

Caste Violence and Dalit Deprivation in India A Capability Approach

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Abstract

This paper examines the connections between caste violence and its effects on economic, social and human well-being among the dalits in India. To analyze the effects of violent conflicts that lead to changes in people's choices and consequently affects in their functioning and freedom, Sen's *Capability Approach* could help us to understand the process. The complex effects of violent conflicts can change both intrinsic and instrumental aspect of human capabilities (e.g. income, education, health, human rights, civil rights etc.) that permits people to achieve *functionings*. Through its recognition of this relationship, the capabilities approach makes strong and explicit links and as such is useful for understanding the processes surrounding violent conflicts and its effect of impoverishment. Evidence supporting these relationship enlighten us the violent conflict has often been observable fact between the dalits and the other dominant castes, caused death, injuries, rape, property lose and the dalits are worst sufferers and impoverished their lives for generation. Further, the study found that the dalits confronted with multiple deprivations - high level of poverty, illiteracy, landlessness, and lack of access to education, health care and denial of human rights and freedom in widespread situation of caste violence. In order to provide an enabling environment for caste conflict free India, the findings suggest that a focus on economic reforms alone – the usual interpretation for economic growth – will not succeed. Instead, the social reform the crucial one is to effect wide ranging land reforms would help to achieve dalit development and social justice.

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I. Introduction

The Dalit¹ have often been in their development witnessed violent conflict, caused death, injuries, rape, property lose and impoverished their lives for generation. The caste conflict, in this sense, has long been a historical fact and continues to be an unfortunate feature of contemporary India. Moreover, history enlightens us the violent conflict has often been observable fact between the dalit minority and other dominant castes within India. It has also emphasized in the recent development debate that more people have died or suffered from violent conflict between groups within countries than in wars between countries in the past two decades and conflicts constitutes one of the most important source of deprivation, caused widespread poverty and undermined human development (Fukuda-Parr S, 2003 and Stewart, 2003). In the 1990s, almost two and half lakh cases of violence on dalit were registered countrywide. If we look at the type of violence, we get to know that on an average 553 Murders, 2990 Hurt cases, 919 Rapes, 184 Kidnapping/abduction, 47 Dacoity, 127 Robbery, 456 Arson, 1485 civil right violation under OCR ACT, 6174 atrocities under atrocities Act and 12, 995 other offences were registered every year during 1990 – 2000 (Report of National Commission for SC/ST, Govt. of India, 2004). Consequently, the dalit, almost half of them are living under chronic poverty, widespread illiteracy, and lack of assets and denial of their basic rights such as right to food, education, health and political participation.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to address these issues through an in-depth case study of the caste violence in India – the Dalits and other dominant caste – with emphasis of its impact/interlinks between the conflicts and poverty and human deprivation in the conflict situation. To analyze these complex effects of violent conflicts that lead to changes in people's choices and consequently affects in their functioning and freedom, Sen's *Capability Approach* could help us to understand the process. The complex effects of violent conflicts can change both intrinsic and instrumental aspect of human capabilities (e.g. income, education, health, human rights, civil rights etc.) that permits people to achieve *functionings*. Through its recognition of this relationship, the capabilities approach makes strong and explicit links and as such is useful for understanding the processes surrounding violent conflicts and its effect of impoverishment.

The paper is organised as follows. The next section commences with a brief clarification on conceptualization of the three phenomena such as caste violence and economic principles implicated in a social system, which is the major source for the caste violence and its possible impact/connections to capability failures which results human deprivation. In exploring the empirical evidence, we focus on contradictions in terms of violence/atrocities and development prospects of dalits and compare to other social groups in India in the third section and finally, in the concluding section we summarize the lessons from Indian experience and point to the factors that should receive due consideration in designing long-run development strategy for caste free and violence free India.

¹ I used the word dalit to represent the ex untouchables, the present Scheduled Castes.

II. Conceptual Framework

In this section we focus on some important issues related to conceptualization of the three phenomena such as caste violence and economic principles implicated in a social system, which is the major source for the caste violence and its possible impact/connections to capability failures which results human deprivation. The caste system in India has resulted in highly stratified societal structure with a hierarchy of castes. In traditional and formal sense, the caste system is based on three interrelated principles. These are predetermined social, cultural and economic rights of each caste based on birth; the unequal and hierarchical (graded) division of these rights among the castes and provision of strong social ostracism supported by social and religious ideology to maintain the Hindu social order. While the first two of them defined and laid down the framework of the caste system, the third prescribed the social mechanism of its enforcements. Third feature of caste system relating to the provision of strong ostracism for the enforcement of the system is quite important and crucial in providing the continuity of the system despite the changes in the in legal framework of social behavior of the Hindus in contemporary India. The social ostracism normally takes the form of numerous penalties, supported by social and religious ideology. The form of social ostracism varies from violation of social and economic rights to various types of physical violence to the low caste untouchables who challenge the traditional rules resulted deprivation. To analyze these complex effects of violent conflicts that lead to changes in people's choices and consequently affects in their functioning and freedom, Sen's *Capability Approach* could helpful us to understand the process. The complex effects of violent conflicts can change both intrinsic and instrumental aspect of human capabilities (e.g. income, education, health, human rights, civil rights etc.) that permits people to achieve *functionings*. Through its recognition of this relationship, the capabilities approach makes strong and explicit links and as such is useful for understanding the processes surrounding violent conflicts and its effect of impoverishment.

