

**CHANGING INTERACTION PATTERNS AMONG DALITS
AND JAT SIKHS IN DOABA REGION OF PUNJAB**

Dissertation

**Submitted to the Punjab Agricultural University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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in
SOCIOLOGY
(Minor Subject: Economics)**

By

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CERTIFICATE I

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, “**Changing interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba region of Punjab**” submitted for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**, in the subject of **Sociology (Minor subject: Economics)** of the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, is a bonafide research work carried out by **Ms. Amanpreet Kaur (Admn. No. L-2010-BS-61-D)** under my supervision and that no part of this dissertation has been submitted for any other degree.

The assistance and help received during the course of investigation have been fully acknowledged.

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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, “**Changing interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba region of Punjab**” submitted by **Ms. Amanpreet Kaur (Admn. No. L-2010-BS-61-D)** to the Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D, in the subject of **Sociology (Minor subject: Economics)** has been approved by the Student’s Advisory Committee after an oral examination on the same.

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ABSTRACT

Rural population of Punjab mainly comprised of Jat Sikhs and Dalits. The land owning Jat Sikhs were locally dominant and Dalits were dependent upon them. Off late with benefits from affirmative action program of government, NRI remittances and political mobilization, Dalits had improved their socio-economic status. This had impacted the interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs of the region. The present study was conducted with specific objectives: to study the socio-economic status of the respondents; to analyze the changing socio-economic and political interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs; to identify the conflict between both castes, if any, and the reasons thereof and to investigate state intervention in conflict resolution as perceived by Dalits and Jat Sikhs. The study was based on primary data collected from 320 respondents (160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs) from Doaba. Study found that almost half of Jat Sikhs (49.3%) and Dalits (43.7%) had medium socio-economic status. Three fourth of the Jat Sikhs (74.3%) and Dalits (80.0%) were from 31-50 years of age. More than one third of the respondents were educated up to higher secondary level and 42.4 per cent of Dalits were doing semi-skilled and skilled jobs whereas almost three fourth of Jat Sikhs (73.2%) were engaged in farming. It was reported that 5.6 per cent of high status Dalits had moved to the village locality inhabited by Jat Sikhs without any resistance. A significant majority of Dalits (96.2%) reported no restriction on their entry into Jat Sikh kitchen and 58.7 per cent of them attended the social ceremonies of Jat Sikhs as guests. Economic dependence on Jat Sikh patrons was reported by 19.3 per cent Dalits. In 87.5 per cent of villages there was separate Dalit gurudwaras. It was Dalit sarpanch in forty three per cent of the villages. A significant majority of Jat Sikhs were apprehensive (88.7%) of Dalit dominance while Dalits were conscious and assertive (65.6%) of their newly acquired identity. Religious issues were found most responsible behind subtle form of conflict among both castes. Two third of the respondents felt that police personnel favoured their caste group while resolving the dispute. Socially mobile, economically influential and subaltern Dalits carry the movement of a separate Dalit identity and Jat Sikhs need to understand it and act accordingly to avoid any conflict.

Keywords: Dalits, Doaba, interaction patterns, Jat Sikh

Signature of Major Advisor

Signature of the Student

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ABBREVIATIONS

SCs	:	Scheduled Castes
STs	:	Scheduled Tribes
DSB	:	Dera Sachkhand Ballan
GOP	:	Government of Punjab
SBS Nagar	:	Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar
NRI	:	Non Resident Indian
BSP	:	Bahujan Samaj Party
UK	:	United Kingdom
SAD	:	Shriomani Akali Dal
BJP	:	Bhartiya Janta Party
DICCI	:	Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
EMI	:	Equated Monthly Installment
MGNREGS	:	Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
CD	:	Compact Disc
RRBs	:	Regional Rural Banks
CBs	:	Commercial Banks

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Punjab is a Sikh majority state. The Sikhs constitute 57.6 per cent of the state's population. Jat Sikh constitutes 25 per cent of population in Punjab. Jat Sikh is a sub-group of the Sikh ethno religious group from the Indian subcontinent. Involved in peasantry, the landowning Jat Sikhs played an important role in agricultural development of the state and second most populous social group in Punjab after Dalits. Dalits have a highest proportion of population in the state, i.e., 31.94 per cent among the states in India (GOP, 2010). Over 80 per cent of them live in the rural areas. Punjab's villages are, therefore, predominately Sikh and Dalit. Scheduled Castes (SCs) comprised a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchables. Belonging to the lowest rung of the Indian caste hierarchy; these people are more commonly referred by name 'Dalit'. Given the concern with the context of social reality as it exists in Punjab, the term Dalit is used mainly as an alternative for the constitutional category of SCs. In Punjab state, *Mazhabi, Chamar, Ad-dharmi, Balmiki* dominate the total SC population.

The origin of caste system is widely accepted from the divine theory, which states that the four castes namely Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and the Sudras, came from four different organs of the Hindu figure Brahma such as from mouth, arms, thighs, and feet respectively. At the top of the hierarchy are the Brahmans, who are mostly the descendants of the priests and wise men of the society. Following the Brahman castes are the Kshatriyas, who are soldiers or warriors. The third caste consists of the Vaisyas who are artisans by their nature, and the lowest caste is the Sudras who basically are farmers and peasants by their occupation. In the *varna* scheme of the Vedas there are only four orders, and the untouchables have no place in it. But there are references in Vedic literature to groups such as the *Ayogava, Chandala, Nishada and Paulkasa*, who are outside the *varna* scheme, and who seem to be despised (Srinivas 1962). The word Dalit comes from the Sanskrit language, and means ground, suppressed, crushed, or broken to pieces. It was first used by Jyotirao Phule in the nineteenth century, in the context of the oppression faced by the erstwhile untouchable castes of the twice-born Hindus. Mahatma Gandhi coined the word '*Harijan*', translated roughly as "Children of God", to identify the former Untouchables. But Dalits never took '*Harijan*' in a good stride and they perceive the term as if whose father is not known. In 1935 British passed the Government of India Act, 1935 which brought the term Scheduled Caste into use and defined the group as including such castes, races and tribes formerly known as the Depressed Classes. After independence, the Constituted Assembly continued the prevailing definition of SCs and STs via article 341, 42 and compiled a full listing of castes and tribes via two orders, The Constitution Order (SC) 1950 and the Constitution Order (ST) 1950.

The position of Dalits in the state of Punjab is quite different from that of Dalits in other parts of India. Sikhism appears to have experienced a significant liberating influence on Dalits in Punjab. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus, the religious institutions of *sangat* and *langar*, the absence of a caste based priesthood, and the respect for manual labour, all these together aims at creating a harmonious community in which distinction of caste, creed and status are not relevant (Jodhka & Louis, 2003; Ram, 2007). However, there was a wide gap between the teachings and social practice (Grewal, 1998; Webster, 2001; Jodhka, 2009; Ram, 2009). Sikhism did not lead to the creation of an egalitarian community or end of caste hierarchy and discrimination. It only led to a change in the caste pattern, leading to the construction of a Sikh caste hierarchy, parallel to that of the Hindu caste hierarchy (Kaur, 1986; Juregansmeyer, 1988; Puri, 2003, 2004; Jodhka, 2004).

Though integral to the social structure, there were several instances where Dalits were discriminated by land owning Jat Sikhs. Restrictions on Dalits' entry into upper caste houses had been one of the most strictly observed practices. Dalits were associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as scavenging and cleaning, leatherwork, butchering, or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses, and attached labourers (*siris*). The Scheduled Caste population of the region had been comparatively vulnerable in the economic structure of the village. Their ownership of agricultural land is among the lowest in the country (Malhotra, 1976; Jodhka, 2002; Swamy, 2003; Dhaliwal, 2015; Jolly, 2015). Scheduled Caste Sikhs did not get equal treatment in the gurudwaras of the upper caste Sikhs. Until 1920 Dalit Sikhs were not allowed to go beyond the fourth step in the Golden Temple. Their offering of *karah prasad* was not accepted (Ram, 2004; Ram, 2007; Webster, 2007; Singh, 2012). Besides some discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab is quite different than that of Dalits in other parts of the country. There are many factors responsible for better position of Dalits in Punjab.

One of the distinguishing features of Dalits in Punjab is their numerical strength. They constitute 31.9 per cent of the total population compared to 16.6 at national level (Census, 2010). Punjab is comprised of three socio-cultural zones namely, *Majha*, *Malwa* and *Doaba*. Though Dalits are unevenly spread over the three regions, the largest concentration is in the *Doaba* region. *Do-aab* literally means two waters i.e. the area between two rivers, Beas and Sutlej. In more than 3000 villages of *Doaba* region, proportion of Dalit population is over 40 per cent and in some villages it is as high as 65 per cent. Out of the total 38 Scheduled Castes, two major groupings, *Ad-dharmis* and *Balmikis* together constitute 80 per cent of the total scheduled castes in *Doaba* region. This numerical preponderance of Dalits is a measure of their strength (Jodhka, 2000; Awasthi, 2003; Judge, 2003; Judge and Bal 2008).

Secondly, the literacy data shows that Dalits of Punjab have made significant headway in education. The literacy rate, which was 16.12 per cent in 1971, rose to 23.85 per

cent in 1981. It further increased to 41.1 per cent in 1991 and 56.2 per cent in 2001 and 64.8 per cent in 2011 which is very close to the percentage at national level i. e. 66.1 percent (GOI, various issues). Almost equivalent to general population, *Ad-dharmis* have the highest literacy rate of 76.4 per cent and occupy the top position among the Dalits. Due to reservation, proportion of Dalits in government jobs has witnessed an increasing trend during last three decades. In the year 1980, 18 per cent of Dalits were in government jobs and further this proportion increased to 23.98 per cent in 1990 and 25 per cent in 2010 (GOP, various issues).

A less known but another significant factor which made a major difference in the status and self-perception of the Dalits in Punjab is related to the large scale migration of the Dalits, particularly *Ad-dharmis* of *Doaba* region, to foreign countries. It is estimated that on an average one member in every second Dalit family in *Doaba* region have gone abroad. Migration is part of Punjabi heritage. In the 20th century, Punjab has been one of the leading states of emigration from India. The export of man power has already been established as one of the most lucrative industry in Punjab. A good number of young economically motivated all over the state particularly from the *Doaba* region were motivated to the direction of industrialized developed countries in the search of employment and a better future. The studies on migration by scholars (Judge 1994, 2002; McLeod, 1986; Kessinger, 1974; Helweg, 1983) show that initial emigration from Punjab was the emigration where higher castes were dominated. During much of the 20th century, especially since the 1950s, international migration from Punjab has been substantial.

The emigration of Dalits has a history old then that of higher caste. Mcleod (1986) has given caste wise data of Punjabis entering New Zealand. According to this data, out of 212 Punjabis entering between 1912 and 1921, 133 were Jats and 24 were *Chamars*. Among the *Chamars* 22 belonged to the *Doaba* region whereas other two were from *Majha*. The emigration of Dalits to outside world started during the colonial period as a result of the large scale emigration to British, French and Dutch colonies as indentured labourers to work in the plantations. The post-colonial migration of Dalits was directed towards the developed countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and later to the Gulf and South East Asian countries (Tatla, 1999; Khullar, Kaur and Toor, 2009; Bahadur, 2012).

Today, Dalits diaspora form an important part of the Global Indian diaspora. The Dalits had suffered and resist changes in the diaspora culture despite oppressions over a period of time in various countries. However, at present it is observed that the Dalit diaspora has become resilient and in a position to support their counterparts in India, the land of their forefathers. Emigration of Dalits to the other countries initially as indentured labourer or forced labourer, but Punjabi Dalits emigration is a post-independence phenomenon, as a voluntary labourer and it resulted in their economic development. Initially *Chamars* of *Doaba*

region were numerically predominant among the Dalits in the immigration process which seems to be a result of their economic improvement. The change in the economic conditions of Dalits is both a cause and a consequence of emigration (Juergensmeyer, 1988; Judge, 2010, 2012; Chana, 2012).

The remittances sent home by these Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and contribution they made to the enlargement of the community's autonomous cultural spaces may be an exceptional distinguishing feature. Fourth factor responsible for their enhanced status is increased political representation of Dalits from the grass root level of Panchayats to the legislative assembly. One third representation of Dalits in village Panchayats in Punjab as envisaged in the 73rd Amendment Act of PRIs is further testimony of the fact. Political movements such as Singh Sabha movement, *Ad-dharam* movement started in *Doaba* region, laid foundation for their political participation in different movements and contributed to the change in their status (Shah, 2001; Puri, 2003; Kumar, 2004; Ram, 2009).

Due to these factors, socio economic status of Dalits has changed significantly. This has impacted the interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs. In *Doaba* region, upwardly mobile Dalits had purchased houses in upper caste localities and there was little resistance from the neighbouring upper caste Jat residents to Dalits' buying houses in their localities. Green revolution brought prosperity to the farmers of Punjab and they began to employ Dalit women to help with the domestic chores. Jats no longer mind Dalit women entering their houses or even in the kitchen. Large majorities of Dalits have consciously dissociated themselves from their traditional occupations such as cleaning and scavenging as it carried an alleged stigma. They also began to distance themselves from agriculture during green revolution. The post green revolution period saw an influx of migrant agricultural labour to the tune of about one million. This sizeable presence of migrants altered the traditional roles of farmers from being patrons to their local farm workers to de patronage. Land owning Jat Sikhs de-patronized local Dalit *siris* which compelled them to seek off farm employment (Jodhka, 2002; Ram, 2007; Sharma and Sidhu, 2012).

Events like the honouring of the first Punjabi Dalit millionaire at the International Dalit Conference at Vancouver in 2003, contribution of one crore (10 million) by one Dalit NRI to *Sant Sarwan Das Dera of Sachkhand Ballan*, near Jalandhar for construction of an eye hospital, the building of 21 Ravidas Temples in United Kingdom alone and putting up gold sheeting on the domes of their temples, emerged as a measure of their upward mobility and pride. They started constructing their own gurudwaras and it never been met with any resistance from Jats. Out of 12581 villages in Punjab, there are separate Dalit gurudwaras in about 10000 villages (Judge, 2002; Chachrari, 2003; Singh, 2012; Mahajan and Jodhka, 2012). Such Dalit gurudwaras were not simply places of worship, these were in fact symbols of resistance and assertion of caste identities.

More and more *Ad-dharmis* are turning to Ravidasi *deras* such as the *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* (DSB) in Jalandhar district and other *deras* in *Doaba* region. Hardly any *Balmiki* went there, they have their own religious organizations, named after *Maharishi Balmiki*. The different *jatis*, discrete in character, with their own distinct hierarchies, appeared to be in the process of inventing and strengthening distinct *jati* based religio-cultural identities through symbols, rituals, ceremonies, festivals, *jaikaras* (religious cries), and salutations. It is part of the ongoing process of construction of identity at the social and popular levels (Rawat, 2003; Gupta, 2000). Though it may be because of ideology of Sikhism, untouchability has been less of a problem in Punjab. There are no open civil, social and religious restrictions on Dalits but in several cases Dalits feel that they are discriminated against by locally dominant Jat Sikhs, who control not only the social system but political system too.

Srinivas used the term *sanskritization* to describe the change occurred among lower castes, in which they try to follow the life style, rituals and beliefs of upper caste (Srinivas, 1952). It also happened in case of Dalits in Punjab, they used surnames of Jats, wore turbans just like Jats did and were follower of Sikhism. *Sanskritization* occurred usually in groups who have enjoyed political and economic power but were not ranked high in ritual ranking. After gaining political and economic strength, these groups tried to imitate certain rights, practices and rituals to achieve upward social mobility.

In the recent past, the conflict among *Ravidasia*, *Ad-dharmis* and Jat Sikhs have made national headlines many a times. The infamous socio-political conflict at *Talhan*, *Boota Mandi* and at *Ballan* is the testimony of the fact that social relationships among Dalits and Jat Sikhs are tensed and often flare up at slightest provocation. Dalits are no more in the denial mood and are becoming impressively assertive (Judge, 2004; Ram, 2004; Judge and Bal, 2009; Zelliot, 2010).

With this backdrop the present study was an attempt to understand the form in which casteism had continued to survive in Punjab state with special reference to Jat Sikhs and Dalits. Changing interaction patterns between these two castes had been examined with following objectives:

1. To study the socio-economic status of the Dalits and Jat Sikhs.
2. To analyze the changing socio-economic and political interaction pattern among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in the study area.
3. To identify the conflicts between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any, and the reasons thereof.
4. To investigate state intervention in conflict resolution as perceived by Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

Significance of the study

The present study was planned to highlight the changes in interaction between the two castes (Jat Sikhs and Dalits) and the manifest and latent causes behind various political and

religious conflicts that Punjab state has experienced in the recent past between these two major caste groups. Based upon the insight provided by the study, strategies may be formulated to tackle the social conflict between the two castes which will further be helpful in policy planning, for maintaining social harmony in the rural social milieu of Punjab.

Limitations of the study

Effort has been made to make the study as comprehensive as possible, yet, it is subjected to limitations inherent in a single student's project. The various limitations of the study are as follow:

- i) The study was limited to geographical region (*Doaba*) of Punjab. The inference derived may not be entirely applicable to the rest of the state.
- ii) The findings of the study were based on the expressed opinion of the respondents. Thus, the objectivity of the data was limited to their ability to recall and their trustworthiness in furnishing the required information. Although, all efforts were made to get accurate information from the members, the possibility of the members giving some biased information cannot be completely ruled out since some vital information could have been kept back.
- iii) Value of the study could have been further enhanced if large sample had been taken

Theoretical framework

Caste and untouchability have been much-studied subjects in the Indian social sciences. Social Anthropologists and Sociologists have in particular been preoccupied with understanding its various aspects and theorizing its origin (Kothari, 1994; Jodhka, 2000; 2002; Zabiute, 2010; Zelliot, 2010). However, though caste had remained a popular subject, the paradigm within which it is studied has undergone many significant changes over the years. Against the social anthropological common sense that saw it as a feature of the traditional social structure of India and expected it to decline with progress of the modernization process, more recent studies of caste look at it as a dynamic force, which, though weakened over the last five decades of experiences in certain respects, has grown stronger in some others. The forms of manifestation have indeed changed. Caste is talked more in terms of politics and lesser as an aspect of social and cultural life of the Indian people (Zelliot, 1970; Ram, 1988; Sharma, 1996; Duncan, 1999; Gupta, 2007; Judge and Bal, 2005). The two most important things that have happened over the last century are, a legal de-recognition of the practice and a near complete change in the consciousness of those at the receiving end of the hierarchical system (Juergensmeyer, 1988; Judge, 2002; Ram, 2004; Guru, 2005). Dalits have almost everywhere become much more assertive about their human and political rights. Today, they aspire for more comfortable material circumstances, demand

more equality, dignity and are aggressive and vocal against discrimination (Padhi *et al*, 2012; Singh, 2012; Pai, 2013; Chowdhry, 2015; Dhaliwal, 2015).

Since independence, a section among Dalits has experienced a significant improvement in their socio-economic status through various Constitutional Provisions and Special Development Programs. Besides, there have been numerous instances of the efforts by Dalits themselves of political mobilization towards improving their condition (Puri, 2003; Swami, 2003; Ram, 2007; Dhanda, 2009). If regional variations were recognized, much of the literature on caste and untouchability has come from western and southern India or in the North, from Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, despite it having the largest proportion of Dalit population in India, Punjab has not been very widely studied for understanding caste. Sociologists of the region had taken interest in studying caste system prevalent but most of them tried to investigate with their major thrust on Dalits only (Gill, 2004; Judge, 2004; Ram, 2004; Meeta and Rajivlochan, 2007; Judge and Bal, 2009).

With an objective to investigate the interaction patterns among two major caste groups i.e. Jat Sikhs and Dalits, the present study captured the change in inter-caste relations in the realm of caste paradigm. For this certain dimensions of the caste system were identified. This was done with the help of Ghurye's (1969) framework of caste features, such as social disabilities like segregation, kitchen entry, attending social ceremonies, exchange of goods, religious disabilities and disability in political participation. There is no denying the fact that in the traditional Hindu society numerous social, religious and legal disabilities had been imposed on the Scheduled Castes, previously known by different names (Ghurye, 1969). They were considered untouchables and denied the rights of fetching water from public wells, admission to schools and services of community priests, barbers and washermen. These castes endured humiliating restrictions even in the use of umbrella and *dolis* (palanquins). Their women were not allowed to wear bangles and any clothes above waist. They were prevented from taking out processions on occasions of weddings and festivals. The social conception of theological contamination, *chhut*, which prevented the lower orders from association with the higher castes and resulted in artificial ceremonies of purification, remained in force rigorously from the medieval period (Raghubanshi, 1969; O'Malley, 1974).

The untouchables were segregated from habitations of the general population and required to reside mainly in thatched huts outside the village boundary (Edwardes, 1961). Untouchability has been less of a problem in Punjab due to ideology of Sikhism. There are no open civil, social and religious restrictions on Dalits but in several cases Dalits feel that they are discriminated against by locally dominant Jat Sikhs, who control the social system. Up till now, various forces and structural constraints prevented Dalits from revolting against the above said social disabilities.

Social mobility was present in Indian society especially in caste system even in past. Mobility in class hierarchy occurs in the form of improving one's socio-economic position. However, a dominant pattern of social stratification in India has been that of caste. The hierarchies of class and caste have not functional in parallel direction. Mobility of a person in class structure has not always led to his mobility in the caste structure. This has happened particularly in case of Dalits. Thus, for present study social mobility in class hierarchy has been measured through a multiple approach suggested in Lipset and Zetterberg's theory with necessary modifications. The theory of social mobility propounded by Lipset and Zetterberg is based on certain assumptions directly related to the study. The theory of social mobility is based on a multiple approach, according to which the mobility of a group or individual is determined both by its shift and the ranking of multiple dimensions like occupations, consumption patterns, and social power along with the social class. Two sets of methodological approaches have been suggested in the theory to measure social mobility. In the first set, it is suggested to compare; (i) The present status with that of the past; (ii) The mobility in one area or country with that of another; and (iii) One model of mobility with another expressing equal opportunity. In the second set, it is intergenerational comparison. Present study adopted the conventional method of ascertaining mobility by comparing father's and son's positions. Study relied on this approach because a comprehensive study of social mobility is possible through such an approach only and not through the single dimension approach, namely the dimension of occupation. Study of social mobility is possible through such an approach which taken into account the society which is characterized by multiple overlapping and even contradictory criteria of status.

Social mobility within the framework of caste ranking could be achieved through the adoption of reference group behaviour. According to the theory of reference group a person adopts a style of life and the behaviour patterns of his superior in anticipation of acquiring a status equal to him. In this process he accepts his status inferiority and tries to raise it to the level of that of this referent(s) through anticipatory socialization (Merton, 1966).

The intergenerational mobility was explained through subaltern perspective which in literal sense conveys 'view from below', i.e., a view or understanding from the bottom of society or the flow of knowledge from below. Populist discourse refers primarily to 'people' or masses. The significance of ideology needs not be viewed merely in terms of dialectical tension between the people and the classes where conflicting situations provide meaning. It can also be viewed within the frame of composite and integral world view and life ways. In this frame one can observe the possible clash between self and society, transcendence and secularism, unity and diversity and between holistic understanding and individuality. In the history of ideas, academia has evaluated critically the relationship between ideas and social

forces in terms of its forms and content. Specific societies are always important in making such evaluation.

This perspective emphasizes not to view peasant or tribal insurgents merely as 'object' of history but to treat them as makers of their own history – endowed with a transformative consciousness of their own. The important proponents of this perspective in India are David Hardiman (1984), B.R. Ambedkar (1970), Ranajit Guha (1989), Kapil Kumar (1988) and others. These subalternists claim to have unfolded the incapacity of nationalist and elitist historiography to incorporate the voices of the weak into the project of history re-writing. Subalternists focused their attention on the circle of elite politics and have emphasized the insurrectionary activities and potential of the subaltern classes to make these classes possessed self-conscious and coherent conception of resistance that was directed against dominant castes.

Dalits in Doaba region

This region of Punjab, between the *Beas* and *Sutlej* rivers is known as *Doaba*. It is also known as *Bist Doab*. People of this region are known as *Doabia*. The dialect of Punjabi spoken in *Doaba* is called *Doabi*. The term "*Doaba*" or "*Doab*" is derived from Persian, *do āb*, two water meaning "land of two rivers". This region includes districts of Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Shaheed Bhagat Singh (SBS) Nagar and Kapurthala and has population of 52.08 lakh. Highest literacy rate of Punjab is noted in Hoshiarpur district (85.4%). In more than 3000 villages of *Doaba* region, proportion of Dalit population lies between 40-60 per cent as compared to 31.9 per cent in Punjab and 16.6 per cent at national level. Majority are *Ad-dharmis* who are traditionally leather workers and contributed to state through leather trade. This area is also called the NRI hub of Punjab. The distinguishing feature is that Dalit migration to the west and NRI remittances almost equal to that of Jats for the region.

All the visited 16 villages were located 5-6 kms from the nearby city. In six villages, sarpanch of the village was Dalit and in one village it was Dalit female sarpanch (though she was not having those powers as it was her husband and other upper caste Jats who were running the panchayat). There was significant number of Dalit panches (male and female) too. Dalits participated in the elections freely and without any fear. There was no pressure on them to vote for the particular candidate and party. In 14 villages there were separate gurudwaras of *Ad-dharmis* and *Balmiki Mandar* for *Balmiki*. Even there was no restriction on their entry on Jat gurudwaras. They celebrated Ravidas Jayanti by performing *Parbhat Pheris* and by holding *Akhand Paths*. These *Parbhat Pheris* were performed by holding *Amrit Bani* (a separate religious granth, including *shlokas* of Guru Ravidas originally found in *Guru Granth Sahib*) in a decorated palanquin. They held *nagar kirtan* and show off their strength, religion and economic well-being by distributing sweets, fruits and *langar*. There was a failed attempt to institute *Amrit Bani* in *Ad-dharmi* gurudwaras in some villages of Jalandhar district.

Besides the separate Dalit gurudwaras in villages there were other *Deras* and *Peera di Jgah*, mainly followed by Dalits but Jats too were devotees to these. It was observed that *Jgahs* (kind of Muslim religious places) were also built within some houses.

All the villages had government schools and in four villages private schools were also running successfully. It was found that in one village private primary school was run by *Ad-dharmi* family. In 1-2 villages *shamlat* was encroached by the people living nearby and in 9 villages some portion of this land had been converted into *Marla* scheme of government in which *Ad-dharmis* and *Balmikis* were given for making houses. Caste based discrimination had been observed in regard to cremation grounds. In ten villages of the study area, there was separate cremation ground for Dalits. Two villages had common cremation ground for *Ad-dharmis* and Jat Sikhs. *Balmikis* had their own separate cremation ground. There were *janjhghr* for Dalits, where they can organize marriages and other functions.

During study it was reported that in last 10 years, the inter-caste marriages had been solemnized in these villages. Four villages had not observed such kind of trend, in remaining villages such cases had been found, but not within the village. In 6 cases Jat boys married Dalit girls, and in 3 cases Jat girls married Dalit boys. All the respondents in the sample area use their surnames like *Mahey*, *Bhatoa*, *Kaler*, *Choprha* etc and some cases it was found that they use the words *Danav*, *Bhavadas*.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Every researcher plans and execute his/her work on the basis of work already accomplished in that particular area and related sphere of study. Review of literature thus provide an insight which helps in the development of instrument, selection of sample, interpretation of findings and discussion of results of the research problem under study. A number of studies having focus on different aspects such as on caste, scheduled castes, social mobility, interaction with other castes, conflicting situation and assertion of Dalits have been conducted in India as well in Punjab state. A brief review of work done have been given under following sub heads, will help to comprehend the problem in right perspective.

1. Caste in India
2. Dalits in regional context
3. Interaction between Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

1. Caste in India

Kothari (1994) said that something quite different was happening, the very sufferers from caste system were invoking caste identity and claims. There was no clear and well thought out ideological framework that was relevant to undertaking the new, struggles, co-optation, divide and rule by the dominant class. It appeared from a variety of indications that the process had started and there was need to provide fresh impetus and intellectual understanding backed by political action based on new modes of coalition-making that cut across the wide array of deprived and oppressed social strata.

Duncan (1999) evaluated that in the last decades *Bahaujan Samaj Party* (BSP) had established a strong electoral presence in northern India. It was particularly successful in Uttar Pradesh where it had participated in government three times in the 1990s. The party seek to mobilize the support of the SCs on the basis of aggregate and survey analysis that it had been constrained by its excessive reliance on just some sections of former untouchables (Dalits). The BSP represents a significant social and political movement of some Dalit groups but it had failed to secure the support of the wider population of the rural poor.

Shah (2001) Identity is concerned with the self – esteem self-image of a community, real or imaginary dealing with the existence and role: who are we?, what position we do have in society vis-a- vas other communities?, how are we related to others. Nothing standing differences in the nature of Dalit movements and the meaning of identity, there has been a common quest – the quest for equality, self – dignity and eradication of untouchability.

Webster (2001) studied the social strategy adopted by the Christian missions over a century ago and churches thinking about improving the Dalits. There were churches which not only giving special priority to Dalits in some of their institutions of formal education, but

were also developing job oriented, non-formal educational projects to enhance skill development. The social strategy had also provided much of the affirmative action policy built into India's constitution. The assumption was that if Dalits get educated, get better jobs, and earn more money so as to raise their class status, then their caste status (measured in terms of mutually respectful and friendly relations with members of higher castes) would improve also. The problem was that the government had never fully implemented all the progressive affirmative action legislation it passed into law. This was a source of great resentment, especially, among educated Dalits.

Gail (2006) in her work explored and critiques the sensibility which equates Indian tradition with Hinduism, and Hinduism with Brahmanism; which considers the Vedas as the foundational texts of Indian culture and discovers within the Aryan heritage the essence of Indian civilisation. It shows that even secular minds remain imprisoned within this Brahmanical vision, and the language of secular discourse is often steeped in a Hindu ethos. The tract looks at alternative traditions, nurtured within dalit movements, which have questioned this way of looking at Indian society and its history. While seeking to understand the varied dalit visions that have sought to alter the terms of the dominant order, this tract persuades us to reconsider our ideas, listen to those voices which we often refuse to hear and understand the visions which seek to change the world in which dalits live.

Mahimaidass and Sadana (2006) in a report of Dalit Solidarity Network UK revealed that Dalits across the UK felt that, within the Indian community, their identity was based on caste and that the caste system was very much in operation. Examples of non-Dalits discriminating against Dalits were documented in the sectors of employment, politics, health care and education. While 70 per cent of those who responded said their children were not aware of their own caste status, other (non-Dalit) children directed derogatory remarks at them targeting their caste status. A majority thought the caste system originated from Hinduism, with a large proportion asserting that Hindu religious temples were not open to persons of all castes. The research found that 70 per cent thought an individual's caste played a significant role in the appointment of Hindu priests within the UK.

Throat and Senapati (2006) in their work on reservation policy in India, divulged that there had been an improvement in the representation of the SCs/STs in the public sector. There was still a gap of more than 3 percent in Group A jobs and of 3.18 percent in Group B jobs in 2003. Therefore, the representation of the marginalized social communities as stipulated by the government should be realized. Also, the high representation of the SCs and the STs in Group C and especially in Group D category of jobs suggested that notions of untouchability seem to pervade even the spheres of government employment. It had been well documented that certain menial professions like sweeping and scavenging were traditionally

not taken up by the Non SC/STs due to the notion of them being polluted and unclean. This seemed to be evidently so in the lower rungs of government employment.

Times of India (2010) on 30th Jan, 2010, reported that at the *Ravidass Mandir* in *Seer Goverdhanpur*, the birth place of Guru Ravidass, a large congregation of saints and pilgrims proclaimed the birth of a new religion. The new faith, called Guru Ravidass Dharam, was to have its own religious book (*Amrit Bani Shri Guru Ravidass ji Maharaj*), insignial/communal flag (*Har*), and greeting (*Jai Guru Dev Ji*).

Zabiliute (2010) observed that the social movement of Dalits in India was embedded in a local socio-political context. Dalit identities were constructed locally within the discourse model, but they were based on meanings that were shared, circulated and make use of historicity and ideologies. Meanings become local or situated within a discourse model. Situated meanings circulated and thus enact Dalit identity on the following representational levels: (1) locally, within a particular Dalit discourse model, (2) nationally, within the whole Dalit discourse in India, (3) transnationally, by, for instance, entering into the international human rights discourse. These levels were not an attempt to put any meanings and identities into a hierarchical order. Rather, they just help to understand how meanings circulate and how they were shared within and were grounded in different discourse models.

Zelliot (2010) studied that violence against Dalits was most often found in the villages of India. There were slights and humiliations and at times restrictions in housing and jobs in the cities of India. Anonymity, impossible in villages, afforded some protection in urban settings. There was also now a large group of middle class Dalits and a thriving Dalit intellectual and literary sector. However, most of the work traditionally considered polluting in India was done by Dalits, for instance, the cleaning of toilets, work with leather, bringing fuel to the burning (cremation) grounds, disposing of animal carcasses. It was fairly clear that the isolation of Dalits and the violence against them could be compared to race prejudice, but these had a different basis and perhaps a different solution.

Padhi *et al* (2012) in their field study in *Lathore*, a village in the block of *Balangir* district of Odisha, concluded that Dalits had begun to assert themselves, breaking the long years of silence. In Odisha, particularly in the western parts, Dalits faced a peculiar situation. On the one hand, they suffered the indignity of the age-old caste system at the hands of caste Hindu communities and on the other, they were perceived by tribal communities as 'exploiters' and at times, bear the brunt of their fury too.

Pai (2013) said that since 1980s, Dalits had moved closer to the Ambedkarite ideology. But, they had not been able to give up their Dravidian identity since it was also linked historically with language, culture and region, and thus no alternative independent Dalit identity had emerged. With the decline of Gandhian ideology, a process of ideological

homogenization seemed too had taken place. It is the Ambedkarite ideology that had caught the imagination of the younger generation of Dalits across the country.

