

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

At all times and in every society there are certain disadvantaged groups. They lag behind the mainstream of the society due to one reason or the other. In Indian context, ‘*dalits*’ constitute one such group. The *dalits*, which is a social group peculiar to India, lagged behind the rest of the society in several respects since ages. They have been discriminated in several respects and were meted out, in several cases, even inhuman treatment, by the rest of the society particularly the socially advanced groups. They have been poor, deprived of basic human rights and treated as social inferiors in the society.

1.1 The Caste System and the Dalits

The caste system or *varna-vayavastha*, which has dominated Indian society for over 3000 years, was developed by Brahmins (Hindu priests) to maintain their superiority over less educated, less skilled and lower castes. Over the time, caste system was formalized into four distinct social groups called castes or *varnas*, which was organized in hierarchical manner. At the top of the social hierarchy were the *brahmins*, who were considered arbiters in the matters of learning, teaching and religion. Next in the line of hierarchy have been the *kshatriyas* who were warriors and administrators. The third and fourth in the social hierarchy have been the *vaisyas* who constituted the commercial class and the *sudras* who have been the farmers and peasants,

respectively.¹ The four castes are socially and religiously important because they are said to have divine origin.²

Outside the *varna* system, there is a fifth group called *dalits*, who were prevented from doing any but the most menial jobs and were untouchable for the rest of the castes. They have been certain primitives, criminals, defeated and degraded people.³ *Dalits* were referred to as *panchamas* or people of fifth order.⁴ The *dalits* were also called as *pulkasas* and *chandalas* engaged in polluting work such as sweeping and were believed to be the illegitimate children of *sudra* fathers and *brahmin* mothers.⁵ The *chandalas* were the most despised of the Hindu society. They were not allowed to live within the walls of the town. The *pulkasas* like *chandalas* were also despised people. They were excluded from the category of castes. In the *Dharam Shastra* the occupation of a *chandalas* is to carry the dead bodies of men and animals and to execute criminals.⁶ While crises of temporary untouchability occurred in the lifecycle of all castes, the Scheduled Castes were born as untouchables, they lived in untouchability and died as untouchable.⁷ The *dalits* in present context in India are referred to as the Scheduled Castes.

Initially, the Rigvedic *varna* system in the first instance was labour division, i.e., this social classification was on the basis of the work performed by an individual. *Brahmins* or priests were just like Bureaucrats of today. They were the virtually powerful. The *kshatriyas* or warriors were the military personnel and the rulers. The *vaishyas* were merchants and cultivators, while the *sudras* were menials and labourers. But this classification soon became rigid and degenerated and gradually the caste of a person was determined on the basis of lineage.

The doctrine of inequality is core at the heart of the caste system. Dalits are outcastes or people who fell outside the four fold caste system. As a system of social, economic and religious governance, the rigid caste system based on lineage of an individual was not founded on the

principle of equality, liberty or fraternity, but on the principle of inequality in every sphere of life. The social, religious, cultural and economic rights of the person belonging to a particular caste are predetermined on the basis of his or her birth and are thus hereditary; they are not subject to change after the birth of a person.⁸

1.2 Meaning of the Term Dalit

According to Molesworth's Marathi-English Dictionary (1975), the meaning of *dalit* is ground, broken or reduced to pieces generally.⁹ *Dalit* is not a caste in India. Dalit is a man exploited by rituals and upper castes. It means burst, split, broken, downtrodden, scattered, crushed and destroyed. In popular parlance *dalit* refers to ex-untouchable population of India.¹⁰ In legal terminology in India, a *dalit* is a person who belongs to the castes identified as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The term *dalits* has under gone many changes and each time it appears with new nomenclature. The Hindu doctrine of creation exemplified in *chaturanana* scheme of social stratification does not clearly account for the origin of the untouchables. As discussed above, those who were below or outside the four *varnas* were called as *panchams*. In the later Vedic period they were referred as *chandalas* and *pulkasas*. According to *Baudayana Dharm Sutra*, a *chandala* is an offspring of *sudra* father and *brahmin* mother. These *chandalas* do not denote one single homogeneous class, but offsprings of five different varieties.¹¹ The term *antyaaja*, *aniyavasin*, *asuras*, *dasas* or *dasyas* and *raksasa* was used over the period of time.

The term was initially coined by Narsi Mehta, a Bhakti era poet to refer to the children of *devadasis* (female temple dancers).¹² Symbolically speaking, they were children of God in that the *devadasis* were dedicated to the service of God and sexual union between the agents and

servants of God was mystified and even invested with an aura of divinity.¹³ Perhaps the last saint poet in this stream was Narsi Mehta a Gujarati, who coined the term Harijan. The term Harijan literally means ‘children of God.’ By the late 19th century the term ‘depressed classes’ was introduced by the British administration to refer to the untouchables and tribes.

The Government of India Act, 1935 introduced the term Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to replace the earlier composite term depressed classes used for these categories.¹⁴ Mahatma Gandhi invoked the term “Harijan” in a different sense a word intended to express his compassion and meant to be ennobling. But it was totally rejected by conscious untouchables and wondered why they had been signed out as ‘children of God?’ In this terminology *dalits* perceived another attempt to subtle segregation from the rest of society.¹⁵ But Ambedkar, the most outstanding leader of the Scheduled Castes in modern times, rejected it outright and insisted that these people be referred to as ‘untouchables’ so as to avoid the obfuscation of reality.¹⁶

The last and the current label used by Scheduled Castes to define themselves is *dalit*, the oppressed. The basic characteristic features of the *dalits* in India are: A recent coinage, it came into vogue in the 1970s in Maharashtra with the formation of a political party that called itself the Dalit Panthers. Although the Dalit identity crystallized first in Maharashtra, it spread quickly, gaining wide currency, and it is now used all over India.¹⁷ They are stigmatized people and poverty is their constant companion; segregated by the society marginalized by the polity, oppressed by the power mongers. Act of brutality and terror continue to be part of the atrocities perpetuated on *dalits*.¹⁸

Thus, it can be said that *dalit* is not the name of any traditional caste;¹⁹ rather it is a social group which has been deprived of the rights which other sections of society enjoyed. People

belonging to this group worked as manual scavengers, clearing away dead animals and doing other such works. Engaging in these activities was considered to be polluting to the individual who performed them and this pollution is considered to be contagious. As a result, *dalits* were commonly banned and segregated from the rest of the society.

