

CASTE, CORRUPTION, AND CONSTITUTION

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Abstract

Corruption means the act of abuse or/and misusing of power by those who are in power for personal gains either pecuniary or a favour. Corruption can be of various kinds and in this research paper we study about the non-materialistic corruption based on caste system in India. In this study we get to know whether Indian caste system promotes non-materialistic Corruption or not. Casteism hinders the growth and development of the country by promoting political corruption and political corruption is a part of this study. In this research paper we also study about the causes and consequences of caste system in India. The research paper includes the study of the stand of Indian Constitution on casteism. Constitution of Indi promotes protective discrimination which was and is the need of the country but what is the stand of Indian Constitution on exploitative discrimination. This study will help the students and researchers to understand the non-materialistic caste based corruption and the stand of Indian Constitution on casteism.

Keywords: Non-Materialistic Corruption, Casteism, Favouritism, Discrimination, Constitution

INTRODUCTION

The origin of the casteism is not fully known and is believed to have originated some more than 2000 years ago. There are various theories about the origin of caste system in India and most prominent among them are :

1. **Traditional theory:** According to this theory casteism is of divine origin and is the extend of Varna system where 4 varnas originated from the body of Bramha.
2. **Racial Theory :** According to this theory the word caste in sanskrit is called "varna" which means colour
3. **Political theory :** According to this theory casteism is the clever invention of Brahmins in order to place themselves on the highest ladder of social hierarchy.

In earlier times the caste system was based on the work people do e.g. warriors were called "Kshatriyas" and servants were called "shudras" etc. But in model times caste system has become hereditary. The earliest written evidence about the caste system appears in vedas (sanskrit language text) dated back from 1500 Bc and Bhagavad Gita which dates from 200 BC – 200 AD. These earliest sources of casteism mentions only four primary castes.

1. Brahmin ----- The priests
2. Kshatriya ----- warriors and nobility
3. Vaisya ----- Farmers, Traders and Artisans

4. Shudra ----- Tenant farmers and servants.

But there were in fact thousands of castes, sub-castes and communities within the Indian society.

In India, it is not only the Hindu population which is divided into castes but other religious population are also organized themselves into castes as well e.g After Islam came into subcontinent Muslims were divided themselves into various classes such as Pathan, Sheikh, syed, Qureshi etc.

Corruption is defined as when a person is holding public office and is using that office for private gains. Corruption can be Materialistic as well as non-materialistic. This non-materialistic corruption sometimes goes unnoticed because there is such a huge materialistic corruption in our country we hardly pay any attention towards non-materialistic corruption. There is a strong notion that caste system in India promotes non-materialistic corruption which includes favouritism, caste preference etc.

After independence the leaders of India decided that India will be Democratic, Socialist and Secular country. According to this vision of leaders of Independent India there will be a separation between religion and state. The Constitution of India also abolishes untouchability and discrimination on the basis of caste and make these laws

fundamental rights. Along with these laws the Constitution also allows positive discrimination of the depressed classes of India.

CASTEISM PROMOTES CORRUPTION

Social psychology says that groupism/casteism promotes favouritism. According to Henri Tajfel "just dividing people into arbitrary groups produces in-group favouritism which means tendency to respond more positively to people from our in-groups than the PEO from out-groups". A person belongs to a particular caste have a tendency to help people of his own caste more than People from other castes. India being the second most populous country in the world having population more than 1.3 billion. People in India are divided into various castes and every other person who is in some position try to help people from his own caste. There is no harm in helping people but that help should not be biased towards caste. In India hundreds of cases have been heard about religious favouritism and caste favouritism. Although caste favouritism do not usually promote materialistic corruption but there is non-materialistic corruption. This non-materialistic corruption of casteism can be seen in various ways and some of these are mentioned below.

1. If two candidates are equally deserving for a position, selecting one just because of his caste is a form the corruption although non-materialistic.
2. Paying more attention or helping more a person in a job because of his caste is also a corruption.
3. Putting a caste condition in recruitment is another form of non-materialistic corruption.
4. Refusing to do work with another caste.

