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Political power is agony of scheduled tribes & scheduled castes: A study of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

The study has a vast scope in terms of understanding the nature and status of electoral participation of tribal in a caste commanding society. The study has its important in understanding the impact of this participation in extending the constitutional safeguards to the people belonging to scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes. In the framework of Indian democracy, over the past few decades, the issue of political representation of backward classes has emerged as a focal point. The entry of these classes in the political discourse has resulted in major shifts in the basic premises of democratic thinking and understandings on representation. The issue of electoral participation of marginalized section of the society is gaining great importance, an effort to gauge the pattern of electoral participation of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes in a state with highest concentration of sc and STs are being made through the present study. The study is also importance because increasing participation of all sections of society in political process itself is considered an indicator of political development. As stated earlier electoral participation is a multifaceted process, involving participation before, during and after elections.

Keywords: Scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, political power, Indian democracy, Andhra Pradesh

Introduction

The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. Which is not only reflects in social life of Indian people but also economic and political behaviors of people are governed by the caste system. They have remained as educationally, culturally, economically and socially deprived sections which play a very significant role in their social, cultural, economic and religious ways of life and they are considered as a development factor in society. But they are still lagging far behind in the different walks of life like education, employment, political, social position, good health and empowerment etc., Empowerment define as higher literacy levels, education, better healthcare, equal ownership of productive resources, increased participation in economic and political sectors, awareness of rights and responsibilities, improved standards of living, self-reliance, self-esteem and self-confidence. The Scheduled Tribes empowerment also determined as economic, social and political identity and their weight age. Majority of sc/st communities are in the rural areas and in the informal, unorganized sector and they got less education, health and productive resources, among others, is inadequate Unless these are addressed, inequalities and differentials may continue to exist One of the prominent aspects of economic, political and social relations revolves around the issues of inequality based on class, caste, race and gender. In the context of India, caste based politics has always remained in the forefront. The main objective of this study is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of Scheduled Tribes, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the Scheduled Tribes and to ensure their active participation in all spheres of life and activities. But still schedule Tribe continues to be socio-economically and politically backward. Participation also has intrinsic value for the quality of life. Active participation of the people belonging to the lower strata would facilitate changes in the society itself Political participation can be defined as the involvement of members of the society in the decision-making process of the system. Political participants are those individuals who are oriented to the input structure and engage themselves in the articulation of demands and decision making. However, an important feature is that those persons who participate in most forms of political activity constitute a minority of the members of the

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society (Jagam, 1982). Democracy in the sense of a system of decision making in which all members or citizens play active roles in the continuous process is inherently impossible. Differences in political participation can be related to demographic, socio-economic, ethnic, caste and religious characteristics, their value is relevant to the degree that they reveal motivational and socio structural uniformities. The idea of socialization centres about how the individual is introduced into 2nd made part of an ongoing society and how people learn to function within it. In short, social characteristics such as economic status, racial/ethnic/caste/religious group are likely to influence the political participation. These are general characteristics that can determine participation in all democratic societies which is necessary to explain the framework in which the participation of schedule cast and Schedule Tribes will be analyzed in Indian politics. Through this study we tried to attempt to assessment the schedule cast and Scheduled Tribes electoral participation with different review literature which is supplement on socioeconomic, political and educational status in present society.