1.3 Historical Position

During the Vedic times, when the caste system was not defined on the basis of birth rather on the basis of the occupation pursued by an individual, the position of the *dalits* was not pathetic. However, their position started deteriorating when the caste of a person was determined on the basis of lineage. The *Dharam Shastras* and the Epics mention the *nishada*, *chandala*, *pulkasas* as degraded ones.²⁰ The outcaste people were mainly bounded labourers and could do only menial jobs. They were denied access to temples, wells and schools.²¹ Manu's work is full of inhuman codification of caste rules. He supported the supremacy of *brahmins* and other dominating communities and fully condemned the Non-Arya *sudras* and *chandalas*.²² Hence the position of *chandalas* was very critical at that time. *chandalas* could not live in the villages, they could perform the menial and unskilled labour particularly the ritually unclean works.²³ So they were out of the Hindu caste system cut off from the rest of the society. Chinese pilgrim Fahien, a contemporary of Chandra Gupta-II, visited and lived in India between 405 A.D. and 411 A.D. He stated that *chandalas* lived apart from others, in separate quarter. The other Chinese traveler Yuan Chaug, who visited India in 629 A.D., reiterated that "these people were forced to live outside the city."²⁴ In Buddha and Mahavira, period the condition of the *dalits* was not worse. Both Buddha and Mahavira admitted untouchables in their administration and social order, during their life time they condemned caste system.²⁵

By the time of medieval period, the practice of untouchability had set in. In the beginning of the eleventh century Al-Brunie visited India and left some valuable accounts of the life of the people during that period. He said that *sudras* followed by a section of people, *antyaja* or *achhut* were engaged in eight varieties of crafts and trades.²⁶ Those were sailor, fisherman, juggler, basket maker, weaver, shoemakers and hunter of birds and wild animals.

During thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Hindu religion was promoted at high-level. During this period, the condition of *dalits* was not very good. During Medieval period, the Arab invasions started, one after another and plundered the country followed by massacres and destruction of religious sites. During *Sultanate* period and *Mughal* regime, the *sudaras* and untouchables suffered very badly.²⁷ With the emergence of Kabir, Ravidas, Dadu, Nanak etc., it almost became a movement of social awakening and unity among lower castes. *Bhakti* movement condemned the social odds and oppressive features of Hindu society and also attacked Muslim orthodoxy. It opposed caste system and practice of untouchability. At that time society was consisted of poor and rich, the master and the slave. The *dalits* were known as *achhut* in this period. Ramanand, a Hindu reformer, Rai Das, a *chammar* of Banarasa, preached equality and opposed untouchability. The *Bhakti* movement rejected the authority of Vedas, *brahmin* priesthood and ritual practices, but failed to recover the lost identity. It was continued in various forms till the 18th century.²⁸

During the 19th century during British rule the condition of *dalits* was not as worse as it was in ancient time and during *Bhakti* period. The emergence of British power made a lot of difference for downtrodden people. They brought a sense of liberty for the marginalized communities. The British strongly opposed the rituals as *sati partha* and untouchability.²⁹ During

this British period, the *dalits* were known as untouchables and they were officially called the Scheduled Castes. After independence the position of *dalits* has improved considerably due to constitutional provisions and the efforts undertaken by the government, spread of education and awareness. Although the concept of untouchability was made illegal after India gained independence in 1947, the persecution and alienation of the *dalits* has not been stopped³⁰ altogether. They are still facing economic problems, socio-cultural and political discrimination in the name of caste in many parts of India. The education is the basic factor for upliftment of any section of society. But the quality of education especially of government school in rural areas is very poor. In rural areas there is inadequate infrastructure, lack of accountability of teachers and inadequate working conditions of teachers and this has adversely affected the quality of education thereat.

Even now the position of *dalits* especially of the women and children of this category is vulnerable. *Dalit* women and children are primarily engaged in civic sanitation work followed by leather fraying in tanning and footwear manufacturing whereas many *dalits* are agricultural labourers.³¹ Most of the *dalits* are living very critical life particularly in states like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan etc. Dalits claim that their economic, social cultural rights as well as their civil and political rights have been violated by the government and its entities for centuries. They argue that the government should recognize and enforce economic, social cultural rights of *dalits*.³²

Therefore, the condition and position of *dalits* was very critical in ancient and in medieval periods. But when the Western ruler held the power in India, the position of *dalits* was improved in modern times. Their condition and position has improved further and is still

improving due to constitutional provisions and the legislative and executive efforts. So the position of *dalits* is not as critical in present as it was earlier.

1.4 Efforts towards Uplifting

Even though the *dalits* were deprived of several social and political rights and were even regarded untouchables, there have been several individual, group and governmental efforts to mitigate their sufferings. Some of these efforts have been stated in this section.

Efforts during Pre Independence Period

Renaissance in India appeared during the beginning of nineteenth century. During this period, several efforts were made to liberate the people from the clutches of religious orthodoxy and to eradicate social and cultural evils. Several movements were launched especially by those who got western liberal education. Besides, the British government also undertook several measures to remove the prevailing evil practices. They also introduced the western education system which was based on western democratic ideas. Several of these efforts were directly aimed at improving the lot of the *dalits* while several others had indirectly contributed to improve their condition. Some of the important efforts during the pre-independence period are discussed in this section.

Impact of Western Education and Culture

In 19th century, English education which was imparted with the view to popularize the western way of living and thinking transformed the mind of Indians. The spread of western liberal education triggered the process of social and cultural reforms and helped develop scientific and rational attitude, which was due to the study of English literature, philosophy and science.³³ The British observed that in India *brahmins* alone were the custodians of imparting

education, learning and knowledge and that the system of education in this country had become redundant. Therefore, they introduced the Western system of education in India. Although amongst the untouchables education came very late, but the spread of education changed their way of living and thinking. It also changed their socio-economic conditions.

In the earlier 19th century Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the *Brahmo Samaj* and acknowledged the virtues of Western education, liberal outlook and legal institutions. Dr. Ambedkar also admired the English education and held that “Untouchability can be removed by education alone, yet he was greatly committed to the cause of education. He founded the people’s Education Society at Bombay in July 1945. He started the Siddharth College, Bombay in 1946.³⁴ Hence English education and Western values benefited all parts of the Indian society and it improved the socio-cultural, economic condition of untouchable or *dalits* also.

Laws and Policies during British Rule

During the British rule in India, downtrodden people started getting some relief and it brought a sense of liberty for the marginalized communities.³⁵ The main source of the socio-cultural oppress of scheduled castes is the practice of untouchability. The first governmental step to legislate against untouchability was taken in 1858 when an untouchable boy was refused admission in a government school in Dharwar, a small town in the then Mysore state southern India.³⁶ In 1858 Government of India declared that educational institutions of government will be open to all classes. From 1858 in theory all government schools and colleges were open to untouchables but in practice, admission was often refused to them in rural areas.³⁷ But over the period of time, the situation was changed and untouchables also got admission in schools and colleges.