The capability approach to a person's advantage is concerned with evaluating it in terms of his or her actual ability to achieve various valuable functionings as a part of living. The corresponding approach to social advantage –for aggregative appraisal as well as for the choice of institutions and policy – takes the set of individual capabilities as constituting an indispensable and central part of the relevant informational base of such evaluation” (Sen 1993: 30). The capability approach to deprivation thus evaluates people's freedom or rights according to their impact on well-being. It asks whether people are being healthy, and whether the resources necessary for this capability, such as clean water, access to medical doctors, protection from infections and diseases, and basic knowledge on health issues, are present. It asks whether people are well-nourished, and whether the conditions for this capability, such as sufficient food supplies and food entitlements, are met. It asks whether people have access to a high quality education, to real political participation, to community activities, which support them to cope with struggles in daily life and which foster real friendships, to religions that console them and

which can give them peace of mind. For some of these capabilities, the main input will be financial resources and economic production, but for others it can also be political practices, such as the effective guaranteeing and protection of freedom of thought, political participation, or social or cultural practices, social structures, social institutions, social norms, traditions and habits. The capability approach thus covers the full terrain of human well-being. Development and well-being are regarded in a comprehensive and integrated manner, and much attention is paid to the links between the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of life. The capability approach focuses on the information that we need to make judgments about individual well-being, social policies, and so forth, and consequently rejects alternative approaches that it considers normatively inadequate, for example when an evaluation is done exclusively in monetary terms. The capability approach also identifies social constraints that influence and restrict both well-being as well as the evaluative exercises. The capability approach can be used to measure poverty or inequality, or can be used as an alternative for traditional utilitarian cost-benefit analysis. It is a perspective that can be applied to efficiency evaluations. It can serve as an important constituent for a theory of justice but, as Sen argues, the capability approach specifies an evaluative space and this does not amount to a theory of justice (Sen 1995). He stresses that a theory of justice must include both aggregative considerations as well as distributive ones, whereas the capability approach does not specify an aggregative principle. An important illustration of how the capability approach can be used as such a broad framework of analysis and evaluation, is Sen's own work with Jean Drèze on development in India (Drèze and Sen 2002).

III. Empirical Analysis of Caste Violence and Dalit Deprivation

A. Magnitude and Pattern of Violent Conflicts

The conflict between the dalits and other dominant caste are not a new phenomenon. The social behavior by the dalit contrary to the customary rules and norms or assertion in some form by them for human basic human rights- to be treated equally have invited the violence reaction and atrocities by higher caste. It is very clear from the field results that the atrocities committed on Dalits presents a pattern, which is reflective of the continuing influence of the customary rules and norms on the behavior of the Hindu toward dalits. The extent and the magnitude of various crimes committed against Dalits certainly reflect the incivility and violent character of caste system. What has come out of this study is that discrimination and untouchability is still being practiced and the traditional mechanism in the form of social ostracism and numerous penalties is used by the high caste on large scale. Dalits predicaments are such that the provision of equal citizenship guaranteed by the Constitution has become a farce in several spheres, if not in all.

We present the evidence on the magnitude and pattern of atrocities against dalit based on both official statistic from 1990 (the year in which Act came into operation) to 2000 and the information from the present survey collected for the year 2000 in the eleven sample states. The nature of data however needs to be understood properly. The magnitude of atrocities is measured in terms of number of cases registered by the dalit with police under Indian penal code, Protection of civil right act and prevention of

atrocities Act. This statistics is picked up from the annual report of the SC/ST Commission and Crime in India for eleven states. . Official data are supplemented by the survey data on the nature and pattern of violence and atrocities. Survey information is qualitative in nature, with case studies from about 550 sample villages in eleven states. The case studies, which are collected through field survey and in close interaction with the dalits, indeed is a mirror of the present state of Hindu society with respect to the continuing influence of caste system in rural India.

Evidence from official statistics

The official statistic during 1990 to 2000, indicate that a total of two and half lakh (precisely 252370 cases) cases of various crimes were registered countrywide by the dalits. If we look at the type of crime and atrocities, we get to know that on an average (average for ten year): 553 Murders, 2990 Hurt cases, 919 Rapes, 184 Kidnapping/abduction, 47 Dacoity, 127 Robbery, 456 Arson, 1485 civil right violation under OCR ACT, 6174 atrocities under atrocities Act and 12, 995 other offences were registered every year by the dalits. During the latest year 2000 the break-up of the atrocities and violence include 473cases of murder, 3139 of grievous hurt, 251 cases of arson and 992 cases of rape, 631 case under PCR ACT, 6350 cases under PA Act and 12149 cases of other offences (Table-1)

Of the total crimes about 94 percent is accounted by the eleven sample states. (Table 2 &3). Four BIMARU states however accounted bulk of the crimes and atrocities. In fact in 2000 Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh account for about 65 percent of crimes and atrocities against SC in the country, and this is far higher than their in the total SC population in the country which is 65 percent. Southern States: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are no less good. Gujarat and Maharashtra also accounts for worst cases of crimes reported against Dalits.