Sathe (2015) captured the externalities that arouse from land acquisition and the consequent development that occurred on the acquired land. In his case study of *Maan* village close to Pune in Maharashtra, found that externalities arising out of the development of land show a caste bias. The economic condition of the Dalits remained inferior to the non-Dalits, there was no difference in the benefits for Dalits and the non-Dalits due to the externalities. There had been a positive movement in favour of the Dalits as far as issues related to dignity, discrimination and dependence are concerned. They were mainly dependent upon non-governmental jobs, which gave them an escape out of the earlier feudal relations but the kind of jobs that they engage in possibly kept them frozen in traditional caste identities

Chowdhry (2015) highlighted about the emergence of a nebulous middle class category among Dalits. There was a shift of emphasis from birth to one's acquired status through self-achievement, enterprise and agency-all qualities associated with upper castes. This leads to more atrocities against Dalits. The educated class among the Dalits had a new self-perception as they had access to social mobility and portal of power however limited, a different social rank demanding a distinct degree of 'social honour' in which birth was in the background was undermining the hierarchically arranged society or groups.

Subramanian (2015) studied a grisly feature of the violation of negative freedom constituted by the phenomenon of caste atrocities, violent acts of arson, destruction of property, rape and murder. In this regard, he constituted the following list of dates and locations of violence against the SC/ST community. *Kilvenmani*, Tamil Nadu (1969); *Bathani Tola*, Bihar (1996); *Laxamanpur Bathe*, Bihar (1997); *Malavalavu*, Tamil Nadu (1997); *Jhajjar*, Haryana (2002); *Muthanga*, Kerla (2003); *Khairlanji*, Maharashtra (2006); *Jhabhar*, Punjab (2006); *Nayakankottai*, Tamil Nadu (2012). According to National Crime Bureau Records of the Ministry of Home Affairs, that in 2011, out of 33719 recorded crimes, 11342 were crimes under SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act. Many crimes against the depressed castes were not reported for fear of reprisal, or the reported crimes were simply not registered by the police.

2. Dalits in regional context

Kessinger (1974) in his classic study of *Vilayatpur*, a *Doaba* village, provided an interesting insight into early Punjab migration. Two per cent of SCs and one per cent of *Julahas* had already gone abroad by 1898. By 1922, 9 per cent of village *Julahas* were abroad. In the extensive Punjabi migration to East Africa, there were a significant number of SCs, a fact attested by the *Balmiki* gurudwara in Nairobi.

Helweg (1979) in his study of the village *Jandiali* in Punjab, observed that most of the Jat (higher caste) emigrated to the England. About 100 *chamars* out of the total 400

houses of village with other specialist castes had emigrated to the Middle East countries to improve their social status. He also noted that the first emigrant of this village was a *chamar* “Ganda Singh” who had been a sweeper in the Indian railway and started a trend of emigration from the village. This study also showed that how remittance from abroad improved the status of *chamars* and other emigrants. In his later study Helweg further argued that the remittances sent back enabled local residents to live better, invest in machinery, obtain and use new varieties of seed and gain new ideas about farming from abroad. Also with the outflow of people, the pressure on the land decreased so that there was more production for less people. Emigration played positive role in the development of Punjabi community

Judge (2002) in his study on international migration of Dalits from Punjab with special reference to *Chamars* or *Ad-dharmis* gave reasons how Dalits of Punjab with economic disabilities could manage to emigrate. It was explained by the fact that they formed majority in *Doaba* region of Punjab. He highlighted the role of increased value of leather with British annexation in Punjab that helped them arrange money for migration. They hoped to enhance their social status from this process.

Swami (2003) concluded the religion as a medium for political assertion. Dalits must secure real political power if the community as a whole was to share truly in Punjab's prosperity. Although Punjab has the highest proportion of SCs in the population as a whole, 28.3 per cent, Dalits owned just 2.54 per cent of the agricultural land. While the percentage of literates in the State was higher than the national average, Punjab's Dalits were less likely to be educated than their counterparts nationwide. And, between 1981 and 1991, the percentage of Dalits in Punjab living below the poverty line barely declined, while the numbers of poor among them grew.

Singh and Tatla (2006) outlined the broader process of differentiation within the Punjabi community and said that, often the earlier settlers were the sons of well-educated SCs who sought to escape the stigmatization of a society dominated by caste. Many of them who also replicated the patterns of the *barapinds* (large villages) in localities like Bradford, Bedford, Wallsall and Handsworth. Strong ties had involved marriage, business and rerun migration.

Baxis (2007) in his study highlighted the emergence of a de facto power sharing mode of governance under the auspices of the *Shiromani Akali Dal Badal* (SAD)- *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) led government in 1997 could deter the assertion of violent communal identity politics in Punjab. Yet it remained to be seen if this mode of governance could play the same deterrent role in the case of caste based politics identity in the state. The incumbent *SAD-BJP* handling of the fallouts of *Dera Sachha Sauda* controversy and its accommodation of the rapidly asserting Dalit identity will be crucial in the preservation of peace in Punjab.

Meeta and Rajivlochan (2007) evaluated in their study that emergence of number of *deras* in Punjab state were manifestation of prevailing caste divisions and tensions. The violence between *Akalis* and *Dera Sacha Sauda* underscored the existence of number of *deras* in various parts of the state which were manifestations of prevailing caste divisions and tensions. Dalits and other marginalized sections adhere to such *deras* for it promised them an alternative to mainstream, and in many respects, exclusionary Sikhism. Yet, *deras*, especially in recent decades, had acquired strategic political overtones.

Ram (2009) in his study observed that Dalit Sikhs did not get equal treatment in the gurudwaras of the upper caste Sikhs. *Mazhabis* were forbidden to enter the Golden Temple for worship; their offering of *karah prasad* was not accepted and the Sikhs denied them access to public well and other utilities. Dalit Sikhs were not allowed to go beyond the fourth step in the Golden Temple and the members of the four-fold *varnas* were instructed not to mix with them. Evidence of untouchability against the Dalit Sikh is vividly reflected in a number of *Gurmata*s (resolutions) adopted by the *Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee* (SGPC) from 1926-1933. Although removal of untouchability figured in the Singh Sabha movement, no strenuous effort was made in that direction. It was not surprising. For the Jats, who composed 70 per cent of the *Akalis*, and other high castes, caste equality or removal of untouchability was contrary to their disposition for social domination and hierarchy. This had forced the Dalit Sikhs to establish separate gurudwaras, which in turn had further led to the strengthening of the already existing caste divisions among the Sikhs. Moreover the observance of caste prejudices against the Dalit Sikhs compelled them to, search for alternative cultural spaces in a large number of *deras*, sects, and *dargahs* of Muslim *Pirs* and other saints. There was a general impression that Dalits constituted a very large majority of the followings of the various *deras* in Punjab.

Seetha and Swamy (2010) divulged that a quiet revolution was underway in the Dalit world. Assertiveness was replacing defensiveness. Many Dalits, buoyed by prosperity, were flaunting their caste on their sleeves and celebrating it in rap and pop albums. In parts of Punjab, though, rap and pop albums celebrating the *chamar* identity were the new rage. Cars and scooters sporting a defiant *chamar* or *chamaran da munda* (son of a *chamar*) stickers were a common sight in Jalandhar. Dalit entrepreneurs were expanding, and even had their own apex body, the Pune-based Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICCI), which has over 400 members. Dalits were also setting up schools and colleges often as an avenue for helping the community. Help had also come from the prosperous NRI Dalits. The *deras*, the sects sprawling complexes, had largely been funded by NRI Dalits. The diaspora has also helped spread the message of Dalit capitalism.

Judge (2012) in his study in Punjab, concluded that most of the Dalits, predominantly belonging to the *chamar* caste, were living in England followed by Italy. In Italy, the

percentage of *chamars* out of the total Punjabi immigrants might be higher than their proportion in the population of Punjab. However, the Jats were expected to dominate in number.

Parashar (2012) studied the phenomenon of flaunting Dalit identity through music and revealed that songs like, *Hummer wich aounde putt chamaran de* (chamar kids arrive in Hummer), *panga na le chamara de nal* (don't get into a fight with *chamars*), *Ravidassan di chandi* (*Ravidasis* are doing great) and fighter *chamar* were fertile in *Doaba* region of Punjab. In a state which loves to sing and dance, the assertion was manifesting in music. Demand for such songs was not just restricted to *Doaba* and Punjab but also abroad. It was not uncommon now to spot vehicles, especially two-wheelers, with stickers saying *putt chamaran da. Doaba* also accounted for the maximum number of NRIs from Punjab who helped their family members in the region by sending them money regularly. It was also not uncommon to see Dalits living in mansions and driving luxury cars.

Singh (2012) conducted a detailed case study on *Dera Sachkhand Ballan (DSB)* in Punjab and revealed that for organizations such as DSB, which was engaged in subaltern religiosity, transnationalism could be a powerful agent of religious and social change. By cultivating its transitional links, especially in the United Kingdom (UK), the DSB now emerged as the main driver of *Ravidasi* identity in Punjab. In the process of differentiation, the *saints* of DSB gradually adopted a new set of rituals and beliefs, based on their *sampradaya* and teachings of Ravidas. These differentiate their organization from mainstream Sikhism, with the intention of defining more sharply the ambiguous boundaries between Sikhism and Ravidas *dharm* in ways that make the selective appropriation of the message of Ravidas by mainstream Sikhism much more problematic. This strategy of *de-Sikhisation* was a conscious effort to strengthen the claim for a separate cultural and religious heritage. Although the new religious conventions still share much with Sikh religious ceremonies, there was distinctive feeling among followers that they were part of a separate religious tradition, the Ravidas *dharm*.

Jodhka (2012) observed that Punjabi SCs had been much more mobile and politically active and had experienced much more social mobility. In contrast, the *Churah* cluster of the Dalit castes (*Balmikis* and *Mazhabi* Sikhs) had been far less mobile. In the rural areas the *Mazhabi* Sikhs had been closely associated with agriculture, mostly as wage labourers or tied servants of the big landlords. Their local identities were of *kammi* or *sepi*, meaning regular farm workers. Their achievements in education had also been limited.

Sethi (2013) highlighted that Dalit singers produce albums not for entertainment, but for a mission, that of reassertion of Dalit identity. Two years ago, half a dozen Dalit singers launched audio and video CDs to counter Jat pop music that rules Punjab. The initial lot included singer/writer *SS Azad*, *Kaler Kanth*, *Harbhajan Tajpuri* and *Pamma Sunarh* among

others. While some like *Sunarh* launched themselves with mission music, others like *Dhir*, who was a folk singer crooning about landless labourers, and *Azad*, who would sing paeans to *chamar* saint Guru Ravidass at functions, transformed into mission singers. Our music is pro-Dalit, not anti-Jat. The word '*chamar*' finds mention in the *Gurbaani*. If the gurus have given us respect, why should we not be proud of ourselves? said Azad, the pioneer of *chamar* pop in Punjab. *Azad's* debut album was called *Anakhi Putt Chamaran De* (Proud Sons of *Chamars*), released in 2010, it was a direct challenge to the prevailing *Putt Jattan de* (sons of Jats) culture.

Nigar (2013) said that Dalit singers in Punjab were unabashed about their success. The use of the word '*chamar*' is an offence under the Scheduled Castes and Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. Dalits in Punjab were reclaiming the word through their music. Songs such as *Cool Chamar*, *Fighter Chamar* and *Proud Sons of Chamar* had gained popularity both inside and outside the country. They used the word '*chamar*' with pride. The artists producing these songs refer to it as their mission. Our mission is to make the bearers of *Manuwadi* thought understand, that they can't continue to oppress us. Our mission is to spread the ideology of Dr Ambedkar, Jyotirao Phule and Sant Guru Ravidas, which talks of a life of dignity and equality for all, said *Roop Lal Dhir*, a popular singer from Nawanshahr. The majority, still bound to caste occupations with no access to social mobility, was not represented here.

Dhaliwal (2015) divulged that Dalits had started asserting themselves in Punjab. A movement had begun to take shape in the countryside, where they had been living in the margins. The first seed of movement was sown at *Malwa* region in *Balad Kalan* village in Sangrur district, where Dalits strived hard for about a year to win their legal right to till panchayat land. Yielding to the resolve and persisting struggle launched by 132 Dalit families in the village, the Panchayat Department handed over about 84 acres of panchayat land to them on lease for the financial year 2015-16. First time *Malwa* witnessed such a development among Dalits. This movement certainly had the potential to take roots. It had not only produced an amazing success story but opened up opportunities for a new experiment in Punjab's predominantly agriculture-based rural society. Dalits had started cooperative farming on this leased land, which could bring about far-reaching changes in the pattern of agriculture in the state.

Jolly (2015) narrated the story of *Balad Kalan* and *Benra* villages in Sangrur district of Punjab where Dalits fought for the *Shamlat* (common land) for lease through *Zameen Prapti Sangharsh Committee (ZPSC)*. From having that land to sowing and reaping, it was truly tumultuous and decidedly painful journey for Dalit community. For years upper caste (Jat) farmers, local *sarpanches* and revenue officials had been denying Dalit families access to common land. Dalits cultivated fodder crops in *Benra* and the mix of fodder and wheat in *Balad Kalan*. Dalit collectives proved that farming could still be a mutually beneficial

venture-making for distinctly better living and the sense of empowerment that land brings to deprived people.

3. Interaction between Dalits and Jat Sikhs

Kaur, Sharma and Aggarwal (2001) conducted a study on changing interaction patterns among different caste groups in Punjab state. Study highlighted that though the respondents of upper and middle caste groups exchanged food between themselves but very less percentage of them accepted the food from lower castes in developed areas, the acceptance of food was higher in less developed areas. Due to low living standards and old traditional beliefs food was not accepted from lower caste, the respondents of upper and middle caste group had distance with lower caste for inter-dining. Majority of respondents from upper and middle caste did not allow the lower caste people to enter their kitchens. Upper and middle caste respondents considered caste while marrying their children. The respondents from upper and middle caste had a low participation in social ceremonies in the families of lower caste. However, developed area had somewhat better position in regard to interaction pattern than the less developed area. A large number of respondents considered education to be more important tool for reducing the gap followed by those who considered that it was due to the rise in economic status as well as due to change in occupation. Caste still had a strong hold in private domain of interaction, but it is losing its grip when came to the public sphere of interaction.

Judge (2002) in his study on interaction between Jat Sikhs and SCs found that Jats still found caste distinctions while the younger generation was not aware of the existence of such sharp division. He also noted that rules of endogamy had considerably weakened, citing a case of marriage between Jat Sikh girl and an *Ad-dharmi* boy, although the parents on both sides had initially resisted the proposal, they had become reconciled to the marriage.

Jodhka and Louis (2003) in their study of *Talhan* village of Punjab, divulged that conflict involving members of landowning caste of Jats and the scheduled caste of *Ad-dharmis* in the village was far from a typical case of caste violence or Dalit oppression frequently reported from the other parts of India. Instead, it ought to be viewed as a case of Dalit assertion for equal rights and a share in the resources that commonly belong to the village and had so far been in the exclusive control of the locally dominant caste, the Jats.

Ram (2007) in his study on violent conflict in Punjab evaluated that it was a typical case of a marginal community's (Dalits) fight against social exclusion and the resistance that it encounters from a dominant caste. Despite improvement in economic position over the years, there had not been a commensurate improvement in the social status of Dalits even after their conversion to Sikhism as caste inequalities, in the form of dominant cultural patterns, still persist in Punjab. The emergence of large number of *deras* as alternate spiritual sites for the oppressed was linked to this phenomenon.

Ghuman (2008) studied a village in Punjab from 1950-2006 and found that Dalit families were no longer dependent on Jat Sikh families to provide them farm work. Dalit women did not go the fields, as they did in the 1950s, to gather wood and fodder for their domestic animals. Dalit men had developed self-confidence and believe in their own abilities to undertake major responsibilities in the village affairs. In the nearby city they occupied senior civil and police jobs. Young Jat Sikhs emigrated to overseas countries for better standard of living. As a consequence, power structure in the village had changed and there was an embryonic formation of social class – albeit ‘Avtara of caste’ (incarnation). Highly educated Dalits, who hold (or have held) professional positions, sent their children to private schools, owned *pucca* houses and had access to senior district officers, belonged to the new emerging middle class. But it must be emphasized that they were a tiny proportion of the total population. The majority of the middle class still consisted of people from the Jat Sikh families who own all the farm land. Senior Dalits in the village were tolerant and even forgiving, in their attitude towards the farmers. There were separate gurdwaras for the Jat Sikhs and *chamars* and *Balmiki* (also known as *Bhangis* – sweepers and toilet cleaners) families.

Judge and Bal (2008) observed that casteism was powerfully embedded in the collective consciousness of the Dalits in Punjab, as a result of which their orientation towards caste system was ambivalent. For them the caste system was oppressive due to discrimination, exclusion, exploitation and untouchability, but, at the same time, it situated them in the system as a collective identity. Their desire was to end all kinds of discrimination, oppression and exclusion, but not the caste system. At the level of the caste system, inequalities and exclusion continue to show their existence, Dalits were unable to construct the plausibility of a society without caste. The relevance and indispensability of caste in marriage had been largely accepted by them though there were apprehensions that without ending caste endogamy, caste might not disappear. Articulation of Dalit identity for political gains in the electoral process was again an important issue of concern.

Dhanda (2009) in a comparative study of Indian Punjab and Wolverhampton (UK) concluded that young urban Dalits in the Indian Punjab were negotiating an identity that was open to caste border crossings in personal relations unlike Dalits in Wolverhampton, who had a greater opportunity to cross caste borders but seem to be more inclined to maintain them. In other words, intentional separatist tendencies in the realm of personal relations may be more evident amongst Dalits in Wolverhampton than amongst Dalits in the Punjab. On the other hand, fortuitous romantic mixing was tolerated more in Wolverhampton than in the Punjab. The stakes too in crossing or maintaining caste-borders in personal relations were different in both contexts. Some people still pay with their lives for daring to cross the caste border in marriage in the Punjab. However, both in Punjab as well as in Wolverhampton, young Dalits seem to care about not adding to their parents’ burdens by presenting them with unacceptable

partners. Young Dalits in Punjab seem to aspire for greater control over their lives, their economic autonomy seemed to be a larger issue than finding success in self-chosen marriages. In the United Kingdom, the dogged persistence of caste-based prejudice, despite economic success, seems to have brought 'identity negotiation' into sharper relief.

Sharma and Sidhu (2009) conducted a study in Punjab on farmers, local labour and migrant labour. Study found a change in the relationships amongst farmers and local labour (generally Dalits). The post green revolution period saw an influx of migrant agricultural labour. Presence of migrants altered the traditional roles of farmers from being patrons to their local farm workers to de patronage. In absence of sufficient work opportunities in the farm sector, there was wide spread unemployment amongst local labour. Unemployed they feel alienated from land, from traditional bond of relationships in large number.

Jodhka (2009) highlighted that despite the cultural influence of Islam and Sikhism, caste had survived in Punjab and worked as a disabling institution for those located at the margins of Punjabi society, the Dalits. However, over the years caste relations had undergone some major changes. Not only had the ideological hold of caste nearly disappeared, structurally also Dalits had moved away from tradition-based caste occupations, and in some regions, even from the local agrarian economy. Their growing economic autonomy also found its expression in their urge for cultural and religious autonomy. As a religious system Sikhism was opposed to caste based divisions and denials. Social and religious institutions had come to be dominated by the traditionally and economically dominant caste groups. Though nearly half of all the Dalits of Punjab enumerated themselves as Sikhs and some of them had risen to positions of power within the religious establishment.

Bal (2010) in her study on *Boota Mandi* a native place of most of the entrepreneurs in Jalandhar district of Punjab, revealed that it had emerged as the most important economic and political centre of *Ad-dharmis* in Punjab. Here everyday trade of rawhides worth lakhs of rupees took place. Trading of rawhides had concentrated in the hands of big merchants who after its semi finishing and processing sent it to far off places. The traditional vegetable tanning of the hides had been replaced by the use of modern chemicals and techniques to make it compatible in the national and international market. They started manufacturing leather garments, shoes, accessories, and other export-oriented products. As a result of diversification in their work they had been able to earn more profits, which raised their standard of living and they moved up in the social hierarchy. All those artisans who could not cope up with the brunt of industrialization have become skilled workers in leather-based industries, tanneries and sports industries. They utilized their traditional skills through industries. Leather being such a commodity that still had relevance, usefulness and is expensive, the *Ad-dharmis* find much demand for their work. Due to their affluence as a result of entrepreneurship and political representation, they started asserting their caste status.

Assuming their caste differences, they had been able to, though not uniformly, get equal economic status, political representation and social mobility in the society.

Rajat, Sharma and Sidhu (2011) in their study on empowerment of Dalits through Panchayati Raj institutions in Ludhiana and Hoshiarpur districts of the state determined that 73rd Amendment Act was one such initiative to ensure equality, justice and empowerment of marginalized section (SC/ST and women) of the society. The study did not find any overt case of conflict between upper caste and Dalits. In most instances, both the groups enjoyed smooth working relations. All the selected panchayats adhere to the norm of one third reservation of seats for women and Dalits. Dalits of Hoshiarpur were more aware, dynamic and assertive about their rights and duties than that of Ludhiana district. Women were mostly passive or dummy/proxy candidates. Not much caste based differences were found as for confronting different obstacles were concerned. Few cases of upper caste dominance of Dalits were reported though they were in latent form.

Bahadur (2012) in his study on Dalit emigration to Gulf countries in *Doaba* region revealed that the emigration of Punjabi Dalits to the Persian Gulf started after the oil boom in 1973 in Gulf countries. The major cause behind their emigration was the socio-economic conditions of the community. Emigration to the Gulf countries was different from the emigration to the developed countries; all foreigner workers in the gulf were temporary in nature and will always remain. They were not entitled to become the citizens of these countries at any cost. Among the Dalit working in the Gulf countries *chamars/Ad-dharmis* constitute overwhelmingly majority among the emigrants. Almost all the workers engaged with the construction work in different forms, like mason and carpenter. United Arab Emirates and Kingdom of Bahrain were two popular destination countries for the Punjabis. Emigrant workers had made significant contributors to both their own countries as well as the labour receiving countries, at enormous cost to the life, health and well-being of themselves and their families. The condition of the emigrants in the Gulf was below the living standard of human beings. The working and living conditions of the majority of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers were extremely poor.

Mahajan and Jodhka (2012) observed that the SCs were the most marginalized sections of Punjabi society and, like other caste clusters, are internally differentiated. The first cluster, comprising *Mazhabi* Sikhs and the *Balmikis/Bhangis*, constituted a total of 41.9 per cent (30.75% and 11.15% respectively) of the total SC population. The second cluster made up of the *Ad-dharmis* (15.74%) and the *Chamars/Ravidasis/Ramdasia* Sikhs (25.85%) who together constituted 41.59 per cent. For various historical reasons, groups from the second cluster of Punjabi SCs had been much more mobile and politically active than the rest. They experienced much more social mobility than the first cluster of caste groups. In contrast, the *Churah* cluster of the Dalit castes had been far less mobile and associated with agriculture as

wage labourers and working as scavengers. With no education or specialized skills, the *Balmiki* youth did not have many options. Even those who get educated were invariably the first generation of the educated in their families. It was not easy for them to compete with the relatively more mobile *chamars* and *Ad-dharmis* for reserved quotas in government jobs.

Sharma and Sidhu (2012) in their study in Punjab state concluded that there was no overt case of conflict between Dalits and upper castes. In most instances, both the groups enjoyed working relations. All the selected panchayats in the study area adhere to the norm of one third reservation of seats for women and proportionate representation of Dalits. The study found Dalits more aware, dynamic and assertive about their rights and duties. No much caste based difference were found as far as for confronting different obstacles were concerned. Few cases of upper caste dominance of Dalits were reported though they were in latent form. Dalits had achieved a state of consciousness which was not only had empowered them to say a firm 'no' to their hitherto dominators and also encouraged them to ask assertively for an equal share in the structure of power.

Singh (2012) studied that for many subaltern groups in India, especially low caste groups, a new distinct religious identity was a necessary precondition for social equality and recognition. The *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* (DSB) was an exceptional example of an organization that had skilfully drawn on transitional networks to create a distinct religious identity separate from Sikhism. Two factors had been central to this exercise: the piecemeal differentiation from mainstream Sikhism through the nurturing of the cult of Ravidas- a process accelerated by the Vienna incident – and the self-confidence of the DSB which drives from its leadership of development projects. These had intersected in a dramatic way to launch the Ravidass *dharm*, a final parting of the ways between *Ravidassis* and Sikhism.

Taylor (2014) examined the phenomenon of post-migration religious conversion from Sikhism to Christianity and neo-Buddhism among the Punjabi dalit diaspora in UK. Study found that religious conversion from Sikhism to Christianity and neo-Buddhism clearly facilitated feelings of greater self -respect and they articulated the process as one in which they were able to escape from transitional Punjabi caste based oppression, social exclusion and humiliation. The Punjabi Christians and non Ambedkarite Buddhist dalits converts focussed exclusively and transnationally upon the text and practices of their new religion as a means to escape the Punjabi caste order.

Conclusion

From all these reviews it can be concluded that caste violence was most often found against Dalits in India. Most of the work traditionally considered polluting in India was done by Dalits such as, the cleaning of toilets, leather work, disposing of animal carcasses etc. There was shift of occupation and in identity of Dalits from ascribed to achieved status through Government's Protective Discrimination policy, self-achievement and enterprise.

Besides some discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab was quite different than that of Dalits in other parts of the country. Better position of Dalits in Punjab was due to their numerical strength, literacy rate, emigration and political participation. Dalits were more aware, dynamic and assertive about their duties. They ascertain a new Dalit identity and assertion in *Doaba* region of Punjab through music, by establishing of Dalit *deras* and religion different from mainstream Sikhism.

CHAPTER III

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The most important in conducting a scientific study is to follow a scientific procedure in investigating the problem. This helped the investigator to design and conducts the study in hand, in a scientific manner. The present study on Changing Interaction Patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in *Doaba* Region of Punjab was conducted in *Doaba* region of Punjab by adopting multi stage stratified sampling technique. In this chapter, the research methodology followed for carrying out the present investigation has been discussed under the following categories:

- 3.1 Locale of the study
- 3.2 Selection of districts
- 3.3 Selection of blocks and villages
- 3.4 Selection of respondents
- 3.5 Construction of schedule
- 3.6 Pre-testing of the schedule
- 3.7 Collection of data
- 3.8 Classification and analysis of data
- 3.9 Operational definitions

3.1 Locale of the study

The study entitled, “Changing Interaction Patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in *Doaba* Region of Punjab” was conducted in *Doaba* region of Punjab state. It has been purposely selected as it has the highest proportion of Dalit population i.e. 40 per cent.

3.2 Selection of Districts

All four districts of *Doaba* region i.e. Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar (SBS Nagar) and Kapurthala were selected to make the study representative of whole *Doaba* region. Therefore, the sample constitutes four districts.

3.3 Selection of blocks and villages

At second stage two blocks from all four districts were selected randomly from the *Doaba* region to obtain a total of eight blocks. At third stage two villages from each block were taken for the purpose of present investigation (as shown in table given below). So, in the present study eight blocks and sixteen villages were selected randomly from *Doaba* region.

List of selected districts, blocks and villages is given below:

Zone	District	Block	Villages
Doaba	Jalandhar	Adampur	Najka, Jandu Singha
		Jalandhar	Dhaliwal, Chugava
	Hoshiarpur	Tanda	BudhiPind, Nangal Khunga
		Bhunga	Dhugga Kalan, Johlan
	Kapurthala	Dhillwan	Mansoorwal Bet, Fattu Chak
		Phagwara	Saprod, Narangpur
	SBS Nagar	Balachuar	Mohar, Dhaulan
		Banga	Gobindpur, Atari

3.4 Selection of respondents

At the final stage 20 respondents i.e. 10 Dalits and 10 Jat Sikhs from each village were selected randomly. Thus total sample size comprised of 320 respondents i.e. 160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs from sixteen villages.

3.5 Construction of research instrument: Data were collected with the help of self-structured Interview schedule.

Interview Schedule consisted of following parts:

- Part I** : It consisted of items related to socio-economic profile of the respondents like age, sex, education, occupation, caste, family size, size of land holding, income etc.
- Part II** : In this part changing intergenerational interaction patterns between the two castes were assessed on social, economic, political and religious basis.
- Part III** : This part focused on the various factors that may had caused dissociation or conflicts between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any.
- Part IV** : This part highlighted the interventions of state as perceived by Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

The questions were framed in a simple language and arranged in a systematic manner to facilitate smooth conversation and easy collection of data. Due care was given to avoid the overlapping of questions.

3.6 Pre-testing of the instrument

The pre-testing was done on the non- sampled respondents and the necessary modifications were made accordingly.

3.7 Collection of Data

Data were collected personally with the help of a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Before actually interviewing the respondents, they were assured that the information rendered by them was exclusively required for a research project and the personal identity of any subject would not be revealed to anyone. The study pertains to the year 2014-15.

Objectives:

1. To study the socio-economic status of the Dalits and Jat Sikhs.
2. To analyze the changing socio-economic and political interaction pattern among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in the study area.
3. To identify the conflicts between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any, and the reasons thereof.
4. To investigate state intervention in conflict resolution as perceived by Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

3.8 Classification of Data

3.8.1 Tabulation of data

Master tables for the data collected were prepared and the data were quantified for precise and systematic analysis and interpretation.

3.8.2 Statistical Analysis

The data were tabulated and analysed on the basis of appropriate statistical tools. Thus, frequency distribution and percentages were worked out to analysis the data.

3.8.3 Chi square test

Chi square test was applied to test the statistical independence of two variables when the data is arranged in a two way table (known as two-fold classification) known as contingency table. Association between caste status and different variables had been assed though chi square.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

3.8.4 Z test

It was used to observe the statistical significance in the perception of respondents on various issues.

$$Z = \frac{P_1 - P_2}{\sqrt{PQ \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

$$P_1 = r_1/n_1$$

$$P_2 = r_2/n_2$$

$$P = \frac{n_1 P_1 + n_2 P_2}{n_1 + n_2} = \frac{r_1 + r_2}{n_1 + n_2}$$

$$Q = 1 - P$$

P_1 = Proportion of sample 1

P_2 = proportion of sample 2

N_1 = number of subjects in sample 1

N_2 = number of subjects in sample 2

R_1 = number of attributes in sample 1

R_2 = number of attributes in sample 2

p= estimate of population proportion

3.8.5 Socio-economic indicators

		Category	Variables
1.	Age of the respondents	Young	18-30 years
		Middle age	31-50 years
		Old	Above 50 years
	Caste	Upper Caste	Jat
		Scheduled Caste	<i>Ad-dharmi/Balmiki</i>
2.	Land Holding	Marginal	less than1 hac
		Small	1-2 hac
		Medium	2-4 hac
		Semi-medium	4-10 hac
		Large	More than10 hac
3.	Family Income	Lower	Below 10000/m
		Middle	10000- 20000/m
		High	Above 20000/m
4.	Education	low level	Illiterate Up to matric
		Medium level	Higher secondary
		High level	Graduation & above Graduation
5.	Occupation	Low prestige	Farm Labour Crafts & Service Skilled & Semi Skilled
		Medium prestige	Farming
		High prestige	Business White Collar Professionals

3.8.6 Socio-economic status of the respondents

The socio-economic status of the respondents had been measured by applying Kupuswamy's socio-economic status scale (SES), with necessary modifications. Weightage assigned to education were:

	Score
Illiterate	0
Up to matric	1
Higher secondary	2
Graduation and above graduation	3

Weightage assigned to occupation were:

No occupation, Housewife	0
Farm labour Crafts & services,	1
Skilled & semi-skilled, Farming	2
Business, White Collar professionals	3

Weightage to income were:

Below Rs.10000/month	1
Rs.10000-20000/month	2
Above Rs.20000/month	3

Weightage to caste was:

<i>Balmiki</i>	1
<i>Ad-dharmi</i>	2
Jat Sikhs	3

Weightage to land holding was:

Less than 1 hac	1
1-2 hac	2
2-4 hac	3
4-10 hac	4
More than 10 hac	5

Weightage to political participation:

No participation	0
<i>Panch</i>	1
<i>Sarpanch</i>	2

Weightage to type of house was:

Mix	1
<i>Pucca</i>	2

Thus, by aggregating weightage assigned to all the dimensions, socio-economic status of the respondents had been measured. On the basis of their status, respondents were categorized into three different levels i.e. low, medium and high. Based on the scores given to three levels, socio-economic status scale has been developed as below:

Status level	Score
Low	4-9
Medium	10-15
High	16-21

3.8.7 Inter-generational occupational mobility

The Inter-generational occupational mobility had been measured by the change of occupation from father's to son's. Simple percentages were used to measure the rate of inter-generational occupational mobility.

3.8.8 Occupational structure

An attempt was made to arrange the occupations followed by the sample population of the study area in a broad hierarchical order. These were categorized into low, medium and high prestige. The objective of the present categorization was mainly to show the prestige attached to that occupation. The occupational categories were:

S.No	Occupational categories	List of occupations included
1	Farm labour	Agricultural labour and skilled/unskilled work
2	Crafts and services	Tailor, barber, domestic service, carpenter, <i>granthi</i>
3	Semi-skilled & skilled	Mechanic, peon, mason, army men, driver Policemen, factory worker, electrician,
4	Farming	Agriculture, poultry, dairy
5	Petty Business	Small shops, small industry (<i>aata chakki</i>) property Dealer
6	White collar professionals	Clerical, Doctor (RMP), Teacher. Engineer

3.9 Operational definitions

Dalits: The word Dalit comes from the Sanskrit language and means suppressed, crushed, or broken to pieces first used by Jyotirao Phule, a Maharashtrian activist. Dalit is the name given to the group of people traditionally regarded as untouchables. They belong to the very bottom of India's caste hierarchy.

