ANALYZE CASTE AND MODREN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Both the social and political institutions of India are heavily influenced by the caste system, which is prevalent throughout India. Caste is the oldest component of India's social system, and it plays a large role in both the organisational structure and the day-to-day operations of India's political system. Caste is also the component of India's social system that is most closely associated with Hinduism. The Spanish word "caste," which literally translates to "race," is whence we get our word "caste," which we use in English. Those individuals who share a certain racial heritage are classified as members of a particular caste. It details the status of the individual in relation to all of their social, economic, and political relationships. Caste is one of the fundamental foundations on which India's social order is founded, and it plays a significant role in the country. Casteism plays a crucial part in the political system of India. Caste has an impact not only on the make-up of political parties and interest groups, but also on their organisational structures and how they function, as well as on the many other aspects of political power. Parliamentary democracy in India is dysfunctional because the society is heavily stratified along the lines of castes, religion, socioeconomic class, and other similar divides. This prevents the system from operating as it should. The primary objective of this research is to investigate the role that caste plays in Indian politics with the goal of figuring out why it is such a significant cause of concern and how it thwarts efforts to achieve greater national cohesion. Specifically, the research will look at how caste affects the political system in India. In the latter section of this article, a suggestion is provided about how these challenges may perhaps be overcome.

Keywords: Caste, Social stratification,Indian Politics and Society.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of Indian society, the word "caste" refers to a social group, the membership of which is mostly determined by the location at where an individual was born. The evolution of Hinduism resulted in the formation of a hierarchical caste structure that was passed down via families. The Laws of Manu, which are often referred to as the Manusmitri, assert that those in higher castes are superior to those in lower castes and absolve themselves of any responsibility for their actions. In contrast, lower castes are described as unclean and obliged to serve upper castes.

It is said to those who are members of the lowest caste that their status in the caste system is because of the wrongdoings they performed in a former life. This is because their caste is the lowest. The practise of

obtaining literacy or insulting a member of a ruling caste, both of which are considered to be serious offences, can result in severe punishments such as being tortured or even being put to death. The Manusmitri, which is considered to be the most authentic source of the Hindu religion, gives a rationale for social exclusion and establishes severe injustice as the guiding principle of social affairs. Even in today's contemporary world, caste is still extremely essential to the people who live in India; nevertheless, it is crucial to bear in mind that different groups of Indian residents have diverse reasons for maintaining the caste system in place. Caste is something that those in higher castes want to preserve for as long as possible so that they may maintain their dominance over those in lower castes and keep themselves in power. It is very common to see members of lower caste groups, who are supposed to despise the caste system, using their caste identity to their advantage in the halls of power and politics, while at the same time expressing a desire to free themselves from the caste oppression that is inflicted upon them by members of higher castes. This is despite the fact that members of higher castes are the ones who are inflicting the oppression on members of lower caste groups. This kind of contradiction happens all the time. In today's society in India, there is a conundrum that is both humorous and fascinating; it is a situation that has emerged.

In point of fact, the goal of this was to show that the four classes stood in relation to social order in the same way as the various organs of Primordial Man stood in relation to his body. This was intended to be a comparison between the social order and Primordial Man. However, the caste system has progressed to the point where it now stunts the development of individuals in the name of their caste, thereby impairing the fundamental rights of individuals to live and develop, which is antithetical to the concept of democracy as a whole. Together, they were required to function in order to maintain the health of the body politic. The primary factors that have a significant impact on Indian politics are the country's cultural diversity, as well as its social, ethnic, caste, community, and religious pluralism; the well-established tradition of the nation-wide movement; the contrasting style of party leadership; and the singularly contrasting ideological perspective. India is arguably the most significant of all the younger nations that are regarded to be part of the so-called "third world," according to the opinions of the great majority of political scientists, like Myron Weiner, who believe that India is the most important of these countries.

When a nation's broad and diverse history, large population, and present situation are taken into consideration, it is possible to identify, in general, the one-of-a-kind worth that such a country possesses without being unjust to any other country. Politics may be broken down into two separate categories: the politics of ideology, on the one hand, and the polities of action, on the other. These categories can be found in every political system that is undergoing the maturation process. An analysis of the way in which the two interact with one another can help throw light on some of the most crucial features of the nature and trajectory of the political transition that is taking place inside a system like this. During the period of the Vedic culture, a system of social stratification known as Varna came into existence and became the foundational principle. There were a total of four castes or Varnas in this system. These were the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Baishya, and the Sudra. Every one of these four Varnas was in charge of a different group of obligations. In spite of this, as time progressed, the caste system transformed into an endowment status, which was established from birth. As a result of this transformation, the caste system is now one of the factors that contributes to the division that exists within our modern Indian society.

