue as the untouchables had traditionally been debarred from using this avenue of mobility.

Sanskritization:

The concept of Sanskritization has gripped the sociologists interest for some time now. It refers to cultural mobility within the framework of the caste system. The concept brought out the inherent dynamics of the caste system.

“Sanskritization is the process by which a ‘low’ Hindu caste or tribe or other group changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently, a ‘twice born’ caste” (Srinivas, 1966:6).

British rule heightened the process of Sanskritization. It removed the legal ban on this avenue of mobility for the lower castes. Sanskritization as a vertical mobility movement gained momentum in the colonial period due to the British policy of recording of castes in the census. But the right to sanskritize had to be fought for by the untouchables, who were traditionally debarred from emulating the upper caste life style.

The Nadars, in Kerala for instance were refused entry into Hindu temples and their use of public wells was strictly prohibited. They were not allowed to carry an umbrella or wear shoes or gold ornaments. Regarding the Iravas, Robin Jeffery writes,

“They were forbidden the dignity of an umbrella or a shoulder cloth... their women were prohibited from covering their breasts and from wearing certain types of jewelry. Prohibitions were enforced against their keeping milk cows, using oil mills and metal vessels, and wearing sandals and finally woven cloth... Public offices and roads close to temples or high castes’ houses were closed to them” (Jeffery, 1976:6).

The economically mobile castes were no longer willing to accept a position of social inferiority in the changed circumstances. They “sought to bring their social status to a level commensurate with their economic power through imitation of the Brahmanical customs of the higher castes” (Hardgrave, 1969:58). This led to Skirmishes and even rioting between them and the upper castes. In 1899, riots broke out between the Nadras and Maravars in Madras Presidency, following the Nadar women’s attempt to don the breast cloth. Between January and March 1905 disturbances broke out between Nairs and Iravas in Travancore, for the latter were “said to have put on airs, and when the temple procession took place, they dressed their women in imitation of the Nairs and pressed closer to the idol than custom allowed. Nairs retaliated by beating the disrespectful Iravas and sometimes stripping their women to the waist” (Jeffery, 1997:230).

In course of time, the resistance to sanskritization of the untouchables was overcome, and they took avidly to this avenue of social mobility. Hardgrave (1969) argues that claiming high Kshatriya status, the Nadars, from about the 1860s began slowly, to sanskritize their manner of life. Men

began to tie 'dhoti' in Brahmanical manner. Widows were permitted to wear white saris – like the Brahmins, men were stationed at the gates of gardens where the wells were located.

The movement for social uplift among the Iravas led by Narayan Swamy, was not only sanskritizing but mobilizing as well. Characteristically, he repudiated the caste system (his slogan was one caste one religion, one god") and at the same time he sought to bring Iravas stands of religious worship upto the demands of orthodox Hinduism. To this end, he imposed on his caste followers abstention from the Kali worship, animal sacrifices, witchcraft and other superstitious rites (Fucks, 1965). Well aware of the hold of religion on his caste men, he built and consecrated many shrines to Shiva in various parts of Kerala. Wherever a temple was built, he tried to start a Sanskrit school. He even encouraged western education for the Iravas. He organised a group of volunteer teachers to disseminate his teachings on clean and pure living. He eliminated certain customs like 'Talikethi', a kind of preliminary marriage which entailed wasteful expenditure. He founded a special association for the education of women and included them in the social work. Thus, many mobile untouchable castes "set foot to the path of sanskritization" (Lynch, 1969:68).

The Jatavs asserted their claim to Kshatriya status. Similarly Mochi and Kahar also claimed their Kshatriya status while Teli and Khatri asserted their claim to Vaishya status and Chandal, Nai, Sutradar, Sonar and Napit asserted their claim to Brahmin status. The claim was generally made in terms of the varna categories, "because each caste has a name and a body of

customs and traditions which are peculiar to itself in any local area, and no other caste would be able to take up its name" (Srinivas, 1962:69).

The movement for changes in caste appellation took the form of the Adi-Dravidian movement in the south (India, 1971:414). The Mala and Madigas opted for the name of Adi- Andhra, the Holeyas called themselves Adi-Karnataka, the paraiyars as Adi-Kerala. But for the last, the movement picked up momentum, which is born out by the fact that in the 1931 census, castes with these names were returned in large numbers, while there was a corresponding decrease in numbers of Mala, Madiga, Pallan etc. Sanskritic beliefs and values have been mediated to the untouchables through a number of sectarian movements, such as the Satnami sect of Uttar Pradesh. A study of the religions of the Bhangis in Delhi gives an indication of the numerous sects they belong to, such as Gorakh Panth, Ramanand Panth, Kabir Panth, Dattatatreya Panth and Nanak Panth (Ratan, 1961).

Thus, the untouchables took to sanskritization as an avenue of social mobility. But it did not result in their being accorded a higher status by the upper castes. According to Lynch,

"The conflict in this situation was between the Jatavs' definition of themselves as Kshatriyas and other's definition of the Jatavs as untouchables. These others were higher in the caste hierarchy and rejected the Jatav claim to a similar rank of activating the Jatavs' salient status of untouchables. In structural terms the Jatavs were laying claim to a new status of Kshatriya which the other castes would not accord (Lynch, 1969:74).

Srinivas says, "However thorough going the sanskritization of an untouchable group may be, it is unable to cross the barrier of untouchability" (Srinivas, 1962:58).

Thus, sanskritization did not result in the social mobility of the untouchables. But a new basis for social mobility, namely political power had emerged in the rapidly changing society of the middle of the twentieth century.

Politicization

The Scheduled Castes are a disparate category in terms of social and economic status. It was the British rulers who gave them a shared identity and status by denoting them as 'Depressed classes', Uma Ramaswamy says,

"The most significant act of the British, which set the trend for subsequent policy, was the denotation of castes rather than individuals as depressed" (Ramaswamy, 1974: 1559).

Under the leadership of B.R.Ambedkar, the untouchables realized the importance of their collective stand in the politically fluid situation of pre-independent India. Lloyd and Susam Rudolf regard this form of political participation as "horizontal mobilization" (Susan and Rudolph, 1967).

The first impact for collective action came with the act of 1909, which inaugurated a period of constitutional reform in India. Separate representation for Muslims provided under the Act opened up the possibility that other minorities like the untouchables may be similarly treated in the future. The increasing democratization of the political system raised the importance of

numerical strength and brought home to the caste Hindus the political importance of untouchables. According to Galanter, "It was only after 1909 that fears of diminished Hindu majorities and proposals for special legislative representation for untouchables propelled untouchability from the realm of philanthropy into the political arena" (Galanter, 1972). The establishment of the Depressed Classes Mission Society and the yearly All India Depressed Classes Conference provided a venue for articulating the interests of the untouchables at the national level.

The non-brahmin movement also contributed to the politicization of the untouchables. In need of allies, the non-Brahmin leaders brought untouchable groups into the movement and Dr.T.M.Nair Championed their cause at the Spur Tank meeting in 1917 (Ischick, 1969). But, the association was short-lived, and its importance lies in the fact that it politicized the untouchable movement.

In 1927, Ambedkar led the Mahad Satyagraha, and later in the year he burned the Manu Smriti. In 1929, he led the second Mahad Satyagraha in an attempt to gain entry to the Parvati temple in Poona. The last of the Mahad Satyagraha took place at the Kalaram temple in Nasik.

The satyagrahas drew the attention of the general population to the plight of the untouchables. Between 1932 and 1936, a number of temple entry and anti-disabilities bills were introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly and in the Madras and Bombay Legislatures. In 1938, the Madras Removal of Civil Disabilities Act was passed.

Simultaneous with the movement for removal of civil disabilities began the movement for political rights. For that Ambedkar emerged as the leader for untouchables. He argued that nobody can remove their grievances as untouchables themselves can, so he demanded greater political power. Ambedkar believed that only when untouchables participate in the governance, his objective, could be achieved. So he demanded separate electorate on the basis of caste which was opposed by Gandhi and Congress leaders, who were concerned at the consequences of a separate political identity implied in the demand. The Poona Pact, following negotiations between caste Hindu and untouchable leaders, supplanted separate electorates with joint electorates, where untouchables could vote along with caste Hindus. It retained the principles of reserved seats. The number of such seats were increased from 70 to 148 in Provincial legislatures. In the Central Legislature, 18 percent of the general seats were reserved for them. The Poona Pact became the basis on which the untouchables' rights and privileges were defined in the Government of India Act of 1935.

Thus, Ambedkar stressed the secular avenues of politics and education in the social mobility of the Scheduled Castes. Here he differed fundamentally from M.K.Gandhi who had also taken up the cause of untouchables as his own (Zelliott, 1972). For, Gandhi tried to make untouchability a moral issue and sought to bring about a change of heart in the caste Hindus. His ceaseless campaign constantly kept the problem before the public eye. He wrote,

“To remove untouchability is a penance that caste Hindus owe to Hinduism and to themselves. The purification required is not of untouchables but of the so-called superior castes. There is no vice that is special to the “untouchables” not even dirt and insanitation. It is our arrogance which Hindus us superior Hindus, to our own blemishes and which magnifies those of our downtrodden whom we have suppressed and whom we keep under suppression” (Iyer, 1976).

Thus, Ambedkar and Gandhi helped untouchables to move up the caste hierarchy, with the help of education and political rights. But both the leaders considered Scheduled Castes as a homogenous category which resulted in benefits to the few. M.N.Srinivas (1965), states that by the Scheduled Castes are, no means a homogenous category. There is differentiation on the basis of language and gender. Both Ambedkar and Gandhi did not talk about untouchable women separately and education could not reach to the most depressed among the Scheduled Castes i.e. the women. Again, westernization and Sanskritization could pave the way of social mobility for the Scheduled Caste men only and women remained as the most downtrodden in the caste hierarchy., The secular education introduced by the British too could not reach the Scheduled Caste women and they remained unaffected as will be evident from their situation in the post-colonial period.

Social Mobility In Post-Independence Period

It has been discussed earlier that one of the unintended consequences of colonial rule was the group mobility of the some untouchable castes, in India. Their economic emancipation was followed by sanskritization movements, gaining of a modern education and even westernization. On the other hand, a large number of untouchable castes and women were either unaffected or else pauperized by the mechanization introduced by the British rule.

In the post-independence period, changes have been instituted at the societal level to abolish the civil disabilities suffered by the untouchables, to grant them equality of status and of opportunity, and to promote their educational and economic interests. The Indian constitution provides several temporary provisions for the weaker sections to ensure them the right of education, right of equality and property, right of religions liberty and above all the right to live with other people on the same ground, and a number of Articles (Article 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 29, 38, 46, 48, 164, 275, 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 339, 340 etc.) have been formed to specify these special provisions (Chandra, 1974). Untouchability for example was abolished under Article 17, and Article 46 provided that "the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and scheduled tribes, and shall promote them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation". The Constitution also provides for reservation in the legislatures.