After 1920 the non-*Brahmin* movement took a political colour. The political reforms announced by the Montague-Chelmsford Commission of British Government in 1918 and the subsequent grant of adult suffrage brought the non-*Brahmins* movement in to political arena. During the elections held in 1920, 1923, and 1926, several Non-*Brahmins* were elected to provincial councils and a separate Non-*Brahmin* political party was constituted.³⁸ In 1930, Gandhi viewed the *dalit* problem as social one, whereas Ambedkar saw it a political and economic problem created by upper castes. When Dr. Ambedkar becomes the first law minister in colonial India, he brought some legal reforms, which later on got incorporated into the Constitution.³⁹

It is critical to see that constitutional reservation for the *dalits* was not an idea of equality, but was a historic compromise. The British Government announced in 1932, the creation of communal electorates, i.e., separate seats and extra votes for Dalits and Muslims. An agitated Gandhi went on a fast unto death against separate electorates for Dalits. Faced with intense pressure from popular sympathy for an ailing Gandhi, Ambedkar compromised, giving up on the demand that Dalit voters be kept separate, but gaining reserved constituencies for the depressed classes. This Poona Pact of 1932 became the basis for providing reservations to the depressed classes in the Government of India Act, 1935 which in turn, became the template for the Constitution of India.⁴⁰

Social Movements

In terms of this paradigm the anti-caste social movements were began in the 19th century under the inspiration of Jyotiba-Phule and was carried on during 1920s by the Non-*Brahmins* movements in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu and then developed under the leadership of Dr.

Ambedkar. Jotiba Phule (1826-1890) was himself not a *dalit*, but a man of backward classes, a *malis* (gardener) by occupation and classed with the Maratha *kunbes* as people of middle status. While he developed a strong *dalit* movement, his main organizational work was in fact among the middle to low. Non-*Brahmin* castes of Maharashtra, traditionally classed as *sudra* and known till today as the Bahun Samaj.⁴¹ He began as a first social reformer who established schools for both girls and untouchable boys. Mahatma Jotiba Phule founded first Non-*Brahmin* organization named *Satya Shodhak Samaj* in 1873 at Pune. The early *Satya Shodhak Samaj* movement stressed only two things, first education of the masses and second was reduction of rituals power.⁴² Phule himself was a creative pioneer in education. After Jotiba Phule, Shahu Ji Maharaj of Kolhapur kept the movement alive from the turn of the century until his death in 1923. He was first King of India, who implemented reservation policy in his province.⁴³ He constructed many schools and colleges for the *dalit* people. He opposed caste system and untouchability.

By the 1920s a new militant mass oriented movement arose in Tamil Nadu. Its leader was E.V. Rama Saram Periyar from a merchant family. In the early 1920s, he took part in the *Vaikom Temple Satyagrah*, reportedly clashing with Gandhi while taking a militant position. In 1925 Periyar left the Congress and formed the Self-Respect League in 1926 and its focus was similar to that of Phule for the abolition of caste and supporting the liberation of women. He attacked all religions more than Phule did.⁴⁴ In 1944 he revived the Justice Party and changed its name to Dravida Kazhagam (DK). He launched a number of vigorous anti-untouchability movements that not only claimed a higher social, economic and political recognition to the untouchables, but also some sort of reverse adverse treatment to the hitherto dominant upper caste communities.⁴⁵

Some *Brahmins* also took up the work of educating the untouchables. Pandurang Mahadeo, Bapat (1880-1967) popularly known as Senapati Bapat, a revolutionary who was the first Indian to study in Paris. In August 1913, he began teaching children of untouchables at Partner, a small Town in the Ahmadnagar district.⁴⁶ He gave them books and taught them how to read and write. He regularly visited the hutments of the untouchables and to persuade them to send their children to his school. Bapat invited the untouchables for dinner at his house when he celebrated the birth of his son Vaman.

Bhaurao Paigonda Patil who dropped out education from the Raja Ram High school while he was studying in matriculation, followed the ideas of Shahu Chhatrapati in the field of education. He established a study center at Dudhgaon in Satara District of Maharashtra.⁴⁷ Education, Bhaurao believed, was a way to the solution of many of the problems of poor depressed class people in the rural areas. He made it a mission of his life.

A significant anti-untouchability movement appeared in Punjab during this time known as *Adi-dharam* movement. It was led by a prominent untouchable of the state named Mangoo Ram, with the aim of throwing out the customs and rituals of untouchables in the state. The *Adi-dharam* movement under the direction and leadership of Mangoo Ram also sought to uplift scheduled castes. The *Adi-dharam* movement began with the belief that the untouchables in Punjab existed as a distinct socio-religious entity or quam like those of Hindu, Muslims or Sikhs since ages and with a conviction to remove it.⁴⁸

They should, therefore demand for distinct set of patterns of treatment which may lead to the amelioration of their socio-religious and political condition in the society. Hence, many social activists of the 19th century and in the early 20th century made efforts to organize the non-

Brahmin movements and *dalits* were drawn to an anti-caste, anti-*Brahmin* and anti-Hindu ideology of the kind that Phule formulate. The non-*brahmin* movements in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Karnataka, all argued in terms of the Aryan conquest and *brahmin* exploitation through religion.⁴⁹

Drawing his descent from the untouchable caste of *mahar*, Dr. Ambedkar began the *Mahar* movement in 1926 with the aim of eradicating untouchability from Maharashtra. Though the *Mahar* movement attained fair degree of success, its experiences convinced Ambedkar that for the holistic advancement of the plight of his fellow brethren, the movement must be rooted in the political mould.⁵⁰

Dr. Ambedkar made efforts to transform the hierarchical structure of Indian society for the restoration of equal rights and justice to the neglected lot by building up a critique from within the structure of Indian society. His was not a theoretical attempt but a practical approach to the problems of untouchability.⁵¹ Ambedkar took as his basic goal the ending of exploitation and oppression and the achievement of equality, liberty and fraternity.

Efforts during Post-Independence Period

Efforts towards uplifting the *dalits* got further impetus during the post-independence. Our Constitution provides several provisions which are aimed at improving the lot of this section of society. Parliament also enacted some laws for the benefit of this section and some executive efforts have also been directed towards the achievement of this objective.