Interaction: Interaction refers to the principles by which individuals or actors are related to one another in a society. It also refers to the relationship between parts of a society or a social system.

Social Distance: Social Distance is the degree to which people are willing to accept and associate with those individuals belonging to diverse racial, ethnic class and caste.

Jat Sikh: Jat Sikh is a sub-group of the Sikh ethno religious group from the Indian subcontinent of Punjab. They form at least half of the Sikh population in Punjab.

Doaba: The term "*Doaba*" or "*Doab*" is derived from Persian "(do *āb* "two water") meaning "land of two rivers" and area lies between rivers *Beas* and *Sutlej* is known as *Doaba*. It comprises four districts i.e. Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, SBS Nagar and Kapurthala.

Conflict: Conflict may be defined as a struggle or contest between people with opposing needs, ideas, beliefs, values, or goals.

Feud: A prolonged and bitter quarrel or dispute.

Altercation: A noisy argument or disagreement, especially in public.

Dissociation: The action of disconnecting or separating or the state of being disconnected.

Consciousness: The state of being aware of and responsive to one's surroundings. A person's awareness or perception of something.

Identity: A close similarity or affinity. The fact of being who or what a person or thing is.

Assertion: The action of being assertive: a confident and forceful statement of fact or belief.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The sociological investigation, analysis and the discussion of socio-economic backgrounds of the respondents lays the foundation for venturing into the status of the respondents. In the present investigation the respondents were studied and discussed across two generations, respondents themselves and their fathers as well. Then inter-generational change between the interaction of Jat Sikhs and Dalits had been assessed through the practices followed and perceptions of the respondents. The results of the study have been presented and discussed under the following headings:

- 4.1 Socio-economic profile of the sample population
- 4.2 Changing socio-economic and political interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs
- 4.3 Prevalence of dissociation between Dalits and Jat Sikhs , if any
- 4.4 Dissociation and resulting conflict
- 4.5 Consequences of conflict
- 4.6 State intervention in conflict resolution

4.1 Socio-economic profile

4.1.1 Socio-Economic Status

The analysis of the socio-economic status was based on socio-economic status scale. The socio-economic status of the respondents had been measured by applying Kupuswamy's socio-economic status scale (SES), with necessary modifications. Variables used to develop this scale were, education, occupation, income, caste, land holding, political participation and type of the house of the respondents. On the basis of this scale, the respondents were categorized into three categories i.e. low, medium and high. It is clear from the Table 4.1.1 that 18.1 per cent of the Jat Sikh respondents had low socio-economic status while this percentage was 28.7 per cent for Dalit respondents. Nearly fifty per cent of the Jat Sikh respondents were from middle status and 43.7 per cent of Dalits respondents fall under category of medium status. Data further showed that 32.5 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 27.5 per cent of Dalit respondents had high socio-economic status. It is clear from data that majority of the respondents in both castes, had middle socio-economic status. Percentage of respondents under low socio-economic status was found to be more for Dalits in comparison to their counterparts. The chi square values indicate that status and caste were significantly associated.

Table 4.1.1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of status

Status	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Total
Low (4-9)	29 (18.12)	46 (28.75)	75 (23.43)
Medium (10-15)	79 (49.37)	70 (43.75)	149 (46.56)
High (16-21)	52 (32.50)	44 (27.50)	96 (30.00)
Total	160 (100.00)	160 (100.00)	320 (100.00)

$$X^2 = 5.06^* \quad \text{d.f.} = 2$$

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*Significant at 5 per cent level

d.f - Degree of freedom

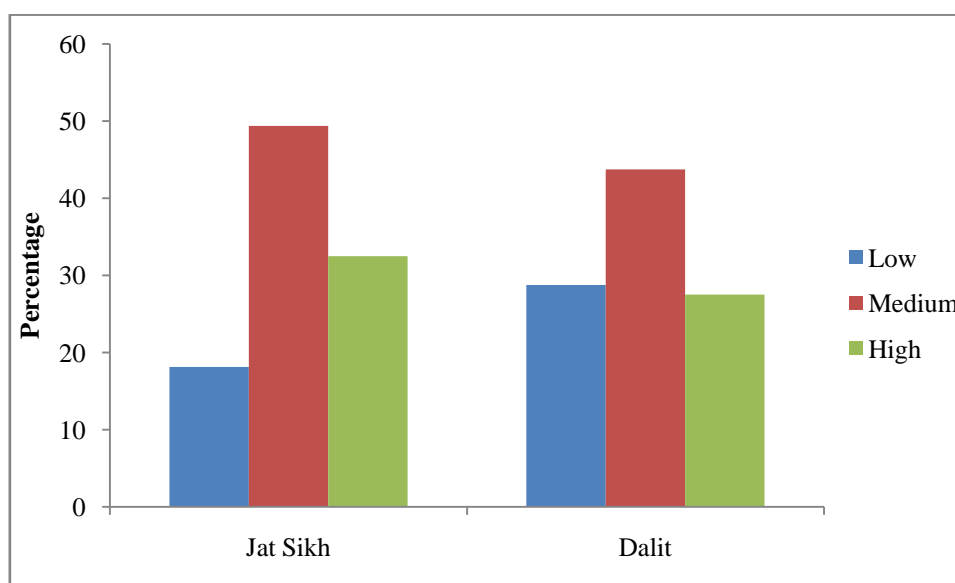


Fig.1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of status

4.1.2 Head of the family

Punjabi society is patriarchal society and family head is always male member of the family. Data given in Table 4.1.2a shows that majority of Jat Sikh (98.7%) and Dalit (87.5%) households were male headed. In few cases it was headed by female due to some reasons. In Jat Sikh respondents two such cases were reported as their husbands were living abroad. In case of Dalit respondents, 40.0 per cent from low, 35 per cent from medium and one fourth from high status, head of the household was female. These households were headed by females because their husbands were either living abroad or out for job/work and in two cases

they were widow (Table 4.1.2. b). The chi square values found that caste status and head of the family were not significantly associated.

Table 4.1.2a: Distribution of respondents according to head of the household

Status	Male headed household		Female Headed household	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	29 (18.35)	38 (27.14)	-	8 (40.00)
Medium n=79,70	78 (49.36)	63 (45.00)	1 (50.00)	7 (35.00)
High n=52,44	51 (32.27)	39 (24.37)	1 (50.00)	5 (25.00)
Total n=160,160	158 (98.75)	140 (87.50)	2 (1.25)	20 (12.50)

X^2 3.33ns d.f.= 2

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

ns- non-significant

d.f - Degree of freedom

Table 4.1.2b: Distribution of the respondents according to reasons behind female heading a household

Status	Widow	Husband Abroad		Husband* Out for job/work
	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Dalit
Low n=29,46	1 (50.00)	-	3 (33.33)	5 (55.55)
Medium n=79,70	-	1 (50.00)	4 (44.44)	2 (22.22)
High n=52,44	1 (50.00)	1 (50.00)	2 (22.22)	2 (22.22)
Total n=160,160	2 (1.25)	2 (1.25)	9 (5.62)	9 (5.62)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*For more than 6 days per week or 25 days per month

4.1.3 Age

It is evident from Table 4.1.3 that five per cent of Jat Sikh respondents and 2.5 per cent of Dalit respondents were 18-30 years of age. Half of Jat Sikh (51.2%) respondents from medium status were 31-50 years of age followed by 34.4 per cent from high and 14.8 per cent from low socio-economic status. Data further divulged that 48.4 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents from medium status were above 50 years of age followed by 30.3 and 21.2 per

cent from high and low status respectively. In case of Dalit respondents a significant majority (80.0%) were from 31-50 years of age group, and 44.53 per cent from medium status belonged to this age group. Again it was found that 28.5 per cent low, 39.2 per cent medium and 32.1 per cent high status Dalits were above 50 years of age. Study revealed that majority of the Dalit and Jat Sikh respondents were of middle age i.e. 31-50. Chi square values showed a significant association between status of caste and age in 31-50 years of age and were non-significant for above 50 years of age.

Table 4.1.3: Distribution of respondents according to age (in years)

Status	18-30 (years)		31-50 (years)		Above 50 (years)	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	2 (25.00)	1 (25.00)	17 (14.28)	37 (28.90)	10 (30.30)	8 (28.57)
Medium n=79,70	2 (25.00)	2 (50.00)	61 (51.26)	57 (44.53)	16 (48.48)	11 (39.28)
High n=52,44	4 (50.00)	1 (25.00)	41 (34.45)	34 (26.56)	7 (21.21)	9 (32.14)
Total n=160,160	8 (5.00)	4 (2.50)	119 (74.37)	128 (80.00)	33 (20.62)	28 (17.50)
	X ² NA		7.88*		0.99ns	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*Significant at 5 per cent level

ns-non-significant

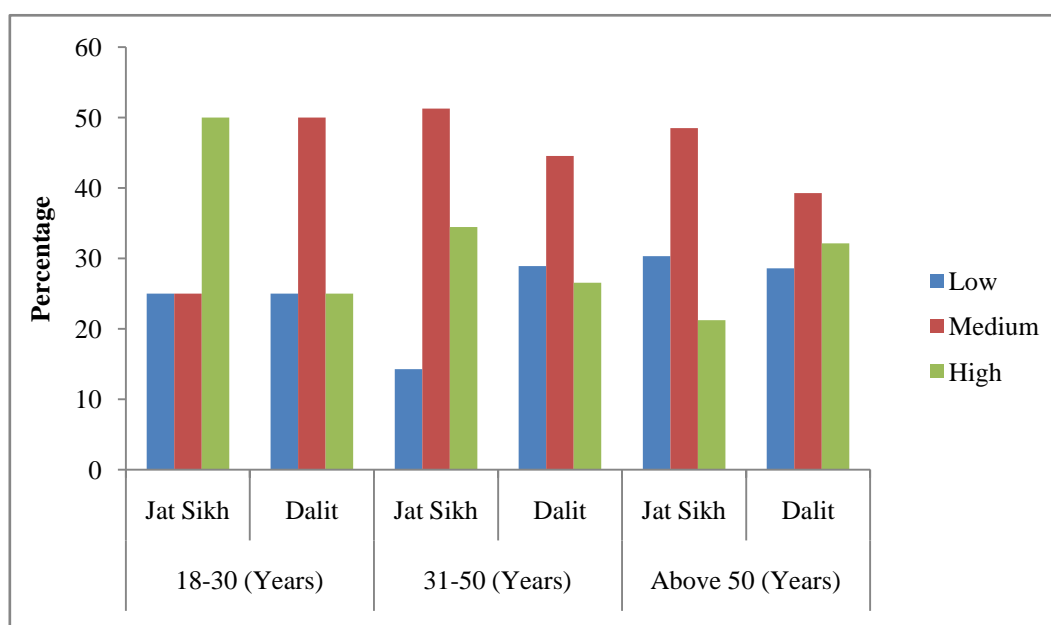


Fig.2: Distribution of respondents according to age (in years)

4.1.4 Education

Education level of the respondents had been divided into four categories i. e. illiterate, up to matric, higher secondary, graduation and above. It is clear from Table 4.1.4 that among high status Jat Sikhs and Dalits no respondent was found illiterate. Almost equal percentage of Jat Sikh (62.5%) and Dalit (63.1%) respondents from low status were illiterate. Data revealed that majority of the respondents in both castes were educated up to higher secondary. Study highlighted that high status Dalit (54.8%) and Jat Sikh (42.8%) respondents had education graduation and above. The chi square values established a significant association between caste status and higher secondary education of the respondents.

Table 4.1.4: Distribution of respondents on the basis of education

Status	Illiterate		Up to matric		Higher secondary		Graduation & above graduation	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	5 (62.5)	12 (63.16)	13 (23.21)	15 (29.41)	7 (11.48)	17 (28.81)	4 (11.43)	2 (6.45)
Medium n=79,70	3 (37.5)	7 (36.84)	31 (55.35)	27 (52.94)	29 (47.54)	24 (40.67)	16 (45.71)	12 (38.70)
High n=52,44	-	-	12 (21.42)	9 (17.64)	25 (40.98)	18 (30.50)	15 (42.85)	17 (54.83)
Total n=160,160	8 (5.00)	19 (11.87)	56 (35.00)	51 (31.87)	61 (38.12)	59 (36.87)	35 (21.87)	31 (19.37)
X ²	0.001ns		0.62ns		5.75*		0.95ns	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

*Significant at 5 per cent level

ns-non-significant

When education level of the respondents was compared with that of their fathers' (Table 4.1.4a), it was found that no respondent had education less than their fathers' in both the castes. Almost three fourth of Jat Sikh and Dalit respondents were educated more than their fathers. Status wise analysis revealed that Dalits from medium and high socio-economic status were educated more than their fathers and also more than their Jat Sikh counterparts. This clearly pointed towards the better educational status of Dalit respondents which mainly was due to benefits from government welfare schemes. Significant association had been found between caste status and education more than fathers whereas it was non-significant for education equal to fathers'.

Table 4.1.4a: Variation in education of the respondents from that of their fathers'

Status	Less than father's		Equal to father's		More than father's	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	-	-	18 (40.91)	17 (36.96)	11 (9.48)	29 (25.44)
Medium n=79,70	-	-	26 (59.09)	16 (34.78)	53 (45.69)	54 (47.37)
High n=52,44	-	-	-	13 (28.26)	52 (44.83)	31 (27.19)
Total n=160,160	-	-	44 (27.50)	46 (28.75)	116 (72.50)	114 (71.25)

X²

0.15ns

13.41**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

ns- non-significant

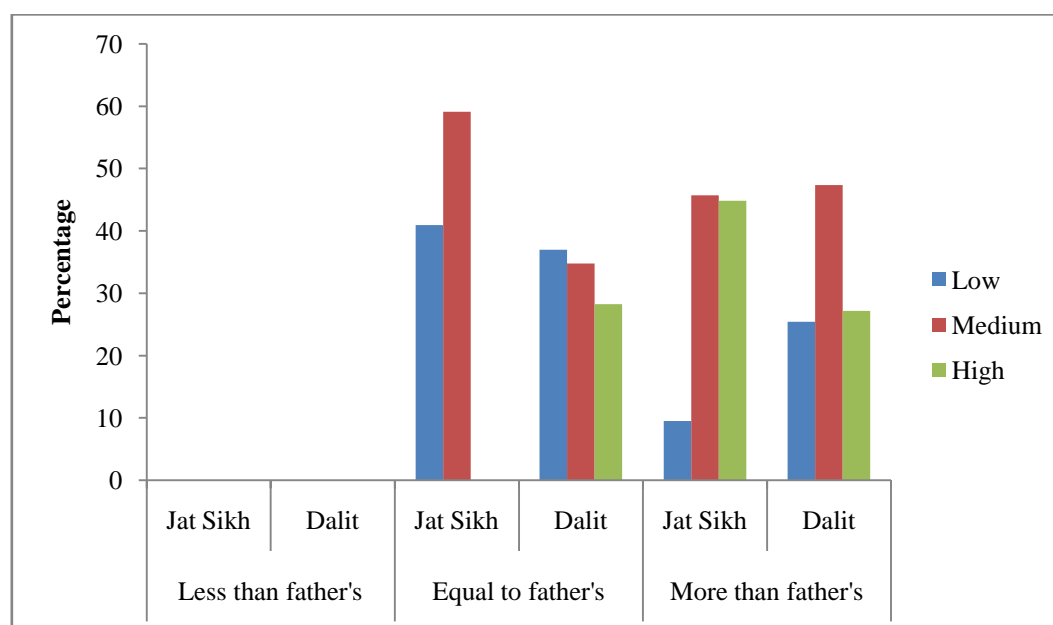


Fig.3: Variation in education of the respondents from that of their fathers'

4.1.5 Occupation

The occupation of the respondents was categorized into six categories i.e. farm labour, crafts & services, semi-skilled and skilled, farming, petty business and white collar professionals. The study recorded complete dissociation of the sample respondents (Dalits) from traditional occupations, which established the fact that Dalits were no more practising traditional occupation of scavenging, picking animal carcasses and polluting jobs in order to get rid of stigmatized identity attached to such jobs. In the study area, it was found that 13.7 per cent households were female headed in both castes due to different reasons, they were not actually engaged in paid work and had not contributed to the family income, so their occupation

Table 4.1.5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of occupation

Status	Farm labour		Crafts & Services		Semi- skilled & skilled		Farming	White collar professionals		Petty Business	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=28,43	1 (100.00)	16 (80.00)	2 (66.66)	13 (65.00)	2 (22.22)	10 (16.95)	22 (19.13)	-	-	1 (5.56)	4 (12.12)
Medium n=78,58	-	4 (20.00)	1 (33.34)	5 (25.00)	7 (77.78)	32 (54.24)	57 (49.56)	5 (45.45)	2 (28.57)	8 (44.44)	15 (45.45)
High n=51,38	-	-	-	2 (10.00)	-	17 (28.81)	36 (31.30)	6 (54.55)	5 (71.43)	9 (50.00)	14 (42.42)
Total n=157,139	1 (0.63)	20 (14.38)	3 (1.91)	20 (14.38)	9 (5.73)	59 (42.44)	115 (73.24)	11 (7.06)	7 (5.03)	18 (11.46)	33 (23.74)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

was not considered. It was found that in two cases respondents were not engaged in any job or work. It is clear from the Table 4.1.5 that one fourth (73.2%) of the Jat Sikh respondents were doing farming and the rest were involved in business (11.4%) and white collar professions (7%) and majority were from high status (54.5%). Forty two per cent Dalit respondents were doing semi-skilled and skilled jobs and 23 per cent of them had petty business. White collar Dalit professionals revealed that they had benefitted from reservation policy. None of Dalit respondent was doing farming.

Table 4.1.5a: Variation in occupation of the respondents from that of their fathers'

Status	Lower than father's		Equal to father's		Higher than father's	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	-	-	16 (12.40)	18 (50.00)	13 (41.94)	28 (22.58)
Medium n=79,70	-	-	72 (55.81)	9 (25.00)	7 (22.58)	61 (49.19)
High n=52,44	-	-	41 (31.78)	9 (25.00)	11 (35.48)	35 (28.23)
Total n=160,160	-	-	129 (80.62)	36 (22.50)	31 (19.37)	124 (77.50)

X²

25.18**

7.96*

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

*Significant at 5 per cent level

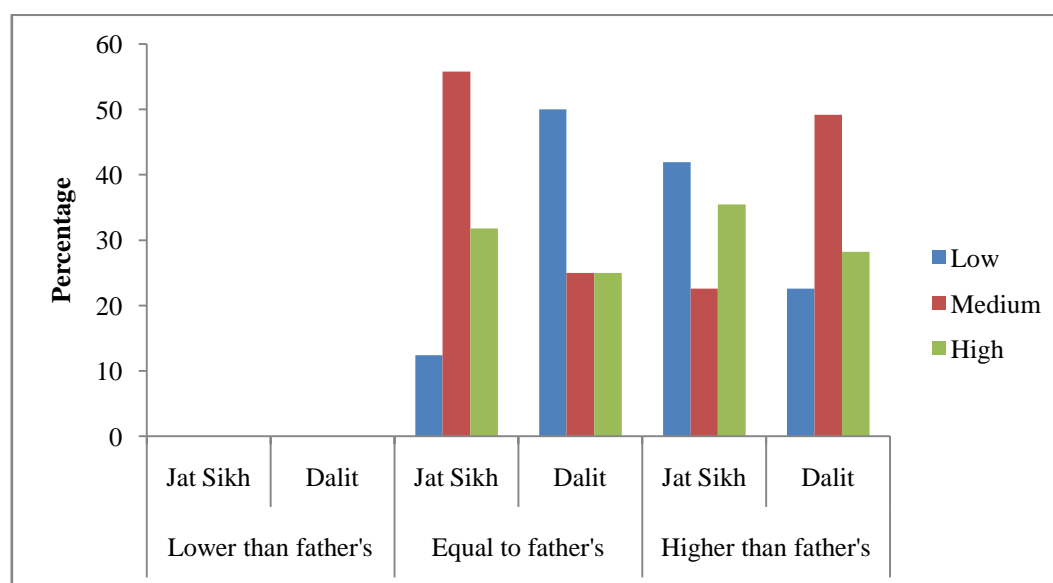


Fig.4: Variation in occupation of the respondents from that of their fathers'

Data given in Table 4.1.5a highlighted the variation in occupation of the respondents than that of their fathers. It is clear from the data that in both castes, no respondent was found having lower occupational prestige than their fathers'. Majority of Jat Sikh respondents (80.6%) remained in the same occupation of their fathers' i. e. in farming whereas 22.5 per cent of Dalits respondents were found following their fathers' occupation of the farm labour and crafts and services. Majority (77.5%) of Dalit respondents had acquired upward occupational mobility as they were doing some government jobs and other skilled and semi-skilled jobs. Medium (49.1%) and high (28.2%) status Dalits had achieved greater occupational mobility and were following high prestige occupations of business and white collar professions. Thus, analysis highlighted that the medium and high status Dalits moved to high prestige occupations. Chi square values established the association between caste status and occupational mobility.

4.1.6 Income

The total monthly income of the households had been classified into three broad categories and presented in Table 4.1.6. It is evident from data that majority of the low status Jat Sikhs (86.6%) and Dalits (93.3%) had monthly income less than Rs. 10000 while on the other hand majority of high status Jat Sikhs (84.9%) and two third of Dalits had monthly income above Rs.20000. there was significant association between caste status and income of the respondents.

Table 4.1.6: Distribution of respondents on the basis of income of household (Rs/month)

Status	Below 10000		10000-20000		Above 20000	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	26 (86.67)	42 (93.33)	3 (3.90)	4 (5.56)	-	-
Medium n=79,70	4 (13.33)	3 (6.67)	67 (87.01)	53 (73.61)	8 (15.09)	14 (32.56)
High n=52,44	-	-	7 (9.09)	15 (20.83)	45 (84.91)	29 (67.44)
Total n=160,160	30 (18.75)	45 (28.12)	77 (48.12)	72 (45.00)	53 (33.12)	43 (26.87)

X² value

NA

4.08**

4.10**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level



Fig.5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of income of household (Rs/month)

4.1.7 Type of family

The family is an intimate domestic group made up of people related to one another by bonds of blood, sexual mating or legal ties. Data given in Table 4.1.7 revealed that more than half of Jat Sikh (57.5%) and 69.3 per cent of Dalit respondents had nuclear families. Joint family structure and agricultural occupation is the prime social feature of rural setting and both institutions mutually benefit each other. Medium status (42.8%) Jat Sikhs and more than half of Dalits had joint families. Study further found that 19.5 per cent of low status Jat Sikhs and one third of Dalits had nuclear families. Hence, study showed that majority of low status had nuclear family structure while majority of medium and high status still had joint family structure. Chi square values found that caste status and nuclear family type were significantly associated.

Table 4.1.7: Distribution of respondents on the basis of type of family

Status	Nuclear		Joint	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	18 (19.57)	37 (33.33)	11 (16.18)	9 (18.37)
Medium n=79,70	50 (54.35)	44 (39.64)	29 (42.65)	26 (53.06)
High n=52,44	24 (26.09)	30 (27.03)	28 (41.18)	14 (28.57)
Total n=160,160	92 (57.5)	111 (69.37)	68 (42.50)	49 (30.62)

X²

5.89*

2.00ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*Significant at 5 per cent level

ns- non-significant

4.1.8 Type of house

Housing conditions indicate the standard of living of an individual. So efforts had been made to know the type of house of respondents. Data given in Table 4.1.8 divulged that all Jat Sikhs had *pucca* house. Status wise analysis showed that half from medium, one third from high and 15.7 per cent from low status had *pucca* houses. Data further showed that 16.8 per cent had mix type of house. Chi square values established the association between caste status and type of house.

Table 4.1.8: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of type of house

Status	<i>Pucca</i> house*	Mix house
Low n=46	21 (15.79)	25 (92.59)
Medium n=70	68 (51.13)	2 (7.41)
High n=44	44 (33.08)	-
Total n=160	133 (83.12)	27 (16.87)

$$X^2 = 65.54^{**} \text{ (YC)}$$

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

YC-Yates Correction

**Pucca* house-made cemented material throughout, including floor, roof and exterior walls

*All Jat Sikh respondents had *pucca* house

4.1.9 Number of rooms

It is clear from the above discussion that majority of the respondents had *pucca* houses. Further efforts had been made to know the number of rooms in the house. Data given in Table 4.1.9 revealed that majority of Dalit respondents from low status (72.8%) had less than three rooms. Majority of Jat Sikh respondents from medium socio-economic status (58.8%) had 3-5 rooms, while fifty five per cent of Dalits from same status too had 3-5 rooms. Data further revealed that Jat Sikhs (78.5%) and Dalit (63.6%) from high status had more than five rooms. It can be concluded that majority respondents had 3-5 rooms in both castes. Caste status and number of rooms were found significantly associated for less than 3 and more than 3 rooms.

Table 4.1.9: Distribution of respondents on the basis of number of rooms in the house

Status	Less than 3		3-5		More than 5	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	8 (100.00)	43 (72.88)	21 (16.94)	3 (3.33)	-	-
Medium n=79,70	-	16 (27.12)	73 (58.87)	50 (55.56)	6 (21.43)	4 (36.36)
High n=52,44	-	-	30 (24.19)	37 (41.11)	22 (78.57)	7 (63.64)
Total n=160,160	8 (5.00)	59 (36.87)	124 (77.50)	90 (56.25)	28 (17.50)	11 (6.87)

X² 6.94** 0.92ns 5.94* (YC)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

*Significant at 5 per cent level

YC-Yates Correction

ns- non-significant

4.1.10 Livestock

Livestock is an important part in rural household setting. They served the purpose of household milk consumption, for agriculture purpose and also supplement household income. In the study area it was found that respondents mainly reared cattle for household milk consumption, but sold out the extra milk remained after consumption. Dalits were selling milk to Jat Sikhs and even Jat Sikhs were also found selling milk to Dalits. It could be inferred from the data given in Table 4.1.10 that greater percentage of Jat Sikhs (82.5%) owned livestock compared to their Dalit (60%) counterparts. Chi square values established the association between caste and having livestock.

Table 4.1.10: Distribution of respondents on the basis of having live stock

Caste	Yes	No
Jat Sikh	132 (82.50)	28 (17.50)
Dalit	96 (60.00)	64 (40.00)

X² 19.77**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

4.1.11 Number of livestock

Study further probed about the number of livestock and data given in Table 4.1.11 show that only Jat Sikh had five cattle heads and that too from medium and high status. Data divulged that three fourth of Dalits had less than three and one fourth of them had 3-5 cattle

and majority of the Dalits reared cattle were from medium status (62.5%). Chi square values were non-significant for caste and number of livestock.

Table 4.1.11: Distribution of respondents on the basis of number of live stock

Status	1-2		3-5		More than 5
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh
Low n=23,39	14 (31.11)	32 (44.44)	9 (15.52)	7 (29.17)	-
Medium n=63,48	23 (51.11)	33 (45.83)	26 (44.83)	15 (62.50)	14 (48.28)
High n=46,9	8 (17.78)	7 (9.72)	23 (39.66)	2 (8.33)	15 (51.72)
Total n=132, 96	45 (34.09)	72 (75.00)	58 (43.93)	24 (25.00)	29 (21.96)

X²

2.82ns

2.01ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

ns -non-significant

*None of Dalit respondents had livestock more than 5

4.1.12 Place of cattle shed

Study tried to find that whether cattle shed was within the precinct of the house or separate. It was found that majority of respondents in both castes had separate cattle shed. All the Jat Sikh respondents who had it within the house were from low status. Majority of Dalit respondents from low (83.3%) too had it within the precinct of house (Table 4.1.12). Chi square values indicated highly significant association between caste status and separate cattle shed.

Table 4.1.12: Distribution of respondents according to the place of cattle shed

Status	Separate		Within house	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=23,39	19 (14.84)	24 (30.77)	4 (100.00)	15 (83.33)
Medium n=63,48	63 (49.22)	45 (57.69)	-	3 (16.67)
High n=46,9	46 (35.94)	9 (11.54)	-	-
Total n=132, 96	128 (96.96)	78 (81.25)	4 (3.03)	18 (18.75)

X²

17.36**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

4.1.13 Toilet facility

Having a toilet in the house is indicator of good hygiene and sanitation in the house. It was found that in the study area all the Jat Sikh respondents had toilet facility in their

houses. Majority of Dalits too had toilets in the houses, only fifteen per cent of them had no such facility in their houses. It indicated that in rural area Dalits still did not have access to such basic amenities. Further question was probed about the type of toilet and it was found that in two villages of Jalandhar district there was sewage system in the village. Data given in Table 4.1.13 shows that one fourth of the Jat Sikhs and 14.7 per cent of the Dalits had sewage toilets. Data further divulged that 10.4 per cent Jat Sikhs from low, 58.1 per cent from medium and 31.4 per cent from high status had compost type of toilet facility. Data further indicated that one fourth Dalits from medium and three fourth from high status too had compost type of toilets in their houses. Study observed the prevalence of *Shankar septic tanks* (readymade cemented septic tanks used to make toilet) in the study area. These were comparatively cheaper and economic. Majority of Dalits from low (28.9%) and medium (69.5%) status had these type of toilets. Even 86.6 per cent Jat Sikh respondents from low status had such type of toilet facility in their houses. Chi square values established a highly significant association between status and compost type of toilets.

Table 4.1.13: Distribution of respondents on the basis of type of toilet in the house

Status	Sewage		Compost		<i>Shankar Septic Tank*</i>	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,22	5 (12.50)	2 (10.00)	11 (10.48)	-	13 (86.67)	20 (28.99)
Medium n=79,70	16 (40.00)	10 (50.00)	61 (58.10)	12 (25.53)	2 (13.33)	48 (69.57)
High n=52,44	19 (47.50)	8 (40.00)	33 (31.43)	35 (74.47)	-	1 (1.45)
Total n=160,136	40 (25.00)	20 (14.70)	105 (65.62)	47 (34.55)	15 (9.37)	69 (50.73)

X² 0.49ns 25.77** (YC)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

YC-Yates Correction

ns- non-significant

*Readymade cemented septic tanks

4.1.14 Land holding

Punjab is an agrarian society and Jat Sikhs hold the major share of land. Study highlighted that all the Jat Sikhs had owned agricultural land. Only 10 per cent of the Dalits had some land that too non-agricultural. Table 4.1.14 indicates that more than half of Jat Sikhs from medium and 36.6 per cent from low status were small farmers and three fourth from high status were large farmers (>10 hac). Chi square values found a significant association between caste status and small land holding.

Regarding the ownership of land, data given in Table 4.1.14a revealed that majority (91.8%) of Jat Sikh respondents owned land by their own. It was found that 77.2 per cent from medium and 22.7 per cent from high status leased out their land to other parties. Study further divulged that high status (83.3%) respondents leased in the land from other people. It came out from the study that leased out and leased in phenomenon was less prevalent in the area, majority of the respondents were cultivating their land by own. No significant association was found in status and ownership of land.

Table 4.1.14: Distribution of respondents on the basis of land holding

Status	Marginal (Less than 1hac)		Small (1-2 hac)	Semi- medium (2-4 hac)	Medium (4-10 hac)	Large (10 hac and above)
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Jat Sikh	Jat Sikh	Jat Sikh
Low n=29,46	3 (100.00)	2 (8.70)	26 (35.62)	-	-	-
Medium n=79,70	-	5 (21.74)	38 (52.05)	26 (63.41)	9 (45.00)	6 (26.09)
High n=52,44	-	9 (39.13)	9 (12.33)	15 (36.59)	11 (55.00)	17 (73.91)
Total n=160,160	3 (1.87)	16 (10.00)	73 (45.62)	41 (25.62)	20 (12.50)	23 (14.37)
	NA		9.29**		1.68ns	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

ns- non-significant

Table 4.1.14a: Distribution of Jat Sikh respondents on the basis of ownership of land

Multiple responses

Status	Owned	Leased out	Leased in
Low n=29	29 (19.73)	-	-
Medium n=79	66 (44.90)	17 (77.27)	3 (16.67)
High n=52	52 (35.37)	5 (22.73)	15 (83.33)
Total n=160	147 (91.87)	22 (13.75)	18 (11.25)
	2.69ns		NA

ns- non-significant

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

4.1.15 Agricultural equipment

It is clear from the above discussion that, only Jat Sikhs were doing farming. Data regarding ownership of agricultural equipment by Jat Sikhs has been given in the Table 4.1.15. Data divulged that majority of high status respondents (93.0%) had tractor and trolley, other equipment like tiller, leveller etc. Study further reported that 6.9 per cent low and 28.3 per cent

medium status respondents too owned tractor, though they had small land holdings. Study further revealed that these respondents custom hire their tractors to earn through paid services.

Table 4.1.15: Distribution of Jat Sikh respondents on the basis of having agricultural equipment

Status	Only tractor	Tractor & trolley	Tractor, trolley & other equipment
Low n=29	5 (6.94)	-	-
Medium n=79	12 (16.67)	17 (28.33)	3 (6.98)
High n=52	43 (59.72)	43 (71.67)	40 (93.02)
Total n=160	72 (45.00)	60 (37.5)	43 (26.87)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

4.1.16 Kitchen gadgets

So far as the possession of kitchen gadgets was concerned, study reported that all the respondents used LPG in their kitchens. All Jat Sikh and majority of Dalit respondents (96.8%) had refrigerator in their houses. Food processor was also owned by majority of Jat Sikhs (82.5%) and 36.8 per cent of Dalits. Study, further observed that majority of the respondents who owned microwave ovens were from high status in both castes. A significant association had been found between caste status and ownership of kitchen gadgets.