The other programs include the granting of scholarships and other educational benefits, setting up of the SC/ST Commission and separate departments and advisory councils to promote their welfare and safeguard their interests.

Apart from governmental attempts to abolish untouchability, there have been forces of modernization and social change working in Indian Society, which have contributed to the weakening of this age-old institution.

With the urbanization and industrialization of Indian Society, the notion of purity and pollution has become less pervasive in the last few decades. Srinivas observes, "As a result of the spread of education among all sections of the population, traditional ideas of purity are giving way to the rules of hygiene" (Srinivas, 1962:124). According to Satish Saberwal, while caste endogamy has not declined, the notion of pollution is on the wane. With industrial growth there is a demand for apprentices who are recruited from any caste (Saberwal, 1973).

After independence education is regarded as the sheet anchor of any program for the upliftment of the deprived groups. Education is also viewed as an instrument of social change.

Further, higher education is viewed as a mechanism through which individuals or groups are to be equipped to obtain occupational and economic mobility. This is specially so for the socially and economically disadvantaged sections such as the Scheduled Castes. Higher education in their case is seen not merely as providing social status but entry into the economy, thus, in the case of Scheduled Castes higher education is expected to play a key role

in their social mobility and promoting equality. Higher education among Scheduled Castes spread rapidly after independence but not all members of the Scheduled Castes benefited. Only a few castes got the advantage of special provisions. Wankhede (1999), argues that only a few castes progressed in terms of their social, political, educational and occupational achievement. For example in Punjab, Adi-Dharmi; in Uttar Pradesh Jatav; in Maharashtra Mahar and in Andhra Pradesh Malas and Madiga show relatively better progress. He also argued that the education system after independence led to elite formation among the Scheduled Castes and women are neglected at every sphere of life.

In the 70s Dalit Movement as a new social movement expressed itself through radical literature and action. But even this upsurge did not give vent to the mute voices of Dalit women. Further, the Dalit women have not received attention of the mainstream women's movement.

The women's movement in India gathered momentum after 1975. The declaration of International Women's Year and the publication of the Report of the Committee of Status of Women in India were crucial happenings. The women's question assumed importance. Women from the upper castes gained an opportunity to be conscientious and therefore the issues earmarked by the movement were issues which affected the women of the upper caste and middle classes and Dalit women were neglected.

Since many of the vocal feminists of the 1970s were white, middle class and university educated, it was their experience which came to be universalised as women's experience. After the Black women's movement in

the West Dalit women raised their voices. In the early 80's the emergence of several organizations and fronts such as Shramik Mukti Sanghatana, Satyashodhak Communist Party, Shramik Mukti Dal, Yuvak Kranti Dal and national Federation of Dalit Women accorded a central role to Dalit women (Rege, 1988).

Padma Velaskar states,

"The setting up of the National Federation for Dalit Women in 1995 and state level affiliated Dalit women's organisations in Maharashtra and other states, has opened an entire area of discussion pertaining to the relationship of Dalit women" (Velaskar, 1999:1-2).

She argues that the mainstream Dalit movements have not provided the adequate space for Dalit women. She writes,

"Pinpointing the failure of the Dalit movements, to carry forward to the fullest the Anti-Brahmanical Hinduism revolutionary agenda of annihilation of patriarchal ideology and relations embedded in the structure of caste-patriarchy of the women's movement to address in any meaningful and comprehensive manner the caste, class and even gender issues that afflict the lives of women belonging to historically downtrodden section (Velaskar, 1999:1).

Significance of the Study

After independence, inspite of constitutional safeguards, it is well documented that Dalit women have not gained much as compared to Dalit

men counterparts. The Dalit women still lag behind in the socio-economic and educational achievements. They suffer from dual disadvantage of being Dalits that is socio-economically and culturally marginalised group and being women share the gender-based inequalities and subordination (Jogdand, 1994). This is why the Indian Council of Social Science Research under its women's studies programme, gives special emphasis to the evaluation of ongoing programme for women's developments, specially the programme emphasizes the study of women in the poorer or the 'less visible' sections of Indian society to understand the sectional difference in women's status and problems (ICSSR Newsletter, October, 1979, 1980).

Therefore, a study of women's educational achievement assumes more significance particularly for Scheduled Caste women. There are special provisions to promote education of Scheduled Castes viz pre matric scholarship, free text books, free tuition fee etc. This has been of considerable help to some of the men students but for the majority of women, however, the programme has not been effective. Therefore, a comparative view of Scheduled Caste women and non-Scheduled Caste women may enlighten to a large extent regarding the educational development of Scheduled Caste women.

Higher education is critical for students because here the students has to make a choice regarding their future course. And only after successful completion of this stage, one can hope to prepare for desired career. Very little percentage of Scheduled Caste women pass through this stage. No doubt some studies have been made regarding higher education of

Scheduled Castes, but negligible studies on women students belonging to the Schedule Caste category.

This also necessitates that the position of Scheduled Caste women students in higher education be studied to find out their participation in comparison with their men counterparts.

Hence, the investigator decided to conduct a research on higher education of Scheduled Castes in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular.

Research Questions/Objectives

- Have the Dalit women gained as much as men in higher education from the reservation policy?
- To find out the genderwise disparities that exist in the specific disciplines.
- Is there any disparity that exists between Scheduled Caste women and non-Scheduled Caste women in higher education vis-a-vis disciplinary orientations?

Methodology:

The present study is designed as an exploratory and descriptive study on the participation of Dalit women in higher education.

With the help of macro-statistics and secondary sources, it aims to find out the extent of women's participation in different disciplines of higher education.

Also, it will compare their participation with that of men within the framework of equality and social change.

Chapterization

The next i.e. the second chapter will review the studies related to literacy, mobility, higher education of Scheduled Castes in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular.

The third chapter entitled will discuss the different theories of inequality in the field of education, and the concepts like equality, opportunity will also be discussed. Also, the supporting data for inequality in literacy and school enrolment will be given.

The fourth chapter will compare the educational achievement of Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes at all India level. A comparison will also be made between Scheduled Castes and non Scheduled Castes in different disciplines, at different levels of higher education. Further, the enrolment of Scheduled Castes men and Scheduled Castes women will be compared.

The fifth chapter will sum up the discussion and conclusion will be given.

Chapter – II

CHAPTER - II

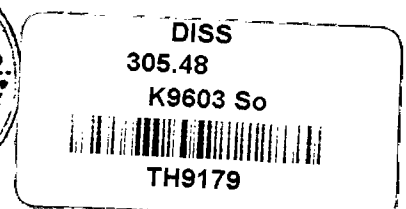
A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the preceding chapter review of related literature of socio-economic and educational dimensions of Scheduled Caste students in general and Scheduled Caste women students in particular will be discussed.

Many studies have been undertaken to understand the educational problems and socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Caste students. Singh (1972) and Lal (1974), have shown that government efforts to improve the economic status of Scheduled Castes might have made some impact but their social conditions remain almost intact. The same observation was made about Kumauni society by Pandey (1978). The studies of Adisheshiah (1974), Chitnis (1974), Raj Gopalan (1974) and Rath (1974), unanimously indicate that the socio-economic condition of the Scheduled Caste students is uncomfortable. On the contrary, Gangrade (1974), Desai (1974) and Nayar (1975), reported satisfactory socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Caste students after independence. Similar trends were reflected in the studies of Shah et.al. (1971) and Pandey (1977), among Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Pandey (1971), argues that although socio-economic status of the lower rungs in the caste hierarchy has somewhat improved yet they are far below the higher castes. There are limited studies regarding women students

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of Scheduled Castes as their number is also quite low in comparison to their men counterparts. The educational backwardness as well as lack of clarity of the goals is also more prominent in case of the female students.

Kabra (1991), states that Scheduled Castes begin their career with certain deprivation. Their performance is found to be poor. Bindu (1974) and Goyal (1974), found in case of Scheduled Castes of Uttar Pradesh that the educational level was significantly low among parents as well as younger generation. Salma (1980), has reported a similar trend for Kumauni Harijans.

Various studies have brought out that the parents, family and cultural environment are important factors responsible for the educational backwardness among the Scheduled Castes in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular. Aphole (1962), observed that Scheduled Caste children did not have any help from their parents in their studies, while better-off families appointed teachers to coach their children. According to Jha (1977), lack of parental encouragement was found to be highly responsible for low level of education among Scheduled Caste girls at all levels of education.

The Scheduled Castes students belong to different socio-economic groups and the nature of their educational development is affected by the level of socio-economic status to which they belong. Chopra (1964), has shown that there is significant positive relationship between family income and achievement even when other important variables such as grade, and community contexts are taken into account. Chitra (1969), has shown that the upper status students have a greater chance of going to college than do their schoolmates from lower status family. Jha (1977) and Lightfoot (1978), have

also shown a positive relationship between high income and good education. Thus, it has been concluded by many studies that social class is an important factor in educational achievement and social mobility. Further, lower socio-economic status is the cause of various obstacles in educational achievement. Singh (1979), observed that the main cause of poor performance as well as of threatened discontinuity of education in the case of Scheduled Castes is their economic condition.

Reddy and Sudha (1980), while studying Scheduled Caste and non-Scheduled Caste men and women students, at school level found that the high socio-economic status group reported significantly less adjustment problems than middle and low socio-economic status group. According to Shah and Salunke (1984), students of high socio-economic status group had better home environment for education than middle and low socio-economic status group. Pappachan (1983), found that the higher the socio-economic status the higher was the intelligence of pupils while the lower and average socio-economic status groups do not differ from each other significantly in their intelligence.

Parvathamma (1974), finds frustration prevalent among Scheduled Castes in post-independence India. She finds that untouchability has been abolished in the constitution but even today it has remained only as a 'legal fiction'. She argues that economic betterment has brought about class consciousness but has not helped to remove the stigma of untouchability and most of the benefits are being utilized by some sub-castes, while the majority continues to lag behind. She argues, for example the Chamars and Mahars

have done well in Bihar and Maharashtra respectively, while Jatavs in Uttar Pradesh, Adi-Dharmis and Julahas in Punjab and Mala and Madiga in Andhra Pradesh.

On the contrary, Singh (1965) and Barial (1966), have shown that there exists no significant relationship between achievement and social class. Some other factors are also important along with the level of socio-economic status.

