



## ATROCITIES VIS-À-VIS DEVELOPMENTAL STRATEGIES FOR SCHEDULED CASTES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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### Abstract

*The human society, since time immemorial, has been characterized by inequalities and inequities on one hand and quest for equality and equity on the other. At present the scheduled castes constituting approximately 16.6 percent (census 2011) of the total population in India and 25.2 percent of the total population in Himachal Pradesh have important social formation in the Indian society. The continuity and change in the life of scheduled castes is historical in nature attributing mainly to the concerted efforts made by various scheduled castes organizations themselves for their up-liftment. The constitutional provisions are translated into a reality by incorporating them into development policies and plans. Whatever changes which have come in the life of the scheduled castes are the result of planned developmental strategies. Despite various measures have been taken to improve the socio-economic conditions of scheduled castes, they still remain vulnerable. Atrocities against the members of the scheduled castes still continue to a disturbing level. The public accountability provisions under the Act need to be outlined in detail and strengthened. The objective of the study is to emphasize the intention of the Indian constitutional provisions to develop scheduled castes through affirmative action's in order to enable them to live in society with dignity and self-esteem without any discrimination and fear.*

**Keywords:** Atrocities, development strategies, scheduled castes, culture.



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In Indian context the caste system is said to be origin from the Verna hierarchy of Vedic age. According to Verna hierarchy society is divided in to four orders. They are Brahmin Kashtriya vaishya and Shudra. The case of blacks in the United States of America and sudra (scheduled caste) in India have been often quoted and discussed as the living examples. Although there are numerous similarities between Blacks and Scheduled Castes 'but the case of latter is unique in the history of human society in general and Indian society in particular. The continuity and change in the life of scheduled castes is historical in nature attributed mainly to the concerted efforts made by individuals and various caste Hindus as well as scheduled caste organizations themselves for their social economic, and political up-liftment during the pre and post independence period. The strategies adopted by the caste Hindu social and religious reform organizations, by and large, remained adoptive and adaptive kind with emphasis on soft as well as somewhat radical reformist strategies. The role of organizations

like Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Satyashodhak Samaj (while Arya Samaj had a radical posture the others- emphasized on reforms, etc) is worth mentioning.

Himachal Pradesh came into being as an independent entity in April 1948 and acquired the status of a full-fledged state in January 1971. At that time the Scheduled Castes numbered approximately 25 percent of its total population with only 18.82 percent literate among them. They were not in position to go to schools and colleges. The educational status of Scheduled Caste women presented a dismal picture. However, the State initiated a number of programmes.

The reasons being the Blacks were discriminated on the basis of the class status. Where as discrimination against the Scheduled Castes religiously ordained Caste and Scheduled Caste. It is essential to understand the difference between caste and scheduled caste. We have said that caste is a hierarchy. It is social stratification. In the hierarchy at the highest end is the Brahmin and at the lowest is the shudra (scheduled caste). Thus whereas caste is wholly hierarchical and scheduled caste is a just a part of hierarchy. There are some social disabilities among scheduled castes- NO SOCIAL CONTACTS , SOCIALLY CUT-OFF CASTE , EDUCATIONAL DISABILITIES, CONOMIC DISABILITY NO OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY , LOW INCOME WORK WITHOUT WAGES , POLITICAL DISABILITIES , RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES.

### **Nature of atrocities**

Atrocities on the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes take various forms – both visible and invisible. However it is the visible forms of atrocities that are defined and included in Scheduled Castes Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of atrocities) Act 1989, Visible forms of atrocities are taking place in the rural India, and invisible forms of atrocities taking place in the urban life, the invisible atrocities are more dominant form of atrocity, this kind of atrocities frequently taking place in the universities and educational institutions The State Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make one or more schemes specifying the manner in which the officers referred to in sub-section (1) shall take appropriate action specified in such scheme or schemes to prevent atrocities and to restore the feeling of security amongst the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

### **Human Right Organizations and Scheduled Castes**

Human rights organizations including Scheduled Castes organizations mostly concentrate on the protection of Scheduled Castes human rights after atrocities had taken place, No people's

organizations or government authorities showing Interest in implementation of preventive measures

At present the Scheduled Castes constituting approximately 16.6 (Census 2011) percent of the total population of India and 25.2 percent of total population of Himachal Pradesh (Census 2011) are an important social formation in the Indian social structure. They are a significantly sizeable and competitive minority in relation to majority constituted by high castes, called caste Hindus or twice born.

