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## Contempt and Denigration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India

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### ABSTRACT

Smith (1776) proposed that in addition to material deprivation, the poor also suffer from pain of shame. Sen (1983) argued that social exclusion (disability to appear in public without shame) is basic capability deprivation and should be included in absolute poverty. Empirical evidence shows the reciprocal relationship between poverty and shame, and poverty and social exclusion. Poor across countries (irrespective of level of development technological progress and rural-urban differentiation) suffer from shame and social exclusion. This paper analyses the contempt and denigration of Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes in India, in reference to Smith's hypothesis. In line with their counterparts in other countries, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes being the poorest among the poor in Indian society suffer from shame and social exclusion. Besides, they had also suffered caste and untouchability-based social exclusion, discrimination, atrocities, and denigration for centuries. All forms of injustice and caste oppression were abolished under the Constitution of India, including the practice of untouchability and atrocities. However, despite anti-caste untouchability and anti-atrocities constitutional laws and government policies, informally untouchability and atrocities are widespread against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in modern India. Caste and untouchability-based social exclusion and discrimination against them foster poverty and deprivation among them; which in turn perpetuates their historical denigration and contempt in contemporary India.

**Keywords-** Poverty, Untouchability, Atrocities, Shame, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

## 1 Introduction

More than two centuries ago, Adam Smith (1776) proposed that the poor in addition to material deprivation also suffer pain of shame in society. He stated that although the possession of minimum requirement is core to living a decent life. However, the custom of the country values minimum necessity for credible people, without which one would be ashamed to appear in public. To quote Smith;

*“Whatever the custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even the lowest order, to be without’ would be ashamed to appear in public.”* (Smith, 1776). He cited the example of linen shirts and leather shoes to explain his view on the social dimension of poverty (social inclusion). A linen shirt is not necessary for life. The Greeks and Romans lived comfortably though they had no linen. But in present times, even a credible day labourer would be ashamed to appear in public without a linen shirt. Here the necessity of linen shirts plays the role of social inclusion, without which one would be excluded from public and social life, and consequently, opportunities that come through social contact.

This observation of Smith led Sen to argue that *‘the ability to appear in public without shame’* is a basic capability, and should be included in absolute poverty (Sen, 1983). Amartya Sen also acknowledged that although *“income is a moderately good proxy for entitlement to food. However, when it comes to health, or education, or social equality, or self-respect, or freedom from social harassment, income is miles off the target.”* (Sen, 1983 Pp. 756). To analyse the persistence of poverty among socially excluded groups, Sen (2000) further distinguished various meanings and manifestations of the concept of social exclusion (Sen, 2000).

Empirical studies show an association between poverty and shame in both developed and developing countries. For example, Kyomuhendo and Mwiine (2011, 2013) have found that the poor in Uganda were not regarded as persons of worth in society. Walker (2012), on analysing data from seven diverse countries, such as—India, Pakistan, Norway, China, Korea, Uganda, and Britain, found an association between poverty and shame. Walker (2012) also concluded that the shame attached to poverty might have been less in the past, and more in traditional societies,

where life experiences are variously attributed to fate and the supernatural rather than to individual effort. Likewise, Walker and Kyomuhendo (2014) found that in recent years, due to the cutting down of welfare measures by the Conservative party poverty in the UK has increased, however, to avoid shame poor have become reluctant to acknowledge poverty.

Existing studies also shed light on the role of '*social exclusion*' and '*economic discrimination*'—inclusion with extremely adverse terms and conditions— in sustaining poverty among socially excluded and discriminated groups. For example, Du Toit (2004) for analysing poverty in the deciduous fruit industry in the Western Cape district of Ceres, South Africa, found that with relatively higher economic development and growth, sustained poverty among labour was the outcome of adverse incorporation, on particularly disadvantageous terms. Likewise, Devicienti and Poggi (2011) analysed the relationship between social exclusion and poverty in Italy and found that they reinforce each other. Similarly, Ramachandran (2016) found a reciprocal relationship between poverty and social exclusion.

