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Census and Caste Association in Indian Perspective (1911-1951)

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Abstract

The census is an important source of information on some aspects of Indian society and economy. The census contains information related to the number of people, their age, gender, occupation, educational level and many other such things. Census was also held in the pre-colonial states, but its purpose was limited to tax collection and compulsory recruitment in the army. The description of caste was also not a new practice introduced by the British colonial government. Manusmriti, Kalhan's Rajatarangini and Aina-e-Akbari, all have a list of castes. However, the present form of the census, in terms of its level, the information collected, its various administrative uses, is due to the modern administrative state. Especially for the British colonists, the census was an essential tool to understand and control the large and differentiated Indian population. The present paper tries to produce an analysis on census and caste association in Indian perspective.

Key-words: Census; Caste; Historical aspect; Political aspect; Sociological aspect; Controversy.

Introduction

Caste and religion were seen as important socio-political categories that also reflected other issues - including today apparently unrelated components such as insanity, intelligence, willingness and ability to fight in the military. Though religion is still included in the census (for categories other than scheduled castes and scheduled tribes), caste has disappeared from it. Caste has been an important variable of census from 1871 to 1931. The Census of 1931, the last census in which the population division on the basis of caste were available. Although caste-related information was collected in 1941, it was not presented keeping in mind the wartime economic measures. In 1951, in addition to data relating to Scheduled Castes and Tribes, limited caste information was collected from other "backward castes". However, these results were not published and were made available only to the First Backward Classes Commission.

The electoral Legislative Assembly, which constituted the Census Act 1948, decided not to include caste on the basis that the British colonial government presented India as a land of various castes, languages and religions so that it could claim Indians could never unite and discipline themselves, and they needed the British to rule. However, the government continued to collect information related to the scheduled tribes so that their success could be monitored to improve the status of various government programs. During the preparation of the 2001 census, there was a renewed discussion on whether the caste of 0 person should be recorded in the census. One view was

that the inclusion of caste was necessary so that the economic and social status of each caste could be inferred, while the second view was that it would be difficult to identify castes and this type of expression unduly promoted 'casteism'. will give. In the end, it was decided not to include caste in the census.¹

In this unit, caste will be talked about in the same way as in the census in India; Impact on caste identity in census on caste identity; Effect of census on the concept of caste in sociology; And in the late 1990s, there was debate as to whether caste should be included in the 2001 census.

Caste in census

The word caste is believed to have originated from the Portuguese word *castas* describing race, species, tribes, etc., and refers to the four-letter categories and castes were such local units that people used to associate with. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the line of caste and varna was thin. Economic differences, migration and ecological differences all played a role in creating new castes or changing their caste identity to the people through caste decolonization and merger. After the disintegration of the Mughal Empire, many tribes headed or people of low caste became kings in their respective areas under unstable conditions. They claimed Rajput or Kshatriya status and the castes appointed as Brahmin priests to create genealogies suitable for themselves had no all-India status and this situation changed over time; for example, argued that religion and political primordialism and the customary practice of Brahmins over Kshatriyas in South India arose from the colonial period.

With the strengthening of colonial rule, the colonial administrators needed to know and understand them to control the resident population. In the 9th century, 'species' became a scientific preoccupation with many studies done to classify species. (Certainly contemporary science and genetics have shown that there is no such thing as a biological species). The series of royal gazettes, including the annual census, anthropological narrative surveys, system records, etc. played an important role in promoting some ideas of caste and species. Caste and religion were considered important to explain 'resident' behaviour; It is unnecessary to talk in detail on the benefits that accrue to many branches of administration in this country, which is due to the accurate and well-organized record of domestic and social relations and practices of different castes and tribes. The entire structure of the resident ethos of individuals is mainly determined by the rules of the group to which they belong. For the legal purposes of legal process, drought relief, sanitation and disposal of epidemic diseases and almost every type of executive activity, and records of people's practices, the survey of the anthropological description of India is as essential to good governance as the land starvation Survey and record of the rights of its tenants.²

Therefore, the colonial rulers used to explain Unmasad, in which Unma, "is a disease associated with socially higher and economically more frontier classes". To help recruit combat species in the army; or used caste to determine which groups were leading to crime (forming the category of delinquent tribes).