Constitutional Provisions

The Indian constitution in its bill of Rights guarantees all citizens basic civil and political rights and fundamental freedom. In addition, the constitution has special provisions prohibiting discrimination based on caste. These constitutional provisions are found under the Right to

equality (Article 14, 15, 16, and 17), the Right against Exploitation (Articles 23, 24), cultural and Educational Rights (Article 29(2)), and prohibition against disenfranchisement in elections based on one's religion, race or sex (Article 325).⁵²

These rights are inviolable rights of the citizens against the state. Any law or executive action depriving individuals of their freedom could be challenged in Supreme Court or High courts.⁵³ The constitution of India also prohibits any forms of discrimination against the *dalits*. The spirit of the constitution is that the equality, Justice and progress of Scheduled castes and scheduled tribes will be a measure of the progress of the Indian society as a whole. The Preamble of the Constitution proclaimed to secure to the people of India "Social, economic and political Justice, equality of status and opportunity and to promote fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual, thus aiming at anti-caste-discrimination aspirations."⁵⁴ Part III of the Constitution of India provides fundamental rights to the citizens of India to assure equality, freedom and dignified life. Unlike the U.S. Constitution, the Indian Constitution provides equality before law and equal protection of laws so that all are considered equal before the law and they are equally protected by the law of the country. Article 17, abolishes the age old practice of untouchability due to which the *dalits* had to face many humiliations and denial of rights. Untouchability has been made an offence punishable by law.⁵⁵ In a continuing effort to ensure that the aims of article 17 are fully realized, Parliament came out with the Untouchability (Offences) Act, 1955.⁵⁶ To break the notion of upgrading service of the upper castes for the lower castes, Article 23 of the Constitution prohibits bonded labour so that their exploitation by upper caste people can be eliminated. Articles 330 and 333 permit Union and state legislatures to reserve seats for members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes based on population in each constituency.⁵⁷ Article 338 mandates the creation of a National Commission for Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes to monitor safe guards provided to them. Finally, Article 341 makes possible the governmental identification of different sub categories of scheduled castes in relation to each state and authorizes the President to declare certain caste as scheduled Castes (SCs) for special benefits like reservation in government jobs and academic institutions, free hostel facility for SC children.⁵⁸

Special Safeguards

Reservation in educational institutes, Jobs and other Constitutional Safeguards should also be provided to the *dalits* in the Constitution of India. To allow for proportional representation of scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes, the constitution reserves 22.5% of Seats in government Jobs, state legislative, the lower house of the Parliament and Government educational institutions.⁵⁹ Originally the provision of reservation of seats was provided for only up to 1960, but it has been extended periodically and the provision continues to this Date. Article 330 provides for reservation of seats for SCs/STs in the State Legislative Assemblies. Article 335 claims of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to services and posts in the government.⁶⁰

SC/ST Commission

There shall be a special officer for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to be appointed by the President of India. It shall be the duty of the Special officer to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the constitution and report to the President upon the working of those safeguards at such intervals as the President may direct and the President shall cause all such reports to be laid before each House of Parliament. The Constitution of India gave a special mandate to the President of India under Article 341 (1) to specify the castes, races under a Schedule. The Castes

as listed become eligible for the purposes of discriminatory protections and favors designed for that purpose.⁶¹

Punjab State SC Commission directed the local police and civil administration to re-open all cases where alleged atrocities have been committed on Dalit and Forcible compromises executed by the police instead of providing Justice to the Victims.⁶²

Hence the Constitution of India provides for a number of protective measures for the welfare of the scheduled castes. Chief among the State measures are: representation in Parliament, state legislatures and panchayats; representation in services both in the central and state governments, special provisions for social educational and economic advancement; banning traffic in human beings and forced labour, abolition of the practice of untouchability and appointment of special officer to investigate all matter relating to safe guards provided for the scheduled castes. So all the measures stated above in Constitution played a prominent role for uplifting the *dalits*.

Legislative Measures

Legislature played an prominent role for upliftment of the *dalits* in India. The second major source of change in the status of the scheduled castes is legislative and administrative measures undertaken for the betterment of this category. Originally, the provision for reservation of seats was provided only for 10 years in the constitution, but it has been extended periodically and the provision continues to this date. While the reserved positions are filled in the case of legislative bodies, wherein no educational or other qualifications are prescribed, the situation with regard to public services is quite different. Second, Article 17, of the Indian Constitution (promulgated in 1950), the practice of untouchability is for bidden and its practice in any form is made punishable. However, a country wide legislation the Untouchability (offences) Act, was

passed only in 1955. According to this Act, Scheduled Castes should have access to all public places, including places of worship and public utilities. However to plug some of the loopholes in the 1955 Act and to augment its scope, the protection of Civil Right act 1976 was passed.⁶³ The Act provide for more stringent punishment for the practice of untouchability in any form. As a result, the socio-economic conditions of scheduled castes improved and social discrimination against them partly disappeared. To meet this new development the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, was passed. The Indian state has been sensitive to the changing need for upliftment of the Scheduled Castes. To fulfill the constitutional provisions pertaining to Scheduled castes, legislature has passed various laws to protect their rights. These include the Protection of Civil Rights (Anti-Untouchability) Act, 1955, the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act, 1976, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and Rules 1995, the Employment of Manual scavenger and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993 and various land reform laws to redistribute community land to the land less.⁶⁴

Hence these measures have been enacted under Article (15 (4)) and Article 46 of the Constitution and are meant to enable them achieve socio-economic development in their own geographical location.⁶⁵ Finally to monitor enforcement of these laws, the central Government established the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes and the National Human Rights Commission in the early 1990s (NCDHR). Policy and legislative measures to promote equal rights for Dalits have so far not touched upon the private sector, but this is about to change. The Govt. of India is now urging the private sector to take on its responsibility of empowering dalits socially and economically. The ILO (International Labour office), Asia Pacific Employment paper provides an insight on the discussion taking place in

India since 2003 how private enterprises can support better and “Decent work” employment opportunities for Dalits.⁶⁶

Executive Measures

Despite the legal safeguards provided for the protection of the scheduled caste from caste based atrocities and discrimination, the atrocities on the *dalits* are not coming to end and the *dalits* are still meted out with various forms of atrocities in different parts of the country. After 65 years of independence the *dalits* are denied their social and economic rights and they are being subjected to various types of atrocities. Due to the ineffective implementation of the anti-atrocities law and lack of strong will on part of the state to prevent the atrocities, the crimes or atrocities against the scheduled castes are still persisting.⁶⁷

To fulfill the constitutional provisions pertaining to scheduled castes, the Government of India has passed various laws to protect their rights. To monitor enforcement of these laws, the Central Government establishes executive bodies such as the National Commission for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes and the National Human Rights Commission since early 1990s.⁶⁸

The Government of India implemented the reservation policy to create jobs opportunities for the *dalits* and other disadvantaged groups. The post-independence government was committed to set a quota for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in all the governmental functionaries including seats in Parliament and other elected bodies in proportion to their population.⁶⁹

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules 1995, played a notable role to prevent the atrocities against the *dalits*. These rules give powers to state

executive for prevention atrocities against the *dalits*. The state government shall have set up a “Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes Protection Cell” at the state head quarter under the charge of Director of Police/Inspector General of Police.⁷⁰

The state Government shall nominate a Nodal Officer of the level of a secretary to the State Government preferably belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes for co-ordinating the functioning of the District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police or the offices authorized by them investigating officers and other officer responsible for implementing the provisions of Act.