Empirical studies establish a reciprocal relationship between '*poverty and shame*' and '*poverty and social exclusion*' for both advanced and traditional societies. The present paper falls under the category of poverty and its association with shame and social exclusion. However, it differs in terms of social and religious sanction of caste and untouchability-based shame and denigration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in India, which perpetuates their historical denigration in contemporary India irrespective of their economic position. The paper is organized into six sections. Section two describes data sources and methods. Section three presents the concept of shame and caste and untouchability-based shame and denigration of ex-untouchables (Scheduled Castes) under the traditional caste system. Section four presents empirical evidence on widespread untouchability and atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India. Section five presents empirical evidence on social exclusion and Economic discrimination against scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India. Section six concludes the discussion with policy suggestions.

## 2 Data and method

Literature and data from various sources are used to analyse caste and untouchability-based shame and social denigration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The Manu's code of Law as cited by Ambedkar is used to analyse the shameful and denigrating life of ex-untouchables (Scheduled Castes) under the traditional caste system. Data from National Crime Records Bureau for 2022 are used to analyse atrocities and heinous crimes committed against them by the high castes. India Human Development Survey (IHDS) data for 2012, and primary studies conducted by scholars, academicians, civil society, and NGOs shed light on the prevalence of untouchability against them in modern India. Primary studies conducted by academicians and scholars are cited to analyse caste and untouchability-based social exclusion and economic discrimination against them in contemporary India.

### 3.1 Definition of shame

Tracy et al. (2007) define shame as a negative assessment of self concerning own aspirations and expectations of others. Therefore, shame involves two intrinsic features, first, it is internally felt and secondly, externally imposed by others/ society. Alexander (1995) depicts internally felt shame as "*inner torment, a sickness of soul.... [and that] the humiliated one feels naked, defeated, alienated and lacking dignity and worth.*" The shame associated with poverty, in extreme form, may lead to mental illness such as chronic depression (Gilbert, 1998, 2000; Gray 2005; Perese, 2007) and in worse cases, it may even lead to suicide (Walker, 2014). The externally imposed shame is a situation of separation of self from others, and the latter is the audience of self (Benedict, 1946). The close relationship between self-esteem and shame comes from an inextricable link between self and others (Rawls, 1973). Although shame is internally felt, it is also externally imposed by others (society, social and cultural norms— what society prescribes minimum for an individual to take part in social activities). Sen (1983, 2000) clarified that the 'capability to appear in public without shame' as advocated by Smith in 1776 is equal to the capacity to 'mix with others' in that society and to 'participate in the activities of the community'.<sup>1</sup> The inability to do so leads to social exclusion, and thereby marginalization.

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<sup>1</sup> For detail see Sen (1983, Pp. 160-164).

### 3.2 Shameful lives of Shudra scheduled castes under the traditional caste system

The traditional caste system divided the whole society into four classes; namely, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra. It assigned unequal economic rights (including, social, political, cultural, and civil rights) to three classes— Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya, but no right to Shudra, excepting serving three class groups above him. Manu further insisted that Shudra first serve Brahmin, and if he is unable to subsist by serving Brahmin, to seek a livelihood, he may serve Kshatriya or Vaishya, to quote Ambedkar;

- I. 91. “One principal duty the supreme Ruler assigns to a Shudra; namely, to serve the three classes (Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaishya, without depreciating their worth).*
- I. 122. But let Shudra serve Brahmanas.*
- I. 121. If a Shudra unable to subsist by serving Brahmanas seeks a livelihood, he may serve Kshatriyas, or he may also seek to maintain himself by attending a wealthy Vaishya.*
- X122. But let a Shudra serve Brahman, either for the sake of heaven or with a view to both this life and the next, for he who is called the servant of a Brahman thereby gains all his ends.” (Ambedkar, 1987 Vol. 3 Pp. 47, 112 and 121).*

On particular wages for shudra, he (Manu) prescribed wages so low that nothing should be left for saving after meeting the consumption requirements of the family. Manu’s codes for payment of wages to Shudra are produced below;

124. *“They must allot to him (Shudra) out of their family property a suitable maintenance, after considering his ability, his industry, and number of those whom he is bound to support.”*

125. *“The remnants of food must be given to him, as well as old cloths, the refuse of their grain, and their old household furniture.”* (Ambedkar 1987, Vol. 3, Pp. 41).

