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Participation of scheduled caste on political processes and decision making

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Abstract

Development involves both objective and subjective dimensions. The objective dimension covers the quality of life, whereas the subjective dimensions involve values and modes of thinking, degree of self-confidence and efficiency (Chanuhan, 1993). These modes can be observed in various aspects of community life. The present paper focuses upon the emerging self confidence and efficacy dimensions of a scheduled caste at the local level in the rural areas in a region in Bihar. Here political participation itself is considered as an indicator of their development. Thus the main question addressed and attempted here is to what extent have the scheduled castes really been participating in the political processes of the local community?

Whether this political participation leads to decision making and it is generating self-confidence and efficacy among them. If so, how far and under what conditions are they being generated. Their political participation is there during elections for the national parliament, state assemblies and the local village panchayat. To be more specific, the present attempt focuses on the participation of the scheduled caste in local level elections and thereby their role in decision making. This focus is purposive as the election becomes more intense. As personal and face to face relations are mobilized, as local issues become important and the elected as well as influence community affairs in daily life. The participation of the scheduled caste in electioneering and for the nation of panchayat thereafter, their role in the functioning of panchayat their influencing the decision making process is taken into account.

Keywords: Scheduled caste, political, decision making

Introduction

The main question raised in the context of development of scheduled castes was to what extent the scheduled castes have really been participating in the political and decision making process of the local political and decision making process of the local community. Whether this political participation is generating self confidence and increasing efficacy among them. If so, how far and under what conditions. These issues have been explored with special reference to "Manjhi" community at the local level in the rural areas of Gaya district of Bihar.

Since Independence, India has been making continuous efforts to develop a programme was the first to tackle the problems of rural India in a comprehensive manner. But the community development programme, as it has been observed by Balwant Rai Mehta committee could not deliver the desired results. Consequently Mehta committee reached the conclusion that unless people's own representatives at the local level are associated with the administration of community development programme and without people's enthusiasm and cooperation it would not be successful. The committee therefore envisaged the idea of democratic decentralisation which in its institutional form is popularly known as panchayati raj system. India is the largest democracy in the world. On the eve of Independence itself Dr. Ambedkar said that we should not be content with mere political democracy. This cannot last unless their lives act as the base of its social democracy. In his historic speech he commented thus: "How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social, economic and political life? We continue to deny for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril."

Participation of scheduled caste in politics

Until the early thirties, the scheduled castes had no say in government. It was only after the organised movement of the scheduled castes for sharing political power and social justice under the leadership of Dr B.R. Ambedkar in the early thirties, the British government gave

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some thought to problems of schedule castes. Dr Ambedkar demanded separate electorate for schedule castes in the local self government. The offer of communal award and separate electorate for schedule castes by British government was opposed by congress and Gandhiji. The congress and Gandhiji thought that schedule castes would go out of their control if separate electorate was given to them. Therefore Gandhiji went on a fast into death for the withdrawal of the award. Accordingly separate electorate was withdrawn. As compensating measure with regard to the withdrawal of communal award, reservation of seats was made for schedule castes both in parliament and assemblies of the states. These states enable the schedule castes to get elected under this provisions and thus voice the problems of their community in legislature. After attaining independence India adopted the democratic form of government. The constitution of India vested sovereignty in the people of India.

State Assemblies and Parliament

As per provisions in the constitution of India. The number of reserved seats for the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes proportion to the percentage of the scheduled castes population. Soon after independence. The central and state government gave importance for the over all development of villages through legislatios.

Now participation by the people in various political activities is generally considered to be the main focus of all democratic system in our country in fact supports, political socialization, recruitment, interest, articulation etc. Are functions of political participation all output in direct of indirect manner are related to it. Political participation can be regarded as the principle by means of which consent is granted or withdrawn in a democracy, it refers to shoes voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rules directly or indirectly in the formation of a public policy. If relates to shaping or reshaping of power, authority of influence. Participation in polities is a value in it has priority over all other ends, including efficiency. If is a core element of democracy, essential for learning legitimacy and stabilization.

Activities related to political participation typically include voting, seeking information discussing and changing option attending meetings, contributing finance and communicating with representatives, in our country, political sense or awareness is a very necessary part of our democratic system.

The situation indicates that in a large villages where the scheduled castes account for more than 20 percent of the population, they have been able to achieve at lease some significant position. They have participated as members of the village panchayat, proposed issues, participated in decision making and have been able to influence the decision to a certain extent in their favour. Traditional non agricultural occupation of some, occupational diversification occupation of others, less dependency on agriculture and some degree of literacy appear to be contributing factors. They have used the provisions, lands, loans for sale – employment and subsidies etc. This whole complex appears to contributing to their changing participation, efficacy and self –confidence as they have also fought against the injustice to them initiated by other higher and dominant back ward castes.

Conclusion

It has been concluded by saying that participation of the scheduled caste in the political and decision making processes has increased quantitatively and qualitatively. Their self-confidence has also development processes to some extent. Numerical strength appears to play an important contributing role in this awareness and confidence. As does occupational diversification and education. These are some indication to wards a desired direction to achieve social equality to achieve the goals of equality and justice to the higher to down tradden and generate their self-confidence we have to go a long way in the economic political educational and social aspects of community life, Lastly is can be say that we shall be able to enhance the political awareness of the scheduled castes without any doubt if people from all walks of society come for ward with a whole hearted effort to increase the total literacy rate from 74% (census report 2011) to 100 percent.

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