The District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police shall visit the place or area where the atrocity has been committed to assess the loss of life and damage to the property and draw a list of victims, their family members and dependents entitled for relief. The State Govt. shall made necessary provisions in its annual budget for providing relief and rehabilitation facilities to the victims of atrocity.

The state government shall prepare a model contingency plan for implementing the Act and notify the same in its official Gazetteer. The state government shall every year, before 31 March, forward the report to the Central Government about the measures taken for implementing provisions of the Act and various schemes plan framed by it during the previous calendar year.

1.5 Non-Dalit in India with Special Reference to Haryana

Caste is a traditional concept of social hierarchy. As ‘Manu’ has classified the castes in Hindu mythology which is known as ‘Manu Smariti’. In this traditional concept of social hierarchy, Manu has classified as Braham as at apex, Khatria ranks second in this caste hierarchy, vaish comes at third place. Lastly, the ‘Shudhra’ comes in the last in this caste

hierarchy. In this traditional concept of social hierarchy. We may understand that the caste Brahman, Khatria and Vaish may be called as 'Non-Dalit Caste' in Indian Caste system. Whereas, the 'Shudhras' are known as 'Dalits' in caste hierarchy.

In the ancient India, castes have been played a significant and notable role, as the castes have been playing well knit cohesive and integrated role to make the tradition, society by its salient feature 'the division of labour' and their economic interdependent ship. This economic inter-dependent ship also known as 'Yajmani system' in the traditional concept of social hierarchy. This system used to produce 'centripetal force' for the society by making the 'social fabric' inter-dependent ship. In this concept, as 'Manu' has discussed the salient feature of first three castes in his social hierarchy. All these three castes are non-dalit castes of today.

Keeping in view the sub-division of caste hierarchy which subsequently sub-divided into large number of sub-castes and 'Gotras' streams. As we know it very well that the castes belong to 'Dalits' come off the 'service-classes'. Whereas the upper castes are known as 'Non-Dalit' castes. In this category, as per the requirement of the study. The 'dominant castes' have been the 'Non-Dalit' castes in India. All these non-dalit castes have been traditionally the castes which have been the 'functional classification' for the white color jobs or bread earner. On the other hand, the 'Shudhras' which have been traditionally 'functionally classified' by low status of jobs in the society.

In context to Non-Dalit castes as M.N. Sri Niwasan (1984) has highlighted the cultural characteristics through attaining the 'cultural traits' through sanskritization. These 'non-dalits' are differentiated from their socio-economic and cultural dynamism. These Non-Dalits castes are characterized by acquiring various cultural traits through 'social processes' taken place during different successive periods. It has been observed that there was a considerable 'cultural-lag'

between the dalits and non-dalits during few decades back in India. As a result, there was a considerable gap between Dalits and 'Non-Dalits' on level of political awareness too. This difference between 'Dalits' and 'Non-Dalits' has given rise to widen the socio-economic and general awareness between the two major social segments.

In India, there are near about 1200 castes which come under the schedule of other backward classes in the Indian society, may also referred as 'Non-Dalit' castes in India. All these castes have been classified by the 'Mandal commission' in the early 90s and subsequently implemented by the parliamentary amendment through amendment procedure of Indian constitution (Indian constitutional Amendment Act.). The castes, belong to this category accounts 52 percent of India's total population. This segment of the population of India belong to 'Non-Dalit' segment of population in the social caste-hierarchy. All these mostly non-dalit caste segment is characterized by the white color means of earning of bread. The people, belong to this category are dominantly the workmen and the artisan who work with their skills. There are few castes which can be exemplified with the castes such as Kumhar, Nai, Darzi, Shimpa, Khati, Teli, Jogi etc. All these castes belong to 'Non-Dalit' segment of population. In this context, it has been observed that all these castes, despite its non-dalit nature, never been a dominant castes.

Among to 'Non-Dalit castes' there have been some of 'Dominant castes' in the caste-hierarchy. Amongst a sizable numerical strength of the dominant castes, Brahmins, being at apex in the social caste system have been dominant castes in North as well as south India. In the northern India, wide spreaded Brahmins in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and at few areas in Punjab and Haryana where the Gaud Brahmins and Saraswat Brahmins have been dominant castes in some of areas of these states. In the western U.P. where the, Tyagi-Brahiman are dominant caste as 'Non-Dalit' caste. In middle of Gangetic plain, where Dwedi, Chaturvedi, Mishra have been

dominated Gotras distributed within these states. In the states like Uttarkhand and Himachal Pradesh the Brahmins such as Tiwari, Numandri and Saraswat have been dominant Brahmins as 'Non-Dalit' castes in these states. In the states West Bengal where the Brahmins like Mukharzi Chatarzi, Chakarwarty and upadhaya have been dominant Brahmin (non-Dalit) castes. In the state like Orisha, where the Brahmins like Mishra, Satpati, Nanda and Patnayak have been 'Dominant Brahmins'. Similarly the other Brahmins like Dixit, Parikh have been dominant Brahmin castes in Gujarat and Maharashtra.

In South India, the Ayanger and Ayyar Brahmin has been dominant caste in Tamilnadu and Kerala respectively. All these non dalits Brahman castes have been considerable representation in politics, public administration, government and corporate services. A considerable percentage of land holdings have been occupied by the Brahmin castes with their respective regions. However, there is considerable political awareness among the Brahmins of different regions of India. Since independence, we may understand the dominancy of Brahmins in the Indian politics. In the northern Indian states there have been dominance of non-dalits or Brahmins castes in parliament state assembly and even chief ministers to Prime ministers post.

Among the 'Non-Dalit Caste' there are other castes as Jats, Jat-Sikhs, Ahirs and other cultivating castes, which have been playing a significant role in their dominancy in the specific regions. In case of Jats & Jat Sikhs as a dominant castes are dominant within the 200 K.M. radius of Delhi. Even within the periphery of outer Delhi, there is considerable dominance of Jat castes of Jat Rana, Tokas and Shokin, Gotras. They are dominant in the politics of Delhi. Almost agricultural land holdings have been occupied by the dominant 'Jat caste.' The clans like Sekhon, Grewal, Kang, Virk, Siddhu, Dhillon, Mangat have been major Jat clans of Punjab.

In Haryana, where the Jat community has been dominant caste in the Haryana-Politics. However, they are also having a considerable share in the services, property, business, public administration and local self governments. The combined effects of all these factors have given rise to develop more socio-economic and political awareness among the 'Non-Dalits' of Haryana. The Jaat community, as a dominant caste is confined to Rohtak, Sonapat, Jhajjar, Bhiwani, Hissar, Jind and Panipat districts of Haryana. These districts are characterized by a specific dominant 'Gotra', popularly known as 'Khap'. All these khaps are well aware of prevailing political activities and act as a strong 'pressure groups' for making decision on socio-economic and political crucial matters, belong to the villagers, belong to different rural social hierarchy. There are some of prevailing 'centripetal and the centrifugal force' which determine the behavior of the 'Khap Panchayats' in different regions of Haryana (Satpal Singh 2013).

