

# Socio-Economic Conditions of Scheduled Castes : A Study of Bhiwani District

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## ABSTRACT

Scheduled castes are most backward castes in Haryana region. The social and economic deprivation among Scheduled Castes had been most common during pre and post-Independence. The constitution of India is enriched with several provisions for schedule caste to safeguard and promote their cultural, social, educational, economic and political interests in order to bring them in mainstream of the nation. Though, Government has formulated many of the welfare schemes for the empowerment of scheduled castes, still their position is vulnerable as they are socially discriminated, exploited, suffering from poverty, illiteracy, etc. The present paper aims to study the socio-economic condition of scheduled caste population. For this purpose multi-stage random sampling has been applied. The fundamental information has been collected through the previously furnished questionnaire of 2017. Totally 550 respondents were interviewed to collect the primary data. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents were suffered from discrimination, caste based inequality, exploitation, poverty, etc. The sample households, according to the study, also entertain loan but on very low scale. In the study it is seen that the uneducated people go to the private money lenders for borrowing money on high interest rate and the treacherous money lenders exploit them. So the Government should enhance better banking service system in order to promote individual economic development and also of the community. Hence, it is suggested to provide higher education and employment to scheduled castes living in backward areas. Further, it is essential that the NGOs should look into the problems of scheduled castes in Bhiwani district.

**Keywords :** Socio-Economic, Respondent, Condition, Households, Development

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indian society is a heterogeneous, wherein people belonging to various castes and communities reside. The main aim of our research is to point out the socio-economic status of scheduled caste population of the sample village and to highlight the backwardness of these people before Government for future planning. The people of Indian society are divided on the basis of castes. Caste system is based on Varna System where the Brahmins are at the top of the hierarchy, followed by Vysyas, Kshatriyas and Sudras. Those people who are outside the varna system are known as Avarnas or Antajas or Panchamas of Chandalas<sup>1</sup>. They are external in the sense that they were required to

stay outside the village settlement. The concept of pollution attached to them was responsible for treating or categorizing them as Scheduled Castes. There are more than 3743 castes and sub-castes in Indian Society<sup>2</sup>. According to census of 2011 the 341,162 population of Bhiwani, district does belong to the scheduled caste, which constitutes 20.9 per cent of the Population<sup>3</sup>. The caste system is characterized by a status hierarchy, the scheduled castes or the so-called untouchables are at the base, in fact, at the lowest of the social and ritual status. These sections had, on account of their low social and ritual status, been subjected to a variety of disabilities under the traditional caste system. All through the ages, the Scheduled Castes had suffered from social injustice

and exploitation. They were denied all privileges and benefits as had been enjoyed by the upper castes. Their entries into temples of upper castes, public places, educational institutions, etc. were restricted. On account of their being on the lowest rung of the social ladder, they were forced to take up unclean and menial occupations and jobs, which yielded low incomes. They were associated with a variety of specialized traditional occupations such as scavenging, cobbling, disposal of carcass, basketry, etc. As a consequence, these castes have remained socially, economically and educationally, politically and culturally backward for several centuries<sup>4</sup>.

During British period, many of the socio-political reform movements were organized to empower the weaker sections especially, scheduled castes and after independence, the Constitution emphasize social equality, that is equality irrespective of race, caste, religion or gender. Consequently, to achieve equality and social justice, reservation in education and employment was provided to the scheduled castes. Due to these efforts The Indian Government has taken many steps to uplift the socioeconomic status of this Dalit population with a lot of plans. From the past the scheduled caste community of India have faced various problems in terms of social and economical development. Though Indian Government after freedom launched various programmes and schemes for the betterment of these people, the desired goal is not achieved yet. These paper is an analysis and discussion the socio-economic conditions of scheduled castes in Bhiwani district.

**Review Of Literature:-** Kamble (1989) in his study stated that even after 33 years of independence, Scheduled Castes have very low level of education and consequently they are engaged in menial jobs which are looked down upon and have low income.

Raju (1992) in his study found that Scheduled Castes are placed at a much lower level both socially and economically when compared to the non-scheduled castes.

Sudha Pai (2000) in his study found that Scheduled Castes constitute disadvantaged, economically poor and socially backward groups. Owning little land, with low levels of literacy, they suffer from low levels of urbanisation, employment and wages due to lack of rapid industrial development.

