

---

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

---

In order to highlight the problematic areas of political awareness among dalits and non-dalits, the authors, belong to various streams of social sciences have put forward their views through their writings. The review of related literature has been discussed as follows:

During the last few decades there have been a number of works done on various aspects of Dalits in the different parts of India. Most of them are sociological, anthropological and some of them are political in nature. However it is also important that more or equal attention should be given to the participation of Dalits in the political system of the society. Although many studies have been undertaken on the role of Dalits in Indian politics and their status in Indian society, yet in the context of Punjab, barring a few scholarly works, not much research work has been undertaken in this field, particularly on the issue of political participation of Dalits. A brief review of the existing literature on Dalit issues in India and in Punjab is given below.

Denzial Ibbetson's, *Punjab Castes* (1916)<sup>1</sup> explains the genesis of caste on the basis of occupation. The emergence of a new occupation or a change in the traditional occupation led to the birth of a new caste. To Ibbetson castes are nothing but groups of people having specific occupation, and these occupations have been arranged in a pollution-purity continuum and this ranking has a bearing on the social intercourse of these groups, that is, caste. He further maintains that these occupations are preserved through certain religious principles.

Rajani Kothari, the well known political scientist, in his pioneer work *Caste in Indian Politics* (1954)<sup>2</sup> exhibits the role of caste in Indian politics. The author emphasizes that political mobilization of various sections of Indian society has given salience to caste in Indian politics.

---

He also points out that mobilization of different caste groups has been a major technique with various political parties for expanding their support base.

To analyze the relationship between social status and occupational status of the Scheduled Castes, D' Souza (1962)<sup>3</sup> conducted a study of three villages of Gujrat, Mysore and Maharashtra. The study brings out that in Gujrat and Mysore occupational status of the Scheduled Castes was the lowest in their respective villages. In the social evolution too, they were ranked lowest by others and by themselves but the situation was different in the Maharashtra villages. The occupational status of the Scheduled Castes was higher than that of some other castes.

Mahars (SC) had also given up their traditional unclean occupation. This did bring about some change in the attitude of the villagers towards the social status of Mahars but social tension and oppression had arisen in their relation with the other castes. The author also observes that people would take some time to forget past occupation of the Scheduled Castes.

Baldev Raj Nayar (1965)<sup>4</sup> while writing on the role of caste in Punjab, takes up the case of the victory of an Akali Dal supported Scheduled Caste candidate in a rural Sidhwan Bet constituency elections of 1962. He shows the powerful influence of religious loyalties in the voting behavior of both Hindus and Sikhs and the important role played by the gurdwaras for the Akali Dal candidate.

But he also suggests that many other factors cut into religious loyalties. In the particular case under study the conflicts among Jat-Sikh factions within the village and the candidate's use of kinship ties were among the more important factors which led a number of Sikhs to vote for the Congress rather than Akali Dal. Loyalties to caste, religion, faction and party were thus all

---

present: the voter had to make a choice among his conflicting loyalties, and the skill of successful candidate lay in his ability to build a coalition of diverse loyalties.

Nayar in his illustrious *Minority Politics in Punjab* (1966)<sup>56</sup> pointed out the cleavages based on religion, caste, rural-urban divide and class amongst the people of the state and raised the question as to the significance of these various cleavages in the population of Punjab for the politics of the state. His work was, however, mainly concerned with the role of religion in Punjab politics. Despite this, he made some valuable observations regarding the role of caste as well.

In *Social Change in Modern India*, Srinivas (1966)<sup>5</sup> has defined the process of Sanskritization: Sanskritization is the process by which a low Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently twice born caste. The low caste takes to the conduct, customs and rituals of higher caste. By Sanskritization a caste or a tribal community ventures to gain higher status in society. In the process of Sanskritization a claim is made for higher status in the social structure and it is therefore a vertical movement. But in Sanskritization there is improvement of status only, there is no structural change.

Chandidas's (1969)<sup>6</sup> study examined how close to equality were the Scheduled Castes. The data was taken from Data unit of Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). The author concluded that after two decades of special concessions to bring them at par with the general population, the Scheduled Castes remained at the rear end of development. In the agricultural sector, where the Scheduled Castes were concentrated, their position as compared with that of the non-Scheduled Castes, was inferior regarding land as well as size of holdings. Their rate of urbanization and education and their average per-capita income in comparison to the non-Scheduled Castes was lower.

---

A study by Saberwal (1972)<sup>7</sup> of three reserved assembly constituencies in Punjab shows that Scheduled Caste leaders have relatively limited political resources and political socialization. Therefore, the net result of this adverse condition is that the leaders refrain from adopting a stable political stance and depend on the patronage given by upper castes and the constitution. Saberwal concludes in his study that without political reservation, the access of the SCs to various elite settings in the political arena would decline, leading to greater inequalities in society. Thus, it is clear from the study that due to political reservation, Scheduled Caste leaders are not inspired to group the larger institutional mechanisms which underlie inequalities, at the same time, the provision for reserved constituencies is indispensable for better political participation of the Scheduled Castes.

Mahar's (1972)<sup>8</sup> edited volume on Dalits is one of the best collections of articles by eminent scholars. The introduction to this volume is written by Opler who argues that interaction of themes such as hierarchy, 'dharma' and ritual purity is pertinent to the understanding of culture of Hindu society. He contends that so long as these themes persist, the existing inequalities would continue. Some of the papers in the book highlight the role of untouchables in rural communities. They stress, what is now common place, that the problems of untouchables are predominantly socio-economic and that the upper castes do not treat favorably to the growing awareness of the untouchables stemming from their education, government and political privileges. Mencher's paper observes that the problem of untouchability is an economic one and cannot be solved in isolation from the overall economic development of the nation. The history of untouchables in the past century or so points to several attempts by them to gain a new identity through religious conversions. Alexander's study of the new Christians of Kerala highlights this point. Despite conversions, the Pulays in Kerala have hardly rid themselves of

---

their traditional allegiances. Owen Lynch's study of Jatavas explains the attempts of this community to gain a new identity through conversion under the leadership of Ambedkar. Zelliott's comparative analysis of Gandhi and Ambedkar who held such divergent views brings out their historic roles and stresses the two main dimensions of the problem.

Another study *Beyond the Village : Sociological Explorations* by Saberwal (1972)<sup>9</sup> based on the survey of industrial township of Punjab, explores the underlying social processes involved in the transformation of closed status group, i.e. caste into an open unbounded system in which any person of a group could take part according to the group's achieved role. He describes how the political processes led the Dalits to a higher level of consciousness of their rights, and how the former relation between caste and occupation was being eroded leading many of them to join the high status network. The processes of social mobility and change have been explained in the context of only one variable i.e. Industrialization.

Shah's work *Politics of the Schedules Castes and Scheduled Tribes* (1975)<sup>10</sup> deals with the political awareness and behavior of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. His findings are that in the last two decades the political participation of SC's and STs has increased considerably. But the political parties have failed in lessening the gap between the deprived communities and the upper castes at political participation. The main object of the study is to examine the nature and extent of political participation of the SC and ST leaders in Gujarat. The study contains ten chapters and covers a vast spectrum of state politics. The author has appraised various types of movements-social, religious political before and after independence. The contributions of M.K. Gandhi, B.R. Ambedkar and Gaekwad have been acknowledged in particular. The author has successfully attempted to examine socio-economic and psychological attributes of political and non-political leaders and their attitude and cognition towards their communities, political system

---

and society at large. Thus, the study has a comparative analytical description of various aspects of the phenomenon of politics.