Literary reviews

During the last few decades there have been a number of works done on various aspects of scheduled tribes in different parts of India. Most of them are sociological, anthropological and some of them are political in nature. However it is also important that more or equal attention should be given to the participation of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes in the political system of the society. Although many studies have been undertaken on the role of schedule cast schedule tribes in Indian politics and their status in Indian society, yet in the context of Andhra Pradesh, barring a few scholarly works, not much research work has been undertaken in this field, particularly on the issue of electoral participation of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes. A brief review of the existing literature on scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes issues in India is given bellow. Rajani Kothari, the well known political scientist, in his pioneer work Caste in Indian politics (1954) exhibits the role of caste in Indian politics. He emphasizes that political mobilization of various section of Indian society has given salience to caste in Indian politics. He pointed out that the mobilization of different caste groups has been a major technique with various political parties for expanding their support base. The social change in modern India, has defined the process of Sanscritisation, it is the process by which a low Hindu caste, or tribals, or other group, changes its customs, rituals, ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently twice born caste. The low caste takes to conduct, customs and rituals of higher caste. By the Sanscritisation caste or a tribal community ventures to gain higher status in society. In the process of Sanscritisation the claim is made for higher status in the social structure and it is therefore a vertical movement. But in Sanscritisation there is improvement status and no structural change. The study brings into sharp relief the basic issue of violation of the constitutional implicit in the New Economic Policy (NEP). Bhandari J.S. and others informed about the tribal people in the edited book entitled 'Tribes and Government Policies', who lived a life of freedom and self respect till the lands of their ancestors and the abode of their spirits were invaded both physically and ideologically by the forces of colonization

and industrialization and the formation of the post world war nation states. This book brings together the views and analysis of a large number of distinguished scholars on the subject of government policies with respect to tribes. discussed in his book 'Dalits Betrayed' the constitutional scheme for establishing an egalitarian society with clear provisions for countering simultaneously inequalities of tradition and backlash of modernization as nation moves forward. His focus is on Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes. The analysis lays bare omissions, distortions, subterfuges and studied silence on vital issues for protecting vested interests, strengthening their stranglehold and promoting their cause revisits the concepts of tribe and tribal society in his book entitled 'State, society and tribes': Issues in Post-Colonial India. He highlighted the situation and the existing body of knowledge in the context of state policy and socio cultural developments which was witnessed after independence. He further focused on transformation of tribes and the causes that have led to this transformation after Independence while elaborating upon the awareness and consciousness of the people living in tribes. Author dealt with tribal movements that further resulted in awakening of people pertaining to various developmental factors. Then the books came on Tribal Culture entitled 'The Tribal Culture of India' by Vidhyarthi in 1976, and Continuity and Change: A Study of Bhils in Rajasthan by Anita Srivastava. Author mentioned that the modernization of tribal communities consists a number of inter related items, to begin with implementation of the special provisions of the Constitution in respect of the tribal communities, expansion of communication and transport and breaking down of physical isolation, establishment of modern amenities of life. The author discussed on some modernization processes with reference to political mobilization, emergence of tribal communities, tendency to sublimate and secularize tribal stream and impact of the extension of the orbit of activities of the national, emergence of socio cultural minorities in tribal areas as a political category, impact of expansion of communication and transport; impact of establishment of urban centers, impact of the introduction of improved technology and welfare measures, impact of the spread of education and impact of extension of medical and other facilities. In the book entitled "Political participation of Minorities editeto national minorities in public life is a key factor for their inclusion in the society as a whole? Minority participation in decision making is a twofold asset: one, minorities have a sense of inclusion and feel that they are taken seriously, and in turn their loyalty to mainstream society is reinforced; second, it helps states to become more aware of the views of minorities and to take them in to account during decision making, which in turn contributes to a more balanced representation of society's diversity. This could be also addresses the issues of participation of minorities in decision making electoral bodies too. It says power denotes the ability to control people and events which believe in the equal dignity of all human beings. argued that, when democratization has reduced the social gap among people as caste system through people to people contact in many forms, political colour has further given re-birth of another caste system-political caste. It has variously broken the relation among siblings with in community and outside community. Even the social gatherings, social functions and common festivals were making division according to the