Meera Anand, (2005) In her study stated that A person is born into a caste once born in that caste, his/her status is predetermined and irreversible. Birth decides one's status and this cannot be. Altered by any talent the person may accumulate.

Noor Mohammad (2006) in his study analyzed the socio-economic transformation of scheduled castes. He found that there are rural-urban variations in the educational level of the scheduled castes. The rural scheduled castes are less educated than that of urban counterpart. Various programmes and policies of rural development in general and agricultural development in particular have resulted into economic prosperity of the masses including the Scheduled Castes. Further, he found that Scheduled Castes have adopted more than one occupation.

Rajnish Kumar, et. al., (2009) in their study found that even within the slums, which are often taken to represent a homogeneous lot, variations across social groups in terms of certain important indicators like education, occupation and incomes are evident. The vulnerability conceptualized in terms of several socio-economic and demographic indicators exists among most of the social categories despite variations in the relative size of deprivation. Further, they found that probability of experiencing well-being beyond a threshold limit turns out to be lower for the socially backward classes than the others. They opined that in the deprived areas, particularly in the urban space where vulnerability has political lineages as well, caste-based schemes hold the possibility of igniting caste-war or communal tensions instead of smoothing the contours of inequalities.

Battula,(2011) in their study found that In Indian social order, caste is still the most influential factor in

determining a person's dignity in terms of socio-economic indicators

Rani, (2014)In her study stated that indian society is highly stratified, with many glaring inequalities among different social group. The worst positioned among them are the dalits and tribals.

The main objective of the Study is to work on grass root level within the society, and to find out the social and economic condition of scheduled caste people. It provides a professional level opportunity in the professional life in the area of research. In overall its main objective to assess the primary data of the social and economic condition of scheduled caste people.

### Objectives of the Study:

- To study the social background such as age, gender, occupations, etc. of the scheduled caste groups;
- To assess the socio-economic condition of the scheduled castes.
- To know about the problems faced by the scheduled castes in society.
- To examine the source of livelihood.
- Find out if Schedule Caste people took the benefits of the different Govt. schemes.
- To analysis the difficulties and changes faced by the them.

Objective of the present study was to assess social and economic condition of scheduled caste people of district Bhiwani in Haryana. For accomplishing objective a sample of N=550 subjects was identified and selected from the Bawani Khera Tehsil, where the population of sc people is more than 200. The selected village is Ratera, Barsi, Lohari Jatu, Jamalpur and Sui. The objectives to work on grass root level within the society, and to find out the social and economic condition of scheduled caste people.

**Sample and Data Selection:** Data is very much required for any research. There are two types of data viz. primary data and secondary data. In present study

both type of data has been used. The study was conducted in the scheduled caste areas of Bhiwani district of West Haryana. A multi-stage random sampling was employed to study the objective. According to per plan scheduled a number Of 550 respondents of the scheduled caste community people was chosen for the study. So our sample size is 550. Both villages and urban areas were covered to select and interview the respondents and collected primary data is analyzed, interpreted and discussed as under.

**Primary data and Secondary data:** Primary data are those which are collected fresh and for the first hand and thus happen to be original in character, which we collected on the field discussing with respondents. We asked no. of questions from them and got response from their side. The main source of Primary data was interview schedule. Secondary data are those which have already been collected by someone. The main sources of secondary data were: internet, books, article etc.

**1. Gender-wise Distribution of the Respondents:**It is noted that the information was collected from the respondents of both the gender. The gender-wise distribution of the respondents is shown as under.

**Table No. 1. Gender-wise Distribution of the Respondents**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Male	344	62.5
Female	206	37.4
Total	550	100

It is noted from the above table that of all the respondents 344 (62.5%) are males, whereas the remaining 206 (37.4%) are female respondents.

**2. Age-wise Distribution of Respondents:** Age of the respondents plays a significant role in the knowledge and awareness about socio-economic, educational, religious and such other aspects. Further, it also helps to know about the knowledge and expertise in their

occupation. Hence, the information collected on the age of the respondents is presented in the following table.