I.P. Singh's (1975)<sup>11</sup> analysis of a Sikh village in Punjab and of changing Sikh traditions in relation to dominant Hindu tradition illustrates a process of differentiation that is fairly characteristic of Indian civilization- the rise of dissenting sects. The Sikhs share with the Buddhists, the Jains and Bhakti movements, an anti -caste sentiment which at the inception of the movement promises significant social and cultural changes but later mellows into some form of compromise with the orthodox position. He finds upper castes and low castes clearly distinguished and not a single case of inter marriage. In the field of performances, Sikh festivals celebrating special Sikh heroes and saints have been added to traditional Hindu festivals.

N.D. Palmer (1976)<sup>12</sup> has done splendid work on elections in respect of South Asian countries of India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Nepal. However, the major portion of his book is devoted to the study of elections and voting behavior in India. The book may safely be designated as a classic of electoral studies in India. The author has tried to correlate electoral politics and voting behavior with the process of political development in India. He has highlighted the functions of elections in political system which according to him is political choice, political participation and political socialization. He gives a summary of elections from 1951 to 1972.

He has also produced a profile of Indian voters and thoroughly discussed the determinants of voting behavior of the Indian electorate. But the book, based as it is on aggregate data, has formulated certain generalizations regarding the behavior of Indian voters in general and does not provide though study of voting behavior of the down trodden people i.e. Dalits.

Maharia(1978)<sup>13</sup> conducted a study to examine the effects of development and welfare

---

programmes on weaker sections in India. The author defined weaker sections as those persons who strikingly fell below the prescribed standards or were placed at the lowest level of society. Characteristics of backwardness might be identified as untouchability, lower social status, unclean occupations, poverty and unemployment, lack of education and low level of living. The author observed that many programmes had been introduced for the benefit of weaker sections in our country but they had not made any impact because even if we had resources (i.e. capital, labor force, technical knowledge etc.), their use was restricted; people were not able to utilize them.

Leela Vasaria (1979)<sup>14</sup> conducted a study "The Harijans Worsening Plight" in four districts of Tamil Nadu of 1000 rural families-800 Harijans and 200 non-Harijans. The study attempted to measure, through economic and social status indices, the level of discrimination suffered by Harijans as also to study the trends in poverty in the two decades between 1950 and 1970. The per capita income of Harijans in 1970 was Rs. 277 as against Rs. 406 of the non-Harijans when Harijan and non-Harijans were employed as coolies. The daily wages of Harijans were less than non-Harijans. The Harijans' income was less because of the small land holding and the low paid menial jobs.

Pimpley (1980)<sup>15</sup> sets out to assess the status of the Scheduled Caste students of Punjab and identify the difficulties and experiences of discrimination. Based on well-designed sample survey of 487 students from schools and colleges, the author concludes that Scheduled Castes have not fully utilized the educational opportunities provided to them by the state government. Two major factors in the form of conjectures for low utilization have been offered by the author. These are general poverty and lack of the culture of education. The comparison of school and college sample shows the difference in their response on several dimensions but without

---

changing the major conclusion. The author feels that a radical transformation of the social structure is necessary to ameliorate the condition of the Scheduled Castes. On the whole, the study provides an illuminating profile of the Scheduled Caste students of Punjab.

D' Souza's *Educational Inequalities among Scheduled Castes-A Case Study in Punjab* (1980)<sup>68</sup> supports the hypothesis that inequalities have a systematic character and that when Scheduled Castes who are structurally differentiated are subjected to uniform condition of change, different castes respond differently, with the result that the gap between them widens further. Caste differences and the concentration of different Scheduled Castes in various educationally and socio-economically different regions are responsible for widening the gap. The solutions suggested to tackle the issue is to improve the socio-economic conditions for the structurally disadvantaged sections. Such a suggestion in no way helps the planners to evolve any action plan. The measure of coefficient of equality used by the author seems to be promising techniques to analyze the increasing gap.

Khan (1980)<sup>16</sup> made an attempt to assess the changes, which have taken place in several aspects of the life of the Scheduled Castes who were subject to several forms of disabilities in the past. Endeavour has also been made to evaluate the working of the governmental policies and programmes for the upliftment of the Scheduled Castes since independence. He observes that Scheduled Castes have not been benefited much from the governmental measures and their economic condition has not improved much. Joshi's *Democracy in Search of Equality: Untouchable Politics and Indian Social Change* (1982)<sup>70</sup> analyses the role of SC legislator's and finds reservation for SCs and STs as the major factor for their political activities. However Joshi observes that the provision for reserved seats is not enough for the Scheduled Castes to reduce their political dependence on the higher castes. Sachchidananda in his remarkable work *The*



---

*Harijan Elite* (1985)<sup>71</sup> points out that reservation measures in jobs, scholarships and seats in legislatures has created a section among the Harijans who do not care for their own community. This is the rise of the 'elite class' within the Harijans. He suggests economic upliftment of all the Harijans.

Mandal's book *Tribals at Polls* (1986)<sup>17</sup> is a longitudinal study of a parliamentary constituency in tribal Bihar. It brings out in detail the political process at work from 1977 to 1984 parliamentary elections. It deals with the changing scenario of the political climate and the changing attitude of the electorate in India.

Narayanan in his "Reservation in Politics and Scheduled Caste Elite" (1986)<sup>18</sup> finds that the present system of political reservation benefits only the Scheduled Caste elite and not Scheduled Caste masses. She concludes that the Scheduled Caste leaders are in a better position to represent SCs' interests but as the policy of reservation for SCs and STs exists today, it tends to create an elite section and the system has not worked to benefit the common SC and ST population.

Kiran Shukla in *Caste Politics in India: A Case Study of Bihar* (1987)<sup>19</sup>, has tried to illustrate the impact of caste on state politics. The author attempts to find the actual influence of caste on the state politics. According to her the impact of caste on politics has progressively been increasing and if the present situation is any indicator of the future, it is very unlikely that the impact will be reduced in future. In the second chapter the author, taking the period from 1912 to 1980, has shown that from the beginning it has been due to economic and social predominance that caste has been influencing politics. In the third chapter the author concludes that caste is playing its role under the shade of class interest. Juergensmeyer has done a pioneer work *Religious Rebels in Punjab : The Social Vision of Untouchability* (1988)<sup>20</sup>. The author has

---

explained the social condition of Dalits in Punjab. This book is about the particular segment of Punjabi society, the so called untouchable castes and their non-violent movements for social change in which lower caste activities have been involved throughout the present century. The Dalit rebels revolted against untouchability on the basis of religion in organized way rather than on the basis of caste. The book also explores other avenues of expression that were available to socially minded Punjabi untouchables in the 20th century. The author also highlights the political awakening among the Dalits through various movements.

Jatinder Kaur's book *Punjab Crisis : the Political Perception of Rural Voters* (1989)<sup>21</sup> is an analysis of the Punjab problem at the grass root level. This study probes the political outlook of the rural people of Punjab and the extent to which this outlook strengthens democratic structure especially the electoral process. The author analyses the level of political awareness and the participation of the people in the electoral process.

Benjamin (1989)<sup>22</sup> observes that the Scheduled Castes of rural Bihar have not reached the level of power sharing despite state help. There is some association at lower levels between social mobility and political participation. Social mobility is not taking place among the Scheduled Castes primarily because of the obstructive role of neo-rich middle castes or classes operating through muscle men and senas.

Panday's study "Protective Discrimination and Social Uplift Among Scheduled Castes" (1991)<sup>23</sup> is an empirical analysis of the impact of special privileges along with democratic secularism in the social mobility and upliftment of Harijans in modern India. The study also gives special analysis of their rise in social hierarchy, social position, mobilization in attitude towards social institutions, patterns of behaviour, style of life, social contacts and nearness with upper castes.