However, recording caste in the census was not an easy task. Subsequent census assemblies called the caste tables the most annoying and expensive part of the census and pointed to the meaningless and contextual nature of the answers received. Yet by 1993, it was considered an essential part of the demographic record and important for administration. As a result, an arrangement was achieved which divided people into random, often unrealistic but different, mutually distinct and thus countable categories of their experiences. In the Madras Presidency only in 1881, the inhabitants returned 3208 different castes which remained 309 after classification.

Caste perspective

This process was described by Risley as follows: "If a person who has been sounded tells the name of a popular tribe or caste... All is well. But he may be of an unknown caste in the second city of India; He may name a sect or sub-caste of a Bahirajatiya class, his occupation or the district of which he belongs. These various options go through many changes at the hands of the more or less educated enumerator who writes them in their own language and translates them into English, the expressive car sitting in the central office. There is a diligent and difficult process of sorting, reference and correspondence with the local authorities, which results in a table showing the classification of the inhabitants of India on the basis of caste, tribe, species or nationality".³

Hatten also commented on the fact that the number of castes counted has decreased from 1881 to 1931 and that the methods adopted may have been random, but that this system of classification also recorded the irrelevance in which individuals Not only their sub-castes were asked but also which list of sub-castes were they asked. According to Peter Ratcliffe, a pre-coded access with the provision of other telltale options also transmits answers and generates distortions.

Apart from this, the person did not have the right to have two castes or two religions in the system of census. Where religious ordination was seen, it was neglected by naming it "the ancient character of the religion of the illiterate and the uneducated." While various sects such as Hindu and Muslim appeared in the 1911 census, in 1921 they were reclassified into a single sect, except the Sanjogis of Sindh. At the same time, when the census authorities standardized caste and reduced their numbers, they also insisted on recording all kinds of sub-castes in order to look completely scientific and to reveal the entire social field.

Census and Identity Politics

Much of the recent social science literature on caste and the Indian census follow the theoretical perspective of Michael Foucault that emphasizes "techniques of government" (i.e. administrative processes) in identity making. Therefore, he argued that caste and religion census Rigidizing Caste and Religious Identities In his early and effective essay, Conn wrote that census questioning culture, religion, language, education, caste, occupation, etc. embraces culture and brings Indians out of context Provides space for asking questions about themselves and the questions they asked or the definitions they used were those used by the British for governance.

Appadurai went further by arguing that "the deadly politics of the community will not burn with the present-day insanity" for the relationship with the technologies of the modern country, especially for those who are concerned with numbers "Identity-related statistics became important when seeking guarantees and benefits from the government based on numbers in communities. The dilemma arose in the representation, which means 'on behalf of' and the representation which means 'coming from a particular community'. So for example this idea was strengthened on the basis that Rajputs would only vote for any Rajput candidate, Hindus would vote for any Hindu candidate 'etc. This perspective still controls the way political parties distribute tickets.

However, the entire caste dynamics cannot be attributed only to the census and the dynamics of the census were only one of the forms that public activity took. Often the census data were the product of the same, rather than creating caste dynamics. For example, the number of Maithili speakers changed significantly between 1901, 1951 and 1961, depending on the Maithili language movement.

Conlon noted that between 1901 and 1931, his attempt to find a change in the educational and occupational status of the Saraswatas of Chitrapur was hamstrung by the fact that it was the time of the caste unification movement between the Saraswatas and Gaur Saraswatas of Chitrapur. For Gaud Saraswat Brahmins, the use of statistics also posed a problem that participation in the integration movement was a matter of dispute within caste itself and therefore not all Saraswat in the unified category. Recently, Sharad Kulkarni has reported that in the 1981 census, when several non-tribes with similar names of tribes declared themselves as tribes, there was a problem regarding reliability in terms of reservation. This made it difficult to get the right picture of the changed situation of some tribes - population, urbanization, and educational levels seemed to have increased while in fact, it was due to incorrect declarations.