**Table No. 2. Age-wise Distribution of the Respondents**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20 Years	115	20.9
21 to 35 Years	158	28.7
36 to 55 Years	152	27.6
Above 55 Years	125	22.7
Total	550	100

Age of the respondents revealed that 158 (28.7 %) of the respondents are between the age of 21 to 35 years followed by, 152 (27.6%) are between the age group of 36 to 55 years, 125 (22.7%) are of above 55 years and 115 (20.9%) are of below 25 years. To collect information from all the age groups, the respondents of different age groups were surveyed.

**3. Occupation of the Respondents:** Occupation of the respondents shows the work doing for the livelihood. Earlier all the occupations were based on the caste of the respondents. But, due to globalization, there is increase in education and employment opportunities and as such, the new employment opportunities made the different castes to take up other professions based on their education. The information on occupations of the respondents covered under the study is presented in the following table.

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	158	28.7
Industry/ Business	65	11.8
Service Sector/ Formal Employment	92	16.7
Seasonal/ Informal Sector employment / Caste Based	215	39.0

Occupations		
Any Other	20	3.6
Total	550	100

The occupations of the respondents shows that majority, that is 215 (39.0 %) are engaged in seasonal, informal sector employment and caste based occupations followed by, 158 (28.7%) are engaged in agriculture, 92 (16.7%) are engaged in service sector/formal employment ,65 (11.8%) are engaged in industry/ business and the remaining 20(3.6%) are engaged in Other sector respectively.

**4. Conditions of Scheduled Castes Due to Welfare Policies of Government:**

The Government has provided many schemes to ameliorate the conditions of Scheduled Castes. As such, many of the castes have developed by getting education and employment in different sectors. As such their socio-economic conditions also improved considerably. In this respect, opinions were collected from the respondents that whether the conditions of scheduled castes improved or not and the collected data is tabulated as under.

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Improved Considerably	198	36.0
Has Not Improved	223	40.5
It is as Bad as Before	59	10.7
Can't Say	70	12.7
Total	550	100

On the developmental conditions of the scheduled castes due to the welfare schemes of the government, of the total respondents covered under the present study, 198 (36.0%) have expressed that the conditions of the scheduled castes is improved considerably, 223 (40.5%) have stated that the conditions of scheduled castes has not improved, 59(10.7%) have opined that the conditions of scheduled castes is as bad as before

and the remaining 70 (12.7%) have not expressed their views on the same. Here the respondents have expressed their dissatisfaction about the social welfare policies of the government, as majority have not gained due to welfare policies formulated for the scheduled castes.

### 5. Faced Bad Situations due to Caste:

The scheduled castes are discriminated, alienated and treated unequal in the society since immemorial days, even though legislations have been already passed by the government to curb such practices. Hence, it was asked to the respondents that whether they have faced any of such bad situations in their life and the collected information is shown as under.

**Table No. 5. Faced Bad Situations due to Caste**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Social Discrimination/ Alienation	124	22.5
Restrictions to Enter Public Places	54	9.8
Lower Treatment at Religious, Cultural and Public Functions	260	47.2
Atrocities from Forward Caste People	29	5.2
Not Faced Any Bad Situations	83	15.0
Total	550	100

It is observed from the above table that, a few of the respondents have faced more than one type of bad situations and a few of the respondents have not at all faced such bad situations in the society due to their caste. Of all the respondents, 124 (22.5%) have experienced social discrimination and alienation, 54 (9.8%) have faced restrictions to enter into public

places, 260 (47.2%) have faced lower treatment at religious, cultural and public functions, 29 (5.2%) have faced atrocities from forward caste people and about 83 (15.0%) have not faced any of such bad situations in their life due to their caste. It is highlighted that even though social discrimination and lower treatment of the scheduled castes have banned long back, still it exists in the society as majority have faced such situations in their life.

### 6. Change in Socio-economic and Educational Conditions of Scheduled Castes since Independence:

It is noted that the scheduled castes were depressed and deprived in different aspects of the society since immemorial days. However, after the independence, the government has passed many legislations and curbed inequality of the scheduled castes and took measures for the development of the scheduled castes. Hence, it was asked to the respondents that whether there are any change of socio-economic and educational conditions of the scheduled castes since independence and the collected information is tabulated as under.

