EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUALITY:
AN INQUIRY INTO THE STATUS OF SCHEDULED
CASTE WOMEN OF ALIGARH (U.P.)

ABSTRACT
THESIS
SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy
in
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BY
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Under the Supervision of
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The persistence of the status of scheduled caste women under the different social, educational and economic conditions inspired the present researcher to make a fresh study of one section of the society, that is, scheduled caste of the two tehsils of District Aligarh namely Koil and Khair. A large number of scheduled caste women of the district who were not being treated equally in the society because of being a women and their education is also affected because of this factor, now with the help of many government policies and programmes, their status has been changed. This fact itself is interestingly challenging as it points to latent desire among the scheduled caste women who feel that they have upgraded themselves by changing their status educationally as well as socially equal to men and hence have achieved a higher status in society. This view of their part challenges some of the basic elements of the nature and capacity of the caste system to have undergone a structural change.

This has led the present researcher to examine the nature of the status of scheduled caste women who fall under the umbrella of untouchables. The present study attempts to make reassessment of the past of the women with the objectives of understanding the role of education and gender inequality in the social structure of their community in bringing about changes in their status.
Earlier, the three upper castes of Brahmins, Kshatriyas & Vaishyas enjoyed the eluted social status whereas the Shudras, i.e., the untouchables were at the lowest ebb of social hierarchy in status. and when it comes to the women, no matter whether they belonged to the upper caste or lower, their position was the same in both the cases.

While the call for abolishing untouchability was constitutionally enforced, their inherent economic and educational prevented deprivation prevented them for obtaining education and thereby from entering the job market. At the same time modern instruments ranging from rapid communications to fire arms and efficient forms of organization (of all those who have resources) have added to the effectiveness of upper caste pressures upon the untouchables, often, the successful sanskritized ‘middling’ castes turn out to be most hostile and powerful opponents of the urges of the untouchables. In other words, sanskritization too helps to consolidate the isolation and repression of the lowest in the caste hierarchy. Like sanskritization, efforts by the government to provide certain privileges for the untouchables have strengthened rather than weaken caste alignments. For example, the educated untouchables want to forget their former caste identity but have not yet been able to build up a satisfactory “identity”. They also tend to discriminated against their own original caste group.

The “Scheduled Caste” is the legal and constitutional name collectively given to the groups which have traditionally occupied the lowest status in Indian society.
The Hindu society is based on four primary castes. The Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The lowest in the caste hierarchy was shudras and the lowest in that class was untouchables.

The present research study is undertaken to analyze the status of lower caste women in relation to education and gender, where caste plays a very peculiar role in Indian social structure. The effects in everyday life of the hierarchical division of caste and sub-caste are manifold. Caste determines social etiquette, payment for services, family life. Hence female education is also affected by the caste system.

According to T. K. Oomen “The traditional social organization of Hindu society was divided into five categories and most of the scheduled caste were designated as panchamars those of the fifth order. They were ranked below of the four varnas of the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras.

Since Indian society is a male-dominated one, for a long time women were denied education as a result, scheduled caste women have one of the lowest levels of literacy of all groups in India (in rural areas, only ten percent are literate). On the other hand, it is universally known that people belonging to scheduled castes have not only marginalized status in economic sphere but also similar marginal statuses in cultural, political, religious and other domains, which leads to the denial of basic human rights and social justice. Here, keeping these marginalization in mind, one can imagine the conditions of women belonging to scheduled caste communities.
In Vedic, Epic or later periods, one’s status and power was based on hereditary caste; mobility was also restricted in terms of horizontal and within one’s caste. Untouchables and that too women were at the lowest ebb of social hierarchy status, ritual purity and socio-political leadership.

As the time passed the caste system also underwent changes and four traditional varnas which were sub-divided into many sub-castes and emerged as endogamous sub-groups within the Hindu fold. With the invasion and conquest by Moghuls, the caste-groups became the citadels of social status, political power, economic leadership and various dominant upper castes were recognized by the ruling Moghuls as Zamindars who were not only owing the land of the area concerned, but also exercised political power and enjoyed superior status. The social distant between the ruler and ruled gave further consolidation to the caste, sub-caste groups and kept their separate identities.

The position of women in India has been a rather ambivalent in our culture, specially when they belong to scheduled caste community. On the one side, she has been raised to the status of divinity, and on the other side, she has been exploited by men in every walk of life. All through the ages, women have contributed immensely to the enrichment of the culture and progress of civilization without getting due recognition for their contribution. Progress of a nation can be measured by the progress of its women folk.
In recognition of the diversity of women’s situations and in acknowledgment of the needs of specially disadvantaged groups, measures and programmes are being undertaken to provide them with special assistance. These groups include all women in extreme poverty, destitute women, women in conflict situations, women affected by natural calamities, women in less developed regions, the disabled widows, elderly women, single women in difficult circumstances, women heading households, those displaced from employment, migrants, women who are victims of marital violence, deserted women and prostitutes. All the forms of discrimination of against the girl child and violation of her rights are shall be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive and within and outside the family. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of girl child within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl child will be actively fostered.

In the post-independence era, so many effort were made by the government of India, reservation policies and programme of the union and state government and also persistent efforts of enlightened sections within these communities like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Jyoti Ba Phule and many others who through their reform as well as emancipator movements helped in raising the economic status of some Dalit women in urban areas.

It is proved through many sociological studies that the caste system of ancient vedic period does not exist today. Even the traditional theory through
providing basis of the caste stratification cannot sustain the breaking barriers of inter-caste relations in the changing milieu. This issue was always been the centre of attraction of so many scholars and sociologists, so many studies of scheduled castes before and after independence.

The education which meant to broaden the minds to sharpen the process of logic reasoning, to provide knowledge and to skill to individuals and to bring him/her to a level that would lead to a gainful successive and satisfying life. Education is liberator, emancipator of women from the bondage of patriarchy and enables her to participate in all areas of life. The traditional concept of purity and impurity impartially has lost in contemporary India. Today Indian society is governed by a secular outlook. So the changes in the position of scheduled caste women are more explicit than the past.

Gender is the difference between women and men within the same household and within between cultures that are socially and culturally constructed and change over time. These differences are reflected in roles, responsibilities, access to resources, constraints, opportunities, needs, perceptions, view etc. held by women, men and their relationships.

The researcher has gone through a vast review of literature and found that a large number of studies have been undertaken on the topic of education and gender equality and its various aspects are as follows:
**Empirical & Theoretical Studies:**

It is necessary to review the available material, which is helpful in understanding the problem under study various studies have been conducted by various scholars on Indian caste system with special reference to the status of scheduled castes, their education and measures to improve their status but a little has been done on the impact of certain inequalities on women as a vulnerable gender category.

Most of the studies were conducted specially in the independent India and the pioneering efforts and contributions of Prof. M.N. Srinivas inspired both foreigners and Indian scholars to study the caste hierarchy. Such studies were conducted by Bailey, Beteille, Hardgrave, Zelliot and others.

All these studies which are referenced in the study did not necessarily deal with the variables Education and Gender and their effects on the status of Scheduled Caste women. These studies conducted by Cohn, Bailey, Beteille are basically general in nature.

Studies using different variables to analyze the status of Scheduled Caste women were conducted by various sociologists such as Andre' Beteille, Lynch, Sachchidananda, V.P. Sharma, M.N. Srinivas, Neelam Yadav, Vijaya B. Korishetty etc.

The Scheduled Caste of District Aligarh form an interesting group which has targeted for the present study. A Sociological study of education, gender and its impact on the status of Scheduled Caste women form the main body of the thesis.
Objectives:

Following are the objectives of the study which are confined to the scheduled caste women, their status with reference to gender and educational inequalities.

1. How much education of women has increased among scheduled caste and what are the educational standards of women belonging to scheduled caste community?

2. How far the community takes its own initiative to educate women?

3. Does education really help to reduce gender inequality? If Yes, then how much?

4. How far the education is liberating an emancipator?

Because of the unique position of the Aligarh District, the large scheduled caste population of the district, Aligarh City and Tehsil Khair have been selected for the purpose of the present study. The sample for the present study is confined to the scheduled caste community of district Aligarh, and the purposive sample selected from the localities of two tehsils of the district, these are: Koil, and Khair.

In Tehsil Koil the localities selected are Avas Vikas Colony, Nai Basti, Pratibha Colony, Surendra Nagar, A.D.A. Colony, Ambedkar Nagar, Dhanipur, Naurangabad and Ram Leela Ground.

In Tehsil Khair, some major villages were selected, where the largest majority of scheduled caste families are residing, these are: Gomat, Bankner, Andala, Rajpur, Sujanpur, Kasisson, Jarara, Takipur and Chaudhana.
Fourteen respondents were selected through purposive sampling for the purpose of study, which is well suited for the conducting case studies. The sample was drawn from different localities of scheduled castes.

The sample population under study has been collected from two tehsils of the district namely Koil and Khair. The total sample size is 250, distributed in terms of various variables such as Age, Location, Marital Status, Income, Education, Gender and Occupation.

The data collection was based on both the sources that are primary and secondary.

In the primary sources, present researcher structured the interview schedule and questionnaire based case studies. It was the main tool. On the basis of interview schedule case studies of respondent’s observation were made. The interviews were taken from some important schedule caste personalities of the area been selected, which contribute to the present study.

Among the secondary sources, census reports of India, newspapers, five year plans, District statistical magazines issued from District Economic & Statistical Department, Aligarh. District gazetteer taken into consideration about the scheduled caste to find out their population composition, their growth rate of literacy and number of caste rates of their growth.

Intensive field work was conducted in the selected areas for the primary information. Fourteen case studies were made from the responses of the respondents, who were from different educational levels, that are, highly educated, low educated and illiterate, then different age, i.e., lower.
medium, upper and in the last three categories were made for family’s monthly income, i.e., lower, medium and higher. However to have insight into the level of education specially what people think about the women education and what is their status in the family and outside among scheduled caste community. On the basis of formal and informal responses, observational data also been used wherever it is possible.

The foregoing results of the study shows that inequalities based on education and gender are weakening in today’s Modern Indian Society, which is changing fast. Therefore, changes are also coming into the status of women and when we talk about the status of Scheduled Caste women, their status is also getting uplifted but the speed of this change is gradual. Though when we compare these changes with the ancient and pre-independence period, their status has improved a lot.

It was observed that after independence, the Government of India continued the tradition of educating scheduled caste people which was initially set-up by Britishers, the pattern of education for all and gave special emphasis on the education of women belonging to all castes.

When asked about the Reservation Policy, almost all the respondent said that this supports Scheduled Caste Community, without it the women of Scheduled Caste Community could not make progress to the level they have today. Respondents also told that without reservation it would have been very difficult to get jobs in Government sector.
While on the issue of Gender Equality, most of the respondents said that education is the strongest factor that opens the door of development and equality in Scheduled Caste Community, various respondent said that different factors which are responsible for the Scheduled Caste Community such as Reservation, Modernization, Urbanization etc. And also highlighted factors that are deteriorating to women of this community such as, Poverty, Illiteracy, Lack of Educational Background, Lack of Determination etc.

It is observed that almost all the respondent said that untouchability is still prevalent in our society. It is more visible in rural areas than urban areas. However, it is generally accepted that untouchability is practiced in lower section of the society and people of higher class do not think much about it. But now a days, the practice of Untouchability has been reduced to a great extent. More importance is given to the economic condition, educational standards, values and civil rights, which has made Scheduled Caste more acceptable to the Hindu Caste.

It is analyzed that almost all the respondents are aware about their political rights. Women respondents are of the opinion that there should be more representation from their community in the political sphere. They strongly believe that their M.L.A./M.P./C.M. should be represented by their community in more numbers.

Most of the respondents cast their vote for BSP ( Bahujan Samaj Party); on the other hand, few of them cast their vote in favour of Congress
and other parties. The reason behind casting their vote to BSP is that they want strong political representation from the persons of Scheduled Caste Community, as they believe only then they will be able to mobilize themselves from the downtrodden condition to a better and secure position.

When asked on the issue of privatization of education, more than three-fourth of the respondents said that privatization of education will not be beneficial for the poor section of society as they are not able to pay the heavy fees which is charged by Private Schools/Colleges/Universities in general and Scheduled Caste in particular. Only higher class and creamy layer class can send their children to the private schools colleges and Universities.

On the issue of Higher Education and Career for Women, almost all respondents have positive attitude about higher education and a better career for women. However in practice lower class hardly educates their girls. Though middle class have been providing education to their girls but after completion of their graduation of girl they, first attempt to arrange a partner for her.

It is observed from society that persons who have consciousness towards changing environment of our society motivate their daughters to higher education and career. It is also noticed that daughters who have got education through convent/ public schools are inclined to enter in the job market. These daughters are highly conscious about the changing position of
women in the society, human rights, family and marriage life. Middle class parents, who earlier not interested in the career of their daughter, are now also motivating their girl to be a career oriented.

Present study reveals that, to some extent education has been quite successful in removing the gender inequality in the form of the long awaited change in the perception of concerned people. Initially, girls were considered as a burden on parent’s shoulder but now with the changing circumstances and perception parents started considering them as an important number of their family and encouraging them to participate in various spheres of life.

In the light of above description it is concluded that education and gender equality affect the down trodden community. As it is evident that untouchability is still prevailing in society in latent form, scheduled caste people are more inclined towards the education, not only for the boys but also for girls.

Indeed government and the community itself struggling hard for the upliftment of scheduled caste women but is, lot to do with the mindset of the people, specially in rural areas, where to women is yet to find a niche for herself.
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This is to certify that Mrs. Charul Sharma has completed her research work under my supervision and guidance and her thesis entitled "Education and Gender Equality: an Inquiry into the Status of Scheduled Caste Women of District Aligarh (U.P.)". The researcher has incorporated the original data in her work. I consider it suitable for submission for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.

Dr. Nemat Ali Khan
(Supervisor)
Dedicated
To
My Beloved Parents
&
Husband
Acknowledgement

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Introduction
INTRODUCTION

The position of women in India has been a rather ambivalent in our culture, specially when they belong to scheduled caste community. On the one side, she has been raised to the status of divinity, and on the other side, she has been exploited by men in every walk of life. All through the ages, women have contributed immensely to the enrichment of the culture and progress of civilization without getting due recognition for their contribution. Progress of a nation can be measured by the progress of its women folk.

Today globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the goal of women’s equality, the gender impact of which has not been systematically evaluated carefully. However micro-level studies that were commissioned by the Department of Women & Child Development, it is framing policies for access for employment and quality of employment. Benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed leading to wider economic disparities, the feminisation of poverty, increased gender inequality through often deteriorating working conditions and unsafe working environment especially in the informal economy and rural areas. Strategies will be designed to enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts, which may flow from the globalisation process. Present study will focus on the measures
which are being taken to eliminate discrimination, universalization of education which automatically eradicate illiteracy, creating a gender-sensitive educational system, increasing enrolment and retention rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education.

There are sectoral time targets in existing policies whether they are achieved or not? These sectoral time targets has a special focus on girls and women, particularly those belonging to weaker sections including Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Classes/Minorities. In order to address sex stereotyping as one of the causes of gender discrimination, gender sensitive curricula would be developed at all levels of educational system.

In recognition of the diversity of women’s situations and in acknowledgment of the needs of specially disadvantaged groups, measures and programmes are being undertaken to provide them with special assistance. These groups include all women in extreme poverty, destitute women, women in conflict situations, women affected by natural calamities, women in less developed regions, the disabled widows, elderly women, single women in difficult circumstances, women heading households, those displaced from employment, migrants, women who are victims of marital violence, deserted women and prostitutes. All the forms of discrimination of
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undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive and within and
outside the family. Removal of discrimination in the treatment of girl child
within the family and outside and projection of a positive image of the girl
child will be actively fostered.

There are many women-oriented schemes of different state
governments to enhance the social status of women, the main focus of these
Government Policies with regard to women working in unorganized sectors
has been to remove the handicaps under which they work, to strengthen their
bargaining capacity, to improve their wages and working conditions, to
enhance their skills and to open up better employment opportunities for
them.

India is home to the largest number of illiterate women in the world.
As far as women education is concerned, it is a combination of parental
apathy, socio-cultural norms, direct and indirect costs, market failure to
capture and reflect the true costs of benefits of girl’s education, the law and
order situation, inadequate and inappropriate educational infra-structure as
well as low participation of women in the system that has made female
education trail behind male education.

Inadequacy of the education system to reach out to girls and women
is seen from four different aspects viz. Supply, access, demand and
participation. Since decision and choices are made at the levels of the
household, the market and the Government, the analysis must relate to all these levels. Finally, girls and women’s needs, problems and perspectives must be seen in the multi-dimensional context of their domestic and social roles and responsibilities. Not having a school in easy reach of home often a barrier to girl’s enrolment and retention. Similarly, the availability of girl’s schools as opposed to co-educational schools is also an important factor. Too often girls do not go to school particularly at the secondary level unless the school has separate lavatories and a degree of privacy for girls, particularly as they move to upper primary levels.

Another major factor to education is cost. Even when the education is free, there are both direct and opportunity costs which are very real. Cost of books, uniform, mid-day meals, etc. are major cost for poor families. Opportunity costs incurred because of the loss of girl children’s availability for household chores and wage earning are very often the major cost for poor families for sensing their daughters to school. Cultural norms increase the cost of girl’s schooling both in terms of direct and opportunity costs.

Moreover, while the costs of schooling appear to real and immediate the benefits are often remote to perceive. While, the gender division of labour tends to mask the benefit of girl’s education in the short gun, the usual social norm of a woman settling down in the husband’s home, often in the different village, further undermines the perceived economic benefits of sending daughters to schools. The concept the daughter as a “someone else’s
wealth” which can at the best benefit another household reduces the incentives of sending daughter to school. On the other hand as a consequence of lack of education and schooling, the labour marked also discriminates against women in terms of wages and hierarchy of tasks. As a result, marked singles further reinforce the perceived futility of girl’s and the various circles go on. The practice of dowry further aggravates the situation. The more educate a girl is, the higher need to be the education level of the groom, their by increase dowry price.

As far as women’s education is concerned, it is a combination parental apathy, socio-cultural norms, direct and indirect costs, market failure to capture and reflect the true costs and benefits of girl’s education, the law and order situation, inadequate and inappropriate educational infrastructure as well as law participation of women in system (insufficient number of women teachers) that has made female education trail behind male education public action, therefore, needs to address all these all these issues.

The most remarkable news about the 2001 census is that there is a significant increase in both the literacy rates and number of literate person. In India as a whole, the proportion of literate person among the population engaged seven years and above is reported to be 65.38% which represent a jump of 13.17% points over the actual of 1991.
The female literacy rate has increased even more rapidly by 14.87 percentage points to reach 54.16 percent, while male literacy has increased by 11.77 percentage points, to reach 75.85 per cent. Accordingly the male-female gap in literacy rate has declined to 27.70 percentages since 1951 Census.

Gender equality is an important issue of human rights and social justice. Women represent half of the resources and half of the potential in all the societies. When it comes to their education, which is a necessity to walk along with men equally. Education of women is an important feature for promoting the social status or initiating the process of gender equality. A great deal of evidences is seen in vedic literature which shows the relationship of the status of women and education.

The problem of inequality is as ancient as Indian society, and has attracted the attention of travelers, men of letters from time immemorial. Efforts to promote gender equality between men and women can contribute to the overall development of the human society.

Sociologists and social anthropologists have attempted to explore various issues related to the empowerment of women. Most of these studies are concerned with political and economic opportunities for women and their empowerment. The present study focuses on the relationship between education and gender equality among scheduled caste women. The study is
mainly based on the field work conducted in two tehsils of district Aligarh. The area under study is located in Uttar Pradesh state of India.

Classical thinkers of Europe, like Karl Marx, Max Weber took a keen interest in the pattern of inequality in India with special reference to the caste system and the attending traditional practices, customs and values. The caste system has historically exhibited great resilience and has accommodated itself to the changing conditions, right from the vedic period. Sociological literature on the problem grew out of the west, and by the earlier part of the twentieth century, Indian sociologists began a revolution of western interpretations in the light society and its ideology.

Karl Marx was the first thinker to draw sharp attention to the highly deleterious impact of caste on Indian society and its causal link with the relations of production. In his famous essay on “The Future Results of British Rule in India” Karl Marx characterized the Indian castes “the most decisive impediment to India’s progress and power” Marx correctly argued that the caste system of India was based on the hereditary division of labor, which was inseparably linked with the unchanging technological base and subsistence economy of the Indian village community.

Later on many Indian and International Sociologists like Srinivas (1952), Dumont (1969, 1970), Beteille (1969b), Bailey (1957) and Leach (1960), tried to delineate specific conceptual and methodological areas
relating to stratification in India. In this manner, they highlighted the relevance of the indigenous categories of caste.

The complex structure and nature of the caste system in India led sociologists to make cultural and structural analysis (Leach 1960; Dumont, 1961; Srinivas, 1952; 1955).

These studies conceived the caste system as a unique mechanism of social inequality, perpetuated through ritual conception of purity and pollution.

Changes in the caste system, like other systems of stratification have been explained in terms of isolated factors like tradition, religion, values and education (Singer, 1956; Kapp, 1963; Tilnan, 1963; Dube, 1955, 1958; Morris, 1967). As apposed to these studies, Rudolph and Rudolph (1967) argued that tradition and values can be adopted and transformed to serve the needs of society and that the caste system can adapt to changes brought about through modernization.

The main question is whether such changes in the system of stratification are brought about through any real weakening tradition and values or whether material changes have produced new forms of social continuousness related to the status of scheduled caste with special consciousness related to the status of scheduled caste with special reference to the women belonging to it, their education and their equality with men.
The persistence of the status of scheduled caste women under the different social, educational and economic conditions inspired the present researcher to make a fresh study of one section of the society, that is, scheduled caste of the two tehsils of District Aligarh. A large number of scheduled caste women of the district who were not being treated equally in the society because of being a women and their education is also affected because of this factor, now with the help of many government policies and programmes, their status has been changed. This fact itself is interestingly challenging as it points to latent desire among the scheduled caste women who feel that they have upgraded themselves by changing their status educationally as well as socially equal to men and hence have achieved a higher status in society. This view of their part challenges some of the basic elements of the nature and capacity of the caste system to have undergone a structural change.

This has led the present researcher to examine the nature of the status of scheduled caste women who fall under the umbrella of untouchables.

The present study attempts to make reassessment of the past of the women with the objectives of understanding the role of education and gender inequality in the social structure of their community in bringing about changes in their status.
The notable sociologist Andre Beteille (2001) in his article on caste, inequality and affirmative actions discussed how caste system is weakening and the affirmative actions which in fact reinforces the sense of separate identity between members of different caste, he also discussed the different aspects of inequality also but that inequality is based on ownership, control and use of land.

Beteille spoke of the basis of Indian society which is caste. Many students of Indian society have argued that caste was the country’s fundamental social institution. Betteille discussed the constitution of India which provides a blue print for an egalitarian society; it is not based on the premise of hierarchy, but on the premise of equality. But it is very difficult to erase or cancel out age old inequalities simply by adopting new principles in a constitution. Affirmative action or positive discrimination was one of the major programmes adopted when country became independent. In other words, the caste system has had a complex history and it has changed so much over the past two millenniums that it would not be possible to say when, if ever, it was in its ‘Classic form’.

Recent studies illustrate that modern socio-economic influences of the past one hundred years have undoubtedly brought about many changes in the Indian social fabric. Earlier educations ceased to be the monopoly of a handful of castes. This new ‘open’ system of occupation provided opportunities for all (a constitutional right). What we experienced in effect
was the transformation from “open” ones which accommodate other components as well (Beteille, 1965, 1966, 1985). The opportunities for education and employment were, however, not equally distributed in society. This was so not only because of planning deficiencies but also because of the disabilities perpetuated by caste traditions. As a result, lower caste people irrespective of their gender remained educationally backward and therefore were not having any opportunity to get a chance for higher ranks in their employment.

(Srinivas, 1952; Beteille, 1965, 1966; Isaacs. 1967; Morris 1968). Thus, those who could obtain higher education entered the higher positions and those who not-like untouchables had to be satisfied with lower cadre jobs of sweepers in the city’s municipalities and hospitals, a garbage collector or cesspool cleaners, so under the modern industrial set-up the untouchables, caste continued to perform their traditional caste roles for want of better ones....

In recent times the dalits are slowly emerging from their internal contradictions. The dalits are trying to unite keeping in mind their common heritage, specially when it is in opposition to other groups. Thus, if dalits of India want to raise their voice or want to bring their grievances in the “UN conference on Race”, it is imprudent for them to fight among themselves. What better way than to unite and form a united identity called “Dalit” to fight for their cause. If they are referred to in general, called the “dalits in
India”, especially when they are represented in international fora, then this single identity becomes meaningful and useful. This shows the importance of the term and the reasons for it being more acceptable and extensively used in today’s scenario.

It is reported that very few untouchables, despite the many obstacles, there appear to be a steady rise in the numbers of educated untouchables. This difference is apparent if we compare the census report of India of 1951 with that of 1981, 1991 and 2001 (See Census Reports). Reservations in government jobs and seats in educational institutions as well as government scholarships have certainly helped, but only marginally. A newspaper reported that reservations for scheduled castes in the education system have been wasted. On an average, only fifty percent of the reserved seats for scheduled caste have been filled. The percentage is even lower on the Medical and Engineering Colleges (Hindustan Times, February 24, 1986). There are many who have now entered the civil services, have become lawyers, doctors, pilots and educationists (Isaacs, 1967). There was a time when untouchables constitute a very negligible minority and despite their high positions, faced much humiliation from their high caste colleagues and subordinates. Recruitment of untouchables into the various service cadres is strongly opposed by upper castes and, time and again newspaper report brutal attacks on untouchables. Such incidents have awakened all concerned people to the nature of mass exploitation of untouchables.
While the call for abolishing untouchability was constitutionally enforced, their inherent economic and educational prevented deprivation prevented them for obtaining education and thereby from entering the job market. At the same time modern instruments ranging from rapid communications to fire arms and efficient forms of organization (of all those who have resources) have added to the effectiveness of upper caste pressures upon the untouchables, often, the successful sanskritized ‘middling’ castes turn out to be most hostile and powerful opponents of the urges of the untouchables. In other words, sanskritization too helps to consolidate the isolation and repression of the lowest in the caste hierarchy. Like sanskritization, efforts by the government to provide certain privileges for the untouchables have strengthened rather than weaken caste alignments. For example, the educated untouchables want to forget their former caste identity but have not yet been able to build up a satisfactory “identity” (Beteille, 1984). They also tend to discriminated against their own original caste group (Isaacs, 1967).