---

*From Untouchables to Dalits* (1992)<sup>24</sup> by Zelliott provides an overview of the Dalits' political and religious movements in Maharashtra from the Bhakti tradition of Chokhamela and Ekanth to the Mahar movement under the leadership of B.R. Ambedkar to the consequence of Buddhist revival and finally to the literary movement in the 1970's. He has written extensively on the life, thought and works of B.R. Ambedkar, and maps out the historical linkage of the untouchable protests with that of the religious movements as modes of protest and change; from the Bhakti movement in the fourteenth century to the Buddhist revival in the 20th century. Kshirsagar (1994)<sup>25</sup> important study deals with the Dalit movements and its leaders in India. It provides the socio-political profile of all those leaders who had worked for the emancipation of their brethren from the curse of untouchability and caste system, especially during 1857 to 1956. No doubt there are certain other books on Dalit movement and its leaders, but they are scanty and scattered. As most of them are written in the regional languages, they are not accessible to others. Hence such leaders and their movements remained unknown to other regions. This book gives knowledge about all the Dalit movements all over India. In addition the author has also included the contribution made by non-Dalit leaders and their organizations aimed at Dalit upliftment. Surinder Mohan in an article published in *Mainstream* "Paradox of Dalit Politics" (1994)<sup>81</sup> has analyzed the paradoxes of Dalit politics in India. He observed that Ambedkar had grasped certain fundamental lessons about how the Dalit politics had to be developed. Ambedkar pleaded for an alliance between the Dalits and other backward castes, both being oppressed by iniquitous caste system. In fact Ambedkar wanted to make Dalits effective constituents of a viable political force. The authors suggested that long term political strategy is required to be built up on

---

the guidelines of Dr. Ambedkar for the downtrodden people to unite together politically for participating in the electoral politics of the country.

Singh and Jammu in their well-documented study "Untouchability in Rural Punjab" (1995)<sup>26</sup> highlight the sense of untouchability prevailing in the villages of Punjab. They collected the information from five villages of Patiala district. The findings of the study indicate that SCs still live in separate places in the villages. Although, the sense of untouchability in physical terms is almost negligible but some of people still hesitate to touch the lower caste people. Though people of higher Caste and SCs can sit on the same cot but inter-caste circle of friendship is quite narrow. SCs are not fully free at religious gatherings, they even have different religious places.

Sangwan's work *Social System and the Dalit Identity* (1996)<sup>27</sup> covers the social structure including the dynamics of the caste system, the evolution of the system, the law and its interpretations, the present status and the hopes and aspirations of the Dalit communities in terms of social and economic betterment. Recent years have seen a great upsurge of Dalit sentiment and determination in India. He argues that it happened only with the collective efforts. The collective consciousness of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes represents the consciousness of the large part of India. However the political implications are diverse and the political diversity of India is tied up inextricably with its social and regional realities. As with other movements the Dalits constitute a vocal and decisive segment of the population of the country. They are a force to be reckoned with. Ghosh and Ghosh's study (1997)<sup>84</sup> mainly deals with the Dalit Women. The author discusses various types of Dalit communities which are considered lowest in the social hierarchy beyond the four Hindu Varnas. The author not only analyses the status of Dalit women in Indian society but also the status of

---

Dalit women in Dalit society. Constitutional and legal protections given after Independence are also discussed in detail.

James Massey's work *Down Trodden - The Struggle of India's Dalits for Identity, Solidarity and Liberation* (1997)<sup>28</sup> tries to deal with the terminology which is being used for Dalits and the origin of untouchability in India. He deals with some of the religious movements in India which worked for the upliftment of Dalits. He also deals with internationalization of Dalit issues and tries to show the condition of Dalits in the era of liberalization.

Suresh Kumar's article "India At Fifty: The Dalit Situation" (1997)<sup>29</sup> expresses the view that violation of civil and human rights and atrocities against the Dalits have been on the rise over the years. The Dalits are still far behind the general population in terms of literacy and education. Despite preferential treatment as a part of the affirmative action of the state, the majority of the Dalits can not afford higher education as they are still below poverty line. But despite the shortcomings and limitations of the affirmative actions of the state, the Dalits have been able to forge an independent identity in its various terms and manifestations. According to the author the growing sense of awareness and assertiveness among Dalits have brought them together on many common platforms. They are now able to express and articulate their common Dalit identity through collective communication action.

Bandyopadhyay (1999)<sup>30</sup> states in his article that the Dalits in the Indian society have been often suppressed by the elite class even after independence. He explains that the system of administration lacks accountability to the people. The bureaucratic system below the state level, was nurtured in such a way that they are almost non-accountable to the people. The author hopes that the new panchayati Raj system will remove the inherent weakness of the administration at the local level. He states that elected representatives of the people should have the right to

---

exercises superintendence and control over government officials. He argues that the democracy of the elites is on the offensive against the democracy of the Dalits. V.B. Singh's article "Deprivation and Political Consciousness" (1999)<sup>31</sup> examines the nature of deprivation of the Scheduled Castes and also discusses its implications for effective political participation. He observes that the phenomenon of deprivation arises out of inequitable distribution of and access to both material and non-material resources in a society. As a matter of fact, in every society, certain groups enjoy disproportionate share in social resources. The Scheduled Castes as a group, with a long history of socio-economic deprivation, present a very good sample for examining the nature and extent of deprivation.

Pushpendra's article "Dalit Assertion through Electoral Politics" (1999)<sup>32</sup> examines the data on voting behaviour of the Scheduled Castes and traces the change in party preferences of the Scheduled Castes. In order to explain why this assertion took place through elections, the author has analysed the opinion of the Scheduled Castes about the legitimacy of the political system. A further attempt is made to find internal differentiation among the Scheduled Castes regarding their voting behaviour.

Michael's edited work *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values* (1999)<sup>33</sup> throws light upon almost every aspect of Dalit life. It is a collection of articles by eminent scholars. The articles focus on the major concerns of the Dalits. The book is divided into four parts. First part deals with historical aspect and traces the origin and development of untouchability in Indian civilization. The Dalit vision of Indian society is not same as the upper caste Hindu vision. The second part has articles studying the contribution of Jyotiba Phule and B.R. Ambedkar, who laid the foundation for the Dalit movements and who are also known as the fathers of the Indian social revolution. Part III deals with methodological and operational aspect of Dalits in Indian society.

---

Here the articles give critique of traditional Indian sociology which look at Indian society mainly from a Sanskrit perspective. In the course of this critique, the author also makes an attempt to propose a method for the study of complex nature of Hinduism and Indian society. The fourth and last part concentrates on the economic condition of the Dalits where problems of employment of the Dalits are also discussed.

Interrogating caste is wide-ranging and amply illustrated account of the working and function of caste in India. Gupta's *Interrogating Caste: Understanding Hierarchy and Difference in Indian Society* (2000)<sup>34</sup> draws upon insights from a variety of disciplines including sociology, anthropology, history and Marxian theory, to analyse the caste system and to provide fresh insights into reality that often appears too familiar to us. As the subtitle denotes, the book is about understanding hierarchy and difference in Indian society. The author challenges the view that there is a single caste hierarchy to which every caste acquiesces ideologically; this is not only the most prevalent academic view, but also the dominant notion about caste in India. He instead argues that there are probably as many hierarchies as there are castes in India. He challenges one of the fundamental assumptions of electoral politics in India that if the caste composition of electoral constituencies is known, political outcomes can be predicted. By treating caste in this fashion, he has produced a work that is timely, very much needed and extremely accomplished. It corrects many of our misconceptions about castes.

Ramashray Roy's *Dalit Development and Democracy* (2000)<sup>35</sup> is an important work on the Indian Dalits. The author examines the social, economic as well as political issues concerning development of the Dalits. The study, therefore, has a wide canvas. It takes up aspects related to economic betterment, social upliftment and political empowerment and in that process sheds new light on several facts of Dalit life. As the author points out, the continued depressed

---

socio-economic condition of the Dalits in India raises questions about the relationship between development and democracy.