Table 4.1.16: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of having kitchen gadgets

Status	LPG		Refrigerator		Food processor		Microwave oven	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	29 (18.12)	46 (28.75)	29 (18.12)	41 (26.45)	14 (10.60)	-	-	-
Medium n=79,70	79 (49.37)	70 (43.75)	79 (49.37)	70 (45.16)	66 (50.00)	18 (30.50)	4 (16.00)	1 (9.09)
High n=52,44	52 (32.5)	44 (27.5)	52 (32.5)	44 (28.39)	52 (39.39)	41 (69.49)	21 (84.00)	10 (90.90)
Total n=160,160	160 (100.00)	160 (100.00)	160 (100.00)	155 (96.87)	132 (82.50)	59 (36.87)	25 (15.62)	11 (6.87)

X²

6.95**

16.75**

NA

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

4.1.17 Vehicle

In the modern time having a vehicle has become a necessity as well as status symbol. Data regarding ownership of vehicle has been given in Table 4.1.17. Data revealed that all the respondents owned two wheelers (motorcycle). During study it was reported that majority of low status and some from medium status Dalits, purchased motorcycles on EMIs from commercial banks. It is clear from the data that more than half of Jat Sikhs (51.2%) and 35.6 per cent Dalits had scooter. Fifty two per cent high status Jat Sikh respondents owned cars too. In case of Dalits near one fourth of them owned cars and out of these majority (89.7%) were from high status. Further, study reported that thirty per cent of Jat Sikhs and 11.87 per cent of Dalits had all these vehicles. Results of the study clearly indicated that all Dalit respondents in the study area were owner of two wheelers and 36.2 per cent of them owned cars too. Ownership of vehicles and caste status were found significantly associated.

Table 4.1.17: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of owning vehicle

Status	Motorcycle		Scooter		Car		All	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	29 (18.12)	46 (28.75)	2 (2.43)	1 (1.75)	-	-	-	-
Medium n=79,70	79 (49.37)	70 (43.75)	55 (67.07)	36 (63.15)	47 (47.47)	4 (10.25)	23 (47.91)	1 (5.26)
High n=52,44	52 (32.50)	44 (27.50)	25 (30.48)	20 (35.08)	52 (52.52)	35 (89.74)	25 (52.08)	18 (94.73)
Total n=160,160	160 (100.00)	160 (100.00)	82 (51.25)	57 (35.62)	99 (61.87)	39 (24.37)	48 (30.00)	19 (11.87)

X² value

15.75**

10.08**

10.77**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

4.2 Changing socio-economic and political interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs

The study further tried to analyze the change in socio-economic and political interaction pattern among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in the study area. Besides instances of discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab, particularly in *Doaba* region, is quite different from that of Dalits in other parts of the country. There are mainly three factors responsible for better position of Dalits in *Doaba* region of Punjab. First, the most distinguishing feature is their numerical strength. In more than 3000 villages of the region, proportion of SC population is over 40 per cent and in some villages it is as high as 65 per

cent. This numerical strength of Dalits is a measure of their strength. Second comes the literacy. *Ad-dharmis* who along with *Balmikis* constitute 80 per cent of the total scheduled castes in *Doaba* region have the highest literacy rate of 76.4 per cent which is more than the general population at the national level. Due to reservation, proportion of Dalits in government jobs has witnessed an increasing trend during last three decades.

A less known but another significant factor which made a major difference in the status and self-perception of the Dalits in Punjab is related to the large scale migration of the Dalits, particularly *Ad-dharmis* of *Doaba* region, to foreign countries. It is estimated that on an average one member in every second Dalit family in *Doaba* region have gone abroad. The remittances sent home by these Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and contribution they made to the enlargement of the community's autonomous cultural spaces may be an exceptional distinguishing feature. Another significant factor responsible for their enhanced status is increased political representation of Dalits from the grass root level of panchayats to the legislative assembly (Helweg 1991; Puri, 2003; Kumar, 2004; Ram, 2009).

Due to these factors, socio economic status of Dalits has changed significantly. The second objective of the study was to empirically analyse whether the changed socio-economic status have impacted their interaction pattern. This was gauged within the framework of caste system. Keeping in view the central features of caste the following aspects had been examined to map the changing interaction amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs: social disabilities like segregation; kitchen entry; attending social ceremonies and exchange of goods and services, religious disabilities, political participation and inter-caste marriage.

Social disabilities

Traditionally various sorts of civil disabilities were imposed upon Dalit section of the society. The present study took into consideration social practices of segregation, kitchen entry, attending various social ceremonies to analyse the prevalent interaction to gauge the social distance.

4.2.1. Segregation

Segregation of individual castes or of groups of castes in a village is the most obvious mark of civil privileges and disabilities, and it has prevailed in a more or less definite form all over India. Southern India stands out distinct in the rigidity of these rules but in Northern India generally, it is only the impure castes that are segregated and made to live on the outskirts of villages. Study investigated the change in this particular feature, by observing if there is any change in the pattern of residence in the sample area. Study highlighted (Table 4.2.1) that more than one third (36.9%) of the fathers' of Dalit respondents lived in the *chamarhli* (a separated living area of Dalits in a village) and the rest two-third (63.1%) lived on the outskirts of the village but that locality was also inhabited significantly by their own caste mates. On the other

hand 96.2 per cent of the Jat Sikh's father generation lived in village and rest 3.7 per cent lived on outskirts of the village. With economic affluence and occupational mobility 5.6 per cent of the Dalit respondents had built up their residence within village (mostly from high and medium status). Study observed a decline in percentage of Dalits residence who lived in *chamarhli*. Thirty per cent of Dalit respondents lived compared to 37 per cent of that fathers' at this side in *chamarhli*. So study observed that segregation of the erstwhile untouchable caste was on wane, though was not completely achieved. Chi square values established the association between caste status and place of residence of the respondents.

Table 4.2.1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of residence

Status	In the village			Outskirts of the village*				Chamarhli/ Vehrha		
	Respondent		Father	Respondent		Father		Respondent	Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Dalits	Dalit	
Low n=29,46	24 (17.39)	-	27 (17.53)	5 (22.73)	21 (20.39)	2 (33.33)	24 (23.76)	25 (52.08)	22 (37.29)	
Medium n=79,70	72 (52.17)	2 (22.22)	78 (50.65)	7 (31.82)	50 (48.54)	1 (16.67)	51 (50.50)	18 (37.50)	19 (32.20)	
High n=52,44	42 (30.43)	7 (77.78)	49 (31.82)	10 (45.45)	32 (31.07)	3 (50.00)	26 (25.74)	5 (10.42)	18 (30.51)	
Total n=160, 160	138 (86.25)	9 (5.62)	154 (96.25)	22 (13.75)	103 (64..37)	6 (3.75)	101 (63.12)	48 (30.00)	59 (36.87)	
	X ²		9.23** (YC)		2.28		NA		6.50*	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

*Significant at 5 per cent level

YC-Yates Correction

*Both castes resided in different localities on the outskirts of the village (mainly roadside)

4.2.2 Neighbourhood

It is clear from the above discussion that Dalits had started living in the village, a feature that was totally absent during their father's generation. It was found that 5.6 per cent of Dalits from medium and high status had Jat Sikhs as their neighbours (Table 4.2.2). Since, study analysed the interaction between Dalits and Jat Sikhs only, so neighbours from other caste were not considered. In their father's generation this phenomenon was absent as majority (99.3%) lived in the localities inhabited by their own caste only. Though a small percentage had moved to the upper caste locality in the village but still a change had been initiated (Judge and Bal, 2008). Chi square values established a significant association between caste status and same caste neighbour.

Table 4.2.2: Distribution of respondents on the basis of neighbourhood

Status	Same caste				One side Dalit, one side Jat Sikh		
	Respondent		Father		Respondent		Father
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh
Low n=29,46	24 (16.78)	45 (29.80)	25 (16.89)	45 (28.30)	2 (40.00)	1 (25.00)	1 (100.00)
Medium n=79,70	72 (50.35)	66 (43.71)	75 (50.68)	70 (44.03)	2 (40.00)	1 (25.00)	-
High n=52,44	47 (32.87)	40 (26.49)	48 (32.43)	44 (27.67)	1 (20.00)	2 (50.00)	-
Total n=160, 160	143 (89.37)	151 (94.37)	148 (92.50)	159 (99.37)	5 (3.12)	4 (2.50)	1 (0.62)

X² 7.00* 5.68 NA

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*Significant at 5 per cent level

4.2.3 Kitchen entry

Due to Ideology of Sikhism, untouchability has been less of a problem in Punjab. Though there was no strict restriction on the entry of Dalits into the courtyard (outer area of house) of upper caste houses but they were restricted to enter the inner side of the house and more strictly into the kitchen. A change had been observed during the study that Dalit women were working as domestic help in Jat Sikh houses, they were doing, cooking, cleaning, other household tasks. Study revealed that majority (96.3%) of the Dalits did not face restriction on entry into the kitchen of the Jat Sikhs acquaintance either as worker or as guests. Though few (3.7%) of the *Balmiki* respondents were still facing such restrictions (Table 4.2.3). This showed the hierarchy within Dalits where Ad-dharmis were at a higher rung and *Balmikis* occupied lower rung within the caste.

Table 4.2.3: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of restrictions on kitchen entry

Status	Yes		No	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=46	3 (50.00)	37 (28.24)	43 (27.92)	9 (31.03)
Medium n=70	3 (50.00)	62 (47.33)	67 (43.51)	8 (27.59)
High n=44	-	32 (24.43)	44 (28.57)	12 (41.38)
Total n=160	6 (3.75)	131 (81.87)	154 (96.25)	29 (18.12)

X² NA 2.90ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

ns-non-significant

4.2.4 Attending the social ceremonies

Social ceremonies are the occasion where whole village participate in the celebrations and sorrow of each other. It was tried to find out that whether Dalits were part of these celebrations or not. Data in this regard is given in Table 4.2.4, and it shows that 85 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 76.2 per cent of the Dalits attended the social ceremonies of each other. Such kind of interaction was comparatively quite less during their fathers' generation of Jats Sikhs (13.1%) and Dalits (21.9%). Caste wise analysis highlighted that more than half of medium status Jat Sikhs divulged of attending the social functions of Dalit acquaintances whereas 40.1 per cent medium and thirty six per cent high status Dalits were attending the functions of Jat Sikh counterparts. Deeper investigation into the matter revealed that class status played greater role in dictating such interaction pattern. Chi squares values too established association between caste status and attending the ceremonies.

Table 4.2.4: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of attending the social ceremonies

Status	Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	27 (19.85)	29 (23.77)	15 (71.43)	16 (45.71)
Medium n=79,70	71 (52.21)	49 (40.16)	4 (19.05)	14 (40.00)
High n=52,44	38 (27.94)	44 (36.07)	2 (9.52)	5 (14.29)
Total n=160,160	136 (85.00)	122 (76.25)	21 (13.12)	35 (21.87)
	X^2 3.80*		X^2 3.51*	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*Significant at 5 per cent level

4.2.5 Type of ceremony attended

It is clear from the previous data that Jat Sikhs and Dalits had started attending ceremonies of each other. Study further investigated the type of ceremonies they attended. It was divulged by majority of Jat Sikh respondents that they attended marriage ceremonies (69.3%) and death (82.5%) of the Dalit acquaintances. Comparatively lesser percentage of Jat Sikhs attended the birth ceremonies of their Dalit counterpart. Study further revealed that during their father's generation none attended birth ceremonies at Dalits' place. Seven per cent of the respondents' fathers attended the marriage ceremonies and 11.2 per cent also went to Dalits' on the occasion of death to show their condolence (Table 4.2.5). Chi square values showed that status and ceremonies attended were significantly associated.

Data regarding the social ceremonies attended by Dalits in Jat houses has been given in Table 4.2.5a, and it indicated that during their fathers' generation one fifth went to Jat Sikhs

Table 4.2.5: Distribution of Jat Sikh respondents on the basis of type of ceremony attended

Multiple responses

Status	Birth		Marriage		Death		All	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=29	2 (11.76)	-	27 (24.32)	8 (72.73)	27 (20.45)	12 (66.67)	25 (20.66)	10 (76.92)
Medium n=79	4 (23.53)	-	43 (38.74)	2 (18.18)	68 (51.52)	4 (22.22)	61 (50.41)	2 (15.38)
High n=52	11 (64.71)	-	41 (36.93)	1 (9.09)	37 (28.03)	2 (11.11)	35 (28.93)	1 (7.69)
Total n=160	17 (10.62)	-	111 (69.37)	11 (6.87)	132 (82.50)	18 (11.25)	121 (75.62)	13 (8.12)

X²

NA

12.11** (YC)

17.58**

19.97** (YC)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

YC-Yates Correction

Table 4.2.5a: Distribution of Dalits respondents on the basis of type of ceremony attended

Multiple responses

Status	Birth		Marriage		Death		All	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=46	19 (27.94)	8 (34.78)	28 (24.78)	11 (44.00)	33 (27.97)	14 (43.75)	30 (28.04)	12 (48.00)
Medium n=70	26 (38.24)	11 (47.83)	44 (38.94)	10 (40.00)	51 (43.22)	13 (40.63)	45 (42.06)	10 (40.00)
High n=44	23 (33.82)	3 (13.04)	41 (36.28)	4 (16.00)	34 (28.81)	5 (15.63)	32 (29.91)	3 (12.00)
Total n=160	68 (42.50)	23 (14.37)	113 (70.62)	25 (25.62)	118 (73.72)	32 (20.00)	107 (66.87)	25 (15.62)

X²

0.56ns

3.73ns

3.73ns

3.72ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages
ns-non-significant

on the occasion of death only, one fourth of them attended the marriages of Jat Sikhs. Further, it was disclosed by medium (38.9%) and high (36.2%) status Dalit respondents that they attended the marriage ceremonies of Jat Sikhs. It was reported by 42.5 per cent of Dalit respondents that they attended the birth ceremonies (when celebrated at large scale, like *aakhand path*, *lohri*, *dastar bandi* etc). It was found during the study that high and medium status Dalit respondents were more forward in attending these ceremonies. But during their father's generation low status Dalits were more into attending the function of upper caste. No significant association was found between caste status and ceremonies attended.

4.2.6 Ceremonies attended as guest/worker

It is evident from the previous discussion that respondents from both castes attended the social ceremonies of each other. This sort of interaction was less prevalent during their father's generation. It was discovered during study that, all Jat Sikh respondents attended the ceremonies of Dalits as guest only. Data given in Table 4.2.6 revealed that 46.8 per cent from high status attended the ceremonies of their counterpart as guest only, whereas 39.3 per cent from medium and 13.8 per cent from low status Dalits were also part of these celebrations as guests. It was revealed by 57.1 per cent from low and 42.8 per cent from medium status Dalits that they attended the ceremonies as workers (they provide services like, electrician, cook, *halwai*, waiter, driver and other domestic help). Study recorded a change that in father's generation irrespective of status, all Dalits had been just workers. They were not formally invites as guest, but in present generation Dalits were invited as guests by Jat Sikhs. There was no significant association found between the status and ceremonies attended as guest or worker.

Table 4.2.6: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of attending the ceremonies as guest/worker

Status	As guest		As worker	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=46	13 (13.83)	-	16 (57.14)	16 (47.06)
Medium n=70	37 (39.36)	-	12 (42.86)	14 (41.18)
High n=44	44 (46.81)	1 (100.00)	-	4 (11.76)
Total n=160	94 (58.75)	1 (0.62)	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)

X²

NA

0.65ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*All Jat Sikh respondents attended the ceremonies as guest only

ns-non significant

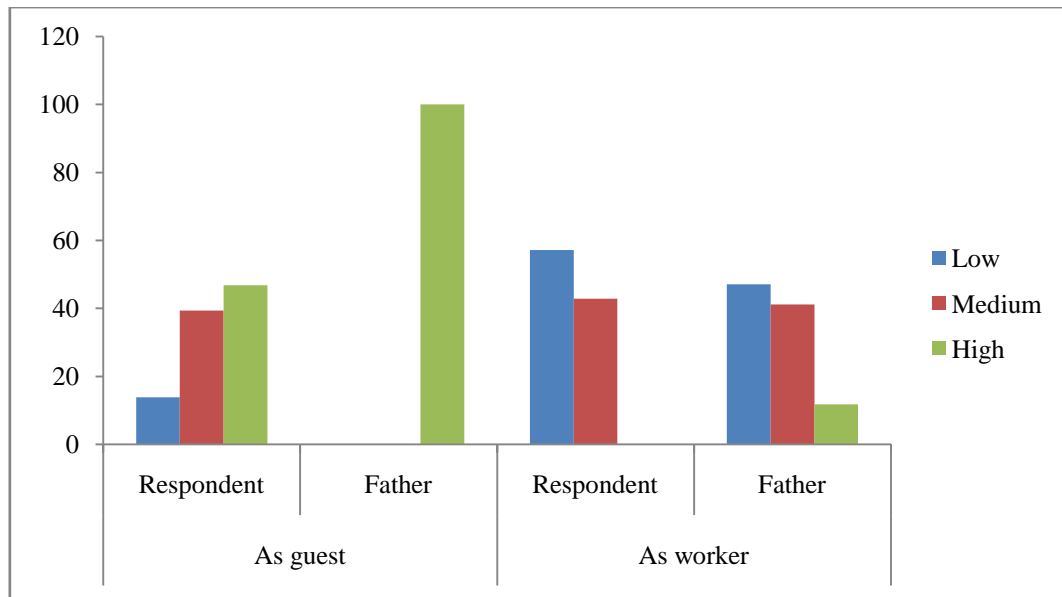


Fig.6: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of attending the ceremonies as guest/worker

4.2.7 Inter-dinning

Preceding discussion had made it clear that both castes attended each other's social ceremonies and on these occasions, inter-dinning was very common. They did not exactly share food with each other but had food at same place from same serving/utensils. Data given in Table 4.2.7 highlighted that majority of Jat Sikh (74.3%) and Dalit (83.1%) respondents took meals together whereas in the generation of their fathers' this was practised by only 3.1 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 18.1 per cent of Dalits. Data further highlighted that medium (48.8%) and high status (30.8%) Dalits participated more in inter-dinning. Chi square values were found significant for caste status and not having meals together

Table 4.2.7: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of inter-dinning

Status	Yes				No			
	Respondent		Father		Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalits	Jat Sikh	Dalits	Jat Sikh	Dalits	Jat Sikh	Dalits
Low n=29,46	19 (15.97)	27 (20.30)	2 (40.00)	7 (24.14)	10 (24.39)	19 (70.37)	27 (17.42)	39 (29.77)
Medium n=79,70	72 (60.50)	65 (48.87)	3 (60.00)	10 (34.48)	7 (17.07)	5 (18.52)	76 (49.03)	60 (45.80)
High n=52,44	28 (23.53)	41 (30.83)	-	12 (41.38)	24 (58.54)	3 (11.11)	52 (33.55)	32 (24.43)
Total n=160, 160	119 (74.37)	133 (83.12)	5 (3.12)	29 (18.12)	41 (25.62)	27 (16.87)	155 (96.87)	131 (81.87)

X² 3.43ns NA 14.07** 6.86**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

ns-non significant

4.2.8 Exchange of goods

In society people interact in such a way as to share a common culture. The cultural bond may be ethnic or racial, based on gender, or due to shared beliefs, values, and activities. In Indian society caste plays an important role in social interaction and in the ideal scheme of values. Contrary to democratic values, different caste systems are interacting as a part of a larger society and they are occupationally specialized. With the advent of modernization, when the Indian society is undergoing both technological and economic transformation it is expected that the stratification by caste will be disturbed and new basis of status will emerge. Studies on inter-caste relationship are a necessity today as Indians are now engaged in the tremendous task of transforming themselves from a traditional hierarchy to modern egalitarian one (Kaur, Sharma and Aggarwal, 2001). Individuals in a society help each other in one another way. During study efforts had been made to assess that both castes exchanged some goods with each other in hour of need. Data given in Table 4.2.8 highlighted that this exchange process was nearly absent in father's generation of respondents and. Data further divulged that more than half of Jat Sikh respondents (53.1%) gave their Dalit counterparts, tractor, trolley, fodder, utensils, when they need. It was reported by 58 per cent of Dalits that they exchanged utensils, vehicles etc. with Jat Sikhs. Study observed that half of Jat Sikhs (49.4%) and Dalits (54.8%) from medium status had exchange relations. Chi square values showed non-significant association between caste status and exchange of goods.

Table 4.2.8: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of exchange of goods

Status	Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	5 (5.88)	3 (3.23)	-	-
Medium n=79,70	42 (49.41)	51 (54.84)	1 (33.33)	3 (42.86)
High n=52,44	38 (44.71)	39 (41.94)	2 (66.67)	4 (57.14)
Total n=160, 160	85 (53.12)	93 (58.12)	3 (1.87)	7 (4.37)

X^2 0.14ns
 Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage
 ns-non-significant

NA

4.2.9 Exchange of food items

Restrictions on exchange of food items was most strictly observed practice in most parts of rural India. Such restrictions were also observed in the sample area, though with much less strictness. Socio-economic status of the respondents largely determined such commensalism. Data given in Table 4.2.9 revealed that 63.7 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents exchanged some food items with Dalits and majority of them belonged to medium status (57.8%). In their fathers generation only five per cent exchanged food with Dalits. Data further divulged that 70.6 per cent of Dalits exchanged some food items with Jat Sikhs while this percentage was 9.3 per cent during their fathers' generation. Thus, it can be concluded that medium and low status Jat Sikhs had such relationship with medium and high status Dalits. High status Dalits were less involved in this process. Chi square values highlighted that caste status and exchange of food were significantly associated.

Table 4.2.9: Distribution of respondents on the basis of exchange of food items

Status	Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	28 (27.45)	16 (14.16)	3 (37.50)	3 (20.00)
Medium n=79,70	59 (57.84)	53 (46.90)	3 (37.50)	5 (33.33)
High n=52,44	15 (14.71)	44 (38.94)	2 (25.00)	7 (46.67)
Total n=160, 160	102 (63.75)	113 (70.62)	8 (5.00)	15 (9.37)

X² value

17.33**

6.83**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

4.2.10 School education and interaction

Unlike the traditional education in Hindu society, modern secular education is open to everyone. There is no caste based discrimination in education system. However, it is mostly the upper castes and rich who have taken to modern education and who continue to dominate these institutions. Due to growing awareness about the use of education among Dalits and benefits from protective discrimination, Dalits too have been able to acquire education. Experience of Dalits in the schools and their interaction with Jat Sikhs in study area was investigated. Study found that majority of Jat Sikhs (91.8%) and all

Dalit respondents went to government schools for education, but a change in trend had been found in schooling of their children. It was reported by 95.6 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 58.7 per cent of Dalit respondents that they sent their children to Private English Medium schools (Table 4.2.10). There was mushrooming of private schools mostly at nursery and primary level. A significant number of Dalits were conscious and convinced regarding the importance and role of education in upward social mobility and hence were eager to send their children to private schools. Chi square values established highly significant association for castes and type of school attended.

Table 4.2.10: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of type of school attended

School	Respondent		Children	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Government School	147 (91.87)	160 (100.0)	7 (4.37)	66 (41.25)
Private school	13 (8.12)	-	153 (95.62)	94 (58.75)
Total	160 (100.0)	160 (100.0)	160 (100.0)	160 (100.0)

X² value

13.55**

61.78**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

Study further observed that both caste children were friendly with each other. Caste based discrimination was not practised in the village government schools. Jat Sikh and Dalit children interacted with each other, they sit together, eat together and drank water from the same source and even they befriended with each other. They visited each other's places for playing, for doing homework. Data given in table 4.2.11 show that majority of Jat Sikhs (93.1%) and Dalits (85.6%) did not practise any form of caste based discrimination. Still 10.6 per cent of Dalits and 4.4 per cent of Jat Sikhs reported about certain caste based discriminatory practices where they did not sit or play together and share water or food. Yet another 2.5 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 3.7 per cent of Dalits disclosed that certain forms of practices of discrimination were practised though in a very latent and subtle form such as not sharing food, water with Dalits students by Jat Sikh students in schools.

Table 4.2.11: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of perceptions regarding caste based discrimination in schools

Discrimination	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Total
Not practised	149 (93.12)	137 (85.62)	286 (89.37)
Practised	7 (4.37)	17 (10.62)	24 (7.50)
Practised in latent form	4 (2.50)	6 (3.75)	10 (3.12)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

4.2.12 Inter-caste marriage

Endogamy is the practice of marrying within a specific ethnic group, class, or social group. Endogamy is common in many cultures and ethnic groups. Several ethnic religious groups are traditionally more endogamous, although sometimes with the added dimension of requiring marital religious conversion. This permits an exogamous marriage, as the convert, by accepting the partner's religion, becomes accepted within the endogamous rules. During study, 9 cases of marriage between Jat Sikhs and Dalits had been reported in visited villages. It was reported that in 6 cases Jat boys married Dalit girls and in 3 cases girls were from Jat Sikh caste and boys were Dalits (Table 4.2.12). Study observed more cases of anuloma marriage. Anuloma Marriage refers to the hypergamy form of marriage according to which a boy from upper varna / caste / class can marry a girl from lower varna / caste / class. Upper caste Jat Sikhs could accept a girl from lower caste though after facing several resistances but marrying their daughters to lower caste could not be accepted and could invite wrath of the in groups and led to brawls and feuds. Besides, such restrictions, three cases of pratiloma were reported in the study area. Pratiloma refers to the hypogamy form of marriage in which a man of lower class / caste / varna marries a girl of higher class / caste / varna. In Indian society, anuloma marriage was considered preferable to pratiloma marriage. Pratiloma marriage was notably discouraged but severely condemned. Marriage of a girl of higher caste with a boy of lower caste faced resistance from the society.

Table 4.2.12: Inter-caste marriages involving Dalits

Caste of the couple	Frequency
Boy Dalit, girl Jat Sikh	3
Boy Jat Sikh, girl Dalit	6

Interactive social relations

Above discussion had made it clear that there were inter-generational changes in the interaction patterns among Jat Sikhs and Dalits. Social distance between both castes had been decreasing. Social distance describes the distance between different groups of society. The more the members of two groups interact, the closer they are socially. During study, it was observed that both castes were becoming socially closer to each other. There was no restriction on Dalit's entry into Jat Sikh kitchen, both castes attended each other's' social ceremonies, inter-dinning was common practice and their children went to same schools and were befriended with each other. All these practices showed the proximity in relationship among respondents in both castes whereas it was almost absent during their fathers' generation.

A rising middle class of Dalits were more active in such social ties. The newly achieved status of Dalits had made significant changes in interaction with upper caste Jat Sikhs. It was a trend in Dalits to put Jat surnames with their names like *Gill, Sandhu, Dhillon* etc. It was their way to show or achieve equality or equal status to that of upper castes or Jats. but in the sample area Dalits put their own surnames like *Kaler, Nanah, Mal, Bhatola, Bhadhan Mahey*, and even in some cases they use the words like, *Danav, Bhavadas, Sonh, Hari* with their names. These words can be seen written in front of their houses, vehicles. They showcased their caste on their vehicles through slogans like *Putt chamara de, chamaras* etc. *Ad-Dhrmis* greeted each other by saying *Jai Gurudev*. Singers of Doaba region launched audio and video CDs to counter Jat pop music that rules Punjab. Album like *Anakhi Putt Chamaran De* (Proud Sons of *Chamars*), *Charhat chamara di* was a direct challenge to the prevailing '*Putt Jattan de*' (sons of Jatts) culture. They reclaimed the word through their music. Songs such as *Cool Chamar, Fighter Chamar* and *Proud Sons of Chamar* have gained popularity both inside and outside the country. Dalits of Doaba were reclaiming a new identity thorough music, slogans and *Jaikaras*. The popular call in Doaba right now is, *Bole so nirbhay, Guru Ravidas ki jai* (Be fearless, hail Guru Ravidas).

Dependency

Dependency is the state of being connected to and subordinate to someone or something. Traditionally Dalits were dependent on upper caste Jat Sikhs for grain, cash, fodder etc. During study effort were made to assess the inter-generational changes in dependency relations of Jat Sikhs and Dalits. Data given in Table 4.2.13 highlighted that one fifth of the respondents were dependent on Jat Sikhs for cash and kind. High status Dalit were no more dependent on Jat Sikhs for cash and kind, but their fathers were. It was t low status Dalits who still dependent on upper caste for cash (61.2%), kind (75.7%) and for both (64.0%). Study also observed the dependency of some medium status respondents for cash

Table 4.2.14: Distribution of Jat Sikh respondents on the basis of sources of borrowing money

Multiple responses

Status	Institutional sources		Non institutional sources					
	Commercial / Cooperative Banks		<i>Arhtiyas</i>		Friends		Relatives	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=29	14 (10.68)	9 (7.62)	4 (4.04)	3 (4.28)	19 (27.94)	27 (37.50)	22 (41.50)	25 (39.68)
Medium n=79	69 (52.67)	62 (52.54)	49 (49.49)	29 (41.42)	28 (41.17)	25 (34.72)	17 (32.07)	21 (33.33)
High n=52	48 (36.64)	47 (39.83)	46 (46.46)	38 (54.28)	21 (30.88)	20 (27.77)	14 (26.41)	17 (26.98)
Total n=160	131 (81.87)	118 (73.75)	99 (61.87)	70 (43.75)	68 (42.50)	72 (45.00)	53 (33.12)	63 (39.37)

X² value

0.79ns

1.00ns

1.47ns

0.04ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

ns-non-significant

Table 4.2.14a: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of sources of borrowing money

Multiple responses

Status	Institutional sources		Non institutional sources					
	Banks/ cooperative Banks		Jat Acquaintances		Friends		Relatives	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=46	38 (30.4)	7 (12.28)	19 (61.29)	41 (37.27)	16 (34.04)	21 (33.87)	42 (41.58)	45 (39.13)
Medium n=70	44 (35.2)	18 (31.57)	12 (38.70)	36 (32.72)	17 (36.17)	22 (35.48)	35 (34.65)	36 (31.30)
High n=44	43 (34.4)	32 (56.14)	-	33 (30.00)	14 (29.78)	19 (30.64)	24 (54.54)	31 (26.95)
Total n=160	125 (78.12)	57 (35.62)	31 (19.37)	110 (68.75)	47 (29.37)	62 (38.75)	101 (23.76)	115 (71.87)

X² value

9.84**

5.71*

0.01ns

0.44ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at 1 per cent level

*Significant at 5 per cent level

ns-non significant

Greater accessibility of Dalit respondents across different socio-economic categories over institutional sources as credit pointed towards success of government's policy of financial inclusion of Dalits. Compared with their father's generation, 78.1 per cent had access to institutional sources. Dependency on their Jat patrons was reported by nineteen per cent of the respondents whereas it was 68.7 per cent in the previous generation of their fathers'. Medium (35.2%) high status (34.4%) respondents procured credit from institutional sources (Table 4.2.14a). Thus, it can be concluded that Jat patrons were no longer major source of credit for Dalits. Outreach of institutional sources of credit and greater accessibility of Dalits to these institutions was significant in the study area. Chi square values were significant for caste status and institutional sources, caste status and Jat acquaintances.

Changed patron- client relations

In Indian caste system, lower castes were dependent on upper castes for help in the form of kind and cash. This interaction system was known as *Jajmani* system. It was an economic system where lower castes performed various functions for upper castes and received grain or cash in return. There was exchange of goods and services between landowning higher castes and landless service castes such as weaver, leather worker, black smith, barber, washer men etc. The landed higher castes were patrons and the service caste were the *kameen* (server) of the *jajman*.

Study observed a significant change in *jajmani* relationship between Jat Sikhs and Dalits. Dalits, in the study area reported that their fathers were not just labourers but also a client and as such they were entitled to affection, generosity on the part of their master, who as a patron had to guard and promote their interest. In present generation such type of ties were missing and they (Dalits) were no longer in *jajmani* relations with Jat Sikhs. Initially Dalits especially *Balmikis* distanced themselves from traditional unclean occupations in order to get rid of stigmatized identity attached with such jobs. They had been replaced with contractual labour mostly from outside the village and in some cases even outside the state. But in the due course of time Dalits also distanced themselves from agricultural labour and the reason behind was not the dislike for the occupation but rather they were not in mood of carrying forward the relations of dependency on their age old Jat Sikh patrons.

In the era of green revolution they were replaced by cheap and decile migrant labourer. A section amongst erstwhile marginalized achieved a significant upward mobility after benefitting from government sponsored policy of protective discrimination. Moreover, in *Doaba* region economic affluence of *Ad-dharmis* achieved by sheer hard work and entrepreneurship in leather business had made them not only economically independent but had bestowed economic and political power reckoned even by the dominant Jat Sikhs. All this

has resulted in drastic change of earlier patron client relations. Jat Sikhs on their part had de patronized their Dalit clients in favour of hired contractual migrant labour as it suited best to their vested economic interests. Dalits on their part moved higher on the ritual as well as economic ladder, distances themselves from patron-client relationship, consider themselves self-sufficient and autonomous.

Religious disabilities

4.2.15 *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat Sikh Gurudwaras

Study found that in 14 villages, Dalits had separate gurudwaras. In these villages they (Dalits) did not bring *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat Sikh gurudwaras, though there were no restrictions imposed on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras. Data given in Table 4.2.15 show that just 12.5 per cent of Dalits brought *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat gurudwaras, whereas in their fathers' generation, forty per cent brought *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat Sikh gurudwaras. In their fathers' generation there was no separate gurudwaras for Dalits so they brought *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat Sikh gurudwaras.

Table 4.2.15: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of having *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat Sikhs gurudwaras

Particulars	Yes	No	Total
Respondents	20 (12.50)	140 (87.50)	160 (100.00)
Fathers	64 (40.00)	96 (60.00)	160 (100.00)

X^2 31.25**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant for 1 per cent level

4.2.16 Visit to Dalit religious places

There were separate gurudwaras Dalits in the fourteen villages under study. Besides these gurudwaras there were other religious places like *dera*, *jpgah* (Muslim places of worship) etc. An attempt had been made to know that whether they visited each other's religious places or not. It was revealed by all Dalits respondents that there were no restriction on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras and other religious places. Data given in Table 4.2.16 indicate that in fathers' generation of Jat Sikhs 16 per cent went to Dalit's religious places but now trend had been changed significantly as it was disclosed by 74 per cent of the Jat Sikh respondents that they went to Dalit gurudwaras and their other religious places in the village.