Sachchidanand (1974), Pimpaly (1976), Chitnis (1977), Kirpal (1978) and D'Souza (1979), came to the conclusion that the economically better off among the Scheduled Castes had been able to avail themselves of the educational opportunities more than the really impoverished (Bains, 1987). Similarly, economic benefits had failed to percolate to the poor and Scheduled Caste women students. However, Aggarwal and Ashraf (1976), pointed out that in some cases the reservation policy was a major factor in the upward mobility of those Scheduled Castes who belonged to very poor families. But their number is very small.

There are some studies regarding goals and aspirations of the students. Joshi (1979), studied the educational problems of the Scheduled Castes and tribes of Baroda district and found that there was a wide gulf between the aspirations of Scheduled Castes and general students. It indicates that they are not clear about their studies. At the same time the educational aspirations of the women were much more restricted. Chitnis (1974), in a study in Maharashtra found the Scheduled Caste and Tribe women students planned to terminate their education at graduation or even earlier.

However, Sachchidanand (1973), found in Bihar that Dalit girl students have set high goals for their educational aspirations. Out of eight high school girl students, seven aspired for college education.

Parental involvement in setting the child's goals also determine the magnitude of child's aspirations. According to Pal and Dixit (1983), those parents who set their children's goals also paved way for them to attain them. There was also reinforcement by rewarding or punishing them which later or sooner led to internalization of aspirations. Sachchidanand (1973), had also observed that out of eight Dalit girls studied, all except one got encouragement from their homes for education.

Many researchers have observed that the Scheduled Caste students have a low-level profile in terms of their educational goals. According to Thakral (1977), in high school, Scheduled Castes students aspired for low prestige hierarchy occupations as compared to non-Scheduled Caste students. Singh (1981), has found in some schools of Rajasthan that Scheduled Caste and Tribe students were indecisive in choosing any particular vocation and subject for higher education. They had anxiety about their future education.

However, Pimpley (1974), in Punjab and Gangrade (1974), in Haryana found that high school Scheduled Caste students had high educational and occupational aspirations. Singh (1979), has that Scheduled Caste students desired to adopt government services or occupations which are new and modern. In a study of Scheduled Castes and Tribes students in Maharashtra, Chitnis (1974), found that the major difference between the occupational

aspirations of the women and men was that none of the women wanted to join the police force, the military, the business or the industry, and preferred jobs of clerk, typist and do some extent officers and professional work like law, engineering or medicine. In a study conducted by Madras Institute of Development Studies (1973), in Tamilnadu, it has been found that most of the Scheduled Caste girl students studying in high school aspired to become teachers and nurses. Only about one-third of them wished to get into professional work and government services.

Though poverty may be an important reason for many Scheduled Castes girls to abstain from education, even for those who are in a position to go beyond the first few years of school, the culturally disadvantaged position hampers their educational goals. It may be said that the family creates an awareness of preparation for girl's future life in the husband's home while for boys, the stress is on completion and career. Further, it is argued that where the "pervasive media reaffirms existing social values on the division of labour within the family as well as in the external world, the task of changing stereotype becomes difficult" (Desai and Krishna Raj: 1987).

Sunanda Patwardhan (1973), found in her study that cultural change in terms of self-motivation is an important factor in upward mobility. This can be proved by the example of Mahars and Neo-Buddhists in Maharashtra. Ambedkar's movement made them motivated for the conversion to Buddhism. Chitnis (1975) states that although Scheduled Castes have access to higher education, they are enrolled in the less prestigious courses and institutions.

Regarding the utilization of the scholarships provided for the Scheduled Castes students, Oommen (1977), states that the actual beneficiaries were not the poorest or the most deserving among the Scheduled Castes but those who were already economically better off among them. According to him the scholarships for higher education were grabbed by these somewhat affluent sections among the Scheduled Castes. Issaces (1965), observes that self-betterment in India has to begin with education in the case of Scheduled Castes. He also argues that reservation has benefited only ten percent of Scheduled Caste population.

Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), sponsored a national study in seventies to look at the educational problems of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes school and college students in fourteen states of India. The results are summed up under the categories of state, sex, age, hostellers/non-hostellers, year of study, marital status etc. of the respondents in both higher school and college. The finding shows that both men and women respondents are into arts stream rather than in commerce and science stream. It also shows most of the parents are non-literates. When it comes to the occupation of their fathers, mostly they are involved in work in the village such as delivering service to higher castes rather than engaging in the farming. The finding also shows that the economic condition of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is very low and only 3.2% (men) and 3.5% (women) do not get scholarship as their fathers are economically well off. The younger generation of Scheduled Castes students do not prefer to follow the occupation of their fathers, after completing their higher studies.

Economic reason is the main factor for them to have discontinuity in their studies. When it comes to the questions regarding reservation, most of them feel that the programmes for uplifting their conditions are useful. Again most of them felt that the conditions of Scheduled Castes have improved visibly because of the programmes under reservation policy, but they also feel that they are still inferior to the non-Scheduled Castes. Though they are climbing the social hierarchy because of economic improvement, sizeable number of respondents still felt ill-treated by other castes because they belong to Scheduled Castes category. Overall finding of ICSSR's study shows the aspiration among younger generation of Scheduled Castes for higher education and the enthusiasm and spark in the eyes to excel in each and every field of the wider society. This is a great leap towards the social, economic and political emancipation of Scheduled Castes who had been underdogs for centuries in Indian Society.

✓ Most studies find that education in India has not reached to the lower strata of Scheduled Caste except marginally. Their enrolment ratio to the non-Scheduled Castes is very low and among those who enrol, few pass the examination. In 1962, Nelson found out that out 40,000 students who had enrolled for pre-university course in Mysore University, there were only 961 Scheduled Caste students and only six percent of them go through the course. In Bombay University, in 1961-62 out of 228, only 88 Scheduled Caste students passed their intermediate examination. Anne Felice (1977), finds that caste barriers as a hurdle in interaction among modern educated youth in India. The study done by Chauhan and Narayan (1976), in Uttar Pradesh

discovered that out of 296 Scheduled Castes respondents, only 71 were in receipt of scholarships. They also found that in all the managing committees and schools, teachers were from higher castes. Naik (1971), mentions that spread of higher education among the Scheduled Castes is still only about a fourth of that of other communities. Shukla (1989), discovered that education cannot be spread easily or be an effective means of change as long as status is measured by land holding, income etc.

Inequality of educational opportunity for Scheduled Castes has been studied by various sociologists. Patwardhan (1973), considers education as a very important factor to enhance the social mobility of the Scheduled Castes. She studied the growth of literacy rates, post-matric scholarships, and hostel facilities utilized by the various sub-castes in Maharashtra. She found that Mahars are educationally the most advanced group. They have a positive and conscious approach to education. She underlines the magnitude of 'wastage' and 'drop-out' among the Scheduled Castes. For her, socio-economic backwardness is the main reason for the poor enrolment especially at higher levels of education. She argues that there is lack of tradition of learning in the homes of Scheduled Castes and their economic backwardness is responsible for the incidence of large number of dropouts among the Scheduled Castes.

Similarly Karlekar (1975), also highlights the social backwardness of Scheduled Castes. She finds that the main problem in educating the Scheduled Castes is one of socializing them into the dominant norms of an educational system based on rote, learning from note books etc. which they

feel unfamiliar with. Geetha (1978), argues that studies on the education of the Scheduled Castes emphasize the fact that the inequality of educational opportunity among the Scheduled Castes, when compared to non-Scheduled Castes was a result of both economic as well as social factors. Their extreme poverty makes the education of the child not viable. "The major barrier to the education of the untouchables was economic, most families did not want to lose the income earned by their children as cowherds and field hands" (Mahar, 1972:32,33). The centuries of social discrimination and educational deprivation also resulted in the educational backwardness of the Scheduled Castes.

Wankhede (1994), found in his study of 150 educated Scheduled Castes in Delhi that educational measures are most important among all. Therefore, the educational progress of Scheduled Castes can be regarded as the most important index of their general growth and development. D'Souza (1980), argues that social change and development of Scheduled Castes is to be necessarily viewed through education. Although, Indian education has its inherent weakness, Indian society has heavily depended on education for social change. However, major cause of social change has been industrialization and urbanization. He further argues that the Scheduled Castes being the last to receive the changes through these process their development has been minimal and has been confined to the urban sectors. Although the development benefits are extended to the Scheduled Castes and Tribes as a social category. The beneficiaries are specific persons and

families. This means that the unit of mobility is an individual and not a group in the context of development benefits (Oommen 1977).

Similarly Wankhede (1999), says that after independence the untouchable communities received special attention by means of adopting many welfare measures through the Constitution. Educational facilities, reservation in jobs and political reservation have been the major ones. Among all these, the educational measures are most important.

However, educational benefits reached mainly to the few among the urban population resulting into a formation of educated elites which are insignificant in number (Wankhede 1999). Although, the development planning has been to expand education, it did not reach the majority during the last 50 years of independence, it is revealed that the Scheduled Castes who have entered the educational system suffer from backwardness in terms of quality and quantity of the education they receive (Velaskar 1988). The reason underlying this backwardness have been categorized by Velaskar (1988) into two, namely, problems related to their social background and problems that are inherent within the educational system.

Wankhede (1999), maintains that there are limits to what we expect from education for social change and development among the Scheduled Castes. Social development through education is confined to limited urban based population. Among Dalits, social change is more at peripheral level that took place through processes of industrialization and urbanization (Wankhede: 1999:10)

Pinto (1999), considers education as an important instrument of social change. He argues that in spite of 50 years of independence dalits have not been able to break into the mainstream of Indian Society. As long as the system is not operated by them whatever education they receive will be against their cultural values infusing in them attitudes of inferiority, difference and low-esteem. Pinto advocates sufficient awareness of their rich cultural heritage and the exploitative structures that oppress them.

Vishwanath (1993), also finds education as an important tool for social change. She calls education as a 'solvent' of caste barriers. In her study of Scheduled Caste women in Kerala, she found that there is a considerable educational mobility between the two generations of the Scheduled Caste women. There is definite improvement in the educational level of Scheduled Castes. In her sample in Kerala a larger number of daughter respondents were literate, sixty four percent of the members were illiterate, whereas only 12 percent of their daughters were found to be illiterate. Thus, 88 percent of daughters had a level of education higher than their mothers. She found that the major factors responsible for educational mobility were parental pressure, self motivation, higher level of aspiration of the respondents, awareness of the advantages of education, and governmental welfare measures.

The significance of formal education in social mobility had been pointed out by Rao (1972), "Education helps in promoting values and achieving new goals. It is widely recognised that formal education plays a vital role in social mobility, both horizontal and vertical. If formal education is seen as a socializing agency preparing individuals for a style of life associated with a

stratum, it is the same time an agency helping individuals to overcome prejudices, and promoting values and behaviour of a more universalistic nature" (Rao, 1972: 131-132).

