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Kallepally Prashanth
Research Scholar,
Department of Political
Science, Kakatiya University,
Warangal, Telangana, India

Impact of reservations on scheduled castes in Telangana state

Kallepally Prashanth

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Abstract

Caste has always been one of the focal points of exploration while understanding development in India, as well as intergenerational mobility of the different social groups. It has been viewed from a myriad of perspectives such as sociological, economic, anthropological, political, historical, etc. Caste has been used historically as a tool of oppression against the marginalised lower castes. Since India's independence and abolishment of untouchability and other forms of discrimination, a considerable section of the society holds the view that Caste-based discrimination is a thing of the past. While the cases of explicit forms of discrimination have surely decreased, caste still plays a very important role in the modern economy and so does the implicit form of discrimination accompanying it. To undo this injustice, reservations were introduced, hoping that they would act as a catalyst in the upward mobility of the Scheduled Castes. However, the situation continues to be grim and the opposition against caste-based discrimination has only increased. Therefore, to analyse these arguments and provide a quantitative analysis of the plight of Scheduled Castes becomes necessary. According to 2011 census, the scheduled caste's population in the state is 54.08 lakhs, which accounts for 15.45 percent of the State's total population of Telangana State. The Process of Equalization among an Indian civilians is a continuous practice since Independence, Even after several decades of independence and after several attempts by the government, it is unable to reduce the discrimination in social, cultural, political and economical status of depressed class people. It is observed that economical equalization can be the thriving effect than the other methods of equalizing with mainstream of the Indian society. Taking this economical perspective into consideration the governments are giving much more priorities to economical aspects, like Budgets, Sub plans, special component plans, economical packages etc., Provisions have been made to effectively utilize the funds allocated for the target communities based on the proportion of their population within the budget year.

Keywords: Scheduled caste, reservations, Telangana

Introduction

Caste system forms the essential component of stratification system in India. The Varna system, constitutes a status-hierarchy with the Brahmins on the top followed by Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. The scheduled fall out of the fourfold Varna System. The Scheduled Caste is a politico-legal-term. It was first coined by the Simon Commission and then Government of India, Act, 1935. When India became independent this term was adopted by the Constitution for the purpose of providing them some special facilities and the constitutional guarantees. Yet Untouchables or the Scheduled Castes do not constitute a homogeneous group. They are internally differentiated in terms of occupation, numerical segregated on the criteria of untouchability. Another term used for the Scheduled Castes or Untouchables is "Harijans" (the children of God). This term was first used by Mahatma Gandhi, which refers to an aggregate of castes which may differ from each other and which have been reduced to the lowest ritual and social status in the caste hierarchy. Another term which comes into currency almost at the same time is depressed class or classes. This term was used by Dr. Ambedkar and it referred to those classes of categories or people who were poor, exploited and socially and ritually or religiously degraded. They were treated as pariah or socially defiled. In term which is currently popular and is preferred by the scheduled caste is the term dalit. The word dalit is inclusive, in the sense that it includes also those communities groups of people, who are marginalised and subjugated it is used in a generic sense to the untouchable or the scheduled caste.

Corresponding Author:
Kallepally Prashanth
Research Scholar,
Department of Political
Science, Kakatiya University,
Warangal, Telangana, India

Constitution and the Scheduled Castes

Before being scheduled and embodied in the Government of India Act 1935 and later in the constitution of free India in 1950, these castes were classified as “exterior” or “depressed” castes or classes. A caste was classified exterior or depressed if it was found subjected to a set of social disabilities or restrictions. According to the 1931 census, these disabilities or restrictions were: (1) inability to be served by clean-Brahmins; (2) inability to be served by the barbers, water carriers, tailors, etc. who served the caste Hindus; (3) inability to serve water to caste Hindus; (4) inability to enter Hindu temples; (5) inability to use public convenience such as roads, ferries, wells or schools; and (6) inability to dissociate oneself from despised occupation. Ambedkar played key role in the fight to give Scheduled Caste a dignity and their rights. He among others championed the cause of Scheduled Caste. During independent India certain reforms were undertaken to remove the discriminatory practices of intouchability.

“The castes, races, tribes or, parts of groups within castes or races, tribes which shall be deemed to be scheduled castes for the purpose of the constitution.” However, according to the Article 341 (2) the Parliament of India, can include or exclude any group from the list of Scheduled Castes through an enactment of law. The Scheduled Castes are socially and economically backward groups and, therefore, the constitution gives special protection to them. Under Article 46 of the constitution, it is the responsibility of the State to promote with special care the educational and -economic interests of the weaker sections of people and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in particular, and to protect them from social injustices and all forms of exploitation. The Preamble reflects the basic philosophy of the Indian constitution which stands by the Scheduled Castes.