Not only the idea of the benefit of having a large number (like the example of Maithili) but also the personal idea of the benefit of announcing a specific situation also affects the statistics. Although the details of the census are confidential and cannot be used for any other purpose, the circumstances of the census and the fact that the enumerator is often a local teacher or similar person (if the defendant does not know personally Be) can create opportunities to talk about the situation. This is clearly not an argument against having such data, but in favour of the need to carefully reference metaphysical data in historical, political and cultural frameworks. When seeking census data to study the changing conditions of some groups, one must also be wary of politics when estimating the extent of their behavioural use and the unreasonable use of data as objective facts.

The motive of mobility also changed with the change in the objectives of the census. Detailed political events determined both the use of census data and the public's response to it. Hence the comparative figures of Hindus and Muslims in the 1931 and 1941 census became an issue due to the possibility of communal rewards (in assemblies) and division; During the 1951 census the need for the demolition of speakers of different languages in multilingual talukas became important as a basis for language-based reorganization of states. Finally from 1921 onwards, the importance of economic issues increased. With the development of the country, in terms of the distinction between castes, comparative statistics between nations became important in which statistics of one nation's population were kept against other nation's statistics along with indicators of education, occupation, level of urbanization etc. . A lot depends on how the 'Rashtra' (or the group dominated by the nation) defines itself at a particular time, and with changes in it also change the index of identity and prosperity (eg gender The ratio has struggled to have a more gender sensitive index in terms of female workforce participation or property rights.

Effect of Census on Sociological Perception of Caste

Historically, anthropology and demography have been closely linked. As Conn wrote, "It would not be an exaggeration to say that until 1950, the opinions of scholars and scientists on the nature, structure and function of the Indian caste system were mainly formed by the data and concepts generated from the census work." Mostly, this was due to the fact that from 1850 to 1950, most of the writing on caste system was done by officials who had once been Census Superintendents of India or any of its districts, used to be an opportunity when there were few opportunities for professional anthropologists. Yet until 1941 the Census Commissioner supported the separation of anthropology from the census. Which can benefit both: "There exists a popular opinion that the main objective of Indian census is anthropological. One unfortunate consequence of this excessive organization of anthropology with the census was that the fundamental importance of the nation's perseverance was obscured. Census was the

only way to save it ... It may have adversely affected the proper thinking and financial support of anthropological works in India. Such works should be done every year and they should not be forced into a built up period of ten years".⁴

One consequence of the census's need for identifiable parameters at both the basic level and macro linkage was that, as Pant has written, the 'rationalization of caste': castes became a unit in which "the name of a social group, the members' Numbers, physical features, cultural practices, their residential area, were in essence the sum of all the information that was received after many surveys and from various defendants who did not have the same social outlook. Its influence was evident in a large number of studies in which there was considerable debate over the sources of caste system (species, occupation, cultural, ecological explanations); Explicit characteristics of caste (e.g. ban on consanguineous marriages, cohabitation); Effective unit of caste (sub-caste, caste group, varna); Principles that determine the location of caste (purity-inaccurate interactional); Mobility within and against the caste system (Sanskritisation, dominant caste competition, concepts of Westernization, emphasis on Indian values, etc.); Is caste specific to India or is it a limited form of stratification; And can the opposition to caste be within its own categories or against the entire caste system. In all these, the present castes are taken as units. Instead, we need studies that can examine how caste is transformed into a system (and a combination of individuals) in response to detailed political, economic and historical development.

