INTRODUCTION

As an ideology, socialism moves on a very wide spectrum from the early utopian to the later scientific socialism consisted of some discernible characteristic surrounding more on equality and egalitarian society. The struggle for socialism, emanating from capitalist critique revolves round certain key ideas, which express not simply differs values, but an entirely different way of running a society.

This idea provided an ideological motivation to a significant section of educated Indian youth in 1930’s and since then on shifting its focus from the nationalist urge to that to the mobilization of marginal social groups in the present scenario.

All ideologies try to transplant themselves into a cultural milieu by creating a suitable climate and explaining their stand point in a way that imparts relevance to the traditions and problems around. Any alien ideology or movement has to make use of local idioms and symbols if it is to sustain, as it cannot be alienated from the surroundings. This all applies to socialism as well. India’s traditional – philosophical system with its striking flexibility accommodated socialism due to its integrated aspect of social reconstruction while simultaneous upholding the ideal of equality – economic, social and political.

In India, the choice of socialism as both strategy of mobilization and a set of goals to be achieved is inexorably dictated by many inherited features of Indian society as well as by the compulsions of the development processes.

Ranging from being a strategic ideological move to make nationalist movement more inclusive, upto colliding with the drastically changing and emerging forces like, “Mandal” and democratic upsurge, Socialist and its practical dimensions have effectively influenced the Indian democracy.

This study is an effort to situate this philosophical ideological wave of socialism in India along with its multidimensionality. It is to comprehensively trace down the underpinnings of socialism as a movement being grasped by a major section of leadership ranging from Pre-independence to Post Independent India. The socialist movement in India has a chequered history with multiple twists – turns; almost ignored part of this journey was the partial failure at the part of all socialist (political) outfits to realize the essential adaptative pluralism of this ideology for our own socio-eco-politics. In the initial phase, the socialist movement was highly doctrinaire in nature and ignored the problems peculiar to India’s economy – polity and hierarchical social structure (class – caste) ridden reflected in the dilemmas associated with Congress Socialist Party, its
first political instrument undoubtedly. This study aims at bringing to the fore the evolution of socialist movement, its growth, its deideologization, its alternatives, its faulty lines, its level of adaptability and its multidimensional interaction with the current generation of leaders as well as the political relevance.

In a Democracy, political party plays an intermediate link between the interests – needs and aspiration of the mass to the policy formulation mechanism. As a group, have a distinct set of leadership, ideology, programme, vision, political strategy on the basis of which it operates, socialism as an ideology manifested in different parties, nomenclature, witnessed numerous merger and splits on its name and became an inalienable populism symbol in Indian politics. This study aims at exploring its distinctive operational narratives too especially in the context of its prime geographical location – Uttar Pradesh where most of its transmutation has taken place and socialism has been converted into a oppositional movement first and the idiom of political change and empowerment later by political parties.

More concretely, the first chapter deals with the philosophical – ideological connotations of the socialism. It involves the whole spectrum from western orientation and its Indianized version. This chapter has also tried to explore the political strategization of socialism in India.

The second chapter deals with unravelling of socialism as the political mobilization strategy and its transformation from an ideology to a movement. Here a periodical structure is being adopted where the distinct trends come to be easily discerned. It ranges from the establishment of congress socialist party in 1934 up to the shapes it experience in the hand of Third front forces.

The third chapter aims at highlighting the marked changes witnessed by socialist movement in the form of democratized element where Lohia made an invaluable contribution in evolving a positive, yet involving theory of immediacy, issue of preferential opportunities, language primacy, etc. Thus a clear bifurcation of the socialist movement is marked.

Fourth chapter essentially works on the origin and growth of Samajwadi party in the backdrop of tracing socialist movement at the most favourable battle – area of Indian politics – Uttar Pradesh, where there appears a drastic change in the form, nature, and appeal regarding socialistic tendencies. Here the focus would be to unearth the forces which totally change the language of political idioms. Mandalization, casteist social base, federalization of Indian polity coalitional pragmatism are the issues which invaded the ‘sacrocant’ image of socialist ideology. Here a brief effort is also made to focus on the emerging political players and trends in state politics.
Fifth chapter speaks about the rise and role of Mulayam Singh Yadav in socialist movement focusing on his basic orientations of mass mobilization which are largely shaped by socialist tendencies. This study also tries to throw light on the process of “Redefining Socialism” where Mulayam integrated the issue of secularism, democratic rights of minorities, social justice to it. It involves a scrutiny of the political – electoral performance of Mulayam Singh Yadav also; trying to highlight the political line followed by socialism in the hands of Mulayam’s strategy.

Why and how socialism has moved from being a dogmatic doctrine to a working concept? What are the positive aspects of unending saga of merger – splits – unification and ideological personal clashes? How an alternative formulation of socialism creeps in it? Has the divisive social structure of India helped in retaining the socialistic tendencies? How Mulayam Singh Yadav used socialism as a strategy of mass mobilization or for political – electoral gains? Whether he has really been able to retain the socialistic influence? All these are the questions which have been tried to be answered in this study.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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