Their conversion to Buddhism also did not alleviate their situation either, particularly since the new-Buddhists were excluded from reservation (Parvathamma, 1968).

Earlier, the three upper castes of Brahmins. Kshatriyas & Vaishyas enjoyed the eluted social status whereas the Shudras, i.e., the untouchables were at the lowest ebb of social hierarchy in status, and when it comes to the
women, no matter whether they belonged to the upper caste or lower, their position was the same in both the cases.

Coming to the status of scheduled caste women. Historically, women in all societies been oppressed and this oppression attracted the worldwide concern in both developed and underdeveloped countries. Indian society is the ideal place for the better understanding of oppression. Women and women belonging to the lower caste and class throughout the long established Indian hierarchy have traditionally born the force of oppression generated by the Indian social structure. “Scheduled caste women constitute a lower segment in Indian society and they are the victims of dual disadvantages: - (a) of being Dalits, i.e., socio-economically and culturally marginalized groups and (b) being women share the gender-based inequalities and subordination” (Jogdand, P.G. (Ed.), 1995).

The present research study is undertaken to analyze the status of lower caste women in relation to education and gender, where caste plays a very peculiar role in Indian social structure. According to Ishwaran (1968), the effects in everyday life of the hierarchical division of caste and subcaste are manifold. Caste determines social etiquette, payment for services, family life,. Hence female education is also affected by the caste system.

Since Indian society is a male-dominated one, for a long time women were denied education as a result, scheduled caste women have one of the
lowest levels of literacy of all groups in India (in rural areas, only ten percent are literate). On the other hand, it is universally known that people belonging to scheduled castes have not only marginalized status in economic sphere but also similar marginal statuses in cultural, political, religious and other domains, which leads to the denial of basic human rights and social justice. Here, keeping these marginalization in mind, one can imagine the conditions of women belonging to scheduled caste communities.

In Vedic, Epic or later periods, one’s status and power was based on hereditary caste; mobility was also restricted in terms of horizontal and within one’s caste. Untouchables and that too women were at the lowest ebb of social hierarchy status, ritual purity and socio-political leadership.

As the time passed the caste system also underwent changes and four traditional varnas which were sub-divided into many sub-castes and emerged as endogamous sub-groups within the Hindu fold. With the invasion and conquest by Moghuls, the caste-groups became the citadels of social status, political power, economic leadership and various dominant upper castes were recognized by the ruling Moghuls as Zamindars who were not only owing the land of the area concerned, but also exercised political power and enjoyed superior status. The social distant between the ruler and ruled gave further consolidation to the caste, sub-caste groups and kept their separate identities (Suman, Shaphali, 2002).
Brahmins were having the hold on education, so that they were enjoying the higher status in the society and the establishment of British rule and the advent of western education, gave further impetus to the caste system. Britishers also were not in the favor of the education of untouchables, so that they were kept away from it.

The turn of the century witnessed a huge change in the contemporary education system, which became more open and secular in character. Lower caste people who were kept away from education also found access to the educational institutions. Drastic changes in attitude of people came when Indian headed towards the advancement in the means of transport, technological industries, urbanization, and communication. These advancements witnessed change in the attitude of caste, education of untouchables, status of women and social relations. Caste rituals, social distance and untouchability became flexible and these social evils further declined since independence.

Punalekar (1995). In the post-independence era, so many effort were made by the government of India, reservation policies and programme of the union and state government and also persistent efforts of enlightened sections within these communities like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Jyoti Ba Phule and many others who through their reform as well as emancipator movements helped in raising the economic status of some Dalit women in urban areas.
Suman, Shaphali (2002) in her study on “Education and Social Mobility Among Scheduled Castes of Aligarh” stated that mainly due to constitutional guarantees to the untouchables (Schedules Caste) and various social legislations which helped a lot in raising the status of the community not only as a whole but for the women belonging to it also. The process of westernization among the upper castes and that of Sanskritization among the scheduled castes has marked the eruption of new social values, norms, social relations and hierarchical stratification. It is proved through many sociological studies that the caste system of ancient vedic period does not exist today. Even the traditional theory through providing basis of the caste stratification cannot sustain the breaking barriers of inter-caste relations in the changing milieu. This issue was always been the centre of attraction of so many scholars and sociologists, so many studies of scheduled castes before and after independence. Freed & Freed throws some light through the help of their study of a village of Delhi territory; they observed a marked change towards untouchability and that too especially among the urban oriented persons. They also observed about the lower caste people who were illiterate, their illiteracy is the main reason for their low status and works as a hindrance to change, on the other hand those people belonging to the scheduled caste community, who are educated, are more critical to the caste system.
Another scholar V.P. Sharma in his study of Chhatisgarh region also throw light on highly educated lower caste persons, for them there are very bright chances to walk along with the upper caste persons with similar education. Another sociologist H.L. Hant also supported this view in his study “A sociological classification of scheduled castes and their socio-political trends”.

While talking about the status and education of numerous scholars (Khan and Ayesh, 1982; Kapadia and Pillai, 1972; Kamat, 1973) Show positive relation between higher caste and female education. Nagraj and Ramchandran (1992), dealing with formal education in rural Karnataka write that lingayats, the dominant castes, have the highest education levels compared to scheduled castes. Further, Mr. Kanitkar (1988) points out those educational aspirations for girls by scheduled castes and scheduled tribes were comparatively lower.

It is very well known that ignorance is the major threat to the women existence. It is due to the constant reminders that they are the objects of hatred and they have to serve upper caste people for their salvation lower caste (scheduled caste) women were not only looked down by the society. But they were considered inferior by their own men. So, that they accepted their lower status and position in the society. They accepted this discrimination as their fate most of the lower caste women work in the unorganized sector. The employment sector so scheduled caste women in
the organized sector are very few because these women are lacking education, training and also does not have any social connections. Inspite of the reservations for scheduled castes and backward classes the benefit do not reach upto them (Yadav, Neelam, 2005). The scholar also adds here that government and general public are also paying attentions for this cause like opening more schools, giving them incentives like free tuition, dresses and mid-day meals but due to their other household liabilities these are not proving to be successful.

Parvathamma traces the root cause of this stagnation in the scheduled castes. She blames the scheduled caste leaders for not being able to take initiative in their own castes. She says that upper caste dominance and constitutional guarantees and face to face. The dominant upper caste leaders do not allow the scheduled caste leaders to have and exercise much political power, she suggests for more industrialization and urbanization in order to allow more competition along caste lines.

Numerous scholars like Kaufman, Satish Sabherwal, Subramaniam and Francis observed in their studies and supported each other in the same way or the other that the conjunction of pressure form above with the pressure form below has produced new cultural patterns. Now, after 62 years of independence, the Indian caste stereotypes and socially approved interactions and civil rights. Untouchability is more occupationally practiced by the individual than on his hereditary caste. It is due to the contact with
urban areas, quota reservations and other government upliftment of the marginalized groups.

Sharma, in his study of six villages of Rajasthan, he studied different variables of caste, class, power, income, education and rural-urban distinction. While studying these variables, he observed that now there are horizontal differences within the same caste instead of the vertical one. Rural stratification has undergone so many changes, more emphasis is now paid to achieved status rather than the ascribed status, which was an earlier practice concluded that differences between the caste, class, gender and power is coming down these days.

Another sociologist Sharda (1991) discussed structural inequalities in his introductory article, “Introduction: Structural inequalities and mobility in India”. Later on in the edited volume “Tribes, Castes and Harijans”, Ajanta Publications, Delhi, he discussed all the work done so far concerning stratification and mobility. He mainly emphasized on “caste” which received a considerable attention by so many other scholars and always proved to be a sensitive issue in Indian Caste System. He included all the findings and literature in his later volume. He showed the influence of Ideologists and Social Anthropologists who dominate the field of stratification in India. In his study the unit of observation was the individual, their life, their experiences, inequality they faced, inter as well as intra generational. He also lay emphasis, that other than inequality, mobility is a very rare
phenomenon which attracted the attention of Ideologists and Social Anthropolists who dominate the field of stratification in India and also influenced Indian Sociology.

These inequalities and differences, which are an integral part of Indian Social System, will take a long time to be fully abolished. Society is changing, but the process of change is gradual. There are so many reasons for these inequalities; one of the major factors is financial statuses of untouchables. Untouchable remain economically dependent. Upper caste people enjoyed a higher status comparative to the lower castes. They were forced to do the menial tasks for upper castes. For them, one of the British administrator said that they are the very “dregs of impurity – scavengers and remover of corpses....” (Crooke, 1986, P.206).

There are so many other views of different Sociologists and Social Anthropologists who took keen interest in the status of Scheduled Castes (Untouchables). Since India got Independent, some changes came in their status also.

Panchandikar & Panchandikar have studied village Mahi in Gujarat and agreed that there are changes those who are taking benefits of changes are only the dominant caste. The dominant caste, i.e., Leuva, in the village Mahi own maximum percentage of land, money in the cooperative societies, they are the members of village panchayat and the other cooperative
societies. They hold the good and their children are also taking benefit of that. They are getting good education in the schools of village and then going outside for higher education. There one can experience the traditional form of untouchability in their study of village Mahi.

On the contrary to Panchandikar & Panchandikar's study, I.P. Desai experiences the other form of untouchability in Gujarat. His study shows that the rigid and strict untouchability is the past. People do no differentiate others only because they are born as untouchables they exercise untouchability in two forms: "private" and the other one is "public". In "private" form of untouchability, people practice untouchability, which depends upon the cleanliness of work. And in "public" form of untouchability, it has lost its significance in terms of physical contact except in village panchayat. He concluded that in those villages which are still under developed, people belonging to those areas are practicing untouchability in its traditional form, whereas, in developed villages the strictness and differences have declined.

Further Agarwal, S. (1999) in his work “Genocide of Women in Hinduism”, highlighted the hardship of Dalit (Untouchable) women which is not only due to their poverty, economical status, or lack of education, but are a direct result of the severe exploitation and suppression by upper classes, which is legitimized by Hindu religious scriptures. He reviewed Hindu religious books like Manusmriti, Atharva Vedas, Vishnu Smriti and other
literature available that these books specially like Manusmriti divide people into a stratified caste system and promotes inequality between men and women. He says that according to the Manusmriti, women have no right to education, independence or wealth.

Moses Seenarine, discusses in his article “Education of Dalit Women” that Dalit females have one of the lowest levels of literacy of all group in India, their economic status is also very poor, close to ninety percent of dalit women are rural and living under the conditions of abject poverty. They are targeted by so many government population programmes and female literacy is also a part of this strategy for both rural and urban women but, it is the Other Backward Castes, middle and upper Hindu Caste women who derive most of the benefit; dalit women are left out, with few exceptions. They are being raped and gang raped in order to terrorize a whole caste and community.

Gaborieu in his paper “Caste, Lineage Territory and Power in South Asia: Introduction”, shows that caste and lineage still hold significance in exercising power. He studied the institution of India and Nepal between 1948 and 1975.

Venugopal has given an account of the earlier uprising against the traditional caste system. In the twelfth century when Lingayat movement was started, the caste-syatem was started to overthrow the rigidity and the
traditional form of Brahmin dominated caste-system, Linga considered themselves as ritually pure. This movement was pronounced the equality and provided an opportunity to many lower castes in raising their status socially. But this movement could not sustain its existence for a long lasting period, after three hundred years, it weakened and ended as a caste system. Therefore, in this way, it can be said that whether the caste system has gone through so many ups and downs but even then it sustained itself though undergoing changes with the changing requirements of time immemorial.

Therefore, taking the reference of some studies, it can be said that caste system in India is undergoing various changes. So, is the case with the status of women whether hey belong to upper caste or the lower one. Indian society is changing according to the demand of the modern era. Women are also getting chance in various activities which were confined to the unorganized sector earlier but modern Indian social system allows them to participate actively in organized sector also. The Constitution of India guarantees them to rise socially, economically, politically, educationally and giving them reservation of seats in all government institutions and services.

With the help of these measures, their status is rising but the results are not upto the desired level. Women are becoming more aware politically and educationally. As a result they are becoming self dependent economically also. Now they are enjoying their high social status by virtue of their political and occupational position. But the overall condition is still
remains complex the places which are under developed or we can say that in rural areas the condition of women is still the same as it was earlier. On the other hand, in urban areas due to the social awareness and political rights, the discrimination based on caste has finished. The caste-type social structure can be seen in urban areas where occupation and not caste is the determinant of social status.
Review of Literature
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature is a very important and integral part of a research process. While doing research, review of literature helps the researcher to formulate theoretical and empirical base so that the objectives of the study find adequate justification. It helps in making a proper research design for the problem under study. Review of literature helps a lot in exploring the ideas related to the topic under study. A literature review forms a basis for the scholar, from the published literature on a topic by concerned scholars and researchers, with the purpose of writing literature review to raise some problem related ideas, and highlight the strengths and weakness of the topic. It gives a broader perspective to the researcher to relate the gathered information from field with that of existing body of knowledge for further theorization.

Keeping the above arguments in mind, the present research study has been conducted in district Aligarh of Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, it is necessary to review the available material, which is helpful in understanding the problem under study various studies have been conducted by various scholars on Indian caste system with special reference to the status of scheduled castes, their education and measures to improve their status but a little has been done on the impact of certain inequalities on women as a vulnerable gender category. This research study include various journal articles and books and the nature of the study mostly qualitative.
The problem of inequality is as ancient as the Indian society. Indian caste system is divided into four varnas, where Shudras, i.e. untouchables were at the lowest ebb. The present research study is undertaken to analyze the status of scheduled caste women and their education.

The “scheduled caste” is the legal and constitutional name collectively given to the groups which have traditionally occupied the lowest status in Indian society and the Hindu religion which provides the religious and ideological basis for an “untouchable” group, which was outside the caste system and inferior to all other castes. Today, untouchability is outlawed, and these groups are recognized by the Indian constitution to be especially disadvantaged because of their past history of inferior treatment, and are therefore entitled to certain rights and preferential treatment.

Wikipedia defines scheduled castes as the communities that are accorded special status by the constitution of India. These communities were considered “outcastes” and were excluded from the chaturvarna system, they were traditionally been relegated to the most menial labour with no possibility of upward mobility and subject to extensive social disadvantage and exclusion.

Economic & Political Weekly (2002) describes that in 1930, the term “Dalit” was fast used addressing the whole chaturvarna of the Indian caste system. It was used as a Hindi and Marathi translation of “depressed classes”, a term the British used for what are now called the scheduled castes. In 1930 a newspaper published for the depressed classes in Pune
called “Dalit Bandhu” (friends of dalit). Dr. B.R. Ambedkar also used this term in his Marathi speeches later on, “Dalit patterns” revived the term in their 1973 in their manifesto and included also those who were exploited, politically, economically, scheduled tribes, Neo-Buddhist, working people, landless and poor peasant, women and those who were exploited in the name of religion.

It is evident that, historically, the caste system classified people by their occupation and status. According to Sheth “ caste had a specific place in the “scpictural terms” social and economic status were supposed to be separated, the economic and social status of the various caste tended to coincide”.

Sheth (2004) stated that the turn of the 19th century brought a remarkable change between caste and occupation and has become less rigid. It accelerated with the economic boom which has taken place in India since the early 1990s. However, intermarriages between lower caste and upper caste are still very rare. Many have commented on the robustness of the caste system, “ which has survived the South Asian societies in one form or the other, despite the fundamental, ideological and structural changes that have occurred spread of religion like Islam and Christianity as well as of model secular and egalitarian ideologies, all opposed to the very idea of hierarchy based on inherited statuses”.

Gangadhar Pantawane had written a letter to Zelloit, given a clearest definition of dalit: to me, dalit is not the caste, Dalit is a man exploited by
the social and economic traditions of this country. He does not believe in God, rebirth, soul, holy books teaching separatism, fate and heaven because they have made him a slave. He does believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution (Zelliot, 2001).

Prof. Nandu Ram (1995), uses the term dalit in a broader social category of people. According to him, the term dalit in the contemporary Indian society is used for and by untouchable caste all over the country. This term includes all landless, poor peasant women, scheduled tribes, backward castes. He observed that social scientists uses dalit and untouchables interchangeably.

Hutton (1963) chosen to call the exterior castes. He painted out that the defining characteristics of the exterior castes was that contact with them entails purification on part of high caste Hindus. It is not intended that the term should have any reference to occupation as such but to those castes which by reason of their traditional position in Hindu society are denied access to temples, for instance, or have to use separate wells or are not allowed to sit inside a school house but have to remain outside or which suffer similar social disabilities.

Michael (1999) studied various scholars and also gave the analytical framework within which the census of India sit its description and enumerations of the Dalit provide a useful starting point for such a re-examination. The census-data taken, may not be accurate always but it helps
in shaping the reality. Dalits were listed in the chapters of the census devoted to caste and tribes.

The 1881 census simply describe and enumerates castes in the various provinces and states, where varna categories were grouped and so the “Dalit jatis” generally appeared at or near the end of the lists. The 1981 census adopted a standard classification on castes according to the occupation assigned to each by tradition. Dalit castes were thus included within such occupational categories as field labourers leather workers, scavengers, watchman and village menials. Then, 1901 census classified Hindu castes in order to social precedence as recognized by the native public opinion. The 1911 census provided a separate enumeration of those castes and tribes which either did not conform or to be generic Hindu religion. Then criteria were used to determine whether a caste or not (Ambedkar). The fine which applied to Dalits pertained to the denial both of various services by Brahman priests and access to the interior of temples, to causing pollution by proximity or contact, as well as to the Dalit practice of eating beef and not revering the cow.

**Origin and History:**

According to P.C. Jain and Sudha Bhatnagar (1997), Indian society is a stratified one, stratification is the direct result of class struggle and class exploitation. Ancient Indian society was stratified into different “Varnas” and “Jatis” which were determined by the accident of birth. Brahmins were at the top of the social ladder, after Brahmins it was Kshatriyas and then
Vaishyas. Shudras were placed at the lowest, they were further divided into indefinite mixed castes of varying status. “Shudra” denotes to the lowest rung of the caste stratification of the Indian society. It is said that, the Rigvedic Aryan Society and the society described in the “Atharvaveda” we found no such class division amongst the members of the contemporary society and it was continued upto the advent of “Treta Age” (Partially division and nothing like greed or a tendency to steal could be found). But slowly after the emergence of military leaders and priests the rules regarding the defilement by touch become more rigid and the lowest castes, i.e., Shudras were the worst sufferers.

It was Ghurye (1969), who studied western thinkers and come to the conclusion that most of the western thinkers called caste, were actually jatis and he thus innumerated more than two thousand jatis, each associated with a particular occupation. Ghurye helped and given the ideas to his successors who studied caste later on and also the measures taken by the government to uplift the status of the disadvantaged class. The present review of literature also based on the theoretical and empirical studies carried out on the status of scheduled castes, specially the women.

Paswan & Jaideva in their book, encyclopaedia of dalits in India (2002) says that the Dalit women is a social force, a cultural symbol and has historical background. They are estimated to contribute eighty percent of labour to strengthen the national economy. They further added that the Scheduled Caste women were being discriminated over centuries in all
spheres and aspects of their life. They observed that the portrait of women in Indian literature is very contradictory at some points it says that mother should be more respected than the father and teacher and somewhere else it advises not to believe on women”. They believe that caste plays a very important role in the life of a Dalit woman.

Mahendra Singh (2003), stated that it is an irony that the structural basis of the Hindu society is caste, which is a rigid social division of the society governed by the concept of pollution, purity and professional restrictions. In a feudal agrarian system and static village economy of an organized Aryans, the non-Aryans, Dravidians or the natives were kept and forced to live like slaves and servile class, with minimal occupational and spatial mobility formed the lowest strata of society. For centuries, they remained dominated by the caste Hindus. From the ancient days to the recent times has done great harm to the society as well as low caste people. At the time of Aryan invasion, the dominating classes enjoyed all the power, Shudras were considered a defeated race and not allowed to live within the walls of villages and towns. The Hindu doctrine of racial supremacy has remained powerful and triumphant because of divisions in the society.

Many studies shows that, women of scheduled caste community are the great sufferers. Jogdand (1995) says that women belonging to scheduled caste are “Thrice alienated” by class, patriarchy and caste. They are always subjects to serve exploitation at the work also suffer on caste ground and gang rape from upper castes, while at the same time they are the victims of
domestic violence also. In addition due to the rural development programmes rural dalit women are forced to migrate from rural to urban areas, they are getting aware about some state developmental activities has led to over burdening and self exploitation. New agricultural technology and other modernization programmes are affecting dalit women adversely. Because these policies for women empowerment are beneficial for urban based and better placed women where as women belonging to the weaker sections remain high and dry. Punalekar maintains that for the better understanding of the trends and tendencies concerning Dalit Women in India in post-independence era, it is necessary to make distinction between Dalit women in urban areas and the other who live in rural and tribal areas. Both have similarities as well as differences which are equally valid. Urban women are comparatively more secular and are involved in some other kind of occupation and taking benefits of reservation policies and programmes which is the result of the role of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar and many others, who through their reform as well as emancipatory movements helped in raising the status of urban Dalit women. Urban dalit women are found concentrated in the unorganized sector and this sector is further divided into two: (a) self employment and (b) wage employment. In self employed women covers activities like hawking, scrap collection, petty trade and home based production or service activity. These activities give a very little financial returns and also have uncertainties and insecurities. Moving on to wage employment activities, which is more
complex than the past. This sector covers activities like construction labour, land leveling, earth work, domestic labour, beedi, agarbatti and candle making etc. in this sector, non dalit workers also are the sufferers of low wages, irregular employment, absence of social security benefits and many other handicaps. They are also victims of sexual harassment and child labour. They are also sufferers of gender biasness, these dalit women are competing with men to secure purely casual employment. In rural areas, dalit women are closely identified with their caste status and associated social disabilities, they have to undergo hardships of gender. Though, there is some hope for upward improvements in health, housing and education of dalit communities and too specially for women.

Beteille (1969) argued that in India, elite educational institutional are “caste free” and their pattern is based on western styles of life. This has helped about a new distribution in the status hierarchy. He further added that education along with income and occupation became the bases of new forms of social differentiation, which tended to cut across differences based on caste. Consequently, inequalities have become more dispersed than in the past.

Pimpley (1980) confined his study to education among the school and the college students belonging to scheduled castes in Punjab. The study showed that school students have lower educational aspirations than the college students. The educational aspirations were found to have been significantly affected by the father’s education. The backwardness of these
students was attributed to environmental factors including their family background and poverty rather than to any intrinsic shot which was inherent in them because of the behaviour of their classmates which was not desirable to a large extent. They believed that the status of the scheduled castes had improved but continued to be inferior to that of other castes.

Khan (1980) analyzed the changing status of scheduled castes since independence in some parts of rural Karnataka. His study showed that until recently, the scheduled castes had no access to education and that their position had changed considerably mostly because of the various steps taken by the government during the last two decades. He observed that maximum changes had taken place in schools where the traditional social restrictions placed on the scheduled castes had almost disappeared. He saw a significant change in the relationship between the caste Hindu masters and scheduled caste employees. The study further showed that the working of government policies and programs and measures had not borne the expected results. There was a wide gap between what the government envisaged and what was actually found in rural areas.

Vishwanandham & Reddy (1985) focused on the educational achievements of scheduled caste. Their study was based on the assumption that scheduled castes are no longer a homogenous community and that there are perceptible differences among them with respect to their class, status and power. They hypothesised that parental attitudes, perception traditions in regard to education can influence educational attainment among scheduled
castes. Their study was conducted in Hyderabad city. The study also showed that there was a close association between the social class position of the parents and the educational achievement of their children among scheduled castes, most of the top achievers from scheduled castes community belonged to the high economic status and on the other hand person who are under achievers belonged to the low economic status group. The findings of their study suggested that unless structural changes were brought about, they continued to remain educationally backward.

Shah (1984) significantly studied various aspects of caste, class and reservation. He observed that even after the emergence of economic differentiation within the untouchables, it can not be concluded that the class based society had merged. He further stated that even though the caste system appeared to be “breaking down” it and pollution had disappeared from society. Those who belonged to the higher caste inherited the tradition of education whereas the other were denied these educational opportunities. These differences were based on the caste prejudices and the stereotypic images of the scheduled castes.

Reddy (1986) also made his contribution in studying the patterns of non-formal education and social change. In his study he pointed out that non-formal education was an important means to the status change among poor and disadvantaged people, who want to liberate themselves from ignorance, disadvantages and to gain equality and social justice. A number of voluntary organizations are promoting non-formal education in India. He
stated that non-formal education deals with the problem of the drop outs. Voluntary organizations tried to improve the worse educational conditions of poor masses and gave them access to education through their educational programmes. The poor and the women belonging to these castes and classes who were not able to get education through formal institutions could now have access to education. Reddy through his study also revealed that non-formal education is people’s education and it helps in the liberation of people from ignorance and leads to change in society.

Guru (1986) keenly observed the relationships between the process of sanskritization and the provision of reservations. He stated that reservation played a contradictory role in the process of sanskritization, which enabled the whole scheduled caste community to undergo a process of change in their status.