Manu was not fully confident that the above prescription on payment of wages for Shudra would ensure economic dependency of him (Shudra) on the above three caste groups and he (Shudra) will not be able to save any amount, after meeting consumption. Therefore, Manu further prohibited Shudra from acquiring wealth, so that the economic dependency of Shudra on three caste groups must be ensured. Manu’s code on the prohibition of Shudra from accumulating wealth is produced below;

X. 129. *“No collection of wealth must be made by a Shudra even though he be able to do it; for a Shudra who has acquired wealth gives pain to Brahmans.”* (Ambedkar, 1987, Vol.3 Pp. 41).

Therefore, the position of Shudra (ex-untouchables) was reduced so low under the traditional caste system that they were not entitled to have a respectful occupation, food, clothes, or household furniture. Besides economic adversity, to ensure shame and contempt in the life of Shudra, Manu prescribed that the names of Brahmin denote something auspicious, Kshatriya—power and Shudra— contemptible. Manu’s codes for keeping the names of four caste groups are produced below;

31. *“Let (the first part of) a Brahman’s name (denote something) auspicious, a Kshatriya name connected with power, and a Vaishya name with wealth, but a Shudra’s (express something) contemptible.”*

32. *“(The second part of) a Brahman’s name shall be a word implying happiness, of a Kshatriya (a word) implying protection, of a Vaishya (a term) expressive of thriving and of a Shudra’s (an expression) denoting a service.”* (Ambedkar, 1987, Vol. 3, Pp. 122).

Manu was not fully confident that the above prescription would ensure that all Shudra have contemptible names. Therefore, to ensure contemptible names for all Shudra, he (Manu) instructed that Shudra should not have high-sounding names. Manu's code on the prohibition of high-sounding names for Shudra is produced below;

*“Shudra must not have the comfort of a high-sounding name. He must be contemptible both in fact and in name.”* (Ambedkar 1987, Vol.3, Pp. 122)

In addition to making the economic and social life of the Shudra pitiable, the traditional caste system further attached shame and contempt to the identity of the Shudra by declaring them untouchables—whose touch was regarded as polluting. Under the rule of Peshwas in Maharashtra the untouchable was not permitted to walk on public streets if a high caste was coming along lest he pollute the High caste by his shadow. The untouchables were mandated to tie a black thread on their wrist or neck as a mark to recognize that one is untouchable so that the High caste could prevent themselves from getting polluted by his touch by mistake. In Poona—the capital of Peshwa, the position of the untouchable was even terrible. He was required to hang an earthen pot around his neck to hold his spit, to avoid polluting high caste by his spit falling on the street. Besides, He (the untouchable) was also required to carry a broom strung from his waist, to sweep the dust of the street from behind through which he walked, so that a High Caste trading on the same should not be polluted (Ambedkar 1979, Vol. 1, Pp. 39).

Walker et al. (2013) based on the experience of poverty and shame in seven diverse societies concluded that although the shame attached to poverty might have been less in the past, and more in traditional societies, where life experiences are variously attributed to fate and the supernatural rather than to individual effort. On this account, if we examine shame and contempt for Shudra under the traditional caste system, the Hindu religion through the philosophy of *'Karma and Rebirth'* left no scope for Shudra to improve their present life and avoid suffering. The philosophy of *'Karma and Rebirth'* attributes suffering of the present as an outcome of bad conduct of past life; and good conduct of this life will bring fortune in the next life. Attribution of fate to the suffering of Shudra can be better understood by keeping Manu's prescription of right and good work for Shudra in mind;

X122. *“But let a Shudra serve Brahman, either for the sake of heaven or with a view to both this life and the next, for he who is called the servant of a Brahman thereby gains all his ends.”* (Ambedkar 1987, Vol. 3, Pp. 74).

Thus, the above discussion makes it clear that under the traditional caste system, the economic condition of Shudra was pitiable as they were given remnant food, old clothes, and used household furniture by the high caste as wages for their services to them. Besides, the social life of Shudra was full of shame and contempt through the prescription of a shameful name for Shudra and the practice of untouchability against them. Further, the Philosophy of ‘*Karma and rebirth*’ attributed the suffering/ shameful life of Shudra to fate, and therefore, worked as a self-regulating mechanism by reducing individual efforts to improve their present life.

