An Evaluative Study of the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan and Other Developmental Policies for Scheduled Castes in India

Dr. Mangal Singh Mandrawal, Deputy Registrar, Doon University, Dehradun.

Komal Sajwan, M.Sc. Economics, Doon University, Dehradun.

Abstract

The Scheduled Caste (SC) population of India (16.8% - Census 2011) has had a history of being excluded from basic rights which had an adverse effect on their socio-economic development. Inclusion of SCs has always been important from the point of view of the policymakers too, (The motto of the 11th five year plan). Many other policies have been formulated for the socio-economic development of the SCs and many are directed solely towards the improvement of their educational, employment and health levels. Hence, it is crucial to assess the developmental policies for the SCs.

This paper throws light on the allocations on some of the policies working for the socio-economic development of the SCs. The Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and some centrally sponsored policies are analysed to know the amount allocated for the inclusion of the SCs.

Keywords- Scheduled Caste, SCSP, Inclusion, Developmental Policies

Introduction

In the year 1935, British listed the lowest ranking Hindu castes in a schedule appended to the Government of India Act for the purpose of statutory safeguards and other benefits, these legal designations are called the scheduled castes. The Schedule caste has faced discrimination, untouchability and backwardness from a long time and has been a serious subject of research. In the Vedic period the Varna Ashram Dharma carried occupational Attributes and formed a social structure where society was divided on the basis of occupation but slowly untouchability and discrimination crept in and strengthened its roots. The SC population was 6.44 crore in 196, representing about, 14.7% of the total population of India. It has increased to 16.66 crore, representing 16.2% of the country’s population, as per 2001 census. There are 22 districts in the country which have more than 30% SC population concentration and out of the 5.93 lakh villages in the country, around 44,000 villages have more than 50% SC population. The main concentration of SCs is in Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. In the period 2001-2011, the SC population grew by 20.8%, in comparison to the total population decadal increase of 17.7%. The highest SC population concentration is in Punjab with 31.9% SC population.
According to the 2001 census data access to electricity among SCs is 44.3% and among all households is 61.4%. In terms of villages, 21.4% of SC villages had no electricity as per the census 2001 data. 45.2% households had drinking facilities within their premises whereas only 27% of SC households had drinking facilities within their premises. Availability of permanent houses was 42.8% among SC while 57.7% among all the households.

The economic status of the Scheduled Caste lags behind the rest of the population. As per the 61st round of the National Sample Survey (2004-05), the BPL population among the SCs was 36.8% in the rural areas and 39.9% in the urban areas.

**Schedule Caste Sub-Plan: General Overview**

Though there were Constitutional safeguards and developmental plans, which were launched since 1951, through the First Five Year Plan (1951-56) the SCs lagged behind the general population in various socio-economic indicators. The Sixth Plan has identified the lack of economic support as the main cause of extremely slow pace of development of the Scheduled Castes during the 16 earlier plans. Thought it was inherent in the earlier five year plans that the benefits of economic development resulting from the investments in agriculture and industry in particular would, in the course of time trickle down to the poorest of the poor, the search of a new strategy during the Sixth Five Year Plan. The new strategy so evolved is a combination of the following three instruments: (1) The Special Component Plan of the States and Central Ministries (SCP), (ii) The Special Central Assistance, (iii) The Scheduled Castes Development Corporations in the States (SCDCs). The Sixth Plan (1980-85) marked a shift in the approach to the development of SCs. Special emphasis was laid on the implementation of the newly launched SCSP for SCs facilitating easy convergence and pooling of resources from all the other developmental sectors in proportion to the population of SCs and monitoring of various developmental programmes for the benefit of SCs.

These plans are envisaged to help poor Scheduled Castes families through composite income generating programmes during the Sixth Plan period. Such family oriented programmes are to cover all the major occupational groups amongst Scheduled Castes such as agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers, share-croppers, fishermen, sweepers and scavengers, urban un-organised labourers below the poverty line.

In addition, the Special Component Plans also seek to improve the living conditions of Scheduled Castes through provision of drinking water supply, link roads, house sites and housing improvements, establishment of such services as primary schools, health centres, veterinary centres, panchayat ghars, community halls, nutrition centres, rural electrification, common work places, common facility centres etc. in the scheduled Caste bastis under the Minimum Needs programme to improve their access to social, educational and other community services and earmarking outlays for this purpose in appropriate sectors.

The Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP) launched for the Scheduled Castes expected to facilitate easy convergence and pooling of resources from all the other development sectors in proportion to the population of SCs and monitoring of various developmental programmes for the benefit of SCs.
Aims of Scheduled Caste Sub Plan (SCSP)

1. Conservation of whatever assets the Scheduled Castes have;
2. Updating and/or provision of new skills to improve their employability or productivity;
3. Providing minimum literacy and functional skills through education to every scheduled castes up to 35 years of age as part of the programme of universalization of elementary education and eradication of illiteracy;
4. Enabling them to acquire special education/technical qualification and avail of existing as well as newly emerging employment opportunities etc;
5. Provision of entrepreneurial training to educated unemployed scheduled castes youth;
6. Helping in their taking diversified activities including in the area of manufacturing, and business through self-employment programme.
7. Modernizing existing traditional activities like tanning and leather work;
8. Liberating them from demeaning work like scavenging of dry latrines;
9. Doing all what is necessary to tackle and eradicate social problem of untouchability.
10. Provision of minimum needs and basic amenities in their habitations.