His study clearly showed that reservation was a practical necessity for removing not only the economic backwardness of scheduled caste but also a drastic change in their education and helped the women be equal to their men.

Rao (1996) analyzed contemporary Dalit ideology. His study was confined to a south Indian village called Thalupuru in the Nellore District of Andhra Pradesh. He maintains that Mahatma Gandhi, Jyoti Phule and Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar played a very important role and considered to be the icons of Dalit or backward class protests and movements. These movements were based and directed by the ideology of these great social reformers.
Rao stated that “In the village where a vast majority of the Dalit lives in the ideology of the national or regional celebrities…..” Dalits engaged in everyday protests promoted and shaped by caste ideologies. The Dalits were highly influenced by the local ideologies that served their interest.

Malhotra (1986) analyzed education and development in India and social disadvantages faced by SCs. The study revealed that progress of scheduled caste students in various aspects of their “cognitive” development such as intelligence and reading ability and their school achievement might be slower than that of the higher caste groups. He further stated the drop out among Scheduled Caste students was higher than in the other groups. The reason behind this was mainly the unawares about the availability of scholarships and about the opportunity for further education and future vocation. Later on, he discussed the constitutional provisions. He stated that under these provisions and the state government within its both human and financial resources should extent special facilities to the scheduled castes. Further he added that there was no lacking of sincerity on the part of government, but only government could not resolve this problem alone. Voluntary agencies also worked for the upliftment of SCs but in spite of the best efforts made by the government and voluntary agencies, not much could be done. Hence it is necessary to change the attitude of society. The stigma of untouchability has not yet gone, although much work has been done in this regard at the political level to do away with it.
Vidyut Bhagwat (1995) critically analyzed the status of Dalit women and stated Dalit women are not sharing similar status as the low educated high caste women are enjoying. And in that way the potential of Dalit educated women has been bogged down. Today dalit women are working in various government offices, they are active members of Zilla Parishad but they are still the bearers of the burden of double day, sexual division of labour and overall patriarchal ideology and not saying anything about it.

He further stated that the term ‘Dalit Women’ is an imagined category which is necessary because it gives hope that Dalit women in near future will give new critical dimensions to Indian feminist movement as well as to Dalit movement. Inspite of so many social and political movements, Dalit women are silenced today by narrowing their democratic space. According to Bhagwat Urban Dalit women whether they are working or taking care of their homes and children are still awaiting to be explored. In another chapter Jogdand admittedly mentioned the problems of women regarding their status in society and maintained that despite several efforts and women’s movement still the problem of Dalit women have not received adequate attention. They are in search for their own identity. They are expected to have some revolutionary potential, so that they can fight with the complexities of caste and gender they might also challenge all three structures viz. patriarchy, caste and class. Today, Dalit women are making their presence in the active participation in Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s movement
and even later struggles. They are protesting towards the breaking down the cultural and material servility.

On the other hand he further added that due to the growing modernization and development and hence Dalit women should be brought under purview of Hindu Code Bill.

Yadav (2003) studied that it was Brahmanical order of Hindu society where dalits were constantly reminded that they are the objects of hatred and their salvation lies in the service of the upper caste. This developed in them a feeling of inferiorly complex which was much more aggrevated among the females of the dalits since they were considered inferior to their own men. They involve themselves in doing menial tasks as these tasks required no education or training they developed a mentality that education is meant for upper and richer castes, not for them. Thus, as a result the women belonging to scheduled caste community remained illiterate or their literacy rate is very low as compare to the upper caste non-dalit women.

Yadav further added that even after more than 60 years of independence dalit women are still in a miserable plight in relation to their education and employment. Despite of so many governmental as well as general public’s efforts towards their betterment like opening more schools, giving incentives like free tuitions, dress, and mid day meals, etc. Dalit women are still engaged with their household work. To have a sound social and economical progress, education is very important but in the process of
making this progress happen, it is necessary to understand their psyche and sociological problems which they are facing in their day to day life.

Dr. J. Muthumary in his article “Dalit Women in India” discussed almost all aspects of the life of Dalit women. Muthumary stated that there is a meagre improvement in the socio-economical condition of dalit in the past 50 years, which is not enough compared to non-dalits. Economic backwardness is mostly due to injustice done to them by the high castes and also due to exploitation, which led to social discrimination, economic deprivation and educational backwardness.

He stated the reasons for the high rate of illiteracy among dalit women for e.g. resistance from the family to send their girls to schools, lack of physical facilities like accommodation, school, transport and medical facilities, working to earn for the family prevent the girls from attending school, working with parents to earn their livelihood in beedi factories or other unorganized sector made them illiterate etc.

According to National sample survey on dalits, the literacy rate is 31.48% for boys and 10.93% for girls. Dalit women belonging to the creamy layer of the society are better with good education and socially and economically they are well off like other castes. Dalit women are aware of the welfare schemes provided by the government but their percentage is very low as compare to the total dalit population specially in rural areas. Women are not properly informed about the welfare schemes for their development.
These programmes also do not reach the needy dalit women because they are cornered by the very few dalit women.

Later, he discussed some suggestions for the better implementation of the schemes and also given some suggestions for effective implementation of schemes.

He further added about the female infanticide, which is a very common practice among the uneducated dalit families. Due to the lack of educational development among Scheduled Caste women, they were not sent to school because of the responsibilities at home. Therefore, the gender discrimination starts at a very early stage in the life of a dalit girl. Their marriage happens at a very early age after which the education is stopped. Generally in the male dominated society, polygamy is allowed and more so in many dalit families. This is one of the main reason for the position of the women deterioration. Earlier, the position of Dalit women was very poor but in twentieth century, Mahatma Gandhien movement to educate women, enabled women to fight the evils and this helped them in improving their position.

The contribution of SC women to the economic development of our country is significant specially in the agricultural sector. The work participation rate (WPR) of SC population is said to be for males 22.25% and for females 25.98%.

Education enables women to plan their family, educate the children, assist the husbands in family matters and office going and professional girls
improve the economic conditions. On the whole family becomes socially
developed because of the education of girls. It also increased intercaste
marriages, which is definitely a sign of development.

One’s association with his/her caste played a very decisive role in
their socio-economic status. After independence, the government allows
positive discrimination of the depressed classes along with the law of
democratic socialist and secular country. The term, caste was used by the
British and enlisted these castes, which were used later on by the Indian
governments to create lists of communities who were entitled for ‘positive
discrimination’. Communities other than the elite ones, were classified as
lower castes or classes, which were listed in three categories. Scheduled
castes were the first among these three categories. This was the category of
untouchables.

Zelliot (1970) confined her study to Mahars of Maharashtra who
perceived the importance of politics as a mean of ameliorating their social
condition. She observed that Mahar in the village community was a village
servant. His touch was polluting and he did not come into direct contact with
a caste Hindu. First of all, Mahars tried to claim religious rights as the equals
of the caste Hindus by making three temple entry attempts. The claim to
religious rights lost ground as the consciousness of the importance of
education and political power articulated by western educated Ambedkar.
They were prepared to reject Hinduism together. The figure of chokhemala
remained as a source of caste pride rather than a stimulant to claim a place of
worth in the Hindu hierarchy Ambedkar stated that since success in the case of temple entry had been achieved, the movement should continue. He urged the depressed classes to try to concentrate their energy and resources on politics and education. The factor that led to the Mahar social awakening was military service and contact with the British, employment opportunities outside the village. The beginnings of education and all that Ambedkar had inspired them to do help them find their way into the political arena and equipped them for the use of political means towards a modern goal of social equality. Ambedkar converted himself to Buddhism along with a large number of Mahars, but religious conversion did not bring about much improvement in their social status.

Beteille (1970) in his “caste, class and power” stated that social mobility, economic change and political modernization led to the creation of not only of a new set of relations, but also of new values, new attitudes and new aspirations. Some of the contours of the traditional structure tended to be blurred and new ones tended to emerge. He found greater tendency towards fusion than fission in caste.

Bhatt (1975) examined the relationship between ‘caste and politics’. His analysis covered four states of India these were. Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. He found that caste status was not necessarily a condition for politicization and the relationship between caste status and political activity. It was, rather because of the intervening effects of socio-economic status changed then if little relationship was to exist
between caste, status and political orientation or influence then, caste activity would also change, Bhatt further stated that in a change from traditional to non-traditional occupation, low status caste generally moved to lower status occupations. Processes like education, urbanization and the prevailing social conditions worked against lower status castes groups who wish to acquire a higher status in non-traditional occupation.

Omen (1977) studied the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. His study pointed out that there were various sources of change for the improvement of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. These were the state action, educational development, political action, political associations such as Dalit, panther, allotment of land, establishment of cooperatives etc. Omen observed that various developmental befits are occupied by few sections of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, be it the distribution of land, entry into educational institutions or representation in legislative bodies and government services. Thus a cumulative process started operating for the categories with certain initial advantages. This led to the substantial disparities between the various groups among the SCs and STs and resulted in the emergence of a new prosperous class effecting social differentiation among them.

Omen was in favour of a mass movement of a wider scale with a systematic effort to restructure the prevalent power structure, particularly at the grass-root level so that the development benefits really reached the poor and the disadvantaged.
Brass (1984), stated that development of political effectiveness of the scheduled caste as a group, which has been hindered by the continued educational backwardness. This is true for most of the low castes of low caste groups which come under the constitutional definition of scheduled castes. During 1980s the political activities of scheduled castes spread all over the country, including Uttar Pradesh.

During the course of field work he found that in Uttar Pradesh the Chamars are the best educated and the most politically conscious group among the scheduled castes throughout the state, they are employed in the rural sectors primarily as agricultural labourers and, in the urban areas they are placed in inferior menial occupations.

Further, he added few names of the successful scheduled caste persons who worked for the advancement of his community in Aligarh district, he specially mentioned the name of B.P. Maurya (former M.P) a dynamic and popular leader.

Brass mentioned that before independence the congress never seriously attempted to organize the low castes which remained largely outside the mainstream of nationalist policies in U.P. Besides this, the low castes did not form a significant political force in the pre-independence period and their demands were not clearly articulated.

He further stated that with the adoption of adult franchise and the spread of education, groups which were unorganized in the pre-independence period began to find leaders to voice their demands.
Padhy & Mahaptra’s (1988) studied the reservation policy examined the recent trends of reservation policy in India. It was observed that the benefits of reservation were reaped by some economically affluent and socially influential communities who got their name included in the list of scheduled castes on the plea that they were educationally backward. This was the case with Ahirs, Kurmis and Mandals in North and Lingayats in the South.

They also noticed that in the various services reservation policy yielded poor results. Recruitment in Class I, II and Class III services, were low. Besides, those who were able to enter the services under the reservation scheme, were unable to attain managerial and higher administrative services.

Sachchidananda (1988) focused on the emergence of scheduled caste elite in Bihar. He observed that elite under study had been most active in the propagation of education. This section of society was keen to see that the advantages conceded to them were made available for the common mass of scheduled castes. Some of them have been instrumental. In promoting the caste solidarity and political consciousness among the people. The elite have been most active in prohibiting the practice of child marriage and encouraging freedom in the choice of mates. They have also taken interest in preventing marriages from breaking up and tried to encourage widow re-marriage. The elite have adopted both the traditional prestige system as well as the modern prestige symbols such as education, occupation, power, and
the western style of life. The elite serve as a reference models for the masses.

This study revealed the fact that in education, employment and representation in legislatures, some scheduled caste had a larger share than others. The result was that more backward among the scheduled caste continued to be relegated to the background while the most advanced sections become still more advanced and prosperous.
Government Programmes &

Policies for the Development of Scheduled Caste Women
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN

The present study seeks to describe the salient features of the social change that came among the scheduled caste women and their socio-cultural aspirations. As it is evident that women represent half of the population and half of the potential in every society. Women are the most important part of society and the development of society is incomplete if it does not encompass women. Present study seeks the status of scheduled caste women in contemporary Indian society. Their education, which is gradually increasing now-a-days. Due to their association with their caste, they remained deprived and disadvantaged; they faced the age-old stigma of untouchability with all its disabilities. In the contemporary Indian society the problems and patterns of adjustments to the new situation are likely to be characteristically different from those of the educated women belonging to the caste Hindus. It is known the structure of the traditional Indian society is characterized by the spirit of social inequality based on birth and sex.

In the Encyclopaedia of Dalits in India Paswan & Jaideva (2002), stated that history has referred to Dalits as people without a history of their own. They have been marginalized as objects in a country rather than being treated as its subjects-objects of philanthropic and social work rather than subjects of a nation who have equal rights as other citizens to all the benefits, which are given to them as worthy citizens. Rather than that they
have been pushed around and subjugated and exploited at every point and their life. Thus, their status needs to be uplifted and all the atrocities meted out against them, put to a check. For this we need certain strict measures to uplift them through sanctions by law, which give them a chance to avail facilities like reservation in employment and education and thus emancipate themselves further in the mainstream of the country.

Neelam Yadav (2003), stated that regarding education in India, nineteenth century may be noted for the most abominable conditions for women as well as the initiation of their emancipation. At the beginning of the century, the women were humiliated and tortured, kept illiterate, tradition bound and incomplete subjugation to the men’s well.

Reformers started their reform in the direction of women emancipation in the late nineteenth century and continued in the twentieth century. They succeeded in breaking the strong nations of women’s inferior status. However, the process of awakening to reality was initiated and India passed to an era in which myth around women began to be seriously questioned in terms of realities of human existence. Women started regaining their freedom of will and intellect. Still, the majorities of women were believed to be emotionally morally, biologically and intellectually inferior to women and so were unable to contemplate their equal status with men. To alter this situation it was required that they should undergo a transition in its outlook towards them.
In India, education is the most important instrument for human resource development, education, therefore occupies top priority amongst various measurers taken to improve the status of women in India.

India, A reference Annual of 2005 describes that before 1976, education was the exclusive responsibility of the states. The Constitutional Amendment of 1976, which included education in the concurrent list, was a for reaching step. The substantive, financial and administration implication required a new sharing of responsibility between the Union Government and the states. While the role and responsibility of the states in education remained largely unchanged, the Union Government accepted a larger responsibility of reinforcing the national and integrative character of education, to maintain quality and standards including those of the teaching profession at all levels and monitory of the educational requirements of the country.

Neelam Yadav (2003), again threw light on the present scenario in India and added that education is the most important instrument for human resource development. Education, therefore occupies top priority amongst various measurers taken to improve the status of women in India. In recent years the focus of planning has shifted from equipping women for their traditional roles of house-wives and mothers to recognizing their worth as producers, making a major contribution to family and national income.

Girls belonging to scheduled caste communities are lagging behind the boys. The ratio of S.C. boys to girls in the elementary classes is 2:1. in
the VI to VIII classes, 61.9 percent of girls in the general population are enrolled, whereas among scheduled castes this proportion is only 20.9 percent; the reasons for scheduled castes and scheduled tribe girls lagging behind boys are mainly rooted in socio-economic conditions and environmental constraints such as inaccessibility of schools in tribal areas. Irrelevance of formal education curriculum to the immediate environment is also responsible for low initial enrolment and subsequent drop out rates.

In the Reference Annual (2005), describes that the Central Government played a very important role in evaluating and monitoring of educational policies and programmes, the most notable among them are the National Policy of Education (NPE), 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA), 1986 as updated in 1992. The modified policy envisages to bring about uniformity in education, making adult education programmes a mass movement, providing universal access, retention and quality in elementary education, special emphasis on education of girls, establishment of pace-setting schools like Navodaya Vidhyalayas in each district, vocationalization of secondary education, synthesis of knowledge and interdisciplinary research in higher education, starting more Open Universities in the States, strengthening of All India Council of Technical Education, encouraging sports, physical education, Yoga and adoption of an effective evaluation method etc. Besides a decentralized management structure had also been suggested to ensure popular participation in education. The POA lays down a detailed strategy for the implementing agencies.
De Haan, (2005), pointed out that while the 83\textsuperscript{rd} constitutional amendment recognizes education as a fundamental right to all citizens, disparities continue to be pronounced between the various castes. The Government of India’s approach to historically marginalized groups draws on provision made in the Indian constitution, which contains explicit state obligation towards protecting and promoting social, economic and cultural rights. “The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social justice and all forms of exploitation (\textit{Directive Principle of State Policy, Article 46}). The constitution mandates positive discrimination in government services, state-run, and sponsored educational institutions. Amendments to the constitution also enabled representation of Scheduled Caste men and women in local governance structure.

Neelam Yadav (2003), pointed out the social reformers of nineteenth century raised the demand for women’s transformation but to make them more capable to fulfilling their traditional roles. Since independence, the policy makers have argued for universal education and for making education as a tool for bringing about social equality. Female enrolment in educational institutions is low as compared with males and drop out rates are higher. The factors which do not permit the closing of the existing gap between the education of men and women are many. While undertaking the review of the educational system at the time of formulation of the \textit{National Policy on}
Education 1986, it was noted that the system was caught in a state of ambivalence, aiming at creating an equal society, while at the same time not disturbing the class, caste and gender relationship.

Education enables women to acquire basic skills and abilities, and fosters a value system which is conducive to raising their status in society. Efforts have been made over the past three decades of planned development to enroll more girls in schools and encourage them to stay in schools, to contribute their education as long as possible and to provide non-formed educational directives in respect of providing free and compulsory education upto the age of 14 years has been included as one of the components of “Minimum Needs Programme” and given overriding priority. In the chain of the efforts made by the government, great emphasis has been laid on women’s education in the five years plans. The first five years plan advocated the need for adopting special measures for solving the problems of women’s education. It held that women, “must have the same opportunities as men for taking all kinds of work and this presupposes that they get equal facilities so that their entry into the professions and public services is in no way prejudicial”. It further added that “at the secondary and the university stage it should have a vocational and occupational basis, as far as possible, so that who complete such stages may be in a position, if necessary, to immediately take up some vocation or other”. According the educational facilities for girls continued to expand in the subsequent plans.
The second plan continued the emphasis on overall, expansion of educational facilities. The report of the National Committee on Women’s Education (1959) made strong impact on the next five years plan.

The third five years plan launched important schemes like condensed scheme courses for adult women, Bal Sevika Training and Child Care Programmes. Subsequent plans supported these measures and also continued incentive such as free text-books and scholarships for girls. This trend continued in the fourth and fifth five year plans.

The sixth five year plan was proved as the landmark in the inclusion of women’s education as one of the major programmes under women and development which was an outcome of the publication of the report of the committed on the status of women in India. The programme for universalization of elementary education were specially directed towards higher enrolment and retention of girls in schools. It was envisaged to promote Balwadi cum-creches attached to the schools to enable girls responsible for sibling care at home attend schools. Women teachers, where necessary, were to be appointed in rural areas to encourages girls education. Science teaching in girl schools and colleges had to be strengthened to achieve greater participation of women in science and technology. Multipurpose institutions were developed for imparting training in arts, crafts etc.

The seventh plan envisages restructuring of the educational programmes and modification of school curriculum to eliminate gender bias.
Enrolments of girls in elementary, secondary and higher education courses, formal as well as non-formal has been accorded high priority. Education has been made for girls at elementary stage. Various schemes and measurers were launched to reach 100 percent coverage in elementary education. **Financial assistance schemes** to voluntary agencies to run early childhood (pre school centers) as adjuncts of primary/middle school are to be expanded. Special efforts laid to be made to enroll children belonging to scheduled castes areas. Incentives by way of distribution of uniform, free text-books and attendance scholarships to needy girls are to be continued. It is also proposed the expand of the **“Open learning system”** including correspondence courses for them.

To expedite education among the girls of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, additional facilities will continue to be provided under the “**Development of Backward Classes”** sector. Girls above the matriculation stage will get higher scholarship/stipends than male students.

Under the **National Sports Policy**, participation of women and girls in sports and games is to be encouraged. Stress is to be laid on the identification of sports talent among women and provisions made for sports scholarships, coaching and nourishment support for promising girls.

Reference Annual (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008) describes that since, India became free, the government have taken number of steps to strengthen the educational base of the persons belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes. **National Policy on Education 1986** and the **Programme of Action**
(POA) 1992, these following provisions for SCs and STs have been incorporated in the existing schemes of the departments of the Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Education:

a) Relaxed norms for opening primary/middle schools; a primary school with in 1 km. walking distance from habitation of population upto 200 instead of habitation of population upto 300.

b) Abolition of tuition fee in all states in government schools at least up to the upper primary level in fact most of the states have abolished tuition fees for SC/ST students upto the senior secondary level.

c) Incentives like free text books, uniforms, stationary, school bag etc. for these students;

d) The mid-day meal scheme: a successful incentive programme, covers all students of primary classes in all the government and local body and government aided schools in the country with the aim to improve enrolment, attendance and retention while simultaneously impacting on the nutritional status of the children.

e) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a historic astride towards achieving the long cherished goal of universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) while bridging social, regional and gender gaps in society, the programme lay emphasis on the education of the girl child. The main features of the programme are:-

(i) Focus on the girls especially belonging to SC/ST communities and minority groups.
(ii) Back to schools for out of school girls.

(iii) Free textbooks for girls, special coaching/remedial classes and a congenial learning environment.

(iv) Teacher’s sensitization programmes to promote equitable learning opportunities.

(v) Special focus for innovative projects related to girl’s education.

(vi) Recruitment of 50 percent female teachers.

f) **District Primary Programme (DPEP)** provides infrastructure facilities and special interventions for the education of girls, SC, STs, disabled etc.

g) **The constitutional (86th Amendment) Bill** notified of 13th December 2002 provides for free and compulsory elementary education as a fundamental right, for all children in the age group of 6-14 years.

h) **Mahila Samakhya (MS)** addresses traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement. This involves enabling (especially from socially and economically disadvantage and marginalized groups) to address and deal with problems of isolation and lack of self confidence, oppressive social costumes and struggle for survival, all of which inhibit their empowerment.

i) The scheme of **Kasturba Gandhi Swatantrata Vidhyala** is to improve literacy among the women belonging to SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities. It is proposed to set up 500 residential schools in districts
having less than 10 percent literacy among women. Initially schools would be upto class V and subsequently upgraded in rural areas.

**j)** **Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education (EGC and AIE)** has been launched to provide access to school less habitations.

**k)** **Shikha Karmi Project (SKP)** aims at universalization and qualitative improvement of primary education in remote, arid and socio-economically backward villages in Rajasthan with primary attention to girls. It is noteworthy that in **Shiksha Karmi Schools**, 74 percent of the students are from SCs, STs and OBCs.

**l)** **Reservation** of seats for SCs and STs in Central Government institution of higher education. There is no relaxation in minimum qualifying cut off stages for admission, apart from reservation.

**m)** The UGC has established SC/ST cells in 113 universities to ensure proper implementation of reservation policy.

**n)** To improve academic skills and linguistic proficiency of students in various subjects and to raise their level of comprehension remedial and special watching is provided and special coaching is provided for SC/ST students and for those who marginally fail in the entrance examination are provided a one year preparatory course and those who qualify and admitted to the first year of B.Tech course.

**o)** The UGC provides relaxation of 5 percent at the Master’s level for appointment as lecturer for SC/CT candidates. The commission has
also reduced the minimum percentage of marks required for appearing in the NET examination to 50 percent at master’s level for SCs/STs.

p) UGC awards scholarships, research associate ships, fellowships exclusively to SC/ST students. UGC also awards Junior fellowships every year in science and humanities including social sciences to SC/ST candidates who appear in the National Eligibility Test (NET) of the UGC and qualify the eligibility test for lecturer ship.

q) SC/ST candidates are provided relaxation upto 10 percent in cut off marks for the Junior Research Fellowship (JRF) test and for all the SC and ST candidates qualifying for the JRF are awarded fellowship.

r) IITs have scheme under which SC/ST students, who fail to qualify entrance examinations, are admitted to preparatory courses run by IITs with those who qualify at the end of the preparatory courses being offered admission.

s) Tuition fee exemption, book bank facility and scholarships are given to SC/ST students in IITs.

t) Out of 43,000 scholarships at the secondary stage for talented children from rural area, 13,000 scholarships are exclusively reserved for SC/ST students subject to fulfillment of criteria laid down.

u) 225 scholarships are exclusively reserved for SC/ST students under the National Talented Search Scheme conducted by NCERT.
v) The Central Institute for Indian Languages, Mysore has a scheme for development of Indian languages through Research, developing manpower and production of materials in Modern Indian Languages including Tribal Languages. The institute has worked in more than 90 tribal and border languages.

w) Under the scheme of strengthening of boarding and hostel facilities of girls students of secondary and higher secondary schools cent percent financial assistance is given to voluntary organizations to improve enrolment of adolescent girls belonging to rural areas and weaker sections. Preferences is given to educational backward districts particularly those predominantly inhabited by SCs/STs and educationally backward minorities.

x) 146 districts have been identified as low female literacy districts to be given focused attention by the Centre as well as State/Union Territories for implementation of programmes /schemes.

y) From the allotted Budgets of the Departments of Elementary Education and Literacy and Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, 15 percent and 7.5 percent are allotted under the special component plan and tribal, sub-plan for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes respectively.

A Reference Annual of 2007 describes that The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), the highest advisory body to advise the Central and State Governments in the field of Education, was first
established in 1920 and dissolved in 1923 as a measure of economy. It was revived in 1935 and had continued to exist till 1994. CABE has a particularly important role to play at the present juncture in view of the significant socio-economic and socio-cultural developments taking place in the country and for the view of National Policy on Education which is also due. It is a matter of importance that the Central and State Governments, and educationists and people representing all interests, should increase their interaction and evolve a participative process of decision making in education, which enhances the federal structure of our polity. The National Policy on Education, 1986 (modified in 1992) also envisages that the CABE will a pivotal role in reviewing educational development, determining the changes required to improve the system and monitoring implementation, and will function through appropriate mechanisms created to ensure contact with, and coordination among, the various areas of human resource development. Accordingly the CABE has since been reconstituted CABE was held on 10th and 11th August 2004. The Board consists of nominated members representing various interests in addition to elected members from the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, and the representative of the Government of India, State Governments, UT Administrators and the representatives of the Government of India.

