

## **Chapter 5**

### ***Analyzing the Implications of the System of Political Representation for Scheduled Castes***

In the previous chapters we have discussed the electoral methods and legal framework used for Scheduled Caste communities before 1950 and also the changes made in the electoral method under Indian Constitution. This chapter while trying to demonstrate how this issue has not dealt with either by the scholars or by the government, makes an attempt to find answers to the following questions with the support of empirical data collected from the states of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh.

- How representative have been the Scheduled Caste political representatives?
- What are main constraints faced by Scheduled Caste elected representatives under the present electoral methods, in representing the interests of Scheduled Castes?
- What viable alternate electoral methods can be carved out of the current electoral method under the existing legal framework?

Very rarely the electoral system or the electoral method has come into question, let alone change, since 1961 after the abolition of the double member constituencies. Though arguments are being forwarded to replace the British legacy of the First –Past-The- Post (FPTP) system of election<sup>1</sup> by that of a mix of PR and plurality system right since 1971;<sup>2</sup> none of them till date has tried to analyse what will happen to the issue of

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<sup>1</sup> To know more on FPTP system, see Chapter 1.

<sup>2</sup> One of the initial attempts to argue such was done by The Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary studies, New Delhi by organizing a seminar on Elections and Electoral Reforms in India. The proceedings of the seminar were published as a book edited by Subhash C. Kashyap in 1971. However, soon the Joint Committee of Parliament on Amendments to Electoral Laws (1971-72) rejected the proposal for changing the First –past- the- post (FPTP) system. It though recommended the formation of an expert committee to review it; no such committee was ever formed. Later Jayaprakash Narayan on behalf of the Citizens of Democracy, an independent organization appointed Tarakunde Committee on Electoral Reforms which recommended two alternative formulae for consideration. The first was the German formula (double vote, half of the seats by direct plurality system, ‘top-up’ on the basis of the second vote, provision for additional members) modified, if necessary, to change the mix of direct and list seats from  $\frac{1}{2} : \frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{2}{3} : \frac{1}{3}$ . However, it failed to attract the policy makers and went in vain. After a lull of two decades, the recent past once again some the debate on electoral reforms getting renewed through numerous government committees (though all of them not formed exclusively for that purpose) such as: Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms (1990); Vohra Committee Report (1993); Indrajit Gupta Committee on State Funding of Elections (1998); Law Commission Report on Reform of the Electoral Laws (1999); National Commission to Review the Working of

the political representation of Scheduled Castes by any such move.<sup>3</sup> However, since no government yet has shown any interest in reforming electoral methods, there doesn't seem to be any threat to the present system in the recent future.<sup>4</sup>

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the Constitution (2001); Election Commission of India – Proposed Electoral Reforms (2004); The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2008). The Law Commission Report on Reform of the Electoral Laws (1999) like Tarakunde Committee on Electoral Reforms recommended that in the Lok Sabha as well as in the State Legislative Assemblies, the present strength should be increased by 25% of the existing strength which increased strength should be filled on the basis of List System. The List System was to be confined only to recognised political parties (RPP). There would be neither separate vote nor a separate election for the members to be chosen under the List System. It further suggested that each recognised political party should put forward its "List" of candidates, which will be received, scrutinised and valid List published along with the nominations for elections from the territorial constituencies. It was suggested that for this purpose, 'territorial units' be designated; so far as the bigger States are concerned, each State shall be a territorial unit but in the case of small States, they should either be clubbed with an adjacent bigger State or be clubbed together to form a territorial unit...At the end of polling and counting of votes for the territorial constituencies, the Election Commission, it was suggested, should tabulate votes polled by each RPP in a given State/territorial unit and the seats meant to be filled up under the list system be distributed among the RPPs in proportion to the votes polled by them. For achieving the said purpose, it was found necessary to amend not only the Representation of the People Act, 1951 but the Constitution of India itself in the first instance. For more details see Law Commission Report on Reform of the Electoral Laws (1999) available at <http://lawcommissionofindia.nic.in/lc170.htm#Background%20of%20the%20subject%20undertaken> and the *Report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Indian Constitution*, Government of India, 2002; available at [http://lawmin.nic.in/ncrwc/final report.htm](http://lawmin.nic.in/ncrwc/final%20report.htm).

<sup>3</sup> The only report to mention about reservation for SC/STs in political representation was *Dinesh Goswami Committee Report (1990)* which recommended for a rotation of seats reserved for SCs and STs.

<sup>4</sup> In the year 2000, when the government of India established National Commission to Review the Working of the Indian Constitution, it out-rightly rejected the suggestion of the Law Commission Report on Reform of the Electoral Laws (1999) and recommended against any kind of Constitutional change in the electoral system emphasizing that "while some far reaching reforms in the electoral processes were necessary, no major constitutional amendment was called for. The necessary correctives could be achieved by ordinary legislation modifying the existing laws or, in many cases, merely by subordinate legislation and executive action". However, to opt for a better way to achieve the objective of better representation, the committee supported the recommendation of the advisory panel on electoral reforms; standards in political life of electing candidates only with over 50% of the votes cast in their favour and recommended for serious efforts at implementing this. According to the panel, there were "two substantial advantages of following the policy of 50%+1 vote. On the one hand, it resolves the problem of representation. On the other, it also makes it in the self-interest of various political parties to widen their appeal to the electorate. It can help push political rhetoric in a direction that the mobilizing language might take on comparative "universal" tones as opposed to "sectoral" tones of the present day. Currently the possibility of winning on a minority of votes polled has encouraged parties to function on caste, communal or other sectoral bases. When such parties get into positions of power, they also follow a sectoral agenda. With the need to be more broad based in their appeal, issues that have to do with governance rather than with cleavages and narrow identities might start to surface in the vocabulary of the politicians." In order to achieve this, the commission also proposed to start a "run-off" election process, with a two-day election all over the country; the second day- for run-offs. This means that at the end of the day, through the use of computer technology, the constituency will know whether someone has won by getting over 50% or that it is a run-off. If it is the latter the announcement would mention the names of the two candidates. The final results can be announced with all others. The commission opined that this process may also force political

In the meantime, the efforts made by movement (discussed in chapter 4) led by Ambedkar got diverted after his death. No leader of Ambedkar's status and charisma could effectively lead the movement, and on most of the occasions it remained mere local and spontaneous in its intervention. Even the Republican Party of India (RPI) launched in October 1957 (after Ambedkar's death), could not emerge as an independent political force. It got identified primarily with the Mahar Buddhists and failed to reach out to other Dalit castes, or to appeal to larger section of the Dalits in general. Soon, it also got internally divided into various factions.<sup>5</sup> However, what is noticeable is that the party had openly opposed the idea of reservation in political representation time and again. Speaking on the occasion of the debate on abolition of double-member constituencies in 1961, Siva Raj, a member of the RPI in the Parliament expressed,