Objective of study:

1. To analyze the impact cast on Indianpolitics.

2. To study the constitutional provisionsfor casteless society.

Role of caste in Indian politics:

Specific considerations can be given to each of the following areas of the significance of caste in Indian politics:

- **Caste factor in political socialization and leadership recruitment:**

Different caste groups place their allegiances and support behind particular political parties and the beliefs such parties espouse. A person of India is assigned a caste at birth and continues to develop throughout his life as a member of a certain caste community. It is possible that he belongs to a scheduled caste rather than one of the upper castes. Caste groupings and casteism naturally exert an impact on him when he is forming his political orientations, attitudes, and beliefs, therefore it is inevitable that he will be subject to their sway. Their indoctrination, and as a result, their political thinking, conscience, and engagement, is influenced by the ideals and interests of their caste. He places his bets on the cohesiveness of the caste system in order to occupy and play a leadership recruitment role. There is a strong influence of caste on the selection of leaders. This is especially true of persons living in states like Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh, where caste consciousness is prevalent. In Andhra Pradesh, state leadership is provided by the Reddys, the Karmas, and the Valamas.

- **Caste based political parties:**

The Indian political party structure includes the consideration of caste as a factor. There are several political parties in India that are founded on caste, and each of these parties works to advance and defend the interests of its own caste. Caste is a factor that has a disproportionately large amount of influence on regional political parties, in particular. Both the DMK and the AIADMK are examples of non-Brahmin political parties that originate in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The Akali Dal is a community identity in the state of Punjab. The debate about JAT members vs non-JAT members continues to have an impact on it. When it comes to winning votes in elections, every political party in India relies on caste as a strategy. The support of Scheduled Castes is essential to the BSP, whereas the popularity of the BJP among caste Hindus and the trade community is primarily responsible for its success.

- **Caste based pressure groups:**

In India, there are a large number of caste-based pressure groups. These groups work to promote and protect the interests of a particular caste, and in order to do so, they continually put pressure on the various governments of India. Some examples of these pressure groups include the scheduled caste federation, the Arya Samaj Sabha, and the Sanatan Dharam Sabha. These groups are among those who work to protect the interests of a specific community.

- **Caste and nomination of candidates:**

In India's political politics, the caste system is a significant aspect that plays a significant role. When selecting candidates to represent their parties in various parliamentary districts, political parties carefully consider both the demographics of the voters in each district as well as the demographics of the candidates. As a direct

consequence of this, this politician will undoubtedly receive the support of voters who belong to his caste. In voting districts that are predominantly inhabited by Muslims, candidates from the Muslim community are fielded, whereas in regions that are predominantly inhabited by Jats, candidates from the Jat community are fielded. Even secularist parties like Congress and the Janata Dal, as well as the Communist Party of India and the Communist Party of the People of India, take caste into consideration when choosing candidates.

- **Caste and voting behaviour:**

During the election campaigns, votes are asked for in the names of the various castes. Caste groups are being solicited for their support commitments. Caste concerns are given a considerable deal of weight both in the selection of candidates for office and in the appeals that are made to voters throughout election campaigns, as N.D. Palmer has properly highlighted. During the voting process, caste is the most significant factor to consider. Candidates solicited votes by appealing to voters' sense of caste, and they used caste-based slogans such as "jat ki beti jat ko, jat ki vote jat ko" in their campaigns. These kinds of slogans do have an influence on voters, and as a result, those people end up casting their ballots in favour of the candidate who shares their caste.

- **Caste as divisive and cohesive force in IndianPolitics:**

In Indian politics, caste functions both as a unifying and a fragmenting factor. It lays the groundwork for the development of a number of interest groups inside the Indian Political System, each of which is in direct competition with the other interest groups in the fight for power. On occasion, it results in an unhealthy fight for dominance and functions as a force that divides people; on the other hand, it serves as a source of unity among the members of organisations and functions as a force that brings people together. Caste functions as a unifying factor in rural India, where the social universe of the rural power is restricted to an area of 15 to 20 kilometres. It is the only other social group that makes any sense to them. The existence of different social classes can also contribute to factionalism. The concept of caste in and of itself is a feature in Indian politics, and it serves both as a unifying and a dividing force.

- **Caste and organization of government:**

Caste is an essential component of Indian society, and as such, it plays a preeminent part in a variety of political activities. As a result, caste is also an essential component of the decision-making process. Even the question of reorganising the state was approached with an eye on preventing the undue dominance of one caste group over another in a certain region. This was done in order to avoid any kind of imbalance. Policies and choices made by the state government are impacted by the caste issue. The party in power makes efforts to gain the support of important caste subgroups by utilising the decision-making authority at its disposal. The Congress party has never stopped trying to cultivate those who belong to Scheduled Castes in order to use them as vote banks. Political power in a region for the purpose of advancing the interests of the caste groups that support or have the potential to support the regime in question. The Constitution of India ensures that there will be just one single, united electorate and promotes an environment devoid of casteism in both politics and governance. On the other hand, the element of caste always works as a determining factor in people's voting behaviour, their political engagement, the structure of the parties, and even the decision-making process of the government.

- **Caste factor and local governments:**

It is a well-known and widely accepted fact that caste plays a significant part in the operation of Panchayati Raj and other institutions of local self-government. Caste-based factionalism in India's rural areas has been the single most significant obstacle preventing Panchayati Raj from being effectively organised and functioning throughout its history. Caste was a mobilisation of the communication channel, representation, and leadership in the setting of rural India. It was also a link between the election process and the political process.

