



A STUDY TO ASSESS THE QUALITY OF LIFE, UNDERLYING VULNERABILITY, SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND INCLUSION OF WOMEN BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTE IN RURAL TALUKS OF DAVANGERE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an effort to evaluate the quality of life of the women belonging to the scheduled caste. It also highlights the other major issues like underlying vulnerability, social exclusion, and inclusion of women belonging to the scheduled castes, especially in the rural taluk of Davanagere district. We have now begun to recognize the linkages between social exclusion and high levels of deprivation and poverty of social groups that have suffered such exclusion and differential treatment in different spheres. It has also been recognized that unfair exclusion or inclusion results in low access to income-earning assets, employment, social needs like education, health services, food, and housing; unequal access to civil, religious, cultural, and political rights; and unequal participation in governance, which ultimately cause high poverty and low human development among the excluded groups. This paper thus highlights the issues faced by the deprived among the deprived group, i.e., the women belonging to scheduled castes.

Key Words: Quality of Life, Social Inclusion, Exclusion, Social Group, Social Needs.

INTRODUCTION

We have now begun to recognize the linkages between social exclusion and high levels of deprivation and poverty of social groups that have suffered such exclusion and differential treatment in different spheres. It has also been recognized that unfair exclusion or inclusion results in low access to income-earning assets, employment, social needs like education, health services, food, and housing; unequal access to civil, religious, cultural, and political rights; and unequal participation in governance, which ultimately cause high poverty and low human development among the excluded groups.

Demographic Profile of Schedule Caste in the Davanagere District

Davanagere is one of district of Karnataka in India. There are 6 Taluks, 923 villages and 9 towns in Davanagere district. As per the Census India 2011, Davanagere district has 410176 households, population of 1945497 of which 986400 are males and 959097 are females. The population of children between age 0-6 is 217731 which is 11.19% of total population. The sex-ratio of Davanagere district is around 972 compared to 973 which is average of Karnataka state. The literacy rate of Davanagere district is 67.26% out of which 73.06% males are literate and 61.3% females are literate. The total area of Davanagere is 5924 sq.km with population density of 328 per sq.km.

Out of total population, 67.67% of population lives in urban area and 32.33% lives in rural area. There are 20.18% Scheduled Caste (SC) and 11.98% Scheduled Tribe (ST) of total population in Davanagere district.

VULNERABILITY OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN

Violence against Scheduled caste women occurs at two levels. Firstly, it is an inherent part of the caste system, which uses violence to reinforce the caste norms. The Scheduled caste women are also vulnerable to other forms of violence, especially seasonal violence. When they transgress the caste norms, the dominant castes do not hesitate to resort to violence to teach them a lesson. In fact, violence against Scheduled caste women is socially legitimized. Since 1990, around 158 Scheduled castes have been massacred, with most of them being women. The other endorsement of violence against Scheduled caste women ensues from their gender, as being women; their male counterparts too routinely inflict physical abuse on them, making them targets of pervasive domestic violence. Hence, Scheduled caste women have to shoulder the double burden of marginalization their caste and gender.

The different ways in which the issue of violence against women has been addressed in the last two hundred years in India. The basic question that rise then is pertaining to the forms of violence, the location of individuals and groups addressing the issue and specific context of their addressable. The missionaries, the orientalist, colonial administrators, social reformers and the post independent Indian nation-state have all

addressed the issue of violence against women as a part of either their 'civilizing mission', 'revival or modernization of Indian tradition' or 'Women as weaker sections' projects. The Edwardian and feminists addressed the issue as the white women's burden while the first wave Indian feminists lobbied for amendments in the Hindu law of property and marriage; for 'status' rather than 'survival'.

Scheduled caste woman is a social force, a cultural symbol and has a historical background. She is the prominent feature of a farming culture. She is the true builder and heir of prominent face in the industrial center. She plays a big role in the construction of buildings and lay in roads. Scheduled caste women are estimated to contribute eighty percent of total labor to strengthen the national economy. In India basically women are oppressed and are not treated on par with men. Moreover the Scheduled caste women are oppressed among the oppressed and slaves of slaves.

For the majority of women in Indian, the uppermost problem is of survival. Poverty, dowry murders, widow burning, female infanticide have assumed new forms with modernization and technological advancement. These contexts of fatal aggression seem to normalize the everyday practices of violence by the family, community, state and global economy.