We, the members of the RPI...would like to record and reiterate our view, which we have all along held, viz., that reservation in general and reservation for Scheduled Castes and tribes in particular is a thing which is not good for the growth of democracy in our country...this is only a sort of concession, and concessions, I read somewhere, are an essential feature of colonialism. This reservation, according to us is caste

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parties and candidates to think of strategies to obtain over 50% votes in the first election itself, and therefore, the non-serious candidates and fringe players would be discouraged from jumping in the fray. However, what is surprising is that the report hardly discussed the provisions of reservation for Scheduled Castes in political representation. There was no specific question to inquire the quality or safeguard of the political representation of the Scheduled Castes even in its questionnaire. For more on this see Book I, Chapter 4, Electoral Process and Political Parties, *Report of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Indian Constitution*, Government of India, 2002, available at [http://lawmin.nic.in/ncrwc/final\\_report.htm](http://lawmin.nic.in/ncrwc/final_report.htm). See Annexure XI

- <sup>5</sup> Today several distinct parties claim the name of RPI:
- Republican Party of India (Athvale) of Ramdas Athvale
  - Republican Party of India (Gavai) of R.S. Gavai and Rajendra Gavai
  - Bhartiya Republican Party (Bharip) Bahujan Mahasangha of Prakash Ambedkar
  - Peoples Republican Party of Prof. Jogendra Kawade
  - Republican Party Of India (Democratic) of T.M. Kamble
  - Republican Party of India (B.C. Kamble) of B.C. Kamble
  - Republican Party Of India (Khobragade) of B.D. Khobragade
  - Republican Party Of India (Mogha) of Shivram Mogha
  - Republican Party Of India (Talwatkar) of Ghanshyam Talwatkar
  - Republican Party of India (Sivaraj)
  - Republican Party of India (Raja Dhale)
  - Indian Republican Party (Dalit Panther) of Namdeo Dhasal

colonialism that still persists in India...We feel that this concession, far from helping to develop the political status of the scheduled castes and tribes, confers an inferior political status on them. This will be evident from the fact that whenever there are SC representatives in the Cabinet... we find that the portfolios given them are of a minor and meager nature...Somehow in the minds of those who control there seems to be lurking this idea that the SC man after all occupies an inferior position....We of the RPI are trying to educate the masses ...to...understand and know their rights and duties, and if they understand their rights, to demand them, instead of waiting at the doors of Ministers and members of Government.<sup>6</sup>

The members also expressed his dissatisfaction on the issue of the objections being raised against those scheduled caste men who wanted or were contesting on the general seats. In his words;

There is a feeling lately, quite often openly expressed also, that if a scheduled caste man stands for a general seat, it is asked, "Why should an a scheduled caste man stand for the general seat, if he has got a reserved seat for him?"...That is why we have ceased to be Scheduled Castes and become Buddhists in order that this argument may not be trotted out against us...This reservation...is...a waste...we will continue to protest against this reservation as long as it lasts.<sup>7</sup>

However, no one could argue for an alternate electoral framework and kept arguing for reform within the same. This was also because of the fact that the Dalit Movement remained scattered in the absence of an effective leadership. At the most what they could do is installing Ambedkar's statues throughout the country, which kept the Ambedkarite iconography live and successfully generated a kind-of pan-Indian solidarity among the oppressed sections of the society.<sup>8</sup> One can remember several such incidents and episodes, but three among them acquires a major prominence. One, the Dalit Panther Movement, initially confined to the urban areas of Maharashtra, later also

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<sup>6</sup> *Lok Sabha Debates*, Second Series, Vol L, Thirteenth Session, 1961, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, pp. 370-4.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Sudha Pai, (2002). *Dalit Assertion and the Unfinished Democratic Revolution: the Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, p.199.

influenced other states such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh;<sup>9</sup> two, the Dalit Mahasabha in Andhra Pradesh, after the organized massacre of Dalits by caste-Hindus at Karamchedu;<sup>10</sup> and three, the rise of Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh, founded in 1984 by a Dalit youth from Ropar district of Punjab, Kanshi Ram, with a mission to reinvent the base of the Republican Party of India.<sup>11</sup>

With a goal of serving the traditionally oppressed section of the Indian society, Kanshi Ram planned to bring revolution in a two-stage format: first capture power through mobilization and snatch electoral victory from the Brahmins; and two, consolidate the revolution through use of state power to penetrate deeper into society, thereby transforming it.<sup>12</sup> The most significant about Ram's argument was that he advocated vociferously for the discontinuation of the use of electoral reservation for the Scheduled Castes.<sup>13</sup> However, the party in the 1990s, in order to consolidate its political base reinvented its political tactics from being an almost puritanical, narrow and hostile movement to becoming a more moderate, electorally oriented party while retaining both its Dalit identity and the ideology of Ambedkarism<sup>14</sup> and in a short span of a decade captured power (in political-alliance with another political party) in India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh in 1995 under the leadership of the Mayawati, the successor of Kanshi Ram. In the later years it became clearer that a political movement has to have a broad agenda and a vision of transformation or development; it has to say

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<sup>9</sup> Michael J. Mahar (1998) *The Untouchables in Contemporary India*, Jaipur, Rawat Publishers; S M Michael (1999) *Untouchables: Dalits in Modern India*, Colorado, L R Publishers; P G Jogdand (1991) *Dalit Movement in Maharashtra*, New Delhi, Kanak; J. Gokhale (1979) 'The Dalit Panther and the Radicalisation of Untouchables', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 28(1), March.

<sup>10</sup> D. Narasimha Reddy, "Karamchedu: A Dialectic without Development", *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 20, No. 37, (14 September 1985), pp.1546-1549.

<sup>11</sup> Sudha Pai (2002) *Dalit Assertion and the Unfinished Democratic Revolution*.

<sup>12</sup> Kanshi Ram (1982) *The Chamcha Age: An era of the Stooges*, New Delhi, Self Published.

<sup>13</sup> Oliver Mendelsohn and Marika Vicziany (2000) *The Untouchables: Subordination, Poverty and the State in Modern India*, New Delhi, Cambridge University Press.

<sup>14</sup> Sudha Pai (2011) 'BSP at the Crossroads', *Seminar*, 617, January, pp. 59-63.

why it should rule and what it has to offer. Though this has never been made clear by the movement of the post-Ambedkar era, with gaining absolute majority in the 2007 in the state assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh (UP), the party today has emerged as a viable force in electoral politics, not only in the state but also at the national level.