political colour. D. Pulla Rao (2013) has also addresses the socioeconomic status of the scheduled tribes in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh State (India). In the sample, the majority of the households are the tribe of Konda Dora. The majority of the sample households in the study area are Hindus and more than 70 percent of the sample population was illiterate. There is a need to put more attention on educational aspects of scheduled cast and scheduled tribes, where this only can motivate them for future life. Several studies revealed that the number of political parties and the participation of scheduled tribe voters are impacting the level of democratic functioning within a government and are playing an important role in forming the government at national and state levels. The electoral participation of scheduled tribe can be defined as the degree of participation of equality and freedom enjoyed by these groups in the shaping and sharing of power and in the value given by society to this role of scheduled tribe. So there is a need to overview and evaluate the inclusion level of scheduled tribes in changing politics of India. It is also to know, how the participation of scheduled tribes in the largest democracy of the world India, with a focus of effective electoral participations in the Panchayat Raj Institutions and legislative process of Andhra Pradesh. It can be seen in the following context, Participation in the electoral process as voters and candidates in elections; Political attitude such as awareness, commitment and involvement in politics and autonomy in political action and behavior; and their impact on the political process of elections. The problems of involvement in politics is one of the aspect of theory and practice which have extremely diversified and at times contradictory, interpretations and forms of realization in different periods on different types of socio-political system and political cultures. Moreover even within the frame work one of these types one can easily observe changeability of the conceptual and real content of the phenomenon of electoral participation. After having reviewed the available literature on the themes related without research problem, it may be stated that though a lot of literature is available on this issues in general and on scheduled cast and scheduled tribals in particular yet not much has been written on the electoral participation of scheduled tribe's in Andhra Pradesh. Hence there is a justification of an objective scientific study to understand the issue of political awareness among Scheduled Tribe's in Andhra Pradesh where they are in such a great number and to evaluate their electoral participation. Thus the present study of electoral participation of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribe's in Andhra Pradesh is academically and politically relevant. It may partially fulfill the gap in knowledge on this important theme.

Importance of the Study

The study has a vast scope in terms of understanding the nature and status of electoral participation of tribal in a caste commanding society. The study has its important in understanding the impact of this participation in extending the constitutional safeguards to the people belonging to scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes. In the framework of Indian democracy, over the past few decades, the issue of political representation of backward classes has emerged as a focal point. The entry of these classes in the political discourse has resulted in major shifts in the basic premises of democratic thinking and understandings on

representation. The issue of electoral participation of marginalized section of the society is gaining great importance, an effort to gauge the pattern of electoral participation of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes in a state with highest concentration of sc and STs are being made through the present study. The study is also importance because increasing participation of all sections of society in political process itself is considered an indicator of political development. As stated earlier electoral participation is a multifaceted process, involving participation before, during and after elections. It is necessary participation which is undertaken in various programmes in all these fields should be studies. For the present investigation I have selected an important district of Andhra Pradesh, Guntur district on the basis of the concentration of the scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes. I tried to find out the SC and STS Status in the society and politics in the present context, and whether tribal organizations and tribal's leaders have succeeded in empowering the Scheduled Tribes in some way or not. The present thesis, therefore, aims to explore these shifts in the discourse on political representation by examining the cases of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes political representation in Indian democracy. This research is useful because it helps us in knowing the role of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribe's people in the political process; to know how far the tribal leaders have succeeded in their aim of empowerment of scheduled tribes and how they are utilizing their power in carrying out their objectives. Electoral participation of scheduled cast and Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh particularly in Guntur district is an empirical study through which a humble attempt has been made to enhance a better understanding of the participation of marginalized groups in political process in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, India.

Methodology

The present work is an empirical study based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was collected by conducting the intensive fieldwork in the scheduled cast Madhiga, Mala sub cast and schedule tribal's Nayak in Guntur district Andhra Pradesh. To study the distribution and concentration of sub cast and tribals and their decennial growth rate, the data were obtained from the 1991, 2001 and 2011 censuses. In order to measure the present spatial distribution of tribal population in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh, a simple percentage has been calculated at district and state level. The research techniques will be used on focus groups, interviews and a survey. Interview of the schedule cast and Scheduled Tribe, a sample survey conducted in Gunter district of Andhra Pradesh state with the help of a structured and guided scheduled.

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