QUALITY OF LIFE OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN

The concept of quality of life includes not only wealth and employment, but also the built environment, physical and mental health, education, recreation and leisure time, and social fitting. The quality of life is the degree to which an individual enjoys the important possibilities of his or her Life. The economic impact of quality of life of scheduled caste women after gained by the reservations of seats on employment are measured through ten selective variables such as communication skill, standard of living, decision making in family, self-hygiene and health, skill up gradation, accessibility of resources, technical guidance, sociability and purchase of assets, self confidence and child care and child education.

Schedule caste women are in no way mediocre to other caste people .Government is providing many chances to advance the social, political, economic and educational conditions of schedule caste women. Lastly they must come on their own consensus to grow themselves by reaching will power and confidence which cannot be given by anybody.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN

Social exclusion is defined as a social process that involves denial of equal rights and opportunities, which others enjoy, resulting in the inability of individuals from excluded groups to participate in the basic political, economic, and social functioning of the society that, in turn, results in high human poverty and deprivation among them.

This concept of social exclusion clearly makes a distinction between group exclusion and exclusion of an individual. In 'group exclusion', all persons belonging to a particular social/cultural group are excluded, based on their group identity and not their individual attributes. Exclusion of an 'individual' is fundamentally different from exclusion of a 'social group'. Individuals (both from excluded and from non-excluded groups) often get excluded from access to economic and social opportunities for various reasons specific to them (and not because of their group, social, or cultural identity). Individuals, for instance, may be excluded from employment owing to lack of requisite education and skills; individuals may face exclusion in access to education because of lack of requisite minimum qualification or merit or high education costs; individuals may get excluded from access to input and consumer markets because of lack of income and purchasing power. It is important to note that, conceptually speaking, exclusion of an individual has necessarily no connection with the social and cultural identity of a person.

WAYS IN WHICH SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN FACE SOCIAL EXCLUSION

- Exclusion may be practiced in the labor market through denial of jobs; in the capital market through denial of access to capital; in the agricultural land market through denial of sale and purchase or leasing of land; in the input market through the denial of sale and purchase of factor inputs; and in the consumer market through the denial of sale and purchase of commodities and consumer goods;
- Exclusion and discrimination can occur in terms of access to social needs supplied by the government or public institutions or by private institutions in education, housing, and health, including common property resources (CPR) like water bodies, grazing land, and other land of common use.
- A group (particularly the 'untouchables') may face exclusion and discrimination from participation in certain categories of jobs (the sweeper being excluded from jobs inside the house). Because of the notion of purity and pollution of occupations and engagement in so-called unclean occupations.
- In the civil, cultural, and religious spheres, the 'untouchables' may face discrimination and exclusion in the use of public services like roads, water bodies, temples, and institutions delivering services such as education and health?
- In the political sphere, the 'untouchables' can face discrimination in access to political rights and participation in the institutions of governance and decision-making processes.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Social inclusion in India became a political agenda in which all the governments have tended to practice a politics of inclusion where all social groups along with women are seen to have an important part to play in building new India. Affirmative or positive action is one of the important policies adopted in India which constitutes a set of positive antidiscrimination measures intended to ensure access for members of groups who otherwise would be excluded or underrepresented in preferred positions in a society. Today all countries around the world practice the policy of affirmative action. Using the evidence from India, seeks to assess the case for this affirmative action and its implication in rectifying the past injustice. The article concludes that affirmative action policies backed by constitutional provisions helped in correcting the past discrimination and also in increasing the representation of women and minorities in areas of employment, education, and decision-making from which they have been historically excluded.

CONCLUSION

The role of caste cannot be ignored while studying well-being and mental health in both urban and rural spaces in India. Indeed, there have been efforts made by the community and governments towards increased social mobility and urbanization, which might have changed some dynamics but has not radically, altered the role of caste in an individual's life residing in India. Hence, the scope of caste and its pervasiveness in Indian society needs to be looked into in more detail through more longitudinal and robust cross-sectional studies. Moreover, in the future, psychological research should explore and dig deeper into how caste and gender class interact and create complex social relations and how both factors play a role in an individual's mental health and well-being.

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