It is important to note that in Smith’s analysis of shame, the poor may avoid shame through hard work by accumulating minimum material requirements. In addition to ruining Shudra economically, the traditional caste system attached shame and contempt to their identity through the prescription of contemptible names and the practice of untouchability against them. The philosophy and theory of ‘*Karma and rebirth*’ provided it an extra shield.

Due to the worse economic conditions, Shudra was not in a position to afford to have good quality food, wear good clothes, use good furniture at home, and buy fancy clothes and gold and silver necklaces for their women. Even if they could afford to buy these items, they were further restricted from using any good material things in their life and therefore had no chance left to escape a shameful and contemptible life under the traditional caste system. Thus, a shameful and contemptible life for Shudra was guaranteed under the traditional caste system, which had nothing to do with their economic status. On the murderous attack by High Castes on armless and defence-less untouchables for serving Ghee (clarified butter) in social function Ambedkar (1979) has rightly observed that Ghee was unquestionably a special food for the rich, but it was also a mark of high social status. Consumption of Ghee by untouchables insulted High Castes (as it was considered an item of high-caste food) and High Castes attacked untouchables to take revenge from untouchables for their insult. (Ambedkar 1979, Vol. 1, Pp. 41).



#### 4 Empirical evidence on untouchability and atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India

The Oxford Dictionary defines untouchable as—*"a member of the lowest-caste Hindu group or a person outside the caste system, contact with whom is traditionally held to defile members of higher castes."* Dubois (1906) distinguishes between the notion of 'untouchability' and an 'untouchable'. The state of 'untouchability' (the notion of pollution or defilement done by the touch of an untouchable), can be undone/ removed by taking a bath or performing some rituals (depending on the type of pollution) and therefore it is temporary. However, the status of an untouchable is fixed and permanent, and further, it gets automatically transferred to his/ her offspring (Dubois 1906).<sup>2</sup>

Dubois (1906) misunderstood untouchability—as pollution/ defilement done by touch of an untouchable—, however, in fact, the notion of untouchability is a false belief of High Caste Hindus towards all individuals of so-called untouchable castes, which is as much fixed and permanent as the status of an untouchable. Whereas, pollution/ defilement and contamination of persons, things, and places because of contact with an untouchable can be undone or removed by taking a bath or performing some rituals, depending on the type of pollution (Dundes 1997). Thus, the notion of pollution and untouchability, and the status of an untouchable are interlinked and go together; whereas contamination/ defilement through a touch of an untouchable can be undone.

Although, the Constitution of India under Article 17 banned the practice of untouchability in 1950. The Parliament passed the Untouchability (Offences) Act in 1955 to deter its practice. Even after the passing of more than seven decades of constitutional mandate and Parliamentary Laws abolishing it; informally, its practice is widespread in society. Unfortunately, in the last 70 years, no efforts have been made by the government to collect data and undertake a study on the prevalence of untouchability in independent India.

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in Dundes (1997) Pp. 10-11.

## **Prevalence of untouchability against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India**

Massive literature exists on the practice of untouchability against Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Republic of India. Few representative studies are presented to throw light on the subject.

Six studies (Parvathamma-1973-74, Karnataka, Venkateshwarlu-1977, Andhra Pradesh, Tripathy-1987-88, Orissa, Shah-1971 and 1996 Gujarat, Khan 1996- Karnataka, Action Aid 2000) are analysed to through light on the prevalence of untouchability across states in India from the 1970s to 2000. Findings of two studies (India Human Development Survey for 2012, and Shah et al. 2023) are used to shed light on the prevalence of untouchability across states in India in post 2000. Thorat (2017) has systematically analysed the prevalence of untouchability against Scheduled Castes in Maharashtra from 1958 to 2016 and the same is also described.

Parvathamma (1984) conducted a field survey in Karnataka in 1973-74 covering 76 villages. The study found that half of former untouchables were not allowed to draw water from public wells. More than 60 percent of former untouchables faced restrictions to enter temples and houses of high castes. Likewise, more than half were denied the services of Barber and Washerman. Little less than half also faced obstructions to entering the village tea shop, and one-tenth could not bear the clothes and ornaments of their choice. Khan (1995) conducted another study in Karnataka after more than two decades and found that the practice of untouchability changed very little in Karnataka, as three of four former untouchables were denied entry to the temple, and more than half of the respondents had no access to the village water tank.