Kabra (1991), argues that after independence much has been done for the improvement of Scheduled Castes, but benefits have not reached to all specially the women. In 1979-80 the percentage of Scheduled Caste girls in secondary and higher secondary schools of Rajasthan was only 0.70 percent of the total girls pertaining to Scheduled Caste category. And during 1927-32 the percentage of school going girls compared to overall female population had been reported to be 0.64 in Ajmer (Kabra, 1991:3). Although percentage of Scheduled Castes women students in general continued to increase, it is still lesser in comparison to men students, and in case of Scheduled Castes even at present the percentage is very low.

Saxena (1978), had studied the history of women's education in different regions of Rajasthan. The study shows that women in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular are a behind in the field of education. But in some regions Scheduled Castes Women have progressed in education for example, the Ajmer district, where the female literacy as well as enrolment of Scheduled Caste girls is high.

Pimpley (1980), studied the Scheduled Caste women in Punjab. He argues that overall progress made in education by the members of the Scheduled Castes is quite impressive when compared with the position before and just after independence. However, progress is not uniform in the case of men and women. The men members of the Scheduled Castes have made

considerable headway in the field of education, but the educational progress among the female members, particularly at the post-middle school level is not satisfactory: Pimpley studied the sample of 62 Scheduled Caste girls of whom 48 were school students and 14 were college students. He found that in most of the households belonging to the Scheduled Castes, the education of men is given priority over that of the women. It is not considered proper that women should be educated. As mentioned earlier the Scheduled Castes are not a homogenous group, but consist of many subgroups, and the value attached to women's education varies from sub group to subgroup. He found that in some of the castes, more importance is given to education of women than in the other castes. Ad-Dharmis and Balmikis pay greater attention to the education of boys than that of girls. On the other hand among Chamars or Ramdasis and Mazhabis, the conditions of women education is not as bad as that of education of men. He found that occupation and education of parents play a dominant role in making one liberal towards women education. Education of women in comparison with men's education is more backward in families which still follow tradition-based occupations. And the education of parents is a very important factor prompting them to send their girl child to educational institutions.

A study of Mahar women was conducted in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra by Vetschera in 1990. She argues that dalit women do not find space in the literature. She argues that women's studies concentrate on middle class women among whom very few are Dalits. She estimates that only 5 to 10 percent of Harijan women are able to lead a middle-class life. On

the other hand, in the general literature of Dalits, usually no attention is paid to women and their problems. She finds that in the district, higher education for most girls seems beyond their reach. In most villages of the district only one or two Dalit girls manage to pass their senior secondary class in a couple of years. She argues that girls who reach the 10th standard and fail, are not permitted to repeat the class. She concludes that Dalit movement has done much for a handful of men intellectuals, less for the great majority of Dalit men and nothing for Dalit women.

Nirmal (1990), found that the prevalence of apathy towards the education of Scheduled Caste girls is observed both in rural and urban areas. He gives reasons that due to economic backwardness children, especially the girls, have to stay at home to look after the younger siblings, assist in household chores, work in the field and for tending the cattle. They also supplement the family income either by working on daily wages or on part time basis. He also argues that as expenditure increases in the family without a proportionate increase in the income level the axe of cutting down the expenditure falls on the education of the girls (Nirmal Saberwal, 1990:4). Based on his study among the Scheduled Caste women of Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, Trivedi (1976), observes that the Harijan women's change in various aspects of life including values, attitudes pattern of behaviour, physical and social mobility etc. is generally initiated by the men and not the women of the community.

Duggal (1990), made a situational analysis on the education of Scheduled Caste girls in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana,

Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and found in all these states the literacy rate was very low among Scheduled Castes girls. On the poor participation of Dalit woman in education Gopal Guru (1995), argues that dalit women need to talk differently. He mentions that after the representation of National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW), in Beijing Conference, there is all India mobilisation of Dalit women. However, the issue of representing Dalit women, both at the level of theory and policies have erupted time and again in the discourse on dalit women. He argues that Dalit women justify the case for talking differently on the basis of external factors (non dalit forces homogenising the issue of dalit women) and internal factors (the patriarchal domination within the dalits) (Gopal Guru, 1995: 2548)

Literature on the education of Scheduled Castes in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular speaks about the lack of equal opportunity when compared to non Scheduled Castes. These studies and reports reveal the low education level in Scheduled Castes. Again, the review of majority of the studies reveal that Scheduled Caste lag behind in all states particularly Scheduled Caste women. The next chapter will highlight the role of education in promoting equal educational opportunity.

Chapter – III

CHAPTER – III

INEQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

This chapter aims to discuss inequality of educational opportunity between Scheduled Caste and non-scheduled caste students in higher education. Additionally, it begins with a brief description of the basic concept of equality and goes on to discuss equality of education opportunity in a conceptual framework. In the later part of the chapter an analysis is undertaken to look into the nature of inequality. According to Kristol, equality of opportunity is not merely an abstract idea but also a politically aggressive idea (1975:110). In most parts of the world discussions and debates have taken place to provide equal opportunities to all sections of the society. Oxenham (1975), argues that although the concept has risen to sustain prominence in the nineteenth century but gained momentum during the second half of the twentieth century. In the Indian context, the notion of equality is strongly advocated and it has been a Constitutional provision since 1950.

The term 'equality' refers to the state of being equal. It is an ideology that every person in society irrespective of the social class, caste, status, religion or sex etc. should be considered as equal to others. Berlin (1977), argues that in its simplest form, the idea of complete social equality embodies the wish that everything and everybody should be as similar to everything and

everybody else (Berlin, 1977:29). Kristol (1975), argues that the idea of equality emerged from the assumption that all men are members of one species of a simple class of objects that is human being and, therefore, they should be treated uniformly.

The term opportunity refers to the provision of a favourable chance. Thus, Husen (1975), defines 'equality of educational opportunity as the notion that chances for education of equal quality should be equally available to every member of the eligible group irrespective of their class, race, etc. Husen (1975), is of the view that equality in relation to educational opportunity can be understood in three distinct ways, namely, as a starting point, as treatment and as a final goal.

Equality of educational opportunity as a starting point means that every individual in the society should start his/her educational career on an equal footing. Coleman argues that this notion of educational equality is very near to the western concept of educational equality that free education should be provided to all upto a certain level (1968:134-135).

Educational equality in terms of equal treatment means that everyone irrespective of his genetic equipment and social origin, should get equal treatment and the educational system should be so designed so that no discrimination takes place on the basis of class, race or social origin. The American conception of 'common curriculum' and same school for all children regardless of their background supports this viewpoint of equality of educational opportunity (Coleman 1968).

Equality of educational opportunity could also be regarded as a goal and the educational policy should be framed and implemented in such a manner that might be helpful to an increased equalization in educational attainment (Husen 1975).

The concept of equality of educational opportunity has been developed from the simplistic viewpoint of equal educational chances for all, which takes into consideration different dimensions of social reality. Husen (1975), described three major conceptions of educational equality as follows:

1. The Conservative Conception
2. The Liberal Conception and
3. The Radical Conception

The conservative conception of educational equality maintains that individuals are bestowed with different amounts of ability and, therefore, one should make best possible use of one's own ability or capacity and society should provide ample opportunity to him for his fullest development. Husen argues that basically this conception of equality is based on the premise that "God has given each individual the aptitudes that correspond to the caste or class in which he is born and he is not only makes optimal use of his capacity but be content with it, because he had been given what he by birth deserved (1975:3). This view also emphasises the 'selection of talent' from the masses so that they might contribute to the development of the nation and society should give due recognition to this selected talent.

The liberal conception of educational equality assumes that each individual is born with a relatively constant capacity or intelligence and, therefore, for the maximum development of individuals' ability and capacities, the educational system should be designed in such a way as to remove the external barriers, racial or economic which prevent able students of the lower classes from taking advantage of 'inborn intelligence'. It is, therefore, besides ability social 'distracters' and social facilitators should be taken into consideration in educational decision making. The main thrust of this liberal conception of educational equality is on equal treatment.

The radical conception of educational equality is more logical and advanced than the other two conceptions. According to this conception, equality can not be defined solely in terms of opportunity but it should be judged in relation to the current inequalities of income and wealth, occupation, political power, etc. This conception concedes that equality is a goal which can be achieved by providing compensatory measures.

In India the reservation policy for the upliftment of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes is based on the radical conception of educational equality, because it provides the opportunity to enter at every (except primary and secondary) level into educational institutions.

Tyler (1977), presents a very broad classification of educational inequalities and divides causal factors of inequalities into six categories, namely, inequality of achievement, educational background, aptitude, school environment, credentials, and life chances. He is of the view that educational

inequality is the result of either of these six factors. Coleman (1968), has also identified five types of inequalities in American educational system. The first type of inequality is defined in terms of differences of the community's input to the school, such as per pupil expenditure, school plants, libraries, quality of teachers and other similar qualities. The second type of inequality is due to the racial composition of the school. The third type of inequality includes various intangible characteristics of the school as well as factors directly traceable to the community inputs to school, such as teacher's morale, teacher's expectation and interest of students etc. Fourth type of inequality refers to the difference in school achievement for individuals with equal backgrounds and abilities. Fifth type of inequality is in terms of the consequences of school for individuals of unequal background and abilities.

Sub-cultural differences between social classes which may account for differential educational attainment are discussed by Basil Bernstein (1970). He concludes with a consideration of class differences in speech pattern and their relationship to educational attainment. He distinguishes two forms of speech patterns which he terms the 'elaborated code' and the 'restricted code'. In general, members of the working class are limited to the use of restricted codes whereas members of the middle class use both codes. Restricted codes are a kind of shorthand speech. Those conversing in terms of the code have so much in common that there is no need to make meanings explicit in speech. Restricted codes tend to operate in terms of 'particularistic meanings' and as such they are tied to specific contexts. In contrast, an elaborated code explicitly verbalize many of the meanings which are taken for

granted in a restricted code. As such its meanings tend to be universalistic and they are not tied to a particular context. In Bernstein's words, the meanings are in principle available to all because the principles and operations have been made explicit and so public.

Bernstein (1970), uses class differences in speech codes to account, in part, for differences in educational attainment. Firstly, formal education is conducted in terms of an elaborated code. He states that the school is necessarily concerned with the transmission and development of universalistic orders of meaning. This places the working class child at a disadvantage because he is limited to the restricted code. Secondly, the restricted code, by its very nature, reduces the chances of working class pupils to successfully acquire some of the skills demanded by the educational system.]