Sudha Pai's *Dalit Assertion and Unfinished Democratic Revolution: the BSP in Uttar Pradesh* (2002)<sup>36</sup>, traces the growth of BSP in UP and in the process dispels several myths and historical interpretations. The author says that Dalit assertion in the context of UP means assertion against upper caste domination, against the state for its failure to improve the socio-economic condition of Dalits and remove the practice of untouchability.

Vivek Kumar's article "Caste Mobilization in UP and its Impact on Assembly Election" (2002)<sup>37</sup> examines the nature of caste mobilization in Uttar Pradesh. According to Kumar caste mobilization can be easily observed at two levels: one at the level of caste connections organized by different socio-political organizations and second in the form of formation of single caste based politics. A major threat of this caste mobilization can be seen in the election of UP Assembly election 2002 which was again resulted in a hung Assembly.

Malhotra's study *Gender, Caste and Religious Identity-Restructuring Class in Colonial Punjab* (2002)<sup>38</sup> focuses on how the notion of being 'high caste', as it developed and transformed during the colonial period, contributed to the formation of a middle class among the Hindus and the Sikhs. While many reformist Sikhs and Hindus either denied or re-conceptualized caste, the author draws attention to the innovative ways, in which older privileges shaped newer identities. This in turn, had an impact on gender relation, and encouraged the re-examination of women's role and place in society. The author deals with the problem of women's relationship to the concepts of caste and religiosity in the context of the reformist imagination of the period. Caste was seen as a quality 'attached' to men, making women's relationship to it ambiguous. The late nineteenth century high caste men tried to grapple with this conundrum and upgrade women to a



---

life suitable to the high caste, modernist middle classes. The author further highlights how the new notions of ideal femininity were hidden under the gamut of new and often oppressive cultural practices. He maps the emergence of new high caste, middle class patriarchal structures among the Hindus and the Sikhs, and the ideological pillars, on which they rested. By focusing on the issues of caste, religion and gender in the formation of a middle class, the author fills a major gap in the social history of colonial Punjab.

Vivek Kumar in his *Dalit Leadership in India* (2002)<sup>39</sup> envisages to conceptualize the Dalit leadership in modern day national politics. It traces its origin, growth and development and examines its nature and dynamics, besides inquiring into its strategy or strategies adopted for mobilization and empowerment of the Dalit masses. On the basis of existing temporal reality the author has divided the Dalit leadership into two categories – one dependent category which wanted the upliftment of the Dalits within the Hindu social order and other independent category insisted for Dalits' upliftment outside the people of Hindu social order.

Vivek Kumar in his another article (2003)<sup>40</sup> observes that the Dalits have changed their style of assertion with the structural changes in the Indian society. The change in their style is testimony to the increasing level of consciousness among them. The political assertion of the Dalits in the state has broken the political hegemony of the twice born castes. The article has deconstructed the myth of homogenized Hindu - whole by giving them a separate identity with the construction of different socio-cultural symbols. It says that the political mobilization in the state has checked the communal mobilization of the Sangh Parivar by weaning out the Dalits from its fold. The Dalit assertion has strengthened the Indian democracy and today representative democracy is moving towards participatory democracy in the state as the Dalits themselves are sitting in the institutions of power, taking and implementing decision on their own.

---

H.K. Puri's article "Scheduled Castes in Sikh Community: A historical Perspective" (2003)<sup>41</sup> is an understanding of the distinctive pattern of caste hierarchy in Sikhism which points to a new pattern of competing hierarchies, parallel to that of the Hindus. It calls for deeper insight into the dynamics of political power and economic relations both at the local and regional levels. Not looking closely at the ground level social reality may leave the impression that overall Sikh community represents homogeneity of castes rather than division. In the explanations rooted in the primacy of ideology or culture, on the other hand, the survival of casteism according to the learned scholar, is some times regarded a consequence of incomplete liberation of Sikhism from the stronghold of Brahmanism, emphasizing greater distancing of Sikhs from the Hindus.

Jodhka touched the issue of untouchability, role of various reform movements, question of Sikh identity, the Singh Sabha movement and the Ad-Dharmi movement in his paper entitled "The Scheduled Castes in Contemporary Punjab" (2003)<sup>42</sup>. Chamar and Ad-Dharmi communities have turned out to be more successful entrepreneurs than other small and less mobilized groups among the Scheduled Castes. He holds that the institution of caste is comparatively weak in Punjab.

Gill in his paper "Reservation and Protective Justice" (2003)<sup>43</sup> finds it a social reality, which not only provides ground for social exploitation but also avenues for the mobility of Scheduled Castes. The study finds that there is structural inequality despite reservation policy. The author raises the question of constitutional equality in the context of reservation policy. The study is limited to the urban populace only. The analysis points out that reservation provides an opportunity to the lower section of the society to achieve those qualities and attributes on which modern industrial society lays premium essential for social and economic mobility.

---

Yagati's work *Dalit's Struggle for Identity* (2003)<sup>42</sup> deals with the familiar story of Dalits with a new perspective. Often social scientists in general and historians in particular interpret Dalit consciousness as 'false consciousness' which undermines their radical political self-assertion. This work mainly deals with Dalits' political consciousness, their struggle for identity, and the manner in which they rose from a stage of being political nonentities to a stage when they could develop their own self-definition and roles within the dialectics of nationalist anti-colonial struggle. The strength of this work lies in drawing upon vernacular sources and in presenting an insider's perspective.

Chandra's work *Liberation & Social Articulation of Dalits* (2003)<sup>43</sup> in two volumes tracks down Dalit history, their marginalization, welfare measures and awakening of Dalits. Besides, the work also suggests ways and means to bring Dalits into mainstream society. The first volume traces the social history of Dalits, their ethnicity and racial conflicts, their exclusion from mainstream society, and land laws related to Dalits. The second volume deals with social disabilities of Dalits, their rights, educational development and welfare programmes aimed at them. The burning issues of Dalits and racially discriminated people are elaborately described in the volume. The role of state and social agencies in the mainstreaming of these people are also discussed.

Muthaiah's article "Politics of Dalit Identity" (2004)<sup>103</sup> is devoted to the study of designation of Dalits in different contexts of their designation-impregnate with politics of designator and designates. Designations like Scheduled Castes, Dalits and Bahujan are elite-manufactured categories with politics of their own but alien to common people. Reservation broke monopoly of one or two castes in various fields but preserved caste identities. Ronki Ram's article "Untouchability, Dalit Consciousness and the Ad Dharm Movement in Punjab" (2004)<sup>44</sup>

---

is confined to Ad-Dharm movement in Punjab. Its aim is to explore first the social and political arrangements in colonial Punjab during the 1920s which led to the rise of this movement and second, to document the present status of the movement in Punjab. The article explores the circumstances in which the Ad-Dharm movement originated in 1925 and what accounted for its so called demise in 1968, who were its protagonists, what objectives did it seek to achieve and what were the tactics and strategies adopted for the realization of these objectives.