Table 4.2.16: Distribution of Jat Sikh respondents on the basis of visit to Dalits' religious places

Particulars	Yes	No	Total
Respondents	119 (74.38)	41 (25.62)	160 (100.00)
Fathers	26 (16.25)	134 (83.75)	160 (100.00)

X² value 109.07**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant for 1 per cent level

*It was reported in the study that all Dalit respondents visited Jat Sikh's religious places

Data discussed above had made it clear that Jat Sikhs had started visiting Dalit's religious places. Then efforts were made to know the purpose of visit and data given in this regard has been given in Table 4.2.17. Data revealed that majority of Jat Sikhs (96.6%) and Dalits (95.6%) went to pay obeisance. Compared to Jat Sikhs (46.2%) greater percentage of Dalits (84.3%) reported that they visited these places to have some goods (utensils, mats, loud speaker) which showed Jat Sikhs were more self-sufficient. Few of Dalit respondents (2.5%) reported that they were members in Jat Sikh gurudwara managing committees and even lesser (1.8%) percentage divulged that they went to gurudwaras when called to discuss the financial matters at Jat Sikh's religious places. A change had been observed in the participation of Dalit as members in the Jat Sikh gurudwaras managing committees. It may be the after effect of the *Talhan* incidence. Results given in the Table were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 4.2.17: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of purpose of visit to religious places

Multiple responses

Particulars	Respondents		Fathers		Z values
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalits	
To pay obeisance or ordinary visit	115 (96.63)	153 (95.62)	23 (88.46)	121 (75.62)	0.23
As a managing committee member	15 (12.60)	4 (2.50)	4 (15.38)	-	3.31**
To participate in financial matters	12 (10.08)	3 (1.87)	5 (19.23)	-	3.01**
To have some goods/articles	55 (46.21)	135 (84.37)	-	115 (71.87)	6.76**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant for 1 per cent level

Political participation

Table 4.2.18: Number of SCs sarpanches in Punjab (2013-14)

Particulars	Sarpanche	Panch
SC	3639 (28.59)	24158 (33.63)
Female	3556 (27.94)	25920 (36.09)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Total number of panchayats-12726

Member panchayats-71816

Source: Statistical abstract of Punjab, 2013-14

Data given in Table 4.2.18 indicate that erstwhile marginalized has become conscious of their rights as was enshrined in the Constitution Amendment 73rd and were using it to the optimal level. In year 2013-14, there were 28.5 per cent Dalit sarpanch and 33.6 per cent panches in village panchayats. Regarding female participation in panchayats data highlighted that there was 27.9 per cent sarpanch and 36 per cent female panches in panchayats. One third proportions of seats has been reserved for females and in panchayats under 73rd amendment and above data has made it clear that there was one third representation of Dalits as well as of females in village panchayats.

Village *panchayat* and elections

Panchayati Raj is the foundation of India's grassroot political system. It is a decentralised form of government where each village would be responsible for its own affairs. In the structure of the panchayati raj, the village panchayat is the lowest unit. Parliament enacted the Constitution (73rd) Amendment Act in 1993. The move was hailed as a breakthrough in bringing about a vibrant system of participatory democracy at the grassroots level and a paradigm shift in the process of development. The Act, which contains guidelines for the states to put in place three-tier panchayati raj institutions, generated a lot of hope about empowering the weaker sections. For the first time it provided for statutory reservation of elected posts in local bodies for women, besides the SCs and the STs. During study it was found that this amendment got implemented in toto at village panchayats. In six villages of study area sarpanch was Dalit male and in one village it was Dalit female.

73rd amendment had made possible the participation of Dalits in grassroots level politics and in village elections. But in majority cases Dalit female *panch*, *sarpanch*, were dummy members, all power lied in the hands of Jats who spent money on elections. Due to financial constraint Dalits were unable to bear expenses (Sharma & Sidhu, 2012). Data given in Table 4.2.19 divulged that 66.8 per cent of the respondents said Jat Sikhs bore all the expenses, whereas this percentage was 93 per cent during their father's generation. In some

villages where Dalit families were well off, they bore all the expenses as revealed by 18.7 per cent respondents. Further 14.3 per cent of respondents said that both castes jointly spent money on election. It was evident from the data that dependency of Dalits on Jat Sikhs had been reduced in contesting elections in monetary terms. They had started contesting village election independently. It was found that caste and money spent on elections were significantly associated.

Table 4.2.19: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis who spent money on elections

Particulars	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Both
Respondents	107 (66.87)	30 (18.75)	23 (14.37)
Father	149 (93.12)	6 (3.75)	5 (3.12)

X² 34.46**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at 1 per cent level

Data given in Table 4.2.20 highlighted the perceptions of the respondents on power sharing for Jat Sikh and Dalit female panches/ sarpanch and it was revealed by 30.6 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that women had equal powers as the male members had. Fifteen per cent of Dalit respondents talked about equality in right and power in panchayats. Jat Sikh female panches/sarpanches were enjoying powers, but their Dalit counterpart females did not get such privileges. Chi square valued established a significant association between caste and power sharing.

Table 4.2.20: Perceptions about equality in power sharing by women

Equality in power sharing	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Yes	49 (30.62)	24 (15.00)
No	111 (69.37)	136 (85.00)

X² value 11.09**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at one per cent level

An attempt had been made to assess the cooperation from Jat Sikhs in panchayat as perceived by Dalit respondents. It was revealed by 75.6 per cent of Dalit respondents that Jat Sikhs cooperate with them at each stage, 24.8 per cent of them complained about the problems such as in functioning of panchayat, village issues and in any conflict in the village had been created by Jat Sikhs (Table 4.2.21). In their fathers' generation 38 per cent reported that Jat Sikhs were unsupportive in panchayats with Dalit panches and sarpanches.

Table 4.2.21: Distribution of Dalit respondents on the basis of their perception of cooperation in Panchayats

Particulars	Respondent	Father
Yes	121 (75.62)	98 (61.25)
No	39 (24.37)	62 (38.75)

X²

7.65**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Significant at one per cent level

Social mobility

Social mobility is the movement usually of individuals but sometimes of whole groups between different positions within the system of social stratification in any society. In the social ladder this movement may be upward or downward or it may be inter-generational or intra-generational. In short, social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another. Upward and downward mobility refers to mobility between a family of origin and one's own class or status position. Inter-generational mobility means that one generation changes its social status in contrast to preceding generation. Analysis of the present study depicted an upward inter-generational mobility of the respondents. The Constitutional measures adopted under the protective discrimination policy provided an opportunity to Dalits to improve their status in class hierarchy but did not guarantee any improvement in their caste status. Class status of the respondents had been measured on the basis of their education, occupation, income, caste, land holding, type of house and political participation. Respondents were more educated than their fathers' and had higher prestige occupations. Political participation was also higher in the present generation. Dalits had improved their class status, but not caste status and class status too in limited sense.

Perceptions about changing interaction patterns

Preceding discussion on changing interaction patterns between Jat Sikhs and Dalits had made a clear picture of their relations. An observable change in the interaction and relationships between both castes had been found, which lacked in the generation of their fathers. Then, efforts were made to assess the overall perception of both castes about these changes. Data given in Table 4.2.22 highlighted that majority of Jat Sikh (88.7%) respondents were not at ease with Dalit consciousness and their movement on emerging and establishing separate identity. Though they did not speak openly but shared their fears in hushed up tone that one day they will over power them (*ik din eh sanu hi thale launge*). Jat Sikhs accepted these changes in village caste system because of numerical strength of Dalits. Also they constituted vote bank, and Jat Sikhs had well realized the fact that without Dalit votes they could not succeed in election. Announcement of Rs. 100 crores for Ravidas memorial by

present SAD-BJP government at *Khuralgarh* village in Hoshiarpur district also is the testimony of the fact that they well realized the power of Dalit vote bank and program to cash upon it through such lucrative efforts. Majority of Jat Sikh respondents (96.2%) were strictly against the reservation policy for Dalits. They said reservation for Dalits should be abolished, they (Dalits) were economically sound now, no more a vulnerable section of society. They expressed that Jat Sikh marginal and small farmers were in worse condition than Dalits as agriculture has no more an economically viable occupation and sustainability is in danger. So it should be on the basis of economic status not on the basis of caste. Again it was perceived by more than fifty per cent of Jat Sikh respondents accepted the equality in status of both castes, they perceived Dalit assertion and consciousness a mile stone towards their equality in society or social setting. Fifty four per cent of Jat Sikh respondents reported good and satisfactory relations with Dalits. They did not have any issue with Dalits and lived in a harmony with them. Study further reported that 45.6 per cent of Jat Sikh and 38.7 per cent of Dalits respondents chose to stay silent on the issue.

It was disclosed by 65.7 per cent of Dalits that Jat Sikh dominance had been decreased. They did not try to suppress them due to various reasons such as, preventive and affirmative actions of government, the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989, economic independence of Dalits, deviation from hereditary occupations etc. Further 59.3 per cent of Dalit respondents reported that they enjoyed social status almost equal to their Jat Sikh counterparts and almost equal percentage (61.1%) of them reported harmonious relations with upper caste Jat Sikhs. Difference in the perceptions of both caste respondents regarding changing interaction patterns was found to be significant at one level of significance.

Table 4.2.22: Perceptions of respondents about changing interaction patterns

Perception	Respondents		Z values
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	
Egalitarianism	86 (53.75)	95 (59.37)	1.02
Apprehension of Dalit dominance	142 (88.75)	-	15.98**
Assertion and consciousness	-	105 (65.62)	12.50**
Abolition of reservation	154 (96.25)	-	17.23**
Complacency in relations	87 (54.37)	98 (61.12)	1.25**
Silent on the issue	73 (45.62)	62 (38.75)	1.25**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

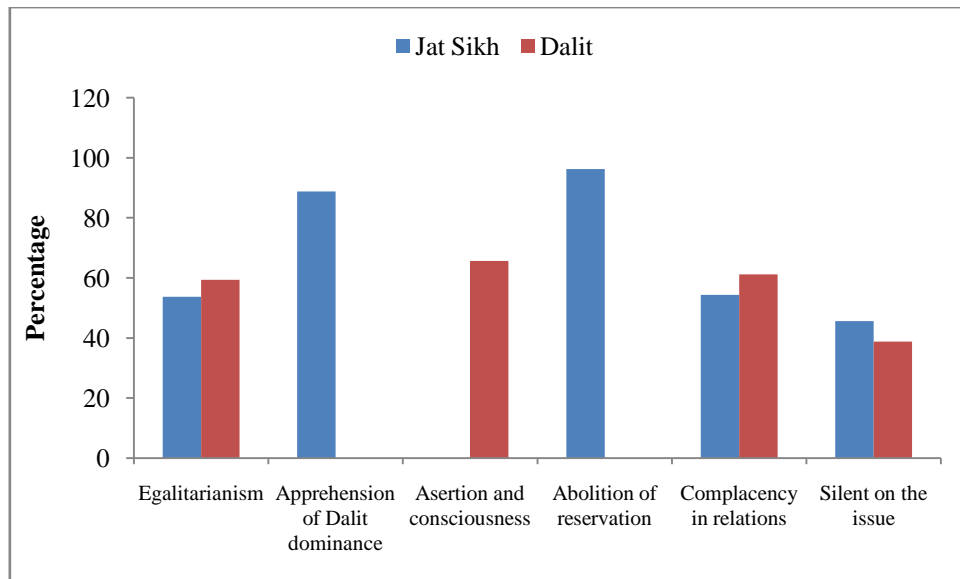


Fig.7: Perceptions of respondents about changing interaction patterns

Assertive and consciousness Dalits; Apprehensive and prejudiced Jat Sikhs

Dalits in rural Punjab do not necessarily want to forget their caste identities. They do want to be treated with dignity and self-respect. For living a life of dignity, they need their own autonomous cultural resources. The Sikh religion does not advocate discrimination against any caste. However, in practice, Sikhs belonging to the landowning dominant castes have not shed all their prejudices against the Dalits. Dalits constructed their own gurudwaras, institute separate dharm granth and new religious symbols in order to attain a certain degree of cultural autonomy from the dominant caste. Dalit consciousness emerged against the backdrop of the bani of Guru Ravidas. The rise of a large number of separate Dalit gurudwaras and community centres, and the ever increasing number of conflicts are a clear testimony to the surging Dalit assertion for equal rights and dignity.

A rise in class status did not lead to a commensurate rise in social or caste status in village. The incongruity or status dissonance between economic or class status is reflected in a noticeable incidence of status anxiety leading to social conflict situations (Saberwal, 1972). The economic prosperity of section of Dalits made them more apprehensive about insults and humiliation as well as being intolerant of uncomplimentary remarks or body language of upper caste Jat Sikhs. Changes taking place at the structural and political level in the institutions of caste and untouchability in contemporary rural areas could be captured through categories of dissociation, distancing and autonomy.

4.3 Prevalence of dissociation between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any

The preceding section on interaction pattern among Jat Sikhs and Dalits very well established the fact that the caste as social and political category for the assertion of lower caste identity politics in *Doaba* region of Punjab. Caste continued to pull strings, even though

the state has long boasted of a caste free society. Dalits particularly *Ad-dharmis*, who had improved their socio-economic status either through immigration, benefits from reservation policies or small scale enterprises like carpenter, service sector, *aata chakis* and oil presses had disassociated themselves from their caste occupations. They also had distanced themselves from age old landlord patrons (who they no longer want to serve) and severed the *jajmani* ties. Empowered through 73rd constitutional amendment act they were no more in denial mode. Thus, they had not only improved their economic status but had also liberated themselves from the subjugation of the Jat Sikh *zamindars*.

This improved socio-political and economic position had sharpened their sense of social consciousness, which is overtly, manifested at different forums through different ways particularly the celebrations of Ravidas Jayanti. They should be no way mistaken with communalism. However, given the state of interaction patterns prevailed among both castes in the region of the state, there were possibilities of turning this into conflicts.

Study further intrigued into the state of affairs and tried to identify the conflict between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any and to ascertain the reasons thereof. Study attempted to record the perceptions regarding prevalence of dissociation in the study area and found (Table 4.3.1) that 28.7 per cent of the Jat Sikhs and 38.7 per cent of Dalits felt that they had dissociative social interaction with other caste fellows. Study found Dalits more vocal in responding about their state of negative affairs. When compared with their earlier generation, it was found almost negligible response from fathers of Jat Sikhs (3.1%) and Dalits (1.3%), which was not indicative of very harmonious or associative social relations amongst their predecessors. Rather deeper investigations of the matter revealed that Jat Sikhs on their part never recognized any form of protest or rebellion by their Dalit dependents and Dalits on their part did not have required consciousness to recognize and report their exploited positions.

Table 4.3.1: Perceptions of the respondents regarding prevalence of dissociation

Particular	Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Yes	46 (28.75)	62 (38.75)	5 (3.12)	2 (1.25)
No	114 (71.25)	98 (61.25)	155 (96.87)	158 (98.75)

X²

3.58ns

1.31ns

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

ns-non significant

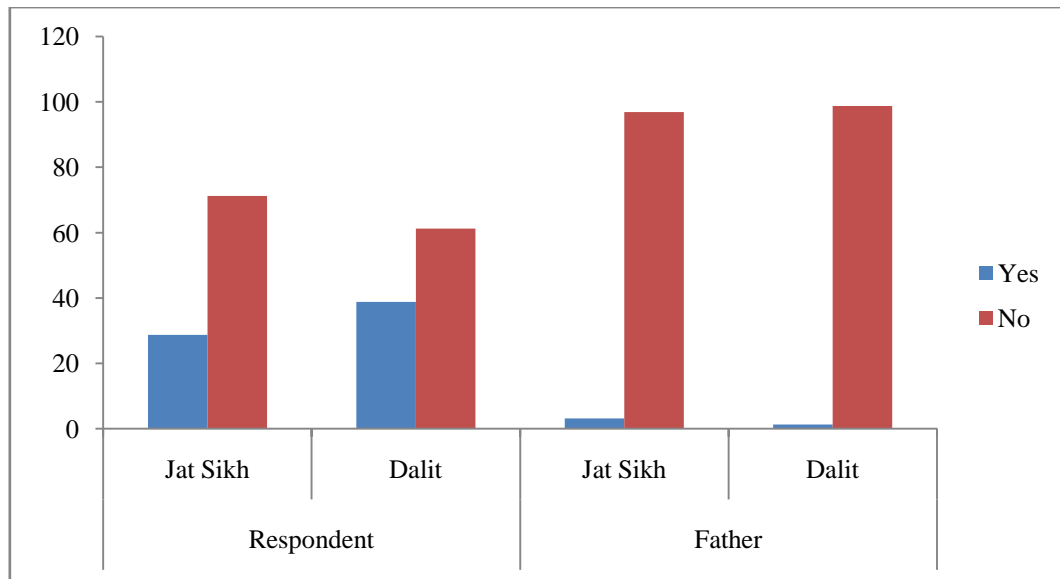


Fig.8: Perceptions of the respondents regarding prevalence of dissociation

4.3.2 Social reasons behind dissociation

Study further tried to explore the reasons behind dissociation between the two castes. The study relied on the perceptions of the respondents. The responses were obtained and for the sake of empirical analysis these were clubbed under different categories viz social, economic, political and religious. Though there existed an overlapping among the responses but to for the sake of analysis these were considered under constituent categories.

Perusal of Table 4.3.2 highlights that flaunting of status by Dalits was the major bone of contention leading to dissociative social relation. More than half of the Jat Sikh respondents, who responded of prevalence of dissociation perceived undue flaunting of newly acquired status by Dalits as the major reason behind the unsavoury social situation but Dalits (29%) on their part felt that their Jat Sikh counterparts were jealous of their improved status and did not come to terms and digest their newly acquired position. Denial to upper caste dominance was reported by three fourth of Dalit respondents as another reason behind dissociation. They divulged that Jat landlords expected same kind of servitude, bondage and obedience from them which their forefathers used to do. Practising other than traditional occupations, Dalits were no longer attached to Jat Sikhs as *siris* and were not obliged to accept their dominance. They were neither ready to accept any derogatory remarks (38.7%) hurled upon them by Jat acquaintances.

Shamlats were another hot spot for which more than half of respondents from both castes tried to acquire and fight over the others' claim over the land. Marriage between different castes is a new social phenomenon which is picking pace in urban areas and making inroads in rural areas too. Neighbouring state of Haryana is infamous for the phenomenon of honour killing. Though, no case of honour killing was reported in the study area, yet inter-

caste marriage was not well received by Jat Sikhs (69.6%) and more so by Dalits (61.2%). Study observed that Jat Sikhs could accept girl from lower caste (though not easily) but marriage of their daughter to lower caste could invite wrath of not only the family concerned, but usually of the whole community which get involved and instigated into the issue. Not only inter caste marriages were unwelcomed but intra caste marriages too were contentious. Due to hierarchy being prevailed among Dalits which placed *Ad-dharmis* at highest rung and *Balmikis* at lowest, conjugal relations among them were not acceptable especially to *Ad-dharmis*. Results were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 4.3.2: Perceptions of respondents regarding social reasons behind dissociation

Multiple responses

Reasons	Respondents		Z values
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	
Improved status of Dalits	25 (54.34)	18 (29.03)	2.66**
Derogatory remarks against Dalits	-	24 (38.70)	4.70**
<i>Shamlat</i> issue	27 (58.69)	35 (56.45)	0.23
Inter-caste marriage	32 (69.57)	38 (61.29)	0.89
Denial to upper caste dominance	-	48 (77.42)	8.01**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

4.3.3 Economic reasons behind dissociation

The increase inflow of migrant workforce in Punjab has far reaching consequences both positive and negative. The substantial presence of migrant agricultural labour in the rural social set up and huge surplus workforce in agriculture and rural economy of Punjab presents a paradoxical situation. Its rural sector absorbs some half to one million migrant labour but its own 391474 youth (both educated and uneducated) stand unemployed (GOP, 2013). Besides skewing employment opportunities, migrants have depressed the wages of local labour and are significant threat to the potential for a further rise in their wages by reducing their bargaining power. Same phenomenon was observed in the study area where eighty per cent of Dalits reported that Jat Sikh landlords had lowered their wages and resorted to migrant labour (severing the age old *jajmani* ties) who were ready to work at lower wages. Jat Sikhs (82.6%) on their part reported labour issue an important reason

behind unsavoury situation. They divulged that local *siris* have shifted to non-farm sector. They (Jat Sikhs) further divulged that Dalits preferred to remain idle at their homes instead of working in their fields as labour.

Further, it was reported by 76 per cent of the Jat Sikhs that Dalits did not pay back the money borrowed from them. They disclosed that Dalits used to promise that if they will be unable to pay money back, they will work in the fields to clear the debt, but they neither pay the money nor work in their fields. Jat Sikhs said it was their mistake to lend money to Dalits, *Ina di zaat hi eho jhi, pese le k vaps karn da naam hi ni lende* (These lower caste people are like that only, they forgot to return what they have taken). On the other hand, on same issue 67.8 per cent of Dalit respondents reported that they had cleared all the debt, but envious Jat Sikhs unnecessarily wanted to trap them by levelling false charges. How they could torture and force them to work as labour in their fields when no dues were outstanding and they did not have any obligation to serve. Chi square values showed significant association between caste and economic reasons.

Table 4.3.3: Perceptions of respondents regarding economic reasons behind dissociation
Multiple responses

Reason	Respondent	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Wage issue	24 (52.17)	49 (79.03)
Labour issue	38 (82.60)	11 (17.74)
Debt issue	35 (76.08)	42 (67.74)

X²

23.99**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

4.3.4. Political reasons behind dissociation

History of active Dalit politics in Punjab is fairly old and goes back to early years of 20th century. It was in 1920s that Ad-dharam movement was initiated in Punjab by Mangoo Ram among the *chamars* of the *Doaba* sub region. This movement has been one of the most successful of Dalit mobilization. It did succeed in mobilizing a large number of local Dalits against the caste system and for a separate identity. After independence India adopted the democratic model of development with special thrust on upliftment of weaker sections. Panchayat Raj System in 1957 was the most exciting experiment in democratic decentralization and further to ensure the participation of SCs and STs. 73rd Amendment Act in Constitution was made and came into force from 24th April, 1993. This had reserved the seats for SCs in proportion to their population for membership of panchayat. These factors led

to a political consciousness of Dalits. This consciousness and active participation of Dalits in village politics had not been easily accepted by locally dominant Jat Sikhs. The study also recorded the same as it was revealed by all the Jat Sikh respondents that due to reservation under 73rd amendment, Dalits hold the power in village, they no longer obey them, disrespect their patronage. Further Jat Sikhs (54.3%) divulged that how a sweeper class, who is illiterate could run the panchayat. They were not aware about the functioning mechanism and lack required skills for politics. Jat Sikhs blamed Dalits for being corrupt and misusing the grants. Same blame of corruption had been levied by Dalits (62.9%) on Jat Sikh Sarpanches and Panches. They expressed that Jat Sikhs who had been controlling the affairs of village could not tolerated the change. This had created cleavage and generated tensions leading to fighting, allegations, mutual suspicion and conflict between them and Jat Sikhs. It was reported by 85.7 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that Dalit voters openly demanded for liquor, money, household items from competing parties and even there was no guarantee that they would vote for that party after grabbing all incentives. On same issue 70 per cent of Dalits reported these as false allegations against them. They denied any such practices. Again majority of Dalits (93.5%) reported discrimination in development projects. According to Dalit respondents, Jat Sikh sarpanches ignored their residential areas (*chamarhli*, *vehrha*) in development projects like, construction of community halls, cemented roads, planation, cleanliness etc. They accused that Jat Sikh sarpanches preferred their own localities for such projects. Differences calculated were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 4.3.4: Perceptions of respondents regarding political reasons behind dissociation

Reason	Respondents		Multiple responses
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Z value
Reservation under 73 rd amendment	46 (100.00)	-	10.39**
Accusations of corruption and inefficiency	25 (54.34)	39 (62.90)	0.89
Malpractices	36 (85.71)	44 (70.96)	0.86
Discriminating Dalits in development projects	-	58 (93.54)	9.64**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

4.3.5 Religious reasons behind dissociation

The recent Dalit backlash in Punjab in the aftermath of the Vienna attack on the lives of two spiritual heads (Sant Niranjana Dass and his second-in-command Sant Ramanand) of *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* (DSB), one of the most important Dalit religious centres and a symbol of Dalit assertion in northern India had flared up the conflict between two castes in the state. DSB, also known as *Dera Shri 108 Sant Sarwan Dass ji Maharaj Sachkhand Ballan* or simply *Dera Ballan*, is situated at village *Ballan* seven miles north of Jalandhar city on the Pathankot road. Other equally famous Ravidass *deras* are, Temple Ravidass *Chak Hakim* (Phagwara), and *dera* of Sant Jagatjit Giri, Pathankot (Ram, 2009). The Ravidass *deras* of *Ballan* and *Chak Hakim* shot into prominence during the Ad-dharm movement. They were instrumental in bringing social consciousness among Dalits of Punjab. Mangoo Ram, the founder of Ad-dharm movement, visited the *dera Ballan* and sought its support in popularizing the image of Ravidass among Dalits of Punjab (Juergensmeyer, 1988). The association of the *dera* with the Ad-dharm movement becomes further clear from the fact that Sant Sarwan Dass, then head of the *dera Ballan*, offered juice to Mangoo Ram to open his fast-unto-death (Bawa, 2004). These *deras* are distinguished from both Hindu temples and mainstream Sikh gurudwaras in the sense that they have their separate patterns of rituals, ceremonies, slogans, *ardas* (prayer), *kirtan* (musical rendering of sacred hymns), religious festivals and iconography (Rawat, 2003). Due to such influential *deras* in the region, a tensed religious situation was simmering between Jat Sikhs and Dalits in the area. DSB has a great influence on Dalits (particularly Ad-dharmis) of *Doaba* region. After Vienna attack on head of DSB, who was attacked by a group of extremist Sikhs, allegedly Jats, laid the foundation for Dalits seeking a more assertive, cultural, political and religious identity.

Then, *dera* purposed a separate religious granth named *Amrit Bani*, containing *shlokas* of Guru Ravidass originally found in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Motive behind instituting a separate religious granth was to establish a separate religion which would be different from Sikh religion. During study it was reported by Jat Sikhs (10.8%) and Dalits (8%) that instituting *Amrit Bani* in Ravidass gurudwaras by Dalits was the major bone of contention between them (Table 4.3.5). Emigration of Dalits to UK, New Zealand, and Italy was quite popular in the region and recently Gulf countries emerged as new destination for Ad-dharmis. Dalit NRIs contributed liberally for the welfare of their community and for social and religious occasions. This ostentatiousness could be observed in Ravidass Jayanti celebrations where they organized *Nagar Kirtans*, distributed fruits, sweets and *langar*. They concluded this celebration by holding *Akhand Paths*. Jat Sikhs were not comfortable with this flaunting, though not objected it openly. In the study area 91.3 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents had some issue with this act of flaunting. It was perceived by 88.7 per cent of Dalits that upper

caste Jat Sikhs did not support them in these celebrations, neither they like such display nor did they participate freely. It was reported by 45 per cent of Dalit respondents that they were not given opportunities to be member in Jat Sikh gurudwara managing committees, even if their numerical strength was more than Jat Sikhs in the village. Even, in the study area out of visited 16 villages, in fourteen Dalits had their own separate gurudwaras. Saints of DSB and other *deras* and Dalit community of region (*Doaba*) attempted to institute new religion. The new faith, called Guru Ravidas Dharm, was to have its own religious book, *Amrit Bani Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj Ji*, communal flag (*Har*) and greeting (*Jai Guru Dev Ji*). Study observed that Jat Sikh respondents (84.7%) did not appreciate and somehow dislike and fear from this emergence of new religion and further 91.9 per cent of Dalit respondents revealed that their separate religious activities were not accepted by Jat Sikhs and all this resulted in often tense situation between two castes. Differences calculated were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 4.3.5: Perceptions of respondents regarding religious reasons behind dissociation

Reason	Respondent		Multiple responses Z values
	Jat Sikhs	Dalits	
Instituting separate <i>Dharm Granth (Amrit Bani)</i>	5 (10.86)	5 (8.06)	0.50
Celebration of Ravidas Jayanti	42 (91.30)	55 (88.70)	0.44
Management committee of gurudwaras	-	28 (45.16)	5.30**
Separate religion	39 (84.78)	57 (91.93)	1.17

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

4.4 Dissociation and resulting conflicts

Conflict is an ever present process in human relations. Social conflict is multi-faceted and does not revolve around one single issue. It is clear from the above discussion that social, economic, political and religious issue made a base for conflict between Dalits and Jat Sikhs in the study area. In most cases, long before conflict erupts in hostile action; it has existed in latent form in social tension and dissatisfaction. Latent conflict becomes overt conflict when an issue is declared and when hostile action is taken. The overt conflict occurs when one side

or the other feels strong and wishes to take advantage of this fact. Sometimes actual conflict may exist in latent form for years before there is a formulation of issue or a crisis. Efforts were made in this regard to assess the prevalent form of conflict. Data given in Table 4.4 indicates that in the study area these forms of conflict had been found in respondents only, while their fathers' generation did not reported of such phenomenon. Mainly conflict was in subtle form, it was not loud or noticeable but important in the change in interaction between two castes. Data suggested that religious, political and social reasons were the major forces behind conflict. It was disclosed by 16.2 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that social reasons such as improved status of Dalits, *shamlat* and inter-caste marriage were responsible for conflict. It was further reported by 46.1 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that such cases end up in altercation with Dalits whereas thirty per cent Jat Sikh respondents divulged that these issues remained subtle. Both castes had some problems but they did not come up with them openly. Eleven per cent of Jat Sikh respondents reported that due to *shamlat* issues they had to resort to litigation and 7.6 per cent had been in feud with Dalits over inter-caste marriage.

Social reason behind conflict had been reported by 11.2 per cent of Dalit respondents and out of this fifty per cent had some kind of altercation with Jat Sikhs while 38.8 per cent reported the subtle form of conflict. Data further highlighted that Dalits (10.0%) and Jat Sikhs (7.5%) had some economic issues of wages, labour and debt. Fifty eight per cent of Jat Sikhs and 56.2 per cent of Dalits faced altercation on these issues. For 14.3 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 13.9 per cent of Dalits, reasons pertaining political participation created conflicting situation in the village or between these two castes. Jat Sikhs (21.7%) reported about altercation on unequal power distribution. Both caste respondents were into litigation due to corruption charges against each other.

Further Jat Sikh respondents (17.3%) reported that political issues flared up in the village where whole Jat and Dalit community stood against each other. Same kind of information had been given by nine per cent Dalit respondents. Conflict due to political reasons was reported as subtle by 47.8 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 68.1 per cent of Dalits. Study came out with religious reasons as major reason for conflict between upper caste Jat Sikhs and Dalits in the region. This was reported as subtle by majority of Jat Sikh (76.9%) and Dalit (86.2%) respondents. In few cases it led to altercation and litigation. It was divulged by Jat Sikhs and Dalits that instituting *Amrit Bani* in Ravidas gurudwaras by Dalits resulted in unsavoury situation where Jat Sikhs opposed this move of Dalits. So, study found that conflict was simmering in *Doaba* region which could flare up into an overt conflict any time at slightest provocation.

Table 4.4: Reasons and forms of conflict

Multiple responses

Forms of conflict	Reasons											
	Social				Economic				Political		Religious	
	Respondent		Father		Respondent		Father		Respondent		Respondent	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Subtle	8 (36.76)	7 (38.88)	3 (6.00)	-	5 (41.66)	7 (4.37)	2 (66.67)	-	11 (47.82)	15 (68.18)	20 (76.92)	25 (86.20)
Altercation	12 (46.15)	9 (50.00)	1 (20.00)	1 (0.62)	7 (56.25)	9 (5.62)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	5 (21.73)	2 (9.09)	2 (7.69)	3 (10.34)
Litigation	3 (11.53)	2 (11.11)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 (8.69)	2 (9.09)	1 (3.84)	1 (3.44)
Feud	2 (7.69)	-	1 (20.00)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (4.34)	1 (4.54)	-	-
Flare up	1 (3.84)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 (17.39)	2 (9.09)	3 (11.53)	-
Total	26 (16.25)	18 (11.25)	5 (3.12)	1 (0.62)	12 (7.5)	16 (10.00)	3 (1.87)	2 (1.25)	23 (14.37)	22 (13.95)	26 (16.25)	29 (18.12)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*In fathers' generation no political & religious conflict was reported

4.5 Consequences of conflict as perceived by Dalits

The struggle for life takes the form of conflict in interests. A conflict free harmonious group is practically impossible. There is no denying the fact that society requires for its formation and growth both, harmony and disharmony, association and disassociation. Conflict serves constructive and positive end too. In human society, however, most conflicts end in some sort of agreement or accommodation or in the fusion of the two opposing elements. The results of personal conflict i.e. intra- group conflict are largely negative in that such a struggle lowers the morale and weakens the solidarity of the group. Conflict threatens group solidarity, but despite it all conflict cannot be eliminated. Though there are common ends for which the individuals unite into group, yet there are also ends which relate to the person himself. Previous discussion on dissociation, conflict, reasons and forms of conflict indicated some threats to group solidarity. This is also indicative of caste consciousness and separate identity among Dalits of *Doaba*. An attempt had been made to investigate the consequences of the conflict caused by social, economic, political and religious reasons as perceived by Dalits and is given as below:

4.5.1 Consequences of conflict caused by social reasons

The constitutional state affirmative action program has been an important factor behind the upliftment of Dalits, besides the role of Ad-dharm movement and of Ravidas *deras*, Dalit NRI remittances has been most crucial in empowering them and shaped a separate Dalit identity in Punjab particularly in *Doaba* region. Conflict and assertion were both means and ends, influencing each other.