In the meeting of the reconstituted CABE held on 10-11 August 2004 some critical issues had emerged needing detailed deliberations. Accordingly, seven CABE committees were set up to examine:
i) Free and compulsory Education Bill and other issues related to Elementary Education.

ii) Girl’s Education and the Common School System.

iii) Universalization of Secondary Education.


v) Integration of Culture Education in the School Curriculum.

vi) Regulatory Mechanism for the Text books and Parallel Text Books taught in school outside the Government System, and

vii) Financing of Higher and Technical Education.

**Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS)** or institute of people’s education is a polyvalent or multifaceted adult education programme aimed at improving the vocational skill and quality of life of the beneficiaries. The objective of the scheme is educational, vocational and occupational development of the socio-economically backward and educationally disadvantage groups of urban/rural population particularly neo-literates, semi-literates, SCs, STs, women and girls, slum dwellers, migrant workers etc.

Jogdand (1995), further added that in addition in the series of the various steps taken by the government for scheduled castes especially women. A document “**National perspective plan for women, 1988-2000 A.D.**” has noted that “employment opportunities in the governmental and public sectors and the private corporate sector are limited in view of the general constraints on resources for region, expansion and dependence on the dictates of the market mechanisms which are prejudicial to women.
Given these realities and based on the performance of previous decades, it is unlikely that this sector can offer much relief by way of expanded employment potential to women.

National services volunteer scheme (NSVS), launched with effect from 1977-78, aims at providing opportunities to students, generally speaking those who have completed their first degree, to involve themselves on a voluntary basis, in national building activities for a specific period on a whole-time bases. The requirement regarding completion of the first degree course may be relaxed in the case of students who discontinued their education after completion of Intermediate/Higher Secondary Education to participate in mass movement for a better political and social order, in case of students belonging to scheduled castes/scheduled tribes who have passed Intermediate/Higher Secondary Examination and in case of women students if in a particular district/area graduate women students are not available. The National Service Volunteer is envisaged as a social engineer, one who is striving to discover his creative potential and to gain a deep and critical insight into the issue involved in the process of development, and who is willing to commit all his energy in the service of the community and the country.

In the Fourth Joint Review Mission of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan witness a significant increase in over all literacy rates and school participation rates across the country since the early 1990s. Gender and social disparities have also declined with an overall increase in school
attendance. This is confirmed by the data from various sources including the 
National family Health Survey-II (1998/99), Reproductive and Child 
Health Survey 2004-04, the 2001 Census and routine minority information 
from the Department of Education. The country is approaching here 
universalization of enrolment at the primary stage. The Gross Enrollment 
Rate has increased from 90% in 2003-2004 to 98% in 2004-2005. Similarly 
the net enrollment rate has risen from 72% to 82% during the same period 
(Department of Education, 2006).

A number of the rising factors that have contributed to the rising 
enrollment rate including the introduction of mid-day meals, opening of 
alternate schools, promoting the participation of Parent Teacher 
Associations (PTAs) and massive enrolment drives.

A constitutional amendment was passed in 2002 making free and 
compulsory education a fundamental right for children aged 6-14 years. The 
national and state governments continue to deliver the programme Sarva 
Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), which aims to achieve universal elementary 
education by 2010.

Ghurye (1969), studied the patterns of caste and race in context of the 
contemporary Indian society and the efforts by the government taken in the 
direction for the overall betterment and educational upgradation. He pointed 
out that “it was in 1923 that the government issued a resolution that no grant 
would be paid to any aided educational institution which refused admission 
to the children of the depressed classes”.

65
The District Welfare Officer for Scheduled Castes represents this department at the district level and Backward Classes. He is assisted by Tehsil Welfare Officers, one in each Tehsil. The administrative control at the state level is vested with the Director, Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes, Haryana, Chandigarh.

The main functions of the District Welfare Officer for scheduled castes and backward classes include creating public opinion against untouchability and to adopt measures for the welfare and uplift of the scheduled caste, *vimukta jatis* and other backward classes. He also guards the interests of these classes against their victimization, untouchability and ejectment.

The different professions adopted by these classes include agricultural labour, sweeping and scavenging, leather tanning, shoe making, basket and rope making, pigs and sheep rearing, hair cutting, iron smithy and dyeing etc.

The Census of 1991 recorded 1,89,813 persons (102741 males and 87072 females) belonging to the scheduled castes. Out of them 1,67205 persons lived in rural areas and 22608 persons in towns.

The Department of Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes has adopted certain measures for the benefit of these classes in pursuance of the directive principle embodied in the constitution of India.
ADVANCE OF LOANS (MISCELLANEOUS): -

An interest free loan to the tune of Rs. 800/- to each post-metric and Rs. 2000/- to each post-graduate scheduled castes student is advanced for the purchase of books and stationery articles. It is recoverable in 20 half yearly installments of its disbursement. It is governed by the backward classes (grant of loans) act, 1957 and the rules framed there under. The Haryana Harijan Kalyan Nigam, Chandigarh, also provides financial assistance to Harijans for their socio-economic and educational uplift. The loans are advanced at moderate rate of interest recoverable in easy installments, for various trades and profession. The loan is advanced for higher studies in which the interest is further reduced.

WIDOW DAUGHTER MARRIAGE SCHEME:-

This scheme was started in 1988 with the aim of providing financial assistance for the marriage of daughters of widows and destitute women belonging to scheduled caste/notified/ tapariwas community for meeting the marriage expenses of the daughter. A sum of Rs. 42,500/- was disbursed in the year 1988 which in 1999-2000 rose to Rs. 2,70,000/- and number of beneficiaries were 27.

KANYA DAN SCHEME

This scheme has been started w.e.f. 1.11.1999 with the aim of providing financial help on the occasion of the marriage of SC/ST girls. The grant will be available to only these SC/ST families, which are living below
the poverty line. A sum of Rs. 3,41,700/- was disbursed to 67 beneficiaries during the year 1999-2000.

**POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP TO SC**

The objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to the SC/ST students studying at Post matriculation or Post Secondary stage to enable them to complete their education. During the year 1999-2000 a sum of Rs. 12469/- was disbursed to students belonging to SC Community.

**MERITORIOUS INCENTIVE TO SCHEDULED CASTE STUDENTS WHO SECURE 1st DIVISION:**

This scheme was started in the year 1997 with the aim of providing incentive to scheduled caste students who secure 1st division in the 1st attempt from post metric to post graduate including medical, engineering, agricultural and veterinary classes to promote higher education among students of Haryana belonging to SC category in Govt. as well as in recognized affiliated college/institution. A sum of Rs. 12000/- was disbursed to the SC studying during the year 1997 which in 1999-2000 went upto Rs. 20,500 and number of student were 19.

**OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES.**

**Subsidy for construction of new house:**

In order to provide shelter to the homeless members of scheduled castes and vimukat jatis, subsidies are granted for the construction of new house. A subsidy of Rs. 2000/- for the construction of a house was given to a person who had no house of his own. The subsidy amount of Rs. 2000/- was
raised to Rs. 5000/- in each case from the year 1988-89. The proprietary rights of the house remain vested in the Government for 20 years after which the house becomes the property of the beneficiary. The latter, of course has the free use of the house during this period.

**Industrial Training:**

In 1999-2000 a sum of Rs. 4,40,000/- was spent on providing facilities for industrial training. To improve the economic condition of the member of the scheduled castes, their young men are trained as skilled workers by giving them training on an apprenticeship basis in various trades in different industrial training institutions. Twenty percent of the seats are reserved for scheduled castes & two percent for other backward Classes. During the course of training, which varies from one year to two years, a monthly stipend of Rs. 100/- is granted to a trainee belonging to the scheduled castes. No stipend under this scheme is admissible to a trainee of other backward classes. This particular scheme is calculated to improve the status not only of the individuals concerned but also of the families to which they belong.
### Scheduled Caste Population in Relation to Total Population in India & U.P.

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<tr>
<td>Population of India</td>
<td>437313115</td>
<td>547367926</td>
<td>683997512</td>
<td>846302688</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste Population of India</td>
<td>44445952</td>
<td>79995896</td>
<td>82480251</td>
<td>138223277</td>
<td>166635700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population of U.P.</td>
<td>73746401</td>
<td>88341144</td>
<td>11085874</td>
<td>139112287</td>
<td>166052859</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste Population of U.P.</td>
<td>18548916</td>
<td>15399881</td>
<td>19095413</td>
<td>29276455</td>
<td>35148377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Scheduled Caste Population in U.P.</td>
<td>25.15</td>
<td>17.43</td>
<td>17.22</td>
<td>21.05</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Scheduled Caste of U.P. of Scheduled Caste of India</td>
<td>41.73</td>
<td>19.25</td>
<td>23.15</td>
<td>21.18</td>
<td>21.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Scheduled Caste of U.P. to Population of India</td>
<td>4.24</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Scheduled Caste Population in India</td>
<td>10.16</td>
<td>14.61</td>
<td>12.06</td>
<td>16.33</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
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ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF DISTRICT

There is a big history about the origin of the name of Aligarh. The district is named after its headquarters to Aligarh which itself receives this name from celebrated fort of Aligarh originally built in 1524 by Muhammad Khan. The government of Koil was under the Lodhes. It was rebuilt in 1717 by Sabit Khan, a Turk man governor during the reign of Farrukhsiyar and Muhammad Shah, and its name was changed to Sabitgarh. In 1757 it was taken by the Jats and was named Ramgarh. It received its present appellation of Aligarh in the time of Afrozyab Khan, who succeeded Safedar Jang, the nawab viz, is of Avadh, in 1782 as Air-ul-Umra.

Earlier the district of Aligarh comprised the northern most portion of the Agra division but it was declared a separate division in 2008. The district lies in the upper Ganga-Yamuna doab. It extends from 27°29’ N latitude to 28°11’ N latitude and 77°29’ E longitude to 78°38’ E longitude. To the north the boundary is purely conventional and touches the district of Bulandshahar; on the north east the Ganga separates it from district Budaun; on the east and south-east lays the district of Mathura; and on the west it is separated from Haryana by the river Yamuna. The greatest length of the district is about 120 km. from the Yamuna to the Ganga near the northern border and the maximum breadth from north to south is same 72 km. the district is divided into five tehsils and thirteen blocks.

According to the Central Statistical Organization the district covered 5,024 sq. km. in 1971 and stood 27th in the State in respect of area. According to the board of revenue the area of the district for the same year stood 5,030 sq. Km.
Research Design
RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan through which various phases of enquiry can be brought under control. It is one of the essential exercises of any research process. To design is to plan; that is a design is a process of making decisions before the situation arises in which the decision has to be taken. It is a process of deliberate anticipation directed towards bringing an unexpected situation under control (Ackoff, 1953:5). Yin also defines, “the design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to study’s initial research question and, ultimately, to its conclusions” (Yin.2003:20). Sellitz comments, “a research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance the research purpose with economy in procedure” (Sellitz & Jahoda, 1969:50). According to Srivastava, “research design is a systematic outline of the way in which a particular research will be carried out” (Srivastava, 2004:5). Thus, to get an appropriate result, a research scholar has to go through the process of research design that involves collection of data and organize that data to get the results.

There are some different types of research designs which are used accordingly for the purpose of the research by the research scholar. An Exploratory research study involves the aim to gain minimum familiarity or insight into the phenomenon, Descriptive study to reveal the characteristics of a particular situation or a group, Diagnostic study to determine frequency
with which something occurs or with which it happens to be associated with other thing or an Experimental Study to test a causal relationship between variables (Wilkinson & Bhandarkar, 2000:102).

All the above mentioned categorization of research designs is of different types of studies and hence it is not fixed or permanent. This classification is tentative and used for the purpose of research.

The problem under study has been conducted in the district Aligarh of Uttar Pradesh State. The Scheduled Castes of Aligarh form an interesting group which, the present researcher has targeted for the present study. A sociological study of inequalities in education and gender among scheduled castes with special reference to women form the main body of the thesis.

India is a secular, socialist country which promises to reduce all kinds of inequalities including gender inequality; it is with this aim that government of India has launched so many policies and programmes for educating women in order to reduce gender inequality. The present study revolves around the education of scheduled castes and the initiatives taken by the community itself for the promotion of education of the women.

It is necessary to mention here that Dr. Vijaya B. Korishetty (2003), studied the education of females of the rural India with special reference to their caste and its impact on their education, says, that girls are born carrying the burden of patriarchy and a history of subordination.

Korishetty’s study showed that Indian women were denied education because it’s a male-dominated society, under the influence of British rule.
and the efforts made by Indian social reformers, women got opportunity in disseminating primary as well as higher education. Korishetty’s review of literature was divided into six sections: family system, economic system, religious system, caste system, value system and wholistic system.

Korishetty reviewed that according to Ishwaran (1968), female is affected by the caste because caste determines social etiquette, payment for services, family life, political life and religious life. The study showed the relation between the caste and female education and concluded that people belonging from higher caste are having higher education and also added that lower caste families are not enthusiastic to educate even boys.

Another scholar, Neelam Yadav (2003) also pointed out the importance of education for women and discussed the status and education of dalit women of Hindu middle class, she said that Dalit women suffer from many type of disadvantages and indignities which is the woeful neglect of their education.

Yadav studied the education and employment prospects of Dalit women in organized sector and concluded that in spite of the reservation policies of the reservation of scheduled castes and backward classes the benefit do not reach up to them.

She focused on various measures like Five Year Plans and different level of education for women with special reference to the women belonging to the lower strata of the society.
Korishetty’s study (2003) showed that caste played a very important role in getting education irrespective of gender. The study further showed that people belonging from high caste had a higher education. He also discussed the impact of caste system, religion, urban impact on the aspirations of parents for daughter’s education in the village. It also takes into account the intergenerational progress of female education whereas Yadav’s study discusses Dalit women, who have been put in the lowest level in the caste hierarchy of Hindus and were required to serve the higher castes, their lower status, history, educational standards and legal measures to improve their status in the society.

While both the studies cited above appear somewhat similar to the present study as it deals with the status of scheduled caste women of District Aligarh. Apart from this, the present study is directed towards certain aspects not taken into consideration either by Korishetty or Yadav. This study has used a different methodological approach and has tried to elicit insights which have not been attempted by either of the two authors stated above.

The present research study is confined to the education and gender inequality among the scheduled caste women of district Aligarh. The present study also examines the status of the scheduled caste women and measures used by the government to improve their status in the family as well as in the society. The researcher uses the case study method to gain deeper insight into various aspects of their lives through a qualitative analysis. The case
studies which are selected for the sampling purpose comprises of scheduled caste women, who are gaining better positions in the society. This study also explores the programmes and policies run by the government and the measures taken by the community itself for the upliftment of scheduled caste community.

In the light of the above discourse, the study has been planned.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

In Indian society, caste system has indulged in such a way that lower caste accept this fact of being inferior to other castes as their fate, other main reason for the inferiority of the scheduled castes is always been associated with those occupations that are considered as defiling and menial. Since Indian society is male-dominated, for a long time. Indian women have suffered a lot with so many types of disadvantages such as gender biasness and lower or no educational levels specially in case of scheduled caste women, who are ‘thrice alienated’ by class, patriarchy and caste. They are subjected to serve exploitation at the work place also. Have the women of scheduled caste gone through any status change? They are considered inferior to men and other castes and deprived from education. Is their education standards are increased and are they coming forward for their rights and duties? Why has their education suffered? What are the factors are still existing which have pushed them in a miserable existence? What factors which are putting hindrances in their respectable rights of living? The present research study is concerned to analyze the relationship between
education and gender inequality among scheduled caste, which as we have noticed earlier, are given special benefits by the government. This study would try to explore and analyze the answer of some questions or assumptions.

**Objectives:**

Following are the objectives of the study which are confined to the scheduled caste women, their status with reference to gender and educational inequalities.

1. How much education of women has increased among scheduled caste and what are the educational standards of women belonging to scheduled caste community?

2. How far the community takes its own initiative to educate women?

3. Does education really help to reduce gender inequality? If Yes, then how much?

4. How far the education is liberating an emancipator?

The present research study also finds out the active political attempts or governmental policies to examine how the scheduled caste women are getting empowered through these policies and programmes and what are their outcomes with regard to their relationships with other caste people. Before proceeding further, it is important to define the variables used for the present study.
GENDER:

Gender is the difference between women and men within the same household and within between cultures that are socially and culturally constructed and change over time. These differences are reflected in roles, responsibilities, access to resources, constraints, opportunities, needs, perceptions, view etc. held by women, men and their relationships. (Moser, C. 1993).

Resultantly gender is a categorization based on sex that places people into two groups are biologically, sociologically, psychologically and physiologically influenced. Gender is based on four aspects, Assignment, Role, Identity and Attribution.

These all four aspects are related to each other, the gender is given at birth, either being male or female it is prescribed by the society. Role is based on assigned gender. Identity is what people think theirs gender should be at any given time. Many people do not question their gender and let their assigned gender function as their identity.

Attribution is the gender which is assigned by people when they first meet and is based on clues from culture to culture.

EDUCATION:

In Indian society there were so many taboos related to the education of scheduled castes and especially for scheduled caste women. It was considered as an offence by certain sections of the society. In Vedic period,
untouchables were restricted in sacred rituals, it was also categorically mentioned that the untouchables should not be present in the rituals performed by higher caste people. As a result education was denied to the untouchables and they remained illiterate, ignorant and backward for centuries. When Britishers came to India, they found a modern system of education which opened the door for all castes and communities in India.

Extensive surveys were conducted by Thomas Munroe in Madras (1882-84). Mount Stouarp and Elphain Stone in Mumbai (1823-25), William Adan in Bangalore, Bihar (1835-38) and Punjab (1849) pointed out the existence of an extensive and widespread child education irrespective of gender. Along with them Indians like Maharaja Saiji Rao, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and many other also advocated the course of modern education.

The education which meant to broaden the minds to sharpen the process of logic reasoning, to provide knowledge and to skill to individuals and to bring him/her to a level that would lead to a gainful successive and satisfying life. Education is liberator, emancipator of women from the bondage of patriarchy and enables her to participate in all areas of life. The traditional concept of purity and impurity impartially has lost in contemporary India. Today Indian society is governed by a secular outlook. So the changes in the position of scheduled caste women are more explicit than the past.
SCHEDULED CASTE:

The “Scheduled Caste” is the legal and constitutional name collectively given to the groups which have traditionally occupied the lowest status in Indian society.

The Hindu society is based on four primary castes. The Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. The lowest in the caste hierarchy was shudras and the lowest in that class was untouchables. An untouchable is a person who does not have any varnas. They were neither allowed to eat food nor were they allowed to wear decent clothes. They were isolated in their own communities, to the point that even their shadows were avoided by the upper castes. Dalit status which has been historically with the occupation regarded as ritually impure. This impurity was considered to be polluting to the individual who perform them and this pollution was considered to be “contagious”. As a result, dalits were commonly banned and segregated from full participation of Hindu social life. They were forced to live outside the village, education was also denied for them.

They were neither wearing nor allowed to bear arms and not allowed to have possessions of wealth. They were not allowed to use decent cultural language but instead were required to use rude language. They bearded religious cultural and economic disabilities.

According to T. K. Oomen “The traditional social disorganization of India” Hindu society was divided into five categories and most of the scheduled caste were designated as panchamars those of the fifth order.
They were ranked below of the four varnas of the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras.

Hindu religions who provides the religious and ideological basis for an “untouchable” group, which was outside the caste system and inferior to all other cases. Today, untouchability is outlawed, and these groups are recognized by the Indian Constitution to inferior treatment and are therefore entitled to certain rights and preferential treatment.

The Scheduled Caste is not a homogenous group and is divided into many caste and sub-castes, as well as by language and geography. Collectively they are best known outside India as “Untouchable” but this term is not used in official Indian terminology where the word “Harijan” is more likely to be favoured. Politically aware members of the Scheduled Castes are likely to use the term ‘Dalit’. At an everyday level specific caste names by law; in practice they are commonly used. Members of Scheduled Castes are found all over India in some areas rising over 25% of the population. With total numbers of over 100 millions, they are the largest minority group in the world—indeed one person in 40 is born ‘untouchable’.
UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of the present study two Tehsils of the District Aligarh have been selected. Aligarh is located in the Western Uttar Pradesh, which is divided into five Tehsils namely Khair, Gabhana, Koil, Iglas and Atrauli. Tehsil Koil and Khair are selected for the purpose of the study.

Aligarh is famous for manufacturing locks and the hardware in India. Aligarian culture which is based on fraternity is the impact of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, where the students are welcomed to get admission irrespective of their caste and gender. They are treated on equal terms through this Institution.

In the Tehsil Koil, i.e., Aligarh city, apart from Aligarh Muslim University, there are three Degree Colleges namely Tikaram Degree College, Dharam Samaj Degree College and Shri Varshney Degree College affiliated from Bhim Rao Ambedkar University, Agra, are also famous for imparting knowledge among masses of Aligarh city and nearby areas. Aligarh Muslim University also gives an opportunity to get admission in professional courses such as, Medical, Engineering, M.B.A., Law etc.

Another Tehsil, i.e., Khair, which has been chosen for the purpose of sample collection, its geographical area is 15.54 square km and is divided into three Blocks known as Chandaus, Tappal and Andala, all three are having so many Inter Colleges. In Khair town area, there are two
Government Degree Colleges namely, Rajkiya Mahavidyalaya and Kanya Mahavidyalaya, both are recognized and affiliated by Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar University, Agra. Apart from these colleges there are many inter colleges in the Khair town area namely, Khair Inter College, Rashtriya Vidhyalaya Inter College, Shri Ram Inter College, Janta Inter College etc. Some private colleges are also running in the area.

According to the Statistical Magazine of District Aligarh 2007, in 2001, there were 713 people living in per square km. among them the percentage of scheduled Caste and Tribe is 23.2 of the total population, whereas in tehsil Khair 573 people are living in per square km. and the population of the scheduled caste people is 23.6 percent of the total population of the tehsil. There are 60.6 percent literate people in Khair.

SAMPLE SELECTION:

The sample for the present study is confined to the scheduled caste community of district Aligarh, and the purposive sample selected from the localities of two tehsils of the district, these are:

Koil
Khair

In Koil the following localities were selected:

Avas Vikas Colony
Nai Basti
Pratibha Colony
Surendra Nagar
A.D.A. Colony
Ambedkar Nagar
Dhanipur
Naurangabad
Ram Leela Ground

In Khair, some major villages were selected, where the largest majority of scheduled caste families are residing, these are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VILLAGE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL S.C.</th>
<th>TOTAL S.C. MALE</th>
<th>TOTAL S.C. FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOMAT</td>
<td>7308</td>
<td>3917</td>
<td>3391</td>
<td>1785</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BANKNER</td>
<td>4737</td>
<td>2546</td>
<td>2191</td>
<td>766</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANDALA</td>
<td>3669</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1697</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAJPUR</td>
<td>5271</td>
<td>2830</td>
<td>2441</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1074</td>
<td>881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUJANPUR</td>
<td>4452</td>
<td>2391</td>
<td>2061</td>
<td>1429</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KASISSON</td>
<td>2124</td>
<td>1156</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JARARA</td>
<td>5384</td>
<td>2896</td>
<td>2488</td>
<td>1765</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAKIPUR</td>
<td>1846</td>
<td>1012</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAUDHANA</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purpose of the study, fourteen respondents were selected for purposive sampling, those respondent were also very well suited for conducting Case Studies. The sample was drawn from different localities of scheduled castes.
The sample population under study has been collected from two tehsils of the district namely Koil and Khair. The total sample size is 250, distributed in terms of various variables as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Lower Age 1-20 yrs</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle Age 21-30 yrs</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Age 31 yrs and above</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Widow/ Widower</td>
<td>06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Low 1000-10,000</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle 10-20,000</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher 20,000 and above</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Illiterate (up to high school)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educated (up to Graduate)</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Highly Educated (Graduate &amp; above)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occupation</td>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farmer/ artisan</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TECHNIQUES OF RESEARCH:

The data collection was based on both the sources that are primary and secondary.

In the primary sources, present researcher structured the interview schedule and questionnaire based case studies. It was the main tool. On the basis of interview schedule case studies of respondent’s observation were made. The interviews were taken from some important schedule caste personalities of the area been selected, which contribute to the present study.


Intensive field work was conducted in the selected areas for the primary information. Fourteen case studies were made from the responses of the respondents, who were from different educational levels, that are, highly educated, educated and illiterate, then different age, i.e., lower, medium, upper and in the last three categories were made for family’s monthly income, i.e., lower, medium and higher. However to have insight into the
level of education specially what people think about the women education and what is their status in the family and outside among scheduled caste community. On the basis of formal and informal responses, observational data also been used wherever it is possible.

HYPOTHESES:

The present study is purely exploratory and descriptive in nature; therefore no specific hypotheses have been envisaged.
DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF SCHEDULED CASTES:-

Scheduled castes in Indian population represents a sizeable portion of the population. There is also a speedy growth in their population during the last decade, according to the census of 2001, the total number of members of Scheduled Caste is 166635700 out of the population of 1027015247. During the last ten years the population of the country, in general and that of Scheduled Caste in particular has enormously increased. The members of Scheduled Caste community comprises 16.2 percent of the total population of India. According to the Census of 2001, the state Uttar Pradesh has 35148377 persons belonging to Scheduled Caste out of the total population of 166052859 it indicates that 21.09 percent of the total Scheduled Caste population resides in U.P. and it is only state in India which has an eight digit population of Scheduled Caste.