However, what is important to mention that even Kanshi Ram, who otherwise had a great vision of Dalit politics and the Movement, did not raise the issue of bringing change in the electoral framework. He rather opted to choose the party mode of democratic struggle as his means to challenge the upper-caste hegemony and then use the political power to consolidate the socio-economic position of the Scheduled Castes.<sup>15</sup>

Studies by majority of scholars, who has shown interest on this issue, also fall short on providing answer to this question. Christophe Jaffrelot's study in a limited way, while analyzing the Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh, without questioning the merits of the present electoral methods remarked,

All in all, the Scheduled Caste MPs achieved little on behalf of their community. Nor did they pressure the government as they ought to have done had they been accountable to a separate electorate of Scheduled Caste voters. Finally the reservation system provided hardly an incentive for the Scheduled Castes MPs or MLAs to foster the political consciousness of their caste fellow since they depend upon other voters to sustain their careers, especially after the abolition of primary election.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> His remark for those Scheduled Caste leaders who emerged through reserved constituencies as "stooges of the political parties" though initiated a space for political criticism for the mechanism of representation; he failed to address the question of the electoral method as raised by Ambedkar in 1932-33. See Kanshi Ram, (1982) *The Chamcha Age*. Op.cit. The idea of separate electorate as propounded Ambedkar has been repeatedly raised in the editorials of *Dalit Voice*, (<http://www.dalitvoice.org/>) by its editor V.T.Rajsekhar. For more details on his arguments see his booklet *Separate Electorate & Separate Settlement*, 1991, Dalit Sahitya Akademy, Bangalore.

<sup>16</sup> Christophe Jaffrelot (2003) *India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of the Low Castes in North Indian Politics*, New Delhi, Permanent Black, p. 102.

Another scholar on Indian politics, Paul Brass too underlined similar observation in Uttar Pradesh,

The Scheduled Caste leaders who have been given Congress tickets in the reserved constituencies are non-militant and have no power in the local or state Congress organizations.<sup>17</sup>

This is further substantiated by studies such as that of Satish Saberwal and Marc Galanter, Oliver Mandelsohn, and Gopal Guru. Saberwal writes,

The town's Harijan political leaders tend to trade their political base for personal gains. None among them understands the larger institutional mechanisms which underlie and renew the current inequalities, nor do any have the stamina for applying themselves to the tasks of changing the larger system so that its processes would generate effective social, economic, and political equality.

Harijan leaders active in [...] politics can choose between - or mix in some manner - three basic options: (1) to enter into patron-client ties, usually with high caste patrons, (2) to act in reference to the solidarity of one's own caste or of Harijans at large, or (3) to act in reference to the solidarity of one's 'class' usually the 'working class' - regardless of caste. Their choices seem to be influenced strongly by the arena(s) in which they operate. At the local or municipal level, the man from a predominantly Harijan ward has little need for high caste support and, in [...] caste councils continue to have some influence on the Harijan vote; these men have to continue to respond to Harijan needs. A constituency at the state level, however, would have a large majority of high caste voters, making the candidates less dependent upon - and therefore rather less responsive to the Harijan vote. Support from high caste faction leaders is, therefore, crucial for success at this level...The importance of high caste support is just as great for the national constituency."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Paul Brass, (1966), *Factional Politics in an Indian State: the Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh*, Berkeley, University of California Press, p. 105.

<sup>18</sup> Satish Saberwal, (1972) 'The Reserved Constituency: Candidates and Consequences', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 2, Jan. 8, pp. 71+73-80

Oliver Mendelsohn though expressed some optimism about a group within the Scheduled Castes and tribes which as a result of the political preference provided to the group had actually or potentially grown as successful leaders in the communities, he made it very clear that their ability to further the interests of their communities were very limited. Mendelsohn opined that reservation of parliamentary seats for the Scheduled Castes though provided a means of giving political preference to these groups, it was never allowed by the national leadership to threaten its own dominance.

<sup>19</sup> According to Mendelsohn;

The standards applied to untouchable politicians seem often to be different and harder than those applied to the representatives of open constituencies. And closely allied to this point, the opportunities open to the untouchable politicians are often almost illusory. It would have been miraculous if reservation of seats had been able to accomplish at one stroke the creation of a talented, highly effective group of untouchable politicians....Reservation is a symbol of the fact that the present is not so bleak as the past, but just as the untouchables--or the 'ex-untouchables', the Harijans, scheduled castes, dalits; choose your name--are still oppressed communities, so their legislative representatives reflect this subordinate condition. Even if the untouchable parliamentarians were as a group unusually well educated and articulate, their ability to further the interests of their communities could be limited. Reservation of parliamentary seats for the scheduled castes was no doubt seen as a means of giving these groups political preference but it was never allowed by the national leadership to threaten its own dominance. The political parties are never controlled by untouchables ever while the reservation system guarantees a large block of untouchable legislators. Jagjivan Ram controlled the large contingent of un- touchable MPs from Bihar at the height of his power, but he could never have controlled the whole Congress party in Bihar. He was shut out from this degree of power by virtue of being a Chamar, irrespective of questions of talent.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Oliver Mendelsohn, 'A 'Harijan Elite'?: *The Lives of Some Untouchable Politicians*', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 12, Mar. 22, pp. 501-509.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

However, Mendelsohn further concludes that;

Far more than mere technical problems in the whole system of reservation, which will progressively move to centre stage in Indian politics, the system may be intuitively unattractive in its derogation from the principle of equality which is so prized in liberal democracies. But my own view is that the maintenance of reservation at the, parliamentary level (and in public employment, for that matter) is vital for the untouchable communities. There is plenty of room for criticism of the performance of untouchable politicians but there is absolutely no reason to believe that the 110 million untouchables would be better off without them. And it is entirely clear that without reservation very few untouchables would manage to gain the backing of the major political parties-there are simply too many other plausible claimants from stronger socio-economic back- grounds...We should be careful to avoid the imposition of special and unreasonable standards on untouchable parliamentarians. As a group they can and should be more resolute in the cause they are elected to pro- mote but we should also recognise the pressures of working in a political environment which cannot be insulated from the patterns of economic and social dominance and subordination in the world outside the legislature. It is extraordinarily difficult to be an effective untouchable politician in India.<sup>21</sup>

Marc Galanter too in his study aimed at analyzing the cost-benefit pattern of the preferential policies for the Scheduled Castes argued;

Reserved seats were provided on the ground that the nation as a whole has an interest in affording these groups more representation than they would gain spontaneously in the political process....While other goals - notably integration, acceptance, redistribution and incubation [did] play a part -it [was] generally assumed that representation is the basic argument for reserved seats. Presumably separate electorates would accomplish this more directly and forcefully. But separate electorates were decisively rejected in favour of joint electorates with reserved seats. Thus in order to promote integration and acceptance, the reservations is designed in a way which filters and muffles the representation of the interests of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in so far as they diverge from the interests of other groups. The reserved seat legislator - especially from the Scheduled Castes - is responsible to and dependent

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

upon a constituency made up overwhelmingly of non-members of his group. Thus the reservations insure representation to distinctive community interests only to the extent that it can be secured by communal loyalty against the pull of political motivations. Representatives who occupy reserved seats can be expected to elevate the interests of Scheduled Castes, etc, over those of their constituents only to the extent that one assumes the Scheduled Caste representatives will be more responsive to the pull of ascriptive ties than to the expediencies of gaining and holding office. But to the extent that these reserved seat legislators are assumed to be responsible and prudent politicians, this arrangement serves as a filter to keep the divergent interests of these groups from being expressed too directly or forcefully. This is especially the case with the Scheduled Caste representatives, whose constituencies are populated overwhelmingly by others.<sup>22</sup>

