

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OPERATIONAL STATUS, AND SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN: THE CRISIS AND CONTRADICTION

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ABSTRACT - This paper consist the empirical analysis of the data floored by the respondents on the various aspects on implemented plan and polices for the upliftment of the scheduled caste women. Similarly, the changes observed in the socio-economic life of the respondents after getting benefits from the implemented plan and police as well as the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents toward plan and polices and the difficulties associated with the respondents in obtaining the facilities and benefits offered by the plan and politics evaluated,

Key Terms: *Scheduled Caste Women, Empowerment, Dalits.*

INTRODUCTION - The Government of India had in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as "Women's Empowerment Year" to focus on a vision ""where women are equal partners like men,"The most common explanation of "women's empowerment" is the ability to exercise full control over one's actions. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and the role of women in our society. There has been shift in policy approaches from the concept of "welfare" in the seventies to "development" in the eighties and now to "empowerment" in the nineties.

This process has been further accelerated with some sections of women becoming increasingly self-conscious of their discrimination in several areas of family and public lire. They are also in a position to mobilize themselves on issues that can affect their overall position. The latest news items regarding violence committed against women reveal that women's position has worsened. Tulsidas' verse from Ramayana "Dhol, Ganwar, shudra, pashu, nari ye sub nindan ke adhikari" highlights the discrimination and deep-rooted gender bias that still exists in all sectors on the basis of caste, communily, religious affiliaiion, and class. The Constitution of India grants equality to women in various fields of life. Yet a large number of women arc either ill-equipped or not in a position to propel themselves out of their traditionally unsatisfactory socioeconomic conditions. They are poor, uneducated,

and insufficiently trained. They are often absorbed in the struggle to sustain the family physically and emotionally, and as a rule arc discouraged from taking interest in affairs outside home, Oppression and atrocities on women are still rampant. Patriarchy continues to be embedded in the social system in many parts of India, denying a majority of women the choice to decide on how they live. The over-riding importance of community in a patriarchal sense ensures that women rarely the latest news items regarding violence committed against women reveal that women's position has worsened.

The reservation policy bill is, however, a very sad stoTy as it is repeatedly being scuttled in parliament. In the system, however, women have been given representation as a sign of political empowerment. There are many elected women representatives at the village council level. But, usually they work as sarpaneh/. They have dejure status instead of defacto. Their decisions arc often over-ruled by their husband or male members of government machinery. It is crucial to train and give real power to these women leaders so that they can act as a catalyst to change the status of women in their villages. For the inclusion of marginalized section of Indian society, the development programs have been started as the means devised by the state to improve the socioeconomic condition of any section of population or area. There are certain programs that also are run by the state to ensure social justice and improvement in living condition of certain section and its people, If someone's standard of living is rising that means that a person or society is developing. Some specific developmental programs that provide essential services and opportunities for women and then other development needs such as education, health, maternity and child welfare, family planning and nutrition, socioeconomic training and community organization. As claimed by the Indian state, scheduled caste women are given priority and attention in these programs because scheduled caste women who remain excluded from the process of development for the several past years.

Position of in - Moreover, in this research, the term "Dalits" is not used in a comprehensive manner and does not include all the depressed and disadvantaged sections of Indian society; here, the term is used in the context of the persons who suffered the absolute deprivation and stigma of untouchability; remain engaged in unclean/polluted occupation and mainly reside in the rural pockets of India. In rural India, the situation of worst in terms of their life and livelihood- In this regard, Sainath wrote that "half a century after independence, still live in segregated section of [the overwhelming majority of Indian villages. To this day, in several parts of the country, it is risky for them to even walk through the upper caste bastions. They have no access to the burial grounds/burning ghats in many villages in this country." This depicts the real picture of Dalits in rural India, The other aspect of rural India is poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. Hence, the nature of poverty in rural India will further substantiate the pathetic condition of Dalits in India.

Scheduled castes are considered out caste categorized as untouchables. They have been socially deprived, discriminated, and exploited by the upper caste. This is the result of our rigid caste system divided the Indian society into upper and lower castes on the basis of the birth. Methodologically, scheduled caste population born impure, culturally they suffer from social disabilities and occupation are linked with impure occupation, depend for their survival on the upper caste. In India, 50% scheduled caste population live in below poverty line. They have not access even to the basic need such as food, cloth, shelter and constituted major part of our labor force and generally engaged in petty occupation such as agriculture labor, work, hawking, and other low wage grade jobs.

Common features seen in caste and analogous system across the world include the following:

- Physical segregation.
- Social segregation including prohibition and intermarriage between caste groups.
- Assignment of traditional occupation selected with death or filth, coupled with restriction on occupation mobility.
- Pervasive doubt bondage due to poor - remuneration for lower caste occupation.
- High level of illiteracy, poverty, and land less compared with so-called high communities.

- Use of degrading language to describe low-caste communities based on notions of purity and pollution, filth, and cleanliness.
- At present, the basic reasons behind their miserable socioeconomic conditions are illiteracy, lack of required skills, inequality in agrarian structure due to failure of land reform, lack of income-generating assets, and in-effective implementation of the welfare schemes.

Development means removal of poverty, improvement of productivity, and consequently raising the quality of life in a given society; policy described as principal or a set of rules to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes and plan is typically any procedure used to achieve an objective, It is set of intended actions through which one expects to achieve a goal.