More precisely, the State shall reserve the public jobs for the members of the Scheduled Caste and Tribes. Two Articles, 330 and 332, lay down that there shall be reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha (Article 330) and State Legislative Assembly (Article 332) in proportion to the number of the Scheduled Castes in various states. And finally, according to Article 340, the President can appoint a commission to investigate the difficulties of the socially and educationally backward classes of the citizens and to make recommendations to remove such difficulties. The commission is also empowered to take stock of the progress made by these classes of citizens due to provisions made under various articles for their welfare, protection and development.

Constitutional Safeguard for Scheduled Castes in India

According to Ambedkar (2008) ^[16], the constitution of India provides several safeguards for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe, which constituted about 23.51 percent of the total population of India. All the safeguards have been provided to facilitate the implementation of the Directive Principles contained in Article 46 of the constitution which read as follows: ‘The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation’. There are various provisions listed for the upliftment of the Scheduled Caste however, the section will focus mainly on education and employment as the variable to see the representation of Scheduled Caste. Therefore, the upcoming

section gives an overview of the macrolevel scenario of the educational and employment status of the Scheduled Castes after the implementation of reservation policy in India.

Reservation Policy for the Scheduled Castes

The aim of the reservation policy is to help Scheduled Castes to come up, within specified time, at par with others in the society. The reservation policy has three major components. These are: 1) reservation in government appointments, 2) reservation in admission to educational institutions and 3) reservation of seats in the House of People (Lok Sabha) and the Legislative Assemblies of the States. There are other progressive measures to boost employment and steps are taken to eliminate poverty. Further, 15% and 7.5% posts are reserved for the Scheduled Caste and Tribe candidates in government jobs. Such reservations of posts are applicable in all the categories of jobs both in the Central and State Government services. In the recent years, such reservation has been extended to the services in the public undertaking units. Out of 542 Lok Sabha seats 79 seats are reserved for the Scheduled Castes. Similarly, out of 3997 seats 541 seats in the State Legislatures are reserved for Scheduled Castes.

The bulk of the Scheduled Caste constituencies contain 10 to 30% of the Scheduled Castes population, and around 75% of the Scheduled Castes population live in scattered fashion outside the constituencies reserved for them. This means, the elections of the Scheduled Caste candidates even from the reserved constituencies are largely dependent on the non-Scheduled Castes. Besides, the Scheduled Castes in rural areas are politically less conscious and are influenced by caste politics. Many of them do not exercise their franchise or they are absent during the time of voting due to reasons of migration for employment. In the urban areas, the Scheduled Castes are relatively in a better position. But in spite of the reservation and other developmental measures the deprived sections who are less in number and who are uneducated continue to remain backward. The caste class nexus works strongly and allows only a few castes to be politically or socially mobile. This has defeated the very purpose of the reservation and the intention of the constitutional measures for development of the Scheduled Castes.

Strength of the Scheduled Castes

According to Census 2011, the number of scheduled tribes in India is 10, 42, 81,034, which is 8.6% of the total population of India. The number of Scheduled Castes is 20, 13, 78086, which is 16.6%. The largest of these castes are the Chamars who form – one quarter of the number of Scheduled Caste – Banghi, the Adi-Dravida, Pasi, Madiga, Dusadhi Mali, Parayan, Koli Mahas, Adi-Karnataka, Namashudra etc. almost half of the total number of Scheduled Caste people live in the five states of Hindi belt in U.P., Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana. In the south they are concentrated mainly in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. In the East in West Bengal. The highest ratio of the Scheduled Caste is in Punjab 28.3. About 84% of the scheduled castes live in rural areas and are working as agricultural laborers, share-croppers, tenants and marginal farmers. Among the, Harijan the ratio of agricultural workers is particularly high in Bihar, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Kerala. More, than one-third of the agricultural workers of India belong to the untouchable castes. A vast majority of

the scheduled caste do not possess land, 32.2% have less than 1 hectare. Almost all persons engaged in jobs like sweeping, scavenging and tanning are from Scheduled Castes. About 2/3rd of the bonded labour are from Scheduled Castes. Literacy among the Scheduled Castes is extremely low. Most of the Scheduled Castes live below the poverty line and are victims of social and economic exploitation.

Untouchable Castes and their Origins

The term Scheduled Castes signifies those groups of people who were out of the caste system or the varna hierarchy. They comprise the bulk of “untouchables” or untouchable castes. These groups or castes have been discriminated against by the superior castes through the ages and they have never had any kind of social acceptance from the majority of the people who belong to the upper castes. The Scheduled Caste were deemed untouchable and polluting by the upper caste due to their so called polluting activities likescavenging, cremation, skinning and hiding, etc. Not only because of their unclean occupations, but also due to their so called ‘dark complexion’ they were placed at the bottom of the ritual and social hierarchies of the caste and varna system. Since the Varna ashram darma – the philosophy and the religious duty demanded that each jati was to follow one’s traditional occupation – like priest’s son becomes a priest and a shoe-maker or tanner’s son or a becoming a shoe maker or a hereditary tanner. It was impossible for the untouchable castes to better their position by changing their occupation. The association of occupation with caste became inseparable, so much so, that the very fact of being born into a community, whether you engaged in clean or unclean activity had become irrelevant. Thus untouchables are those castes which were outside the pale of varna system. They were said to be polluting and marginalised and consigned to the lowest rung in society. Several ideological justifications existed for the sustenance of these hierarchical system, which kept everybody in their place.