**Table No. 6. Change in Socio-economic and Educational Conditions of Scheduled Castes since Independence**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Fully Improved	120	21.8
Improved to a Greater extent	130	23.6
No Change	207	37.6
Worse than Before	93	16.9
Total	550	100

On the change of scheduled castes in socio-economic and educational conditions due to government efforts since independence, 120 (21.8%) of the respondents have expressed that it is fully improved, 130 (23.6%)

of the respondents have stated that the socio-economic and educational conditions of the scheduled castes is improved to a greater extent since independence, 207 (37.6%) have remarked that there is no change in socio-economic and educational conditions of the scheduled castes and surprisingly, 93 (16.9%) of the respondents have responded that the socio-economic and educational conditions of the scheduled caste is wors.

### 7. Barriers to the Overall Development of Scheduled Castes:

It was asked to the respondents to furnish the barriers for the overall development of the Scheduled Castes in Kalaburagi district and the collected information is tabulated as under.

**Table No. 7. Barriers to the Overall Development of Scheduled Castes**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate Caste based Reservation	130	23.6
Regional Imbalance	71	12.9
Negligence of the Scheduled Castes	69	12.5
Social Barriers	280	50.9
Natural Factors	-	-
Any Other	-	-
Total	550	100

On the barriers to the overall development of the Scheduled Castes, among all the respondents, 130 (23.6%) have agreed that there is inadequate caste based reservation, 71(12.9%) have expressed that there is regional imbalance, 69 (12.5%) have stated that there is negligence of the scheduled castes and majority, that is 280 (50.9%) have remarked that there

are social barriers such as untouchability, social discrimination, inequality, etc.

**8. Monthly Income:** Information on the average monthly income of the respondents reveals the economic power and economic conditions of the respondents as well as their families. The information collected on the average monthly income of the respondents is presented in the following table.

Average monthly income of all the respondents covered under the study revealed that, the monthly income of 293 (53.2%) of the respondents is between Rs. 5001 to Rs. 10000 followed by, the monthly income of 113 (20.5%) of the respondents is less than Rs. 5000, that of 86 (15.6 %) of the respondents is between Rs. 10001 to Rs. 25000 that of the monthly income of 33 (6.0 %) of the respondents is between Rs. 25001 to Rs. 50000 respectively and The monthly income of (4.6 %) of the respondents is More than Rs. 50000 respectively. Clearly. The monthly income of the respondents clearly shows that the major portions of the respondents are living below poverty line.

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Less than Rs. 5000	113	20.5
Rs. 5001 to Rs. 10000	293	53.2
Rs. 10001 to Rs. 25000	86	15.6
Rs. 25001 to Rs. 50000	33	6.0
More than Rs. 50000	25	4.6
Total	550	100

### Worth of Properties Owned:

The information was collected on the worth or value of all the properties owned by the respondents and presented in the following table.

**Table No. 9. Worth of Properties Owned**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Up to Rs. 50000	144	26.2
Rs. 50001 to Rs. 1 lakh	131	23.8
Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2.5 lakhs	59	10.7
Rs. 2.5 lakhs to Rs.5 lakhs	68	12.3
More than Rs. 5 lakhs	49	8.9
Nil	99	18.0
Total	550	100

The worth of properties owned by the respondents shows that, 144 (26.2 %) have owned properties worth up to Rs. 50000, 131 (23.8%) have owned properties worth between Rs. 50001 to Rs. 1 lakh, 30 (6.6%) have owned properties worth between Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2.5 lakhs, 38 (8.4%) have owned properties worth between Rs. 2.5 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakhs, 29 (6.4%) have owned properties worth more than Rs. 5 lakhs and 86 (19.1%) have not owned any properties.

## II. CONCLUSION

In the end, I would like to conclude that the Socio-Economic condition of some Respondents is not good. It is also high lighted that many of the scheduled castes are facing bad incidents in public places due to their castes. Many of the scheduled castes are suffering from deprivation in socio-economic and educational aspects. The Indian Government has taken many steps to uplift the socioeconomic status of this Dalit population with a lot of plans. From the past the scheduled caste community of India have faced various problems in terms of social and economical development. Though Indian Government after freedom launched various programmes and schemes for the betterment of these people, the desired goal is not achieved yet. These paper is an analysis and

discussion of these under develop community of sample village and at the same time it will helps to take and implements various future programmes by Indian Government. The social and economic status of scheduled caste people improved in compression of earlier time. This is due to the education improvement and also due the reservation to the scheduled caste people in many sectors.

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