Raymond Boudon (1974), presents a fresh perspective on the relationship between social class and educational attainment. He argues that inequality of educational opportunity is produced by a 'two component process'. The first component, is the primary effects of stratification. It involves sub-cultural differences between social classes which are produced by the stratification system. The secondary effects stem simply from a person's actual position in the class structure. Hence Boudon uses the term 'positional theory' to describe his explanation. He maintains that even if there were no sub-cultural differences between classes, the very fact that people start at different positions in the class system will produce inequality of educational opportunity. He explains the positional theory in terms of cost

and benefit from the educational system. The cost involved and the benefits to be gained for a working class student and an upper middle class student in choosing the same educational courses are very different because their starting positions in the class system are different. Thus, Boudon's positional theory argues that people behave rationally. They assess the costs and benefits involved when choosing how long to stay in the educational system and what courses to take. Boudon (1970), concludes that for people in different positions in the stratification system, the cost and benefits involved in choosing the same course are different. As a result even with other factors being equal, people will make different choices according to their position in the stratification system. Thus, Boudon (1970), attempts to assess the relative importance of the primary and secondary effects of stratification on educational attainment. He finds that when the influence of primary effects (sub-cultural differences) are removed, though class differences in educational attainment are 'noticeably reduced', they still remain very high. In Boudon's analysis the secondary effects of stratification are more important in accounting for differential educational attainment. Thus, even if all sub-cultural differences were removed, there would still be considerable differences in educational attainment between social classes and a high level of inequality of educational opportunity.

Bourdieu (1973), also talked about the poor participation of working class people. He argues that the major role of the educational system is 'cultural reproduction' i.e. of the culture of the 'dominant classes'. These groups have the power to impose meanings and to impose them as

legitimate. They are able to define their own culture as 'worthy of being sought and possessed' and to establish it as the basis for knowledge in the educational system. Bourdieu (1973), refers to the dominant culture as 'cultural capital' because through the educational system, it can be translated into wealth and power and cultural capital accounts for class differences in educational attainment, students with upper class backgrounds have a built-in advantage because they have been socialized into the dominant culture. He argues that children from the dominant classes have internalized these skills and knowledge during their pre-school years. They therefore, possess the key to unlock the messages transmitted in the educational system, in Bourdieu's words, they 'possess the code of the message'. The educational attainment of social group is therefore directly related to the amount of cultural capital they possess.

Bourdieu (1977), claims that a major role of educational system is the social function of elimination. This involves the elimination of members of the working class from higher levels of education. It is accomplished in two ways: by examination failure and by self-elimination. Due to lack of dominant culture working class students are more likely to fail examinations, which prevents them from entering higher education. Bourdieu (1977), concludes that the educational system is particularly effective in maintaining the power of dominant classes. However, Bourdieu argues that education is essentially concerned with the reproduction of the established order.

Indian Context:

In the Indian context the traditional caste system, the higher castes especially the Brahmins have been given the privilege to have the access to knowledge of scriptures (Vedas, Upanishadas etc.) while it was denied to the lower caste people especially Scheduled Castes and women. So the knowledge system was in the hands of so called educated upper caste people. They decided what is knowledge which is to be imparted and to whom. This shows that the inequality of educational opportunity is deep rooted.

The concept of equality, therefore, emerged as a response to such inequality and developed as a motivating factor to bridge the gap among various fractions and sections of hierarchical society. Since education is considered to be an important instrument to bring social change, equality of educational opportunity is emphasised. As Naik (1977), puts it 'better redistribution of knowledge will automatically redistribute the political and economic power in a better way'.

This motivated the founding fathers of our Constitution to make special provisions for educational equality in the constitution. Since independence concrete steps have been taken in this direction such as schooling arrangements and provision of free education. These measures have been extended to for the communities such as Scheduled Castes and Tribes who never had the benefit of education.

The main indicators of inequality of educational opportunity that will be considered here are: literacy and enrolment at school level. In other words,

the distribution of educability or access to education will be used to compare the position of Scheduled Castes with the non-Scheduled Castes.

Literacy :

The total literacy rate has increased to 52.2 percent in 1991 as compared to 24.0 percent in 1961. The literacy rate among Scheduled Castes has increased to 37.4 percent in 1991 as compared to 10.3 percent in 1961. Table 1 shows that the gap between Scheduled Castes and non-SC/ST is very high. This gap was 17.5 Percent in 1961 which increased to 20 percent in 1991.

Table 3.1 Literacy Rate Among the Scheduled and non-Scheduled Castes

Year	All			SC			Non SC/ST
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	M/F
1961	34.4	12.9	24.0	16.9	3.3	10.3	27.8
1971	39.4	18.7	29.5	22.4	6.4	14.7	33.8
1981	56.5	29.9	43.7	31.1	10.9	21.4	41.3
1991	64.1	39.3	53.2	49.9	23.8	37.4	57.4

Source: Selected Educational Statistics, 1998-99 MHRD, Government of India, 2000, New Delhi and Census of India 1991.

Note: Figures for 1991 related to population of 7+ while the earlier censuses included the population of 5 years and over.

Table 3.1 also shows that overall literacy rate is increasing among the Scheduled Castes but Scheduled Caste women still lags behind. In 1961, the literacy rate among the Scheduled Caste women was 3.3 percent as compared to 16.9 percent for Scheduled Caste men. The literacy rate among

Scheduled Caste women increased to 23.8 percent as compared to 49.9 percent of men counterparts. Data also show that the literacy rates for Scheduled Castes are much lower than those of general or non-SC/ST population. Among the least literate groups are the Scheduled Caste women.

Thus, from 1961 to 1991, a considerable gain in overall literacy rates for almost all strata of the society was registered but the disparity between the Scheduled Caste literacy rates and non-SC/ST literacy rates persisted.

Literacy Among Caste Groups:

If we see the literacy rates across the castes among Scheduled Castes then we find that in each state there are some castes among Scheduled Castes which have much higher literacy rate than the state average for the Scheduled Caste population as a whole. Ambrose (1995), argues that although the overall Scheduled Caste literacy rate may be low but certain caste groups among Scheduled Castes either because of their rank in the hierarchy of castes or due to their small numerical strength or otherwise have attained a unique position as far as literacy is concerned. For example, Bharatar in Kerala have attained an overall literacy rate of 80 percent, Vattiyam in Tamilnadu attained 74 percent of literacy while Adi-Dharmi in Delhi has attained as high as 70 percent literacy rate in 1991. However, when it comes to deprivation and illiteracy the position in respect of many castes among the Scheduled Castes is very low. The gap in literacy rate of different caste groups even within the Scheduled Castes is extremely high ranging from almost total illiteracy to that of almost universal literacy. For example in

Bihar, Musahars, with a population of 14 million, have been reeling under total illiteracy, the literacy in their case was only 2.2 percent in 1991. Another example is of Gandhila in Himachal Pradesh who registered 100 percent literacy and Sirkiband showing total illiteracy with not even a single literate person in 1991 census (Ambrose 1995).

According to 1991 census, in as many as twelve states and Union Territories, there are SC Caste groups which have recorded literacy a rate of less than 5 percent, thus showing the extreme conditions of educational deprivation under which some Scheduled Castes live. Ambrose (1995), argues that even in a state like Kerala having attained very high rates of overall literacy and with an overall rate of 55 percent for Scheduled Castes there are caste groups whose literacy is very low. For example Dombans in Kerala have a literacy rate as low as 16.9 percent in 1991 census. Thus, even in the educationally most advanced state, there are castes which have, a long way to go before they can catch up with other caste groups within the Scheduled Castes.

Inter-Regional Differences:

The pattern of literacy rate among the Scheduled Castes is not uniform throughout the country. Some states have performed better like Kerala, Maharashtra, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat and Goa. Table 3.2 shows these states have higher literacy rate than the average literacy rates for Scheduled Castes in 1991. In these states there is not much difference between male and female literacy rates.

Table 3.2: States with Higher Literacy Rate for SCs (1991)

States	Male	Female	Total
Kerala	82.2	74.3	79.7
Gujarat	75.4	45.5	61.1
Goa	69.5	47.5	58.7
Maharastra	70.4	41.5	56.4
Himachal Pradesh	64.9	41.1	53.2
Delhi	68.7	43.8	57.7

Source: Educational Development of SC/STs, Government of India, 1995.

On the other hand, in some states the literacy rate among Scheduled Castes is very low. As Table 3.3 shows that in the state of Bihar, Rajasthan, U.P., M.P. and Orissa the total literacy rate is lower than the average literacy rate for Scheduled Castes in 1991. In Bihar the male literacy rate is as low as 30.6 percent while female literacy rate is lowest in the country that is 7.1 percent. In Rajasthan, the female literacy rate is as low as 8.3 percent as compared to male literacy rate (42.3 percent.).

Table 3.3: States with Lower Literacy Rates for SCs (1991)

States	Male	Female	Total
Bihar	30.6	7.1	19.4
Rajasthan	42.3	8.3	26.2
U.P.	40.8	10.6	26.8
M.P.	50.5	18.1	35.1
Orissa	52.4	20.7	36.7

Source: Educational Development of SC/STs, Government of India, 1995.

At the district level, some districts have very low literacy rates and some districts have better position. Table 3.4 shows that there are a few districts in which there is no difference in the literacy rate for SCs and non

SCs. Aggarwal (1994), identifies four districts which had almost equal literacy rates in 1981. These are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 District with Literacy Rate almost equal to the General Population (1981)

Districts	SC	Non SC/ST
Doda	17.1	18.6
Rajouri	25.4	24.6
Banaskantha	21.9	24.0
Mehesana	45.5	46.9

Source: Aggarwal and Sibou 1994, (pp.96).

Aggarwal (1994), also identifies a number of districts for which literacy among non-SC/ST population was higher than the corresponding SC literacy in 1981. These are as shown in Table 3.5

Table 3.5: Districts Showing Higher Literacy Rate for SC (1981)

Districts	SC	Non SC/ST
Gandhinagar	54.4	50.9
Kheda	51.1	49.8
Balaghat	39.9	37.4
Bhandara	48.3	45.7

Source: Aggarwal and Sibou, 1994, (pp.97).

It may be noted that the proportion of Scheduled Castes population in all these districts is low between 5-10 percent. Aggarwal (1994), states that this situation of high Scheduled Castes literacy level is thought provoking and requires an in-depth study of the favourable factors. He notes that the districts with low level of literacy are concentrated in the Hindi speaking areas of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. He also maintains the view that low levels of SC literacy are also characterized by the influence

of the extremities of physiography. Many of these districts are generally backward and witness the extremes of climate and terrain. The low literacy levels in these districts are also associated with the hardship of life in these areas. Aggarwal (1994) mentions two factors responsible for the under-development of education. First, availability and utilization of educational facilities and, secondly, out migration of the educated.