Coming to the population of District Aligarh, which has a total population of 2992286 comprising 1607402 males and 1384884 females. It has total number of 634270 male and 340763 female member of Scheduled Caste community, according to the census 2001.

There are 66 Scheduled Caste live in various areas of Uttar Pradesh, here is the list of Notified Scheduled Caste of U.P.:--
| 1. Agariya | 2. Badhik |
| 15. Barwar | 16. Basor |
| 17. Bawariya | 18. Beldar |
| 23. Boria | 24. Chamar, Dhusiya, Jhusiya, Jatava |
| 25. Chero | 26. Dhabgar |
| 27. Dhangar | 28. Dhanuk |
| 29. Dharkar | 30. Dhubi |
| 31. Dom | 32. Domar |
| 33. Dusadh | 34. Gharami |
| 35. Ghasiya | 36. Gond |
| 37. Gual | 38. Habura |
| 39. Hari | 40. Hela |
| 41. Kalabaz | 42. Kanjar |
| 43. Kapariya | 44. Karawal |
| 45. Khairaha | 46. Kharwar (excluding Benbansi) |
| 47. khatik | 48. Kharot |
| 49. Kol | 50. Kori |
| 51. Korwa | 52. Lalbegi |
| 53. Majhwar | 54. Mazhabi |
| 55. Musahar | 56. Nat |
| 57. Pankha | 58. Parahiya |
| 59. Pasi, Tarmali | 60. Patari |
| 61. Rawat | 62. Saharya |
| 63. Snaurhiya | 64. Sansiya |
| 65. Shilpkar | 66. Turaiha |

Scheduled Castes popularly known as Untouchables or Dalit- is a person outside of the four varnas, and considered below of all and polluting, they include people as leather workers, scavangers, tanners, flayers, cobblers, agricultural labourers, municipal cleaners, gymnasts, drum beaters, folk musicians and street handicraft persons. Like upper castes, dalits are also divided into various sub-caste or jatis. Scheduled Castes are in a sizeable number and various sub-castes community form a considerable group. Among them chamars, bhangis and agricultural labourers are main.

However, the condition of scheduled caste women is not so much improved with regard to their socio-economic status in the society but it has been noticed that there is an increased awareness in recent years among dalit women about their rights and about the Government welfare schemes and higher education. This should be augmented by information technology, which reach even to the remote rural citizen.

J. Muthumary in his article, stated that the present position seems to be better with reference to the rate of literacy among dalits. The literacy rate is 31.48% for boys and 10.93% for girls.

Gender is a categorization based on sex that places people into two groups, i.e., male and female. Gender equality is an important issue of human rights and social justice. Women represent half of the resources and half of the potential in all the societies. Some efforts to promote greater
equality between men and women can result to the overall development of human society.

The links between gender equality and education are clear in various areas of society. Key to gender equality is good education. Therefore, education function as a very important tool for emancipation of women, specially the women belonging from lower caste.

The purpose of the present study is confined to the status of scheduled caste women. Though their status is improving nowadays, women belonging to scheduled caste are not still in a very good position. Their participation is domestic and social level also increasing but the speed of this process is quiet slow.

According to P.K. Brass, Aligarh district has the heaviest concentration of chamars. They constitute close to 22 percent of the population of the district and are numerically dominant in all.

We also find a reference of chamars, being the numerically strongest caste, taking the leading place in all tehsils the district in the Gazetteer, vol. VI.
NOTES AND REFERENCE


Case Studies
CASE STUDY-1

Kumari Sunita, a twenty eight years old unmarried law graduate is practicing as lawyer at Allahabad and earns her livelihood comfortably. Her father is a small businessman and her grandfather was a farmer. Her father’s monthly income is Rs. 10,000/-, he has completed his intermediate. Her mother is a housewife with very little education.

She believes that being a member of particular caste is a reason for people to discriminate. People used to discriminate on the basis of caste in terms of basic fundamental rights, due to this people belonging to Scheduled Caste are discriminated and she also believes that government has taken certain steps for the upliftment of these castes’. She feels the scarcity of schools for her community.

She is a law graduate but even she believes that the educational standards of her community are up to secondary level which specially limited for a girl belonging to her community because of the reluctance of the elders of the family, who feels that girl should be restricted to domestic circle only but she disagrees that girls should be treated equally in terms of attainment of education because it is necessary for maintaining household and socialization of children.

She agrees that sometime her association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education. She feels that women and men are equal so that they must be treated equally in every sense whether it is
related with education, gender or even politics. Because she has seen so many representations from her community in the politics.

She believes that voting is a right and duty of every Indian whether it is man or woman, that is why, she participates in election and a strong supporter of BSP.

She is also aware of some programmes and schemes started by the government for strengthening the educational status of the persons belonging to the scheduled caste and agrees that few of them are implemented in her locality too but very little women participation was there. Yes, she believes that women should be given equal chance of taking important decision in the family because women participation in every sphere is very important for a better tomorrow and vibrant India. During the past 62 years of independence the condition of her community has improved, she agrees. But she never went through any initiative being taken by elders of her community, rather she has seen some initiatives taken by the community itself for the better education of women because now the community believes that educating girls has been a tool to reduce gender inequality and by getting educated women can use education as a tool with which they can participate in community more vigorously and with determination which has been prove to a tool to reduce gender inequality.

She feels that education of girls is gaining popularity among her community to a definite extent and there is still a long way to go for
women to get emancipated by education. She believes that women are being emancipated by seeing things in a better way at domestic and social level and education is also helpful for women to get independence at domestic front also. She says that patriarchal set-up of society is the main reason for gender in-equality in her community which forces women to be unequal to men.

She denies that women in her community are still behind in gender inequality and decision making in her family and she also agrees that the community is more receptive towards education of girls now than before because they have seen fruits of girl-education and community is responding to the demands of modern society, political leadership is also active in this regard that educating women is providing beneficial in educating children, management of household and additional income of the family.

CASE STUDY-2

Yogita Kashyap, is a 17 years old unmarried girl, living in awas-vikas colony. She has just completed her senior secondary examination from CBSE Board, she is living in the city. Her father is a well-reputed business man and mother is active in politics. Her family consists of a grandmother, who never went to school, father who is post-graduate in law, mother is a graduate, elder sister who’s pursuing M.A. from Agra University, two younger brothers one is studying in High School and 2\textsuperscript{nd}
is in VII standards respectively. Their family’s monthly income is nearly Rs. 25,000.

She denies that, being a member of a particular caste she has faced any sort of discrimination and also doesn’t know about any certain necessary steps for the upliftment of their caste.

She feels that there is no discrimination in terms of availability of schools for her community with respect to other communities, says that there is a lack of good schools as a whole. She says that the educational standards of her community is still not in good position. Most of the people are uneducated or their education is confined up to secondary level only, and also believes that girls of her community are far behind from boys in terms of educational attainment and also tells the reason that most of the scheduled caste families are having low income, that is why, educating girls proves hectic for the family. She says that in terms of attainment of education, girls must be treated equally with boys because it is necessary to educating girls for maintaining household and socialization of children being an educated wife and mother can only take care of these things. She doesn’t agree that her association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining good education but she believes that women and men should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights. She was never been a member of panchayat or of some local body but she has seen her mother in such a body. She doesn’t participate in elections as her age doesn’t allow but a strong supporter of BSP and
agrees that women should be given equal chance like men to participate in elections. Being a daughter of a political mother she’s known to some plans for development of her community adopted by government, they were not implemented in her locality rather they were implemented in working area of her mother. She believes that women should be given equal chance for taking important decisions in her family and also strongly in favor of women participation in every sphere of life for a better tomorrow and vibrant India. She agrees on that during the past 62 years of independence the condition of her community has improved. She is known to an initiative taken by the elders of her community which was a kanya pathshala was opened up by the members of her community for their better future at her native place. She agrees that educating girls in her community has been a tool to reduce gender inequality because education makes women to assert their rights in family and outside. She says that now education for women is getting popular among her community to a moderate extent. Being a member of scheduled caste community she strongly believes that education is providing to be a tool for emancipation of women, by getting educated they can take part in important decisions making vis-à-vis family and society. It also helps women to get economic independence at domestic front. She believes that the adherence to the age old system is responsible for gender inequality in her community. She says yes, that educated women in her community are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality in decision making in
family and agrees that educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women. She says that community is more receptive towards educating women now than before because community has seen the fruits of girls education and community is responding to demands of modern society, political leadership has being a force to act in this regard and last but not the least that educating women is providing beneficial in educating children, management of house-hold and additional income.

**CASE STUDY-3**

Miss Manisha Maurya, an 18 years old unmarried girl, resident of pratibha colony, doing preparation of medical entrance examinations and for that she is taking her coaching in Delhi. She belongs from a family of educated elders, her mother is a graduate housewife, and father is a government employee in SBI. Her family comprises of four, i.e., her parents, she and her younger brother who is also studying in reputed convent school in Aligarh. Her father’s monthly income is Rs. 20,000.

On being asked about the caste based discrimination as Indian society is divided into various castes. She said that she never went through any caste based discrimination. She is not aware about the steps for the upliftment of her caste taken by the government or district administration. She disagrees about any sort of discrimination in terms of availability of schools for her community with respect to other communities but says that the educational standards of her community is still up to secondary level in which girls are not far behind than boys in
terms of educational attainment, she believes that the low family income is responsible for this cause and educating girls is still a taboo in her community so that she is strongly in favor of equality of girls in terms of educational attainment because education is necessary for maintaining house-hold and socialization of children. She disagrees that her association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining good education. She is in favor of equality of women and men in her community and should have equal rights.

She was never been a member of panchayat or some local body. From this year she is eligible to participate in elections and will give her vote for congress. She feels that women should be given equal chance to participate in elections. She is not aware of plans for development of her community or her caste adopted by government. She agrees that women in her community should be given equal chance for taking important decisions in her family because women participation in every sphere of life will help in making India’s better tomorrow. She also agrees that during the past 62 years of independence the condition of her community has improved, any initiative being taken by the elders of her community is not known to her rather she knows about an initiative being taken by the community has been a tool to reduce gender inequality, she believes that with the education as a tool they can participate in community more vigorously and with determination has proved to be a tool to reduce gender inequality, it also makes women to assert their rights in family and
outside, that is why, education of girls gaining popularity among her community to a definite extent. Being a member of scheduled caste community she feels that education is providing to be a tool for emancipation of women with the help of education. Women can see things in a better way at domestic and social level and educated women can easily get economic independence at domestic front, she agrees. She says that adherence to the age old system is responsible for gender inequality in her community. She also agrees that educated women are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in family and these educated women are providing to be reference group for uneducated women. Because of all these reasons, she says that the community is more receptive towards education of girls now than before. She says that community has seen the fruits of girls education.

CASE STUDY-4

Mrs. Kalpana Maurya, forty five years old married lady and Chairman of Khair Tehsil of Aligarh District is a Post Graduate, her husband is a businessman and also a great supporter of her at both household and work place. They are very much receptive towards the changes taking place in the society so that, they have maintained their family in
that way. Her family comprises of four children, two boys and two girls, the eldest daughter is doing post-graduate course in Hindi, younger daughter has passed her senior secondary and now preparing for some competitive examinations, elder son is doing higher secondary from an English medium school and the youngest son is in 8th standard. Their family’s monthly income is Rs. 20-30,000.

She says that society is divided into various castes, she, as a member of a particular caste feels discriminated and the discrimination was based on occupation. She agrees that the district administration or government has taken certain necessary steps for the upliftment of her caste. She disagrees that there is any sort of discrimination in terms of availability of school for her community with respect to other communities and educational standards of her community is confined up to middle level and she says that the girls of scheduled caste community are not at par with boys in terms of educational attainment because educating girls proves hectic for the family as the income is low. She feels that girls of her community should be treated equally in terms of attainment of education because education to girls is necessary for maintaining house-hold and socialization of children. She disagrees that her association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining good education, she feels that the women and men whether they belong to scheduled caste or any other caste should treated on equal terms and they should also have equal rights. She is the present chairman of Khair Tehsil
and there she felt almost nil participation of women belonging to her community and believes that the women should come forward and should get some representation in such kind of bodies. She always participates in elections and votes for BSP. She is a great supporter of the fact that the women should be given an equal chance like men to participate in elections. She is also aware of some plans for development of her community adopted by the government and those plans were also implemented in her locality and their women were also given opportunity to get participated in those plans or schemes. She says that she takes part in making important decisions of her family so that all women should be given equal chance of taking important decisions of their family because it is necessary to get participated in every sphere of life which is beneficial not only for them but better for nation’s better tomorrow. As India has completed 62 years of independence, during this period the condition of her community has improved, she agrees. She also agrees that the elders of her community are very much aware now for the education of boys and girls on equal terms and for that cause they also have taken some important initiative for the education of women because the community believes that education for girls is very necessary to reduce the evil of gender inequality. With education as a tool they participate in community more vigorously and with determination. She feels that education of girls gaining popularity among her community to a definite extent. She says that being member of scheduled caste
Community education is providing a tool for emancipation of women because through education women are being vested with freedom, they can see things in a better way at domestic as well as social level, women takes part in important decision making vis-à-vis family in society and lost but not the least women assert their rights properly to fight for justice. She agrees that education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front; she says that economic dependence of women on men is the main reason for gender inequality. She agrees that educated women in her community are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decisions making in family, as well as in the society, educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women. Educated women are economically independent, self-reliant and having more respect in the society as compared to uneducated women. For this, she gives her own example, people of her community and caste gives her respect and considers her as a role model for the women in their family, so that the community has become more receptive towards education of girls now than before because community has seen the fruits of girls education.

Community is responding to the demands of modern society, political leadership has been a force to act in this regard and educating women is providing beneficial in educating of children management, management of house-hold and additional income.
CASE STUDY-5

Smt Sharda Devi, a forty-six year’s old married woman, literate up to 5th standard use to serve the people of her locality. Her work is sweeping and cleaning of roads and toilets of the houses of her locality; her husband is a rikshaw-puller and used to take school children to their respective schools. Sweeping is their family occupation but doesn’t like their profession and also didn’t want to leave his family so that her husband left a job in a mill in Mumbai and he also doesn’t want his wife to do this work. Their family comprises of five persons, Sharda Devi, her husband, two daughters one is married and another helps her in her work and an intermediate pass, jobless son. Their family’s monthly income is Rs. 8,000 which is quite low. Sharda Devi believes that economic backwardness and her occupation are the two main reasons responsible for discrimination and gender inequality. Illiteracy among scheduled castes’ and specially the women belonging to this community is responsible for gender inequality.

She says that being a member of scheduled caste she feels discriminated which is based on occupation because people consider her occupation dirty. She doesn’t know about certain necessary steps taken by district administration or government for the upliftment of her caste for that she is having some complaints. She says that there are schools but due to the low family income Scheduled Caste people are not able to get their children admitted in those schools. Because of this reason Scheduled
Caste people enrol their sons only in schools. This is considered as the main reason for the backwardness of girls in terms of education. Even then she believes that the girls should be treated equally in terms of attainment of education. She has not decided that which of the reason is responsible for the low educational level among them, low family income or their association with their caste. She says that women and men from their community should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights. She was never been the member of panchayat or some other local body and also not aware of women representation in such bodies but strongly in favour of the women representation. She always participates in election and votes for Congress. She agrees that women should be given an equal chance like men to participate in election. She never heard of plans for development for her community or caste adopted by the government. She adds that she always takes part in making important decisions in her family, all women should also be given the same chance in their families too and not only in decision making but they should participate in every sphere of life for their betterment. She maintains that during the past 62 years of independence the condition of her community has definitely improved. She doesn’t know about any initiative taken by the elders of her community itself or the initiatives taken by the community in terms of education of women. She says that for reducing gender inequality the education of girls is necessary, because education is providing women job security so that they can participate in building
economy of their family. She says that education of girls gaining popularity among her community to a definite extent. She says that being a member of scheduled caste community, education is providing a tool for emancipation of women because by getting educated they are being vested with freedom, they can see things in a better way at domestic level, they can take part in important decision making in family as well as in the society, they assert their rights properly to fight for justice and yes, education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front, she adds that economic dependence of women on men is responsible for gender inequality in her community. She totally agrees with the fact that educated women in her community are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in the family. They are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women. She feels that, now, the community is more receptive towards education of girls than before, for that she thinks that all the following reasons are responsible that the community has seen the fruits of girls education, community is responding to the demands of modern society, political leadership has been a force to act in this regard and finally educating women is providing beneficial in educating children, management of house-hold and additional income.

CASE STUDY-6

Fifty-seven years old Kanchhilal, lives in a village of Tehsil Khair of district Aligarh. He is a farmer and also a peon in a school nearby. He
is literate up to middle level, his wife is fifth pass whether they both are
not very much educated even they are very much aware of the benefits of
education, that is why, they encouraged their children to study and have
done everything they could do for their better future. His family
comprises of him, his wife, his three sons, a daughter and two little
grandsons. His all children are well educated, the eldest son is science
graduate and married to a girl who is an intermediate, having two sons
both of them are taking education in a convent school, working in Indian
Army, Nagpur, his middle son is also a science graduate and also working
in Indian Army, the youngest son is doing his graduation from B. R.
Ambedkar University, Agra and his daughter who is literate up to
Intermediate level also have done some vocational courses and married to
a person having a large piece of land an district Bulandshahar. His
Family’s monthly income is around Rs. 20,000, in which they are living
happily. He says that education is the foundation for happy and
prosperous life and education also helps to explore our self to different
spheres of life, he understood the importance of education because he was
not very well educated and faced so many difficulties just because of the
lack of higher education, he realized the value of education. In the last he
maintains that girls and boys are equal and should get equal chance.

He says that being a member of scheduled caste community,
sometimes he faced some discrimination based on the status. He believes
that district administration or government has taken certain necessary
steps for the upliftment of their caste and denies any sort of
discrimination in term of availability of schools to his community with
respect to other communities. He thinks that educational standards of his
community is not in good condition and it is limited up to middle level
only and the girls of his community are still not at par with boys in terms
of educational attainment because people are having very low family
income and educating girls proves hectic for the family but he strongly
believes that girls should be treated equally in terms of attainment of
education because by getting education they can maintain their house­
hold and socialization of children. He totally disagrees that his
association with his caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good
education and believes that women and men from his community should
be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights. He was never
been a member of panchayat or some other local body, also never gone
through of any representation from the women of his community in such
bodies and disagrees that women should get some representation there.
He participates in elections and gives his vote for BSP. He believes that
women should also get equal chances to participate in elections like men.
He heard some plans for development of his community or caste adopted
by the government and those plans were also implemented in his locality
and there was very little participation of women in them. He allows the
women of his family to participate in important discussions and decision
making and also want that, women should be given equal chance of
taking important decisions in the family. He believes in equality, that’s why, he also believes that women participation must be there in every sphere of life for a better tomorrow and vibrant India. He agrees that during the 62 years of independence the condition of his community has improved. He doesn’t know about the initiatives being taken by the elders of his community, for the community or for the education of women of his community. He agrees that educating girls in his community has been a tool to reduce gender inequality because education makes women to assert their rights in family and outside. He thinks that education of girls is gaining popularity among his community up to a definite extent. According to him education leads to the emancipation of women because by getting education they are being vested with freedom, they see things in a better way at domestic and social level. He believes that education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic level. Patriarchal set up of society force women to be unequal to men. He agrees that educated women in his community are leading better lives in terms of gender equality and decisions making in the family, that’s why, educated women are providing a reference group for uneducated women. He agrees that community is more receptive towards education of girls now, than before because he thinks that educating women is providing beneficial in education of children, management of house-hold and family income.
CASE STUDY-7

Kumari Nisha, a twenty five years old, unmarried girl is living in Naurangabad locality of Aligarh. She is a science graduate, pursuing B. Ed. through correspondence, and with also a teacher in a convent school with her twin sister. Her father is a government servant in Uttar Pradesh Roadways; her mother is an intermediate pass housewife. There are four members in her family, her parents and two sisters. She believes that education is very important to survive in the present society, she realizes that education helps women to walk equal to men. She says that education is necessary for every person whether it is a boy or a girl. She says that education helps a person to fulfill his/her desires. Their family’s monthly income is Rs. 20,000.

She maintains that she never felt discriminated because of a member of a particular caste instead she got appreciated everywhere. She feels that the district administration or government has taken certain necessary steps for the upliftment of her caste and there was no such kind of discrimination in terms of availability of schools to her community with respect to other communities. She maintains that the education standards of her community is still not very much improved and is up to senior secondary level only. She agrees that girls from her community are not at par with the boys in terms of educational achievement because people of her community believes that girls should be restricted to domestic circle only but she says that girls should be treated equally in
terms of attainment of education because it is necessary for maintaining house-hold and socialization. She denies that her association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education. She believes that women and men in her community should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights. She was never been a member of panchayat or some other local body but she has seen some representation from the women of her community in such bodies. Yes, she participates in election and gives her vote to BSP and also believe that women should be given an equal chance to participate in election to men. She is known about the plans of development for her community or caste adopted by the government those plans were implemented in her locality too and there was a women participation too.

Respondent agrees that women in her community should be given equal chance for taking important decisions in their families. One being asked about the women participation, she replied that there should be women participation for better tomorrow.

Respondent also agrees that during the past 60 years the condition of her community improvers. She maintains that the elders of her community took equal steps for the education of boys and girls.

The respondent believes that educating girls in her community proved to be a tool to reduce gender inequality because it provides women, job security so that they can participate in building economy of their families. On being asked about the education’s popularity among her
community she says that education is getting popular to a moderate extent. Being a member of scheduled caste community respondent feels that education is providing a tool for women’s emancipation because with the help of it women gets freedom, they can see things differently at both i.e. domestic and social level. Educated women can also give their views in the family on important issues and lastly they can use their education properly to fight for justice. She also believes that education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front also. Respondent says that patriarchal set-up of society force women to be unequal to men which is responsible for gender inequality in her community.

On the discussion whether the educated women in her community are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in family, she says yes and also said that educated women are also a reference group for uneducated women.

Respondent agrees that the community is more receptive towards education of girls now than before because of so many reasons like community has seen the fruits of a girl education, community is responding to the demand of modern society, political leadership has been a force to act in this regard, educating women is providing beneficial in educating children, management of house-hold and additional income.

**CASE STUDY-8**

Srimati Uma Devi, a sixty five years old illiterate, widow living in a village named Gomat of tehsil Khair of the district. This village is one
of the main villages of Khair, having its historical importance also, Uma Devi’s husband was a landless farmer and due to his bad health and illness, he expired eight years before, leaving behind his wife, two married sons and one unmarried daughter. Her family’s financial condition was so poor. After her husband’s death, her sons started giving money for their livelihood. Her elder son is an I.T.I. holder and does the electrical fitting and repairing of electrical goods in the village whereas the other son is an intermediate and work as a compounder at a doctor’s clinic. Uma Devi, her daughter and two daughter-in-laws are engaged in making agarbatti and candles at their home. Their family’s financial condition is now improved. She says that just because of having some awareness about the schemes and plans, their condition has improved.

Their family’s monthly income is raised up to Rs. 12,000. So, here she makes the difference that being illiterate is the worst thing. Earlier, it was the illiteracy which was the main hurdle in the way of their happy life but what they did best is they gave education to their sons and today her children are educated and aware which is the reason for their better condition.

We started our discussion with whether she felt discriminated because she is a member of a particular caste, she replied, yes, caste sometimes plays a very important role in terms of exercise of basic fundamental rights.
Respondent also agrees that the government has taken certain necessary steps for their upliftment but people are unaware of those plans. She disagrees that there is any sort of unavailability of schools for her community with respect to other communities but says that the educational standards are still up to secondary level which should be increased in which girls and boys should be treated equally because girls in her community are far behind than boys, the reason behind the cause is educating girls roves hectic for the family as the income is low. She says that educating girls is necessary for maintaining household and socialization of children.

On being asked that one’s association with the caste acts as an impediment an attaining a good education, she disagrees and maintains that one can get a good education if there is a will, whether the person belongs to the scheduled caste or any other caste.

The respondent maintains that women and men from her community should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights.

The respondent was never been the member of panchayat or some other local body and never seen any representation of women in such bodies but feels that there must be the women representation in such bodies from her community. She participates in elections and votes for BSP, she believes that women should be given an equal chance like men to participate in elections.
Respondent is also aware of plans of development for her community or caste adopted by government and also adopted some plans for the betterment of their family, those plans and schemes were also implemented in her village also. Yes, there was some scope for women participation also, she adds.

Respondent agrees that during the past 62 years of independence the condition of her community has improved. She never went through with the initiative being taken by the elders of her community even in terms of education of women.

On being asked, do education of women has proved to be a tool to reduce gender inequality, she replied yes, she gave her example and said that short vocational courses provide women with economic independency but she also said that education of women is gaining popularity among her community to a little extent only.

Respondent says that being a member of scheduled caste community she feels that education also help women to get emancipated. With education they can get more freedom, they can see things in a better way both at domestic as well as social level. Women are more efficient to take part in important decision making vis-à-vis family and society; they assert their rights properly to fight for justice.

On the further discussion whether education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front, she said yes.
Respondent also threw some light on the reason responsible for gender inequality in her community, she says that adherence to the age old system is mainly responsible for it. She agrees that educated women are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in their family and says that educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women.

Respondent believes that community is more receptive towards the education of girl now than before because the community has seen the results of girl education, that’s why, community is responding to the demands of modern society, political leadership has also been a force to act in this regard, educating women is providing beneficial in educating of children, management of house-hold and additional income.

