

Paper 43 POLICY AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE WELFARE FOR SCHEDULED CASTES IN PUNJAB: A STUDY

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Abstract :The welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been placed in the State List. Therefore, it becomes the constitutional responsibility of the State Governments to promote and protect the interests of the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes within the broad policy framework laid down by Union Government and Planning Commission. Article 46 of the Indian Constitution states that the State shall promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation. The Planning Commission allocates appropriate funds under various heads and provides guidelines and consultancy support to states in regard to the welfare and development of Scheduled Castes. The various State Governments have evolved and strengthened the Social Welfare Departments entrusted with the responsibility of developing and promoting the interests of Scheduled Castes. As per Census 2011, the State of Punjab, has the highest percentage of SC population amongst all the States of the Country. The SC population in the State is 88.60 lac which is 31.94% of the total population (277.43 lac) of the State as against 16.6% SC population of the Country. Punjab accounts for 2.3% of total population and 4.3% of SC population of the Country. The decennial growth rate of SC population in the State during the period (2001-2011) was 26.06% as compared to 13.89% for the State as a whole. The present study aims at studying the status of scheduled castes and contribution of different factors responsible for their status improvement based on review and synthesize the findings of the earlier studies based on secondary source of data. Majority of Scheduled Castes are having low literacy status which in turn causes for backwardness with low income, landlessness, poverty, etc, in spite of affirmative action with various education as well as development programmes. Hence, all educational and development programmes should be planned for social inclusion which constitute significant proportion of India population. This paper giving review of Policy and programme of scheduled castes in Punjab. A brief overview of the caste system and discusses the types of groups and their social, economic, political, educational and cultural aspects to castes.

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