Levels of Educational Attainment Among SCs At School Level:

After a discussion of literacy among the Scheduled Castes, this section begins with analysis of the growth of school level enrolment among Scheduled Castes. Table 3.6 presents the enrolment in India from year 1964-65 to 1998-99.

**Table 3.6: Scheduled Caste Enrolment at School Level
(1964-65 to 1998-99)**

(In Thousands)

Year	I – V		VI – VIII		IX- XII	
	Total Enrolment	% Girls	Total Enrolment	% Girls	Total Enrolment	% Girls
1964-65	5655	27.7	916	20.0	365	15.8
1970-71	6709	31.0	119	21.8	499	18.3
1980-81	10981	33.6	2222	26.3	1152	22.8
1989-90	15400	38.2	3921	33.1	2056	28.6
1998-99	19499	42.9	6135	38.9	3474	34.9

Source: Chaudhary 1995, (pp.54-55).
India, 2000 (pp. 54-55)

It shows a significant increase in the number of SC students enrolled at all levels of school education, the increase in enrolment from 1964-65 to

1998-99 is more than three times at the primary level. Similarly, at the secondary level the increase has been more than six times. It may be noted that the relative increase in enrolment has been faster as one moves up in the educational hierarchy. Another feature of educational development among Scheduled Castes is that the gap between the enrolment of boys and girls has witnessed a decline at higher primary level. This is due to a significant increase in the share of Scheduled Caste girls in total enrolment. At primary level, their share has increased from 30 percent in 1964-65 to 38 percent in 1989-90 and 42.9 percent in 1998-99.

One sees the percentage share of Scheduled Caste students to the total enrolment, one can conclude that the share of Scheduled Castes is increasing but not to the extent of corresponding population of Scheduled Castes. Table 3.7 shows that in 1971-72 at the primary level only 11.8 percent students were Scheduled Castes. This decreased to 7.6 percent in 1971-72. In 1994-95, the percentage share of Scheduled Castes at primary level is 16.2 percent while at Senior Secondary level, only 12 percent students were Scheduled Castes.

Table 3.7: Percentage Enrolment of SCs to Total Enrolment

Stage	Year	
	1971-72	1994-95
Primary	11.8	16.2
Middle	8.9	14.0
Senior Secondary	7.6	12.0

Source: India 1977, 1995, Government of India, 1977 and Kamleshwar Chaudhary, 1995.

Thus, literacy rate and enrolment at different levels of education shows that Scheduled Caste students do not have adequate representation. Inequality is more pronounced as one moves up in the hierarchy of levels. The proportion of Scheduled Caste girls is increasing but when compared to Scheduled Caste boys, the proportion is inadequate. The next chapter will highlight the representation of Scheduled Caste in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular with that of non-Scheduled Castes.

Chapter – IV

CHAPTER - IV

DALIT WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In this chapter focus will be on the enrolment trends of women in higher education in general as well as on the Scheduled Caste women. Further, a comparative analysis is also undertaken between Scheduled Castes and non-scheduled Castes, Scheduled Caste men and Scheduled Caste women. For the trend, the data of 1978-79 and 1998-99 are used for Scheduled Castes and other communities while for the general women, data from 1950-51 is used.

Table 4.1: Proportion of Scheduled Castes in Higher Education

Year	Communities		
	SCs	Non-SCs	All communities
1978-79	473,420 (10.09)	4,218,812 (89.91)	4,692,232 (100.00)
1998-99	632,689 (8.91)	6,467,753 (91.09)	7,100,442 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

- Source: 1. Selected Educational Statistics (1998-99) Government of India, 2000 (pp.47-52).*
- 2. Progress of SCs and STs, Ministry of Culture and Education 1981 (pp.15-17).*
- 3. Annual Report of Ministry of Human Resource Development (1999-2000), 2000 (pp.171&173).*

In table 4.1 communitywise enrolment in higher education is given. It that during the period under investigation, i.e. from 1978-99 to 1998-99, the total enrolment has increased from 46,92,232 to 71,00,442 denoting a net increase of 51.32 percent. The enrolment of Scheduled Castes during the

said period has also increased from 4,73,420 to 6,32,689 i.e. accounting a growth of 33.64 percent which is quite low as compared to the total enrolment at higher education for all communities. Thus, comparing the growth rate for Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes, it may be concluded that a large discrepancy remains between the two communities for the said period. Again, while in absolute numbers the enrolment of Scheduled Castes in higher education has increased, but in terms of proportion of Scheduled Castes to the total enrolment there was decline. It was 10.09 percent in 1978-79 which has gone down to 8.91 percent in 1998-99. While the proportion of non-Scheduled Castes has gone up, although marginally, i.e. it has increased from 89.91 percent to 91.09 percent during the same period.

Disciplinewise analysis shows the disparities among the communities from 1978-79 to 1998-99. If one sees disciplinewise analysis of the data for the same period, the disparities among the communities are pronounced as shown in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Discipline-wise proportion of SCs and Non-SCs (in terms of percentages)

Year	1978-79			1998-99		
	SC	Non-SC	Total	SC	Non-SC	Total
Arts	9.83	91.17	100.00	10.47	89.53	100.00
Science	4.28	95.72	100.00	7.03	92.97	100.00
Commerce	5.02	94.98	100.00	5.56	94.44	100.00
Education	5.77	94.23	100.00	11.38	88.62	100.00
Engg./Tech.	5.28	94.72	100.00	9.65	90.35	100.00
Medicine	7.13	92.83	100.00	8.79	91.21	100.00

Source: Selected Educational Statistics (1998-99), Government of India, 2000 (pp.47-52).

Progress of SC/ST (1978-79), Ministry of Culture and Education, Government of India, 1981 (pp.15-17).

Annual Report of Ministry of Human Resource Development (1999-2000), 2000 (pp.171&173)

Table 4.2 depicts the disciplinewise share of Scheduled Castes and non-Scheduled Castes. Not all the popular disciplines could be taken for this analysis, rather a number of major disciplines viz., arts, science, commerce, education, engineering and technology and medicine have been taken into consideration. Scheduled Caste students constitute 9.83 percent share of the total enrolment in arts faculty in the academic year 1978-79, which has slightly increased in 1998-99. Apart from arts the proportion of Scheduled Castes in other disciplines was substantially lower as compared to the corresponding share of the non-Scheduled Castes in higher education. In science discipline the share of Scheduled Castes was the lowest in 1978-79 i.e. they were only 4.28 percent, which has rose upto 7.03 percent in the academic year 1998-99. In commerce also the percentage of Scheduled Castes was quite low in 1978-79. But unlike science it could not increase substantially in 1998-99 and, therefore, a very marginal growth from 5.02 percent to 5.56 percent. In education, and engineering and technology the proportion of Scheduled Castes has improved dramatically showing almost 100 percent growth. In 1978-79, 5.77 percent Scheduled Caste students were enrolled in education against 94.23 percent non-Scheduled Castes which increased to 11.38 percent in 1998-99. Likewise, in engineering and technology the proportion of Scheduled Castes was 5.28 percent in 1978-79 which increased to 9.65 percent in 1998-99. But in medicine, the share of Scheduled Castes has not shown any substantial positive change, rather it has increased only marginally, from 7.13 percent to 8.79 percent during the same period. What is noteworthy is that in all disciplines, and especially in the professional subjects

such as engineering, teachers' training and medicine, their proportion has gone up.

Further, distribution of Scheduled Castes in different faculties by level been taken.

Table 4.3: Faculty-wise Percentage of Scheduled Castes at Undergraduate Level

Faculty	Year	
	1978-79	1998-99
Arts	91,721 (56.5)	3,48,890 (55.14)
Science	19,369 (11.9)	89,744 (14.18)
Commerce	21,398 (13.2)	75,684 (11.96)
Education	3,782 (2.3)	13,004 (2.05)
Engg./Tech.	3,486 (3.4)	30,193 (4.77)
Medicine	7,266 (4.5)	12,615 (1.99)
Others	13,315 (8.2)	62,559 (9.88)
Total	1,62,305 (100.00)	6,32,689 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

Source: Selected Educational Statistics (1998-99), Government of India, 2000 (pp.47-51).

Progress of SC/ST (1978-79), Ministry of Culture and Education, Government of India, 1981 (pp.15-17)

In table 4.3 facultywise percentage distribution of Scheduled Castes at undergraduate level is given. It is quite obvious from the table that a very large percentage of Scheduled Caste students are in arts faculty. During the academic year 1978-79, out of the total 1,62,305 SC students at graduate level, 91,721 students constituting 56.5 percent were enrolled in arts faculty. In 1998-99, however their share in arts has declined slightly. But it is still the

most favoured faculty for them i.e. out of every 100 Scheduled Caste students, who enter higher educational system, approximately 56 join arts. It may be mentioned that this is a general trend that a majority of students of all categories join arts faculty. In science faculty the share of Scheduled Castes was 11 percent in 1978-79 which has gone up to 14.18 percent in 1998-99. It shows that the tendency to pursue science courses among SC students has improved substantially. In contrast to the increasing share of Scheduled Castes in science faculty, a declining trend may be noticed in commerce. For example, in 1978-79, out of the total 1,62,305 Scheduled Caste candidates, 21,378 students constituting 13.2 percent were pursuing commerce education. In 1998-99, there were only 11.96 percent students in commerce faculty. No doubt their total strength has increased from 21,378 to 75,684, but their representation has gone down substantially. In education the situation almost remains unchanged, while in engineering and technology Scheduled Castes have improved their position in 1978-79. The proportion of Scheduled Castes in engineering and technology was 3.4 percent which has improved to 4.77 percent in 1998-99. But in medicine the share of Scheduled Castes has gone down very dramatically, as shown in the table. During the academic year 1978-79, the share of Scheduled Castes in medicine was 4.5 percent which declined to 1.99 percent in 1998-99 at the undergraduate level which requires an indepth study.

Kamat (1985), argues that one very important indicator of social progress is the position of women in society. Moreover, the education that a society provides for its women and their social position in society are closely

inter-related. While improvement in the social status of women is generally accompanied by their educational advance, a corresponding change in the character of their education enhances their status in society. He argues, "The movement for improving women's status all over the world has always emphasised education as the most significant instrument for changing women's subjugated position in society". (Kamat, 1985: 205).

Kamat (1985), states that education, especially higher education, not only adapts an individual to the existing or emerging social situation, but has also a creative role. It has the potential for liberating the mind from the shackles of the established culture. Therefore, liberal ideas of freedom, equality and dignity of the individual lead educated women and men, at least at the ideational level, to the objective of complete equality of status with men, of the total emancipation of women (Kamat, 1905: 233).