Puri's edited book *Dalits in Regional Context* (2004)<sup>45</sup> has assessed the present condition of Dalits in Punjab. It is a collection of articles by eminent scholars of Punjab. These articles cover a wide range of local-regional differences in the historical evolution of caste hierarchies, the differential impact of socio-economic changes, the state's affirmative actions, the individual and collective Dalit aspirations and coping strategies, and the experience of political resistance and mobilization within different regions. This regional case study contributes to a more nuanced and composite understanding of the Dalits' position in this continental polity. The legacy of Ad Dharm in the radicalization of Dalit consciousness in contemporary Punjab is explored by Ronki Ram in his article "Limits of untouchability, Dalit Assertion and Caste violence in Punjab". He also deals with the source of untouchability, caste and domination and the state of untouchability in Punjab. The article reflects briefly on the role of upper caste social reformers in the eradication of untouchability. Mark Juergensmeyer in his article "Cultures of Deprivation: Three Case Studies in Punjab" in the above cited work has captured the intertwining of the social and the economic dimensions through a more inclusive meaning attached to the words-culture and deprivation. His comparative study of three villages representing three different locales points to different levels of the cultures of deprivation in one and the same state. S.S. Jodhka presents a picture of the impact socio-economic development and the strategies of

---

social and cultural assertion made on the life and struggle of the Dalits. The title of the article "Dissociation, Distancing and Autonomy" draws our attention to the dynamics of the process of social change that underlay the observable sense of autonomy in this section of the people in Punjab.

Another very interesting study in the book is 'Interrogating Changing Status of Dalits of Punjab' by Parmjit Singh. On the basis of his empirical survey of low castes and the Scheduled Castes, Judge points to not only the evidence of their autonomy but also to their assertiveness which includes a readiness for confrontation in case of discrimination and insult. Harish K. Puri's article "The Scheduled Castes in the Sikh Community" aims at exploring the difference between the doctrinal principles of Sikh religion and the ruling social and political interests in the context of the changes in society and economy of Punjab. Sucha Singh Gill's paper is organized into three sections. The distribution of Scheduled Caste workforce across nine industrial categories is examined in comparison to Scheduled Caste workforce in section I. The educational status and progress is covered in section II. Section three analyses the role of reservation policy for Scheduled Castes. Shalini Sharma and B.K. Aggarwal's article "Educating Dalit Women for Development" notices a close connection between higher levels of education in Dalit families and a higher incidence of recourse to pre-natal diagnostic techniques and female foeticide, in precisely the same way as among the educated and better-off sections of higher castes. Parmod Kumar and Rainuka Dagar's study also brings out how in the post Green Revolution period the Dalit males' taste of prosperity led them to emulate the upper castes not only in terms of tightening control over their women but also in terms of violence against women. Their field work study shows that such incidence of control and violence has increased among the Dalits and exceeds that among the non-Dalits.

---

Thus the edited work of Harish Puri provides a multidimensional study of the Dalits in contemporary Punjab and is academically very important and relevant. Buta Singh, the well known parliamentarian, in his *Dalit and Dalit Awakening in India* (2004)<sup>46</sup> has laid thrust on Dalits' status in ancient, medieval and modern India. He has given in detail, the origin of caste and caste system and social status of Dalits and untouchability in medieval India. The Bhakti movement as the voice of revolt, devotion and its implications has also been discussed in detail.

Sudha Pai's essay "Social capital, Panchayats and Grassroots democracy: The Politics of Dalit Assertion in two districts of Uttar Pradesh" (2004)<sup>47</sup> examines the politics of identity, the role of social capital in resolving conflicts among social groups competing for the benefits of development within the new Panchayats established under the 73rd Amendment Act in U.P. The essay shows that the new Panchayats are an arena of conflicts and contestation over scarce resources, social status and political power. Conflicts have increased not only between the dominant castes and Dalits, but the increasing differentiation of identities and awareness has sharpened competition and conflicts between sections of the rural poor. The author argues that social capital in the form of communal solidarity has united the Dalits for joint social and political action against the upper and middle castes. But in negative terms, increased social awareness, politicization and their improvement in their economic position, has divided the group of their own community with whom they have common economic interests. This means that group identities have the potential to create strong reservoirs of social capital within segments.

Bhatia's article "Dalit Rebellion Against Untouchability in Chawada, Rajasthan" (2006)<sup>48</sup> presents a detailed case study of Dalit rebellion against untouchables in Chakward, a village of Jaipur district in Rajasthan. The case study highlights the fact that, while many humiliating practices of the past have ceased, caste discriminations continue in many forms. Caste

---

based hierarchy and power are still at the heart of the traditional social order and determine, to a large extent, the kinds of lives that people live. Further the police, administration and state machinery have failed to protect the constitutional rights of Dalits and often end up aligning with the forces that suppress them. In the eyes of the law-enforcing agencies, Dalits remain unequal citizens. The Chakwa story brings out the difficulties that Dalits face in breaking traditional forms of oppression. Any attempt to challenge the traditional social order makes them vulnerable to repression and violence, and also to isolation. The article also argues that this rebellion against untouchables did not really challenge the caste system itself.

After having reviewed the available literature on the themes related with our research problem, it may be stated that though a lot of literature is available on Dalit issues in general and on Dalit assertions in India, in particular yet not much has been written on the political participation of Dalits in Punjab. Hence there is a justification of an objective scientific study to understand the issue of political awareness among Dalits in Punjab where they are in such a great number and to evaluate their political participation. Thus the present study of political participation of Dalits in Punjab is academically and politically relevant. It may partially fulfil the gap in knowledge on this important theme.

**K.R. Narayanan** (2011), has examined the position of scheduled castes which are still the lowest, the most deprived, the most dispossessed and the least educated section of Indian society. If Gandhi aroused the masses of India as a whole Ambedkar aroused and organized social and political consciousness among the lowest strata of Indian society. Our democracy is functioning properly in India because the average voter is able to cast his vote with a degree of intelligence and political consciousness. Today the voter from the lowest strata of society is able

---

to exercise his right to vote properly partly due to the work done by Dr. Ambedkar in arousing their political consciousness.

*David L. Shills* Editor of International Encyclopedia of social sciences, (Vol-12,) reveals, that political participations is positively correlated with the political awareness. Meaning these by voluntary activities by which the members of a society share in the selection in of rulers and directly or indirectly in the formation of public policy is influenced by the political awareness. The political activities which including voting, seeking information, discussing & attending meetings, contributing financially and speech making working in campaigns are all depends upon the political awareness of the people and it cumulatively affected the levels of political participation in society. People participate in politics whenever they do something to affect public.

*S. Sherril Kenneth, Vagler J. David* (2008), have examined that political awareness is best explained by political factors such as political information, education level, Economic conditions, a feeling of political efficiency and holding the certain beliefs. It may well be noted that non-participation is also best explained by these political factors. We have seen that people who participate in the electoral process are better educated, wealthier and in general better off than those who do not participate. But we have also seen that social and economic factors effect participation directly. They are mediated and shaped by political awareness of an individual.

*Hutchmson Alex* (2007) in his blocritics explained that the level of political awareness of the masses of developed countries is very high. They take active part in political activity and public policy development and they are more aware than the people of developing countries. The author described that the people of developed countries are very cognizant about their political system, government, policy making process, constitution and they are always remain very well



---

aware about the all types of political activities which occurs at national level or international level.

*J.R. Arnold*, (2012) has discussed the multifaceted views on political awareness corruption perceptions and democratic accountability in Latin America.” He has mentioned that voter to be able to monitor their representatives effectively, they must be aware of the extent of corruption within their respective countries. There are the instances where the voters underestimate corruption levels; politician is not held to account for their malfeasant actions. Informed or well aware citizens on the other hand are better equipped to judge the performance of their politician and can therefore punish them during elections. The author contents that extent of public ignorance with in Latin America countries erroneously shapes citizens perception of corruption and thus, leads to weak accountability mechanisms, as such, his policy implication focus on role of the citizens in acquiring pertinent political information in order improve his/her levels of corruption perception. This article extends our understanding of why systems with a lively and free media may still lead to ineffective voter monitoring of corrupt politicians.

The article reflect that the countries whose public ignorance levels are high will have greater levels of corruption, and other side the process of opening up the information environment will result in reduction of corruption levels, as politically aware citizens begin to use their knowledge of political actions to reward or punish politicians.

