

Research Paper :

Awareness of scheduled caste women about provision and rights targeted at them

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ABSTRACT

Data was collected from 300 scheduled caste women of six villages from Hisar district. Findings revealed that most of the women were neither aware that atrocities against scheduled caste is a crime nor about, punishment to offenders, relief provided by the govt. and their rights. Maximum respondents were aware about the scholarships provided by the government and availed benefits of scholarships in school for fees and books, but did not avail benefits for higher education and job reservation.

Key words : Scheduled caste women, Atrocities, Problems, Awareness

The term caste was used by the British who wanted to rule India efficiently, made lists of Indian communities. They used two terms to describe Indian communities :Castes and Tribes. These lists were used later on by the Indian governments to create lists of communities who were entitled for positive discrimination. The lower classes were listed in three categories. The first category is called Scheduled Castes, the second category as Scheduled Tribes and the third category is called Other Backward Classes. Scheduled Castes include in it communities who were untouchable and suffered from many social restrictions. They were not allowed temple to worship with others, nor water from the same sources. Person of higher castes would not interact with them. Sometimes in villages or in the cities there are violent clashes which are connected to caste tensions. Sometimes the high castes strike the lower castes who dare to uplift their status. Sometimes the lower caste gets back on the higher castes.

The caste identity in India has become a subject of political, social and legal interpretation. Along with the central government, the state governments of India follow a positive discrimination policy based on the population of each state. In many cases the legal system is involved to decide if a certain person is entitled for positive discrimination.

The Haryana Government is fully committed to promote the welfare of scheduled castes and backward classes by implementing various schemes for their socio-economic and educational upliftment. However, full

benefit by the beneficiaries cannot be availed unless people are aware about these schemes. Therefore, present study was conducted to find out the awareness and utilization of various provision and rights by SC families targeted at them.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Hisar District of Haryana state. From Hisar District, six villages having predominately large number of scheduled caste population were selected randomly. From each selected village, fifty SC women were selected randomly, thus making a total sample of 300 women. The data were collected personally through self-structured pre-tested interview schedule. An inventory of various schemes and provisions was developed after consulting literature and experts. Responses were taken as Yes and No as per their awareness or utilization of rights/ schemes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the present study are presented below:

Awareness of women about provision and rights of scheduled caste population:

As the data reveal, the awareness of SC women about provision and rights given by the government for SC families (Table 1). It is clear from the table that only forty per cent of respondents were aware that untouchability and atrocities towards SC is a crime while