However, further Galanter points out that when, in jeopardy, Scheduled Caste MPs also defend material interests- such as university grants and subsidies- of their fellow caste members. This point is further substantiated by Barbara Joshi when she shows how the Scheduled Caste representatives pressurized the government for de-scheduling some part of the Scheduled Caste list as recommended by the Lokur Commission.<sup>23</sup>

Gopal Guru too in his writings argues that to believe that political reservations for Scheduled Castes lead to integration is somewhat misleading. He sees it actually as a tactic of the ruling class of India to form a "bourgeoisified microscopic middle class from the Scheduled Caste community". He demonstrates how over the years there has been a growing trend that only those Scheduled Caste candidates who are nominated and financed by the dominant parties win in the elections; and therefore the winners try

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<sup>22</sup> Marc Galanter (1979) "Compensatory Discrimination in Political Representation: A Preliminary Assessment of India's Thirty-Year Experience with Reserved Seats in Legislatures", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 14, No. 7/8, Annual Number: Class and Caste in India February, pp. 437-454.

<sup>23</sup> Barbara Joshi (1980) 'Ex-Untouchables, Progress and Policies in the Indian Social Change', *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 53, No. 2, Summer.

to make others feel that the winning party or the government are the messiah of all the Scheduled Castes and will solve all their problems.<sup>24</sup>

Alistair McMillan in a recent study concludes that;

The effect of electoral reservation on the overall system of party competition appears to be very peripheral...Parties with minimal support base amongst the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes have still managed to win reserved seats...Once elected, the evidence that MPs and MLAs from reserved seats have any real influence in advocating the general interests of the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes is limited, and the overview of the socio-economic position of these groups suggests that, in the period when electoral reservation has been in operation, there has been virtually no improvement (and some evidence of decline) in the relative position of these members of the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes.

Electoral reservation, as a part of a broader package of the protective or compensatory discrimination, has become entrenched within the electoral system of India. However...the extent to which the system of electoral reservation provides the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes with symbolic representation can be seen to distract from the substantive issues which determine the situation in which the vast majority of these people live....Within this system there are few elements of accountability to the groups that these legislators are supposed to represent, and little incentive for them to be responsive to the needs of the general Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes population, rather than respond to the needs of their constituents and party supporters. As such, electoral reservation becomes little more than a scheme of political trickle-down, where the substantive interests of the socio-economically disadvantaged are served by symbolic representation, with the hope that, somehow, this will lead to a more equitable society.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Gopal Guru (1979) *Scheduled Caste Politics in Reserved Constituencies- A Cse Study of Washim Constituency in Maharashtra*, Unpublished M.Phil. Thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Also see, Gopal Guru (1986), 'Political Reservations for the Scheduled Castes: A Politics of Reformism', in Ram Gopal Singh (ed.), *The Depressed Classes of India: Problems and Prospects*. New Delhi, B R Publishing Corp.

<sup>25</sup> Alistair McMillan (2005) *Standing at the Margins: Representation and Electoral Reservation in India*, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, pp. 326-7.

All these studies are an attempt to map the diversities of opinion but all keep a distance from getting into the task of proposing or even suggesting alternatives electoral methods in the existing electoral framework.

This study in order to understand the perception of the Scheduled Caste population regarding the nature of political representation of the Scheduled Castes and the electoral method, conducted a field survey of 177 respondents spread across four legislative assemblies in two states- Punjab and Andhra Pradesh. Two constituencies, one reserved and one non-reserved, both under a reserved Parliamentary constituency were selected in each state. The two constituencies namely - Hoshiarpur (General) and Sham Chaurasi (Reserved) were identified under the Hoshiarpur (Reserved) Parliamentary constituency in the state of Punjab, and P Ganavaram (Reserved) and Mandapeta (General) which come under the Amlapuram (Reserved) Parliamentary constituency were selected in Andhra Pradesh for the field study. Focused group discussions/ unstructured and open ended questionnaire were used as tools for data collection.

The selection of these two states was based primarily on the fact that they have a large number of Scheduled Caste populations<sup>26</sup> and have witnessed a strong Dalit Movement. The selection of respondents in the sample was random and was mostly done during the repeated visits to these places. The number of male respondents (154) in the sample is much higher than the number of female respondents (23); however, it should not be considered intentional. A detailed profile of respondents is presented in Appendix XII. What follows below is a detailed analysis of the questions asked by the respondents.

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<sup>26</sup> District-wise distribution of the Scheduled Caste population in Punjab according to Census 2001 shows that they are mainly concentrated in the districts of Amritsar, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Sangrur, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and Patiala. These districts account for 62.5 per cent of the total SC population. While the population of the Scheduled Castes in all the blocks (Hoshiarpur-I, Hoshiarpur-II, Mahilpur and Bhunga) of Hoshiarpur is more than 40 per cent of the total population, that in the Hoshiarpur Parliamentary (R) and the two Assembly constituencies- Hoshiarpur (G) and Sham Chaurasi (R) are 34.42%, 31.99% and 44.67% respectively. In case of Andhra Pradesh while the population of Scheduled Castes in Amlapuram Parliamentary constituency (R) is 23.65%, that in the two constituencies- P Ganavaram (R) and Mandapeta (G) are 30.26% and 15.3% respectively. See Census 2001, Government of India. Also see the documents published by the Delimitation Commission of India, 2010 available at [http://eci.nic.in/delim/Final\\_Publications/finalpublication.asp](http://eci.nic.in/delim/Final_Publications/finalpublication.asp).

**Table No. 5.1**

**Has SC representatives (MLAs/MPs) of your constituencies ever raised the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assembly or Parliament?**

	MLAs	MPs
Yes	16 (9)	43 (24.3)
No	136 (76.8)	102 (57.6)
Don't Know	25 (14.1)	32 (18.1)
Total	177 (100)	177 (100)

A slightly higher percentage in the case of MPs (24.3%) as compared to the MLAs (9%) is due to the fact that both the Parliamentary Constituencies are reserved. This becomes more simplified when we break this question Vidhan Sabha wise (see Table below).

**Table No. 5.2**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs**

**Has SC representatives (MLAs/MPs) of your constituencies ever raised the issue of SCs in the legislative assembly or Parliament?**

		MLAs			MPs		
		Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	1	43	14	1	42	15
	Sham Chaurasi (R)	4	43	3	5	37	8
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram (R)	4	26	7	13	19	5
	Mandapeta	7	24	1	24	4	4
Total		16	136	25	43	102	32

However, it is clear from the Table above that the difference between SC representatives and non-SC representatives raising issues of SCs is not very significant. We then went on to ask whether any SC representative anywhere in the country has/d ever raised the issue of SCs in the Parliament/State Legislative Assemblies.