In all 10,0891 cases are still pending by the end of the year 2000 in Courts countrywide against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Uttar Pradesh tops the list of pending cases with 74303, followed by Maharashtra (8212), Rajasthan (5836), Orissa (5669), Andhra Pradesh (1845), Tamil Nadu (1810), Karnataka (1794) and Kerala (1768). Conviction rate is very low whereas the acquittal rate is very high.

Survey Results

After having presented the magnitude of crime and atrocities based on the official statistic we try to get insight in to the pattern of violence and atrocities based on the field survey which again the Commission have been conducted in eleven states. Table 4 present the wide range of violence - varying from psychological humiliation/ torture to physical assault, and sexual violence against Dalit. The range of violence is indeed widespread and indicative of the oppressive character of the caste system. There are also regional variations in the pattern of atrocities.

Andhra Pradesh

The primary survey revealed that these crimes take numerous forms (table 4). It includes Murder, Rape, Naked Parading of a Dalit woman, Social Boycott, Grievous Hurt, Beating, Attacking of Dalit Bastis, Destruction of Properties, Causing Serious Injuries, Death in Police custody, Encroachment on Dalit lands, Bonded Labour, Forceful Eviction from House-sites, Harassment due to love relationship with Caste Hindu, Suicide due to humiliation & excessive beating by the Police, Beating up for riding a cycle; wearing nice cloths; for sitting in the Bus, Harassment of Dalits Sarpanches and Panchayat members, and Resentment and insult over winning of Dalit. Attempts by the Dalits to assert their self-respect and to break the taboos imposed by the high castes are viewed with hostile suspicion and met with violence of various types. Whenever Dalits have tried to organize themselves or assert their rights, there has been a backlash from the high caste feudal lords resulting in mass killings, gang rapes and arsoning of Dalit.

Bihar

Bihar represents one of the leading states in terms of magnitude and intensity of violence on the Dalits. Massacres after massacres and endless lists yield obnoxious results- the number of Dalits killed are extremely high. The nature of atrocities that are committed on the Dalits vary in forms but there has been a single underlying logic of demeaning them and forcing them into retreat- a passive and submissive existence. They range from a macro level organized violence and repression through formation of Senas (private armies) to the micro level, ban on entering village temple or discriminatory use of ghats (river banks/lake sides) and a forceful implementation of these discriminatory unwritten rules by non-Dalit castes. The other quite commonly encountered forms of atrocity have been intentional acts designed to demean the community through challenging the notions of izzat (dignity/respect) that exists in the community. These have been the common theme in all the regions of Bihar. The survey data indicate evidence on atrocities which include Murder/Attempt to Murder, Grievous Hurt, Rape, Arson, Dacoity, Outraging Modesty of Dalit Women, Abuse and Insult, Beating; destruction of houses and also foisting false cases by Police, Violation of democratic rights during elections, etc. as some of the most common forms of crimes against Dalit in Bihar.

Karnataka

The survey data revealed that the atrocities took number of forms like Murder, Rape, Grievous injuries, Arson, Abuse and insults, illegal occupation of Dalit lands, Bonded labour, foisting of false cases & unlawful arrests/detention by Police, Prevalence of Devadasi system, discrimination in Hotels & Tea stalls, No access to wells and other drinking water sources, Outraging the modesty of Dalit women, naked parading of Dalit Women, Forcing Dalits force to consume human waste. Brutal repression is unleashed when Dalits refuse to carry out the traditional work related to all kinds of menial and degrading jobs. The Dalit entering a temple, or even entering a restaurant for tea or food is considered as an assertion for equality by Dalit, which invite violent reaction on the part of high caste.

Madhya Pradesh

The field data revealed various types of atrocities being committed which include, Murder, Attempt to Murder, Rape, Arson, Hurt, Abuse; insult & beating, wrongful confinement & arrests, Attack on Dalit houses and outraging the modesty of Dalit women, Eviction from houses, Forceful driving away from villages, etc. In the recent past the atrocities against Dalits in the state have increased due to various reasons. Among other reasons the decision of the state government to distribute land to the Dalits previously marked as grazing land and state policy to ensure reservation in Panchayats and to ensure participation of Dalits, tribal and women in local governments are most prominent. Opening of avenues for the Dalits, has provoked the high caste to violence. Some of the sample cases provide insight in to the nature and pattern of atrocities against the dalit in M.P.

Maharashtra

Maharashtra, which is known for social movement, does not have good record with respect to atrocities against. The sample cases presented here throw light on the grim reality about the human rights violation of Dalits in some part of the state. In 2000 a total of 489 cases of crimes, untouchability and atrocities were registered by the dalits and this include 2 murder, 16 cases of hurt, 49 rapes, 98 cases of untouchability and 128 cases of atrocities.

Orissa

The atrocities documented during the study relate more generally to land disputes, payment of low wages, utilisation of common property resources and enforcement of caste based discrimination and untouchability. In most cases, the police or the State have had minimal role to play and never been sited as having given any justice to the Dalits. It might be said clearly that the State's responsibility to protect the dignity and livelihood of Dalits has been violated in many instances. There are also innumerable instances of caste violence that go unreported due to the fear of backlash by the upper castes. Since dalit is dependent on them for survival they bear and absorbed the insult and anger quietly.

