



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

The Interaction Between caste and politics In Indian Perspective

Author: Somnath Saha (MA in political.sc, RBU) Contact number 8910974769 ,

Abstract: Caste and politics both are interrelated with each other. Caste is deeply rooted in Indian society. Relationship between caste and politics looks like two variables. Caste is nothing but social stratification which determined by birth. Caste used as a tool or mechanism from ancient India to 21st century india for various purposes. In Indian society as per as Electoral democracy is concerned Caste becomes an integral part in Indian politics. India being a diverse country in terms of culture (food habit, wearing clothes, rituals etc) caste plays a very significant role in Indian politics. Caste forms political socialization in Indian society. Some times Caste based politics in Indian society gives rise to Regionalism which obstacles national integration and unity. The word caste derived from Latin word caste which means race. Caste and politics interaction is seen through the lens of the reservation policy of India.

Caste has become a weapon for political participation, empowerment, and representation. Casteism also challenges Indian democracy.

Keywords: political socialization, Regionalism, Social stratification ,Electoral democracy, Democracy.

Introduction: According to Christopher Jaffrelot," Caste forms the mosaic of Indian politics." The particular origin of caste cannot be tracked. Caste first mentioned in indo- Aryan culture. caste provides an extensive basis for democratic politics. Caste used as a mobilizing force during the time of election. The regional political parties in india were influenced by the caste factor.

VN Gadgil said" In India,"We do not caste our vote,we vote our caste." Louis Dumont has explersonsained the features of caste by comparing it with class. He basically differentiated between two concepts. Class is a Western system of stratification based on economic criteria. Caste is an Indian system based on the criteria of purity and pollution .

MN Srinivas was not in favour of differentiated the concept of class and caste. He coined the term Sanskritization. It means persons of lower caste adopted the practice of Brahmins. He gave the concept of Dominant caste. In some situations upper castes like Brahmins and Kshatriya s are not dominant caste. Example Yadav in up, jats in harayana, Maratha in Maharashtra.

In Indian society mainly divided in four varnas these are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Baishya, Shudra. Brahmins in highest position and Shudra holds the lowest position in the society.

Views on Different scholars:

1. According to Rudolph and Rudolph the relationship between caste and politics can be understood in terms of three types of political mobilization, i.e vertical, horizontal and differential.

2. Rajni Kothari has pointed out three aspects of caste system in the context of interaction between caste and politics. 1. secular dimensions: It emphasized caste as a stratification system in which distances are maintained through rigid rituals.

2. Integration dimensions: in this dimension caste not only determined individual social station but also differentiated occupational and economic roles.

3. Third dimensions is consciousness. Caste enters politics through the consciousness aspect highlighted by its symbolism and value structure. Rajni Kothari said, " It is not politics that gets caste-ridden, it is caste that gets politicised."

Role of caste in Indian politics:

1. Caste as a tool for political Socialization : Caste is determined by the birth. People may be born either in a higher caste or lower caste room. People usually attain some value, belief, etc. This influences persons' political beliefs, participation etc.

2. Caste and Electoral behaviour in India: The political behaviour of the people of different political parties and the members of government is caste oriented or influenced by the caste consideration. Caste plays an important role in Election in India. Most of the political parties in India give primacy to give the ticket to the candidate on the basis of caste factor. Example in constituencies predominated by Muslims, Muslim candidates are fielded.

3. Caste and party politics: Most of the Regional parties formed by on the basis of caste in India. Bahujan samaj party formed in 1984 to represent lower caste so called scheduled caste, tribe and other backward class (OBC). AIMIM is a regional party in Indian state of Telangana, representing only Muslims. Such parties used caste as a weapon and wins the election with huge majority.

4. Caste-based Social Movements: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar led Dalits Buddhist Movement have played a significant role in advocating for the rights and empowerment of marginalized people.

Caste and the Indian constitution:

Indian constitution is supreme law of India. It ensures social justice and empowerment to the downtrodden people. Some of these are

Article 14 : Article 14 ensures equality before the law and equal protection of the laws for all individuals.

Article 15 and 16: Article 15 and Article 16 provide for reservation in educational institution for socially and economically backward classes.

Article 17: Article 17 abolished untouchability, which was a bad practice of caste system abolished by law.

Article 341 and 342: Article 341 and 342 are taken specially for scheduled caste and scheduled Tribes.

Caste and local government: Caste plays a significant role in local body elections. It is generally seen that in every election competition on the basis of caste rivalry.

Caste based schemes and policies: Sometimes govt. formulated policy in such a way that it should give more benefit to the socially disadvantaged section of the society. For example setting up constitutional body like SC, ST commission. Article 338 for national commission for scheduled caste.

Caste as a Divisive and Cohesive factor of Indian politics:

Caste acts both as Divisive and Cohesive force in Indian politics. Through the emergence of caste system various pressure group was born. They struggled for Power. Some times it leads to create hindrances national integration. Thus it act as a Divisive force.

On the other hand caste acts as a cohesive factor in india by providing strong horizontal solidarity,group identity. Caste acting as a primary unit for social,economic, and political mobilisation.

Conclusion: There is no denying the fact that caste is deeply rooted in Indian society.Caste and politics in Indian context are complementary to each other. Form Ancient India to Modern India caste situated in the political domain.British government used caste system for divide and rule policy. In Modern India Caste used as a channel through which lower caste,Dalits,pleasant,business group, etc gets platform in the Political discourse.Lower caste raises their voice,their demands in the parliamentary democracy of India is concerned., So It enhances the true meaning of democracy. On the other hand we used to see headlines of Newspaper, that shows Caste based violence really bolts from the blue to every one.Being a largest Democracy in the world India have a history of social harmony,peaceful coexistence. Political leader of India should keep in mind that while using caste as a force it should not hinder the social harmony of India.

References:

- 1.Fadia BL,Fadia Kuldeep(2022). Indian Government and Politics.sahitya Bhawan
- 2.Chakraborty Bidyut,Pandey Rajendra(2022).Indian Government and politics
- 3.Rudolph and Rudolph,(1967) The Modernity of Tradition
- 4.kothari Rajni (1970) caste in Indian politics.
- 5.srinivas MN ,(1970) Caste In Modern India.

Journal Article:

- 1.Barman shanta(2023) caste in Indian politics: An analysis and it's implication,IJCRT
- 2.Begum Gousia (2020) The role of caste in Indian politics,Indian journal of Research.