CASE STUDY-9

Mr. Munne Singh, 58 years old, male, living in A.D.A. colony, Ramghat Road, Aligarh. He is an Income tax Officer. He is having two married sons in his family. Earlier he was doing his job in All India Radio meanwhile he got selected in Income Tax Department, so he left his job in All India Radio. He is post Graduate in Mathematics, his wife is also graduate and a house wife. His two sons are working and both are engineer, one is at Ranchi and other one in NOIDA. Mr. and Mrs. Munne Singh are living at their residence at A.D.A. colony. His monthly income is twenty thousand rupees.
On being asked whether he belongs to a particular community, does he feel discriminated? He says no.

Respondent also agrees that district administration or government has taken certain necessary steps for the upliftment of his caste. Respondent disagrees that there is any sort of discrimination based on unavailability of schools for his community with respect to other communities.

Respondent believes that the educational standard of his community has improved and nowadays it is upto graduate level. He said no on being asked about the educational status of girls is not at par with boys.

Respondent believes that boys and girls are equal and they should also be treated equally in terms of attainment of education as education is necessary for maintaining house-hold and socialization of children. He disagrees that his association with his caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education. He also says that women and men from his community should also have equal rights. He was never been a member of panchayat or some local body but feels that they should get representation. Respondent participates in election and castes his vote for BSP.

Respondent believes that women should be given equal chance to participate in elections. He is known to the plans for development of his community or caste adopted by government those plans were also
implemented in his locality. He also says that yes, there was scope for women participation also. Respondent says that women in his community should be given equal chance for taking important decisions, he maintains that participation of women in every sphere of life for a better tomorrow and vibrant India. Respondent agrees that during the past 62 years of independence the condition of his community has improved. He says that the elder of his community took equal steps for both boys and girls in terms of education.

He threw some light that education makes women to assert their rights in family and outside, that’s why educating girls in his community has been a tool to reduce a gender inequality. He also adds that education of girls is gaining popularity in his community to a moderate extent.

Respondent believes that being a member of scheduled caste community he feels that education is providing to be a tool for emancipation of women because education leads to freedom and one can see things in a better way at domestic and social level, they can take part in decision making in family and society and they can also assert their rights properly to fight for justice.

Respondent says that the education is very important for women to get economic independence at domestic front. He believes that patriarchal set-up of society force women to be unequal to men and it is the main reason for gender inequality in his community. He feels that educated women in his community are leading better lives in terms of gender
inequality and decisions making in family, educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women, he agrees.

Respondent agrees that community is more receptive towards education of girls now than before because community has seen fruits of girls education, community is responding to the demands of modern society, political leadership has been a force to act in this regard, educating women is providing beneficial in education of children, management of household and additional income.

CASE STUDY-10

Smt Maya, a thirty-five years old female, married to a government servant, living in Khair Tehsil. She also belongs to a village of the Tehsil itself, she is a graduate and her husband is post-graduate, they are having two children one boy and one girl. Both are studying in 5th and 1st standard respectively in a reputed school. This couple gives importance of education because they have seen results of being educated. Her husband got opportunity in government sector just because of having good education. Their family’s monthly income is Rs. 15,000.

Respondent disagrees when asked about the discrimination based on caste. District administration or government has taken necessary for the upliftment of her caste, she denies. She said that there is no discrimination in terms of availability of schools to her community with respect to other communities. She believes that educational standard of her community is limited upto senior secondary only.
Respondent agrees that girls from her community are not at par with boys in terms of education attainment because it is the reluctance of elders of family, who feel girls should be restricted to domestic circle.

When asked about does she, as a member of particular community feels that girls should be treated equally in terms of attainment of education, she agrees that education for girls is necessary for maintaining house-hold and socialization of children. She do not think that her association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education, she feels that women and men of her community should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights.

Respondent was never being a member of panchayat or some other local body, have seen some other women to represent in such bodies, she participates in election and gives her vote to BSP.

Respondent thinks that women should be given equal chance like men to participate in elections. Respondent is not aware of the plans for development of her community or caste adopted by government. She believes that women in her community should be given equal chance for taking important decision in her family and women participation must be there in every sphere of life for a better tomorrow and vibrant India.

Respondent agrees that during the past 62years of independence the condition of her community has improved. Respondent told that a nursery school was started up by the elders of her community and the community also took initiative in terms of education of women.
Respondent believes that educating girls in her community has been a tool to reduce gender inequality because education makes women to assert their rights in family and outside. She says that education of girls is gaining popularity among her community to a definite extent.

When the question asked about that being a member of scheduled caste community feel that education is providing a tool to be for emancipation of women she agrees and says that women have been emancipated by education they are getting more freedom, they can see things in a better way at domestic and social level, by getting educated they are capable of taking part in important decision making vis-à-vis family and society, they also assert their rights properly to fight for justice.

Respondent thinks that education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front. She believes that economic dependence of women make women equal to men and it is the main reason for gender inequality among her community.

She is also known of the fact that women in her community are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in the family and agrees that educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women.

On being asked that, do you feel that community is more receptive towards education of girls education now than before, she agrees and also gave some reasons that community has seen the fruits of girls education.
community is responding to the demands of modern society. Political leadership has been a force to act in this regard and last but not the least education for women is providing beneficial to children, management of house-hold and additional income.

CASE STUDY-11

Smt. Mithlesh, forty years old married female, living in Chaudhana village of tehsil Khair of District Aligarh, her husband works in a lock factory in Aligarh city. She is not very well educated and has passed class fifth only. Her husband has passed intermediate. By occupation she is a maid, therefore, she goes to people’s houses for sweeping, swabbing and cooking. Her husband goes to Aligarh daily with local transportation and she lives in the village with her in-laws and three children. She has two sons and a daughter. Among her children, her daughter is the eldest, who is studying in class third, helps her mother in her work and also looks after her younger siblings.

Their family’s monthly income is near about five thousand. Their financial condition is not so well, that is why, have are not able to afford the expenses of the school fee for their children. Respondent and her husband wanted to settle down in Aligarh for the purpose better future of their children but due to the lack of sufficient income and resources which are easily available in their village, their could not make it possible.

Respondent believes that having insufficient income is much more responsible of being discriminated than being a member of a particular
caste, so according to her, status is the main reason for being discriminated.

Respondent is not aware of any step for the upliftment of her caste, adopted by the district administration or government. She disagrees when asked about existence of any sort of discrimination in terms of availability of schools for her community with respect to other communities but says that the educational standards of her community are limited up to primary level only, in which girls are not at par with boys in terms of educational attainment, the reason behind for this cause is that most of the families are living below poverty line and educating girls proves hectic for the family as their income is low.

On the other hand, she states that girls should be treated equally in terms of educational attainment because education of girls is necessary for maintaining household and socialization of children. According to the respondent, her association with her caste never acted as an impediment in attaining a good education and she maintains that women and men in every community should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights for the betterment of the society.

She was never been the member of Panchayat or other local body and have not seen any representation of women from her community in such bodies but is a strong supporter of women representation in these local governmental bodies. She always participates in elections and votes for BSP, according to her women should also be given equal chance like
men to participate in elections. She is known to some plans of development of her community or caste adopted by the government but those were not properly implemented in her locality, so that she also did not get chance to take benefits of those plans. She believes that women of scheduled caste community should be given equal chance like men to take important decisions in the family and they should also have freedom to move freely in the society for the better tomorrow of the nation she denied, when asked about the condition of the community has improved after independence.

Respondent maintained that the elders of her community took some initiatives for their betterment; they took some equal steps for both boys and girls in terms of educational attainment which led to reduce gender inequality in her community.

She says that education of women has proved to be a tool to reduce gender inequality because education is providing women job security so that they participate in building economy of the family but it is gaining popularity only up to a little extent.

Being a member of scheduled caste community she agrees that education is really helpful for the emancipation of women because with education women are being vested with freedom and it gives women to be economic independence at domestic front also.
Respondent believes that patriarchal set up of society force women to be unequal to men, which is the main reason responsible for gender inequality in her community.

She feels that women, who are educated, are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in the family and are also providing inspiration for uneducated women.

She is not sure about the community whether it is receptive towards the education of girls now than before.

**CASE STUDY-12**

Mr. S. K. Singh is 60 years old male, living in Gyan Sarover locality of the city Aligarh. He is also the native of a village of Khair tehsil. He is teaching in an agricultural university, Kanpur. His family is residing in Aligarh. There are five members in his family, Mr. Singh, his wife, two daughters and a son. His monthly income is near about Rs. 35000/-. 

He is very aware about the importance of education, therefore, does not believe in gender biasness. One of the main reasons for his awareness is related to his son’s illness. His son is suffering from a kind of mental syndrome because of that could not able to speak properly, unable to do his daily routine work also and therefore could not take his education more than 8th standard. That’s why Mr. Singh took keen interest to educate his daughters. His elder daughter has completed her MBA after Mass Communication and working in American Bank, Delhi,
and younger daughter has passed her +2 examinations and taking coaching to get admission in engineering.

When asked about the discrimination, the respondent replied that there is no discrimination as such for their caste but due to the lack of good educational background, members of his community are facing difficulties. He said that if there is discrimination then it is limited to the exercise of religious and that too in rural areas only because only rural areas are untouched or there is lack of awareness about the government schemes running for the betterment of scheduled caste and other backward classes. He doesn’t agree, when asked about any discrimination in terms of availability of schools for his community with respect to other communities.

He said that still the educational level of his community has not increased up to a desired level and it is only up to graduation level, in which girls are far behind than boys because it is the reluctance of elders of the family, who feel that girls should be restricted to domestic work and should take care of the household whereas he maintains that this practice should be stopped and one should treat girls equally because educated girls are good at maintaining household and socialization of children.

He agrees that sometimes one’s association with his or her caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education.
The respondent has seen women representation in Panchayats and other local bodies but he was never been a member of it. He participates in elections and casts his vote for BSP. He thinks that women should be given equal chance like men to participate in elections because there are so many opportunities for women in politics as well as in different plans for their development adopted by government and those plans were also implemented in his locality also and there was women representation.

He maintains that women in every community should have equal rights for taking family’s important decisions because it will help India to make its better tomorrow.

The respondent agrees that during the past 62 years of independence the condition of his community has definitely improved because the community itself has taken some initiatives, like opening of schools for both boy’s and girl’s education, which has been proved as a tool to reduce gender inequality in the society but this educational popularity is only up to a definite extent.

As a member of scheduled caste community he feels that education is providing to be to emancipation of women because educated women can assert their rights properly to fight against injustice and education also help women to get economic independence at domestic front.

He said that adherence to the age old system is mainly responsible for gender biasness in his community.
The respondent maintains that educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women because being vested with education, women can lead better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in and out of the family and nowadays the community is also very much receptive towards education of girls than before with this he also adds that this mentality if the people is confined only the people residing in urban areas and specially in those families which are already educated and think that education of women is providing beneficial in educating of children, management of household and additional income are some of the possible reason of it.

**CASE STUDY-13**

Ms. Suman Devi, a 32 years old, divorcee, is a native of village Sangrampur of Tehsil Khair of Aligarh District. Her father is a land laborer and also looking after his own small piece of land. Suman is literate in her family and is graduate. Her father’s monthly income is very low and it is not stable also, therefore, he was not able to send his daughters to school, even he was very willing to send them.

After completing her graduation, her father gave her hand to a resident of Rajpur village of the same tehsil. He was intermediate and was running a daily needs shop in the village. Due to the lack of money and other resources, Suman tied the knot with that person.

When some time passed after marriage, Suman came to know about the habits of her husband, he used to drink and beat her in front of
his family members and soon he sold off the shop, which he owed. According to the respondent, “after six years spending in the hell, and decided to take divorce”. She moved out from her husband’s house and applied in court for divorce.

In the course of taking divorce, she met with so many persons, who helped her a lot and told her about the plans for development and other schemes run by the government.

Now she is independent and working as a teacher in “Shiksha Mitra”.

The respondent says that, those who are uneducated and unaware, discrimination still exists and on the other hand who are aware about the plans, policies and schemes, are living their lives freely.

She agrees that district administration or government has taken certain necessary steps for the upliftment of her caste. She also agrees about the discrimination in terms of availability of school not only for her community but as a whole.

Respondent believes that the educational standard of her community is below graduation level and members of her community rarely head towards any other professional course.

She maintains that girls not only from her community but in general also, are far behind than boys in every sphere, they are bound to live only in domestic circle and this is due to the reluctance of the elders of the family.
Being a member of a particular community, she feels that girls should be treated equally in terms of attainment of education because educated women are much better in maintaining household and socialization of children, whereas she also agrees that one’s association with his/her caste sometimes act as an impediment in attaining a good education. In spite of all above negative factors, she believes that women and men belonging from her community should be treated equally and should also have equal rights.

She was never been the member of Panchayat or some other local body but she has seen some women representation in those bodies. She always participates in elections and casts her vote for BSP. She is also known about so many plans for development for her community adopted by the government and also personally thank them as because whatever she is now, because of those plans only.

She believes that women should have equal rights in politics and at home for taking important decisions in their family which is necessary not only for them but for the nation also. She agrees that during the past 62 years of independence, the condition of her community has improved.

She is not aware about the initiative being taken by the elders of her community for the education of women. She agrees that girl’s education helps a lot to reduce gender inequality because short vocational courses provide women with economic independency; she also maintains
that this practice of women education is gaining popularity among her community only up to a definite extent.

She maintains that education enables women to take part in important decision making vis-à-vis family and society, so that women can easily get emancipated. She believes that education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front. She also maintains that adherence to the age old system is the main reason for gender inequality in her community.

Respondent also believes that educated women are providing to be a reference group for uneducated women and educated women belonging to scheduled caste community also leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making in the family. On the other hand she also feels that in case of education of girls, the society has still a long way to go.

CASE STUDY-14

Mrs. Shalini, forty five years old, married lady residing in the locality of the city Aligarh. She is a graduate. She knows very well how to maintain her household and family. Her husband is a Doctor in a Government hospital near Etawah. He used to be outside and be able to come only on weekends. Mrs Shalini has to take care of her home, family and children. Her father and mother-in-law also used to live with them. Her father-in-law is also a retired Govt. servant. Mrs Shalini has two children, a son and a daughter. Her elder son has passed his higher
secondary examination and wants to be an engineer. Therefore, he has been sent to Kota in Rajasthan, where he is doing his +2 and also taking coaching for IIT. Her younger daughter is studying in class 8th in D.P.S., Aligarh. They are a very happy family where family’s monthly income is Rs.40,000/- (approx.) per month. They are liberal minded and pay equal attention to the education and facilities for their children. They wanted their son to be a doctor but he wanted to be an engineer, so they did not impose their will on their son and sent him to prepare for his own interest. Mrs Shalini said that they would do the same in case of their daughter too.

Respondent agrees that being a member of particular caste sometimes they felt discriminated and that discrimination was based on status. She further added that district Administration or Govt. may have taken certain necessary steps for the upliftment of her caste but people belonging to rural areas are still far from those benefits.

Respondent denies about any sort of discrimination in terms of availability of schools for her community with respect to other communities. She maintains that her community’s educational standard is upto Graduate level. She believe that girl’s of her community are still at par with boys in terms of educational attainment because in her view most of the Schedules Caste families are still living below poverty line which proves hectic for them to send their girls to school as their income is low.
She maintains that girls from her community should be treated equally in terms of attainment of education.

She agrees that girl’s education is necessary for maintaining household and socialization of children. When asked about, whether the association with her caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education, she disagrees. Further she added that women and men should be treated on equal terms and should have equal rights because it will help them to come out from the old social stigma and to reach upto a new heights.

Respondent was never been a member of Panchayat or some other local body but she maintains that women in modern India are actively participating in political sphere. She always casts her vote for BSP. Respondent have heard about so many plans for development of her community adopted by the government, some of them are National Educational Policy, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid-day Meal, etc. These plans were successfully implemented in her locality and helped the women to raise their educational and living standards, which later on helped them to take part in the decision making in their families. Taking part in such activities automatically lead to a better tomorrow and vibrant India.

She maintains that after almost 60 years of independence the condition of her community has definitely improved because now the elders of her community are more open and concerned about their next
generation and now they are equally taking steps for both i.e. boys and girls in terms of education. She agrees that educating girls in her community is definitely is a tool to reduce gender inequality because education makes women to participate in various institutions of decision making.

Respondent also maintains that even after so many efforts by the government and the community itself the education of girls is gaining popularity among her community only upto a definite extent. The community has a long way to go. She agrees that education is providing to be a tool for emancipation of women. Education help women to see things in a better way at domestic as well as social level and also helpful for them to get economic independence at domestic front.

When asked about the reason for gender inequality in her community, she replied that patriarchal set-up of society is mainly responsible for gender inequality which force women to be unequal to men. On the other hand, women who are educated are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decisions making in family, those women are definitely providing to be a reference group for uneducated women.

Respondent also agrees that her community is more receptive towards education of girls now than before. The reason behind this response is that community has seen the fruits of girl’s education.
Results
**TABLE 6.1**

Respondents view regarding Discrimination on the basis of Caste

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.1 shows the views of respondents regarding discrimination in the society on the basis of caste. Out of the total 250 respondents, 112 respondents (44.8%) agree that there is discrimination on the basis of caste, 30 respondents (12%) are undecided and 108 respondents (43.2%) disagree on the issue.

It can be inferred from the table that the response we got from respondents is some sort of a mixed response and the reason for this is caste as a category of social stratification and thereby discrimination is losing its ground owing to economic development as well as social development in our country. The traditional attitudes are fast vanishing and universalistic attitudes are being adopted. The class as a category of stratification is emerging as a current trend and the discrimination is least experienced in society owing to democratic and equalitarian principles associated with new forms of production and work. At the same time rural society is still
experiencing strict caste identities at many places and that may be a reason of mixed response in the above query.

The above stated explanation is supported by 44.8 percent respondents and is best supported by the case study of Kumari Sunita, because being a member of Scheduled Caste community and has to suffer on grounds of basic fundamental rights, which leads to the exclusion not only from the society but also from one’s fundamental activities and rights, such as education, prohibition in the temple entry. This discrimination is mainly responsible for the Scheduled Caste community to behave in such a manner and to keep their girls away from education, as a result they remained at home and become a victim of gender biasness.

TABLE 6.2

Form of Discrimination witnessed by respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form or discrimination</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In terms of status</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of occupation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of exercising basic fundamental rights</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of exercising religious rights</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No discrimination as such</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table 6.2 shows different forms of discrimination on the basis of caste witnessed by respondents. Out of the total 250 respondents 80 respondents (32%) feel discrimination in terms of status, 20 respondents (8%) feel discrimination in terms of occupation, 18 respondents (7.2%) feel discrimination in terms of exercising their fundamental rights, 44 respondents (17.6%) feel discrimination while exercising their religious rights and 88 (35.2%) respondents do not feel any discrimination.

As can be inferred from the table majority of respondents 35.2% do not feel any discrimination on the basis of caste, but when we cumulatively add up other responses in the table, majority sides with the view that there is one or the other form discrimination witnessed by respondents on the basis of their caste. Table somehow reinforces the findings of the Table 6.1. Again we can see 32% respondents feel discriminated in terms of status, which means they are being made to believe that they are inferior in terms of hierarchy. Similarly, respondents feel discrimination on various counts as shown in the table. Though India is fast changing into an industrialized power, following the democratic principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity reinforced by a powerful constitution which follows the principle of equitable justice and discarding any form of discrimination, yet the social setup of the society carries on the burden of traditional social inequalities. These inequalities get manifest in different forms of social intercourse in the day to day lives of an average Indian. It is not that the so called lower castes are being discriminated by upper castes, but it is also that these castes feel it
their destiny and the discrimination appears natural. But as said earlier, things are changing fast for Indian society and the caste is gradually and swiftly giving way to class distinctions. The constitution guarantees that nobody shall be discriminated in terms of caste, creed or colour, therefore, for the future India we can see a hope, an inevitable reality in offing where the inhibitions of caste will be shunned down for a vibrant society and a vibrant nation.

Case study of fifty seven years old Kanchhilal, living in a village, supports the above explanation of table 6.2. according to him, most of the Scheduled Caste people face discrimination based on status. People consider their work polluted and impure and see those people inferior to them. As a result, people from Scheduled Caste community who face this type of discrimination, does not allow their family members or girls to face it and keep them at home most possible. According to him this practice is more common in rural areas as compare to urban areas.

**TABLE 6.3**

Respondents view regarding initiatives taken by Government for their Upliftment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.3 shows the views of respondents regarding the administration/government taking initiatives for their upliftment. Out of the total 250 respondents, 150 respondents (60%) agree that district administration/government has taken certain positive initiatives regarding their caste upliftment. 48 respondents (19.2%) are undecided on the issue and 52 respondents (20.8%) disagree on the same.

It can be concluded from the table that majority of the respondents feel that government has been taking initiatives for their caste upliftment. The government has been always eager to develop schemes for the lower castes like SCs, STs and OBCs to bring them in the national mainstream. The positive discrimination has been used as a tool to give reservations to these sections of society for their status upliftment and overall development. The government has been providing reservations not only in educational and technical institutions but also in jobs to these sections of society with an aim to see the effect trickle down to other people of these communities, but how far government has succeeded in this endeavour is again a cumbersome question.

Table 6.3 shows that 60 percent of the respondents believe that district administration has taken steps to uplift their status. Schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, which proved to be the most successful among all educational Schemes. These Schemes played a very important role in enhancing the status of Scheduled Caste people and specially the women.
Table 6.4 shows the discrimination to a particular community in terms of availability of schools. Out of the total 250 respondents, 92 (36.8%) respondents are of the view that they feel discrimination in terms of availability of schools to their community, 60 respondents (24%) are undecided on the issue and 98 respondents (39.2%) disagree with the same.

Therefore majority 39.2% of the respondents do not feel any discrimination in terms of availability of schools, but at the same time 36.8% of respondents feel discriminated by not being provided adequate number of schools for educating their children. Though table takes to a positive direction where majority do not feel such discrimination, yet equally true is that a major portion of respondents feel such discrimination. The obvious reason for such a development is the large and ever expanding population of India, the government has always been determined to give compulsory basic education to the children of every category, even it has been made free of cost in government schools, the success of Sarv- Shiksh Abhiyan is an open
reality now and the provision of midday meal is an added incentive to children of poorer sections. At the preschool level the work of Integrated Child Development Scheme run Angan Wari Centers is commendable, yet to serve the needs of the billion plus population, the country has yet to go long way in making India a 100% literate society. Another reason for such a development may be the case of school dropouts, the children belonging to under privileged sections of society have to take the burden of running household at a very tender age or they are being forced to take some vocation for adding to household income, such pressures often lead to school dropout in majority of cases. There have been NGOs working in this sector and recently Integrated Child Protection Scheme has been launched by government of India to address Children in distress, but that will surely take some more time to get the things materialized and results evident.

The above explanation is supported by the case study of Shrimati Sharda Devi, she explains that because of unclean work they do, people used to neglect them and keep distance with them at the social and cultural gathering. They do not want that their children study with the children of such people who are involved in doing some unclean work. She also explains that with the help of different governmental policies and programmes, people belonging to Scheduled Caste communities are also coming forward and showing their interest in educating their children, even the girls.
Table 6.5 shows educational standards of the community as per the information given by respondents. Out of the total 250 majority 52 respondents (20.8%) report that the community members are mostly post graduate, 40 respondents (16%) are of the opinion that educational standards of the community members are mostly up to graduation level, 32 respondents (12.8%) report in favour of Sr. secondary level and only 14 respondents (5.6%) feel that educational standards of the community are mostly up to secondary level. Again 38 respondents (15.2%) feel that the educational level of the community is mostly middle level, followed by 36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uneducated</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to primary level</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to middle level</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to secondary level</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to sr. secondary level</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to graduate</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
respondents (14.4%) who feel it is mostly up to primary level and lastly 28 (11.2%) respondents feel that the community is mostly uneducated.

The table clearly gives a mixed response, at one extreme are 11.2% respondents who feel the particular community is mostly uneducated and at other extreme are 20.8% respondents who feel the majority of the members of particular community are post graduate and in between these two extremes are scattered responses. The result clearly shows that the community is divided in its opinion on the issue, some have got the benefits of education and others have yet to get the desired benefits. Actually the benefits of modern and technical education have started to trickle down owing to reservations and awareness campaigns by the government. The marginalized sections are being provided with reservations and scholarships to carry forward their ambitions in a desired direction. The government has realized that for a better tomorrow the marginalized Indian is to be taken into the development net, only then India can emerge as a powerful developed nation. In the education of these sections lie remedies for various demographic and social problems of the country and it is high time that the needs and aspirations of these marginalized sections are being taken into account and same is being done by the Government of India.

Almost all the case studies shows the difference of opinion about the educational standards of their community. As they belong from different social and political backgrounds, the educational standards of their community one and the other.
Table 6.6.1 shows respondents view regarding differences between educational attainment of girls and boys in the community. As can be inferred from the table out of total 250 respondents majority of the respondents 166 (66.4%) believe that there is substantial difference between the educational attainment of boys and girls and only 84 respondents (33.6%) feel the contrary. There is clear gender discrimination in terms of attainment of education in the community; the things get clarification in Table 6.6.2

The above stated explanation is supported by 66.4 percent of the total respondents. In today’s modern Indian society, people behave and act in a different way from the ancient Indian society. Now they consider their children equal irrespective of their gender. This view is best supported by the case study of Mr. S.K. Singh, who prepared both of his daughters efficient enough so that they can walk shoulder to shoulder along with boys and can take their own decisions.
TABLE 6.6.2

Possible reasons for gender differentials in educational attainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Actual Percent</th>
<th>Total sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls are restricted inside their household.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl’s education proves hectic because of low family income.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elders of the family restricted their girls at domestic circle.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls themselves opt to be at home.</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educating girls is still a taboo.</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>166</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.6.2 shows the respondents view regarding factors responsible for low educational attainment of girls. Out of the total 250 respondents only 166 are of the opinion that there is gender discrimination in terms of educational attainment of boys and girls, so responses of only 166 respondents have been taken into account. Out of 166 respondents, 26 (15.6%) respondents opine that girls are being restricted inside their
households, 66 (39.8%) respondents believe that low income of the family proves detrimental for girls education, who cannot afford it easily, 68 respondents (41%) find elders not supporting girls education and restricting them to work in domestic sphere, curiously none of the respondents feel that girls themselves want to be out of education sitting at home, only 6 respondents (3.6%) feel that education of girls is a taboo in the particular community.