Women, who constitute half of the population of our society, have been subjected to the patriarchal order of Indian society for centuries, In fact, most of them are suffering from the same fate even today after the six decades of our independence. They are badly discriminated and contemptuously treated anywhere at home and outside. The conditions of scheduled caste women are still more miserable. Women's welfare is the greatest need of today. They are the backbone of the Indian society. As a fact, women's role in development is so much taken for granted that there is no room for debate on it. The Indian constitution recognised the equality of women vis-a-vis men. It clearly states that there will be no discrimination in the name of caste, creed, community, or color. **OBJECTIVE:** The main objective of this research paper to understand the castes women, who are mainly laborers and are engaged in unorganized sector of economy, are still living below the poverty line and suffering due to their overall backwardness. The study will come out with suggestive developmental policies and plan implementation,

METHODOLOGY:

Selection of - Talukas had been selected on the basis of the following criteria to ascertain the impact of development program of the target groups. There are total 11 numbers of talukas in Satara district. Out of these talukas four talukas will be selected on the basis of following criteria purposefully.

- (1) Two talukas has been selected on the basis of their distance from district head quarter: Koregaon taluka is the nearest, whereas Phaltan taluka is located a far of distance from District headquarter.

(2) Other two talukas has been selected on the basis of the literacy rate. The taluka has higher literacy rate namely Karad and the other taluka namely Wai has lowest literacy will be selected purposively,

Selection of - From these four talukas, 20 villages will be randomly selected and from one taluka minimum 5 villages will be selected purposefully.

Selection of respondents - The respondents to this study will be village-level scheduled caste women who are the beneficiaries of developmental policies and program, A beneficiary list of various programs will be collected from the taluka office and, on the basis of random sampling, the respondents will be selected. The total respondents (200) will be 10 from each village will be interviewed.

In this research paper, the empirical analysis of the data floored by the respondents ori the various aspects on implemented plan and polices for the upliftment of the scheduled caste women. Similarly, the changes observed in the socioeconomic life oT the respondents after getting benefits from the implemented plan and polices as well as the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents toward these plan and polices and the difficulties associated with the respondents in obtaining the facilities and benefits offered by the plan and policies were evaluated.

Likewise, the health and educational situation of the respondents' were assessed, In the interpretation of the health status of the respondents, study primarily focused on the maternity health, its available services, and the difficulties associated with them to receive the health services were examined. Similarly, in the educational aspects, The importance of education in their observation, enrollment of their children, and the problems associated to achieve quality education has been analyzed on the ground of the data derived during the field survey.

Operational Status of Development Programs

Some researcher opined that the Scheduled are suffering not only because of imposed social and cultural disabilities but perhaps much more because of the imbalances created by the emergence of structural differentiation within them which is a consequence of the policies and plans undertaken ostensibly for their uplift and welfare. The differential treatment given to the politically weaker and sometimes to the non preponderant groups within the castes is a major reason for these continuing inequalities. In his study, he analyzed the various factors such as enrollment, hostels,

and scholarships related to the education. He found that scheduled castes' alarmingly backward condition is connected to the deprivation they suffer in relation to the higher status groups and to the differential treatment they receive from the power elites among themselves. Broadly, the distributive disparities affecting the are at three levels, namely, between the scheduled castes and the general population, between the various scheduled castes, and among castes in a particular district or area.

CONCLUSIONS - Regarding the source of information of development policies, respondents came with diverse views as meeting or gram sabha, panchayat, tehsil, interaction, radio, television, and so on are their sources. Here, 79.0% respondents opined that they are getting benefits of government policies though middlemen. Of them, 52.0% stated that they depend upon their family member to receive the henefits and 21.(1% depend upon pardhan of panchayat. It is very disgusting to note that 73.0% of them have to pay some amount for these middlemen, even pardhan of panchayat are involving in such activities. OTthc respondents, 78% felt that they arc getting government benefit schemes later that women's belongs to general categories and 83.0% opined that they felt discrimination during the, delivery of services. Caste-based discrimination (72,0%), based discrimination (11,0%), discrimination on the ground of closeness to pradhan (9.0%), and discrimination of the ground of smartness (8.0%) arc the mode of discrimination that are felt by the respondents. They further suggested that awareness (18.0%), eradication of casteism (56,0%), information (12,0%) and establishment of equality in society (14.0%) are the measures for the reduction of discrimination. Likewise, 88.0% felt that positive changes in the current social status are due to present running government plans and policies,

Regarding the health condition of the respondents, 17.0% said that there health condition is bad and 9.0% said it is very bad. Likewise, 44.0% of them preferred untrained doctors for the medication and only 35.0% of them prefer cither government or private hospitals for the treatment. Similarly, majority (44.0%) respondents prefer untrained doctors during their delivery where only 2ft,0% go for government or private hospitals. Another interesting fact to note is that, still 50.0% respondents take the help of or age village women during their delivery, whereas other 50,0% prefer doctors or ASHA/ANM. It may be due to the lack of availability of modem health care in the nearest distance. In total, 44.0% shared that the nearest hospitals or health ceutei~s are located by 4- to 6-km distance from their

residence and majority (61.0%) opined that transportation facility is the main barrier to get these facilities. They further opined that medical facilities located at remote distance (29.0%) and unpunctuality of the doctors (43.0%) are the major problems faced during the getting health facilities. Of respondents, 8.0% agreed that education is the foremost to enhance their survival level and 94.0% shared that educated persons have respected life in the society. Of the respondents, 43.0% opined that they are sending their children to government school for the education and, at the same time, 78.0% strongly agreed that private school provides better and quality education than the government school where their children go for education, Poor economic condition has compelled them to send their child to government schools.

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