*Rajni Kothari* (2010) examines the place of caste in politics of India. It is very comprehensive factor of the Indian politics which affect the level of political awareness of all the strata of the society. According to Kothari people do not cast their vote, they vote their caste. So caste is very important factor which influence the whole politics and is a leading factor to create the political awareness among the masses. Kothari also reflects on obvious impact of different

---

caste, especially in the regional politics. He also examines different magnitude of political awareness within specific caste and the dominant caste in the regional politics in India. He also reviews the level of political awareness in rural and urban areas of some of pockets of India. Kothari has tried to establish a 'cause effect relationship' between the caste and the level of political awareness in India. A comprehensive study, carried out by Kothari, reflect the political awareness its magnitude, composition and the direction in relation to caste and the dominant caste in a particular area. He has tried to elaborate the different levels of political awareness by citing different examples in the regional politics in India. Kothari, Rajni (1970) examines some of quantitative and qualitative variables for determine the voting behavior of voters. Amongst these parameters, the level of political awareness is most dominant factor which determines the magnitude and direction of polling during an election. He also point out the level of election in relation to constituency (Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha or election and Local Self government) reflect a varied voting behavior, determined by solo parameter i.e. the level of political awareness in an area.

*Harley, Jean* (2007), examines the role of leadership for creating to political awareness among the masses. The author also discuss the leadership qualities which pave the way to develop the views on various issues come across during propagation of theoretical and practical phases of politics. The author focus on cultivating the leadership qualities among the leaders. He also emphasis on the specific skill too. These specific skills may be proved conductive to inculcate, the right things into the wrong minds. It also help to overcome the prejudices against the prevailing political dimensions across all sectors. The managing skill also help to manage to change taken place during different successive periods. How to lead the political awareness? Hartley has been examined to situation for agriculture sector, industrial sector, co-operative

---

sector, public policy and their implementation, mixed economy etc. He also pointed out that the different traits of leadership can be proved conducive to create an adequate political awareness among the masses, so that they may take a judicious decision to choose a right leader and may become highly responsible and responsive to the public works.

*Zelliot* (2001)<sup>70</sup> has made a multifaceted review of the social movements, forwarded by Dr. Ambedkar. It was an essay on social movements. “Untouchable to Dalit” which includes grievances faced by the dalits. The author has discussed deteriorated socio-economic conditions of scheduled castes and tribes dwelling in different regions of India. Ambedkar has enlightened an awakening in the dalits and inspired them for fighting for their right of equality. However, Dr. Ambedkar was blessed with all leadership qualities; as a result he led this movement which was an urgent need of that time. Dr. Ambedkar felt it was imperative to raise the educational standard of depressed class. He was also of the view that political power was the only alternative which could ameliorate the deteriorated conditions of the dalits in India.

*Duffee* (2002)<sup>70</sup> has examined the multiple aspects of political awareness among the dalits in India. The author discusses the factors which affect directly or indirectly political awareness of the people belongs to the dalits community. He also refers to some of socio-cultural aspects which reflect the position, the prospects of the dalits culture among different power structures, emerging in the contemporary society.

*Sharma, Reeta* (2003)<sup>70</sup> in her paper on “Flames of Caste” described her view on this burning question. According to the author, considerable improvement has taken place in the social and economic conditions of the dalits under the impact of social welfare measures which cover education, reservation in jobs, changes in occupation and political awareness and international migration. These are some of the traits of growing prosperity among the dalits. On the other hand,

---

as we observe that the majority of the dalits are very poor, exploited and subjected to inhuman insult and atrocities. Even after governments and constitutional support, the dalits are not duly represented in Punjab.

**Rawat** (2005)<sup>70</sup> discusses a sizeable numerical strength of the movement led by different social reformers and contemporary dalits leaders. Multiple of cause-effect relationships have been discussed in this paper. A historic past has reflected a glorious functioning of the dalits movement based on nationalism and humanism towards political awareness. The outcome of these movements remained fruitful

**Asghar** (2006)<sup>70</sup> has discussed the ‘vested interests’ of the upper castes which have always been proved a ‘wet-blanket’ in the growth of the dalits in the Indian society. The author comments that the upper caste Hindus are swept off their feet by powerful emotional propaganda. The dalits have been victims of upper caste elite’s politics in order to keep their caste flock with them. The caste awareness is increasing with the passage of time and gaining the democratic awareness. But dalits are far behind in the field of education, yet education and awareness among them are fast spreading and they are becoming more aware of their rights.

**Sita Pati**, (2009)<sup>70</sup> has examined the changing socio-economic conditions of the dalits during the last sixty six years. In his paper ‘The dalit Contract with India’, the author highlights some of ‘directed change’ which have taken place after the independence of India. As a result, a significant share of the dalits has increased in the politics and the administration. It indicates a steady growth of political awareness in different directions. It also indicates a good potential for future performance.

**Mimroth** (2009)<sup>70</sup> has highlighted that the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments have brought a considerable section of the dalits into the power circles at the local level and thus has

---

brought a big breakthrough for the people of this community. As a result, political awareness among the dalits community has increased.

*Sarah Beth* (2009)<sup>70</sup> highlighted on this aspect that the dalit autobiographies are not only written for the purpose of personal reflection, but also cover literary aspect of works as well as influential political statements. In other instance, Jai Prakash Kardam has justifies his views by saying “if you have the power to write and I don’t have the power to write, then they will listen to you. They will look at me, clap their hands and go away.” Hence dalit literature has played a very significant role for expediting the dalit awareness or movements.

*George Oommen* (2009)<sup>70</sup> discusses the ups and downs of the dalits, especially after the post-independence period. Dalit panther movement in Maharashtra, which had popularized the word of Dalit for this neglected section of society, is one of the best example cited for the new wave of the dalit awareness movement. The Dalit panthers saw ‘Caste’ as the major source by which their humanity was being virtually reduced to a state of being no people. However, class analysis also used as an effective tool to understand the plight of this down trodden people. Owing to considerable influence of the Secular Dalit movement in India and liberation theology from Latin America, dalit Theology began the movement by accepting Marxian analytical tools.

*Satchianandan* (2009)<sup>70</sup> expresses his ideas on dalit consciousness and explains that ‘dalit consciousness’ is a term often used in discussions of dalit politics and identity. Political leaders on dalit issue refer to it in term of political awareness in the sense of consciousness rising among the marginalized sections of the Indian society. Sometimes, it also refers to the notion of collective identity among the diverse dalit communities. These two usages are fundamentally same in their emphasis on the need to be aware of the age long exploitation based on caste.

---

**Kamble** (2009)<sup>70</sup> explain her ideas about the dalit awareness and participation of women in panchayati Raj institutions. Author says that vision of political development emphasizes on political awareness among the masses and active participation as innate to its discourse. Development in this sense needs democratic decisions making activity of all the stakeholders uniformed and active civil society and inclusive political structure to reach at its goal.

**Chanchreek** (2010)<sup>70</sup> has discussed the historic past of dalits which have been entangled with rigid caste system in India. He has made a comprehensive review on the deteriorated conditions of dalits during ancient and medieval periods of India. He had mainly focused on slavery and suppressed conditions of dalits in the ancient and medieval periods. The emergence of Buddhism was certainly an era of social transformation, when the untouchables and other marginalized sections of society got equal treatment in the society. Buddha himself initiated many shudra dalits in his order, who have deprived with their civil rights in the Vedic period. They were also denied from their right to education and to gain knowledge and treated worst than animals.