**Table No. 5.3**

**Do SC MLAs and MPs anywhere in the country raise (or have raised in the past) the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assemblies or Parliament?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	87	49.2
No	57	32.2
Don't Know	33	18.6
Total	177	100.0

Half of the respondents (49.2 per cent) feel that that the MLAs and the MPs have raised the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assembly and Parliament.

The response of the same question Vidhan Sabha wise was:

**Table No. 5.4**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs**

**Do SC MLAs and MPs anywhere in the country raise (or have raised in the past) the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assemblies or Parliament?**

		SC MLAs and MPs anywhere in the country			
		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	29	12	17	58
	Sham Chaurasi (R)	34	12	4	50
Andhra	P Gannavaram (R)	7	20	10	37
Pradesh	Mandapeta	17	13	2	32
Total		87	57	33	177

It is important to note that the majority of the affirmative response to this question came from Punjab and when we asked them specifically to tell some of the representatives that have raised the issue of SCs; they invariably pronounced the names of Kanshi Ram and Mayawati. Majority of them expressed their happiness on the formation of the first BSP (to which they referred as a political party of Dalits) government in the biggest state of India- Uttar Pradesh in 2007. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, people mostly referred to Dr. B R Ambedkar.

In a supplementary question to those who answered "NO" in the question discussed above, we also asked them to specify the reasons why the SC representatives did not raise the issues of SCs. Some of the repetitive answers to this question were:

- They are selfish
- They need caste symbol only to win elections.
- Because they win with the help of other caste votes also.
- Because they act on the order of the high commend of their respective parties.
- Because Dalits are not united.
- Because they work on the diction of the Upper Caste leaders.
- Because they fear that they will lose their ticket in the next election.
- Because they care only for their power and position.
- Because even Dalit leaders they believe in money power not social service.
- Because they feel ashamed by talking about Dalit issues, they use them only as vote banks.
- Because they don't know about the issues of Dalits.
- Because they work for only those people who give them money.
- Because they are not honest and committed to the SC communities.
- Because Dalit MLAs and MPs they are bound to work according to the party rules.
- Because our people don't know the importance of our votes. They sell their votes for liquor and money.
- Our MPs and MLAs are "BIKAU" so they work only for the upper castes who give them money.
- Because they work only for their personal benefits and for their parties. They all support criminals and during elections they use them to buy dalits votes.
- Because they are very poor and weak. The stronger will easily buy their votes.

However, in addition to that when we specifically asked whether the dependence on other caste votes was a reason for the same, their responses were as follows:

**Table No. 5.5**

**Do you think that SC representatives don't/cannot raise the issue of SC communities because they have to depend on other caste voters?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	87	49.2
No	48	27.1
Don't Know	36	20.3
No Answer	6	3.4
Total	177	100.0

About half of the respondents (49.2 per cent) feel that SC representatives are not able to raise the issue of SC communities because they have to depend on voters from other communities.

To understand it better; we must look at the breakup of this answer Vidhan Sabha wise.

**Table No. 5.6**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs**

**Do you think that SC representatives don't/cannot raise the issue of SC communities because they have to depend on other caste voters?**

		Yes	No	Don't Know	No Answer	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	17	14	27	0	58
	Sham Chaurasi	14	27	9	0	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	30	3	0	4	37
	Mandapeta	26	4	0	2	32
Total		87	48	36	6	177

Thus, while there was a clear polarization of this issue in Andhra Pradesh, respondents in Punjab were divided. Our next set of questions was to examine the above mentioned questions in greater details.

**Table No. 5.7****Have you ever met your MLA/MP**

	Yes	No	No Reply	Total
MLA	77 (43.5)	91(51.4)	9 (5.1)	177 (100)
MP	49 (27.7)	127 (71.8)	1 (0.6)	177 (100)

A majority of the respondents could neither meet their MLA or their MP. But between the two a larger percentage of respondents could meet their MLA.

**Table No. 5.8**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Have you ever met your MLA/MP?**

		MLA			MP		
		Yes	No	No Reply	Yes	No	No Reply
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	22	32	4	11	47	0
	Sham Chaurasi	20	25	5	16	33	1
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	22	15	0	20	17	0
	Mandapeta	13	19	0	2	30	0
Total		77	91	9	49	127	1

Between the respondents from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh with the exception of Mandapeta in Andhra Pradesh there is no significant difference in their meetings with their MLA. In Mandapeta very few of the respondents could meet their MLA.

We further asked whether they had met/requested their representatives for some work related to the SC community. The reply was as follows:

**Table No. 5.9**

**Have you ever met/requested your MLA/MP for some work related to SC community?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	91	51.4
No	86	48.6
Total	177	100.0

A majority of the respondents have met their MLA/MP for some work related to their community.

**Table No. 5.10**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Have you ever met/requested your MLA/MP for some work related to SC  
community?**

		Yes	No	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	39	19	58
	Sham Chaurasi	36	14	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	12	25	37
	Mandapeta	4	28	32
Total		91	86	177

Thus, the number of people expecting returns from their MLA/MPs was higher in Punjab as compared to Andhra Pradesh. For those who answered “YES” we asked them about the response of the MLA and MPs and the answer was:

**Table No. 5.11**

**What was the response of the MLA/MP**

	Frequency	Percent
Positive	27	29.6
Negative	56	61.5
Mixed	8	8.7
Total	91	100.0

Approximately one-third of the respondents (29.6 per cent) could get a positive response from their MLA and MP. For a majority the meeting with their elected representatives did not lead to their needs being met.

Table No. 5.12

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
What was the response of the MLA/MP**

		Positive	Negative	Mixed	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	8	31	0	39
	Sham Chaurasi	11	20	5	36
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	5	4	3	12
	Mandapeta	3	1	0	4
Total		27	56	8	91

Thus, while the chances of demands being met in an open constituency was certainly very meager, the condition in a reserved constituency was also similarly worse. Out of those 48 respondents that had met/requested the SC representatives, only 16, i.e. nearly 33 per cent of them answered that the response of the SC representative was positive and they got their work done. Another 8, i.e. nearly 16 per cent said that the response of the SC representative was mixed, while the rest 51 per cent replied that they were not satisfied with the SC representatives in their respective constituencies. Important to note is the fact that the level of dissatisfaction from the SC representatives in Andhra Pradesh was much higher than in Punjab. However, when we went a step further and asked if the SC representatives had helped them in getting certain things listed in our questionnaire, and the response was as follows:

	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Has your MLA/MP helped in getting basic amenities such as house, water, road, and transport for Dalit localities?	65 (36.7)	104 (58.8)	5 (2.8)	3 (1.7)	177 (100)
Is there a school in the Dalit localities of your constituency?	162 (91.5)	15 (8.4)	----	----	177 (100)
Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting other educational facilities for SCs?	19 (10.7)	146 (82.5)	12 (6.7)	----	177 (100)
Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting employment for SCs?	2 (1.1)	162 (91.5)	13 (7.3)	----	177 (100)