Venkateshwarlu (1990) conducted a field survey in Andhra Pradesh in 1977. The study found that entry to temples and houses of high castes was debarred for former untouchables. Marriage procession through public roads was prohibited. The use of public wells and taps for drinking water was prohibited. They were also debarred from exercising their franchise.

Tripathy (1994) conducted a field survey in Orissa in 1987-88. Former untouchables faced restrictions to draw water from village wells or public taps, were debarred from entering temples

and houses of high castes, and were excluded from barber and washerman services in the village. They also faced restrictions to enter tea shops and grocery shops.

Shah (1998) conducted a field survey in 1971 covering 69 villages in Gujarat. A repeat survey was also done after more than two decades in 1996 to see the changes in the practice of untouchability, to what extent and in which sphere it is abolished, and to what extent and in which sphere it is still practiced. The key findings of the study are summarised below;

- \* In 1971, there was negligible discrimination in the seating arrangements of students in schools, and in 1996 it was fully abolished.
- \* There was no discrimination against Scheduled Castes teachers in school, however, for housing, they were not able to get houses on rent in high caste locality.
- \* In 1971, former untouchables faced restrictions on free movement on the road in 60 percent of villages, and it reduced to 23 percent in 1996.
- \* In 1971, untouchability was practiced in villages Panchayat meetings in 47 percent of villages, which reduced to 30 percent in 1996.
- \* In most village temples 75 percent of ex-untouchables were not allowed to enter beyond the threshold, they may worship from a distance.
- \* Untouchability against former untouchables in drawing water from public sources was practiced in 61 percent of villages.
- \* In 1971, 85 percent of Scheduled Castes were restricted entry in village shops, which declined to 30 percent in 1996.
- \* Likewise, the practice of untouchability in giving things and receiving money was reduced from 67 percent in 1971 to 28 percent in 1996.

Borooah (2017), and Thorat and Joshi (2020) analysing India Human Development Survey data for 2012 have found that more than one-fourth of all households (27 percent) accepted that they observe untouchability. Social group-wise, more than half of Brahmin households accepted practicing untouchability against Scheduled Castes.

Shah et al. (2023) based on a large survey (covering 565 villages from 11 states) found that in almost 80 percent of villages, untouchability was being practiced against former untouchables in one form or the other.

Thorat (2017) based on seven large surveys, (1 **Wai Taluk Survey, 1958-** 17 villages, 2 **Nasik and Buldhana Untouchability Survey, 1962-** 25 villages, 3 **Harijan Sevak Sangh Survey, 1970,** 192 villages, 4 **Harijan Sevak Sangh and Gokhale Institute Survey, 1970,** 206 villages, 5 **Marathwada Survey 1991,** 95 villages, 6 **Action Aid Survey 2000,** 51 villages, 7 **Civil Society Organization (CSO) Survey 2013-2016,** 52 case studies) conducted on regular intervals found that in Maharashtra (which has been the pioneering states for struggle against all forms of injustice and for securing human rights) untouchability was widely prevalent in public as well as in private spheres. Unfortunately, no attempt by the government to collect data on the prevalence of untouchability inhibits analysis and policy-making to counter it.

The above analysis throws light on widespread practices of untouchability against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Republic of India. Untouchability was observed in public institutions such as government Schools and hospitals (Dreze and Goyal, 2003, Desai and Thorat 2016, Namabissan 2010, Acharya 2010, George, 2015). It was also prevalent in government schemes, such as midday meals, PDS, immunization, and other health services (Thorat and Lee, 2010, Dreze and Goyal, 2003, Borooah et al. 2012).

Thus, persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in different capacities such as casual wage workers, business owners, service providers, and even village panchayat members, and Sarpanch of village Panchayat were condemned socially through the practice of untouchability (Saket, 2019).

### **Prevalence of Atrocities against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India**

Besides untouchability, caste-based atrocities are a key barrier that prevents the social inclusion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India. When members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes try to exercise their rights conferred in the Constitution of India, high castes react violently to debar them from the same. High castes commit heinous crimes

against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, which are described as the rarest of rare by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and the Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India. The Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989, outlined 19 violent acts and behaviours of high caste as violations, and thereby punishable offenses. The Prevention of Atrocities Act 2015 increased the number of violent acts and behaviour of high castes as a violation and thereby punishable offenses from existing 19 to 35 (Thorat, 2017).