Controversy over inclusion of caste in census

Like all administrative steps, benefits and disadvantages have been seen for various groups of people in the caste census. The caste census counterpoint refers to the past experience of caste dynamics and the current context of caste conflicts in the census, arguing that new calculations give more dynamism to new dynamics and caste identities. It is also argued that such mobility will impair data quality. In fact, during the census, there is already political interference on the collected data related to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Singh (1992: 25) has written that the Scheduled Castes in the courts to obtain reservation by various communities. Thousands of cases are under consideration for taking the status of. In other regions, however, they claim high customary status. Some sociologists also argue that the plurality of names and their use in contextual context makes it difficult to collect caste-related data and this problem has worsened due to changes in migration, modern employment practices, inter-caste marriages, etc. Generally the nation will suffer in terms of cost, increase in social dispute and scientific looking but genuinely unreliable data. The proponents of caste census argue that refusing to measure caste is a good example of the existence of upper caste interest as a national or universal interest. Even in 1948, there was some dissatisfaction when widespread caste details were dropped. For example, P.S. Deshmukh argued, "It was too early to expect people to accept the abolition of caste." These people now want to exploit themselves in the name of being caste-inferior. The census work is very important and there are excellent indices for measuring progress made from time to time for all people.⁵

The main demand for caste census came from the Backward Classes Commission, which was suffering from lack of data for its work. After independence, the term 'Other Backward Classes' (OBC) became prevalent and refers to groups which do not belong to Scheduled Castes or Tribes but are still seen as suffering from social and educational backwardness. Although the term 'class' in the Constitution is known, it usually refers to some castes in many ways, the dilemma as to whether the census should contain details of caste shows in parallel debates on the subject that backwardness How to define - purely in terms of caste or on any economic criteria.

For example, the chairman of the First Backward Classes Commission, which identified the backward classes by caste, later rejected its recommendations by arguing that the caste test of backwardness was contrary to the creation of a casteless society and was replaced by the backward housing Recommended economic, educational and cultural criteria.

To implement reservation in jobs and educational institutions and welfare schemes, scholarships etc., the lists of backward classes need to be identified by the Backward Classes Commission for their states. In the absence of census data, commissions obtained data from the 93 census. Many have also conducted their sample surveys, collected data from educational institutions and government offices and have sought applications from individuals and groups. While the "fake" secondary data will continue to be required, the task will become easier with the updated census data. It is argued that to include new castes in the list or to remove the old from the list, the AP Census data can be useful in preparing new lists of. In addition, this will help in the proportional representation of backward castes under reservation quota. However, it is politically difficult to get out of the list of beneficiaries and no state government has been successful in this. The minority castes that suffered during this process did not have political support.

Proponents of caste census also claim to be useful in its planning. In order to target the backward classes, a person needs block or district level data as this is the level at which decisions are taken to build schools or first aid centres. However, the link between this type of data and real services is questionable. While there have been few studies on the functioning of local governments, the available studies suggest that the location of schools is determined not by necessity but by strong local groups. For example, P. Sanat has shown how the upper classes ensure that the village school is in their housing area as it ensures their control over voting. Similarly, despite the availability of data on Scheduled Tribes, the lack of facilities in 'tribal areas' indicates that the blame should be on other components rather than lack of data.

On the other hand, caste census data can play a useful role in generating awareness and vote for some groups when there is systematic lack of facilities. While the person does not need to know the caste of the citizen or the caste structure of a village to ensure that everyone gets basic services, this data can be useful in a situation when the government has claimed to make universal provisions. . If census data suggests that some castes are not getting education despite having a primary school in each village, it is an issue of concern and possible mobility.

While anti-caste census emphasizes its role in increasing mobility and strengthening identity; The proponents of caste enumeration present it as a step to challenge the status quo by exposing inequality and eventual caste elimination. While the opponents of caste census are inconsistent with unmanageable public reaction, its supporters present a naive and good picture of the government and its use of data. If the purpose of the census is the elimination of caste, it will not be done by the use of the data presented but by the people but by public mobility. Instead of being afraid of mobility only, one should focus on the form taken by it. The real challenge is to ensure that such data is not misused by racist parties or to narrow politics.

Conclusion

This would not be to say that on the top, the simple act of British authorities' characterization of the Indian population to facilitate administration emerged as a powerful tool in political, cultural and religious battles. The census is a political act in which sensitive information with political implications is collected. Many uses of census data have been made. This data has been used to make comparisons between different communities and religious groups. Caste census data has great potential for understanding socio-economic problems and analyzing various communities to make them divisive. Social scientists face the task of appropriate use of data.

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