Punjab

The Field survey indicates that the cases of atrocities against Dalits in rural Punjab are not all that glaring. Of all the 51 villages studied, there was only one village in the Malwa region from where a case of social boycott of Dalits by the dominant castes was reported to have taken place during the last five years. Boycotting no longer works as an effective method of controlling Dalits in rural Punjab. However, there have been a few cases of "individual oriented" atrocities. Though the caste factor remains important in these cases, so far most of these cases did not lead to the involvement of the entire caste communities in the conflict. Most frequent cases of atrocities reported from rural Punjab are those of physical beatings. And nearly all of them emanate from the prevailing structure of agrarian relations, viz., the Dalit labourers being assaulted by their dominant caste employer farmers. About 8 cases of physical beating were reported from the sample

village most of those who work as attached labourers on annual contract basis do so out of some economic compulsions, invariably involving debt from the employer farmer.

Rajasthan

The Dalits in Rajasthan face far more hostile situation than in Punjab, given the feudal and deeply caste ridden character of the society .In 2000 a total of 5190 cases of crimes, untouchability and atrocities were registered by dalit. This include 48 cases of murder,153 hurt,128 cases of rapes and 454 cases of atrocities .Rajasthan account for about 20 percent of all crimes committed against dalit in the country. This ratio of crimes against dalit was much higher than their share in the countries SC population, which was about only 5.5 percent .In fact Rajasthan's share in the crime was four time higher than its share in SC population. The atrocities in Rajasthan takes various forms and include insult & abuse, Beating, Grievous Hurt, Foisting of false cases; wrongful confinement/arrests, etc.

Tamil Nadu

The atrocities committed against Dalits are on the increase in Tamil Nadu. The raising trend in the atrocities in Tamil Nadu is closely associated with growing assertion among the dalit in the state. These atrocities are brutal in nature leading to grievous hurt and murder of dalit. They are aimed at generating scare, and fear psychosis so that Dalit would be forced to accept their subordinate status. These violent acts are, more often than not, accompanied by a massive destruction of properties, such as arsoning of the houses, breaking of household utensils and setting fire on crops in the lands owned by Dalits. The purpose behind most of the atrocities is to root out Dalit resistance, socially, psychologically and economically. The destruction of properties assumes more importance as aggressive non-Dalits recognized that the assertion of dalit is closely associated with their economic well-being.

Uttar Pradesh

The state of U.P rank first both in term of absolute number of crimes against SC and in term of U.P.'s share of crimes against SC in the total crimes committed against SC in the country. U.P account for almost one third of the total crimes committed against the SC in the country and this ratio was much higher than the U.P. SC population's share in the total SC population in the country. The SC population in U.P constitute about 17 percent of SC population in the country, but its share in the total crime against SC was about one third (or 30 percent) . In 2000 about 6600 cases of crimes were registered by the dalits with police. Theses include 302 murder, 761 cases of hurt, 346 rapes, 142 cases of arson, and 2683 cases of atrocities. The high number of cases registered under the atrocities is a grim reminder of the continuing and unabated violence and atrocities against the Scheduled Castes in the state Information from the field study in the form of sample case studies across the villages indicated cases of atrocities related to bonded labour , depriving of government housing scheme ,false cases for theft ,restriction on the use of public roads and discrimination in wage payments

B. Poverty and Human Deprivation in Conflict Situation

Poverty

We examine the changes in achievement indicators which capture the sum total of the improvement in level of living of dalits with respect to some basic needs such as food, health, education and housing. These basic needs which capture the cumulative achievement include poverty, education, health and housing indicators. The data on most of these indicators by social groups are available from the early 1980's to late 1990's at various points of time. However these data are available for the period, which by and large coincide with three period of NSS, namely 1983-84, 1993-94 and 1999-2000. We therefore examine the change in human poverty by analyzing the trends in selected achievement indicators such as consumption poverty, literacy rate, life expectancy, under and mal-nutrition at all India.

Table 1 present the poverty ratio for SCs and others (non SC/ST) for 1983, 1993-94 and 1999-2000 at state level (the poverty estimate are based on modified methodology of Planning). The incidence of rural poverty among the SC has declined from 58 percent 1983-84 to 48 percent in 1983-84 and further down to 35 percent in 1999-2000. The percentage of rural Sc poor reduced at per annum rate of 2.9% during 1983/2000, the rate of decline is however by 1.9% during 1983/93 and 4.6% during 93/2000. Thus the rate of decline is higher during the 1990's. Due to the problem associated with 55th round this results have to be taken with lot of caution. The incidence of poor among the SC urban household has also declined from 56.5% in 1983-84 to 49% in 1993-94 and further down to 36.6% in 1999-2000, that is by about 2.6% per annum during 1984/2000. The rate of decline is relatively high during the 1990's (4.2% per annum) compared with the 1980's (1.23%). There are however, differences in the direction and rate of change in rural and urban poverty between SC and Non-sc/st? At all India level the rural poverty has declined both SC and other group. There is however difference in the rate of decline between the two groups. Between 1983/2000 the rural poverty among the non sc/st declined at slightly higher rate (3.3%) as compared with Sc (2.9%). In the 1980's there is not much difference in the rate of decline among the two social groups. In 1990's the poverty among the SC has declined at lower rate (4.6%) as compared with nonsc/st group (5.9%), the difference being 1.3% points. Thus decline in the rural poverty among the Sc is generally lower during overall period, 1983/2000, and also during the 1990's, while it is about the same during the 1980's.

