

Main objectives and findings of a study by Prof. Satish Deshpande, Department of Sociology, University of Delhi, titled, "Dalits in the Muslim and Christian communities...A status Report on Current Social Scientific Knowledge" and a Brief Critique of the Study.

1. Objectives of the Study

An independent research study was commissioned by the National Commission for Minorities(NCM). The objective of the study was to produce a status report on the evidence that is already available to answer the following questions:-

- (i) What is the contemporary status of Dalit Muslims (DMs) and Dalit Christians (DCs)?
- (ii) How does their situation compare with that of a: (a) the non-Dalit segments of their own communities (i.e. Muslims and Christians) and (b) the Dalit segments of other communities.
- (iii) Do the disabilities suffered by these groups justify State intervention within in the spirit of the Constitution as interpreted by the judiciary, and in keeping with evolving national norms?

2. Main Findings

Main findings are summarized below:-

- (i) With respect to **proportions of population in poverty and affluence**, DMs are the worst off among all Dalits in both rural and especially in the urban sector. DCs may be moderately better off than other Dalits except Dalit Sikhs. DCs have higher proportion in poverty than Dalit Sikhs.
- (ii) When it comes to **Intra-Community comparisons**, DMs and DCs are study in contrasts. DMs are slightly worse off than Non-Dalit Muslims. This is because of Non-Dalit Muslims are much worse off than their Non-