Data given in Table 4.5.1 highlighted that more than fifty per cent (53.1%) of Dalits in the region felt more assertive after some conflict with upper caste Jat Sikhs. They were no more under the influence of Jat Sikhs, they felt more confident, conscious towards their identity and considered themselves indispensable part of the society (44.3%), whereas earlier they themselves considered neglected and exploited by the society in general and upper caste in particular. Reservation under 73rd amendment made their participation mandatory in panchayat elections, and beside this Dalit (55.6%) started participation in village elections to show their strength, to have their distinct identity by holding power. It was revealed by forty per cent of Dalit respondents that beside village panchayats they were now members in gurdwara committees, school *paswak* committees, and had established youth clubs in the name of Guru Ravidas. Their institutional participation had been enhanced which had boosted their confidence a lot. Study further found an increase in inter-caste marriages from last 10 years as disclosed by 7.5 per cent of the Dalit respondents. Still anuloma (upper caste boy married to lower caste girl) was more common than pratiloma (upper caste girl married lower caste boy) which showed the age old phenomenon of exploiting the Dalit females by upper caste Jats. It was felt by 73 per cent respondents that conflicts in the village had changed the interaction patterns and relationship equation between Dalits and Jat Sikhs. They were no more related as exploiters and exploited or ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’. Discrimination or exploitation on the basis of caste was not in practice. Social interaction was not generated by caste system and a new system of interaction was emerging which was facing some initial hiccups before final settlement.

Table 4.5.1: Perceptions of Dalits regarding consequences of conflict caused by social reasons

Multiple responses

Consequences	Frequency	Percentage
More assertive	85	53.12
Indispensable part of society	71	44.37
Participation in village politics (panchayat)	89	55.62
Institutional participation	64	40.00
Inter-caste marriage	12	7.50
Changed social interaction	118	73.75

4.5.2 Consequences of conflict caused by economic reasons

The prosperity of the dominant caste Jats is rooted in the ownership of land and control of agricultural production whereas Dalits are landless in Punjab. So the economic means of production remained with Jat Sikhs and Dalits worked as agricultural labour. Government's welfare schemes and reservation policy proved favourable for them in occupational mobility. Large majority of Dalits have consciously dissociated themselves from their traditional occupations (as discussed earlier), they no longer worked as farm labours and seek employment and had no such ties with the locally dominant caste. They seek jobs in government sector and government sponsored schemes such as MGNREGS. *Doaba* is the NRI hub of the state. The studies on migration by scholars (Kessinger, 1973; Helweg, 1976; McLeod, 1986; Judge, 1994, 2002) show that initial emigration from Punjab was the emigration where higher castes were dominated. The emigration of Dalits to outside world started during the colonial period as a result of the large scale emigration to British, French and Dutch colonies as indentured labourers to work in the plantations. The post-colonial migration of Dalits was directed towards the developed countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand and later to the Gulf and South East Asian countries. Emigration of Dalits from India as mentioned above started to the other countries initially as indentured labourer or forced labourer. But Punjabi Dalits emigration is a post-independence phenomenon, as a voluntary labourer and it resulted in their economic development. Initially *chamars* of *Doaba* region were numerically predominant among the Dalits in the immigration process which seems to be a result of their economic improvement. The change in the economic conditions of Dalits is both a cause and a consequence of emigration (Helweg, 1991; Judge, 2010). All these factors enhanced their self-image and boosted their morale and motivation and they are challenging the hegemony of dominant Jat Sikhs in village affairs.

Results of the study showed that (Table 4.5.2) 65.6 per cent of Dalits dissociated themselves from their traditional occupation of scavenging and farm labour and NRI remittance played a significant role in change of status and shift of occupation as divulged by 54.3 per cent of respondents. With improved economic status, a change had been observed in their expenditure patterns (63.7%). They flaunt on religious occasion as well on social ceremonies like marriage, and other functions. Besides spending on basic necessities and needs they spent on luxury things, as a mean to lay claim over a status which they considered was due to them. A change in the economic position of Dalits had brought a change in the economic ties of both castes as reported by 61.2 per cent of the respondents. *Jajmani* relation had been abolished. There were no Dalit *siris* with Jat Sikhs, and they were less dependent on Jats for kind and cash and other help. If they took anything from Jat Sikhs it was due to the fact that they had some type of social relationship with them, caste did not have much to do with dependency relations.

Table 4.5.2: Perceptions of Dalits regarding consequences of conflict caused by economic reasons

Multiple responses

Consequences	Frequency	Percentage
Change in hereditary occupation	105	65.62
Foreign remittances	87	54.37
Change in expenditure patterns	102	63.75
Changed Economic relations	98	61.25

4.5.3 Consequences of conflict caused by religious reasons

Guru Ravidas had become very popular among the Dalits especially in *Ad-dharmis* and Dalit diaspora of *Doaba*. Guru Ravidas philosophy has become the manifesto of the Dalit consciousness in the region and among Dalit diaspora also. In *Doaba* region Ravidas *deras* which were different from both Hindu temples and mainstream Sikh gurudwaras had their separate patterns of rituals, ceremonies, slogans, *ardas* (prayer), *kirtan* (musical rendering of sacred hymns), religious festivals and iconography. Data given in Table 4.5.3 indicate that all the Dalit respondents celebrated Ravidas Jayanti with great fervour and pomp and show. It was reported by 87.5 per cent of the respondents that they had separate Ravidas gurudwaras and *Balmiki* temples, though they accepted that there was no overt restriction on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras. Twelve per cent of respondents reported of following dhram granth *Amrit Bani*, even after failed attempts of instituting it in their gurudwaras. Further 42 per cent of Dalit respondents revealed that they were in the process of emergence of new religion separated from mainstream Sikhism. It was revealed by 10.6 per cent of the Dalits that it was only after their continuous efforts, struggle and protest they had been granted membership in local gurudwara managing committees.

Table 4.5.3: Perceptions of Dalits regarding consequences of conflict caused by religious reasons

Multiple responses

Impact	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Separate Gurudwaras	140	87.5
Separate religious celebrations	160	100.0
Separate dharam granth (<i>Amrit Bani</i>)	20	12.5
Emergence of separate religion	68	42.5
Involvement in gurudwara managing committees	17	10.62

4.6 State intervention in conflict resolution

Conflict resolution is conceptualized as the method and processes involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict and retribution. Committed group members attempt to resolve group conflicts by actively communicating information about their conflicting motives or ideologies to the rest of the group (e.g., intentions; reasons for holding certain beliefs), and by engaging in collective negotiation. Dimensions of resolution typically parallel the dimensions of conflict in the way the conflict is processed. Cognitive resolution is the way disputants understand and view the conflict, with beliefs and perspectives and understandings and attitudes. Behavioural resolution is how one thinks the disputants act, their behaviour. Ultimately, a wide range of methods and procedures for addressing conflict exist, including but not limited to negotiation, mediation, diplomacy, and creative peacebuilding. The term conflict resolution may also be used interchangeably with dispute resolution, where arbitration and litigation processes are critically involved. Furthermore, the concept of conflict resolution can be thought to encompass the use of nonviolent resistance measures by conflicted parties in an attempt to promote effective resolution (Forsyth, 2009; Meyer, 2012).

So during study it was tried to find out that how the conflict had been resolved in the region to attain a harmonious relationship between Dalits and Jat Sikhs. It was reported by all the Jat Sikh and Dalit respondents that at very first stage of conflict it was panchayat who intervened and tried to sort out the matter in village through collective negotiations (unless some panchayat member or some villagers intention were to play politics on that issue). Majority of Jat Sikh (85.6%) and Dalit (91.5%) respondents highlighted that laws meant for protection of Dalit rights especially, SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989 and Reservation under 73rd Constitutional Amendment had proved very effective in prohibiting any atrocities committed against Dalits. Jat Sikhs divulged that these laws had given Dalits enough rights and in any dispute proved helpful to them. Further, it was revealed by 58.7 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 56.8 per cent of Dalits that conflict between both castes had been resolved with the involvement of respected persons in the village, though person was mostly from upper caste Jat Sikhs. These influential persons tried their best to tackle the issue amicably and effectively in order to maintain peace and harmony in the village.

Police intervention had been reported by 55.6 per cent of Jat Sikh and 59.3 per cent of Dalit respondents. Both parties were in favour of ending the matter at village level only. They attempted not to disturb the social fabric of the village. However, it was disclosed by 30.6 per cent of Dalits that influential dominant Jat Sikhs tried to suppress them, just ignored and suppressed the actual issues and pressurize them in many ways to end up the matter and that too in their (Jat Sikhs) favour (Table 4.1.6). There was no significant differences were found in the perceptions regarding state intervention.

Table 4.6.1: Perception of respondents regarding state intervention in resolving conflict

Multiple responses

Particulars	Respondent		Z values
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	
Role of respected persons	94 (58.75)	91 (56.87)	0.34
Role of Panchayat	160 (100.00)	160 (100.00)	NA
Police intervention	89 (55.62)	95 (59.37)	0.68
Pressure of Jat Sikhs	-	49 (30.62)	7.61
Implementation of laws	137 (85.62)	146 (91.25)	1.57

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

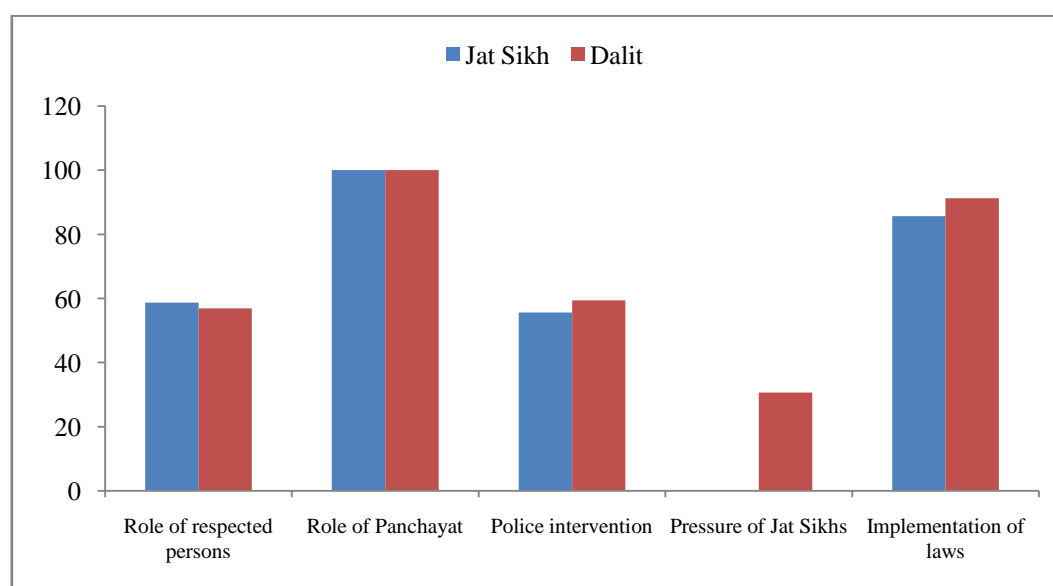


Fig.9: Perception of respondents regarding state intervention in resolving conflict

Role of administration and police in conflict resolution

It is clear from the previous discussion that panchayats and other respected persons of the village tried to solve the matter at local level and tried their best not to let it flare up. In some cases both castes approached police to seek justice. Police force is the face of modern state that an average person encounters in his/her everyday life. In the new legislative system, where untouchability is a crime, the role of police and its accessibility to Dalits is very crucial. The police are the custodian of law. Though, Dalits did not feel intimidated by the police and there were no restrictions on their entry into the police stations and they did not

feel discriminated against, yet not everyone felt comfortable going to police station. Caste of the police personnel still played a significant role as was found during study.

Majority of Jat Sikhs (64.4%) felt that if the officer on duty (*Munshi*, ASI, SHO) at the police station was of Dalit caste, he favoured Dalits and did not listen to Jat Sikhs side, and same type of expression had been held by 58.7 per cent of Dalit respondents. They also expressed that upper caste police personnel suppressed, pressurized them to end the matter and openly favoured Jat Sikhs. But at the same an equal percentage of Jat Sikhs (48.1%) and Dalits (51.8%) respondents disclosed that there was no caste based discrimination in police stations or by concerned personnel. They were neutral to both castes. It was further revealed by 61.8 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that Dalits were favoured in conflicting situations at every front. Laws and police favour them only. In conflicting situation, if Dalits were on fault, even then upper castes were considered as culprit. This may be the policy of administration, to keep the situation under control and to avoid incidents like *Talhan* and *Boota Mandi* that made national headlines in year 2003. Data further divulged that 35.6 per cent of Jat Sikhs and forty five per cent of Dalit respondents choose to keep quite on the role of administration and police in conflict resolution (Table 4.6.2). It can be concluded that police and administration played a positive role in conflict resolution. They aimed for a peaceful end of the situation, come what way and made every effort to convince both parties for *rajinama*.

Table 4.6.2: Perceptions of respondents regarding role played by administration / police in resolving conflict

Multiple responses

Particular	Respondents		Z values
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	
Neutral to both castes	77 (48.12)	83 (51.87)	0.67
Caste of police personnel matter	103 (64.37)	98 (61.25)	0.58
Dalit are favoured	99 (61.87)	-	11.97**
No response	57 (35.62)	72 (45.00)	1.71

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

Strategies suggested in tackling the conflict, if any:

Based upon the insight provided by the empirical analysis of the interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs of the Doaba region, study suggested following few intervention strategies to be adopted by community and the state to tackle the situations of conflict, if arisen:

- Socially mobile and economically well off Dalits were in no mood to compromise their dignity, self-respect and upper caste dominant Jat Sikhs need to understand it and act accordingly to avoid any unsavoury incident.
- As enshrined in our Constitution, state has to ensure the religious autonomy to assertive Dalits in order to maintain rural social harmony.
- Role of administrative personnel especially police, should be prompt, vigilant, fair and free from caste biases and prejudices to prevent a small community fight turning into full blown state riots.
- Hierarchical differentiation which pitted *Ad-dharmis* against their fellow *Balmikis* as well as Jat Sikhs is an obstacle to Dalit Identity Formation in an inclusive and real sense. Hence, existing inequality and irrationality of the social order needed urgent correction for sustainability of the movement for development of the Dalits as a whole.
- High status Dalits who had benefitted from affirmative action programme of the government and subaltern Dalits had to take along with them their underprivileged brethren for the endurance of their movement to achieve rising new Dalit identity.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Since Independence, India has made impressive progress in terms of growth, education, caste system and untouchability etc. Caste and untouchability have been much studied subjects of Indian social setting. The paradigm within which caste is studied has undergone many significant changes over the years. In the specific context of Punjab with Dalits constituting 31.9 per cent of the population of the state, condition of dalits is different from that of the rest of the country. Punjab is comprised of three socio-cultural zones *Majha*, *Malwa* and *Doaba*. Though Dalits are unevenly spread over the three regions, the largest concentration is in *Doaba* region. In more than 3000 villages of *Doaba* proportion of Dalit population is over 40 per cent and in some villages it is as high as 65 percent, became a measure of strength for them. Out of the total 38 Scheduled Castes, two major groups, *Ad-dharmis* and *Balmikis* together constitute 80 per cent of the total SCs in *Doaba* region.

Sikhism appears to have experienced a significant liberating influence on dalits in Punjab. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus, the religious institutions of *sangat* and *langar*, the absence of a caste based priesthood, and the respect for manual labour, all these together aims at creating a harmonious community in which distinction of caste, creed and status are not relevant. However, there was a wide gap between the teachings and social practice. Besides some discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab is quite different than that of Dalits in other parts of the country. There are many factors responsible for better position of Dalits in Punjab. One of the distinguishing features of Dalits in Punjab is their numerical strength, then high literacy rate, political mobilization and large scale emigration has contributed in their improved socio-economic status. This has impacted the interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs. So the present study examined the changing interaction patterns between these two castes in *Doaba* region of Punjab with following objectives:

1. To study the socio-economic status of the Dalits and Jat Sikhs.
2. To analyse the changing socio-economic and political interaction pattern among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in the study area.
3. To identify the conflicts between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any, and the reasons thereof.
4. To investigate state intervention in conflict resolution as perceived by Dalits and Jat Sikh.

The framework of this study has been developed with the help of Lipset and Zettaberg's (1966) theory of social mobility to analyse the intergenerational mobility. To assess the changing interaction patterns Merton's reference theory (1966) and subaltern perspective has been used.

Study was based on primary data. *Doaba* region comprised of four districts i.e. Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar and Kapurthala. It had been purposively selected as it has the highest proportion of Dalit population i.e. 40 per cent. At first stage two blocks from each of the four districts were selected randomly, constituting eight blocks. Then two villages from each block were further selected randomly. At final stage 20 respondents i.e. 10 Dalits and 10 Jat Sikhs from each village were selected randomly and interviewed personally with the help of an interview schedule. Thus total sample size was of 320 respondents i.e. 160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs from sixteen villages. To assess the social status of the respondents Kupuswamy's Socio Economic Scale (SES) was used with necessary modification. To assess the change in the interaction patterns between both castes Inter-generational changes had been observed. Data were analysed by using statistical techniques such as, percentages, chi square and Z test.

While studying the village profile of the sample area it was found that in six villages, sarpanch was Dalit male and in one village it was Dalit female. In every village panchayat one third of the *panches* were Dalits. There was no restriction on entry of Dalits into Jat Sikh *gurdwaras*, even then in twelve villages there were separate *gurdwaras* for *Ad-Dharmis* and in two villages separate for *Balmikis* as well. In all the sample villages Ravidas Jayanti was celebrated with great pomp and show. *Ravidas Jayanti* was marked by *parbhat pheris* and *nagar kirtan* by holding *Amrit Bani* in a decorated palanquin. There was separate cremation ground for Dalits in ten villages.

Socio-economic status of the respondents revealed that almost half of Jat Sikhs (49.3%) and Dalits (43.7%) had medium socio-economic status, while 18.1 per cent of Jat Sikhs and more than one fourth (28.7%) of Dalit respondents were from low status. Majority households in Jat Sikh (98.7%) and Dalit (87.5%) respondents were male headed. Three fourth of the Jat Sikhs (74.3%) and Dalits (80.0%) were from 31-50 years of age. More than one third of the respondents were educated up to higher secondary level. No respondent was found illiterate in high status and 54.8 per cent Dalit and Jat Sikh (42.8%) respondents from same status had education graduation and above. Dalits were not involved in the traditional occupation of scavenging, picking animal carcasses and polluting jobs in order to get rid of stigmatized identity attached due to such jobs. They were doing semi-skilled and skilled jobs (42.4%) whereas fifty four per cent of Dalits from high status had white collar jobs and 42.4 per cent had small business. In case of Jat Sikhs three fourth of them were engaged in farming followed by business and white collar jobs. A significant intergenerational change had been observed in education and occupation. The rate of intergenerational mobility was higher among Dalits than their counterparts Jat Sikhs.

Majority of the low status Jat Sikhs (86.6%) and Dalits (93.3%) had monthly income less than Rs. 10000 while on the other hand majority of high status Jat Sikhs (84.9%) and two third of Dalits had monthly income above Rs.20000. Significant association was found between status and income of the respondents. More than half of Jat Sikh (57.5%) and 69.3 per cent of Dalit respondents had nuclear families and Majority of the respondents had *pucca* house. All Jat Sikh and 85 per cent of Dalits had toilet facility in their houses. All Jat Sikh respondents owned agricultural land whereas only ten per cent of the Dalits had some land that too non-agricultural. All the respondents used LPG in their kitchens and all Jat Sikh and majority of Dalit respondents (96.8%) had refrigerator in their houses. All the respondents owned two wheelers (motorcycle), further 36.2 per cent of Dalits and majority of Jat Sikhs (91.8%) owned cars too. Status of the respondent and owning agricultural equipment, kitchen gadgets and vehicles were found significantly associated.

Change in socio-economic and political interaction pattern among Dalits and Jat Sikhs were assessed on the basis of social disabilities like segregation; kitchen entry; attending social ceremonies and exchange of goods and services, religious disabilities, political participation and inter-caste marriage. It was found that majority of Jat Sikhs and their fathers were living in the village whereas Dalits and their fathers were living in the *chamarhli* (a separated living area of Dalits in a village) and outskirts of the village. With economic affluence and occupational mobility 5.6 per cent of the Dalit respondents had built up their residence within village (mostly from high and medium status), locality inhabited by Jat Sikhs without any resistance.

There was no restriction on Dalits' entry into the kitchen of the Jat Sikhs acquaintance either as worker or as guests. Though few (3.7%) of the *Balmiki* respondents were still facing such restrictions. Dalit women were working as domestic help in Jat Sikh houses, they were doing, cooking, cleaning and other household tasks. Jat Sikhs (85%) and Dalits (76.2%) attended the social ceremonies of each other. In their fathers' generation irrespective of status all Dalits had been just workers, they were not formally invited as guest. Majority of Jat Sikh (74.3%) and Dalit (83.1%) respondents took meals together whereas in the generation of their fathers' this was practised by only 3.1 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 18.1 per cent of Dalits. Majority of Jat Sikhs (93.1%) and Dalits (85.6%) did not report of any form of caste based discrimination in schools. Marriage between Jat Sikhs and Dalits had been reported in nine cases. These changing interaction patterns showed that social distance between both castes had been decreased than their fathers' generation. A rising middle class of Dalits were more active in such social ties.

The newly achieved status of Dalits had decreased the social distance but on some aspects Dalits distanced themselves from their Jat Sikh patrons. Dependency on Jat patrons

was reported by nineteen per cent of the respondents and Jat patrons were no longer major source of credit for Dalits. Outreach of institutional sources of credit and greater accessibility of Dalits to these institutions was significant in the study area. Drastic change of earlier patron client relations had been observed during study. Jat Sikhs on their part had de patronized their Dalit clients in favour of hired contractual migrant labour as it suited best to their vested economic interests. Dalits on their part moved higher on the ritual as well as economic ladder, distances themselves from patron-client relationship, consider themselves self-sufficient and autonomous. High status Dalit were no more dependent on Jat Sikhs for cash and kind, but their fathers were. Institutional sources remained major source of credit for Jat Sikh respondents (81.8%) and for their fathers (73.7%) too. Compared with their father's generation, 78.1 per cent of Dalits had access to institutional sources. Dependency of Dalits on Jat Sikhs in monetary terms had been reduced in contesting elections. They had started contesting village election independently.

Regarding dissociation and conflict study concluded that majority of Jat Sikh (88.7%) respondents were not at ease with Dalit consciousness and their separate identity, though they did not speak openly. They were fearful of Dalit solidarity which they often display aggressively and envisions of their newly acquired status. Jat Sikhs accepted these changes in village caste system because of numerical strength of Dalits. Also they constituted vote bank, and Jat Sikhs had well realized the fact that without Dalit votes they could not succeed in election. Majority of Jat Sikh respondents (96.2%) were strictly against the reservation policy for Dalits.

Dalits felt that age old dominance of Jat Sikhs had been decreased. They did not try to suppress them due to various reasons. Behind such changes were mainly, Preventive and Affirmative actions of Government, the SCs and STs The Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989, improved economic status of Dalits, breaking of *jajmani* ties etc. Further 59.3 per cent of Dalit respondents reported that they enjoyed social status almost equal to their Jat Sikh counterparts.

Improved socio-political and economic position had sharpened their sense of social consciousness, which is overtly manifested at different forums through different ways particularly the celebrations of Ravidas Jayanti. Jat Sikhs on their part never recognized any form of protest or rebellion by their Dalit dependents and Dalits on their part did not have required consciousness to recognize their exploited positions. Dalits were neither ready to accept any derogatory remarks (38.7%) hurled upon them by Jat acquaintances. Jat Sikhs (82.6%) on their part reported labour issue an important reason behind unsavoury situation. They divulged that local *siris* have shifted to non-farm sector. They (Jat Sikhs) further divulged that Dalits preferred to remain idle at their homes instead of working in their fields as labour. Further, it was reported by 76 per cent of the Jat Sikhs that Dalits did not pay back

the money borrowed from them. On the other hand, on same issue 67.8 per cent of Dalit respondents reported that they had cleared all the debt, but envious Jat Sikhs unnecessarily wanted to trap them by levelling false charges.

Jat Sikhs and Dalits blamed each other for corruption in panchayats and in misusing the grants. This had created cleavage and generated tensions leading to fighting, allegations, mutual suspicion and conflict between them and Jat Sikhs. It was reported by 85.7 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that Dalit voters openly demanded for liquor, money, household items from competing parties and even after satisfying their demands, there was no guarantee that they would vote for that party. On same issue 70 per cent of Dalits reported these as false blame on them, they denied any such practices. It was reported by Jat Sikhs (10.8%) and Dalits (8%) that instituting *Amrit Bani* in Ravidas gurudwaras by Dalits was the major bone of contention between them. It was perceived by 88.7 per cent of Dalits that upper caste Jat Sikhs did not support them in their religious celebrations, neither they like such display nor did they participate freely. Jat Sikh respondents (84.7%) did not appreciate and somehow disliked and feared from this emergence of new religion and further 91.9 per cent of Dalit respondents revealed that their separate religious activities were not accepted by Jat Sikhs and all this resulted in often tense situation between two castes.

Dalits in the region felt more assertive after some conflicts with upper caste Jat Sikhs. Dalits dissociated themselves from their traditional occupation of scavenging and farm labour. NRI remittances played a significant role in change of status and shift of occupation. With improved economic status, a change had been observed in their expenditure patterns (63.7%). They flaunt on religious occasion as well as on social ceremonies like marriage, and other functions. On the issue of conflict resolution, it was solved with the involvement of respected persons in the village though mostly from upper caste Jat Sikhs. Police intervention had been reported by 55.6 per cent of Jat Sikh and 59.3 per cent of Dalit respondents. When, both parties did not agree on a common platform for *rajinama*, only then they opted for police. Majority of Jat Sikhs (64.4%) felt that if the concerned person in the police station was of Dalit caste, he favoured Dalits and did not listen to their side, and same type of expression had been held by 58.7 per cent of Dalit respondents.

Thus, it can be concluded that social status of Dalits had been improved; there was a rise of middle class within Dalits. A majority of the respondents had improved their status in class and position in society. With their change in socio-economic and political status their interaction with upper caste Jat Sikhs had changed significantly. Social distance had been decreased and Dalits were more conscious, assertive and autonomous. An emerging new Dalits identity was not accepted by Jat Sikhs and sometimes resulted in conflicting situation which could be tackled wisely to maintain a harmonious and peaceful society.

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**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE DATA COLLECTION FOR THE STUDY OF
CHANGING INTERACTION PATTERNES AMONG DALITS AND JAT SIKHS IN DOABA
REGION OF PUNJAB**

**Department of Economics and Sociology
PAU, Ludhiana**

Village: _____ District: _____ Distance from nearest town: _____
Name & Contact no: _____ Caste: _____

A. Profile of the Village:-

1. Population: _____
2. Number of votes: _____ Dalit votes: _____
3. Jat votes: _____ Others: _____
4. Sarpanch: Dalit _____ Jat: _____ Others: _____
5. Number of Panches: Total _____ Dalit: _____ Jat: _____ Others: _____
6. Religious places: _____

Place	Name	Number	Caste structure of managing committee
Gurudwras			
Mandir			
Smadh			
Dera			
Others			

7. Educational institutions:

Educational institutions	Government	Private
School		
Higher secondary		
College		
Technical institute		

8. Is there any caste specific educational institution? Yes: _____ No: _____
9. If yes, then specify: _____
10. Is there any shamlat in the village? Yes : _____ No: _____
11. Has Marla scheme been implemented in the village? Yes: _____ No: _____
12. If yes , who are the beneficiaries: Ad-dharmi: _____ Balmiki: _____

B. Socio-economic profile of the respondents:

1. Profile of the respondents:

S.No.	Relationship with respondent	Sex	Age	Education	Occupation	Income (m)
1	Self					
2						
3						
4						
5						

1. Type of family:

2. Type of house: *Kaccha* *Pucca* *Mixed*

3. Cattle shed: Separate: Within the house:

4. Number of rooms:

5. Toilet facility: Yes: No:

6. If yes, type of toilet: Sewage: Composite: Others:

7. Land holding: Owned: Leased in: Leased out:

8. Material Possessions:

S.No.	Agricultural Equipment	Home appliance	Vehicle	Livestock
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

C. Changing interaction patterns: (on the part of Jat Sikhs)

1. Place of residence:

Place of residence	Respondents'	Fathers'
In the village		
Outskirts of the village		
Lehndey pase		

2. Type of neighborhood:

Type of neighborhood	Respondents'	Fathers'
Both sides Jat		
Both sides Dalit		
One side Dalit one side Jat		
Others		

3. Is there any taboo/restriction on entry in other castes house?

Type of restriction/taboo	Respondents'	Fathers'	Caste	Reason

4. Do you attend the social ceremonies of SCs? Yes: No:

Fathers': Yes: No:

5. If yes, mention the ceremony and in what capacity?

Fathers':

6. If no, why?

7. Whether you take meals with Dalits: Respondents: Yes: No:

Fathers': Yes: No:

8. Do you depend on Dalits during social ceremonies? Respondents:

Fathers':

9. If yes, specify the occasion and kind of help you received?

Respondents:

Fathers'

10. Whether you exchange goods/articles during ceremonies with Dalits:

Fathers'

11. If yes, mention the caste and kind of goods/articles:

Respondents:

Fathers':

12. Whether you exchange food items with Dalits': Respondents:

Fathers'

13. Do you have Guru Granth Sahib from SC Gurudwras during path/marriages?

Fathers':

14. If no, why?

15. Do you visit Dalits' religious places:

Fathers':

16. If yes, the purpose of the visit: To pay obeisance
 Ordinary visits
 As a managing committee member
 To sort out financial matters
 To sort out conflicts
 To have some goods/articles
 Other reasons

17. If no, why?

18. From whom you borrow money during need?

Fathers'

19. What is the mode of payment?

	Respondents'	Fathers'
Cash		
Kind		

20. Who invest money in Panchayat elections if it is Dalit sarpanch/panch?

Jats:

Dalits:

21. Do you work in cooperation with Dalits in Panchayat?

Yes:

No:

22. Do you let Dalits candidates function freely?

Yes:

No:

23. If no, why?

24. SC women panch/sarpanches have equal powers?

25. Any case of discrimination in Panchayat elections/Panchayat:

26. Wards/ children going to School (specify type): Govt Schools: Private schools

27. Do they befriend with other castes: Yes: No:

28. If yes, then specify the castes:

29. If no, why?

30. Any case of discrimination in school:

31. Is there separate cremation grounds for Jats: Yes No

32. Is there separate Janjhghar: Yes No

33. Is there any case of inter caste marriage? Yes: No:

34. If yes, mention the caste:

- Is it within the village or outside the village?

- Mention the time period:

D. Conflict

1. Have you ever been experienced any conflict with Dalits:

Forefathers:

2. If yes, what was the issue: Individual

Community

Religious

Political

Inter caste marriage

Other reasons

3. How conflict/issues have/had been resolved:

With the involvement of caste members

With the involvement of Panchayat

With the involvement of police

Mutual understanding

Rajinama

Pressure of the opposite party

C1. Changing interaction patterns: (on the part of Dalits)

1. Place of residence:

Place of residence	Respondents'	Fathers'
In the village		
Outskirts of the village		
Lehndey pase		

2. Type of neighborhood:

Type of neighborhood	Respondents'	Fathers'
Both sides Jat		
Both sides Dalits		
One side Dalit one side Jat		
Others		

3. Is there any taboo/restriction on entry in other castes house?

Type of restriction/taboo	Respondents'	Fathers'	Caste	Reason

4. Do you attend the social ceremonies of Jats? Yes: No:
 Fathers': Yes: No:
5. If yes, mention the ceremony and in what capacity?
 Fathers':
6. If no, why?
7. Whether you take meals with Jats: Respondents: Yes: No:
 Fathers': Yes: No:
8. Do you depend on Jats during social ceremonies? Respondents:
 Fathers':
9. If yes, specify the occasion and kind of help you received?
 Respondents:
 Fathers':
10. Whether you exchange goods/articles during ceremonies with Jats:
 Fathers':
11. If yes, mention the caste and kind of goods/articles:
 Respondents:
 Fathers':
12. Whether you exchange food items with Jats: Respondents:
 Fathers':
13. If yes, to whom and at what occasions?