The urban poverty among the SC has also declined by less per annum rate compared with non sc/st during the overall period and also during the two periods. The urban poverty declined at per annum rate of 2.36% for the Sc as compared to 3.91% for non sc/st during 1984/2000. Similarly urban poverty decline at the per annum rate of 1.23% and 4.2% during 1980's and 1990's respectively for Sc and non sc/st, as compared with 2.42% and 6.4% for Sc and non sc/st during 1980's and 1990's respectively.

Trend in disparity in poverty between SC and Non-Sc/St –1983/84—1999-2000

The objective of the government policy towards SC is not only to improve their level of living but also to reduce the gap between them and non-SC/ST group and bring them on par with the latter. Table—gives disparities between SC and non-SC/ST in term of disparity ratio and disparity index (based on the modified Sopher-index) (Kundu A,)

In 1983-84 about 56 percent of rural SC were poor- higher compared to 37% for non SC/ST. The disparity ratio work out to 1.57 and the disparity index to 00.37 (0 value of disparity index indicate equality while any value greater than 0 indicate the disparity). Between 1983/93 the disparity ratio and disparity index (between SC and non SC/ST) have declined by 1.96 % and 6.95 % respectively. During 1993/2000 however, both disparity ratio and disparity index have increased by 8.67 % and 1.01 % respectively. During the overall period 1983/2000 while the disparity ratio has increased by 6.64 % the disparity index declined by 16.12 percent. Thus disparity in the rural poverty between SC and non-SC/ST has increased during the 1990's both in term of disparity ratio and disparity index, the period which co-inside with liberalization of Indian economy .

Unlike disparity in rural poverty, (which showed a decline during the overall period, 1983/2000, and during 1980's but increase during the 1990's), the disparities in the urban poverty have enhanced during overall period by about 26 per cent and also during both 1980's and 1990's. The rate of increase in the disparities was higher during the 1980's as compared to the 1990's . During the overall period, 1983/2000 the disparity in poverty of SC. and non SC/ST has increased in as many as fourteen states . About ten states in the 1990's and eleven in the 1980's experienced an increase in disparity ratio. Thus in about 12 states the poverty gap between SC and non SC/ST has increased both during 1980 and 1990's . The increase in the disparity in the incidence of urban poverty of SC and non SC/ST has been regionally quite wide spread.

To combine the trend in poverty and disparity, it is clear that in the case of rural poverty the decline in its incidence among the SC was accompanied by decline in disparity in 1980's . During the 1990 however, the decline in rural poverty among the SC was associated with increase in disparity between SC and non SC/ST . In the case of urban poverty decline in urban poverty was associated with increase in disparity both during 1980's, and 1990' and the overall period between 1983/2000 .

Human Development

The human development has often been shown by its composite index, which basically has three key components – *longevity, knowledge and standard of living*. The composite index of HDI reveals many aspects of human condition. Beside consumption poverty, the human development is also reflected by some critical health indicators such as life expectancy (LE), and other indicators of mortality and morbidity (or illness). Life expectancy and indicator of mortality and morbidity in fact capture and reflect the cumulative impact of good or bad standard of living of any population. We look in the situation of SCs and non SC/STs with respect to some of these health indicators.

The life expectancy estimates (Indian institute of Dalit Studies, 2004) for 1998-99 and 1992-93 bring out the situation of SC vis-à-vis the non SC/ST. In 1998-99 overall LE at national level is 65 years where it is about 62 years for SCs and 66 for non SC/STs. In 1992-93 the LE was 62, 63 and 58 years for all India average, Others and SCs respectively. Thus in 1992-93 the LE of SCs was lower compared with non SC/STs by about five years and four years compared to the all India average. In 1998-99 the LE of SCs was lower by four and three years compared with non-SC/STs and all India average. High mortality and morbidity is closely associated with under and malnutrition. Malnutrition is generally considered a common disseminator of deprivation that reduces child survival. Taking the health status of women in 1998-99, among SC women, about 33 per cent women suffered from anemia as compared to only 15 percent among non SC/ST. The incidence of anemia among the SC children is also quite high as nearly 56 of the SC children suffer from the anemia compared with 49 percent among non SC/ST . The nutritional status of women and children brings out the disparities between SC and non-SC/ST women and children. The indicator of undernourishment (in term of minimum weight for age) of the children is much higher for SC children - 54 per cent for SC and 44 per cent for non SC/ST. Similarly, undernourishment reflected in terms of stunting (in terms of height for age) was 52 per cent for SC children and 43 per cent non SC/ST children. In case of wasting (weight for height) as indicator of undernourishment, however the difference is minimum.

The indicators of nutritional status of women also bring out similar disparities between Sc and nonsc/st .These include height below 145 centi meter (that is less than minimum) and Body mass index (BMI). The values of both indicators are generally higher for SC women –17 and 42 per cent for Sc women as compared with 12 and 32 per cent for non SC/ST women respectively.