After independence mass national awakening accelerated this process and young women joined new white-collar professions and services which resulted into social liberation of women. In last three decades women's education has made considerable advance but it still suffers from economic difficulties and social inertia and inhibition. There has been considerable increase in the number of educated working women, but a large number of them are still confined to their homes. They have no productive employment.

Sinha (1996), argues that higher education of women has resulted in social mobility among them. Women's role in the home widens when she is educated. Even when she is not working her quantum and scope of work at home definitely increases. Outside the home also, the social status of the

educated women has improved, particularly at the higher reaches as teachers, doctors and researchers. Kamat (1985), argues that like all other social change, changes in the role and status of women in society are also a result of changes in many factors such as mode of production and socio-economic structure through the spread of education especially higher education, enactment of reforms, the growth of consciousness and organisation among concerned sections of the people.

The advance in the higher education of women and their entry into high and low services professions even in politics at some levels, has given a significant push to changing women's role and status in society in the post-independence period.

Our discussion has been confined to the interconnection between the social change and higher education of women which is mainly about women of the upper and middle classes. Also 'women' is not a homogenous category. The various sections of the women suffer exploitation, inequalities and injustices specially the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women. During the pre-independent period two movements which affected the position of Dalit women were: the social reform movement of 19th century and the nationalist movement of 20th century. The status of women was an issue of great concern to social reformers in India. The early social reforms were concerned with two major problems. These were: the emancipation of women and amelioration of the condition of depressed class (Jogdand 1994).

Table 4.4: Percentage of Women to Total Enrolment in Higher Education

Year	Total Enrolment	Women Enrolment	% of Women total Enrolment
1950-51	3,06,745	33,126	10.9
1960-61	10,49,864	1,70,455	16.2
1970-71	31,12,404	6,89,086	22.1
1980-81	27,52,437	7,48,525	27.2
1991-92	52,65,886	16,85,926	32.0
1998-99	71,00,442	27,57,858	38.8

Source: Selected Educational Statistics (1998-99), Government of India, 2000 (pp.47-51).

Annual Report of Ministry of Human Resource Development, (1998-2001), Government of India, 2000 (171&173).

Table 4.4 shows the women's enrolment in comparison to the total enrolment for a period from 1950-51 to 1998-99. It is revealed from the table that enrolment has increased more than 23 times from 1950-51 to 1998-99. While in absolute numbers during 1950-51 women's enrolment was 33,126, it has gone up to 27,57,858 in 1998-99, showing a dramatic increase of more than 83 times. It shows that in terms of percentage share women have improved their position quite substantially as compared to the total enrolment. If the same exercise is done for men, it shows that the enrolment of men could increase only by 16 times during the same period. The Table also reveals that in 1950-51 the proportion of women's enrolment was only 10.9 percent to the total enrolment which has increased up to 38.8 percent in 1998-99.

Further, a break up is undertaken to show the proportion of women in different faculties in higher education.

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Table 4.5: Faculty-wise proportion of Women's Enrolment in Higher Education (Number of Women per 100 Men) (1950-51 to 1993-94)

Faculty	1950-51	1970-71	1985-86	1993-94
Arts	16.10	33.20	40.40	43.22
Science	7.10	18.60	30.50	34.17
Commerce	0.60	3.10	19.10	23.14
Education	32.40	36.50	49.00	52.00
Eng./Tech.	0.16	1.00	5.90	7.84
Medicine	16.30	22.90	29.50	34.56
Agriculture	0.17	0.50	4.30	7.09
Veterinary Sc.	0.45	0.70	4.90	7.79
Law	2.10	3.70	8.10	11.32
Others	18.80	47.20	39.50	38.90
Total	10.90	22.10	29.60	33.20

Source: 1. UGC. Reports, 1981-82, 1985-86, Government of India.

2. Chanana, Karuna 2000. *Treading the Hallowed Halls: Women in Higher Education*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 35, No. 12, March 18.

Table 4.5 attempts to depict the position of women's enrolments, i.e. their proportion among faculties in higher education. Even cursory look at the table shows that the enrolment of women has improved significantly in all the faculties. However, the rate of increase has not been the same for all faculties. In 1950-51 women's proportion was only 10.9 percent in total enrolment, while in 1993-94 their proportion has increased up to 33.20 percent. It is, however, not sufficient as women constitute almost half of the population. A faculty wise analysis of enrolment reveals that education, medicine and arts were the most favourite faculties for women from the very beginning as in 1950-51, 32.40 percent, 16.30 percent and 16.10 percent women were enrolled in these faculties, respectively. This proportion has increased as shown by the enrolment in 1993-94. In education the enrolment increased from 32.40 percent to 52 percent, in medicine it has increased from

16.30 percent to 34.56 percent and in arts it went from 16.10 percent up to 43.23 percent during the period from 1950-51 to 1993-94. In engineering and technology, agriculture, veterinary science and commerce, the share of women was very low to the extent of being negligible in (i.e. less than one percent) 1950-51 in these faculties. It has increased very substantially over the period, and in 1993-94, the proportion of women was 7.84 percent for engineering technology and for agriculture while; for veterinary science and commerce 7.09 percent, 7.79 percent and 23.14 percent, respectively. Moreover, their representation in commerce faculty has increased with a rate par excellence. Nevertheless, the proportion of women in these specific faculties remains low as compared to their men counterparts. It is also obvious from the table that science discipline which once was considered to be very difficult now includes a fairly large number of women students. The proportion of women in science faculty, which was 7.10 percent in 1950-51 increased up to 34.17 percent in 1993-94, showing around a fourfold increase (in terms of percentage). Likewise, in law the share of women has gone up from 2.10 percent to 11.32 percent during the same period. One of the most interesting feature in women's enrolment seems that education is the only faculty where women have surpassed men and they constitute the 52 percent share of the total enrolment in 1993-94. The following table shows the proportion of women at different levels of higher education.

Table 4.6: Level Wise Distribution of Women Students in Higher Education 1950-51 to 1993-94

Year	Undergraduate			Graduate			Research M.Phil/Doctor		
	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III
1950-51	3,75,319	40,499	10.8	19,922	2,425	12.1	1,434	202	14.1
1960-61	9,85,872	1,59,491	16.2	58,909	10,170	17.3	50,83	794	15.6
1970-71	28,62,799	6,11,553	21.6	1,61,182	41,516	25.8	13,313	2,753	20.7
1980-81	23,401,485	6,52,808	27.2	2,73,667	77,001	28.2	32,171	8,780	27.3
1993-94	51,30,447	16,94,546	33.02	5,49,741	1,98,907	35.37	62,444	22,788	36.49

Source: Chanana, Karuna 2000. Treading the Hallowed Halls: Women in Higher Education. Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.35, No. 12, March 18.

Note: i) Total Enrolment
 ii) Enrolment of Women
 iii) Percentage of Women to total enrolment.

In Table 4.6 levelwise (i.e. undergraduate, graduate, research) distribution of women is given. It can be observed from the table that the proportion of women has increased substantially across the level over the period. In 1950-51 at undergraduate level, the proportion of women candidates was 10.8 percent which has increased up to 33.02 percent in 1993-94. At the graduate level out of the total 19,922 candidates there were 2,425 women candidates constituting 12.1 percent share of the total enrolment. In terms of absolute numbers, women's share has gone up sharply in 1993 and out of the total 549,741 enrolments, 1,98,907 candidates were women. However, in terms of percentage women were still lagging behind constituting 35.37 percent of the total enrolment. It is also revealed that during the decade from 1970-71 to 1980-81 the growth rate for women's enrolment has been slow as compared to the growth in other decades. In 1950-51 only

202 women were enrolled at research level, which seems to be quite low. However, the percentage distribution shows that at research level the representation of women was comparatively higher than the other two levels. It has increased to 36.49 percent in 1993-94 from 14.1 percent. It can be concluded from the table that at higher education level women's representation has improved continuously over the period.

Now, further discussion will focus on the Scheduled Caste women in higher education in particular and in comparison to Scheduled Caste men, non- Scheduled Caste women from 1978-79 to 1998-99.

Table 4.7: Gender-wise Enrolment in Higher Education Across Communities

Community		Year	
		1978-79	1998-99
SCs	Men	3,92,451 (82.9)	4,52,325 (71.49)
	Women	80,969 (17.1)	1,80,364 (28.51)
	Total	4,73,420 (100)	6,32,689 (100)
Non-SCs	Men	31,38,014 (74.38)	38,90,259 (60.15)
	Women	10,80,798 (25.62)	25,77,494 (39.85)
	Total	43,18,812 (100)	64,67,753 (100)
All Communities	Men	35,30,465 (75.24)	43,42,584 (61.16)
	Women	11,61,767 (24.76)	27,58,858 (38.84)
	total	46,92,232 (100.00)	71,00,442 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

- Source: 1. *Selected Educational Statistics (1998-99) Government of India, 2000* (pp.47-51).
 2. *Progress of SCs and STs, Ministry of Culture and Education 1981* (pp.15-17).
 3. *Annual Report of Ministry of Human Resource Development (1999-2000), 2000* (pp.171&173).

In Table 4.7 genderwise as well as community wise description of the enrolment is given. However, communitywise breakup takes only a two-category model, i.e. Scheduled Castes and non- Scheduled Castes. It is evident from the table that proportion of women in higher education has increased across communities from 1978-79 to 1998-99. In 1978-79, out of the total enrolment of Scheduled Castes, which was, 4,73,420 there were 80,969 women constituting 17.1 percent of the total. In a period of twenty years, however, this composition has changed dramatically, i.e. in 1998-99 women's enrolment in higher education has increased upto 1,80,364 consisting 28.51 percent of the total Scheduled Castes share of enrolment. In terms of absolute numbers also, this increase was more than two folds.

The table very clearly points out that the representation of Scheduled Caste women in higher education was quite low as compared to the enrolment figure of the non-Scheduled Castes women and total representation of women across communities. In 1978-79, Scheduled Caste women were only 17.1 percent in total share of Scheduled Castes in higher education while non-Scheduled Castes women were sharing 25.62 percent enrolment in their own category. Likewise, in 1998-99 the share of Scheduled Caste women was 28.51 percent whereas the share of non-Scheduled Caste women was 39.85 percent in their respective categories. Communitywise comparison of enrolment shows that the gender gap is characteristic of both the communities. In other words, women of all communities lag behind men

even though the gender gap is lower among the non-Scheduled Castes than the Scheduled Castes.