Among other dominant castes of Haryana, the Ahir (Yadav) rank second, who have a considerable share in socio-economic and political activities in Haryana. The major consideration of Yadavs is in the southern region of Haryana. Whole of Rewari district, district Mahendergarh and Bhiwani district are some of Yadav pockets of Haryana. In the Bhiwani district, where the dominant caste has been the Jaat community, but there are few villages such as Misri, Bhageshwari, Barsana, Chang Road, Balroad and some of other villages where the 'Yadavs' are having a complete dominance within this region. The land holding of the southern districts have been owned by the 'Yadavs'. They are also having or considerable share in the services and political activities in the government and local self government too. Desai, A.R. (1984) has discussed the magnitude and composition of dominant castes in rural India, indicate some of quantitative and qualitative parameters which determine the levels of political interests in the rural society of India. He has carried out some of empirical study on various rural areas of

India and found a considerable regional disparity of the behavior of various 'dominant castes' of rural India. M.S. A. Rao (1981) also discusses the growth of various movements of 'peasant-class' during different successive periods. He has highlighted the salient features of political awareness among the peasants which is one of 'non-Dalit' dominant group in the rural society. In the period of early 40s Ch. Chhotu Ram, the leader of the peasants of Punjab and Haryana region has been played a significant role by creating an awareness for the rights of the farmers, belong to different hierarchy. These segment of the peasants were 'Non-Dalits' and had a more political awareness for their rights in the 'National Movement days'.

The 'Khatrias' which are Rajputs of different clans, scattered in all over northern India, Rajasthan, Madhaya Pradesh, Bihar, U.P. and the hill states. The Khatria with its different nomenclatures, has been a dominant caste in above mentioned regions. All these 'Khatrias' belong to 'Non-Dalit' community which is inhabited mostly in Indo-Gangetic plains and hills of sub-Himalayan region.

Keeping in view their sub-clan which shows a considerable regional disparity for their dominance. In the northern India the major clans of the Rajputs are Pawar, Rawats, Bhadoria, Sindhiya, Chauhans, Parmars, Ranawats, Pathania, Negi and Mankotias.

These clans are charaterised by the ownership of land-holdings, political representatives for governments and local-self governemtns. In addition, they are numerically dominated in some of cluster areas too. They are having a considerable number of government jobs such as Military, Police, Civil service and professionals of different streams. All these 'Khatrias' come off 'Non-Dalits' in the caste-hierarchy in India. Among the 'Rajputs', a consistant representatives of political parties for a apex positions, such as chief Ministers of various states

are some of examples of dominance of Rajputs and their high level of 'Political Awareness' in northern and central regions of India.

In Haryana, the Rajputs have never been a dominant caste, except few villages of districts like Bhiwani and Hissar, where there are a few villages, belong to Parmar clan and Chauhan clans. Though they are having a considerable share of land-holdings, but indicate a least political-representation in Haryana-politics. They are having a considerable share in military-services and good professionals in Haryana.

Hence, it is obvious that the Rajputs is one of dominant caste, belong to 'Non-Dalit' caste in habited, mostly in Bhiwani and Hissar district of Haryana. The Rajputs in Haryana, are found in the cluster forms, which tend to produce least 'political-force' among the 'non-dalits' in Haryana. And the Jats have gained more importance to have a public representative at different political levels. The 'Vaish' mostly belong to Aggarwal community of different parts of India. This a Bania community, which has been a bigger-business caste of northern and central parts of India. The population belong to Bania community has been spread over a major part of Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and parts of Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Assam, Odisha etc. Apart from the Vaish, which belong to Aggarwal community, are Jains too. All these are the people belong to bania community, but has adopted the 'Jain Dharma', mostly inhabited in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh. They are mostly businessmen and good professionals of different technical and non-technical streams. A considerable number of public-representatives have been at different political-hierarchy of different political parties in India.

In Haryana, right from the very beginning there has been a considerable political participation, particularly at a apex level, it has been one of business caste among 'Non-Dalits' in

Haryana. In the initial years of Haryana's formation, the leaders like Banarsidas Gupta and subsequently Mange Ram Gupta, Om Prakash Jindal and now Naveen Kumar Jindal are some of examples which indicate a consistency in Haryana politics. In this context, the 'Banias' who have migrated to other states like Assam, Odisha, Bihar and Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and other states have shown no-interest in the political activities in the states, where they are presently reside in different parts of India. Among the non-dalits, there are the castes which belong to dominant 'cultivating castes' in southern parts of India. The Nairs of Kerala and the Reddies of Andhra Pradesh. These two castes having a considerable participation in their 'region' and 'national politics' of their respective states at different political hierarchy.

Among the 'Non-Dalits', there has been a considerable and significant role of 'minority' and other backward classes in different parts of India. In Uttar Pradesh, there is dominant role of Muslims, which is comprised of different castes, play a significant role in the state and India politics. There has been a significant role of 'Muslims' in expediting the National movement for India's independence too. There are a large number of examples of 'Muslim leaders' such as Mulana Azad, Jinnah, Saffarulla Khan, Abdul Gaffar Khan, who have played a notable role for freedom struggle.

In the present politics, there have been various Muslim leaders such as Jakir Hussain Dr. Nazama Happtualla, Abdul Kalam, Dr. Hamid Ansari etc. who have been at apex position of the state. In the present Indian politics, the leaders like Gulam Nabi Azad, Mukhtiar Ahmad Ansari, and Salman Khur Shid have been playing a significant role in the India politics. Though the Muslim comes in Minority, but has a considerable and significant role in the regional and National politics. The constituencies of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh such as Aligarh, Moradabad, Farukhbad, Azamgarh, Muzaffar Nagar in U.P. & Bhopal and Indore in M.P. have

a considerable number of 'Muslims' who are politically strong and make a considerable difference to the vote-bank. It is the solo factor which determines the voting-behaviour of the regional and National politics. Similarly there are other regions like Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh, Ajmer and Jaipur in Rajasthan, Malerkotla in Punjab, Bhwandi in Mumbai, Mujjaffarpur in Bihar and some of pokets of south India have a considerable dominance of Muslim caste, which has been playing a significant role in the active participation in the political activities. Though the Muslims as a 'Non-Dalit' community are relatively poorer and having a least share in the service sector but determine the voting behavior of the regional and national politics. It is because of relatively low literacy rates and religious prejudices against family planning and women's education, as a result the shrewd politicians are relatively affect their attitude towards their 'vested interests' and ultimately affects the voting behavior of the regional politics as well as the national politics in India.