Objectives

This paper throws light on the allocations on some of the policies working for the socio-economic development of the SCs. The Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and some centrally sponsored policies are analysed to know the amount allocated for the inclusion of the SCs.

Analysis

A. Allocations under SCSP in the Union Budget

- TOTAL EXPENDITURE
The preceding figure shows a significant gap between the budget and revised estimates in 2005-06, 2008-09 and 2015-16. It is also clear that there are only 5 years in which there is no gap in the budget and revised estimates.

- **REVENUE EXPENDITURE**

Source: Union budget (2000-01 to 2015-16)

The preceding figure shows a significant gap between the budget and revised estimates in 2005-06, 2008-09 and 2015-16. It is also clear that there are only 5 years in which there is no gap in the budget and revised estimates.

Source: Union Budget Various Years (2000-01 to 2014-15)
This graph shows that except 5 years the budget and revised estimates differ from each other and there is a significant and immediate increase in the difference in budget and revised estimates from 28.01 in 2004-05 to 92.94 in 2005-06 and from 26.93 in 2007-08 to 108.61 in 2008-09. It is also clear that there is a consistent increase in this gap since 2010-11.

- CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

**Fig-3: Budget Estimates in Capital Expenditure**

The BE in capital expenditure is very less as compared to the revenue expenditure and the BE is continuously decreasing from 2000-01 to 2003-04 and even after 2003-04 there is not much increase in it. After decreasing from 2009-10 to 2010-11, the budget estimates have been consistently same.
Fig 4: Revised Estimates in Capital Expenditure

Source: Union budget (2000-01 to 2014-15)

The RE in the capital expenditure is same as the BE. It is declining from 2000-01 to 2003-04 and after a slight increase in some years it is consistently same since 2010-11 to 2014-15. The capital expenditure is very low and is a very small proportion of the total expenditure, i.e. most of the expenditure in the SCSP is done as revenue expenditure.

Fig 5: Revenue and Capital Expenditure (Revised Estimates)

Source: Union Budget Various Years (2000-01 to 2014-15)
Revenue expenditure shows an upward trend which is encouraging and can help in the welfare of the SCs but most of the Expenditure is done under revenue expenditure and capital expenditure is negligible with consistently low figures. Capital expenditure is important in capacity building and helps in the growth in the long run as it contributes in asset building.

B. Allocations under Developmental Schemes in the Budget

Fig-6 BE and RE in Post Matric Scholarship Scheme

Source: Union budget (2000-01 to 2013-14)

This graph shows that there is a sudden gap in the BE and RE in 2007-08, 2011-12 and 2013-14 and the allocation in this scheme has drastically decreased from 2013-14 to 2014-15.

Fig-7 BE and RE in Pre Matric Scholarship Scheme

Source: Union budget (2000-01 to 2013-14)
There is a sudden increase in the allocation from 2011-12 to 2012-13. Apart from this, gap between the budget and revised estimates is seen at various points.

C. Allocations under Other Programs of Welfare of Scheduled Castes

Fig-8: BE and RE in Other Programmes of Welfare of Schedule Castes

![Graph showing BE and RE in Other Programmes of Welfare of Schedule Castes]

Source: Union budget (2000-01 to 2014-15)

The budget and revised estimates under this scheme have a wide difference and decrease and increase suddenly by a large amount. There is inconsistency in their path and are not equal to each other in any year.

- Assistance to Voluntary Organizations for Welfare of Scheduled Castes

Fig-9: BE and RE in Assistance to Voluntary organizations for welfare of Scheduled Castes

![Graph showing BE and RE in Assistance to Voluntary organizations for welfare of Scheduled Castes]

- Assistance to Voluntary Organizations for Welfare of Scheduled Castes
Source: Union budget (2000-01 to 2014-15)

Initially the budget and revised estimates are equal till 2008-09 and start to show a gap since 2009-10. There is a sudden drastic difference in the BE and RE in 2012-13. BE and RE are again equal in 2013-14 and move apart suddenly in 2014-15.

❖ Other developmental policies for the Scheduled Caste in India

❖ Scheme For Up-gradation Of Merit Of SC Students

The Scheme of Upgradation of Merit of SC Students was started in 1987-88 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education) and was later transferred to Ministry of Welfare during 1993-94.

The objective of the Scheme is to upgrade the merit of SC students by providing them remedial and special coaching in classes IX to XII. While the remedial coaching aims at removing deficiencies in various subjects, the special coaching is provided with a view to prepare the students for competitive examinations for seeking entry into professional courses like engineering and medical disciplines.

❖ Central Sector Scholarship of Top Class Education for SC Students

The Scheme framed in pursuance of the Union Budget 2005-06 announcements is effective from 21st June, 2007. The Scheme was subsequently revised in January, 2012.