As can be inferred from the table, majority 41% respondents feel that elders have been responsible for restricting girls to domestic sphere and added to this is the 39.8% respondents who feel that it is low income of family which prompts the community to rest girls at home and engage them in household activities. The things are clear, the overarching patriarchal setup of the community still considers educating women to be a danger for traditional social organization. The females are being considered to be the care takers of the household and the men are considered to be the bread earners. The girls are trained in household activities since the early childhood and boys are given chance to excel in outdoor life. The low income of the families adds fuel to this exercise, where the limited resources of family not only restrict education of girls, but even boys of the family are not spared, who are being forced to earn for sustenance of the family. This has been one of main cause for school dropout throughout India.
Table 6.7 shows the respondents view regarding equal educational attainment of boys and girls in the community. As can be seen from the table out of 250 respondents, 222 respondents (88.8%) agree with the statement, 16 respondents (6.4%) are undecided and 12 respondents (4.8%) disagree on the same.

It can be concluded that majority of the respondents, irrespective of age, gender and location feel that there should be parity among boys and girls in terms of their educational attainment. The result is in affirmative for a positive change in the community, but owing to limited resources of the family there have been certain hiccups in the process and government and non government intervention is required. The good thing in this direction is that government has already started its initiative in this regard, the securing of basic education has been made the basic right of the citizens of India and that too free of cost. The schemes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have taken education to the doorsteps of common masses where children are provided
with free education and nutritious diet. The days are not far when whole country would be literate and the gender disparity in education will be a tale of days gone by.

The result of this question has drastically shows that the community want their girls to have equal educational opportunities, like boys. Almost all selected respondents for case studies showed their interest in the equal educational attainment for both boys and girls. Now this practice is common in urban as well as rural areas.

**TABLE 6.8**

**House hold maintenance and socialization in terms of girls education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.8 shows respondents’ view regarding education of girls being necessary for proper maintenance of the household and better socialization of the children. Out of the total 250 respondents, 210 (84%) agree on the issue, 22 respondents (8.8%) are undecided and 18 respondents (7.2%) disagree on the issue.

The table clearly shows that majority 84% of respondents feel that education of girls is necessary for both household and socialization of
children. The educated girl can maintain the household more properly, she can maintain health and hygiene of the family, she can take decisions at times when males are not around, owing to her awareness she can utilize the services of government and non government sectors for family welfare, she can plan the family for an equitable development of her children. Again an educated girl can prove to be a good mother for her children in terms of socialization, she can guide them and maintain them in a proper way, providing them nourished food, immunizing them in time and giving them good etiquettes and a proper base for good educational attainments.

‘Good education is the key to happiness’; this phrase fits very well on the educated women. Only an educated woman knows how to maintain her family very well. The case study of Mrs. Kalpana Maurya proves it in a way. She is a chairperson of Tehsil Khair of the District Aligarh. According to her an educated women can provide an atmosphere to her family and children for their better future.

### TABLE 6.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.9 shows respondents view regarding caste acting as an impediment in terms of educational attainment. As can be seen from the table, out of total 250 respondents, 80 (32%) agree on the issue, 52 (20.8%) are undecided and 118 (47.2%) disagree with the same.

It can be inferred from the table that majority of the respondents 47.2% almost half of the total feel that caste has not acted as an impediment in attainment of education, but again a substantial amount of respondents 32% feel that caste has acted as an impediment, so there is a mixed response on the issue. The caste has been a factor of immobility in traditional Indian society but things have changed and the constitution of India is a witness to this change which guarantees that there should be no discrimination in terms of caste, creed and colour. The different lower and marginalized sections of the society are given reservations in educational institutions and employment to bring them into the national mainstream. The things have changed a lot, but there are still certain regions in the country where caste distinctions are being followed in letter and spirit, even in modernized and educated sections of our society caste affiliations act as a determining force in social intercourse. We are in a state of mistaken modernity and India still has to go a long way in eradicating the evils of caste system, because it is sanctioned by religion.

As the table 6.9 shows that 47.2 percent of the total respondents disagree with the question asked. More than 10 sample case studies support this view of the total sample selections. People believe that one’s association
with his/her caste does not act as an impediment in their success. There are some Constitutional provision which prevent the people of minority, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Communities for being discriminated on the basis of their caste.

**TABLE 6.10**

**Gender equality and equality of rights for the community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.10 shows respondents' view regarding gender equality and equal rights for both genders. Out of the total 250 respondents, 222 (88.8%) agree on the statement, 14 (5.6%) are undecided and again 14 (5.6%) disagree on the same.

The table clearly shows that there is an increasing awareness among the community regarding gender equality and equal rights for all. Leaving aside certain impediments like caste, traditional social setup, an average Indian today believes in the free play of everything where everybody is treated on equal terms, be it employment, civil rights, judicial rights, education etc. the discrimination among men and women is fast disappearing, we have a female Smt. Pratibha Devi Singh Patil as the
President of our country, Smt. Sonia Gandhi as the Chairperson of the largest National Political Party of the country and also Smt. Meera Kumar as the speaker of our Parliament. These are just a few examples, the contemporary India has given representation to women in every field and they are competing with men in every nook and corner of the country.

**TABLE 6.11.1**

*Membership in Panchayat and Local Bodies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 6.11.1 shows the respondents response in terms of their membership in Panchayats and local bodies. Out of total 250 respondents, 208 respondents (83.2%) answer in affirmative and 42 (16.8%) answer in negative.

Majority of the respondents report to have been given representation in panchayats and local bodies and that is a positive sign. The representation in decision making bodies can give members of a particular community a chance to assert their rights and take part in decision making regarding the welfare of the people and in turn the community.

The case study of Mrs. Kalpana Maurya supports the above explanation of the table 6.11.1. She says that it is only due to the education,
today she is at this position, without having knowledge this would not have been possible. She also gives the example of Mrs. Ramsakhi Katheria Ex-MLA, Aligarh. In her view Scheduled Caste women are also coming forward to grab new educational and occupational opportunities not only in unorganized sector but their participation and representation is also visible in organized sector too.

**TABLE 6.11.2**

**Representation of S.C. women in Panchayat or other local body**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.11.2 shows respondents opinion regarding representation of schedule caste women in panchayats or other local bodies. Out of the total 250 respondents, 124 respondents (49.6%) are of the opinion that women of the particular community have been given representation in panchayats/local bodies, while 126 respondents (50.4%) answer in negative.

Though table gives a mixed response, yet it can’t be ruled out that representation has been given to women too as almost 50% of the respondents report that the women of the particular community have been given representation. This is again a positive sign, because for the proper development of the community the emancipated position of women is a must.
Table 6.11.3 shows respondents view regarding representation of women in panchayats/ local bodies. In table 6.11.2 only 126 respondents feel that women have not been given representation in the panchayats / local bodies, therefore only these 126 respondents responses have been taken into account in this table. Out of the total 126 respondents majority 104 (82.6%) respondents agree that women should be given representation in the Panchayats, local bodies, 10 respondents (7.9%) are undecided on the issue and 12 respondents (9.5%) are against their representation in these bodies.

Table clearly shows that there is a growing awareness among the members of the particular community regarding involvement of women in institutions of local self governance; it manifestly shows the commitment of particular community towards women emancipation and their realization that for a better tomorrow women have to be included in every endeavour. The emancipation of the women will in turn lead to proper development of children, family and community in large. The table is an evident example of change to be witnessed in modern India.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Actual Percent</th>
<th>Total sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.12.1 shows respondents view regarding participation in elections. Out of total 250 respondents, majority 208 respondents (83.2%) report to have been participating in elections, while 42 respondents (16.8%) do not participate in the election exercise. The things further get cleared in Table 6.12.2.

Almost all the respondents take part in elections and one thing which is common among all is their vote and support to BSP. Mrs Kalpana Maurya, Mrs Ramsakhi Katheria are some of the great supporter and follower of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, therefore, they give their support to the party of women representative and follower of Dr. Ambedkar.

### TABLE 6.12.1

**Participation of respondents in elections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 6.12.2

**Participation in elections and party affiliation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Actual Percent</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSP</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.12.2 shows the voting behavior of the respondents who participate in elections. Out of the total 250 respondents only 208 report to have been participating in elections, therefore, responses of only 208 respondents have been taken into account. Out of 208 respondents 20 respondents (9.6%) report supporting BJP, 54 respondents (26%) report supporting Congress, 108 respondents (51.9%) have been supporting BSP 12 respondents (5.8%) have been supporting SP and 14 respondents (6.7%) have been voting in favour of some other party.

The result clearly shows politicization of the caste. The majority of the respondents from the particular community have been voting in favour of BSP (51.9%), a caste based political party. It also reflects the contemporary political scenario of India, where voting is done on religious and caste lines. The leaders exploit the voters on the pretext of the miserable conditions of the caste and highlight the luxuries and well being of other groups in the area, thus juxtaposing the interests of caste against others. The caste affiliation thus becomes manifest and of supreme importance and identity and even violence can be seen owing to conflict of interest. But the good thing is that this divisive politics is fast losing ground in the contemporary India, as can be seen by the large scale debacle of the largest Hindu nationalist party BJP in recent elections and same is true with this particular community where a considerable number of voters have favoured largest nationalist secular part INC (Congress) (26%). This is a positive sign
which not only shows awareness of the community, but a promise for a better, developed and secular India.

**TABLE 6.13**

**Women participation in elections**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.13 shows respondents’ view regarding the women being given equal chance to participate in elections. Out of the total 250 respondents, majority 230 respondents (92%) are in the favour of equal participation of women in elections, 16 respondents (6.4%) are undecided on the issue and only 4 respondents (1.6%) disagree on the same.

It can be inferred from the table that majority of the respondents favour for women participation in elections, and that has been an exercise quite familiar in contemporary India. The women have been given the right to express their will and that is a positive sign for the women emancipation. The women are moving out of the four walls of the house and exercising their franchise so that their issues are highlighted and their condition in society is improved and the best part is that even society is realizing their genuine demands as can be seen from the findings of this table.
It was observed that almost all the respondents were in favour of equal chances like men to participate in election. This explanation is supported by the case study of Ms. Yogita Kashyap, though she is not eligible to vote as she is minor but has a great enthusiasm for taking part in such an interesting process.

**TABLE 6.14.1**

**Awareness regarding developmental plans for community/ caste**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.14.1 shows respondents view regarding development plans for their community. Out of total 250 respondents, 186 respondents (74.4%) report of having knowledge or have heard of development plans for their community, while as only 64 respondents (25.6%) deny having such knowledge or have heard about such plans.

Table clearly shows that majority of the respondents have knowledge of development plans initiated by government for their community. This clearly implies that community has positively been involved in various developmental activities for their welfare and at the same time members are well aware of the developmental programmes for their community so that they may reap benefits not only for themselves but for the whole community.
at large. This really can lead to progress of the community and their emancipation.

Above stated explanation is supported by the case study of Mrs. Uma Devi, who with the help of some beneficial schemes run by the government, came out from the trauma of her husband’s death. As after her husband, she and her daughter-in-laws started doing some small scale work like making agarbatti, which proved to be a great help in their survival. It is also observed that Anganwari and Panchayati Raj Institutions are some of the very important examples of the plans for development for these communities.

### TABLE 6.14.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Actual Percent</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>74.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.14.2 shows respondents view regarding developmental plans being implemented in their locality. Out of the total 250 respondents, only 186 have reported of having knowledge of developmental plans in previous table (Table 6.14.1), therefore, only the responses of 186 respondents have been taken into account in this table. Out of the total 186 respondents, 130 (69.9%) are of the opinion that different developmental plans initiated by the
government have reached their village and at the same time 56 respondents (30.1%) do not feel so.

As can be concluded from the table that majority of respondents (69.9%) feel that their localities have seen the developmental plans initiated by government being implemented in their locality, but at the same time a considerable number of respondents feel the contrary. The development is positive, but still a lot needs to be done to make the localization of development plans 100%. The government of India is fast working towards the development of Indian villages, we can see the developmental works going on in almost every village of the country, the schemes like NREGS, PMGSY etc being implemented in letter and spirit to connect every village to the town and provide guaranteed employment benefits to the villagers, and that too for developmental works in their own locality. This is only a beginning and the days are not far when whole of village India will be technologically connected and updated.

TABLE 6.14.3

Inclusion/Participation of women in developmental plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Actual Percent</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.14.3 shows the respondents view regarding inclusion/participation of women in developmental plans of the community at local level. In continuation to the previous table (6.14.2), out of 186 respondents
only 130 respondents reported to have seen the developmental plans being implemented in their locality, therefore only responses of these 130 respondents have been taken into account. Out of total 130 respondents, 116 (89.2%) are of the opinion that women have been included or participated in these developmental plans and only 14 respondents (10.8%) do not feel so.

The message is clear from the table, that there is no gender bias in the implementation of these developmental plans and women have been positively included in such endeavours. These are no wage differential on the basis of gender and women have really explored the avenues of income generation in such developmental activities. The status of women has improved from being a dependent to a bread earner for the family.

**TABLE 6.15.1**

**Equal chance in Decision Making For Women**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.15.1 shows respondents view regarding equal chance being provided to women in taking part or making important decisions regarding their family. Out of total 250 respondents, 220 respondents (88%) are of the opinion that women should be given equal chance in decision making process of the family and only 30 respondents (12%) are opposed to this view.
Table clearly shows that majority of the members of the particular community are in favour of a positive change where women should be given equal chance in decision making and only a meagre 30 respondents (12%) were against this trend.

This explanation is also supported by almost all the respondents but it would be significant here to mention that educated families pay special attention to their female members to take important decisions in their family.

**TABLE 6.15.2**

**Reason for non involvement of women in decision making**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women are not efficient in decision making.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It increases influence of the women in the family.</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women often take wrong decision.</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women can never be given equal status.</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is against religion and norms.</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.15.2 shows the reason for non involvement of women in decision making as per respondents view. Out of the total 250 respondents only 30 are of the opinion that women should not be given any chance in decision making, therefore, responses of only these 30 respondents have been taken into consideration. Out of the total 30 respondents, 14 respondents (46.7%) are of the opinion that women are inefficient in making vital decisions regarding welfare of family and its members and community at large, 6 respondents (20%) point out that it increases influence of women in the family, 2 respondents (6.7%) feel that women often take wrong decisions, again 2 respondents (6.7%) feel that women can never be given equal status owing to their own ideological bent of mind and 6 respondents (20%) feel that it is against religion and norms/values of society.

The table clearly shows majority of respondents either feel that women are inefficient in decision making (47%) or they feel it will result in increased influence of women in society and still there are others who feel that it is against religion and norms. The responses clearly show the patriarchal ideology prevalent in the particular community where women are still looked down upon as inferior and subjugating beings, they are just status symbols of honour and prestige and their participation in decision making is even considered anti religious, this presents a quite dismal picture of the affairs of the particular community, but since only a few respondents are of this bent of mind (only 30 respondents out of 250 have this attitude)
so there is no need to panic, majority feel that the change should be positive in terms of empowerment of women.

TABLE 6.16
Women Work Participation and National Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.16 shows respondents’ view regarding participation of women in daily activities for their betterment and for the betterment of nation. Out of the total 250 respondents, 216 (86.4%) agree with the statement, 26 respondents (10.4%) are undecided on the issue and 8 respondents (3.2%) disagree with the same.

Table just reinforces the findings of table 6.15.1 showing that there should be participation of women in every sphere and that too in the positive direction. The good thing is that the respondents feel that women can be a force ushering in a drastic change in the whole social setup of the country to make country a better place and a growth oriented nation.
Table 6.17 shows the opinion of the respondents regarding improvement in the status of their community since Independence. Out of the total 250 respondents, 176 respondents (70.4%) agree with the statement, 54 respondents (21.6%) are undecided and only 20 respondents (8%) disagree on the same.

Table clearly shows that majority of respondents have witnessed change rather improvement in the status of their community. It again manifests the change that is taking place in today’s India. Based on the democratic principle of equality and supported by a powerful constitution which gives every Indian and equality of opportunity have helped a lot in eradicating the downtrodden, stagnant and benign condition of the society possessing a lot of differential parameters. The government of India has been following Five-Year plans and assuming the status of a welfare state where focus has been the village India and at the same time without compromising with the industrial advancement and modernization of the nation.
Table 6.18 shows the initiatives taken by community elders for improving social and in particular education of the particular community. Out of the total 250 respondents, 158 (63.2%) answer in affirmative that elders have taken such initiatives, while as 92 respondents (36.8%) answer in negative. Things get cleared in table 6.19 below.

Above stated explanation is supported by so many respondents. First of all they pay their gratitude to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Jyotiba Phule, Mayawati, Meera Kumar and some local renowned names who take the credit to initiate in this regard.
Table 6.19 shows the various initiatives being taken up by community elders to improve the lot of community as whole in particular education. Out of the total 250 respondents only 158 are of the opinion that any initiative has been taken by the community elders in this regard, therefore, the responses of these 158 respondents have been taken into account, out of these, 20 (12.7%) report that an arrangement for preschool education was being made by community elders, 20 respondents (12.7%) are of the opinion that a nursery school was set up by community elders, 8 respondents (5.1%) report that a middle school was setup by the initiatives of the elders of the community, 18 respondents (11.4%) think that community elders have been active in arranging the education of boys of the
community and lastly 92 respondents (58.2%) are of the opinion that elders of the community have taken equal steps in arranging for education of boys and girls.

As can be inferred from the table, majority feel that elders have taken the initiatives in educating children of the community and that too without gender bias. The initiatives have been taken a primary, middle and higher levels as is evident from the table. This is again a positive development and the reason for this has been the various initiatives and awareness created by both Government and Non Government sectors in this regard. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Free Education for all, various schemes launched by Ministry of social welfare like scholarships for different sections of society, intervention of NGOs in the education sector supplemented by awareness through electronic, print and other advocacy campaigns throughout country have proved to be boon in changing the face and outlook of modern India. The communities too have responded well, the hereditary caste distinctions have almost vanished and people have begun to value meritocracy and human potential and added to this a drastic change has occurred in the area of gender equality, people have begun to realize that girl child is no way inferior to boys. The role models have been women in diverse fields like sports, politics, academics, media, civil services, entertainment, modeling and emerging sciences where women have proved their metal not only in our own country but in the world also.
Above stated explanation is strongly supported by cases taken for the purpose of sampling. Smt. Maya, supports that, education is the only factor which is responsible for one’s mental status, one can think in a much broader way with the help of education, which also helps to reduce gender inequality. Being an educated mother, she agrees that, son and daughter, both are equal and she doesn’t make any difference among them.

**TABLE 6.20**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.20 shows initiatives taken by community for education of women. Out of the total 250 respondents, 144 (57.6%) are of the opinion that community has taken initiatives in this regard and at the same time 106 respondents (42.4%) do not feel so.

As compared to the previous table (6.19) where majority of respondents were of the opinion that community has been active in arranging the education of their children without any gender bias, but this table shows a somewhat different picture. Although majority (57.6%) still believe that community has taken initiatives regarding education of women
but at the same time 42.4% respondents do not feel so. The reason for such a mixed response seems to be the burden of the past traditions and values, though the change is towards progress. India has been the country where gender differences have been most prominent. The birth of girl child was never welcomed, though we can see a lot of change now, again it was believed that girl should be educated in domestic work and kept away from the social sphere (girl being a symbol of honour and pride), the practice is still persistent in many parts of village India. Though revered and considered a Janani (progenitor) in the religious scripts, she was never given a place in social space, she was just considered a property in malevolent patriarchal system still existing in the contemporary India, she was instead considered a Dasi whose sole duty was to serve her husband and was even expected to perform Sati on the pyre of her dead husband, though the practice is banned now. The point is that even in this jeopardized environment she has managed to gain a lot of ground for her, the social norms and values have changed a lot to enable her to redefine herself, she has been empowered by laws and legislations and the most important is that the society has begun to accept her a legitimate stake holder in the social sphere of the community and country as a whole. The census 2001 data shows male literacy rate of the country is 75.85% and female literacy rate is 54.16%, though she seems to be behind men but seeing her state of affairs in the past, it is quite evident she has moved a lot leaving behind her tumultuous past and it is up to the
policy makers and the nation as whole to let her spread her wings and make her life a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

TABLE 6.21

Education of Girls and Gender Inequality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.21 shows respondents view regarding reduction of gender inequality through education of girls. Out of the total 250 respondents, 206 respondents (82.4%) agree with the statement that educating girls will result in reduction of gender inequality, 24 respondents (9.6%) are undecided on the issue and remaining 20 respondents (8%) disagree on the same.

As can be concluded from the table, majority of respondents seem to be quite aware that education of girls can prove to be a force for achieving a positive change in terms of realizing gender equity in the country. The education will definitely open new vistas and avenues for women, she will be empowered to exert herself in domestic and occupational sphere, that way she will not be only empowering herself, but she will be empowering the nation as whole to realize the desired aims of progress and development. The participation of women in various sectors will usher in a confidence in
her to work not only for her family but for the society at large. In fact the woman of contemporary urban India has already begun to realize her potentials and the day is not far behind when her rural counterpart will surely shun her inhibitions and burdens to participate in every sphere of life without distinctions of caste, community, creed and colour.

**TABLE 6.22**

**Education as a means of Gender equality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women assert rights at family level and outside.</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>37.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It provides job security for building economy of the family.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It provides women economic independence.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women can participate in community more vigorously with education.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It makes women to participate in decision making.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.22 shows different opinions of respondents regarding education of women to be means in reducing gender inequality. out of the 250 respondents, 94 (37.6%) feel that through education women have been able to assert their rights in family and in society at large, 46 respondents (18.4%) think that education provides job to women which adds to family economy, 24 respondents (9.6%) feel that education provides economic independence to women, 46 respondents (18.4%) are of the opinion that
through education women can participate in community affairs more vigorously and confidently and 40 respondents (16%) feel that education is a tool for involving women in decision making process.

The table clearly shows the diverse opinions of respondents regarding girl education and gender equity. Majority believe that through education women can assert their rights, participate more openly in community affairs and can be helpful to family economy and self dependent. The table just reflects the possible outcomes of women education and it happens to be truer than just a projection. The women, wherever they have been educated and empowered have been able to change the whole social space and milieu, they participate in. Education of women has proved helpful for family in terms of health and hygiene, better socialization to children and economic support to family. The women have been able to put their views in community matters to make every developmental initiative a complete one, similarly while being in the occupation women has been able to realize her potentials and secure her identity being self dependent, aware and ready to face any discrimination. Through education she has been able not only to assert her rights but she has been able to challenge any discrimination or atrocity against her. It is only through education that the women have been able to know the rights/laws governing her existence in domestic and social sphere where she should feel more free than confined. The ultimate thing is
that she has found herself to be equal to men to participate in any sphere and giving her a sense and realization of equality.

Most of the educated women support this view that education makes women to assert their rights in family and outside. Ms. Sunita, Mrs. Kalpana Maurya, Ms. Nisha, all are in favour of this above stated explanation.

**TABLE 6.23**

Girl education and its popularity in the community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a little extent.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a definite extent.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a moderate extent.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.23 shows respondents’ view regarding education of women gaining popularity in their community. Out of the total 250 respondents, 74 (29.6%) feel that girl education has gained popularity to a little extent, again 74 respondents (29.6%) feel girl education has gained popularity to a definite extent, 60 respondents (24%) feel that girl education has gained popularity to a moderate extent and lastly 42 respondents (16.8%) feel that girl education has gained popularity to a great extent.
The results of table 6.20 shows to a large extent that the things are changing, but the burden of past is still there, but the whole scene is that of progress. The people are on the positive track rather realizing that their daughters should be educated though intensity is more prominent from a mild to moderate level. To keep things moving it needs initiative from government and non-government sectors plus community participation to realize the ultimate objective of 100% literacy of the country, the things are moving in the right direction and all that needed is proper planning and consistency and definitely the mass media has a tremendous role to play in this great endeavour.

**TABLE 6.24**

**Education as a tool of emancipation for the women of the community**

(Schedule Caste).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.24 shows the respondents view regarding education as a tool of emancipation for the women of the community. Out of the total 250 respondents, 202 (80.8%) agree that education has proved beneficial in emancipating women of the particular community (schedule caste). 32
respondents (12.8%) are undecided on the issue and 16 respondents (6.4%) disagree on the same.

It becomes clear from the table that majority of the respondents feel that education has been a tool for emancipation of the women of their community. The positive thing is that people of the particular community not only witness, but perceive education of women to be tool for their emancipation, this has become a reality only when the people have witnessed change on ground in their own domestic and societal spheres where these women have not only changed their lives but the lives of their families and community at large. The things get further clarified in the table 6.25.

The above stated explanation is supported by the case study of Ms. Suman Devi, as after her divorce when she was searching for some new horizons, people from different backgrounds came and helped her and showed some new ways to be independent and stand on her own.
Table 6.25 shows different ways of emancipation of women through education. Out of the total 250 respondents, 32 (12.8%) feel that women are being vested with freedom, 28 respondents (11.2%) feel that women see things in a better way at domestic and social level, 22 respondents (8.8%) feel that women can take important decisions at family and societal level, 20 respondents (8%) feel women can fight for justice and lastly majority of respondents 148 (59.2%) feel that women have been emancipated through education in all of the above ways.