In Haryana, where the minority of Muslim Community are dominant in the Mewat region of Haryana. They are the 'Meoes', who adopted the Muslim religion during early Mughal period. In the Mewat region which is comprised of the district headquarters 'Nuh' and the Tehsil Ferozpuer Jhirka and a part of Hathin Tehsil of Palwal district. In this region, there has been a significant role, played by the leaders, belong to every regional and National political parties of Haryana. Amongst the Political leaders such as Taiyab Hussain, Yaseen Azad Mohamad and now Afhtab Ahmad, the Minister of Transport Haryana has been a considerable place in the Haryana politics. Whole Mewat region is characterized with general backwardness and chronic drinking water problem in almost whole region of Mewat. It is because of the sub-surface water of Mewat which is sline and not suitable for drinking purposes for human and bovine consumption. There is wide spread low literacy rate particularly among the women, prejudices

against family planning are some of pressing problems of this region. As a result, a cumulatively has given rise to dominance of few families for taking participation in regional and state politics of Haryana. Hence, the 'Meos' are the one of community, among the 'Non-Dalits' of Haryana, has a significant role as 'Minority' dominance, but least political participation by the majority of the 'Meo-population' of Mewat of Haryana.

The role of 'other backward class' as 'Non-Dalit' caste has a significant role in regional and National politics. It is because of higher literacy rates among the people, belong to 'other backward classes'. The numerical strength of these castes is 52% of the total population of India. Though there is 27% reservation for the other Backward classes in the all India and central services but there is no reservation in the state assemblies and the parliament. That is why, no political party is in a position to ignore the people, belong to Backward class. All these Non-Dalit' people population live in various states of India, make a considerable difference on 'voting-behaviour', if there is reservation in the state assemblies and the parliament elections.

Though the people belong to other backward classes enjoy their socio economic status more or less almost equaling to the dominant castes, particularly in the urban areas, but they are scattered in nature and almost 'unorganized', way. As a result, could not make as an 'effective pressure groups' so that they may raise their voice for choosing their leaders among the OBC category as a 'Non-Dalit Pleader' out of Backward classes. Though the people belong to OBC category, are having a very much political awareness and a considerable share in the service-sector. They are the good professionals but lack of minority of different backward classes, has given rise to not organize to build a pressure on state and the central government. All these related problems have given rise to political incompetency and choosing their 'right leaders' and make the government of their own for their respective regions. These types of some of

‘centrifugal forces’ have given rise to frequently averting their due share in the regional and national politics among this ‘Non-Dalit’ castes in India.

In case of Haryana, where the other Backward classes constitutes over 50 per cent of population, but their share of state reservation policy is still 10 per cent in the class-I and class-II services. The dominant castes of the state politics, do not bother about their due share for the state service. Since the formation of Haryana, Nov. 1, 1966 the people, belong to other Backward classes have failed to pressurise the governments, came in different successive periods. Same tendency has been observed for allotting the quota for the beneficiaries of other socio-economic and political aspects. Among this ‘Non-Dalit’ categories, most of the people are ready to become ‘followers’ rather than ‘leaders’ in various parts of Haryana. Till now, they have never been to mobilise any resources in an effective ways. It is because of ‘poor collective bargaining’ of the ‘other backward classes of the state. In this categories, there are few ‘petty leaders’ who keep on full feeling their ‘vested interests’ rather than representing the mass of the backward classes. This is a ‘plight’ on the part of the people, belong to backward classes. It is because of least socio-economic and politically mobility among this ‘Non-Dalit’ category of a large number of backward castes in Haryana.

Apart from the backward castes, there is a considerable number of ‘Punjabi population’, which includes Khatri & Aroras particularly those who have migrated from Pakistan to Punjab and Haryana, played a notable role and established themselves in an adverse circumstances, created during Indo-Pakistan partition. There are over 40% of the Punjabi speaking Hindus, who have been migrated from the Punjab of Pakistan to the Punjab of India and subsequently settled in Delhi, Haryana and Punjab. All these Punjabi speaking Hindus are having a some of Hard-working attributes which have been proved conducive to resettle in an adverse circumstance. The

numerical strength of Punjabi speaking Hindus are in the districts such as Panipat, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Karnal, Ambala, Kurukshetra and Sonapat, where the Punjabis have been inhabited with a sizable numerical strength. Though most of the Punjabies are engaged in the business activities. It is because of their inherited business skill and partly because of least probability of getting opportunities to get the jobs in the government's services. In almost an government which has come in Haryana, did not bother too much for the Punjabi speaking Hindus. A considerable segment of the 'Punjabi population' who has got the services either in the central government or by his own efforts or acquire the professional qualifications.

In this context, almost all the leaders, belong to dominant castes have tried to oblige the Punjabies by making the leaders like Ashok Arora, by the INLD party, and Bharat Bhushan Batra by the Indian National Congress Party. It is because of the 'Vested interest' developed by each and every political party. There is a considerable vote-bank of the Punjabies, who are one of major population segment which belong to 'Non-Dalit caste', want to mobilize every political party in Haryana.

Though there are few Punjabies, who have been landlords in Pakistan, allotted the cultivable land in Punjab, Haryana and Rajsthan. These Punjabies are having some of political interest to represent themselves in the local self governments and doing well and become responsive to the public works. In this context, only few cases have been noticed in rural areas of Haryana. It has been observed that the Punjabi's presence in the local self governments is negligible and often they are influenced by the dominant castes where they inhabited. It has been often observed that there are strong prejudices against the Punjabies, particularly the Punjabies living in the rural areas. All these factors have given rise to oppress the growing the budding leaders among this 'Non-Dalit' community of Haryana.

Though there is wide-spread political awareness among the Punjabi speaking Hindu Population in Haryana, but due to mind-set of the dominant castes which has always been proved a 'wet-blanket' to take an active political participation at different political hierarchy. And this segment of 'Non-Dalit' population has always been suffering from the adverse, closed and prejudicious attitudes of the people, belong to 'Dominant Caste' has made this 'Non-Dalit' segment, lag behind by several decades for receiving the return of their worth in various political activities in Haryana.

Among the 'Non-Dalit' segment of the society, the 'Christians', who has a significant number in India. It is the fourth religious population, mostly live in the Metroplitan regions. It has been observed that the 'Indian Christians' community, which enjoy 'Non-Dalit' status today, have been 'converted Christians'. Most of the Indian Christians have been Dalit. Hindus and subsequently due to unfavourable social-conditions, they have converted as 'Chritians'. In India, there is considerable variability among 'Chritians' who live in different regions of India.