- **Caste violence:**

Violence on the basis of caste frequently finds its way into politics. Traditional disparities between those in higher castes and those in lower castes have become more pronounced and have evolved into a vicious and intense competition for dominance in society. The increasing persecution of those belonging to lower castes at the hands of those belonging to upper castes or even transitional castes is turning into an established feature of the political landscape in rural India. Even in certain metropolitan regions, incidents of caste-based violence have been reported in a number of Indian states, including Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat, and Uttar Pradesh. However, even in modern times, casteism remains the primary motivation for the majority of violent incidents in rural politics.

The demand for reservation by other communities:

The provisions of reservation provided in the constitution have proven to be counterproductive as well, since the non-scheduled castes have also started exerting pressure on the government to adopt provisions of quota for them. Consequently, the constitution's provisions have become less effective.

Social and political tensions:

Because of the regulations that were put in place to preserve the interests of scheduled castes, the social peace that existed within the Indian society was disrupted, and this led to an increase in the number of social and political tensions. The society is now stratified among those of upper caste and those of lower caste.

Caste and civil administration:

Caste also has an effect on the bureaucracy since, in most cases, decisions regarding the postings, transfers, and appointments of public employees are impacted by caste concerns. When the government is operated in today's world, it is common practise to take into account the needs and priorities of specific castes.

Caste and formation of a council of ministers:

In the process of forming the council of ministers, the prime minister and chief minister of a state are obligated to provide representation to members of the various castes found in that state. If they fail to do so, the supporters of a particular caste exert pressure on the prime minister and chief minister to provide representation to their caste.

Caste and Indian Constitution:

Acts &Constitutional Provisions for a Casteless Society:

However, despite having one of the world's finest constitutions, it is only partially put into effect. The sincerely made efforts put forth by the Great Indians have yielded the stipulations that are detailed here.

- The Civil Rights Act of 1976 (Protection of Civil Rights Act)

- The Act of 1989 for the Prevention of Atrocities Against SCs and STs

Fundamental Rights – First Right is the Right to Equality:

- Equal protection under the law is guaranteed under article 14.

- Prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, gender, and colour, as outlined in Article 15 of the Constitution

- Article 16 - Equal opportunity in public employment.

- Article 17 declares an end to the practise of untouchability.

- Article 18 declares an end to the use of titles.

Fundamental Duty:

51A-e), to foster unity and the spirit of common brotherhood among all of the residents of India regardless of religious, linguistic, regional, or sectional diversities, and to abandon practises that are derogatory to the dignity of women.

Directive Principles ofState Policy

- Article 38 – To promote the welfare of the people by guaranteeing a social order permeated by justice – social, economic and political – and to reduce disparities in income, position, facilities, and opportunities.

- Article 46: "To promote the educational and economic interests of SCs, STs, and other weaker parts of society and to safeguard them from social injustice and exploitation." This provision is intended to protect disadvantaged groups from being subjected to unfair treatment in society.

- Article 330, which stipulates the reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

- Article 332 provides for the reservation of seats in the State Assembly for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Taking the Following Steps:

Without a shift in mentality on the part of the general population, the caste system would never disappear. The illiteracy and ignorance of the population have contributed significantly to the problem's continued existence. As a result, they are resistant to any kind of societal reform.

For the purpose of eliminating the impact of caste on politics, consideration needs to be given to the following points:

1. The foundation of the reservation should be economic rather than caste in order to ensure that all economically disadvantaged members of society benefit from it.

2. The media ought to maintain its impartiality.

3. Violence towards members of other castes needs to be eradicated via well-organized initiatives.

4. The recognition of political parties that are founded on caste systems should be discontinued.

5. The politician should put caste politics to the back of his or her mind.

6. The educational system need to be redesigned in accordance with secular principles.

7. All schools are obligated to promote the idea of living in communities by hosting communal dinners, and each and every student should be invited to participate.

8. Textbooks used in schools should go through extensive revisions. The students should learn through the course content that the caste system is something that was created by man.

9. We can bring about change in the people of the future generation by encouraging individuals to marry across caste lines and by making special deals available to those whose marriages cross caste lines.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there is a strong connection between political power and caste in India, and both of these factors have an impact on one another. Caste is a fundamental element of India's social order and has carved out a distinct niche for itself in the country's political hierarchy on many different levels. Casteism presents the most significant obstacle for democracy in India. Both democracy and casteism are inherently incompatible with one another. The liberal democratic system, which is primarily founded on the principles of equality, freedom, and justice, has been implemented in India. In India, the concept of caste refers to inequality based on birth. The doctrinal differences do not serve as a significant dividing line between the various Indian political parties; rather, caste affiliations and other ethnic elements do. Election campaigns are typically run along caste lines, and violence that occurs during the voting process is typically motivated by caste tensions. Both politics and castes have gotten more politicised, and politics has become more caste-ridden. Politics is the vehicle via which caste groups obtain the benefits that accrue to them.

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