Thus, in all the cases the overwhelming majority of respondents replied that the SC representatives had not helped them in any of the options listed above. Despite that fact that there was a school (which was identified by majority of the respondents as primary schools) in nearly every Dalit localities of the constituency, there was no initiative taken by the SC representatives to help the community in getting some additional educations benefits, such as giving scholarships, distributing books or uniforms, appointing extra teachers etc. However, respondents who said that they were helped by their representatives specified mostly granting funds for building a room on his name or building roads to reach to the school etc. In one case the respondents of Hoshiarpur (G) legislative constituency said that they were helped by the MLA with a fund for buying sports equipments. The breakup of the same question Vidhan Sabha wise is:

**Table No. 5.13**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Has your MLA/MP helped in getting basic amenities such as house, water, road,  
and transport for Dalit localities?**

		Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	3	54	1	0	58
	Sham Chaurasi	20	26	1	3	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	15	22	0	0	37
	Mandapeta	27	2	3	0	32
Total		65	104	5	3	177

Important to note is the fact that in the Mandepeta (G) constituency of Andhra Pradesh, the number of respondents that confirmed being helped by the representatives was much higher than that in the P Ganawaram (R) constituency.

**Table No. 5.14**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Is there a school in the Dalit localities of your constituency?**

		Yes	No	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	47	11	58
	Sham Chaurasi	48	2	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	35	2	37
	Mandapeta	32	0	32
Total		162	14	177

An overwhelming number of respondents from all the four constituencies in the states of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh say there is a school in their locality.

**Table No. 5.15**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting other educational facilities for SCs?**

		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	2	46	12	58
	Sham Chaurasi	2	48	0	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	7	30	0	37
	Mandapeta	8	22	2	32
Total		17	146	14	177

An overwhelming number of respondents from all the four constituencies in the states of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh say that their MLA and their MP have not helped in getting other educational facilities for the SC community.

**Table No. 5.16**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting employment for SCs?**

		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	1	45	12	58
	Sham Chaurasi	1	49	0	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	0	36	1	37
	Mandapeta	0	32	0	32
Total		2	162	13	177

An overwhelming number of respondents from all the four constituencies in the states of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh say that their MLA and their MP have not helped them in getting a job. In case of Andhra Pradesh this comes to a hundred per cent.

The next set of questions was regarding the issue of mistreatment with/ atrocities on Dalits. Their response was as follows:

**Table No. 5.17**

**Does your constituency witness atrocities on or mistreatment of Dalits?**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Yes</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>69.5</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>30.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Slightly less than two-thirds of the respondents (69.5 per cent) have witnessed a mistreatment or atrocity against Dalits.

**Table No. 5.18**

**If yes, how often does it take place?**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Every Day</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16.3</b>
Every Month	11	8.9
Every Six Month	17	13.8
<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A majority of the respondents (61 per cent) say that it happens sometimes. What is of significance is that 39 per cent of the respondents say that the occurrence of these incidents is more frequent.

**Table No. 5.19**

**What has been the response of MLAs/MPs on this issue?**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Positive</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Negative</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>86.2</b>
Mixed	7	5.6
Don't Know	8	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>100.0</b>

An overwhelming majority of the people (nearly 70 per cent) replied that atrocities on or mistreatment of Dalits do take place in their area. Among them, every sixth respondent replied that this is a very common phenomenon, which occurs in one form or the other every day; nine per cent said that it occurs at least once in a month; fourteen per cent said that it occurs occasionally once or twice in a year; and nearly 60 per cent told that it occurs only sometimes. However, surprisingly, among all who accepted that these incidents do take place, more than 86 per cent of the people replied that the SC representatives were insensitive to this issue. In majority of the discussions it was reported that they never stand on behalf of Dalits against the oppressors. And in cases where they get engaged, they force for a compromise between the two parties. During the discussion the respondents told us many such examples. Since the focus of this study is not 'Dalit atrocities', I chose not to include these cases here. The breakup of this answer Vidhan Sabha wise is:

**Table No. 5.20**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Does your constituency witness atrocities on or mistreatment of Dalits?**

		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	35	23	0	58
	Sham Chaurasi	32	18	0	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	27	9	1	37
	Mandapeta	29	2	1	32
Total		123	52	2	177

From table 5.20 it is clear that more respondents from Punjab report mistreatment and atrocities than respondents from Andhra Pradesh. There is a geographical correlation between atrocities and regions.

**Table No. 5.21**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
If yes, how often does it take place?**

		<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every Month</b>	<b>Every Six Months</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	<b>2</b>	2	12	<b>19</b>	35
	Sham Chaurasi	<b>1</b>	8	3	<b>19</b>	32
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	<b>9</b>	0	0	<b>18</b>	27
	Mandapeta	<b>7</b>	1	2	<b>19</b>	29
<b>Total</b>		<b>19</b>	11	17	<b>75</b>	123

A majority of the respondents say that it happens sometimes.

**Table No. 5.22**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
What has been the response of MLAs/MPs on this issue?**

		<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Mixed</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	<b>35</b>	0	0	35
	Sham Chaurasi	0	<b>24</b>	0	8	32
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	0	<b>25</b>	2	0	27
	Mandapeta	2	<b>22</b>	5	0	29
<b>Total</b>		2	<b>106</b>	7	8	123

Our next set of questions was related directly with the system of political representation of SCs and the responses were:

**Table No. 5.23**

**Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?**

	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Yes</b>	15	8.5
<b>No</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>65.0</b>
<b>Little Satisfied</b>	37	20.9
<b>No Answer</b>	10	5.6
<b>Total</b>	177	100.0

Slightly less than two-thirds (65 per cent) of the respondents say that they are not satisfied with the political representation of the SC community.