As per the data from NCRB for 2022, total (incidents of crimes registered under Indian Penal Code, Prevention of Atrocities Act, and Protection of Civil Rights Act taken together) 67646 incidents of crimes were committed against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (57582 incidents of crimes against Scheduled Castes, and 10064 incidents of crimes against Scheduled Tribes) at all India level (Table 1 and 2). Of the total crimes against Scheduled Castes only 8 percent of crimes were registered under the Prevention of Atrocities (PoA) Act 1989 and 2015, and the remaining were registered under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) where punishment is milder when compared with punishment under PoA.

In 2022 large number of heinous crimes were committed against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes taken together, 1171 incidents of murder, 1436 incidents of grievous hurt, 5182 incidents of assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty, 1227 incidents of kidnapping and abduction, 5588 incidents of rape and 183 incidents of arson) Table 2 and 4. Despite a large number of heinous crimes, only 4703 (8 percent) crime cases of Scheduled Castes, and 329 (3 percent) crime cases of Scheduled Tribes were registered under PoA, which shows the insensitive attitude of law enforcement agencies (police) towards crimes against these groups. Non-registration of cases under the relevant PoA Act was not the only problem through which victims suffered while seeking justice. Even in the cases in which FIR was filed, the same was not done in the prescribed time, cases were not investigated by the police in time, accused were not arrested in time, chargesheets were not filed in the prescribed time, and all these procedural lapses together resulted into high acquittal and low conviction rate for crimes committed against Dalits (Thorat, 2017).

**Table 1: Incidents of Crime against Scheduled Castes, 2022**

Sl. No.	States/ UTs	Total registered crimes (IPC, PoA and PCR)	IPC crimes	PoA crimes	Act	PCR crimes	Act
1	Andhra Pradesh	2315	2190	125		0	
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0		0	
3	Assam	14	4	10		0	
4	Bihar	6509	6509	0		0	
5	Chhattisgarh	323	321	2		0	
6	Goa	8	4	4		0	
7	Gujarat	1279	1214	65		0	
8	Haryana	1633	1535	98		0	
9	Himachal Pradesh	210	18	191		1	
10	Jharkhand	674	443	231		0	
11	Karnataka	1977	1930	42		5	
12	Kerala	1050	1021	29		0	
13	Madhya Pradesh	7733	7732	1		0	
14	Maharashtra	2743	2376	365		2	
15	Manipur	0	0	0		0	
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0		0	
17	Mizoram	5	5	0		0	
18	Nagaland	0	0	0		0	
19	Orissa	2902	2902	0		0	
20	Punjab	162	112	50		0	
21	Rajasthan	8752	8651	101		0	
22	Sikkim	3	0	3		0	
23	Tamil Nadu	1761	1684	77		0	
24	Telangana	1787	1725	62		0	

25	Tripura	2	0	2	0
26	Uttar Pradesh	15368	12287	3081	0
27	Uttarakhand	114	62	52	0
28	West Bengal	104	79	25	0
	UTs			0	0
29	A & N Island	0	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	4	2	2	0
31	D & N Haveli and Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0
32	Delhi	130	47	83	0
33	Jammu and Kashmir	11	5	1	5
34	Ladakh	0	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	9	8	1	0
	<b>All India</b>	57582	52866	4703	13

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

**Table 2: Incidents of Crime against Scheduled Tribes, 2022**

Sl. No.	States/ UTs	Total registered crimes (IPC, PoA and PCR)	IPC crimes	PoA crimes	Act	PCR crimes	Act
1	Andhra Pradesh	396	379	17		0	
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0		0	
3	Assam	9	5	4		0	
4	Bihar	146	146	0		0	
5	Chhattisgarh	516	510	6		0	
6	Goa	1	1	0		0	
7	Gujarat	330	322	8		0	
8	Haryana	0	0	0		0	
9	Himachal Pradesh	4	0	4		0	
10	Jharkhand	283	131	152		0	
11	Karnataka	438	434	4		0	
12	Kerala	172	167	5		0	
13	Madhya Pradesh	2979	2979	0		0	
14	Maharashtra	742	688	54		0	
15	Manipur	1	1	0		0	
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0		0	
17	Mizoram	29	29	0		0	
18	Nagaland	0	0	0		0	
19	Orissa	773	773	0		0	
20	Punjab	0	0	0		0	
21	Rajasthan	2521	2498	23		0	
22	Sikkim	4	1	3		0	
23	Tamil Nadu	67	61	6		0	
24	Telangana	545	529	16		0	



