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Recent Trends In Class Formation And Polarization And Its Impact On Caste-Class Identities : A Socio-political Study Of Firozabad District Of U.P.

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Received-22.12.2023,

Revised-26.12.2023,

Accepted-31.12.2023

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Abstract: *Politics is significantly impacted by class formation. Class is arguably the most significant factor among the numerous that influence political attitude. After viewing the cast and class, people mark and select the candidate to be elected. In Indian politics, true representation has always been a problem. The representation of all classes, particularly "Dalits," in politics is still inappropriate, even after about 70 years of the dream. To improve representation in politics, they have therefore become more adamant about forming classes and supporting local candidates. The current work is empirical in nature because it draws from both primary and secondary sources of data. A total of 236 voters from the "Dalit" community provided primary data. In order to determine whether caste identities are significant to them and whether they still believe that class creation is required, behavioral data was gathered and examined. The study's sample was taken from the UP district of Firozabad. The data has been analyzed using statistical techniques including multiple regression analysis and percentages.*

Key Words: : Politics, class political attitude, class creation, dalits, particularly, inappropriate, representation.

The intricate social structure of the Indian caste system has made social roles, such as one's occupation, "hereditary," leading to fixed status hierarchies and limited social mobility. Additionally, we contend that caste is a natural phenomenon that increases group affiliation with one's caste. When group norms are broken, highly identifiable group members would defend the group's identity. People often fall into a variety of social categories, some of which are inherited (e.g., gender) or can be attained (e.g., profession).

The effects of social classifications are frequently observed in the representation of social rank as well as in the dynamics of social interactions. The Indian/Hindu caste system, a fundamental aspect of Indian society, is of importance for the current study.

Political opinions that deviate from ideological extremes might be referred to as polarization. Such differences as those in public opinion or even among particular groups might be referred to as polarization. When there is no true middle ground or moderates and public opinion shifts to either extreme, polarization results. For a fifth of the world's population, inherited caste identification plays a significant role in determining their opportunities in life, but it is not given the same weight in discussions of global development strategy as other identity traits like gender, ethnicity, age, or religion. This assessment questions whether or not intergovernmental commitments like the Sustainable Development Goals should address caste-based discrimination and inequality. Focusing on India, it discovers that caste has been viewed as an outdated system and the cause of past disadvantage that needs to be addressed through affirmative action, ignoring its ongoing significance as a discriminatory and advantageous structure in the contemporary economy, particularly since the 1990s when liberalization began. The contemporary life of caste in society, economy, and development is examined through a corpus of recent literature from the fields of anthropology, economics, history, and political science. Caste as a social hierarchy, its role in rural inequalities after liberalization, its impact on urban labor markets and the commercial economy, and the impact of affirmative action measures on public-sector employment and education are all topics of discussion. Caste is a complicated institution that has been both damaged and resurrected by contemporary political and economic pressures. It has a significant impact on subjective well-being and contributes to the persistent national socioeconomic and human capital inequities. The consequences of caste are not location-specific; they are present in almost every market, from the village to the city. Due of its benefits, caste still exists in the age of the market. Discrimination allows others to hoard opportunities, and the danger of subordinate groups' growth leads to degrading violence against them.

Several international human rights organizations maintain that caste is "a fundamental determinant [of] social exclusion and development" and that it affects approximately 20-25 percent of the world's population, including (but not limited to) the peoples of South Asian nations and their diasporas. They also assert that over 260 million people worldwide experience discrimination based on caste (or "work and descent," as the UN refers to such systems of inherited status). They have advocated for the inclusion of caste in data disaggregation and progress measures. As previously mentioned, discrimination



against members of lower castes was one of the most prevalent societal issues associated with the caste system. The constitution of independent India forbade discrimination based on caste in 1950, and the government implemented quotas in government employment and educational institutions to make up for past wrongs and enhance the lot of lower castes. When a reservation system was implemented, a specific number of seats in government positions and higher education institutions were set aside for people from lower castes. However, the high caste society quickly opposed this legislation, believing that it was unfair to the low caste members and that the system was not meritocratic. We think that one of the most significant societal effects of the caste system in the modern era is the quota system, and opinions about it must be a reflection of one's caste identity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: Sharma (1984) "found that social relations and position of women matter a lot in the economic development and political development".

Bhagat (2001) "found that the census exercise in colonial India introduced the concepts and categories of religion according to colonial perception of Indian society as primordial pre-capitalist entities. The boundary line between different communities in India was obscure and communal consciousness lacking. It is now obvious that the Census of 2001 is more conscious of this fact and intends to publish the socio-economic data along with demographic data on religion. This will certainly weaken the force of demographic communalism in the country in the long run".

