

A Study - Indian Politics and Castism

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ABSTRACT: *In Indian Politics we preserve and amend the general rules under which they live. Politics has been seen as an uninterrupted, enduring, constantly changing and omnipresent activity having its key disclosure in the decision making to face and solve a mare"s nest and flows from an outstanding activity, a form of human conduct. Indian democracy being the largest in the world, has survived itself from illiteracy, poverty, castism secessionism and communalism with different critical problems that have cut down the emergent democratic institutions of so many post-colonial societies. Since Indian society has being highly sectioned along the lines of castes, religion, class and creed etc, it eventually prevents the true functioning of Parliamentary democracy and puts an extremely bright feature of Indian politics which is largely shaped by its cultural religious and geogrophical diversity, social, ethnic, caste, community and religious pluralism, known tradition of the countrywide movement with a unique contrasting approach of party supervision and grappling ideological outlook.*

INTRODUCTION: The study of Indian politics in this context stands as a climacteric and composite one, even though India is said to be a secular state. It is climacteric in the sense that Indian politics emerge from various social multifariousness and is largely shaped by the cultural varieties, social, ethnic, caste, community and religious pluralism, known tradition of the countrywide movement with contrasting style of party leadership and unique contrasting ideological perspective.¹ Indian political system is actually framed by the conventional traditions and customs, though India has a legal authority with democratic governance which has yet to get evolve into a bonafide political system. India is a particularly significant place of political, economic and social development and change as most scholars claim that it is a static society in progress. India is perhaps the most important of all the newer countries of the so-called „third world“. In every developing political system two types of politics can be pointed out, the politics of ideology and the politics of action. An analysis of the reciprocal action between the two can throw up some of the most



important strand of the essence and direction of political change occurring in such a system.²

There is the need to work within the configuration of a democratic constitution which is lead, on the other hand, to a measured change in the political conditions to shifts in power and to a struggle for political predominance, which gained impetus with every election. The near-monopoly of power of the Congress party actually meant that this construction for power was waged, for the most part, within the ruling party where the other parties had been exercising at best, an insignificant influence on the changing serendipity of factions within the Congress and the net result of this complicated interactions was a gradual broadening of the fissure between the politics of ideology conducted at the superior ranks of the party; and the politics of action that was conducted in the 'field' itself.³ For a time, the arguments within the parties were veiled behind the ideological smokescreen which on the eve of the third General Elections was seen as the struggle promised to come out into the forefront. The nature of Indian political system has been prominently shaped by its historical, social, economic, religious and many other deep-rooted traditions of the society and which simply means that a political system

cannot completely slip away from its social, economic as well as historical ambience. It is well known to all of us that the accomplishment of a political system widely depends upon the nature and culture of its society and so far as our Indian political culture is concerned, it is in the moldable stage and still continues to emerge new attributes and inclinations.⁴

Again, with this we also have to admit that the basic features of Indian politics becomes the causes of threatening remark to national amalgamation which here simply means political, social and cultural binding or in another word it means a feeling of oneness by the people of a country. A critical study of the unique nature of Indian politics indicates that the national integration or simply amalgamation is under threatening remark due to several reasons which are none but the nature of Indian politics itself namely the role of caste, regionalism, communalism, linguistic, and politics of minorities, politics of backward classes, politics of agitation, rallies and violence, politics of secession, disintegration and terrorism.⁵ The basic purpose of this paper is to analyse the role of caste in Indian politics and how it become a major cause of serious concern and become obstacle to the national amalgamation and lastly, this paper

concludes with few propositions to overcome these hurdles.

ROLE OF CASTE IN POLITICS: The substance of Indian politics has been largely modeled by its social, economic, religious and geographical conditions and these special conditions have further provided a clear-cut shape to Indian politics that is dominantly marked by the caste politics. Various scholars view that Indian politics is mainly caste ridden politics as caste is long in the tooth and is a notable foundation of social stratification in India and interestingly we see some of the specific castes to be given superior place with social and economic entitlements that were denied to the lower caste of people. During Vedic period, the system of Varna became the foundation of social stratification and according to this system there were namely four Varnas like Brahmin, Kshatrya, Baishya and Sudra where each were assigned with specific role. However, with the progress of time the caste system came to the in endowment status, which got resolved by birth and as a result it has now become a divisive factor in our Indian society today.⁶