The poor nutritional status, higher undernourishment, and higher incidence of anemia among children and women are culminated in higher incidence of mortality among the SC children, which is one of the important indicators of health status. Among the measures of mortality, the IMR (Infant mortality Rate) is generally considered as the most sensitive and important indicator of health status of a population, which is determined by the leaving standard. While the government of India has adopted the national goal of reducing the present level of IMR to 60 by 2000, the SC's IMR, Child Mortality and Under Five Mortality are 83, 40 and 119 respectively in1998-99. The mortality rates among SCs are much high compared to 61.8, 22.2 and 82.6 for other respectively.

IV. Conclusion

The foregoing sketches of caste conflict in India, considered against the backdrop of the long term trends identifiable in the different sets of data on the incidence of poverty, human development and of violent conflict presented earlier, enable certain generalizations to be drawn on the nature of the inter-relations between the three basic phenomena with which this study is concerned. One of the most readily evident among such generalizations is that variation in the level of economic development within its

range encountered in India has discernible relationship with variations in the incidence of violent conflicts between caste groups spatially or temporally. Another is that the impact of mass poverty in its diverse exemplifications is found in all major situations of violent conflict witnessed within the national units of the region during the past fifty years. Thirdly, it is equally clear that this impact has seldom taken the form of misery, despair and desperation among those in extreme poverty being converted directly into collective violence. It has, indeed, been persuasively argued that extreme forms of deprivation and want produce apathy rather than anger and violence. As Atul Kohli has asserted: "Successive governments in India have had reason enough to rely on the unending patience of the neglected and deprived millions in India, who have not risen in fury about illiteracy, hunger, illness, or economic insecurity. The stubborn persistence of these deprivations has much to do with that lack of fury. This, however, does not negate the point that it is poverty in its different forms – absolute deficiency in the supply of the minimum survival needs, relative deprivation, marginalisation in access to resources, denial of the benefits of development – that produces, more persistently than any other cause, the conditions in which political conflagrations occur, albeit with a pronounced element of stochasticity in their location and timing. In the situations of 'agrarian unrest' or of 'caste resistance' that have been outlined earlier, poverty is seen to be converted into violent conflict mainly as a consequence of the correspondence of prevailing socio-economic inequalities with differentiations in caste and tribe, with the infiltration of external influences in the form of ideological inspiration. In our sketches of 'caste conflict' – the SCs – where poverty *per se* appears prominent among the causes that have set in motion the processes of violence, poverty-related factors such as inter-group rivalry in the control over scarce resources and economic opportunities, discrimination and/or exploitation of one group by another, inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth that correspond to group differences. In order to bring about a major change in the life of Dalit masses, social and economic opportunities have to be opened up in a big way to a whole lot of people belonging to these groups. And one crucial precondition for this to happen is to affect wider-ranging land reforms, reservation in private sector and government expenditure on human development.

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Data Appendix

Table 1. Multiple Deprivation of Dalits in India						
	Popn.	Poverty	Land less ness	Illiteracy	IMR	Under nutrition
State/India	1991	1993-94	1992	1991	1998-99	1998-99
Andhra Pradesh	15.90	26.01	71.85	19.74	95.00	43.00
Assam	7.40	45.29	50.55	46.11	45.00	32.00
Bihar	14.60	70.92	88.49	15.12	86.00	59.00
Gujarat	7.40	32.20	56.43	46.83	80.00	45.00
Haryana	19.80	46.55	83.37	28.43	68.00	40.00
Karnataka	16.40	46.62	45.97	23.13	70.00	53.00
Kerala	9.90	36.28	93.63	74.32	-	43.00
Madhya Pradesh	14.60	46.00	42.74	24.78	102.00	58.00
Maharashtra	11.10	51.70	59.43	42.57	53.00	51.00
Orissa	16.30	49.06	70.80	33.82	84.00	59.00
Punjab	28.30	21.83	93.70	31.27	74.00	39.00
Rajasthan	17.30	38.33	43.04	18.67	99.00	56.00
Tamil Nadu	19.20	44.14	86.24	32.67	42.00	48.00
Uttar Pradesh	21.10	59.27	68.21	20.45	110.00	60.00
West Bengal	23.60	45.28	71.32	38.75	55.00	56.00
All-India	16.50	48.14	69.73	28.30	83.00	54.00
Source: Author's estimation from different documents						

Table 2 Occupational Pattern of SCs (in %)

Occupational Category	1987-88		1993-94	
	SC	OTHER	SC	OTHER
Rural				
Self-employed in Agriculture	18.90	43.3	19.12	42.42
Self employed in Non-Agriculture	11.0	13.8	10.32	13.89
Self-employed (Total)	29.8	57.1	29.49	56.31
Agricultural Wage Labour	51.7	23.2	50.6	22.37
Non-Agricultural Wage Labour	11.4	09.7	10.22	6.67
Rural Wage Labour Total	63.1	31.1	60.28	29.14
Others	06.9	11.5	9.67	14.62
Urban				
Self-employed	28.0	35.2	24.08	35.05
Regular Wage/Salaries	39.4	45.0	39.27	43.11
Casual Labour	26.0	10.3	26.96	10.57
Others Wage	08.5	09.2	9.67	11.25
All	100	100	100	100

Source: NSS Employment/Unemployment Survey, 1987-88, and 1993-94 CSO, Delhi.