Srinivasulu (2002) "found that the emergence of the TDP resolved some of the asymmetry between the economic position and under-representation in the political system of the neo-rich (especially belonging to the Kamma community) of this advanced region. This class, in the process of mobilising support for the TDP, sought to translate the economic dependence of the lower castes into political loyalty. The latter's resistance resulted in massive and well-organised riots against dalits. Crucial to this dalit assertion are the emergence of an educated youth and a growing awareness of their rights."

Jaspal (2011) "explored that the caste functions as a potent social identity, since members of both the SCs and the HCGs frequently regard themselves and are regarded by out groups, primarily in terms of their caste group membership. Existing research into caste identity reveals the social stigmatisation of the SCs both among the HCGs and among many SC members themselves."

Samuelsen (2011) "found that the process of politicisation is seen through the idea of 'Dalithood'. The activists that figure here are 'Dalit' by birth, but they are not 'Dalit' in the sense 'broken, ground down, oppressed'. The activists are part of what I have argued is an emerging 'politics of difference', which seeks to redefine collectively the status of the group to which they belong. This politics is premised on a sharp conceptualisation of 'us' and 'them', where the 'upper castes' or 'non-Dalits' are the oppressors and the Dalits the victims of their oppression. I argue that the dynamics between a narrative of community progress and this specific narrative of 'Dalithood' serve to situate 'the Dalit' as perpetually at the receiving end of relations of status and power."

Kumar (2012) "concluded that conversely the proliferation of small holdings in the large semi-irrigated region ought to propel governments to take policy measures to protect the survival of the marginal, small and middle peasants particularly in present circumstances when the cases of farmers' suicides are frequently reported. The technology points out that the system of school education and policy intervention in education have been largely at the level of provisioning and providing incentives to encourage schooling. While provisioning is inadequate in terms of physical access even at primary stage, the issue of how socially accessible the schools really are for Dalits has never been addressed. This is important because the policy fails to acknowledge or confront the role of discriminatory caste relations that pervade the educational experiences of Dalit children. It is clear that caste continues to obstruct the access of Dalit children to schooling as well as the quality of education they receive. Increasing costs of education, the need for children's contribution to work for the maintenance of family remain serious issues to be considered. Poverty continues to be a major impediment in the education of Dalit children."

Gang (2012) found "that the high prevalence of agricultural labour among SC households can be traced in part to the Indian caste system, which is a social order with hierarchically ordered occupational types, with the SC social group clustered in occupations that were the least well paid and most degrading in terms of manual labour. Since independence, the Indian government enacted large-scale affirmative action policies in educational institutions and public sector employment to help provide routes out of poverty for SC and ST households".

Zuber (2013) "investigated and concluded that Indian sociology deals, directly or indirectly with the social stratification or caste. In this regard, the Indian society has been studied both by the local sociologists as well as the alien sociologists. The focus of these studies has been on the origin, dynamics, implications and change in the Hindu caste system excluding Muslims from their studies."



Bharti (2018) "found that the economic inequality is working as a skin for caste inequality. The ordering of averages based on any economic or educational parameters of different castes follow the caste hierarchy. The measure of positive discrimination is not working on average".

OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESIS: There are two objectives of this paper:

Objectives:

1. To find the reasons of class formation in Firozabad District with respect to the political orientation.
2. To find the impact of class Formation and Polarization and its Impact on Caste-Class Identities

Hypothesis:

H-1 There is no impact of class Formation and Polarization and its Impact on Caste-Class Identities based on various reasons of class formation.

H-2 There is a significant impact of class Formation and Polarization and its Impact on Caste-Class Identities based on various reasons of class formation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: Methodology is a scientific process to reach to findings of a study. This study is exploratory and empirical in nature. The study is mainly based on primary data but secondary data has also been collected and used with the help of various magazines and journals in the form of articles mentioned as literature review in this paper. The primary data has been collected from 236 voters of Firozabad District who belonged to 'dalit' community. The questionnaire was design with a view to find out the reasons of political polarization and class formation. Around 400 respondents were contacted for filling the questionnaire but finally 236 questionnaire were found fit for the study with a response rate of 59%.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents:

Table 1 Gender

Categories	Respondents	Respondents %
Male	149	63.14
Female	87	36.86
Total	236	100.00

There are 63% male and 37% female in the current set of respondents.

Table 2 Age

Categories	No. of Respondents	Respondents %
18 - 25	84	35.59
25- 40	93	39.41
Above 40	59	25.00
Total	236	100.00

Maximum respondents i.e. around 39% belong to the age group of 25-40 followed by the age group of 18-25 (around 36%).