**Kethineni and Humiston** (2010)<sup>70</sup> have discussed the deteriorating socio-economic conditions of the dalits. In the present scenario it indicates a better change among dalits. For this radical change, the credit goes to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who had led the movement with great enthusiasm. Mahatma Gandhi also threw an adequate light on the grievances and discussed different problems in his 'My experiment with truth. When Dr. Ambedkar became first law minister of India he made some significant legal and welfare oriented reforms and incorporated in the Indian constitution. In this paper, the authors have highlighted the strong reforming measures, which were very urgent for that time.

**Khadaga, Parejuli, and Dhruva** (2011)<sup>70</sup> have discussed their views on socio-economic conditions of dalits in Nepal. The authors have highlighted the social hierarchy in terms of caste-

---

occupation, caste barriers and untouchability, which have been some of salient features of traditional Hindu society, found nowhere in the other parts of the world. It was chronically deep rooted social problem, except its symbolic value it does not have any functional importance in the society. Even though considerable interaction has developed but caste is still considered as an important factor in maintaining social distance. Hence no date can be predicted for comprehensive eradication of caste prejudices, but due to growing socio-political awareness among the educated dalits and non-dalits, the distance between them need to be narrowed down. In spite of caste hierarchy, those who have been able to attain economic, educational and political achievement have received greater acceptability in the society.

**S.K. Gupta** ( 1985) in his study present a detailed and analytical account of the multifaceted struggle of the scheduled castes, the odyssey of their transformation from an apolitical, ostracized and indigent mass into a crucial factor in the Indian political structure.

Many attempts were made in the nineteenth and twentieth century's by the socio-religious reforms , religious zealots and eclectics to purge the system of social evils and to eliminate inequalities heaped upon the lower castes . Many socio-religious and secular organizations emerged on the Indian scene. Of these, the Brahmo Samaj, the satya Shodhak Samaj, the Arya Samaj , the Dev Samaj , the Prarthana Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Depressed Classes Mission, the National Social Conferences, the provincial social conferences, and the All-India anti-Untouchability League , and the small sects such as the Satnamis, the Radhaswamis the Shikshaparas, directly or indirectly not only voiced against the inequalities between man and man, caste and caste, and group and group but also called for and contributed to the uplift of the untouchables. It is in the light of the emergence and efforts of these organizations and those of the Christian missionaries, the pioneers in the field that the socio-economic condition of the

---

depressed classes in 1916 has to be studied to established a proper perspective. Since India is virtually a continent united in a single state, the conditions of the people of vary widely from province to province and from district to district within certain provinces. Thus to minimize the hazards of generalization , it will be equally essential to first attempt a province-wise analysis of the socio-economic condition of the depressed classes .

**Zoya Hasan** (2009) explained about the interest in patterns of political representation and strategies for social inclusion has exploded both in india and around the world. The past few years have witnessed an upsurge of interest in strategies of inclusion ranging from affirmative action to mandatory reservations. The proliferation of democracy in the last decade has led to the emergence of a consensus that within democratic systems one social group should not monopolize political power or governance . this has led to an awareness that creating political systems that address the needs of various groups, especially those that are marginalized on the basis of race, religion, and ethnic background, is necessary for equity, fairness, and political stability .

At an empirical level, political changes around the world have stimulated reflection on questions of exclusion of marginalized groups and ways of redressing this imbalance. Special efforts have been made to include those previously excluded in government and legislatures. In the realm of formal politics the modes of representation are increasingly dominated by descriptive representation and participation in decision making. Overall, it is widely believed that a more balanced representation in governance would lead to better decision making and policy priorities that reflect people's concerns.

**Dr. Shailendra Kumar Singh** (2010), has described that Ambedkar framed the constitution, and has become a symbol of the struggle against oppression and discrimination in modern politics. A member of an untouchable caste, Ambedkar was raised in poverty and faced caste discrimination



---

throughout his life. Through the sponsorship of the maharaja of Baroda, he attended Columbia university, and then moved to london, where he studied at the london school of economics and trained for the bar. On his return to india, Ambedkar became a spokesman for the Untouchables, campaigning for social, economic, and political rights. His opposition to the Indian national congress, which he saw as being dominated by caste hindus, brought him into conflict with Gandhi. Upon independence Ambedkar was inducted into the congress-led administration, and given a powerful role as chair of the drafting committee of the constitution. Here he used his legal expertise to mould a document which combined the existing political arrangements with aspects of the American bill of rights and guaranteed protection for the most disadvantaged groups in society. Ambedkar's political philosophy combined a rational individualism with a social critique which sought to undermine the constraints which held back personal development , particularly caste discrimination and economic disparities. His disillusionment with Hinduism led him on a search for an alternative religion more compatible with his political outlook, and 1956 Ambedkar converted, followed by some three million followers, to Buddhism. His assertive championing of the socially and economically disadvantaged, and reputation as the Untouchable who framed the constitution, has given him an iconic status amongst the poor of modern India.

*R.K. Ksirsagar* (1992) in his book highlighted that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was the champion of human rights, emancipator of the so-called untouchables, a protagonist of social justice, a compassionate revolutionary, the architect of the constitution of india and a great reviver of Buddhism in india. He visualized a new social order based on justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. His whole life was but a mission based on reason and morality. He was not a mere thinker, but a dedicated social activist. Politics for him was a mission and not a trade. He thought not only for the upliftment of his community, but of the nation as a whole. He gave to india a

---

new vision, a new philosophy and a new way to march on. However, he was woefully misunderstood by the caste hindus in general. Even, the academicians have not given due attention to his thoughts, especially to his political thoughts. Today the nation needs his thoughts in order to solve the vexed problems before it. Political thoughts of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar are not a speculation regarding utopian ideal, but it is an attempt to provide empirical solutions to the complex problems of the society.

*Sudha Pai* (2011), described that the rise of Bahujan Samaj party has been one of most significant developments in Uttar Pradesh politics since the 1980s. The presents study analyses the emergence, ideology, mobilisational strategies and electoral progress of the BSP, against the backdrop of the phenomena of dalit assertion , both historically, and particularly, the strong wave witnessed in recent years, which has taken two forms: electoral and grassroots activism. While highlighting its considerable achievements, the study explores the reasons for the failure of the Bahujan Samaj Party to harness the rising wave of dalit assertion, evident in up society today. The work attempts a sympathetic yet critical look at a Party, once eulogised as a social movement that would introduce social revolution and transformation which larger got converted into an opportunistic political party, interested in capture of state power and political empowerment of Dalits, and attempts to explain what went wrong. It examines how empowering the BSP-experience has actually been for the vast majority of subaltern dalits and whether it has contributed to the social deepening of Indian democracy, or merely helped in the upward mobility of the elite sections of the dalits. It provides an understanding of the impact of the BSP, on both UP and Indian politics, in a phase when sectarian identities have become important following the unraveling of the Nehruvian consensus, which was upheld by the single dominant party system.

---

*P.S. Krishnan* (2009) in his study reveals that Dr. Ambedkar is a well known and universally accepted icon of social justice in our country. What is more remarkable is the fact that his following has not diminished with his demise, rather his influence and acceptability have been increasingly growing with passage of years. So much so that social justice has moved to the centre stage of all discussions and action in recent years with the reinforced and visible emphasis of the process of planning and governance on equity and inclusion. Ambedkar was deeply heart by the social malady of derivation and exclusion of a very large section of Indian society-the “untouchables” and the backwards. He sought to fight against the social evil, risking personal isolation from the then all encompassing mainstream of political movement of freedom struggle. This was reflected in his bitter strategic duel with Mahatma Gandhi, sense of disillusionment with india’s independence devoid of social justice and equality and his note of caution on the contradictions between political equality and social inequality that the constitution sought to provide. Taking his words seriously and inspired by his vision, the Indian constitution-makers and leadership thereafter have been striving hard to redeem pledge of social justice which, for Ambedkar, meant essentially liberty, equality, fraternity and mobility for all. But still, we have miles to go.