SC= SCHEDULED CASTE; OTHERS = NON SC/ST. (excluding, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe

Table 3 All India-Crimes against Dalits-1992 to 2000

Types of cases	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Murder	616	510	546	571	543	513	516	506	526	4847
Rape	849	798	992	873	949	1037	923	1000	1083	8504
Kidnapping & Abduction	213	246	251	276	281	243	253	228	268	2259
Dacoity	81	102	78	70	90	58	49	36	38	602
Robbery	265	197	259	218	213	162	150	109	108	1681
Arson	406	369	533	500	464	389	346	337	290	3634
Hurt			4542	4544	4585	3860	3809	3241	3497	28078
PCR Act	2900	2531	1731	1528	1417	1216	724	678	672	13397
POA Act	NA	NA	14938	13925	9620	8070	7443	7301	7386	68683
Others	19592	20220	10038	10492	13278	12396	11425	11657	11587	120685
Total	24922	24973	33908	32997	31440	27944	25638	25093	25455	252370

Source: Crime in India, National Crime Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, 1994-2000

Table-4. Category Wise Crimes Committed against Dalits – 2000

State/UT	Murder	Hurt	Rape	Kidnap & Abd.	Dacoity	Robbery	Arson	PCR Act	POA Act
Andhra Pradesh	29	323	53	9	2	0	8	284	529
Bihar	4	244	17	5	2	3	12	6	220
Karnataka	10	13	14	2	0	0	1	95	1073
Kerala	7	126	65	0	1	0	4	0	146
Madhya Pradesh	45	798	289	26	5	8	27	27	539
Maharashtra	2	16	49	4	1	2	5	98	128
Orissa	14	47	6	0	0	0	3	0	147
Punjab	0	4	8	2	0	0	0	0	13
Rajasthan	48	153	128	13	1	3	49	0	454
Tamil Nadu	12	654	17	1	0	1	0	103	418
Uttar Pradesh	302	761	346	163	23	65	142	18	2683
Total	473	3139	992	225	35	82	251	631	6350

Source: Report, National Commission for Scheduled Caste And Scheduled Tribes, Government of India, New Delhi, 1999-2000 & 2000-2001.

Table 5 Caste conflicts between dalits vs. others –1992-2000

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Andhra Pradesh	591	678	1202	1764	1880	1605	1749	1582	11051
Bihar	751	721	789	747	710	785	820	741	6064
Karnataka	905	902	957	1171	1227	1148	1277	1329	8916
Kerala	634	477	657	696	755	768	514	467	4968
Madhya Pradesh	4571	3690	3745	3979	4269	4051	4667	4631	33603
Maharashtra	1231	1323	1475	1622	831	683	605	489	8259
Orissa	220	213	497	329	678	772	772	793	4274
Punjab	18	14	9	8	11	23	39	34	156
Rajasthan	4379	4298	4797	5197	5624	5586	5623	5190	40694
Tamil Nadu	550	503	1449	1293	1403	1562	883	1296	8939
Uttar Pradesh	9296	10321	16166	14205	8500	6511	6122	7330	78451
Total	23146	23140	31743	31011	25888	23494	23071	23882	205375

Source: Crime in India, National Crime Record Bureau, Government of India, 1994-2000.

Table 6 INCIDENCE & RATE OF CRIME COMMITTED AGAINST DALIT
DURING 2000- Samples States

SL.	STATE/UT	INCIDENCE	PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION TO ALL INIDA TOTAL	RATE OF TOTAL COGNIZABLE CRIMES	RANK *	RANK**
1	ANDHRA PRADES	1582	6.2	2.1	9	4
2	BIHAR	741	2.9	0.7	13	9
3	KARNATAKA	1329	5.2	2.5	6	6
4	KERALA	467	1.8	1.4	11	11
5	MADHYA PRADESH	4631	18.2	5.8	2	3
6	MAHARASHTRA	489	1.9	0.5	16	10
7	ORISSA	793	3.1	2.2	7	8
8	PUNJAB	34	0.1	0.1	17	14
9	RAJASTHAN	5190	20.4	9.6	1	2
10	TAMILNADU	1296	5.1	2.1	8	7
11	UTTAR PRADES	7330	28.8	4.3	3	1

Source: Crime in India, National Crime Record Bureau, Government of India, 1994-2000.

Table 7

Percentage of population living below poverty live, 2000				
India/ state	SC	OBCs	Others	ALL
Andhra Pradesh	31	21	10	22
Assam	44	39	40	40
Bihar	60	43	27	44
Gujarat	18	12	5	14
Haryana	19	12	1	8
Karnataka	26	16	12	18
Kerala	15	11	5	9
Madhya Pradesh	41	32	12	37
Maharashtra	33	22	14	24
Orissa	52	40	23	48
Punjab	13	7	1	7
Rajasthan	20	10	6	14
Tamil Nadu	33	15	12	21
Uttar Pradesh	44	33	18	31
West Bengal	35	20	30	32
India	36	27	15	27
Source: NSSO, Govt. of India, 2001				