Table 3 Income Profile of the Respondents

Categories	No. of Respondents	Respondents %
below 1 lack per year	112	47.46
1 to 3 lack per year	74	31.36
Above 3 lack per year	50	21.19
Total	236	100

As per table 3, 47% respondents earn below 1 lack per year followed by 31.36% respondents who earn 1 to 3 lack per year and lastly 21.19% respondents earn more than 3 lack per year.

Table 4 Marital Status

Categories	No. of Respondents	Respondents %
Married	178	75.42
Unmarried	58	24.58
Total	236	100

There are 75% respondents who are married and around 25% respondents who are unmarried.

Table 5 Educational Qualifications

Categories	No. of Respondents	Respondents %
Intermediate school	82	34.75
Graduate	86	36.44
Post graduate and above	68	28.81
Total	236	100.00

Regarding educational qualifications, it was found that around 35% are intermediate school, 36% are graduate and around 29% are post graduate and above.

Reasons of Class Formation and Polarization:
Table 6 Reasons of class formation and polarization

Sl. No.	Reasons	Mean Value on 5 point scale
1	Dalits have low representation in Current political system	4.22
2	Other caste leaders do not listen to the problems of Dalits	3.96
3	Dalits feel safe when their elected leader is of their own caste / community	3.77
4	Polarization is a need to be politically strong	4.25
5	Cast formation / Cast Class identities will ensure better political representation in future	4.38
6	Cast formation and polarization is the way to safeguard from oppression and discrimination	4.61
7	I strongly support and believe in cast class identities	4.01

Table 6 shows the reasons of class formation and polarization. The most important reasons is Cast formation and polarization is the way to safeguard from oppression and discrimination with a mean value of 4.61, followed by Cast formation / Cast Class identities will ensure better political representation in future with a mean value of 4.38 and Polarization is a need to be politically strong and Dalits have low representation in Current political system with mean values of 4.25 and 4.23 respectively.

The last statement is a dependent variable on which the impact of other six statements is to be checked. This statement is I strongly support and believe in cast class identities, it also has a good mean value of 4.01 out of 5.

Regression Analysis and Hypothesis testing:

Table 7 Regression Results

	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	Beta		
Constant		2.503	.009
Dalits have low representation in Current political system	.075	1.151	.037
Other caste leaders do not listen to the problems of Dalits	.088	1.140	.049
Dalits feel safe when their elected leader is of their own caste / community	.196	1.020	.025
Polarization is a need to be politically strong	.142	1.480	.014
Cast formation / Cast Class identities will ensure better political representation in future	.175	3.756	.000
Cast formation and polarization is the way to safeguard from oppression and discrimination	.120	2.524	.004

Table 7 shows the results of the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. There were 6 statements whose impact was found on the dependent statement i.e. "I strongly support and believe in cast class identities" has been found from the table that, in the significance value column all the values of below 0.05.

Results of Hypothesis Testing:

In hypothesis testing it should be noted that on 5% significance level a null hypothesis is rejected when the significance (p value in the significance column, refer table 7) values is below .05. As per the table 7, all the 6 variables have significant impact on the dependent variable hence null hypotheses are rejected and alternate hypothesis viz. "There is a significant impact of class Formation and Polarization and its Impact on Caste-Class Identities based on various reasons of class formation" is selected.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION: So when we talk about the "aspect of community of any place like as Firozabad than very important thing which is considered is Sanskritisation, which is a specific particular form of social change found in India. It denotes the process by which castes placed lower in the caste hierarchy seek upward mobility by emulating the rituals and practices of the upper or dominant castes. It is a process similar to passing in anthropological terms. This term was made popular by Indian sociologist M. N. Srinivas in the 1950s. This ambitious concept is again revolving back with the time



in contemporary Indian society after the caste-based policies, result was 'de-Sanskritization' it was no longer beneficial to be an upper caste and so attempts were made to re-claim any lower or backward caste roots. Westernisation is a process whereby societies come under or adopt Western culture in such matters as industry, technology, law, politics, lifestyle, diet, language, religion, philosophy, and/or values. Westernisation has been a pervasive and accelerating influence across the world in the last few centuries. It is usually a two-sided process, in which Western influences and interests themselves are joined by a wish of at least parts of the affected society to change towards a more Westernised society, in the hope of attaining Western life or some aspects of it. The main purpose behind this paper is to analyse the impact of the westernisation and sanskritization in the present modern Indian society".

There is a long way to go for abolition of cast system in India. In fact the class consciousness is taking a worse shape in than ever before. The commitments by political parties and leaders of other castes are never fulfilled for any section of the society, hence the deprived section remains deprived and they think that polarization is the only solution to overcome these problems. The present study also opens up lot of new areas to be worked out. The study has been done in the Ferozabad District, and may be extended to other Districts and districts for better representation.

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