	Respondents'	Fathers'
To whom		
At what occasions		

14. Do you have Guru Granth Sahib from Jat Gurudwras during path/marriages?
 Fathers':
15. If no, why?
16. Do you visit Jats' religious places:
 Fathers':
17. If yes, the purpose of the visit: To pay obeisance
 Ordinary visits
 As a managing committee member
 To sort out financial matters

To sort out conflicts
 To have some goods/articles
 Other reasons

18. If no. why?
 19. From whom you borrow money during need?

Fathers'

20. What is the mode of payment?

	Respondents'	Fathers'
Cash		
Kind		

21. Do you participate freely and fearlessly in elections?

Fathers':

22. Who invest money in Panchayat elections if it is SC sarpanch/panch?

Jats:

SCs:

23. Do Jats' work in cooperation with you in Panchayat? Yes:

No:

24. Do Jats let SCs candidates function freely?

Yes:

No:

25. If no, why?

26. After winning the elections do Jat Sikhs allowed you to exercise your powers?

27. If no, mention the hurdles:

28. SC women panch/sarpanches have equal powers?

29. Any case of discrimination in Panchayat elections/Panchayat:

30. Wards/ children going to School (specify type): Govt Schools: Private schools

31. Do they befriend with other castes:

Yes:

No:

32. If yes, then specify the castes:

33. If no, why?

34. Any case of discrimination in school/colleges:

35. Is there separate cremation grounds for SC:

Yes

No

36. Is there separate Janjhghar:

Yes

No

37. Is there any case of inter caste marriage?

Yes:

No:

38. If yes, mention the caste:

39. Is it within the village or outside the village?

40. Mention the time period:

D1. Conflict

1. Have you ever been experienced any conflict with Dalits:

Forefathers:

2. If yes, what was the issue: Individual

Community

Religious :

Political

Inter caste marriage

Other reasons

3. How conflict/issues have/had been resolved:

With the involvement of caste members

With the involvement of Panchayat

With the involvement of police

Mutual understanding

Rajinama

Pressure of the opposite party

E. Perceptions:

1. Have you feel that these changing interaction patterns are good? Yes: No:

If yes, why:

If no, why:

2. In conflicting situation, what type of role has/had been played by administration/police:

Cooperative to both the parties

No caste biasness

Tried to suppress the matter

Proper role playing

LIST OF SUBMITTED/ACCEPTED/PUBLISHED RESEARCH ARTICLES

S. No.	Publication	Journal	NAAS rating	Status
1.	Religious Assertion Among Dalits in Doaba Region of Punjab	Indian Journal of Economics and Development	4.1	Accepted
2.	Changing Interaction Patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba Region of Punjab	Journal of Agricultural Development and Policy	3.2	Submitted
3.	Dissociation among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba region of Punjab: Causes and Consequences	Guru Nanak Journal of Sociology	-	Submitted



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Religious Assertion Among Dalits in Doaba Region of Punjab

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ABSTRACT

In the last few decades, India has experienced a strong wave of Dalit assertion. As a result of economic, political policies and other efforts of government, assertion has taken many forms and the most apparent is religious assertion. They were proud of their caste and following the teachings of their Gurus. This phenomenon is more prevalent in Doaba region of Punjab because of their numerical preponderance with more than 60 per cent of the population in some of the villages. So the present study was conducted with specific objective to study the religious assertion among Dalits of Doaba. From randomly selected 16 villages from four districts of the region 160 Dalits were interviewed. The study found that 14 village had separate Gurudwaras for Dalits. They celebrated their religious functions separately with great pomp and show. Though overtly Jat Sikh commonly had not defied their attempt (s) and were extremely supportive (though due to political compulsion), a conflict is simmering which could flare up into an overt conflict any time at slightest provocation.

KeyWords

Ad Dharmis, religion. assertion

JEL Codes

INTRODUCTION

Growing out of the powerful anti-brahmanical *sant* tradition of fourteenth and fifteenth centuries north India, the Sikh variant of Nanak and his successors evolved into an organized religious movement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Punjab. It became a rallying point for the low-castes and untouchables for a respectable and redeemed social existence. And so have dalits of Punjab who joined it in great numbers in theseventeenth century and experienced centuries-old-denied dignity and equality within itsegalitarian fold. Like the ancient religions of Buddhism and Jainism, the Sikh tradition also could not escape the snare of brahmanisation. Its body-politic came to be afflicted bybrahmanical casteism and untouchability from which the great gurus had tried to pull out itsadherents so successfully. Ever since Brahmanism came to rob the defeated indigenous people of their independence and dignity by pushing majority of them toward the status of untouchables, thedalits would try to escape such humiliation by joining orders, traditions or religions that preached equality. The conversion of Dalits, in large numbers, to Buddhism, Christianity, Islamand Sikhism, besides being change of religion, was

also a search for equality and human dignity (Hans, 1995).

Sikhism appears to have experienced a significant liberating influence on Dalits in Punjab. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus, the religious institutions of *sangat* and *langar*, the absence of a caste based priesthood, and the respect for manual labour, all these together aims at creating a harmonious community in which distinction of caste, creed and status are not relevant (Jodhka and Louis, 2003 and Ram, 2007). When the Singh Sabha leadership chose to assert a separate and distinct identity to underline their boundary demarcation from the Hindus, the people of the untouchable castes in the region converted to Sikh religion in large numbers with a view to improve their status. However, there was a wide gap between the teachings and social practice (Jodhka, 2009, Ram, 2009, and Webster, 2001).

Scheduled Caste Sikhs did not get equal treatment in the gurudwaras of the upper caste Sikhs. Until 1920 Dalit Sikhs were not allowed to go beyond the fourth step in the Golden Temple. Their offering of *karah prasad* was not accepted. ((Puri, 2003, Ram, 2007, and Singh, 2012). Besides some discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab is quite different than that of

Dalits in other parts of the country. There are many factors responsible for better position of Dalits in Punjab.

One of the distinguishing features of Dalits in Punjab is their numerical strength. They constitute 31.9 per cent of the total population compared to 16.6 at national level (Census, 2011). Though Dalits are unevenly spread over the three regions, the largest concentration is in the *Doaba* region. *Do-aab* literally means two waters, that is, the area between two rivers, Beas and Sutlej. In more than 3000 villages of *Doaba* region, proportion of SC population is over 40 per cent and in some villages it is as high as 65 per cent. This numerical preponderance of Dalits is a measure of their strength (Jodhka, 2000; Awasthi, 2003; Judge, 2003; Judge and Bal 2008).

Secondly, the literacy data shows that Dalits of Punjab have made significant headway in education. The literacy rate, which was 16.12 per cent in 1971, rose to 23.85 per cent in 1981. It further increased to 41.1 per cent in 1991 and 56.2 per cent in 2001 and 64.8 per cent in 2011 which is very close to the percentage at national level, that is, 66.1 percent (GOI, various issues). Almost equivalent to general population, *Ad-dharmis* have the highest literacy rate of 76.4 per cent and occupy the top position among the Dalits.

A less known but another significant factor which made a major difference in the status and self-perception of the Dalits in Punjab is related to the large scale migration of the Dalits particularly *Ad-dharmis* of *Doaba* region, to foreign countries. It is estimated that on an average one member in every second Dalit family in *Doaba* region have gone abroad. The remittances sent home by these Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and contribution they made to the enlargement of the community's autonomous cultural spaces may be an exceptional distinguishing feature. Fourth factor responsible for their enhanced status is increased political representation of Dalits from the grass root level of panchayats to the legislative assembly. Political movements such as Singh Sabha movement, *Ad-dharam* movement started in *Doaba* region, contributed to the change in their status (Judge, 2003 and Kumar, 2004; Ram, 2009).

Due to these factors, socio economic status of Dalits has changed significantly. The recent Dalit backlash in *Talhan*, *Boota Mandi* and aftermath of the Vienna attack on the lives of two spiritual heads (Sant Niranjana Dass and his second-in-command Sant Ramanand) of *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* (DSB), one of the most important Dalit religious centres and a symbol of Dalit assertion in northern India had flared up the conflict between two castes in the state. *Deras* is distinguished from both Hindu temples and mainstream Sikh gurudwaras in the sense that they have their separate patterns of rituals, ceremonies, slogans, *ardas* (prayer), *kirtan* (musical

rendering of sacred hymns), religious festivals and iconography (Rawat, 2003). Due to such influential *deras* in the region and other factors discussed above, Dalits in *Doaba* region has become conscious and trying to establish a separate religious identity. So the present study had been carried out with specific objective to study the religious assertion among dalits and reasons and consequences of religious assertion.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Present study was based on primary data and conducted in *Doaba* region of Punjab. It had been purposively selected as it has the highest proportion of Dalit population (40 per cent). All four districts of *Doaba* i.e. Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar and Kapurthala were selected to make the study representative of whole *Doaba* region. Two blocks from all four districts were selected randomly to obtain a total of eight blocks. Then, two villages from each block were taken; constituting total sixteen villages from *Doaba*. At final stage 10 dalits from each village were selected randomly and interviewed personally with the help of a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Thus total sample size comprised of 160 respondents. Master tables for the data collected were prepared and the data were quantified for precise and systematic analysis and interpretation. The data were subjected to simple tabulation. Thus, frequency distribution, percentages were worked out to analyse the data. The study pertains to the year 2014-15.

The socio-economic status of the respondents had been measured by using Kuppaswamy's SES by doing necessary modifications. On the basis of their status, respondents were categorized into three different levels such as low, medium and high. Based on the scores given to three levels, socio-economic status scale has been developed as below:

Status level	Score
Low	4-10
Medium	11-17
High	18-24

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dalits Sikhs did not get equal treatment in the gurudwaras of the upper caste Sikhs. Mazhabis were forbidden to enter the Golden Temple for worship; their offering of *karah prasad* was not accepted and the Sikhs denied them access to public well and other utilities. Dalit Sikhs were not allowed to go beyond the fourth step in the Golden Temple. Evidence of untouchability against the Dalit Sikhs is vividly reflected in a number of *Gurmata*s (resolutions) adopted by the *Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee* from 1926-1933. Although

removal of untouchability figured in the Singh Sabha movement, no strenuous effort was made in that direction. It was not surprising. This has forced the dalit Sikhs to establish separate gurudwaras, which in turn has further led to the strengthening of the already existing caste divisions among the Sikhs (Jodhka, 2002 and Muksar 1999 and 2003). Moreover the observance of caste prejudices against the Dalit Sikhs has compelled them to search for alternative cultural spaces in a large number of *deras*, sects, and *dargahs* of Muslim *Pirs* and other saints (Puri, 2003 and Ram, 2009). During study it was reported out of the visited 16 villages of *Doaba*, 14 had separate gurudwaras for Dalits and other *deras*, sects, and *dargahs* of Muslim *Pir*:

The study was based on 160 Dalit respondents and regarding their socio-economic status. It was found that that 28.7 per cent of respondents had low socio-economic status while 43.7 per cent of them fall under medium status. Data further showed that 27.5 per cent of respondents had high socio-economic status. It is clear from the table that majority of the respondents had middle socio-economic status (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their status

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Low (4-10)	46	28.75
Medium (11-17)	70	43.75
High (18-24)	44	27.5

It is evident from Table 2 that 2.5 per cent of Dalit respondents were from 18-30 years of age. Data further divulged almost equal percentage from low and mediums status was from 31-50 years of age group, and 77.2 per cent from high status belonged to this age group. Again it was found that 17.3 per cent from low, 15.7 per cent from medium and 20.4 per cent from high status respondents were above 50 years of age.

Education level of the respondents had been divided into four categories, that is, illiterate, up to matric, higher

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to age (years)

Status	18-30 (years)	31-50 (years)	Above 50 (years)
Low n=46	1 (2.17)	37 (80.43)	8 (17.39)
Medium n=70	2 (2.85)	57 (81.42)	11 (15.71)
High n=44	1 (2.72)	34 (77.27)	9 (20.45)
Total	4 (2.50)	128 (80.00)	28 (17.50)

secondary, graduation and above graduation. It is clear from Table 3 that in high status no respondent was found illiterate. In low socio-economic status 26 per cent of respondents were illiterate. Data revealed that majority of the respondents were educated up to higher secondary. Data further highlighted that 38.6 per cent of respondents from high status were graduated and had education above graduation.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the basis education

Status	Illiterate	Up to matric	Higher secondary	Graduation and above
Low (n ₁ =46)	12 (26.08)	15 (32.60)	17 (36.95)	2 (4.34)
Medium (n ₂ =70)	7 (10.00)	27 (38.57)	24 (34.28)	12 (17.14)
High (n ₃ =44)	-	9 (20.45)	18 (40.90)	17 (38.63)
Total (N=160)	19 (11.87)	51 (31.87)	59 (36.87)	31 (19.37)

The occupation of the respondents was categorized into six categories, that is, farm labour, crafts and services, petty business and white collar professionals. No menial workers had been recorded in the study area. Dalits were deviating from jobs of scavenging, picking animal carcasses, and the jobs traditionally assigned to them. Government's protective discrimination proved helpful for them to overcome their stigmatized identity. It is clear from the Table 4 that 42 per cent respondents were doing semi-skilled and skilled jobs and 23 per cent of them had petty business. Eleven per cent respondents from high status had white collar professionals and 31.8 per cent from same status had small business. At its outset, the study found that no Dalit respondent was doing traditional occupation of polluting and menial jobs which substantiated the fact that they wanted to get rid of stigmatized identity attached with their traditional occupation.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents on the basis of occupation

Status	Farm labour	Crafts & Services	Semi-skilled and skilled	White collar professionals	Petty Business
Low	16 (34.78)	13 (28.26)	10 (21.73)	-	4 (8.69)
Medium	4 (5.71)	5 (7.14)	32 (45.80)	2 (2.86)	15 (21.42)
High	-	2 (4.54)	17 (38.63)	5 (11.36)	14 (31.81)
Total	20 (14.38)	20 (14.38)	59 (42.44)	7 (5.03)	33 (23.74)

Figures in parentheses are percentage to the total

Total monthly income of the households had been classified into three broad categories and presented in Table 5. It is evident from the table that no respondent from high status had monthly income of less than ₹10000. Majority who had less than ₹10000 income were from low status (91.30 per cent). Data further indicated that one third medium status respondents income ranging from ₹10000-₹20000. A significant proportion of respondents (65.9 per cent) from high socio-economic status had monthly income above ₹20000.

So a significant change had been observed in the socio-economic status of Dalits, and this change in status, increased literacy, occupational mobility, resulted in a Dalits consciousness and a separated identity. Religious assertion is a part of their emerging different identity. They felt proud to be Dalits or *chamars*. Proceeding discussion will make it clear how Dalits in Doaba asserted themselves.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of monthly income of household

Status	₹ per month		
	Below 10000	10000-20000	Above 20000
Low	42 (91.30)	4 (8.69)	-
Medium	3 (4.28)	53 (75.71)	14 (20.00)
High	-	15 (34.09)	29 (65.90)
Total	45 (28.12)	72 (45.00)	43 (26.87)

Figures in parantheses are per cent to the total.

Religious consciousness and emerged separated identity

There were separate gurudwaras for Dalits in 14 villages. In these villages they (Dalits) did not bring *Guru Granth Sahib* from Jat Sikh gurudwaras, as such there were no restrictions imposed on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras. Change in this practice had indicated the religious assertion of Dalits in the area.

Visit to religious places

Study observed that Jat Sikhs had started visiting Dalit religious places. And as such there were no restrictions on dalits to visit Jat Sikh gurudwaras, so both castes went to each other's religious places. It was tried to investigate about the purpose of visit of Dalits to upper caste gurudwaras. Data given in Table 6 highlighted that majority of respondents (95.6 percent) went to pay obeisance. It was disclosed by 84.3 per cent of respondents that they visited these places to have some goods (utensils, mats, loud speaker). Further 2.5 per cent of the respondents reported that they were members in Jat Sikh gurudwaras managing committees and very few

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of purpose of visit to religious places Multiple responses

Particulars	Respondents	Fathers
To pay obeisance or ordinary visit	153 (95.62)	121 (75.62)
As a managing committee member	4 (2.50)	-
To participate in financial matters	3 (1.87)	-
To have some goods/articles	135 (84.37)	115 (71.87)

Figures in parantheses are per cent to the total

were consulted to discuss the financial matters of Jat Sikh's religious places. To observe change in such religious practices, efforts intra generational difference had been assessed. A change had been observed in the participation of Dalit members in the Jat Sikh gurudwaras managing committees, and financial matters of these places which was absent in their fathers generation.

Religious reasons behind dissociation

Due to influential *deras* like *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* (DSB), *dera Hakimpur* in the region, a different religion has been emerging. This separate religious identity, ideology different from mainstream Sikhism, tensed religious situation between Jat Sikhs and Dalits in the area. DSB has a great influence on Dalits (particularly Ad-dharmis) of *Doaba* region. After Vienna attack on head of DSB, who was attacked by a group of extremist Sikhs, allegedly Jats which laid the foundation for Dalits seeking a more assertive, cultural, political and religious identity. After this incident, *dera* purposed a separate religious *granth* named (*Amrit Bani*, contain *shlokas* of Guru Ravidas originally found in *Guru Granth Sahib*). Philosophy behind having a separate religious *granth* was not to preach/follow the Sikh religion or Sikh *granth*. It is their way to say no to Jat Sikh dominance. During study it was reported by eight per cent respondents that instituting *Amrit Bani* in Ravidas gurudwaras by Dalits had been opposed by upper caste Jat Sikhs and in some places resulted in conflict. Emigration of Dalits is quite popular in the region to UK, New Zealand, Italy and recently Gulf countries emerged as new destination for Ad-dharmis. Dalit NRIs contributed to the welfare for their community and flaunt on social, religious occasions. This flaunting can observe on religious celebrations where they organized *Nagar Kirtans*, distributed fruits, sweets and *langar*. They concluded this celebration by holding *Akhand Path*. Jat Sikhs did not accept this flaunting. Data given in Table 8 indicates that 88.7 per cent respondents revealed that upper caste Jat Sikhs did not support them in these celebrations; even they did not openly revolt against these celebrations. It was reported by 45 per cent respondents that they were not given

Table 7: Perceptions of respondents regarding religious reasons behind dissociation Multiple responses

Reason	Frequency
Instituting separate Dharm Granth (Amrit Bani)	5 (8.06)
Celebration of Ravidas jayanti	55 (88.70)
Management committee of gurudwaras	28 (45.16)
Separate religion	57 (91.93)

Figures in parantheses are per cent to the total.

opportunities to be member in Jat Sikh gurudwara managing committees, even their numerical strength was more than Jat Sikhs in the village. Saints of DSB and other *deras* and Dalit community of region (*Doaba*) proclaimed the birth of new religion. The new faith, called Guru Ravidas Dharm, is to have its own religious book (*Amrit Bani Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj Ji*), communal flag (*Har*) and greeting (*Jai Guru Dev Ji*). It was divulged by majority (91.90 percent) of the respondents that their separate religious activities were not accepted o Jat Sikhs and all this resulted in a tense situation between two castes.

Consequences of conflict caused by religious reasons

Guru Ravidas had become very popular among the Dalits especially in Ad-dharmis and Dalit diaspora of *Doaba*. Guru Ravidas philosophy has become the manifesto of the Dalit consciousness in the region and among Dalit diaspora also. Establishment of Ravidas *deras* by Dalits over the last few years, distinguished from both Hindu temples and mainstream Sikh gurudwaras in the sense that they have their separate patterns of rituals, ceremonies, slogans, *ardas* (prayer), *kirtan* (musical rendering of sacred hymns), religious festivals and iconography (Rawat, 2003 and Ram, 2007 and 2009). Data given in Table 8 indicates that all the Dalit respondents

Table 8: Perceptions of Dalits regarding consequences of conflict caused by religious reasons Multiple responses

Impact	Frequency
Separate Gurudwaras	140 (87.50)
Separate religious celebrations	160 (100.00)
Separate dharamgranth (AmritBani)	20 (12.50)
Emergence of separate religion	68 (42.50)
Involvement in gurudwara managing committees	17 (10.62)

Figures in parantheses are per cent to the total.

celebrated Ravidas jayanti with great pomp and show. It was reported by 87.5 per cent of the respondents that they had separate Ravidas gurudwaras and *Balmiki* temple; as such no restriction was found on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras. Twelve per cent of respondents reported about *Amrit Bani*, there were failed attempts to institute in their gurudwaras but still they had it personally. After some conflict with Jat Sikhs, Dalits got membership in Jat Sikh gurudwaras in villages where Dalits dominated in population.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus armed with the weapon of improved economic conditions and social consciousness, the Dalits mustered enough strength to ask for a concomitant rise in their social status. However, the Jats interpreted this Dalit assertion as a challenge to their long established supremacy in the state. This in turn has sharpened the contradictions between them and the Dalits. The Jat-Dalit conflicts thus signify the emerging Dalit assertion and its serious implications for the asymmetrically structured agrarian society of Punjab. Such conflicts are in no way a manifestation of communalism in the state. They are in fact, signs of emerging Dalit assertion, which has all the possibilities of snowballing into serious violent conflicts, if kept ignored for a long time. It can be concluded that Dalits are following their own separate religion and sometimes it resulted in conflict with upper castes. Dalits had started dissociate themselves from mainstream Sikh religion and established their separate identity. Though overtly Jat Sikh commonly had not defied their attempt (s) and were extremely supportive (though due to political compulsion), a conflict is simmering which could flare up into an overt conflict any time at slightest provocation.

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Changing Interaction Patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba Region of Punjab

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ABSTRACT

Punjab's villages are predominantly Jat Sikh and Dalits. In several instances Dalits were discriminated by land owning Jat Sikhs. But due to benefits from affirmative action programme of government, NRI remittances and political mobilization, Dalits had improved their socio-economic status. This had impacted the interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs of the region. Thus, the present study was conducted with a specific objective to analyze the changing interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs, The study based on primary data collected from 320 respondents (160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs) from all the four districts of Doaba region found that 5.6 per cent of high status Dalits had moved to the village locality inhabited by Jat Sikhs without any resistance from them. More than half of them attended the social ceremonies of Jat Sikhs as guests. Out of the sixteen villages under study, in fourteen villages Dalits had separate gurudwaras and nineteen per cent had started bearing the panchayat election expenses independently. Study found that though social distance between both castes had been decreased but Dalits particularly high status ones had heightened religious consciousness and were assertive about their political rights.

Keywords: Dalits, Jat Sikhs, Doaba, Interaction

JEL Classification: J62, Z10, Z12, Z13

Introduction

Punjab is a Sikh majority state. The Sikhs constitute 59.9 per cent of the state's population. Their share in the rural population is 72 per cent. Dalits have a highest proportion of population in the state, i.e., 31.9 per cent among the states in India (GOP, 2010). Over 80 per cent of them live in the rural areas. Punjab's villages are, therefore, predominately Sikh and Dalit. Sikhism appears to have experienced a significant liberating influence on Dalits in Punjab. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus, the socio-religious institutions of *sangat, pangat* and *langar*, absence of a caste based priesthood, and respect for manual labour aims at creating a harmonious community in which distinction of caste, creed and status are not relevant.

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However, there is a wide gap between the teachings and social practice (Puri, 2003; Jodhka, 2004; 2009 and Ram, 2009). Though integral to the social structure, there are several instances where Dalits are being discriminated against by land owning Jat Sikhs. Restrictions on Dalits entry into upper caste houses had been one of the most strictly observed practices. Dalits are associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as scavenging and cleaning, leatherwork, butchering, or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses, and attached laborers (*siris*). Besides some discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab is quite different than that of in other parts of the country (Ram, 2007 and Singh, 2012).

One of the distinguishing features of Dalits in Punjab is their numerical strength. They constitute 31.9 per cent of the total population compared to 16.6 at national level (GOP, 2010). In more than 3000 villages of *Doaba* region, proportion of Dalit population is over 40 per cent and in some villages it is as high as 65 per cent. This numerical preponderance of Dalits is a measure of their strength (Jodhka, 2000; Awasthi, 2003; Judge, 2003; Judge and Bal 2008). Secondly, the literacy rate among Dalits, which was 16.12 per cent in 1971, rose to 23.85 per cent in 1981. It further increased to 41.1 per cent in 1991 and 56.2 per cent in 2001 and 64.8 per cent in 2011 which is very close to the Dalit literacy rate at national level i.e. 66.1 percent (Census, various issues).

Another significant factor which made a major difference in the status and self-perception of the Dalits in Punjab is related to the large scale migration of Dalits, particularly *Ad Dharmis* of *Doaba* region, to foreign countries. It is estimated that on an average one member in every second Dalit family in the region is an NRI (Juergensmeyer, 1988; Tatla, 1999 and Judge, 2012). The remittances sent back home by NRIs and contributions made by them to the enlargement of the community's autonomous cultural spaces may be an exceptional distinguishing feature. Another notable factor responsible for their enhanced status is increased political representation at the grass root level of Panchayats to the

legislative assembly. In year 2013-14, there were 28.5 per cent Dalit sarpanches and 33.6 per cent panches in 12726 village panchayats (GOP, 2013-14). Political movements such as *Singh Sabha* movement, *Ad-dharam* movement started in *Doaba* region had also contributed significantly to the change in their status (Kumar, 2004; Ram, 2009; Chana, 2012).

Due to these factors, socio economic status of Dalits has improved. This has impacted the interaction with their erstwhile Jat Sikh patrons. With this backdrop, the present study had been undertaken with a specific objective to analyze the changing interaction patterns among Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in *Doaba* region in year 2014-15 and based on primary data. Doaba region comprises of four districts of the state of Punjab i.e. Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar and Kapurthala. It had been purposely selected as it has the highest proportion of Dalit population i.e. 40 per cent. At the first stage two blocks from each of the four districts were selected randomly to obtain a total of eight blocks. At the second stage two villages from each block were further selected randomly and then at the final stage 20 respondents i.e. 10 Dalits and 10 Jat Sikhs from each village were selected randomly and interviewed personally with the help of an interview schedule. Thus a sample of total 320 respondents i.e. 160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs from sixteen villages was taken. Perceptions regarding intergenerational changes had been obtained from respondents to study the change in the interaction patterns. Socio-economic status of the respondents had been measured by using Kuppuswamy's Socio Economic Status (SES) scale after doing necessary modifications. Data was tabulated and statistically analyzed by using frequency, percentage, Chi-square and Z values to reach logical scientific conclusions.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study were focused on the status of the respondents and

intergenerational change in interaction patterns. Interaction patterns had been studied within the framework of caste system and aspects such as social distance, interaction in religious and political institutions had been examined to map the changing interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

Social distance

Social distance describes the distance between different groups of society. Traditionally various sorts of civil disabilities were imposed upon Dalit section of the society. They were socially segregated and lived in the separate areas meant for them (*chamrhli/vehrha/thathi*) and were *kameens* to their Jat Sikh patrons. The present study examined the social distance between Dalits and Jat Sikhs and took into consideration the social practices of segregation, of attending various social ceremonies, inter dining to analyse the prevalent interaction and gauge the social distance.

Segregation

Segregation of individual castes or of groups of castes in a village is the most obvious mark of civil privileges and disabilities, and it has prevailed in a more or less definite form all over India. Southern India stands out distinct in the rigidity of these rules but in Northern India, generally it is only the low castes that are segregated and made to live on the outskirts of villages. The study investigated the change in this particular feature, by observing if there is any change in the pattern of residence in the sample area. The study highlighted (Table 1) that more than one third (36.9%) of Dalit respondents' father lived in the *chamarhli* (a separated living area of Dalits in a village) and the rest two-third (63.1%) lived on the outskirts of the village but that locality was also inhabited significantly by their own caste mates. On the other hand 96.2 per cent of the Jat Sikh's father had lived in village and rest 3.7 per cent on outskirts of the village. With economic and occupational mobility 5.6 per cent Dalit respondents from medium and high status had built up their residence within village and

lived with Jat Sikhs as neighbours and that too without any resistance from them. The study observed a decline in percentage of Dalits who lived in *chamarhli*. Thus the study observed that the phenomenon of segregation of the erstwhile untouchable caste had declined. Chi square values established a significant association between the caste and the place of residence of the respondents.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of residence in Doaba region of Punjab

Status of the respondents	In the village		Outskirts of the village*				Chamarhli/ Vehrha		
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Dalits	Dalit
Low n=29,46	24 (17.39)	-	27 (17.53)	5 (22.73)	21 (20.39)	2 (33.33)	24 (23.76)	25 (52.08)	22 (37.29)
Medium n=79,70	72 (52.17)	2 (22.22)	78 (50.65)	7 (31.82)	50 (48.54)	1 (16.67)	51 (50.50)	18 (37.50)	19 (32.20)
High n=52,44	42 (30.43)	7 (77.78)	49 (31.82)	10 (45.45)	32 (31.07)	3 (50.00)	26 (25.74)	5 (10.42)	18 (30.51)
Total n=160, 160	138 (86.25)	9 (5.62)	154 (96.25)	22 (13.75)	103 (64..37)	6 (3.75)	101 (63.12)	48 (30.00)	59 (36.87)
X^2	9.23** (YC)		2.28		NA		6.50*		

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at 1 per cent level

* Significant at 5 per cent level

*Both castes resided in different localities on the outskirts of the village (mainly roadside)

Social ceremonies

Social ceremonies (marriage, birth, death and *paths* etc.) are the occasions where whole village participate in the celebrations and sorrow of each other. An effort was made to find out whether Dalits were part of these celebrations or not. The study showed that 85 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 76.2 per cent of the Dalits attended the social ceremonies of each other (Table 2). Such kind of interaction was comparatively less during fathers' generation of Jats Sikhs (13.1%) and that of Dalits (21.9%). Caste wise analysis highlighted that more

than half of medium status Jat Sikhs divulged of attending the social functions of Dalit acquaintances whereas 40.1 per cent medium and thirty six per cent high status Dalits were attending the functions of Jat Sikh counterparts. Deeper investigation into the matter revealed that socio-economic status played a greater role in dictating such interaction pattern. Chi squares values too established an association between status and attending the ceremonies in both the generations.

Table 2: Attending the social ceremonies of Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba region of Punjab

Status of the respondents	Attending the social ceremonies			
	Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Low n=29,46	27 (19.85)	29 (23.77)	15 (71.43)	16 (45.71)
Medium n=79,70	71 (52.21)	49 (40.16)	4 (19.05)	14 (40.00)
High n=52,44	38 (27.94)	44 (36.07)	2 (9.52)	5 (14.29)
Total n=160,160	136 (85.00)	122 (76.25)	21 (13.12)	35 (21.87)
X ²	3.80*		3.51*	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

* Significant at 5 per cent level

The study took into consideration the interaction between the two castes at two different levels. Firstly, it was the interaction between the relatively equals (as guests only). Secondly, it was patron-client interaction (as workers only). The study highlighted that all Jat Sikh respondents attended the ceremonies of Dalits as guests only. Data given in Table 3 revealed that 46.8 per cent of those who attended the functions at Jats places as guest were from high status. Nearly forty per cent from medium and 13.8 per cent from low status were also part of these celebrations as guests.

The study further recorded the intergenerational change in patron client relationship between Dalits and Jat Sikhs. Dalit respondents divulged that they had found entry into the

households of Jat Sikhs whereas their fathers' were denied such entry. They revealed that their fathers' too worked for Jat Sikhs but their work pertained to outside the household. Seventeen per cent of Dalit respondents and one fourth of their fathers' generation had such interactive ties. The data revealed that about half of low and medium status Dalits were engaged by Jat Sikhs as cooks/*halwai*, waiters and domestic helpers. Chi square value did not found any association between status and attending the ceremony as guest or worker.

Table 3: Attending the ceremonies by Dalits as guest/worker in Doaba region of Punjab

Status of the respondents	As guest		As worker	
	Respondent	Father	Respondent	Father
Low n=46	13 (13.83)	-	16 (57.14)	16 (47.06)
Medium n=70	37 (39.36)	-	12 (42.86)	14 (41.18)
High n=44	44 (46.81)	1 (100.00)	-	4 (11.76)
Total n=160	94 (58.75)	1 (0.62)	28 (17.50)	34 (21.25)
X ²	NA		0.65	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*All Jat Sikh respondents attended the ceremonies as guest only

Inter-Dinning

Preceding discussion had made it clear that both castes started attending others' social ceremonies and on these occasions, inter-dinning was very common. They did not exactly share food with each other but had food at same place from same servings and utensils. There were no restrictions on Dalits in having food with Jat Sikhs on religious and social functions. The study highlighted that (Table 4) one fourth of Jat Sikh and 83.1 per cent Dalit respondents took meals together whereas in their fathers' generation this was practised by

only 3.1 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 18.1 per cent of Dalits. The study further highlighted that out of those who had inter dined with Jat Sikhs about 49 per cent were from medium and 30.8 per cent were from high class status. It was found that one fourth of Jat Sikhs and one sixth of Dalits did not share meals and this percentage was quite less than their fathers' generation when majority of Jat Sikhs (96.8%) and Dalits (81.8%) did not inter dine with each other. A significant association was observed between status and not having meals together in both castes.

Table 4: Inter-Dinning between Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba region of Punjab

Status of the respondents	Inter-dinning							
	Yes				No			
	Respondent		Father		Respondent		Father	
	Jat Sikh	Dalits	Jat Sikh	Dalits	Jat Sikh	Dalits	Jat Sikh	Dalits
Low n=29,46	19 (15.97)	27 (20.30)	2 (40.00)	7 (24.14)	10 (24.39)	19 (70.37)	27 (17.42)	39 (29.77)
Medium n=79,70	72 (60.50)	65 (48.87)	3 (60.00)	10 (34.48)	7 (17.07)	5 (18.52)	76 (49.03)	60 (45.80)
High n=52,44	28 (23.53)	41 (30.83)	-	12 (41.38)	24 (58.54)	3 (11.11)	52 (33.55)	32 (24.43)
Total n=160, 160	119 (74.37)	133 (83.12)	5 (3.12)	29 (18.12)	41 (25.62)	27 (16.87)	155 (96.87)	131 (81.87)
X ²	3.43ns		NA		14.07**		6.86**	

** Significant at 1 per cent level

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Interaction in religious institutions

The study found that besides at least one Jat Sikh gurudwara in the entire sample villages, there were separate Dalit gurudwaras in 87.5 per cent of villages. Beside these gurudwaras there were other religious places like *dera*, *jgah* (Muslim places of worship) etc.

visited by both the castes. Majority of the respondents visited their respective gurudwaras only but occasionally they do visit each other's religious places also. Efforts were made to know the purpose of visit to each other's religious places to gauge the interaction. Majority of Dalit respondents revealed that (Table 5) though there was no restriction on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras even then majority (95.6%) of them visited there only at the time of *gurupurab* celebration and on other *dharmik smagams*. One fourth of Jat Sikhs also visited Dalit gurudwaras on special occasions to pay obeisance (mostly on Ravidas Jayanti).

Having goods like big kitchen utensils, floor mats, loud speakers was another reason of visiting each other's religious places by Jat Sikhs (40.6%) and Dalits (84.3%). Dalits were always dependent on their patrons for meeting such needs during social functions and Jat Sikhs never had such ties due to prevalence of pollution norms. But study observed that now Jat Sikhs too had such interactive ties with Dalits. They also brought goods when needed from Dalit gurudwaras. Interactions were dictated more by norms of convenience than by norms of caste particularly pollution and purity.