In the Northern region of India, it has been observed that the 'Meteropolitan cities' like Delhi, Ludhiana, Bareilly, Lucknow, Allahabad, Agra, Varanasi, Jhansi, Ambala, Amritsar, Pathankot and Jammu cities are having a considerable number of 'Christians'. The Christian in northern India is well educated, cultured and peaceful community. Though chritians are in minority, but here are few states, where the 'Chritians' are in a 'Dominant' position. These states are Goa, Kerala which constitute from 20 to 40% of the 'Chritian Population' Tamil Nadu, Karnatka and Andhra Pradesh are having 10 to 15 per cent chritians.

In the eastern part of India, there is considerable number of 'Chritians' in Kolkatta and its sub-urban areas. The north-eastern states like Assam, Mizoram, Meghaliya, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pardesh and Nagaland are having a considerable number of Chritians (15 to 35%)

with in these seven sister states. In the eastern part of India, concentration of 'Christian population' is the result of development of 'Britishers Christian Missionaries' within these states. The literacy rates for these states are relatively higher and influenced by the 'British culture' to a considerable extent. The political awareness among the 'Christians' are every high and who have been continuously protesting against the 'discriminated policy' of the central government in their respective states.

Christians in Haryana are in very minority. The number of Christians in the Total population is less than 1 per cent. Maximum christian in the cities, are in Ambala, Gurgaon, Karnal, Panipat and Rohtak. Other districts are having a negligible christian population. It has been observed that the 'Christians' are having an adequate 'political awareness', but they have never been taken an active-participation in Haryana politics. It is because of their 'passive nature' and numerically small segment of 'Non-Dalit' of Haryana.

Hence, it is obvious from the socio-economic and political point of view, the 'Non-Dalit' population is dynamic and having a considerable share in the politics. Most of the 'Non-Dalit' population belong to 'Dominant castes'. A considerable part of the land-holdings, business, services (government and corporate) are some of salient features associated with the 'Non-Dalit' segment of population. There has been high probability of social and occupational mobility among them. They are having high degree of spatial mobility too. As a result, there is higher probability for taking an active political participation for forming governments and local self governments. The 'Non-Dalit' segment of population is relatively aware of the political activities, happening around there and respond in accordance with prevailing local conditions.

In Haryana, the 'Non-Dalit' segment of population has been playing a significant and notable role in Haryana politics. This segment of population, mostly belong to 'Dominant Caste'

and having a considerable share in services, land-holdings, and having a better social and occupation mobility in the state. They are having a more political participation at various political hierarchy. The share of administrative positions of 'Non-Dalits' in the 'Haryana Administration' are having considerable share and expedite their 'social mobility' through their socio-political network. They know better to mobilize their resources by influencing their political connections and take advantages of their socio-economic dominance in the state. On the other hand, an other segment of population which is comprised of the Punjabi speaking Hindus the Brahmins and the people belong to backward class having a considerable share in Haryana's economy, but almost passive nature in Haryana politics. As a result, negligible participation in the Haryana politics. Hence, it is obvious that the castes belong to 'Non-Dalit' segment of society, play a significant role in India. They are having a considerable share of wealth, education, business and political power to mobilize their human and financial resources which have led to development themselves. They are relatively more aware of the political activities, prevailing within their region and their surrounding areas. They are having a better political network which has been proved conducive to mobilize the human, financial and physical resources to get the targeted results.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

In the above sections, an effort has been made to highlight the importance of political awareness of the citizens of a democratic country. It has also been observed that the level of political awareness of the dalits is usually believed to be relatively low in comparison to non-dalit because of their age old suppression, discrimination and due to low level of education among them. Keeping in view this problematic area, the researcher chose to study the level of political awareness of the dalits and non-dalit of Mahendergarh district in Haryana state. The problem

under study may be stated as: “Political Awareness Among Dalits and non-dalit: A comparative Study of Mahendergarh District in Haryana”.

1.7 Objectives

Following are the main objective of the study:

1. To know whether there exist significant difference in the level of political awareness among the dalits and non-dalits of Mahendergarh District vis-à-vis their level of age.
2. To know whether there exist significant difference in the level of political awareness among the dalits and non-dalit of Mahendergarh District vis-à-vis their level of income.
3. To know whether there exist significant difference in the level of political awareness among the dalit and non-dalits of Mahendergarh District vis-à-vis their level of education.
4. To know the level of political awareness among the dalit of Mahendergarh District.
5. To know the level of political awareness among the non-dalit of Mahendergarh in Haryana
6. To know whether there is any difference in the level of political awareness among dalit and non-dalit in Mahendergarh District in Haryana.

1.8 Hypotheses

It is proposed to test the following hypotheses:

1. There exists significant difference in the level of political awareness among the dalits and non-dalits of Mahendergarh District vis-à-vis their level of age.
2. There exists significant difference in the level of political awareness among dalits and non-dalits of Mahendergarh District vis-à-vis their level of income.

3. There exists significant difference in the level of political awareness among dalits and non-dalits of Mahendergarh District vis-à-vis their level of education.
4. The level of political awareness of the dalit in Mahendergarh District is relatively low in comparison to non-dalits.
5. The level of political awareness of the non-dalit in Mahendergarh District is relatively high in comparison to dalits.
6. Null Hypothesis: There is no difference in the level of political awareness among the dalits and non-dalit in Mahendergarh District of Haryana.

1.9 Methods and the Methodology

The present study is basically an empirical study, which is based upon primary as well as secondary sources of information. In this study, we interviewed the Dalit leaders, common Dalit community, non-Dalit leaders and Non Dalit community members from Mahendergarh district.

The data was collected by conducting interviews with the respondents. For this a total sample of three hundred respondents was selected on the basis of purposive and random sampling method. Out of these three hundred, 150 respondents were taken from Dalits and 150 from Non Dalits.

With a view to proceed further, an interview schedule-cum-questionnaire was prepared. It contained questions regarding the participation in different political processes as well as general questions regarding the socio-economic background of respondents like: education, profession etc. It also contained questions to know the social and political awareness of the respondents, their attitude towards political parties, Dalit organizations and Dalit issues etc. After systematization and analysis of the data, conclusions have been drawn. In addition to the data collected through empirical survey, the Constitution of India, Census of India and Statistical

Abstracts of Punjab have been consulted. The relevant books, journals and newspapers etc. have also been made use of as secondary sources of data.

The primary data generated by the researcher has been analysed on two bases: on the basis of one-way ANOVA and through percentages for in depth analysis. ANOVA is a tool for comparing the differences in means between various groups. There are three versions of ANOVA – one-way ANOVA, two-way ANOVA and n-way ANOVA. Since in the present study we have to ascertain whether Level of Political Awareness and the scores of respondents vis-à-vis their Age/ Level of Education/ Level of Income are individually “statistically different”, therefore, one-way ANOVA has been used.

Secondary sources used in the study include Census 2011 report, District Gazetteer of Mahendergarh district, and the other reports published by the Government of India and the Government of Haryana, books and research articles on the subject, journals, newspapers etc.

1.10 REFERENCES

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