Even in the post independence period also these remain same although different measures had been seen to be

taken to reduce the differences among the various existing castes, but the conclusive outcome was not so much positive as the influencing nature of caste system was seen to strongly affect the political dynamics of India from all levels and thus given a prominent disposition to the Indian politics. Like now, every political party is observed to give an alert and commanding view to the caste consideration in every candidate selections and appointment of ministers in the governance. However, not only these but also its influence has strongly affected the bureaucracy also.⁷ Within this backdrop, the most recent reservation policy has given a new impetus to the role of caste in Indian politics and the role of caste in the different aspects of politics can be viewed by the given points as it is seen to influence the entire policy making of the government; example is vivid like Reservation policy in favour of certain castes.

I. The political leadership in many political parties as a matter of fact emerges and sustains in politics on the foundation of support of certain caste groups.⁸

II. The bureaucracy i.e., the administration also gets influenced by the caste consideration as mostly, the postings, transfers and appointments of public

officials get influenced by the caste considerations and even more importantly, the behavior of the public officials in carrying out the administrative duties eventually gets influenced by caste considerations.

Openly speaking most of the representatives of the various constituencies ensure the deployment of the officers public servants of their own casts in their constituencies without hesitation.

III. Most interestingly, caste also acts as pressure group in politics where mostly political bargaining is done on these caste lines.

IV. As a result this caste factor also influences in the genesis of council of ministers and making appointment to various political positions in the government.

V. Caste factor naturally becomes central contemplation in all the programmes, policies and manifestoes of the political parties and even different position within political parties is seen to get distributed in terms of various caste configurations.

VI. Caste plays a prominent role in the elections and voting behavior where as a

usual phenomenon the political parties select their candidates on caste lines.

ANALYSIS SYSTEM CASTE BASE:

However, taking all these into considerations the increasing role of caste in politics as many political experts view it as a tendency that seem to develop a negative role⁹ for the overall system which is not at all helpful for the development of democracy as regarded by scholars namely D.R. Gadgil and the famous sociologist M.N. Srinivas. Again on the contrary, some experts in the area also hold an opposite view point by saying that the role of caste is absolutely essential as it gives momentum to the political process specially in Indian context. American political experts I. Rudolf and S.H. Rudolf¹⁰ in their book “Modernity of Tradition” hold the view that caste politics in India has reduced the divergence among caste and has brought about political non-discrimination among the members of different castes and so it is worth to mention here that the former President of India K.R. Narayanan had rightly mentioned that, “What is obstructing the unity and emotional integration of India is not so much the large divisions into regions, languages and religions, but the atomization of our society into numerous castes, sub-castes and tribes”.



The politics of casteism should be legally banned with strict operation. It has been observed that although the caste practice is legally banned through the constitution by Article 17 yet, these have been practiced the society and ultimately penetrate into politics. Eventually, advantages of these have been taken by the political parties and leaders. In the states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal these have been more pronounced hence, the political leaders and parties easily take the chances of these. The ultimate solution lies to the attitude of the men. The people of the modern society should have modern attitude not traditional attitude.

CONCLUSION: India is largest democracy in the world, yet it has to get a mature stage. All the pre-requisite of vibrant democracy in India is not available because of variety of reasons like hence. We can get rid of this problem if we could remove all these evils. There is a lack of democratic training, well educated society, committed political parties, committed political leadership, initiative for women empowerment, girls education, intra-party democracy And Passive role of civil society. There is a need to stop political corruption, mismanagement eradication & extreme poverty. The strict operation of constitutional mechanism is required to

mitigate different problems arising out of huge diversity in India. A great, constructive role should be played by the civil society because this task is the collective responsibility of all citizens, politicians, educationists, teachers, students, intellectuals, businessmen and trade union leaders not of one section of the society. Good and positive attitude of one community to another is essential to establish religious and communal harmony and thus to intact national unity and integrity. Even though, the government of India is committed to protect the unity and integrity of the country by following the ideals and goals of the constitution

According to Dr. Jitender kumar the government should ensure that the operation of political practices and system are just and equal to all sections, regions, religions and communities. The political leadership and political parties and bureaucracy should also rise above narrow interests to face the challenges of national crisis, unity, castism, poverty illeteracy and integrity.

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