Only 2.5 per cent Dalits reported that they were members in Jat Sikh gurudwara managing committees and even lesser (1.8%) percentage divulged that they went to gurudwaras when called to discuss the financial matters. An intergenerational change was observed that in the generation of the fathers' of Dalits they were never the members in committees and neither were called to discuss any financial matters.

Table 5: Purpose of visit of Dalits and Jat Sikhs to each other's gurudwaras in Doaba region of Punjab

Purpose of the visit	Multiple responses			
	Respondents		Fathers	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalits
To pay obeisance on special occasions	45 (28.12)	153 (95.62)	23 (14.37)	121 (75.62)
As a managing committee member	15	4	4	-

	(9.37)	(2.50)	(2.5)	
To participate in financial matters	12 (7.5)	3 (1.87)	5 (3.12)	-
To have some goods/articles	65 (40.62)	135 (84.37)	-	115 (71.87)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

During study it was reported by only 8 per cent of the respondents that instituting *Amrit Bani* (a separate religious granth containing *Shlokas* of Guru Ravidas originally found in Guru Granth Sahib) in Ravidas gurudwaras by Dalits had been opposed by upper caste Jat Sikhs and in some places their attempts resulted in conflict. Religious celebrations particularly Ravidas Jayanti was the major bone of contention between Dalits and Jat Sikhs. The study observed that Ravidas Jayanti was celebrated with greater fervour in the sample area. An attempt was made to investigate the interaction between the two castes on such occasions. As was divulged in the preceding discussion that the social distance had decreased and it was expected to had position impact on interaction in religious spheres. But contrary to this, study found widening of gap between the two.

A majority (88.7%) of Dalit respondents revealed that (Table 6) Jat Sikhs did not participate and support them in these celebrations though they did not openly came against these celebrations. On the other hand 91.3 per cent of Jat Sikhs objected to the undue flaunting and ostentatiousness during *nagar kirtans*. Jat Sikhs had issues with the pomp and show during such processions and considered their act of distributing fruits, sweets etc. unruly. Not given opportunities to be the member in Jat Sikh gurudwara managing committee, inspite of their numerical strength was another reason behind Dalits distancing from Jats. Saints of DSB and other *deras* and Dalit community of *Doaba* region proclaimed the birth of new religion. Dalits asserted for the new faith, Guru Ravidas Dharm, and were trying to institute their own religious book, *Amrit Bani Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj Ji*, had

their communal flag (*Har*) and greeted each other by saying *Jai Guru Dev Ji*. Differences calculated were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 6: Religious interaction between Dalits and Jat Sikhs in *Doaba* region of Punjab

Reason	Respondent		Multiple responses
	Jat Sikhs	Dalits	Z values
Instituting separate	5	5	0.50
<i>Dharm Granth (Amrit Bani)</i>	(10.86)	(8.06)	
Celebration of Ravidas Jayanti	42	55	0.44
	(91.30)	(88.70)	
Management committee of gurudwaras	-	28	5.30**
		(45.16)	
Separate religion	39	57	1.17
	(84.78)	(91.93)	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

Village panchayat and elections

73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993 provided for statutory reservation of elected posts in local bodies for women, besides the SCs and the STs. This generated a lot of hope about empowering the weaker sections. Study found proportionate representation of Dalits in all the sample villages and 43.7 per cent villages had Dalit sarpanch.

The study recorded the perceptions of Dalits regarding their interaction with Jat Sikhs in the functioning of village panchayats and cooperation from Jat Sikhs. It was revealed by the three fourth of Dalit respondents that Jat Sikhs cooperated with them at each stage (Table 7). Dalits felt that Jat Sikhs had accepted them as equal partners in political institution due to their numerical strength. Jat Sikhs had well realized the fact that without Dalit votes they

could not succeed in election, hence the cooperation was more a compulsion than a choice for them. Announcement of Rs. 100 crores for Ravidas Memorial by present SAD-BJP government at *Khuralgarh* village in Hoshiarpur district also is the testimony of the fact that they had well realized the power of Dalit vote bank and program to cash upon it through such political tactics. Two third of the Dalits divulged that Jat Sikhs spent money on panchayat elections whereas a large majority (93.1%) revealed that during their fathers' generation election expenses were bore by Jat Sikhs. Mobility in socio-economic status had enabled Dalits to spend money on panchayat elections as was divulged by one fifth of them.

Table 7: Perceptions of Dalits regarding functioning of panchayats

Particulars	Dalit		X ² value
	Respondents	Father	
Cooperation in panchayats			
Yes	121 (75.6)	98 (61.2)	7.65**
No	39 (24.3)	62 (38.7)	
Who spent money on elections			
Jat Sikhs	107 (66.8)	149 (93.1)	34.46**
Dalits	30 (18.7)	6 (3.7)	
Both	23 (14.3)	5 (3.1)	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at 1 per cent level

Conclusions

The study highlighted a significant intergenerational change in interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs. Social distance between both castes had been decreasing. It was observed that both castes were coming socially closer to each other. There was no restriction on Dalits' entry into Jat Sikhs' kitchen, both the castes attended each others' social ceremonies and had meals together. Dalits had constructed their own gurudwaras in order to

attain a certain degree of cultural and religious autonomy from the dominant Jat Sikhs. Government's affirmative action program had enabled proportionate political representation of Dalits in village panchayats and Jat Sikhs had accepted well this fact. The change in interaction patterns was not by choice for Jat Sikhs but it was a compulsion for them. They had realized that Dalits had become a force to reckon with, at least in the political arena. The increasing level of Dalit assertion, benefits of affirmative action program, remittances and diversification in the realm of economy had given Dalits a strong sense of equality inspiring to assert for share in the local and state power structure and sometimes met with resistance from upper caste. This had created a sort of confrontation between the dominant and the downtrodden.

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Dissociation among Dalits and Jat Sikhs in Doaba region of Punjab: Causes and Consequences

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ABSTRACT

Due to numerical strength, high literacy rate, emigration and political representation, position of Dalits in Punjab is quite different than that of Dalits in other parts of the country. This has impacted their interaction pattern with land owning, locally dominant Jat Sikhs. The present study was conducted with the specific objective to analyse their interaction and causes and consequences of prevalent dissociation amongst them. The study was based on primary data collected from 320 respondents (160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs) from all the four districts of Doaba region. One fourth of Jat Sikh and 38.7 per cent of Dalit respondents reported about dissociation between both castes. Improved status of Dalits, celebration of Ravidas Jayanti with great fervour by Dalits, emerging separate religion (Ravidas Dharm) were some of the reasons perceived by respondents behind dissociation. Dissociation was mainly caused by religious and political issues. Regarding consequences of dissociation study found that institutional participation of Dalits had increased, *jajmani* ties declined with Jat Sikhs and Dalits had constructed their separate gurudwaras. Dalits were no more in the denial mood and were becoming impressively assertive. A conflict was simmering which could flare up into an overt conflict any time at slightest provocation.

Punjab is a Sikh majority state. The Sikhs constitute 59.9 per cent of the state's population. Jat Sikh is a sub-group of the Sikh ethno religious group from the Indian subcontinent. Involved in peasantry, the landowning Jat Sikhs played an important role in agricultural development of the state and they constituted nearly 25 per cent of the total population. Dalits have a highest proportion of population in the state, i.e., 31.3 per cent among the states in India (GOP, 2010). Punjab's villages are, therefore, predominately Sikh and Dalit. Dalits comprised a group of people traditionally regarded as untouchables.

Sikhism appears to have experienced a significant liberating influence on Dalits in Punjab. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus, the religious institutions of *sangat* and *langar*, the absence of a caste based priesthood, and the respect for manual labour-all these together aims at creating a harmonious community in which distinction of caste, creed and status are not relevant. When the Singh Sabha leadership chose to assert a separate and distinct identity to underline their boundary demarcation from the Hindus, the people of the untouchable castes in the region converted to Sikh religion in large numbers with a view to improve their status.

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Though integral to the social structure, there were several instances where Dalits were discriminated against by land owning Jat Sikhs. Restrictions on Dalits entry into upper caste houses had been one of the most strictly observed practice. Dalits were associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as scavenging and cleaning, leatherwork, butchering, or removal of rubbish, animal carcasses, and attached labourers (*siris*). The scheduled castes population of the region had been comparatively vulnerable in the economic structure of the village. Their ownership of agricultural land is among the lowest in the country (Jodhka, 2002). Dalit Sikhs did not get equal treatment in the gurudwaras of the upper caste Sikhs. *Mazhabis* were forbidden to enter the Golden Temple. Their offering of *karah prasad* was not accepted. Until 1920 Dalit Sikhs were not allowed to go beyond the fourth step in the Golden Temple (Ram, 2007; Singh, 2012). Besides some discrimination against them, the position of Dalits in Punjab is quite different than that of Dalits in other parts of the country due to their numerical strength, high literacy rate, large scale migration to foreign countries and due to their increased political representation of Dalits from the grass root level of Panchayats to the legislative assembly (Juergensmeyer, 1988; Tatla, 1999; Jodhka, 2000; Awasthi, 2003).

Due to these factors, socio economic status of Dalits has changed significantly. This has impacted the interaction patterns amongst Dalits and Jat Sikhs. Large majorities of Dalits have consciously dissociated themselves from their traditional occupations such as cleaning and scavenging as it carried an alleged stigma. They also began to distance themselves from agriculture during green revolution. Due to heavy influx of cheap and docile migrant labour, land owning Jat Sikhs de patronized local Dalit *siris* which compelled them to seek off farm employment (Jodhka, 2002; Ram, 2007; Sharma and Sidhu, 2009). They started constructing their own gurudwaras and it never been met with any resistance from Jats (Judge, 2002; Singh, 2012; Mahajan and Jodhka, 2012). Though it may be because of ideology of Sikhism, untouchability has been less of a problem in Punjab. There are no open civil, social and religious restrictions on Dalits but in several cases Dalits feel that they are discriminated against by locally dominant Jat Sikhs, who control the social system.

In the past, the conflict among *Ravidasia*, *Ad Dharmis* and Jat Sikhs have made national headlines many a times. The infamous socio-political conflict at *Talhan*, *Boota Mandi* and at *Ballan* is the testimony of the fact that social relationships among Dalits and Jat Sikhs are tensed and often flare up at slightest provocation. Dalits are no more in the denial mood and are becoming impressively assertive (Judge, 2004; Ram, 2004; Judge and Bal, 2008). With this backdrop, the present study had been undertaken with a specific objective to

analyse the interaction and causes and consequences of prevalent dissociation among Dalits and Jat Sikhs.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in *Doaba* region of Punjab in year 2014-15 and based on primary data. Doaba region comprises of four districts viz Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar and Kapurthala. It had been purposively selected as it has the highest proportion of Dalit population in the state i.e. 40 per cent. At first stage two blocks from each of the four districts were selected randomly to obtain a total of eight blocks. At second stage two villages from each block were further selected randomly and then at the final stage 20 respondents i.e. 10 Dalits and 10 Jat Sikhs from each village were selected randomly and interviewed personally with the help of an interview schedule. Thus total sample size was of 320 respondents i.e. 160 Dalits and 160 Jat Sikhs from eight villages. Perceptions regarding intergenerational changes had been obtained from respondents' fathers (where available) or from respondents themselves. Data was tabulated and statistically analysed by calculating frequency, percentage, chi-square and Z values to reach at logical scientific conclusions.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study were focused on the prevalence of dissociation among Dalits and Jat Sikhs. Causes and consequences of dissociation had been studied on the basis of social, economic, political and religious grounds.

Dissociation between Dalits and Jat Sikhs

Caste tensions continued to affect the social fabric in Punjab, even though the state has long boasted of a caste free society due to Sikhism. Dalits particularly *Ad-dharmis*, who had improved their socio-economic status either through immigration, benefits from reservation policies or small scale enterprises like carpenter, flour mills and oil presses had disassociated themselves from their caste occupations. They also had distanced themselves from age old landlord patrons (who they no longer want to serve) and severed the *jajmani* ties.

Study intrigued into the state of affairs and tried to identify the dissociation between Dalits and Jat Sikhs, if any and to ascertain the reasons thereof. Perceptions of the respondents regarding prevalence of dissociation had been recorded and it had been found that one fourth of the Jat Sikhs and 38.7 per cent of Dalits felt that they had dissociative social interaction with each other (Table 1). Study found Dalits more vocal in responding about their state of negative affairs. When compared with their earlier generation, study

found almost negligible response from fathers of Jat Sikhs (3.1%) and Dalits (1.3%). Rather deeper investigations of the matter revealed that Jat Sikhs on their part never recognized any form of protest or rebellion by their Dalit dependents and Dalits on their part did not have required consciousness to recognize and report their exploited positions.

Table 1: Perceptions of the respondents regarding prevalence of dissociation

Particular	Respondents		Respondents' fathers	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Yes	46 (28.75)	62 (38.75)	5 (3.12)	2 (1.25)
No	114 (71.25)	98 (61.25)	155 (96.87)	158 (98.75)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Reasons behind dissociation

Study further tried to explore the reasons behind dissociation between the two castes. The study relied on the perceptions of the respondents. The responses were obtained and for the sake of empirical analysis these were clubbed under different categories viz social, economic, political and religious. Though there existed an overlapping among the responses but for the sake of analysis these were considered under constituent categories.

Perusal of Table 2 highlights that flaunting of status by Dalits was the major bone of contention leading to dissociative social relation as perceived by Jat Sikhs. More than half of the Jat Sikh respondents, who responded of prevalence of dissociation perceived undue flaunting of newly acquired status by Dalits as the major reason behind the unsavoury social situation but Dalits (29%) on their part felt that their Jat Sikh counterparts were jealous of their improved status and did not come to terms and digest their newly acquired position. Denial to upper caste dominance was reported by three fourth of Dalit respondents as another reason behind dissociation. They divulged that Jat landlords expected same kind of servitude, bondage and obedience from them which their forefathers used to do. Practising other than traditional occupations, Dalits were no longer attached to Jat Sikhs as *siris* and were not obliged to accept their dominance. They were neither ready to accept any derogatory remarks (38.7%) hurled upon them by Jat acquaintances.

Shamlats were another hot spot for which more than half of respondents from both castes tried to acquire and fight over the others' claim over the land. Marriage between different castes is a new social phenomenon which is picking pace in urban areas and making inroads in rural areas too. Neighbouring state of Haryana is infamous for the phenomenon of honour killing. Though, no case of honour killing was reported in the study area, yet inter-

caste marriage was neither well received by Jat Sikhs (69.6%) nor by Dalits (61.2%). Study observed that Jat Sikhs could accept girl from lower caste (though not easily) but marriage of their daughter to lower caste could invite wrath of not only the family concerned, but usually of the whole community get instigated and involved into the issue. Inter caste marriages were not only unwelcomed but contentious too. Due to hierarchy being prevailed among Dalits which placed *Ad-dharmis* at highest rung and *Balmikis* at lowest, conjugal relations among them were not acceptable especially to *Ad-dhrmis*. Results were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table.2: Perceptions of respondents regarding social reasons behind dissociation

Reasons	Respondents		Z values
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	
Improved status of Dalits	25 (54.34)	18 (29.03)	2.66**
Derogatory remarks against Dalits	-	24 (38.70)	4.70**
<i>Shamlat</i> issue	27 (58.69)	35 (56.45)	0.23
Inter-caste marriage	32 (69.57)	38 (61.29)	0.89
Denial to upper caste dominance	-	48 (77.42)	8.01**

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

Economic reasons behind dissociation

The increased inflow of migrant workforce in Punjab has far reaching consequences both positive and negative. The substantial presence of migrant agricultural labour in the rural social set up and huge surplus workforce in agriculture and rural economy of Punjab presents a paradoxical situation. Its rural sector absorbs five to ten lakh migrant labour but its own four lakh youth (both educated and uneducated) stand unemployed (GOP, 2013). Besides skewing employment opportunities, migrants have depressed the wages of local labour and are significant threat to the potential for a further rise in their wages by reducing their bargaining power (Sidhu, Rangi and Singh, 1996; Sharma and Sidhu, 2009). Same phenomenon was observed in the study area where eighty per cent of Dalits reported that Jat Sikh landlords had lowered their wages and resorted to migrant labour (severing the age old *jajmani* ties) who were ready to work at lower wages. Jat Sikhs (82.6%) on their part reported labour issue an important reason behind unsavoury situation (Table 3). They divulged that

local *siris* have shifted to non-farm sector. Jat Sikhs further divulged that Dalits preferred to remain idle at their homes instead of working in their fields as labour.

Further, it was reported by 76 per cent of the Jat Sikhs that Dalits did not repay the money borrowed from them. They disclosed that Dalits used to promise that if they will be unable to pay money back, they will work in the fields to clear the debt, but they neither repay the money nor worked in their fields. Majority among them opined that it was their mistake to lend money to Dalits. *Ina di zaat hi eho jhi, pese le ke vaps karn da naam hi ni lende* (These lower caste people are like that only, they forgot to return what they have taken). On the other hand, on same issue 67.8 per cent of Dalit respondents reported that they had cleared all the debt, but envious Jat Sikhs unnecessarily wanted to trap them by levelling false charges. How they could torture and force them to work as labour in their fields when no dues were outstanding and they did not have any obligation to serve. Chi square values showed significant association between caste and perceptions of respondents regarding economic reasons behind dissociation.

Table 3: Perceptions of respondents regarding economic reasons behind dissociation

Reason	Respondent	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Wage issue	24 (52.17)	49 (79.03)
Labour issue	38 (82.60)	11 (17.74)
Debt issue	35 (76.08)	42 (67.74)
X^2	23.99**	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

Political reasons behind dissociation

History of active Dalit politics in Punjab is fairly old and goes back to early years of 20th century. It was in 1920s that Ad-dharam movement was initiated in Punjab by Mangoo Ram among the *chamars* of the *Doaba* sub region. This movement has been one of the most successful of Dalit mobilization. It did succeed in mobilizing a large number of local Dalits against the caste system and for a separate identity. After independence India adopted the democratic model of development with special thrust on upliftment of weaker sections. Panchayati Raj System in 1957 was the most exciting experiment in democratic decentralization and further to ensure the participation of SCs and STs. 73rd Amendment Act

in Constitution was made and came into force from 24th April, 1993. This had reserved the seats for SCs in proportion to their population for membership of panchayat. These factors led to a political consciousness of Dalits. This consciousness and active participation of Dalits in village politics had not been easily accepted by locally dominant Jat Sikhs (Jodhka and Parkash, 2003; Puri, 2003; Ram, 2004). The study also recorded the same as it was revealed by all the Jat Sikh respondents that due to reservation under 73rd Constitutional Amendment, Dalits no longer obeyed them and disrespected their patronage. Further half of the Jat Sikh respondents shared their apprehension regarding the efficacy of Dalit sarpanches and panches. They opined that how a sweeper class, who is illiterate, could run the panchayat? They were not aware about the functioning mechanism and lack required skills for politics. Jat Sikhs blamed Dalits for being corrupt and misusing the grants. Same blame of corruption had been levied by Dalits (62.9%) on Jat Sikh sarpanches and panches. They expressed that Jat Sikhs who had been controlling the affairs of village could not tolerated the change. This had created cleavage and generated tensions leading to fighting, allegations, mutual suspicion and conflict between them and Jat Sikhs. It was reported by 85.7 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that Dalit voters openly demanded for liquor, money, household items from competing parties and even there was no guarantee that they would vote for that party after grabbing all incentives. On same issue 70 per cent of Dalits reported these as false allegations against them. They denied prevalence of such practices. Again majority of Dalits (93.5%) reported discrimination in development projects (Table 4). According to Dalit respondents, Jat Sikh sarpanches ignored their residential areas (*chamarhli*, *vehrha*) while executing development projects like construction of community halls, cemented roads, planation, cleanliness etc. They accused that Jat Sikh sarpanches preferred their own localities for such projects. Differences calculated in the perceptions of respondents regarding political reasons behind dissociation were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 4: Perceptions of respondents regarding political reasons behind dissociation
Multiple responses

Reason	Respondents		Z value
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	
Reservation under 73 rd amendment	46 (100.00)	-	10.39**
Accusations of corruption and inefficiency	25 (54.34)	39 (62.90)	0.89
Voting malpractices	36 (85.71)	44 (70.96)	0.86

Discrimination in executing development projects	-	58 (93.54)	9.64**
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Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

Religious reasons behind dissociation

Dalit backlash in Punjab in the aftermath of the Vienna attack on the lives of two spiritual heads (Sant Niranjan Dass and his second-in-command Sant Ramanand) of *Dera Sachkhand Ballan* (DSB), one of the most important Dalit religious centres and a symbol of Dalit assertion in northern India had flared up the conflict between two castes in the state. DSB, also known as *Dera Shri 108 Sant Sarwan Dass ji Maharaj Sachkhand Ballan* or simply *Dera Ballan*, is situated at village *Ballan* seven miles north of Jalandhar city on the Pathankot road. Other equally famous Ravidas *deras* are, Temple Ravidass *Chak Hakim* (Phagwara), and *dera* of Sant Jagatjit Giri, Pathankot (Ram, 2007; 2009). The Ravidass *deras* of *Ballan* and *Chak Hakim* shot into prominence during the Ad-dharm movement. They were instrumental in bringing social consciousness among Dalits of Punjab. Mangoo Ram, the founder of Ad-dharm movement, visited the *dera Ballan* and sought its support in popularizing the image of Ravidass among Dalits of Punjab (Juergensmeyer, 1988; 2000). The association of the *dera* with the Ad-dharm movement becomes further clear from the fact that Sant Sarwan Dass, then head of the *dera Ballan*, offered juice to Mangoo Ram to open his fast-unto-death (Bawa, 2004). These *deras* are distinguished from both Hindu temples and mainstream Sikh gurudwaras in the sense that they have their separate patterns of rituals, ceremonies, slogans, *ardas* (prayer), *kirtan* (musical rendering of sacred hymns), religious festivals and iconography (Rawat, 2003; Ram, 2009; Prashar, 2012). Due to such influential *deras* in the region, a tensed religious situation was simmering between Jat Sikhs and Dalits in the area. DSB has a great influence on Dalits (particularly Ad-dharmis) of *Doaba* region. After Vienna attack on head of DSB, who was attacked by a group of extremist Sikhs, allegedly Jats, laid the foundation for Dalits seeking a more assertive, cultural, political and religious identity.

After the Vienna incident, *dera* also had purposed a separate religious granth named *Amrit Bani*, containing *shlokas* of Guru Ravidas originally found in *Guru Granth Sahib*. Motive behind instituting a separate religious granth was to establish a separate religion which would be different from Sikh religion. During study it was reported by Jat Sikhs (10.8%) and Dalits (8%) that instituting *Amrit Bani* in Ravidas gurudwaras by Dalits was the major bone of contention between them (Table 5). Emigration of Dalits to UK, New Zealand,

and Italy was quite popular in the region and recently Gulf countries emerged as new destination for Ad-dharmis. Study found that Dalit NRIs contributed liberally for the welfare of their community and also for celebrating social and religious functions. This was observed during the ostentatious Ravidas Jayanti celebrations where they organized *nagar kirtans* and liberally distributed fruits, sweets and *langar* all through the *nagar kirtan* route. They concluded this celebration by holding *Akhand Paths*. Jat Sikhs were not comfortable with this flaunting, though not objected it openly. In the study area 91.3 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents had some issue with this act of flaunting. It was perceived by 88.7 per cent of Dalits that upper caste Jat Sikhs did not support them in these celebrations, neither they like such display nor did they participate freely. It was further reported by 45 per cent of Dalit respondents that they were not given opportunities to be member in Jat Sikh gurudwara managing committees, even if their numerical strength was more than Jat Sikhs in the village. Even in the study area in 87.5 per cent of villages, Dalits had their own separate gurudwaras. Saints of DSB and other *deras* and Dalit community of region (*Doaba*) attempted to institute new religion. The new faith, called Guru Ravidas Dharm, was to have its own religious book, *Amrit Bani Shri Guru Ravidas Maharaj Ji*, communal flag (*Har*) and greeting (*Jai Guru Dev Ji*). Study observed that Jat Sikh respondents (84.7%) did not appreciated and somehow disliked and feared from this emergence of new religion and further 91.9 per cent of Dalit respondents revealed that their separate religious activities were not accepted by Jat Sikhs and all this resulted in often tense situation between two castes. Differences calculated in the perceptions of respondents regarding religious reasons behind dissociation were found to be significant at one per cent level of significance.

Table 5: Perceptions of respondents regarding religious reasons behind dissociation

Reason	Respondent		Multiple responses
	Jat Sikhs	Dalits	Z values
Instituting separate <i>Dharm Granth (Amrit Bani)</i>	5 (10.86)	5 (8.06)	0.50
Celebration of Ravidas Jayanti	42 (91.30)	55 (88.70)	0.44
Management committee of gurudwaras	-	28 (45.16)	5.30**
Separate religion	39 (84.78)	57 (91.93)	1.17

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

** Significant at one per cent level

Dissociation and resulting conflicts

Conflict is an ever present process in human relations. Social conflict is multi-faceted and does not revolve around one single issue. It is clear from the above discussion that social, economic, political and religious issues made a base for conflict between Dalits and Jat Sikhs in the study area. In most cases, long before conflict erupted in hostile action; it had existed in latent form in social tension and dissatisfaction. Latent conflict becomes overt conflict when an issue is declared and when hostile action is taken. The overt conflict occurs when one side or the other feels strong and wishes to take advantage of this fact. Sometimes actual conflict may exist in latent form for years before there is a formulation of issue or a crisis. Efforts were made in this regard to assess the prevalent form of conflict. It is clear from the data given in Table 6 that in the fathers' generation only social and economic reasons were the base of any conflict between both castes. They did not report any form of conflict due to political and religious issues. Data further highlighted that mainly conflict was in subtle form, it was not loud or noticeable but important in altering the interaction between two castes. Data suggested that religious, political and social reasons were the major forces behind conflict. It was disclosed by 16.2 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that social reasons such as improved status of Dalits, *shamlat* issue and inter-caste marriages were responsible for conflict. It was further reported by 46.1 per cent of Jat Sikh respondents that such cases end up in altercation with Dalits whereas thirty per cent Jat Sikh respondents divulged that these issues remained subtle. Both castes had some problems but they did not come up with them openly. Eleven per cent of Jat Sikh respondents reported that due to *shamlat* issues they had to resort to litigation and 7.6 per cent had been in feud with Dalits over inter-caste marriage.

Social reason behind conflict had been reported by 11.2 per cent of Dalit respondents and out of this fifty per cent had some kind of altercation with Jat Sikhs while 38.8 per cent reported the subtle form of conflict. Data further highlighted that Dalits (10.0%) and Jat Sikhs (7.5%) had some economic issues of wages, labour and debt. Fifty eight per cent of Jat Sikhs and 56.2 per cent of Dalits faced altercation on these issues. For 14.3 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 13.9 per cent of Dalits, reasons pertaining to political participation created conflicting situation in the village or between these two castes. Jat Sikhs (21.7%) reported about altercation on unequal power distribution. Both caste respondents were into litigation due to corruption charges against each other.

Table 6: Reasons and forms of conflict

Forms of conflict	Multiple responses											
	Reasons											
	Social				Economic				Political		Religious	
	Respondent		Father		Respondent		Father		Respondent		Respondent	
	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit	Jat Sikh	Dalit
Subtle	8 (36.76)	7 (38.88)	3 (6.00)	-	5 (41.66)	7 (4.37)	2 (66.67)	-	11 (47.82)	15 (68.18)	20 (76.92)	25 (86.20)
Altercation	12 (46.15)	9 (50.00)	1 (20.00)	1 (0.62)	7 (56.25)	9 (5.62)	1 (33.33)	2 (100.00)	5 (21.73)	2 (9.09)	2 (7.69)	3 (10.34)
Litigation	3 (11.53)	2 (11.11)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2 (8.69)	2 (9.09)	1 (3.84)	1 (3.44)
Feud	2 (7.69)	-	1 (20.00)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (4.34)	1 (4.54)	-	-
Flare up	1 (3.84)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4 (17.39)	2 (9.09)	3 (11.53)	-
Total	26 (16.25)	18 (11.25)	5 (3.12)	1 (0.62)	12 (7.5)	16 (10.00)	3 (1.87)	2 (1.25)	23 (14.37)	22 (13.95)	26 (16.25)	29 (18.12)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

*In fathers' generation no political & religious conflict was reported

Further Jat Sikh respondents (17.3%) reported that political issues flared up in the village where whole Jat and Dalit community stood against each other. Same kind of information had been given by nine per cent Dalit respondents. Conflict due to political reasons was reported as subtle by 47.8 per cent of Jat Sikhs and 68.1 per cent of Dalits. Study came out with religious reasons as major reason for conflict between upper caste Jat Sikhs and Dalits in the region. This was reported as subtle by majority of Jat Sikh (76.9%) and Dalit (86.2%) respondents. In few cases it led to altercation and litigation. It was divulged by Jat Sikhs and Dalits that instituting *Amrit Bani* in Ravidas gurudwaras by Dalits resulted in unsavoury situation where Jat Sikhs opposed this move of Dalits. So, study found that conflict was simmering in *Doaba* region which could flare up into an overt conflict any time at slightest provocation.

Consequences of conflict as perceived by Dalits

The struggle for life takes the form of conflict in interests. A conflict free harmonious group is practically impossible. There is no denying the fact that society requires for its formation and growth both, harmony and disharmony, association and disassociation. Conflict serves constructive and positive end too. In human society, however, most conflicts end in some sort of agreement or accommodation or in the fusion of the two opposing elements (Forsyth, 2009; Meyer, 2012). The results of personal conflict i.e. intra- group conflict are largely negative in that such a struggle lowers the morale and weakens the solidarity of the group. Conflict threatens group solidarity, but despite it all conflict cannot be eliminated. Though there are common ends for which the individuals unite into group, yet there are also ends which relate to the person himself. Previous discussion on dissociation, conflict, reasons and forms of conflict indicated some threats to group solidarity. This is also indicative of caste consciousness and separate identity among Dalits of *Doaba*. An attempt had been made to investigate the consequences of the conflict perceived by Dalits and data is given in Table 7.

The constitutional state affirmative action program has been an important factor behind the upliftment of Dalits, besides the role of Ad-dharm movement and of Ravidas *deras*, Dalit NRI remittances has been most crucial in empowering them and shaped a separate Dalit identity in Punjab particularly in *Doaba* region. Reservation under 73rd Amendment made their participation mandatory in panchayat elections, and beside this Dalit (55.6%) started participation in village elections to show their strength, to have their distinct identity by holding power.

Table 7: Consequences of dissociation as perceived by Dalits

Consequences	Frequency	Multiple responses
		%age
Active participation in panchayat	89	55.62
Institutional participation other than panchayat	64	40.00
Left hereditary occupation	105	65.62
Separate Gurudwaras	140	87.50
Emergence of separate religion	68	42.5
Membership in gurudwara managing committees	17	10.62
Emerging new identity	71	44.37
Changed interaction patterns	118	73.75

It was revealed by forty per cent of Dalit respondents that beside village panchayats they were now members in gurudwara committees, school *paswak* committees, and had established youth clubs in the name of Guru Ravidas. Their institutional participation had been enhanced which had boosted their confidence a lot. In their attempt to get rid of stigmatized identity, Dalits minimize their dependency on Jat Sikhs and severed their *jajmani* ties with erstwhile Jat Sikh patrons, they had left their traditional occupations (65.6%).

It was reported by 87.5 per cent of the respondents that they had separate Ravidas gurudwaras and *Balmiki* temples, though they accepted that there was no overt restriction on their entry into Jat Sikh gurudwaras. Further 42 per cent of Dalit respondents revealed that they were in the process of emergence of new religion separated from mainstream Sikhism. It was revealed by 10.6 per cent of the Dalits that it was only after their continuous efforts, struggle and protest they had been granted membership in local gurudwara managing committees. They were no more under the influence of Jat Sikhs, they felt more confident, conscious towards their identity and considered themselves indispensable part of the society (44.3%), whereas earlier they were discriminated against by society based on caste system in general and exploited by the upper caste Jat Sikhs in particular. Three fourth of the respondents felt change in the interaction pattern and relationship equation between Dalits and Jat Sikhs was due to dissociation. They were no more related as ‘exploiters’ and ‘exploited’. Discrimination or exploitation on the basis of caste was not much in practice. Social interaction was not dictated by caste system and a new system of interaction had emerged which was facing some initial hiccups before final patterning. Dalits were becoming impressively assertive and no more in denial mode.

Conclusion

Study concluded that Dalits had not only improved their socio-economic status but had also liberated themselves from the subjugation of the Jat Sikh *zamindars*. This improved socio-political and economic position had sharpened their sense of social consciousness, which is overtly manifested at different forums through different ways particularly the celebrations of Ravidas *Jayanti*. That should be no way mistaken with communalism. They had dissociated themselves from the traditional *jajmani* relations and had distanced from the mainstream Sikh religion. They no more sanskritized their life style, values institutional pattern of conduct in their attempt to lay claim over a status which their predecessors attempted but were conscious, comfortable and many a times proud of their caste status. Dalits aimed at achieving a separate identity through cultural transformation, religious and political assertion rather than seeking equality in the mainstream Sikh or Hindu fold. Assertion of Dalits sometimes resulted in conflicting situations and sometimes conflict gave way to their assertion.

The increasing level of Dalit assertion and diversification in the realm of economy had given Dalits a strong sense of equality inspiring to assert for share in the local and state power structure and sometimes met with resistance from upper caste. This had created a sort of confrontation between the dominant and the downtrodden. Thus armed with the weapon of improved economic conditions and social consciousness, Dalits had become assertive. However, the Jats interpreted this Dalit assertion as a challenge to their long established supremacy in the state. This in turn has sharpened the contradictions between them and the Dalits. Dalits had started dissociate themselves from mainstream Sikh religion and established their separate identity. Though overtly Jat Sikh commonly had not defied their attempt (s) and were extremely supportive (though due to political compulsion), a conflict is simmering which could flare up into an overt conflict any time at slightest provocation.

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