The table clearly shows multiple ways of women emancipation through education, women are no longer inhibited and confined in domestic sphere, instead they experience freedom to express and exert themselves, they have begun to see things differently and approach various challenges more positively and analytically. They have been able to bring in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women are being vested with freedom.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They see things in a better way at domestic and social level.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They can take decision in family and society.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They can fight for justice.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the above.</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
innovations at various levels, participate more judiciously at family and societal level and more appropriately to fight for their rights. The crux is that women have been able to live a complete life which is more humane, fulfilling and rewarding so that they are not functioning as dependent rather participating functional units of family and society.

**TABLE 6.26**

**Education and economic Independence of women**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>90.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.26 shows the respondents opinion regarding education being a tool for women to experience economic independence. out of the total 250 respondents, majority 226 (90.4%) feel that education has proved to be weapon for women to gain economic independence, 16 respondents (6.4%) are undecided on the issue and 8 respondents (3.2%) disagree on the same.

This clearly shows that majority of respondents feel that education has proved to be tool for economic independence of the women. It has certain other manifestations, being economically independent. Women have been able to free themselves of domestic pressures; she has been able to get
her due status and invest in her welfare and better tomorrow. The pressures of patriarchy have eased upon her and she has been able to take decisions for herself and for her family. She has emerged as a contributor rather than being a dependency on family economy. She has been able to seek justice whenever required; her voice has become audible as she can’t be suppressed now for being an appendage. Being in the occupational sphere she has been able to devote her energies for the betterment of herself, her children, her family and society. She no longer feels insecure for being deserted, violated, desecrated and dishonored; she has open choices and information for an appropriate course of action. She has rose from the position of being a symbol of honour and pride in the patriarchal society to a position where she can fight any discrimination and seek legal reprieve. In short she has fought masculinization of society to make it more equitable for everyone and education has been her strength to rely upon.

**TABLE 6.27**

**Factors Responsible for Gender Inequality in the Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adherence to the age old system.</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic dependence of women.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality is a myth.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women don’t feel to get equal.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patriarchal set up.</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>250</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.27 shows factors responsible for gender inequality as per respondents in their community. Out of the total 250 respondents, 92 respondents (36.8%) are of the opinion that gender inequality is the result of adherence of people to age old system of norms and values, 44 respondents (17.6%) report that gender inequality is because of economic dependence of women, 20 respondents (8%) consider gender equality as a myth as if gender inequality is a natural state of order, 18 respondents (7.2%) feel that it is women who don’t consider themselves as equal to men and lastly 76 respondents (30.4%) consider patriarchal setup of society to be responsible for gender inequality.

It becomes clear from the table that majority of respondents either consider gender inequality. The outcome of age old system of norms and values or the patriarchal setup of society and economic dependence of women also happens to be a factor for gender inequality. Considering all these factors together, we can infer that gender inequality has been mainly because of patriarchal system exist in the society, it is supported by age old norms and values which consider men to be superior and women to be inferior. The women are being restricted to the household chores and domestic drudgery, the work which is never counted as work by men; they are always dependent on men even for their small needs. The overall system provides an ideology which considers all this arrangement to be just and right, even the women who are at the receiving end of this system have a feeling that they can never be equal to men. The patriarchal system through
its various organs makes gender equality to appear as a myth and gender inequality happens to be the natural order of things, the persistence of this system for generations makes every stakeholder in this arrangement to accept the status quo as functional and optimum for maintaining order and stability in the society. So to attack this exploitative system the weaker section (women) who are at the receiving end needs to be empowered and emancipated and the education happens to be the main guiding force and fuel for this change.

Above stated explanation is supported by so many male respondents, Mr. Kanchhilal, Mr. S.K. Singh and Mr. Munne Singh. They all believe that adherence to the age old system and men. They said that, these are the two main reasons for gender inequality in their community.

**TABLE 6.28**

**Education of women, Gender Equality and Decision making in the Family.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.28 shows that respondents view regarding education of women in their community helping women to live better in terms of gender equality and decision making in the family. Out of the total 250 respondents, 204 (81.6%) answer in affirmative and rest 46 (18.4%) answer in negative. It
clearly shows that majority is of the opinion that education in promoting
gender equality and helps women to take part in decision making, the things
have been already discussed in detail in previous tables. The important thing
is that people are perceiving women education to be an emancipating and
liberating experience for women and not just taking it at face value. Things
get further clarified in table 6.29.

**TABLE 6.29**

**Educated women as Reference Group for Uneducated Women.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total Sample Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>76.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.29 shows respondents opinion regarding educated women
acting as a reference group for uneducated women. out of the total 250
respondents only 204 respondents feel that education has been able to
influence women in many ways, so responses of only these respondents have
been taken into account. out of the total 204 respondents, 192 (94.1%) are of
the opinion that educated women are a reference group for uneducated
women, 10 respondents (4.9%) are undecided on the issue and only 2
respondents (1%) answer in negative.
The results are on the expected lines, it is like a chain reaction, the educated women in various sectors have proved to be role models for other women who are illiterate and ignorant. Even if they have not been able to experience a change in their own lives, they have always tried vigorously to bring in a change in their families by educating their daughters. The working women from different communities have resulted in sweeping changes in their communities and attracted attention of other women to change their lot. The progress of contemporary Indian women like Kiran Bedi, Indira Gandhi, Sania Mirza, Saina Nahiwal, Indira Nooyi, Sonia Gandhi, Pratibha Devi Singh Patil, Kalpana Chawla, Chanda Kochhar, Aishwariya Rai, Sushmita Sen to just name a few have touched soul of every contemporary Indian women. The popular television soaps and reality shows have on the one hand made Indian women to realize that she is being exploited and at the same time infused in her the energy that she can be among the achievers. The reservations in various decision making bodies for women have proved helpful to get some women to take the charge of decision making in the community and that too has infused a new life in the contemporary Indian women who also wants to take charge of her life and change her fortunes.

This statement is supported by the case study of Mrs. Kalpana Maurya, as she is successful and having a reputed status in society. She said that so many females from her community came to her for help and support. That’s why she believes that women like her to be a reference group for those who are uneducated.
**TABLE 6.30**

**Community being more receptive to Education of Girls at present**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.30 shows respondents’ opinion regarding community being more receptive to education of girls now than before. Out of the total 250 respondents, 212 (84.8%) agree that community is now more receptive towards education of girls, 22 respondents (8.8%) are undecided on the issue and 16 respondents (6.4%) disagree on the same.

This means that community is experiencing a positive change where education of girls is considered to be a welcome development leaving aside the earlier inhibitions regarding the girl child; the things get cleared in table 6.31.
### TABLE 6.31

Reasons for community being receptive towards Girl Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total sample percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community has seen the fruits of girls’ education.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>12.26</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community is responding to demands of modern society.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.32</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leadership has been a force to act in this regard.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.43</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls’ education is beneficial for maintaining household and additional income.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17.92</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All of the above.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>49.06</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>212</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.31 shows multiple reasons for community being receptive towards education of girls now than before. Out of the total 250 respondents only 212 respondents are of the opinion that family has been receptive towards girl education (table 6.30), therefore, responses of only 212 respondents have been taken into account. Out of total 212 respondents, 26 (12.26%) are of the opinion that Community has seen the fruits of girl education, 24 (11.32%) respondents feels that Community is responding to demands of modern society, 20 (9.43%) feel that political leadership has taken initiatives to bring in such changes in the community where they have begun to readily educate their daughters, 38 (17.92%) respondents are of the
opinion that community has begun to realize that girls' education is beneficial for maintaining household and additional income so an added incentive, and lastly 104(49.06%) respondents are of the opinion that all the above reasons are responsible for community being receptive to girl education presently than before.

Table clearly shows the multiplier effect acting to move community for positive change. There have been initiatives at various levels towards emancipation of women, particularly the political leadership has been quite positive towards the overall education of masses including women. People have themselves witnessed the benefits of educating girls, who happen to be the engineers and administrators of day to day life of the family. These educated women especially in rural sector and in down trodden categories have proved to be torch bearers of change, they have become role models maintaining and propagating health and hygiene, social reforms and developing various civic senses in other women of their community. They are also instrumental in preparing other women and young girls for a new change in their lives and motivating them to join the school. The community is also responding to the demands of modern society where education is key to every innovation, be it agriculture, communication, media or getting mere information. Added to this educating girls has proved beneficial not only in engineering a change in society, but it has been instrumental in adding to family income, the women are no longer burden on the family, but instead they have begun to share burden of the family. These developments have
cumulatively being responsible for community being receptive towards girl education.

Mr. Kanchhilal supports this explanation. He believes that, today the condition of women education has improved a lot than the earlier times. According to him, education for women is providing beneficial in educating of children management her household and additional income.
Conclusion
CONCLUSION

Present research study, i.e., Education and Gender Equality: An Inquiry into the Status of Scheduled Caste Women of Aligarh (U.P), is targeting towards one of the most negligent sections of the Indian society, i.e., Scheduled Caste women. For the purpose of this study, sample of 250 respondents were taken up from two tehsils of district Aligarh namely Koil and Khair. Fourteen respondents were selected through the purposive sampling technique. Present study is aimed with the four main objectives, these objectives helped the researcher to give a general direction to the study. The objectives are:

1. How much education of women has increased among the Scheduled Caste & what are the educational standards of women belonging to Scheduled Caste community?

2. How far the community takes its own initiative to educate women?

3. Does education really help to reduce gender inequality? If yes, then how much?

4. How far the education is liberating an emancipator?

The foregoing results show that inequalities based on education and gender are weakening in today’s Modern Indian Society, which is changing fast. Therefore, changes are also coming into the status of women and when we talk about the status of Scheduled Caste women, their status is also getting uplifted but the speed of this change is gradual. Though when we
compare these changes with the ancient and pre-independence period, their status has improved a lot.

The present study is unique in the quest with respect to those Scheduled Caste women who witness a change in their status based on education and gender and who reaped the fruit of different government programmes and policies. An analysis of the data collected through the field work and case studies shows that the post independence period has witnessed so many positive changes in the status of the women belonging to the Scheduled Caste community. The position of Scheduled Caste women is interesting. On one hand government has promised to raise their status and on the other hand only urban women and women belonging to higher status are enjoying the benefits of the developmental Schemes and policies run by the Government of India. Rural women or the women belonging to the lower strata are still in a miserable position and struggling for better facilities. A discussion over these issues will be in order.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT INDIA:

Ancient India has an eminent status of women. Ancient India was marked by the glorious position of the women. They were given the position of Goddess. Women belonging to this period enjoyed participation in every sphere of life, be it political or social. Lopamudra, Vidyotma are some of the eminent women scholars of that time.

In Vedic period the condition of women deteriorated with the introduction of untouchability and confinement of the women to the four
walls of the house. Actually, this was the period where caste system and gender inequality made its way.

In the Medieval period the condition of women still continued with its deteriorating phase. Even the great Mughal Empire was not able to help the situation.

In the British Era, Britishers were not aware about the prevailing caste situation and gender inequality, they in indirect way started giving equal opportunities to the people of India, irrespective of their caste and gender. With the introduction of modern educational system in India and new communication set-up and their rational thinking showed a ray of hope to the various social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Rai, Vivekananda, Dayanand Saraswati, Ishwar Chandra Vidhyasagar, Mahatma Gandhi, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Jyotiba Phule, Dr. B.R.Ambedkar. The policy which was started by these reformers was continued by Kanshiram for the betterment of Harijans. Their contribution proved to be a mile-stone in the process of building the awakened and modern India where the presence of women is strongly felt by the participation in the freedom struggle shoulder to shoulder with men.

WOMEN EDUCATION IN POST-INDEPENDENT ERA:

As it is evident that before the advent of Britishers, the condition of women was not satisfactory. They were the sufferers of suppression, negligence and victims of physical and mental harassment. With the advent
of Britishers, the condition of women started improving. Britishers opened the door of educational institutions to all the citizens of India.

After independence, the Government of India continued this tradition, the pattern of education for all and gave special emphasis on the education of women belonging to all castes. National Educational Policy of 1986, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mahila Samakhya, Five-year Plans, National Programme for Education of girls at Elementary Level, Shiksha Karmi Project, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidhyalayas, Jan-Shikshan Sansthan, Institute of Open Schooling are some of the main Governmental schemes to achieve the goal of women education in India.

Government of India also set-up National Council for Educational Research and Training and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, these were set-up for the educational development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, which carried out a number of studies relating to educational programmes and schemes for Scheduled Castes and Tribes.

The impact of these schemes is visible in Aligarh Distt. also. Scheduled Castes people are also taking benefit of these schemes which helped them to raise their status socially as well as educationally.

**RESERVATION POLICY:**

On the issue of Reservation Policy, almost all the respondent said that this supports Scheduled Caste Community without it the women of Scheduled Caste Community could not make progress to the level they have
today, they said that without reservation a major section of Scheduled Caste Community will find very difficult to get Government jobs. The Constitution of India under Articles 14-18, provided right to equality and equal opportunity to all the citizens of India irrespective of their caste, creed, gender and race.

Women reservation in Panchayati Raj Institutions provided 33% reservation in the total seats. But the condition of District is not satisfactory as the low participation of women in election and their negligible presence in Panchayati Raj Institution working.

Provisions of Constitution, Government Policies, Schemes and Panchayati Raj Institutions has provided women opportunities in every sphere. They contributed a lot to the women empowerment and made her self-reliant and competent enough to take and handle situations even at the higher levels and demand their share of dominance in Parliament and the National Level also in the form of ‘Women Reservation Bill’.

FACTORS OF GENDER EQUALITY:

On the issue of factors that enhanced and deteriorate the women of Scheduled Caste Community, almost all of the respondents said that education is the strongest factor that opens the door of development and equality in Scheduled Caste Community, various respondent said that different factors which are responsible for the Scheduled Caste Community are as follows:
Reservation
Modernization
Urbanization
Sound Economic Position
Political Power
Standard of Living
Consciousness towards their Rights
Secular Values

These were the major factors that enhance the status of Scheduled Caste Community and factors that are deteriorating the status of women of this community are as follows:

Poverty
Illiteracy
Lack of Educational Background
Lack of Determination
Custom of Dowry
Lack of Unity
Ignorance
Unemployment
Discrimination
Alcoholism of the Male Members
Gambling by the Male Members
UNTUCHABILITY:

It is observed that almost all the respondent said that untouchability is still prevalent in our society. It is more visible in rural areas than urban areas. However, it is generally accepted that untouchability is practiced in lower section of the society and people of higher class do not think much about it.

It is analyzed that some of the studies showed that untouchability exists in urban areas also and one of it, shows that even if the women of Scheduled Caste Community holds a professional position still faces social discrimination in the form of avoidance, less interaction and hence, limiting the relationship.

In the course of the study, many respondents said that whether untouchability is still present in the mind-set of the people belonging to higher caste but it is also analyzed that this practice has weakened as the modernization and Government Policies has taken over the rigidity of the caste system. Now days, more importance is given to the economic condition, educational standards, values and civil rights, which has made Scheduled Caste more acceptable to the Hindu religion.

Practice of untouchability declared an offence under the Act of 1955. It out laws all the imposition, disabilities on the ground of untouchability in virtually all fields of activity except home life, private religious ceremonies and private employment.
Andre Beteille in his “Caste: Old and New” states that the new educational system plays a very significant role. Education along with income and occupation becomes the basis of new forms of social differentiation, which tends to cut across differences based on the caste.

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:**

Educated women of Scheduled Caste Community are fully conscious towards their rights and constitutional provisions whereas rural women are also aware of political power due to political activities during Panchayati Raj Elections.

It is analyzed that almost all the respondents are aware about their political rights. Women respondents are of the opinion that there should be more representation from their community in the political sphere. They strongly believe that their M.L.A./M.P./C.M. should be represented by their community in more numbers.

It is observed that most of the respondents cast their vote for BSP (Bahujan Samaj Party); on the other hand, few of them cast their vote in favour of Congress and other parties. The reason behind casting their vote to BSP is that they want strong political representation as they believe only then they will be able to mobilize themselves from the downtrodden condition to a better and secure position.
ROLE MODEL:

In the course of the present study, it was found that most of the respondents considered Ms. Mayawati as their role model and rest of the respondent pay great respect to other personalities such as Ahilya Bai Holkar, Sonia Gandhi and Meera Kumar at the national level and Bhagwan Devi (Ex. Deputy Mayor, Aligarh City), Ram Sakhi Katheria (Ex. M.L.A., Aligarh), Kalpana Maurya (Chairperson, Tehsil-Khair, Distt. Aligarh) at the local level are some of the renowned persons in Aligarh.

PRIVITIZATION OF EDUCATION:

It is observed that, on the issue of privatization of education, most of the respondents said that privatization of education will not be beneficial for the poor section of society as they are not able to pay the heavy fees which is charged by Private Schools/Colleges in general and Scheduled Caste in particular. Only higher class and creamy layer class can send their children to the private schools and colleges.

Privatization of education prevents the women and girls to go to the schools and colleges because their parents are less concerned about their education in these expensive institutions.

On this issue, Jha stated that the formation of Human Capital is tremendously influenced by the standards of education made available by the educational institutions, particularly in the Developing Countries like
our, further, he said that an urgent task before policy makers is to make possible qualitative improvements in the system of education.

**HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREER FOR WOMEN:**

It is observed that almost all respondents have positive attitude about higher educations and a better career for women. However in practice lower class hardly educates their girls. Though middle class have been providing education to their girls but after completion of their graduation of girl they, first attempt to arrange a partner for her.

The present scenario shows that higher class, which belongs to higher status, wants that their daughter should be an I.A.S./ P.C.S., doctor and engineer. It is observed from society that persons who have consciousness towards changing environment of our society motivate their daughters to get higher education and career. It is also noticed that daughters who have got education through convent/ public schools are inclined to enter in the job market. These daughters are highly conscious about the changing position of women in the society, human rights, family and marriage life. She is more career oriented. It is also a fact that working women supports the family in addition to her housewifely duties. Middle class parents, who earlier not interested in the career of their daughter, are now also motivating their girl to be a career oriented.

All the respondents believe that education is the strongest factor which takes the people up to different heights. Reservation, Modernization,
Urbanization, Sound Economic Position, Political Power, Standard of Living, Consciousness towards their Rights, Secular Values are the other factors responsible for gender equality and the progress of the whole community. On the other hand Poverty, Illiteracy, Lack of Educational Background, Lack of Determination, Custom of Dowry, Lack of Unity, Ignorance, Unemployment, Discrimination, Alcoholism of the Male Members, Gambling by the Male Members are some of the factors responsible to deteriorate the status of the women belonging to Scheduled Caste community.

In the course of the present study, it is finding out through case studies with the help of observation that education is an important agent of social change not only for the women of Scheduled Caste but also for the community as a whole. It is also proved that reservation, standard of living, sound economic position and political power change the attitude of other castes towards the Scheduled Caste people in the society. A lot of awakening has come in the mindset of Scheduled Caste people, as a result they started sending their girls to schools/colleges, which automatically led to increase educational level among the women of Scheduled Caste. mass media, governmental schemes and self-awakening played a very significant role in bringing this change.

Present study reveals that, to some extent education has been quite successful in removing the gender inequality in the form of the long awaited change in the perception of concerned people. Initially, girls were
considered as a burden on the parent’s shoulder but now with the changing circumstances and perception parents started considering them as an important member of their family and encouraging them to participate in various spheres of life. Finally, the decreased rate of female drop outs, female participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions show the education really helped to reduce gender inequality.

During the course of the present study, the researcher found that education again liberating an emancipation of women as they have become more economically independent and aware about their basic rights at domestic as well as social level. Now, they know very well how to take part in the social, political and economic front.

In the light of above description it is concluded that education and gender equality affect the down trodden community. As it is evident that untouchability is still prevailing in society in latent form, scheduled caste people are more inclined towards the education, not only for the boys but also for girls.

Indeed government and the community itself struggling hard for the upliftment of scheduled caste women but is, lot to do with the mindset of the people, specially in rural areas, where the women are yet to find a niche for herself.
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Questionnaire
PERSONAL PROFILE

1. Name :

2. Address :

3. Age :

4. Gender : a) Male b) Female

5. Marital status: a) Married b) Unmarried
   c) Divorced d) Widow/Widower

6. Occupation :

7. Family’s Monthly Income:

8. Educational Qualification:

Q. (1) In India, society is divided into various castes, do you, as a member of a particular caste feel discriminated.
   a) agree b) undecided c) disagree

Q. (2) what sort of discrimination did you witness.
   a) Discrimination in terms of status.
   b) Discrimination in terms of occupation.
   c) Discrimination in terms of exercise of basic fundamental rights.
   d) Discrimination in terms of exercise of religious rights.
   e) No discrimination as such.

Q. (3) Do you feel that the district administration or Government has taken
certain necessary steps for the upliftment of your caste.

a) Agree b) Undecided c) Disagree

Q. (4) Do you feel that there is any sort of discrimination in terms of availability of schools to your community with respect to other communities.

a) Agree b) Undecided c) Disagree

Q. (5) What do you think are the educational standards of your community.

a) Uneducated b) Upto Primary Level
c) Upto Middle Level d) Upto Secondary Level
e) Upto Sr. Secondary Level f) Upto Graduate
g) Post Graduate h) Any other

Q. (6) (i) Do you think that girls from your community are at par with boys in terms of educational attainment.

a) Yes b) No

(ii) If No, what is the possible reason for this?

a) Girls need not to venture out it is better for them to maintain household.
b) Educating girls proves hectic for the family as income is low.
c) It is the reluctance of elders of the family, who feel girls should be restricted to domestic circle.
d) Girls themselves opt to be at home.
e) Educating girls is still a taboo.

Q. (7) Do you, as member of particular community feel that girls should be
treated equally in terms of attainment of education.

a) Agree  b) Undecided  c) Disagree

Q. (8) Do you feel that educating girls is necessary for maintaining household and socialization of children.

a) Agree  b) Undecided  c) Disagree

Q. (9) Do you think that your association with your caste acted as an impediment in attaining a good education.

a) Agree  b) Undecided  c) Disagree

Q. (10) Do you feel that women & men from your community should be treated on equal terms & should have equal rights.

a) Agree  b) Undecided  c) Disagree

Q. (11)(i) Have you ever been the member of Panchayat or some other local body.

a) Yes  b) No

(ii) Was there any representation from the women of your community in such bodies.

a) Yes  b) No

(iii) If No, do you feel they should get any representation.

a) Agree  b) Undecided  c) Disagree

Q. (12)(i) Do you participate in elections.

a) Yes  b) No
(ii) If Yes, which party do you vote for.
   a) BJP   b) Congress   c) BSP
   d) SP   e) Other

Q. (13) Do you think that women should be given an equal chance like men to participate in elections.
   a) Agree   b) Undecided   c) Disagree

Q. (14)(i) Have you ever heard of plans for development of your community/caste adopted by government.
   a) Yes   b) No
   (ii) If Yes, was it ever implemented in your locality.
   a) Yes   b) No
   (iii) If Yes, was there any scope for women participation.
   a) Yes   b) No

Q. (15)(i) Do you think women in your community should be given equal chance of taking important decision in your family.
   (ii) If No, what is the possible reason for this.
       a) Women are not efficient enough to take important decisions
       b) It increase influences of women in family and it is wrong.
       c) Women often take wrong decisions.
       d) Women are made to be guided & can never be given equal status.
e) It is against norms and religion.

Q. (16) Do you think there should be participation of women in every sphere of life for a better tomorrow and vibrant India.

a) Agree  
b) Undecided  
c) Disagree

Q. (17) Do you think that the past 62 years of Independence the condition of your community has improved.

a) Agree  
b) Undecided  
c) Disagree

Q. (18) Do you know any initiative being taken by the elders of your community

a) Yes  
b) No

Q. (19) If Yes, what sort of initiative it was?

a) An arrangement for pre-school education.

b) A nursery school was started up.

c) A school upto middle standard was opened up by the community.

d) Community took active part in arranging for education of boys.

e) Community took equal steps for both boys and girls in terms of education.

Q. (20) Do you remember/know any initiative being taken by the community in terms of education of women.

a) Yes  
b) No

Q. (21) Do you feel educating girls in your community has been a tool to reduce
gender inequality.

Q. (22) How do you think education of women has proved to be a tool to reduce gender inequality?

a) Education makes women to assert their rights in family and outside.

b) Education is providing women job security so that they participate in building economy of the family.

c) Short vocational courses provide women with economic independency.

d) With education as a tool they participate in community more vigorously and with determination.

e) Education makes women to participate in various institutions of decision making.

Q. (23) How far do you think education of girls is gaining popularity among your community.

a) To a little extent

b) To a definite extent

c) To a moderate extent

d) To a great extent

Q. (24) Do you as a member of scheduled caste community feel that education is providing to be a tool for emancipation of women.

a) Agree b) Undecided c) Disagree
Q. (25) How do you think women have been emancipated by education.

a) They are being vested with freedom.
b) They see things in a better way at domestic and social level.
c) They take part in important decision making vis-à-vis family and outside.
d) They assert their rights properly to fight for justice.
e) All of the above.

Q. (26) Do you think that education is helpful for women to get economic independence at domestic front?

a) Agree b) Undecided c) Disagree

Q. (27) What do you think is the main reason for gender inequality in your community.

a) Adherence to the age old system.
b) Economic dependence of women.
c) Gender equality is a myth.
d) Women don’t feel to get equal.
e) Patriarchal set up of society force women to be unequal to men.

Q. (28) Do you feel that educated women in your community are leading better lives in terms of gender inequality and decision making.

a) Yes b) No

Q. (29) If Yes, do you feel that educated women are providing to be a reference
Q. (30) Do you feel that community is more receptive towards education of girls now than before.

a) Agree   b) Undecided   c) Disagree

Q. (31) In case of your agreement what do you think is the most plausible reason?

a) Community has seen the fruits of girl education.

b) Community is responding to demands of modern society.

c) Political leadership has been a force to act in this regard.

d) Educating women is proving beneficial in educating of children, management of household and additional income.

f) All of these above.