There are various other ways where social psychology of belongingness towards own caste promotes corruption. The one which gets mentions more often is that voters in India are often beings biased in favour of those political parties who claim to represent their castes. So directly or indirectly caste system in election is the biggest hindrance in the development and good governance of the country. Thus politicization of caste played a very important role for lagging behind in the development and good governance. The political parties whose politics revolves around caste need caste system and people who belongs to a part if caste uses his caste to get into politics. So caste needs politics as much as politics needs caste. It is a dog process. When the activities of a caste groupings becomes politics or revolves around politics

then there arises the concept of dominant caste. A dominant caste is one which are greater in number meant which dominant numerically. Due to its numeric preponderance it enjoys political power. The caste bases political party once gains power gets influenced by the caste in policy making of the country. The policies, activities, programmed and declarations are made keeping in view the caste factor. Hereditary caste system teaches child right from the birth certain ideologue and the ideology whether high caste or low caste eventually influences socialization and consequently his political thinking. The origin of this caste based politics lies in the fact that British elites transfer power to Indian elites after independence. They transfer power without any significant change in the social and economic structure. Single the most prominent leaders of freedom moment was from upper caste so it was easy for them to claim power that is proud the reason this caste system politics persists and its discontinuation struggle to live.

CONSEQUENCES OF CASTEISM

1. Casteism promotes corruption
2. Casteism hinders national unity.
3. Casteism acts against democracy.
4. Casteism slows down the economic growth and progress.
5. Casteism leads to negligence of talents and efficiency.

CASE STUDY

Pradhan Mantri gram sadak yojna (PMGSY) means prime minister's village road scheme which was launched on 15 August 2000. It is fully funded central government scheme with a plan to provide all unconnected villages a good quality all weather road connectivity.

Recently it has been studied that lot of contracts of PMGSY were given based on caste. It has been suggested that when MLA and district collector shared a surname a contractor with same surname was more likely to be awarded a contract. The expensive of these roads were 7-12 per cent more. Princeton University of USA in its journal of development economics has shown that between 2001 to 2013 the rural road and building contracts of worth 3592 crores (540 million) have been unfairly awarded by the state law makers to the contractors of their own caste. These unfairly awarded contracts have often resulted to be more expensive and in some cases the roads appear to have never been built (based on 2011 census). This is just

an example of how caste system in India promotes corruption.

When caste becomes the qualification for getting a contract the chances of good governance and development becomes less.

CONSTITUTION AND CASTEISM

The evil practice of Indian caste system is as old as ancient scripts. Ancient Hindu scripts speaks of four tiers or varnas. According to religious theory of Rig Veda which is an ancient Hindu scripture, the primal man "purush" destroyed himself to create a society and different parts of his body creates different varnas. The most superior class Brahmins were made from his head, the Kshatriyas (warriors) are made from his hands, Vashyas from his thighs and Shudras from his feet.

During colonization it was British who shaped the caste system in India. The definitions of caste as we all know were developed during the British period. According to Anthropologist Susan Bayly of Cambridge University "until well into the colonial period most of the people who were living in the subcontinent were giving little importance to distinctions of caste although they were living in the so called Hindu heartland". The institutions and beliefs which are now used as an elements of the traditional caste system were only just taking shape as recently as the early 18th century.

After independence the think tanks who frames Indian Constitution makes it clear in the fundamental rights of Indian Constitution that there should be "prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth" (article 15) and abolition of untouchability (article 17). So Indian Constitution does not promote casteism. Although there is a reservation for socially and economically backward sections of society but that doesn't mean it is exploitative discrimination on the basis of caste. Here we have to understand positive meaning of equality and it states that if there is a sec to in the society which is lacking behind then it is the responsibility of the state and its policy makers to make sections for the uplifting of that section of the society. Let us take an example to understand it further. Consider a poor mother who have two children and she can afford only one glass of milk for each child daily. The condition arise that one of his child falls ill and became weak, doctor recommends that he needs more nutrition so you have to increase his diet for his survival. In this condition a wise mother will increase the quantity of milk for the ill child from the milk

of healthy child for a period of time until the child gets healthy. Same was the case with India after independence so leaders chop to give a little been to certain castes for their uplifting and framed Constitution accordingly. So Indian Constitution promotes protective discrimination instead of exploitative discrimination to protect certain sections of society who needed to be protected because they faced oppression before independence.

People of India need to understand Constitution clearly and must not promote corruption on the basis of caste.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that Indian casteism promotes non-materialistic corruption while slows down the developmental process of India and becomes an impeding variable to good governance. For India to prosper this non-materialistic casteism corruption needs to be identified and decisions must be taken to prevent this ill activity. Also Indian political parties need to understand the evils of caste based politics and stop it for the sake of development of the course and its governance. Indian Constitution although promotes protective discrimination which is the need of the country and very essential for uplifting the socially and economically backward sections of the society but in no means that Indian Constitution promotes exploitative discrimination that people of India need to understand properly for the sake of country and must stop this non-materialistic casteism corruption.

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