Some of these efforts coincided with the British rule, a period during which the process of conversion to Christianity of some of the low caste communities had also set in along with Western liberal ideology. Consequently, a large number of conversions took place to Christianity resulting into some degree of social mobility of the converts. The British in India used most comprehensive strategies for the social economic and political development of Scheduled Castes.

First of all, the Scheduled Castes were accorded special status and they were treated as a separate category in the Hindu society. The purpose of this action by the British, in the then given political circumstances was no doubt, to consolidate the already existing divides based on caste, tribe and racial distinctions among the Indians. The purpose, a politically motivated one, was to create allies for the British and then use them against the Indians in India.

### **Reforms**

The social and religious reform movement launched by caste the Hindus and radical movements by the Scheduled Castes reflected on some of the progressive elements of the British liberalism. The continuity to these efforts was provided by the approach of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who demanded separate electorate for the Scheduled Castes. This created considerable debate and controversy. Mahatma Gandhi opposed it tooth and nail and went on to fast unto death. Resultantly Poona Pact came into being whereby the demand for separate electorate was withdrawn by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. However, Dr. Ambedkar's efforts in their intent and purpose became a part of Constitution of India whereby the Scheduled Castes were accorded special privileges in social, economic and political sphere of life.

### **National Schemes and Development**

The major National Schemes launched for the promotion of the interests of Scheduled Castes, as on today are: Agriculture and Allied Activities; Dry Land Farming Horticulture Soil Conservation; Animal Husbandry; Dairy Development, Fisheries Forest, Marketing and

Quality Control, Rural Development Programmes, Swaran Jyanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojna, Employment Assurance, Drought Prone Areas Programmes, Himurja, Rural Employment Programme, Land Reform Programme, Irrigation and Flood Control, Indira Awaas Yojna, Scholarship Scheme for Education, Matching Grant for Scheduled Castes, Medical and Health and the Economic Betterment of Scheduled Castes. The Special Component Plan, therefore, is designed to channel the flow of financial outlays from the general sectors in the State as well as Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment plan to the development of Scheduled Castes in physical and financial terms i.e. through composite income generating programmes. The development of physical component under the sub-plan seeks to improve the living conditions of Scheduled Castes by making provision of drinking water, link road, house sites, establishment of education, health, veterinary institutions, etc. This process also included identification, formulation and implementation of schemes and programmes under different sectors for the economic amelioration of the Scheduled Caste communities. Since they have few productive assets they are generally dependent upon agricultural pursuits and other low income generating occupations like shoe making, sweeping, bamboo basket making, blacksmithy, weaving, poultry farming, etc.

Besides the above provisions under special central assistance and centrally sponsored schemes the State government is also making endeavour to the pace of economic activity. It is imperative to argue the primary objective of various schemes was to promote social and economic interest of scheduled caste, but the lack of empirical studies in the context of Himachal Pradesh make it difficult to spell out the exact extent and magnitude of change in their social status. It therefore becomes essential to carry on empirical analysis. At the same time, it may be assumed that the impact of these schemes is likely to be more on the scheduled caste households who have become the beneficiaries than those who did not take benefit of such schemes.

The change of status in general implies social and economic mobility reflected by achievements made by individuals and the group. In the educational, occupational, and political spheres of their life by neglecting their earlier conditions of existence.

In the world of Mary's the change would mean a transition in the state of one's being that is from the state of known owner to ownership evolution of inequalities and establishment of a classless social orders. Since although such kind of order has not been possible all over the

world. The change therefore has to be seen and assessed in term of transition, which takes place in a given society.

The change may be therefore analyzed in term of changing life styles, value system, knowledge awareness and consciousness, abilities to achieve and many such characteristics, which a particular segment of the society may acquire over a period of time and space. It also implies a departure from ascripted status and to a status of achievement even if it is marginal in quantum. But, what is important to indicate is that the ascripted value is trans found in to achievement value, which in still new life style and ideal in the mind of a particular group. It is in this sense that present study attempts at analyzing in the case of scheduled caste who have been extended various socio-economic privileges.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, this is obvious from the above discussion that the schemes run by the State under various programmes in the Special Component Plan and other strategies the impact is slow, confined to limited number of scheduled castes. However, there is need on the part of the State as well as the scheduled castes for further initiatives to make these programmes more successful.

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