25	Tripura	3	0	3	0
26	Uttar Pradesh	5	5	0	0
27	Uttarakhand	1	1	0	0
28	West Bengal	90	71	19	0
	UTs				
29	A & N Island	3	3	0	0
30	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0
31	D & N Haveli and Daman and Diu	5	0	5	0
32	Delhi	0	0	0	0
33	Jammu and Kashmir	1	1	0	0
34	Ladakh	0	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	0	0	0
	<b>All India</b>	<b>10064</b>	<b>9735</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

**Table 3: Selected crime-head-wise incidents of crime against Scheduled Castes, 2022**

Sl. No.	States/ UTs	Murder	Grievous hurt	Kidnapping and abduction	Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty	Rape	Arson
1	Andhra Pradesh	49	5	25	245	144	6
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Assam	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Bihar	168	480	62	30	161	87
5	Chhattisgarh	10	3	2	49	122	1
6	Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Gujarat	30	89	22	53	129	6
8	Haryana	45	25	44	253	245	4
9	Himachal Pradesh	1	0	0	6	8	0
10	Jharkhand	0	33	1	28	12	1
11	Karnataka	72	37	11	283	204	1
12	Kerala	11	61	7	252	192	1
13	Madhya Pradesh	83	126	59	613	589	32
14	Maharashtra	76	94	36	488	462	3
15	Manipur	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	Mizoram	3	0	1	0	1	0
18	Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Orissa	21	0	0	7	192	8
20	Punjab	6	8	3	14	12	0
21	Rajasthan	99	9	172	676	658	8
22	Sikkim	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	Tamil Nadu	55	5	10	92	166	5
24	Telangana	31	9	13	112	277	2
25	Tripura	0	0	0	0	0	0

26	Uttar Pradesh	189	290	617	939	646	2
27	Uttarakhand	3	2	1	1	17	0
28	West Bengal	2	5	0	2	0	0
	Union Territories						
29	A & N Island	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	D & N Haveli and Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Delhi	0	0	1	17	3	0
33	Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	1	0
34	Ladakh	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>All India</b>	954	1281	1087	4160	4241	<b>167</b>

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

**Table 4: Selected crime-head-wise incidents of crime against Scheduled Tribes, 2022**

Sl. No.	States/ UTs	Murder	Grievous hurt	Kidnapping and abduction	Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty	Rape	Arson
1	Andhra Pradesh	8	2	8	50	29	0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Assam	0	0	0	0	1	0
4	Bihar	0	0	1	3	1	1
5	Chhattisgarh	13	4	7	70	212	0
6	Goa	0	0	0	0	1	0
7	Gujarat	12	21	12	17	58	0
8	Haryana	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Himachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Jharkhand	2	3	0	9	9	0
11	Karnataka	17	10	1	92	51	0
12	Kerala	5	9	3	36	43	0
13	Madhya Pradesh	61	52	43	314	359	7
14	Maharashtra	26	34	14	163	176	2
15	Manipur	0	0	0	0	1	0
16	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	Mizoram	4	4	0	7	5	0
18	Nagaland	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Orissa	16	1	1	10	131	4
20	Punjab	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	Rajasthan	40	5	46	198	163	2
22	Sikkim	0	0	0	1	0	0
23	Tamil Nadu	2	0	0	7	14	0
24	Telangana	10	0	4	40	86	0
25	Tripura	0	0	0	0	0	0

26	Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0	1	0
28	West Bengal	1	10	0	4	6	0
	Union Territories						
29	A & N Island	0	0	0	1	0	0
30	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	D & N Haveli and Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Delhi	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	Ladakh	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	Puducherry	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>All India</b>	217	<b>155</b>	<b>140</b>	1022	<b>1347</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

## **5 Caste and untouchability-based social exclusion and economic discrimination against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India**

Caste and untouchability-based discrimination and atrocities make Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes handicapped to participate freely in market and non-market economic activities. They face social exclusion and discrimination in economic spheres, which affects their employment, income, and consumption negatively.