---

## REFERENCES

1. Denzian Ibbeston, *Punjab Castes*, Language Department, Punjab. 1916.
2. Rajani Kothari, *Caste in Indian Politics*, Oriental Longman Publication, Delhi, 1954.
3. Victor D' Souza, "Changing Status of Scheduled Castes," *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. XIV, No. 48, Dec, 1, 1962.
4. Baldev Raj Nayar, "Religion and Caste in the Punjab: Sidhwan Bet Constituency", in Myron Weiner & Rajni Kothari (ed.), *Indian Voting Behaviour-Studies of the 1962 General Elections*, Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta, 1965.
5. Baldev Raj Nayar, *Minority Politics in Punjab*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1966.
6. M.N. Srinivas, *Social change in Modern in India*, University of California Press, California, U.S.A. 1966, p. 6.
7. R. Chandidas, "How Close to Equality are Scheduled Castes", *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. IV, No. 24, June 14, 1969, p. 975-979.
8. Satish Saberwal, "The Reserved Constituency Candidates and Consequences", *Economic and political weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1972,
9. J. Michael Mahar (ed), *The Untouchables in Contemporary India*, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1972.
10. Satish Saberwal (ed.), *Beyond the Village : Sociological Explorations*, Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, 1972.
11. Ghanshyam Shah, *Politics of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*, Vora & Co. Publishers, Bombay, 1975.

- 
12. I.P. Singh, "A Sikh Village" in Milton Singer (ed.), *Traditional India-Structure and Change*, Rawat Publication, Jaipur, 1975.
  13. N.D.Palmer, *Elections and Political Development- The SouthAsian Experience*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1976.
  14. S.L. Maharia, "Helping Weaker Section", *Kurukshetra*, VolXXVI, No. 12, 1978.
  15. Leela Visaria, 'The Harijans' Worsening Plight', *Economics and Political Weekly*, Vol. IX, No. 5, Feb, 1979.
  16. Prakash N. Pimpley, *Profile of Scheduled Caste Students : TheCase of Punjab*, Department of Sociology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1980.
  17. Victor D. Souza, *Educational Inequalities Among Scheduled Castes-A Case Study in Punjab*, Department of Sociology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, 1950.
  18. Mumtaj Ali Khan, *Scheduled Castes and their Status in India*, Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1980.
  19. Barbara R. Joshi, *Democracy in Search of Equality: Untouchable Politics and Indian Social Change*, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1982.
  20. Sachchidananda, *The Harijan Elite*, Thomson J.K. Publication, Delhi, 1985.
  21. B.B Mandal, *Tribals at the Polls*, Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1986.
  22. Padmini Narayanan "Reservation in Politics and Scheduled Caste Elite" In V.P. Singh and B.C. Aggarwal (ed.), *Reservation Policy; Programmes and Issues*, Rawat Publishers, Jaipur, 1986.
  23. Kiran Shukla, *Caste Politics in India-A Case Study of Bihar*, Mittal Publishers, Delhi, 1987.
  24. Mark Juergensmeyer, *op. cit.*

- 
25. Jatinder Kaur, *Punjab Crisis: the Political Perspective of Rural Voters*, Ajanta publication, Delhi, 1989.
  26. Joseph Benjamin, *Scheduled Castes in Indian Politics and Society*, ESS ESS Publication, Delhi, 1989.
  27. P.N. Panday, "Protective Discrimination and Social Uplift Among Scheduled Castes" in H.C. Upadhyay (ed.), *Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India: A socio-economic profile*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 1991.
  28. Eleanor Zelliot, *op.cit.*
  29. R.K. Kshirsagar, *Dalit Movements in India and its Leaders-1857-1956*, M.D. Publishers, New Delhi, 1994.
  30. Surinder Mohan, "Paradoxes of Dalit Politics", *Mainstream*, Vol. XXXII, No. 20, April, 2, 1994
  31. Sukhdev Singh and P.S. Jammu, "Untouchability in Rural Punjab: An Analysis", *IASSI Quarterly*, Vol.13, No. 4, 1995.
  32. O.P. Sangwan, *Social System and the Dalit Identity*, Commonwealth Publishers, New Delhi, 1996.
  33. G.K. Ghosh and Shukla Ghosh, *Dalit Women*, A.P.H.Publication, New Delhi, 1997.
  34. James Massey, *op. cit.*
  35. Suresh Kumar, "India At Fifty: The Dalit Situation", *Mainstream*, Vol. XXXV, No. 36, August, 16, 1997.
  36. Bandyopadhyay, "Panchyat and Democracy: Elites Vs Dalits", *Man and Development*, Chandigarh, December, 1994.

- 
37. V.B. Singh, "Deprivation and Political Consciousness" in *B.K.Nagla (ed.), Political Sociology*, Rawat Publication, New Delhi, 1999.
  38. Pushpendra, "Dalit Assertion through Electoral Politics", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 36, September 4, 1999.
  39. S.M. Micheal, *Dalits in Modern India- Vision and Value*, Vistor Publications, New Delhi, 1999.
  40. Dipankar Gupta, *Interrogating Caste: Understanding Hierarchy and Difference in Indian Society*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2000.
  41. Ramashray Roy, *Dalit Development and Democracy*, Rawat Publication, New Delhi, 2000.
  42. Sudha Pai, *Dalit Assertion and Unfinished Democratic Revolution: The BSP in Uttar Pradesh*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2002.
  43. Vivek Kumar, "Caste Mobilization in UP and its Impact on Assembly Election", *Mainstream*, Vol. XXXX, No. 10, February 23, 2002.
  44. Anshu Malhotra, *Gender, Caste and Religious Identity- Restructuring Class in Colonial Punjab*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2002.
  45. Vivek Kumar, *Dalit Leadership in India*, Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2002.
  46. Vivek Kumar, "From Social Reform to Political Mobilization Changing Trajectory of Dalits Assertion in U.P." *Social Action*, 53(2), April, June-2003.
  47. H.K. Puri, "Scheduled Castes in Sikh Community: A Historical Perspective", *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. XXXVII (26), June, 28, 2003.
  48. S.S. Jodkha, "The Scheduled Castes in Contemporary Punjab", in M.S. Gill (ed.) *Punjab Society- Perspectives and Challenges*, Concept Publishing, New Delhi, 2003.
  49. M.S. Gill, "Reservation and Protective Justice" in M.S. Gill (ed.), *op. cit.*

- 
50. Chinna Rao Yagati, *Dalit's Struggle for Identity*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, 2003.
  51. Ramesh Chandra, *Liberation and Social Articulation of Dalits*, Vol. I, Isha Books, Delhi, 2003.
  52. P. Muthaiah, "Politics of Dalit Identity", *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. IXI, No. 3, July-Sept. 2004.
  53. Ronki Ram, "Untouchability, Dalit Consciousness and the Ad-Dharm Movement in Punjab", *Contribution to Indian Sociology*, Vol. 38, September-December, 2004.
  54. Harish K. Puri, *Dalits in Regional Context*, Rawat Publication, New Delhi, 2004.
  55. Buta Singh, *Dalit and Dalit Awakening in India*, Gyan Publication, Delhi, 2004.
  56. Sudha Pai, "Social Capital, Panchayats and Grassroots Democracy: The Politics of Dalit Assertion in Two Districts of Uttar Pradesh" in Dwaipayana Bhattacharyya, Niraja Gopal Joyal, Ishnu N. Mohapatra & Sudha Pai (ed.), *Interrogating Social Capital. The Indian Experience*, Sachchidananda Publications, New Delhi, 2004.
  57. Bela Bhatia, "Dalit Rebellion Against Untouchability in Chakward", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, Vol. 40, No.1. Jan- April, 2006.