India needs Reservation Even Today – An Assessment

The government's capacity to rule is threatened by the reservation policy's discriminatory treatment of people. If the reservation strategy is abandoned, the government might no longer be able to rule. Under the new reservation strategy, everyone has an equal chance. To guarantee equitable representation in services paid for by the federal government and the states, India must lessen its 80% reliance on crude oil. To ensure a level playing field for all, India must reduce its 80% reliance on crude oil. Imports have inflated India's trade deficit, which will make trading in India more challenging in 2023. People from lower castes do not have comparable opportunities or status. Caste discrimination persists in rural regions, rendering equality a distant dream. Although equality for all residents is stated in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, this ideal is still a long way off due to discrimination. Because of discrimination, equality for those from lower castes is still a distant ideal. Despite freedom, discrimination against members of lower castes persists.

Reservation Policy in Telangana State

The Census is a decennial exercise and the last Census was conducted in 2011, when Telangana was a part of the erstwhile State of Andhra Pradesh. The Population of

Telangana separately is not available in Census.

As per Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), the percentage of reservation as on date for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in Central Government posts and services are as under:

1. In case of appointment by direct recruitment to civil posts and civil services on all India basis by open competition, 15% reservation for SCs and 7.5% reservation for the STs is provided.
2. In case of appointment by direct recruitment to civil posts and civil services on all India basis otherwise than by open competition, 16.66% reservation for SCs and 7.5% reservation for the STs is provided.
3. The percentage of reservation for SCs and STs in case of direct recruitment to Group C and Group D posts normally attracting candidates from a locality or a region is generally fixed on the basis of proportion of their population in the respective States/UTs.
4. In case of promotion, 15% reservation for SCs and 7.5% reservation for the STs is provided.

Statement of the Problem

The reservation system in our nation was founded as a result of the long-standing social system. The system's primary goal is to elevate the populace and grant them their rights. This system's goal is to provide reservation for the development of Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), as well as for any socially or educationally underprivileged classes or Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of our nation. Although some wealthy groups use the reservation strategy for SCs/STs, it has been successful. After the formation of the new State of Telangana, on the 2nd June, 2014, the State Government has attached the top-most priority for the development of Scheduled Castes population in the State which accounts for 15.45% of the total population as per the 2011 Census.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the impact of reservation on the economic development of scheduled castes.
2. To focus on the impact of reservation and its development.

Methodology

The compilation of secondary data involves using a variety of reports, both published and unpublished. In addition, a thorough review of the literature in the pertinent fields was carried out with the aid of the libraries of the University of Hyderabad, Osmania University, CESS, Higher Education Department of India and Telangana, Directorate of Census Operations in Telangana State.

Scheduled Castes Development in Telangana State

The Department of Scheduled Caste is dedicated to the integrated and general development of Scheduled Castes. Education development, socio-economic development, welfare and protection of scheduled castes and the implementation of land purchase programs are the main objectives of the Scheduled Caste Department, the Kalyana Lakshmi program; the implementation of rules on reservation, financial assistance for Telangana students (FAST) as well as social security, such as orphaned children's homes; and rehabilitation. The Department is responsible for the objectives set out above by the Head of Departments. The population of Scheduled Castes is

54,32,680 (15.43 percent) of the total population, of which 3,51,93,978 are in the 2011 Census. The estimated caste population is 40,96,123 (75.40%) in rural areas and 13,36,557 (24.60%) in urban areas. The frequency of the SC literacy rate is 52.52 percent.

Conclusion

The level of development of the SC communities, which together comprised one-fifth of the total population of Telangana, definitely influences the average level of development of all social groups. It is not just that the backwardness of these communities is pulling down overall development, but that there is a violation of norms like equity, equality and social justice that ought to be followed in the development process of a welfare state, and of the rights of these communities to development equally on par with other communities. The positive discrimination policy of the Indian government followed in the state in favour of the SC and the subsequent special programmes for their development were intended to improve their levels of living. Government of Telangana State adopted the Scheduled Castes sub plan from United Andhra Pradesh. After formation of the Telangana State the Scheduled Castes sub plan has been provisionally implemented. Every year sub budget allocations has been allocated from main budget based on proportionate population of Scheduled castes. The allocations must be utilized for targeted scheduled castes people only, If any unspent funds available it is added to next year sub plan.

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