Objective of the Scheme is to promote qualitative education amongst SC students, by providing full financial support for pursuing studies beyond 12th class.

❖ Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for SC etc. candidates (2018-19)

The Scheme provides financial assistance to the finally selected candidates for pursuing Master level courses and Ph.D abroad in the accredited Institutions/University by an authorized body of that country, under the Scheme in following specified fields of study:

- Engineering and Management;
- Pure Sciences & Applied Sciences;
- Agricultural Sciences and Medicine;
- Commerce, Accounting & Finance; and
- Humanities & Social Science

One Hundred awards, subject to availability of funds, per year are available under the Scheme. 30% of the awards for each year shall be earmarked for women candidates. Vacant slots of previous year if any will also be carried forward.
• National Fellowship for Scheduled Caste Students

Government of India had launched a Central Sector scheme namely, National Fellowship during the financial year 2005-06 to increase opportunities to Scheduled Castes students for pursuing higher education leading to degrees such as M.Phil. and Ph.D. The scheme has been revised with effect from 1.4.2010. The scheme caters the requirements of the Scheduled Caste students for pursuing research degree in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. This will not only enable them to be eligible for employment to the posts of Lecturers lying vacant in various colleges and universities but will equip them to effectively take advantage of the growing opportunities at the national and international level in the context of the new economic order.

• Credit Enhancement Guarantee Scheme for the Scheduled Castes (SCs)

The objectives of the Scheme are as below:

- It is a Social Sector Initiative to be implemented nationally in order to promote entrepreneurship among the scheduled caste population in India.
- Promote entrepreneurship amongst the Scheduled Castes who are oriented towards innovation and growth technologies.
- To support, by way of providing Credit Enhancement Guarantee to Banks and Financial Institutions, who will be providing financial assistance to the Scheduled Caste Entrepreneurs, who in turn will create wealth, value for the society, create jobs and ultimately will develop confidence and at the same time promote profitable businesses. The assets so created will also create forward/backward linkages. It will further create chain effect in the locality in specific and society in general.
- To promote financial inclusion for SC entrepreneurs and to motivate them for further growth of SC communities.
- To facilitate economic development of SC entrepreneurs.
- To enhance direct and indirect employment generation for SC population in India

• National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation (NSFDC)

The National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation (NSFDC) was set up in 1989 as a "Company not for profit" under Section 8 of the Companies Act 2013 [i.e. Section 25 (of the earlier) Companies Act, 1956] with the objective of financing income generating activities of SC beneficiaries living below Double the Poverty Line limits (presently Annual Family Income Rs.98,000/- for Rural Areas and Rs.1,20,000/- for Urban Areas). NSFDC assist the target group by way of loans, Skill Training, Entrepreneurship Development Programmes and Providing Marketing Support through State Channelizing Agencies (SCAs), RRBs, Public Sector Bank & Other Institutions.
• Venture Capital Fund for Scheduled Castes

Venture Capital Fund is a Social Sector Initiative to be implemented nationally in order to promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes population in India. “Entrepreneurship” relates to entrepreneurs managing businesses which are oriented towards innovation and growth technologies. The spirit of the above mentioned fund is to support those entrepreneurs who will create wealth and value for society and at the same time promoting profitable business.

Socio-Economic Status of the SC in India

• Literacy rate of the SCs is lower than that of the total population.
• The enrolment of SC students is higher at primary level and very low at higher education level.
• The drop-out rate of the SC students is higher than that of the total population.
• The workforce participation of the SCs is higher than that of the total population.
• The mortality rates of the SCs are higher than that of the total population.
• The prevalence of anaemia is SCs are higher than in rest of the population.
• The nutritional level of the SCs is lower than that of the total population.

Conclusions

• There are gaps in the BE and RE in the allocations in the SCSP from 2000-01 to 2014-15.
• Most of the allocations in the SCSP have been into revenue expenditure and the capital expenditure is very less and is consistently very low.
• Some schemes like ‘Liberation and Rehabilitation of Scavengers’ and ‘Special Education Programme for girls belonging to SC of very Low Literacy level’ worked for only 3 and 2 years since 2000-01 without any significant improvement in the targeted population.
• In spite of policies working for the improvement of the educational and employment condition of the SCs, there has been no significant improvement in these aspects in around 10 years.
• There has been no policy working at the ground level for the betterment of the health level of solely the SCs.

Recommendations

• More capital expenditure should be done for the scheduled caste in the budget.
• Implementation of the policies should be improved.
• More allocation needs to be done in schemes and programmes.
• More skill development programmes should be started.
• Educational institutions for SCs should be started.
• Technical education should be provided to the SCs.
• Awareness programs should be started for the SCs to make them aware of the benefits they can avail.
• Policies should be introduced and implemented to improve the health level of SCs.
• Proper monitoring of the schemes should be carried out at regular intervals.

Bibliography


CBGA. (2011). Reclaiming Public Provisioning Priorities for the 12th Five Year Plan. Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability.