**Table No. 5.24**

**Vidhan Sabha  
Vs  
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?**

		Yes	No	Little Satisfied	No Answer	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	3	43	8	4	58
	Sham Chaurasi	7	31	6	6	50
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	5	29	3	0	37
	Mandapeta	0	12	20	0	32
Total		15	115	37	10	177

**Table No. 5.25**

**Do you want some change in the system or electoral methods of SC representation?**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	100	56.5
No	52	29.4
Don't Know	25	14.1
Total	177	100.0

The reasons primarily were the lack of awareness among the common people about the electoral methods in general and about the options available for the SCs in particular. However, when we suggested some of the alternatives listed below, their responses were:

**Table No. 5.26**

**Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assembly as well as Parliament) should be elected by SC votes only?**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Yes</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>49.2</b>
No	67	37.9
Don't Know	23	13.0
Total	177	100.0

Nearly half of the respondents of the total sample expressed their agreement with the arrangement in which only SCs could vote for SCs. In a way, this showed that the alternative of Separate Electorate was still felt relevant among a nearly half of the Dalit population of the sample. However, this was nearly 17 per cent less than those who had expressed some desire for change in the system or electoral method of representation of SCs. And therefore, for those who had replied in negative, we asked:

**Table No. 5.27**

**Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assemblies as well as Parliament) should compulsorily secure at least one-third (1/3) of SC votes in their constituencies?**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Yes</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>71.6</b>
No	9	13.4
Don't Know	8	11.9
No Answer	2	2.9
Total	67	100.0

Thus, in a way, we can conclude that in addition to the 87 respondents (who favoured Separate Electorate), 48 more respondents (total 135, i.e. 76.27% of the total respondents) expressed their desire that the people from the SC communities should be given a greater say in choosing their representatives and expressed dissatisfaction with the present political system. A closer look at the breakup of these questions Vidhan Sabha wise shows some more interesting results:

**Table No. 5.28****Vidhan Sabha****Vs****Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assembly as well as Parliament) should be elected by SC votes only?**

		Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	10	29	19	58
	Sham Chaurasi	14	32	4	50
	<i>Total</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>108</i>
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	35	2	0	37
	Mandapeta	28	4	0	32
	<i>Total</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>69</i>
<b>Total</b>		<b>87</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>177</b>

While almost every respondent in Andhra Pradesh (91.3%) opted for separate electorate, respondents in Punjab did not show great enthusiasm about this scheme. In what follows below, however, it becomes clear that they came out in support of the Nagappa formula (i.e. securing 1/3 of the SC votes compulsorily) in great numbers.

**Table No. 5.29****Vidhan Sabha****Vs****Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assemblies as well as Parliament) should compulsorily secure at least one-third (1/3) of SC votes in their constituencies?**




		Yes	No	Don't Know	No Answer	Total
Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	21	5	3	--	29
	Sham Chaurasi	22	4	4	2	32
Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	2	0	0	--	2
	Mandapeta	3	0	1	--	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>67</b>





The above table shows that nearly 40 per cent (43 out of 108) in Punjab supported the formula of securing 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of SC votes compulsorily for the election of a Scheduled Castes representative.


### Part III

This part of the chapter analyses some of the data presented above by cross tabulating some of the variables.

**Table No. 5.30**

Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs? 	Have the MLAs of your constituencies ever raised the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assembly?				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	2	10	3	--	15
No	9	<b>84</b>	22	--	115
Little Satisfied	5	32	0	--	37
No Answer	0	10	0	--	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>177</b>
	Have the MPs of your constituencies ever raised the issue of SCs in the Parliament?				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	3	7	5		15
No	21	<b>71</b>	23		115
Little Satisfied	19	15	3		37
No Answer	0	9	1		10
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>32</b>		<b>177</b>
	Do SC MLAs and MPs anywhere in the country raise (or have raised in the past) the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assemblies or Parliament?				
	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	7	2	6		15
No	52	<b>40</b>	23		115
Little Satisfied	26	8	3		37
No Answer	2	7	1		10
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>177</b>

<p>Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?</p> 	<p>Do you think that SC representatives don't/cannot raise the issue of SC communities because they have to depend on other caste voters?</p>				
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No Reply</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	9	5	0	1	15
No	<b>49</b>	35	28	3	115
Little Satisfied	28	6	1	2	37
No Answer	1	2	7	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>177</b>
	<p>Has your MLA/MP helped in getting basic amenities such as house, water, road, and transport for Dalit localities?</p>				
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No Reply</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	7	8	0	0	15
No	32	<b>79</b>	2	2	115
Little Satisfied	24	9	3	1	37
No Answer	2	8	0	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>177</b>
	<p>Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting other educational facilities for SCs?</p>				
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No Reply</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	0	15	0	--	15
No	12	<b>91</b>	12	--	115
Little Satisfied	5	30	2	--	37
No Answer	0	10	0	--	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>177</b>
<p>Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?</p> 	<p>Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting employment for SCs?</p>				
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>No Reply</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	1	14	0	--	15

No	1	<b>101</b>	13	--	115
Little Satisfied	0	37	0	--	37
No Answer	0	10	0	--	10
Total	2	162	13	--	177
	What has been the response of MLAs/MPs on the issues of Dalit atrocities and mistreatment?				
	Positive	Negative	Mixed	Don't Know	Total
Yes	0	5	0	1	6
No	1	<b>70</b>	3	3	77
Little Satisfied	1	23	4	4	32
No Answer	0	8	0	0	8
Total	2	106	7	8	123


### THE BREAKUP OF THIS CROSS TABULATION VIDHAN SABHA WISE


Table No. 5.31

Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?			Have the MLAs of your constituencies ever raised the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assembly?			
			Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	2	1	3
		Sham Chaurasi	1	6	0	7
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	1	2	2	5
	Total		2	10	3	15
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	1	<b>29</b>	13	43
		Sham Chaurasi	2	<b>26</b>	3	31
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	2	<b>22</b>	5	29
		Mandapeta	4	7	1	12
	Total		9	<b>84</b>	22	115
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	8		8
		Sham Chaurasi	1	5		6

	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	1	2		3
		Mandapeta	3	17		20
	Total		5	32		37
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		4		4
		Sham Chaurasi		6		6
↓ Total				10		10
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?			Have the MPs of your constituencies ever raised the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assembly?			
			Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	2	1	3
		Sham Chaurasi	2	2	3	7
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	1	3	1	5
		Total	3	7	5	15
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	1	28	14	43
		Sham Chaurasi	3	25	3	31
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	9	16	4	29
		Mandapeta	8	2	2	12
	Total	21	71	23	115	
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	8	0	8
		Sham Chaurasi	0	5	1	6
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	3	0	0	3
		Mandapeta	16	2	2	20
Total	19	15	3	37		
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		4	0	4
		Sham Chaurasi		5	1	6
Total			9	1	10	
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs? ↓			Do SC MLAs and MPs anywhere in the country raise (or have raised in the past) the issue of SCs in the Legislative Assemblies or Parliament?			