Table 8 Adult Literacy Rates among Social groups 1991						
India/State	Scheduled Castes			Others		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Andhra Pradesh	19.74	29.42	9.94	43.05	55.59	30.23
Assam	46.11	58.54	32.12	50.25	60.61	38.53
Bihar	15.12	26.06	3.42	38.67	54.89	20.82
Gujarat	46.83	64.99	27.93	60.93	74.11	46.81
Haryana	28.43	43.53	10.75	53.16	68.47	35.44
Karnataka	23.13	35.08	10.85	55.62	68.61	41.96
Kerala	74.32	81.18	67.79	89.79	94.21	85.64
Madhya Pradesh	24.78	40.94	7.59	50.39	67.67	31.33
Maharashtra	42.57	60.41	24.20	64.81	78.48	50.03
Orissa	33.82	51.28	15.62	58.21	74.70	41.05
Punjab	31.27	41.19	19.80	59.59	67.60	50.58
Rajasthan	18.67	33.29	2.75	41.47	59.53	21.72
Tamil Nadu	32.67	46.02	19.26	61.68	74.61	48.49
Uttar Pradesh	20.45	34.27	4.83	42.24	58.03	24.14
West Bengal	38.75	53.25	22.94	63.55	74.44	51.23
All-India	28.30	41.70	13.93	54.01	67.51	39.36

Source: Census of India, 1991 (Estimated from CD Data), RGI, New Delhi.
Note: Adult Literacy Rate is percentage of literates in age-group 15 years and above to population in that age group.

Table 9

States	Life expectancy at Birth 1998-99			Infant mortality rate 1998-99		
	SC	Others	All	SC	Others	All
Andhra Pradesh	62	68	67	95	60	71
Assam	72	67	66	45	64	62
Bihar	60	65	64	86	71	76
Gujarat	62	68	67	80	61	64
Haryana	66	69	68	68	56	59
Karnataka	64	69	69	70	59	62
Kerala	-	-	75+	-	19	21
Madhya Pradesh	58	61	60	102	86	93
Maharashtra	70	70	71	53	50	53
Orissa	62	64	64	84	88	90
Punjab	66	72	69	74	47	57
Rajasthan	59	63	63	99	84	88
Tamilnadu	71	-	71	42	53	51
Uttar Pradesh	57	62	62	110	91	95
West Bengal	68	-	70	55	45	51
India	62	66	65	83	68	73
Source: <i>National Family Health Survey, 1998-99</i> , Bombay: IIPS.						

Table 10. Percentage of Undernourished Children in Terms of Various Measures of Nutrition (Weight, Height and Weight for Height below -2 SD)									
State	NFHS-2 (1998-99)								
	Weight for Age (Undernutrition)			Height for Age (Stunting)			Weight for Height (Wasting)		
	SC	Others	All	SC	Others	All	SC	Others	All
India	54	44	47	52	43	46	16	15	16
A.P.	43	35	38	43	37	39	10	9	9
Assam	32	42	36	45	53	50	8	15	13
Bihar	59	53	54	58	52	54	23	19	21
Delhi	41	33	35	48	34	37	12	12	13
Gujarat	45	41	45	49	41	44	12	15	16
Haryana	40	33	35	56	48	50	4	6	5
H.P.	52	41	44	55	37	41	18	17	16
J&K	54	31	35	39	39	39	23	10	12
Karnataka	53	41	44	44	35	37	28	18	20
Kerala	43	25	27	38	20	22	12	11	11
M. P.	58	51	55	53	47	51	20	18	20
Maharashtra	51	47	50	44	36	40	16	21	21
Orissa	59	51	54	51	39	44	23	23	24
Punjab	39	23	29	50	33	39	10	5	7
Rajasthan	56	47	51	55	49	52	11	11	12
Tamilnadu	48	-	37	41	-	29	22	-	20
U. P.	60	49	52	63	52	56	12	11	11
W. B.	56	45	49	46	39	46	18	12	14
India	54	44	47	52	43	46	16	15	16

Source: IIPS (2000): National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2), 1998-99, Mumbai.

Table 11.

Lack of access to land by social groups in India (in% of households), 1992						
	Land lessness			Near land lessness		
	SC	OTH	ALL	SC	OTH	ALL
AP	12.5	13.1	11.9	59.4	39.6	44.0
Assam	5.5	15.4	13.4	45.0	31.8	31.3
Bihar	19.7	11.0	12.0	68.8	49.5	51.5
Gujarat	18.1	17.5	16.3	38.3	26.1	30.7
Haryana	8.9	1.8	3.7	74.4	26.9	39.5
Karnataka	10.7	10.5	10.0	35.3	25.6	27.7
Kerala	14.3	7.7	8.4	79.3	69.1	70.3
MP	20.5	12.6	15.2	22.2	17.7	19.3
MS	24.3	17.1	19.6	35.1	22.3	25.3
Orissa	11.2	16.4	13.8	59.6	33.2	37.2
Punjab	6.7	5.1	5.9	87.0	34.3	54.9
Rajasthan	7.8	6.2	6.4	35.3	16.8	20.2
Tamil Nadu	19.2	17.6	17.9	67.0	46.1	53.0
UP	6.2	4.4	4.9	62.1	36.3	42.8
West Bengal	12.0	9.8	11.0	59.3	52.9	54.1
ALL INDIA	13.3	10.5	11.3	56.4	36.7	40.1
Source: NSS Report No.399 (48th round -1992) on Some Aspects of Ownership Holdings,						