In rural areas, Scheduled Caste workers were denied agriculture and house construction work. They were paid lower wages than wages paid to high-caste co-workers for identical work (Action Aid, 2000). They suffered social exclusion in processing grain and harvesting vegetables. In certain activities, where employed, they suffered from four types of caste discrimination. First, Lower wages than wages paid to high caste workers for identical work. Second, longer hours of work (more than eight hours) without additional payment; third, delay in wage payment; and fourth, discrimination in the workplace by coworkers belonging to high castes and employers (Thorat, Mahamallik and Sadana, 2010; and Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 2015). Likewise, Saket (2019) found that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe

workers were hired in low-paying and high and risk activities. They were denied wages after work. The workers who received wages suffered two types of discrimination. First, received lower wages than the offered wage rate. Second, delay in wage payment. Besides, the Chamar caste, barbers, and washermen were forced to carry out traditional caste occupations and provide their service to Varga house—permanent customary customers of the village. Tea and betel sellers and restaurant owners belonging to Scheduled Castes suffered social exclusion against their businesses, as high-caste customers did not consume tea, or betel and did not place orders for restaurant services. Likewise, Scheduled castes grocery shop owners, faced caste prejudice against their business, as high caste customers did not buy Laddu, Salt, and Ghee (clarified butter). They purchased certain items on credit and later refused to pay for it (Saket, 2019).

In urban areas, more qualified Scheduled Castes workers were denied employment, whereas, less qualified high castes workers were preferred and employed (Thorat and Attewell, 2007). Those employed as regular salaried in the private sector got lower salaries than their high-caste counterpart for identical work. They were assigned more tasks and faced unequal treatment at the workplace by co-workers belonging to high castes and employers (Madheswaran, 2006; Madheswaran and Attewell, 2007; and Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 2015). The above discussion throws light on social exclusion and discrimination against Scheduled Castes and Tribes in the Economic sphere. Social exclusion and discrimination affect employment, income and consumption negatively and thereby perpetuate relatively high poverty and deprivation among them.

## **6 Conclusion and policy implications**

Smith (1776) proposed that in addition to material deprivation, the poor also suffer the pain of shame in society. Empirical evidence shows the relationship between poverty and shame, and poverty and social exclusion, which provides support for Smith's hypothesis. This paper analyses contempt and shame for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes concerning Smith's proposition. In India, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are the poorest among all social groups. Historically, based on caste and untouchability they suffered from social exclusion, discrimination, and deprivation in multiple spheres for many centuries. Although, the practice of untouchability was abolished by the Constitution in 1950. However, even after passing more

than seven decades since the implementation of the Constitution, informally, untouchability is widespread, particularly, in rural areas, and private spheres. Untouchability is also observed in public spheres, but relatively it is less prevalent. When members belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes try to exercise their constitutional rights, high castes react violently to deter their move. Consequently, despite laws to prevent crime against them, a large number of crimes are committed against members of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India.

Empirical studies show that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes suffer from social exclusion and discrimination in Economic spheres, which leads to high poverty and deprivation among them. Thus, social exclusion and discrimination through high poverty and deprivation carried forward and perpetuated historical denigration and contempt of these groups in contemporary India.

### **Policy implications**

- \* Eradication of untouchability should be the top priority of the government, in line with the eradication of illiteracy and poverty.
- \* Caste and untouchability-based social exclusion and discrimination should be included in absolute poverty (Sen, 1983).
- \* The Protection of Civil Rights Act and Prevention of Atrocities Act should be implemented strictly to prevent occurrences of large-scale heinous crimes against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in contemporary India.
- \* Besides victim-specific policies, the government should adopt programmes for educating high castes against untouchability and crime committed by them against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- \* Religious texts which assigned low status and prescribed untouchability, crime, and denigration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be reformed, to modify the belief and behaviour of high castes towards Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Thorat et al. 2016 and Thorat, 2017).
- \* Specific government schemes and programmes, exclusively for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be formulated, to eradicate relatively high poverty and illiteracy among them, as they face exclusion and discrimination in access to general government schemes and programmes.

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