			Yes	No	Don't Know	Total	
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	3	0	0	3	
		Sham Chaurasi	3	1	3	7	
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	1	1	3	5	
	Total		7	2	6	15	
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	21	6	16	43	
		Sham Chaurasi	23	8	0	31	
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	4	19	6	29	
		Mandapeta	4	7	1	12	
	Total		52	40		115	
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	5	2	1	8	
		Sham Chaurasi	6	0	0	6	
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	2	0	1	3	
		Mandapeta	13	6	1	20	
	Total		26	8	3	37	
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	4	0	4	
		Sham Chaurasi	2	3	1	6	
Total			2	7	1	10	
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?			Do you think that SC representatives don't/cannot raise the issue of SC communities because they have to depend on other caste voters?				
			Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	1	2		0	3
		Sham Chaurasi	4	3		0	7
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	4	0		1	5
	Total		9	5		1	15
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	10	8	25	0	43
		Sham Chaurasi	5	23	3	0	31

	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	24	3	0	2	29
		Mandapeta	10	1	0	1	12
	Total		49	35	28	3	115
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	6	2	0	0	8
		Sham Chaurasi	4	1	1	0	6
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	2	0	0	1	3
		Mandapeta	16	3	0	1	20
	Total		28	6	1	2	37
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	2	2		4
		Sham Chaurasi	1	0	5		6
Total			1	2	7		10
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?			Has your MLA/MP helped in getting basic amenities such as house, water, road, and transport for Dalit localities?				
			Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		3			3
		Sham Chaurasi	--	7	--	--	7
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	--	5	--	--	5
		Total		--	15	--	--
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	31	12	--	43
		Sham Chaurasi	2	29	0	--	31
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	7	22	0	--	29
		Mandapeta	3	9	0	--	12
	Total		12	91	12	--	115
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	8	0	--	8
		Sham Chaurasi	0	6	0	--	6
	Andhra	P Gannavaram	0	3	0	--	3


	Pradesh	Mandapeta	5	13	2	--	20	
	Total		5	30	2	--	37	
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	--	4	--	--	4	
		Sham Chaurasi	--	6	--	--	6	
	Total		--	10	--	--	10	
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?				Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting employment for SCs?				
				Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	3			3	
		Sham Chaurasi	1	6			7	
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	0	5			5	
		Total	1	14			15	
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	1	30	12		43	
		Sham Chaurasi	0	31	0		31	
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	0	28	1		29	
		Mandapeta	0	12	0		12	
	Total	1	101	13		115		
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		8			8	
		Sham Chaurasi		6			6	
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram		3			3	
		Mandapeta		20			20	
	Total		37			37		
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		4			4	
		Sham Chaurasi		6			6	
	Total			10			10	
Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?				Has your MLA/MPs helped in getting other educational facilities for SCs?				

			Yes	No	Don't Know	No Reply	Total
Yes	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		3			3
		Sham Chaurasi		7			7
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram		5			5
	Total			15			15
No	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	31	12		43
		Sham Chaurasi	2	29	0		31
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	7	22	0		29
		Mandapeta	3	9	0		12
	Total		12	91	12		115
Little Satisfied	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur	0	8	0		8
		Sham Chaurasi	0	6	0		6
	Andhra Pradesh	P Gannavaram	0	3	0		3
		Mandapeta	5	13	2		20
	Total		5	30	2		37
No Answer	Punjab	Hoshiar Pur		4			4
		Sham Chaurasi		6			6
	Total			10			10

The table below shows the relation between the level of satisfaction in the people with the system of political representation and their opinion on change or alternatives:

**Table No. 5.32**

**State Vs. Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs? Vs. Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assembly as well as Parliament) should be elected by SC votes only?**

Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs? 	Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assembly as well as Parliament) should be elected by SC votes only?			
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Total

Yes	state	Punjab	2	8		10
		Andhra Pradesh	5	0		5
	Total		7	8		15
No	state	Punjab	11	42	21	74
		Andhra Pradesh	41	0	0	41
	Total		52	42	21	115
Little Satisfied	state	Punjab	11	3		14
		Andhra Pradesh	17	6		23
	Total		28	9		37
No Answer	state	Punjab		8	2	10
	Total			8	2	10


**Table No. 5.33**

**State  
Vs**

**Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?**

**Vs**

**Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assemblies as well as Parliament) should compulsorily secure at least one-third (1/3) of SC votes in their constituencies?**

Are you satisfied with the system of Political Representation for SCs?  			Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assemblies as well as Parliament) should compulsorily secure at least one-third (1/3) of SC votes in their constituencies?			
			Yes	No	Don't Know	No Answer
Yes	state	Punjab	7			
		Andhra Pradesh	0			
	Total		7			
No	state	Punjab	31	8	7	2
		Andhra Pradesh	5	0	1	0
	Total		36	8	8	2
Little Satisfied	state	Punjab	2	1		
		Andhra Pradesh	0	0		
	Total		2	1		
No Answer	state	Punjab	3			
	Total		3			

**Table No. 5.34**

**State Vs. If SC Members (for Legislative Assembly as well as Parliament) should not be elected by SC votes only? Vs. Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assemblies as well as Parliament) should compulsorily secure at least one-third (1/3) of SC votes in their constituencies?**

Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assembly as well as Parliament) should be elected by SC votes only?			Do you think that SC Members (for Legislative Assemblies as well as Parliament) should compulsorily secure at least one-third (1/3) of SC votes in their constituencies?				
			Yes	No	Don't Know	No Answer	Total
No	state	Punjab	43	9	7	2	61
		Andhra Pradesh	5	-	1	-	6
	Total		48	9	8	2	67

Thus, in our attempts to measure the satisfaction level with the political system, we found that only 8.5 percent of the respondent felt that they were satisfied with the system of political representation for Schedule Caste. A good 65 percent was not satisfied and 21 percent were little satisfied. To a leading question whether they wanted some change in the political system, majority (56.5 per cent) replied in positive. In fact, nearly 50 percent of the respondents expressed their agreement with the idea that a Schedule Caste representative should be elected only by Schedule Caste voters. Among those who opposed this idea, about 72 percent agreed that the Schedule Caste members should compulsorily secure at least one third of the Scheduled Caste votes in that constituency. Thus, on the whole it became evident that out of 177 respondents, 135 (76.27 per cent) felt that there should be a change in the electoral system.

A further analysis of the relationship between the response to the dissatisfaction of the respondent - with the performance of the Schedule Caste representatives against the factors of performance (i) raising the issues related to Schedule Caste in the

assembly (ii) raising the issues related to Scheduled Caste in the parliament (iii) performance on the issues of basic amenities (iv) education facilities, (v) employment access and (vi) response to atrocities community of Schedule Castes, indicated that the voters felt that the Schedule Caste representatives were not representing the interest of the Schedule Caste.

The analysis of the factors as to whether the respondents were satisfied with the present system of political representation of Schedule Castes, 77 respondents felt that the dependence on other caste voters by schedule caste representatives is a factor. While seeking solution as to whether a separate electorate methods should be used 66 respondents felt that dependence of the other caste voters was one of the reasons to bring in a change in the electoral method. Similarly, 88 (49.7 per cent) qualified joint electorate method seekers found the dependence on other caste voters as a factor. 80 respondents (45 per cent) who were not or little satisfied with the present system of political representation sought separate electorate and out of those who rejected the separate electorate (i.e. 67) 36 respondents (i.e. 53 per cent) sought qualified joint electorate. There was a clear division in the opinion of respondents from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh on the choice of the new electorate method. It is evident that a majority of the respondents were not satisfied with the present system of political representation. Out of these respondents, the ones from Punjab found qualified joint electorate as a better method while the ones from Andhra Pradesh selected the separate electorate method. But invariably majority was not satisfied with the present system and they clearly indicated for a change in the electoral method.