Table 4.8: Community-Wise Enrolment of Women in Higher Education

Year	Total Enrolment (Women)	Non SCs (Women)	SCs (Women)
1978-79	11,61,767 (100.00)	10,80,798 (93.03)	80,969 (6.97)
1998-99	27,57,858 (100.00)	25,77,494 (93.46)	1,80,364 (6.54)

Note: figures in parenthesis denote percentages.

Source: Computed from

1. *Selected educational statistics (1998-99), government of India, 2000 (pp.47-51).*
2. *Annual Report of Ministry of Human Resource Development (1999-2000), government of India, 2000 (171&173).*
3. *Progress of SC/STs, Ministry of Culture and education 1981*

It is easy to infer from the table 4.8 that the share of Scheduled Caste women is extremely low as compared to the proportion of non-Scheduled Caste women. In 1978-79, there were only 80,969 Scheduled Caste women in higher education constituting as low as 6.97 percent of total enrolment of women. In 1998-99, women's enrolment declined in terms of percentage share, i.e. out of 27,57,858 women only 180,364 women belonged to Scheduled Caste category, which constitute 6.54 percent of total women enrolment.

Further an analysis is made to compare scheduled caste women in comparison with Scheduled Caste men within the category and with that of non-Scheduled Caste women.

Table 4.9: Gender-wise percentage share of Each Community to the Total Enrolment

Category/ gender	Total Enrolment	Non-SCs		SCs	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
Year	All communities M/W				
1978-79	46,92,232 (100.00)	31,38,014 (66.88)	10,80,798 (23.03)	3,92,451 (8.36)	80,969 (1.73)
1998-99	71,00,442 (100.00)	38,90,259 (54.79)	25,77,494 (36.30)	4,52,325 (6.37)	1,80,364 (2.54)

Note: Figures in parenthesis denote percentages.

Source: Computed from

1. *Selected educational statistics (1998-99), government of India, 2000 (pp.47-51).*
2. *Annual Report of Ministry of Human Resource Development (1999-2000), government of India, 2000 (pp.171&173).*
3. *Progress of SC/STs, Ministry of Culture and education 1981 (pp.15-17).*

Table 4.9 provides a wholistic picture of the proportion of non-Scheduled Caste men and women and Scheduled Caste men women in relation to the total enrolment in higher education. Beginning from the enrolment of non-Scheduled Caste men, the table shows that non-Scheduled Caste men constitute a substantial part of the total enrolment in higher education, which was 66.88 percent in 1978-99. However, a declining trend may be noticed in percentage share of non-Scheduled Caste men in 1998-99, i.e. during this span of two decades their share has gone down substantially from 66.88 per cent to 54.79 per cent. At the same time, the share of non-Scheduled Caste women in higher education as gone up, dramatically. In 1978-79 the share of non-Scheduled Caste women in total enrolment was 23.03 per cent which has increased in 1998-99 up to 36.30 per

cent. It is also clear from the percentage shared Scheduled Caste men to the total enrolment in higher education that their representations remains quite low as compared to the non-Scheduled Caste men and to the non-Scheduled Caste women as well. It has also declined from 8.36 per cent to 6.37 per cent during the same period. The enrolment figures for Scheduled Caste women represent a very grim picture of their representations in higher education. In 1978-79 out of the total 46,92,232 enrolments only 80,969 were Scheduled Caste women. Women were enrolled in higher education constituting only 1.73 percentage share of the total enrolment. Their representation, however, improves in 1998-99 and has gone up to 2.54 per cent, but this improvement is very meager.

Is there any disparity among Scheduled Caste women in general and in professional education can be seen in table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Enrolment of SC women in Higher Education: General and Professional

Year	Enrolment		
	General Education	Professional Education	Total
1967-68	8,135 (61.55)	5,081 (38.45)	13,216 (100.00)
1977-78	39,675 (80.19)	9,800 (19.81)	49,475 (100.00)
1998-99	65,730 (81.80)	14,634 (18.20)	80,364 (100.00)

Note: figures in parenthesis denote percentages.

Source:

1. University Grants Commission's Annual Reports, (1971-72), Government of India 1972.
2. University Grants Commission's Annual Reports, (1977-78), Government of India 1981.
3. Selected Educational Statistics, (1998-99), government of India, 2000.

In Table 4.10 enrolment of Scheduled Caste women in general and professional higher is given. It shows reveals that beginning from the 1967-68 the share of women in general education has increased substantially, while in professional education there share is constantly declining. Notwithstanding, in terms of absolute numbers they have gained strength in professional education also. The substantial decrease of women in professional education might led us to conclude that inspite of the increase in total enrolment, the relative proportion of women in higher education is skewed to general education only.

The overall trend analysis of women in higher education shows that the women are under represented. This under represent it more pronounced in the case of Schedule Caste women. Further, non- Scheduled Caste women have better representation as compared to Scheduled Caste women. Thus, that Scheduled Caste women have a long way to go. This analysis also points out that the benefit provided by government have not availed by Scheduled Caste women adequately and their proportion in the total enrolment is less than 3 per cent to the total enrolment for all communities in higher level.

Chapter – V

Chapter V

Conclusion

The unintended results of colonial rule was the economic emancipation and prosperity of some untouchable castes. These prosperous untouchable castes were unwilling to accept the position of social inferiority in the changed circumstances. They avidly took to the new avenues of mobility such as western education and even to Sanskritization. They were aided in their efforts by the missionaries, and by the liberal egalitarian ethos introduced by the Britishers. The realization of a changing political and legal environment, gave rise to the striving for power by the untouchables. Their 'horizontal unity' was brought about by B.R. Ambedkar and other local leaders, who initiated a de-Sanskritization movement, which gave the untouchables a common identity. Above all, Ambedkar pointed out the importance of secular avenues of mobility, such as wealth, power and education. He exhorted them to take education. At the same time M.K. Gandhi helped to focus attention on the plight of the untouchables.

During the pre-independence period, the politicization of the untouchables reached its zenith. As a result they were recognized as a politically important community by the national leaders, and were granted a number of benefits in the post-independence period to bring them on par with the general population. Though the Scheduled Castes have benefited from the provisions of positive discrimination, these have not percolated to the large masses to the Schedule

Castes. There are many reasons for the failure of the reservation system to deal with the problem of Scheduled Castes. Firstly, they have not taken full advantage of the benefits especially regarding women. Secondly, it has created a category of Scheduled Caste elite in which most of the Scheduled Castes people, especially some Scheduled sub Castes could not join the mainstream of Indian society. Thirdly, the 'upwardly mobile Castes' among the Scheduled Castes of the pre-independence period have cornered the protective discrimination benefits. This failure creates a rift among Scheduled Castes themselves reinforcing the heterogeneous nature of Scheduled Caste population.

While the policy of protective discrimination has been disappointing in its effect on social mobility, the progress of education is encouraging. Education is slowly but steadily spreading to the Scheduled Castes and significant strides have been made at the primary level but in higher education the situation is not satisfactory especially for women.

The education of Scheduled Caste women is dismal because of the socio-economic and cultural reasons. In India, women in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular are culturally disadvantaged group. They remain backward in education due to tradition and structure of the society. They suffer from the double burden of being untouchables and of being women.

Inequality of educational opportunity is of special importance for Scheduled castes because of cultural and social factors. Pandey(1993), mentions that there is a variance between the cultural system, values and skills projected by

the school and the cultural system, values and skills of the Scheduled Castes. The inequality is more pronounced for scheduled casts specially women as one moves to the higher level of education. The cultural system projected by the schools is dominantly skewed in favour of middle class upper caste values. Krishna Kumar (1980), states that for an average Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe student, his/her worldview does not match with the worldview by modern system of education. The cultural system projected by the school is divorced from the social reality of the lower Castes. The cultural system of Scheduled Castes also derives mostly from their relationship to ecology and material condition they experience. Their cultural symbols are the products of their relationship with lived reality as such there is no distinction between mental and physical world (Kancha Iiah, 1999). As Krishna Kumar (1980), rightly states that it is extremely difficult for a Scheduled Caste to assimilate and decode ideas disseminated within the school environment; ideas which are alien to their environ. This partly explains the reason as to why a significant number of Dalits do not climb up the ladder of higher education. it is not merely that they cannot compete, but it is also a fact that they have not been equipped to compete. Measures of protective discrimination will not produce the desired results unless, these aspects are taken into consideration. It needs little clarification that measures of protective discrimination should have inbuilt component for the most disadvantaged within the Dalit category i.e. their women.

We have seen their meagre representation in higher education. The structure of patriarchy, which governs man/woman relations among caste groups also governs the gender relations among Dalits. However, as has been well documented that the women of lower social strata have more freedom as compared to their upper caste counterparts. It remains an intriguing question as to why the percentage of Scheduled Caste women as compared to Scheduled Caste men is so low.

Women's movements of 1970's, which came up to liberate women are not homogenous. There is still the practice of differentiation between higher and lower category of women. This is also present between high caste and Dalit women. The latent manifestation of these contradictions involves subtle forms of caste discrimination as practised by upper caste upper class women against Dalit women. Further, Dalit women critique the feminist explanations developed by non-Dalit women and argue that they do not capture their reality (Guru, 1995). Guru argues that these theories should incorporate the voices of Dalit women. As mentioned elsewhere he states that this necessity to talk differently came due to the external factor i.e. the homogenization of the issue of Dalit women by non-Dalit intellectuals and also due to the internal factor i.e. the patriarchal domination within the Dalits.

Education is the weapon to emancipate Scheduled Caste women from their age old oppression in the hands of higher castes, as well as in the hands of Scheduled Caste men. Many movements such as National Federation of Dalit

women came up to spread education and awareness of their grim conditions. The participation of Scheduled Caste women in higher education has been low as compared to Scheduled Caste men in this study. It shows that Dalit women have not gained as much as men in higher education from the protective discrimination. Most of the benefits have been availed by Scheduled Caste men and that too of only some castes. The opportunities have been availed as 'Caste groups' but benefits have percolated to individuals rather than castes as a whole. In that also, the women have been edged out by menfolk. This has resulted in gender-wise disparity in higher education in almost every disciplines.

The study has also shown that these disparities that exist between scheduled caste women and non-Scheduled Caste women in higher education. It is due to the reason that non-Scheduled Castes were far ahead in accessing education. As a consequence, their women have also accessed education in far greater degree as compared to Scheduled Caste women. Thus, the study concludes that Scheduled Castes women are most marginalised in the higher education.

The policy of protective discrimination should take into account that not only their educational backwardness but also their location within the Dalit patriarchal structure as well as their cultural moorings and the ideas in which they have been socialized for ages. Unless, we have an in-depth understanding of levels of discrimination faced by them, the slogan of equal educational opportunity would be nothing but a chimera. Because, it is one thing to make opportunities for education equal but quite another to make access to those opportunities equal.

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