
SYNOPSIS SUBMITTED IN THE PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY TO THE NEHRU INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES TILAK MAHARASHTRA VIDYAPEETH.

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INTRODUCTION

India is a country where large numbers of people are found to be illiterate, ignorant and backward. India is a classical land of caste system in which caste is the main form of social stratification. The main disadvantage here is that the people’s status is ascribed to them by birth in certain castes and tribal groups.

Thus the problem of majority of Indians can be understood, as Prof. B. Kuppuswamy has pointed out, “.. the backward classes in India form an aggregate of closed status groups because they belong to these groups and not because of individual economic characteristics.”\(^a\)

The Britishers to had made use of the concept of backward classes as early as in its Fort Saint George Gazette dated 5th November 1885. M.N Srinivas has also stated the term backward classes in Indian context, representing lower castes including scheduled castes.

Justice K Subbarao former chief justice of India defined backward classes,” as an ascertainable and identifiable group of persons based on caste, religion, race, language, occupation, and such others, with definite characteristics of backwardness in various aspects of human-social, cultural, economic, political and such others.\(^b\)

To understand the Reservation policy and its implication on the backward classes especially, the scheduled castes i.e. among the Mahar and Mang castes thus becomes very vital.

\(^a\) B.Kuppuswamy “Social change in India”(1975) p.62

\(^b\) Justice K. Subbarao” Defender of faiths”(1967) p.21
These underprivileged sections of Indian society whether they have been actually benefited from the reservation policy or not. Is there any other viable alternative option for the policy makers, administrators to try and create an egalitarian society?

The researchers' educational background is related to Sociology, History and Law hence it is a sincere effort on his part to analyse and evaluate the generalizations of reservation policy and its relevance in 21st century.

It is relevant here to study the historical concept of sub-altern approach. It involves the viewing of the historical process from the non-elitist point of view. It studies the narrative aspect of the people belonging to the periphery of the society which in the Indian context involves the vulnerable sections of society including scheduled castes. Reconstruction of it is a difficult task especially in the ancient and medieval period but in modern Indian aspect a lot of authentic data is available and is generated in a comprehensive manner. So the problem undertaken for research will be better understood from this sub-altern approach.

Although our nation is recognized as a secular nation, the actual picture of the Indian Society is different. A well known sociologist G.S. Ghurye in his ‘Caste Class and Occupation’ has noted that, “A foreign visitor to India is struck by the phenomenon known as the caste system. He may not understand the full working of the system, but he is aware of the fact that ‘Hindu Society’ is divided into groups, known as castes with varying degree of respectability and circles of social intercourse. In the Indian caste system, some castes are socio-economically stronger and majority are weaker. It indicates the massive inequality in the social structure of India.
The word \textit{caste} has derived from the ‘Portuguese’ word ‘Casta’ meaning breed, race or kind. In Indian terms it is translated as caste or varna, jati, jat, biradri and samaj. All of these terms refer to ranked groups of various sizes and breadth. Varna or colour actually refers to large divisions that include various castes and subcastes. Many castes are traditionally associated with their occupations such as high-ranking Brahmins, middle ranking farmers and artisans i.e. Potters, barbers, carpenters and very low ranking castes are untouchables like leather worker, butchers, launderers and latrine cleaners. There is correlation between ritual rank on the caste hierarchy and economic prosperity. Members of higher-ranking castes tend, on the whole, to be more prosperous than members of lower-ranking castes. Many lower ranking castes live in the condition of severe poverty.

According to the Rig-Veda sacred texts that date back to oral traditions of more than 3000 years ago, progenitors of the four ranked varna groups sprang from various parts of the body of the primordial man which created Brahma from clay. Brahmans or priests were created from the mouth. Kshatriyas (warriors) and rulers were derived from the arms. Vaiyshas-landlords and merchants sprang from the thighs and were entrusted with the care of commerce and agriculture. Shudras, artisans and servants created from the feet. The later the fifth category was conceptualised as untouchables with the menial and polluting work related to bodily decay and dirt.

Since 1935 ‘Untouchables’ recognized as Scheduled Castes, referring to their listing on government rosters or schedules. They were often called by M. K. Gandhi as ‘Harijans’ or ‘Children of God’. Although the term untouchable appears in literature related to these low ranking castes; many political leaders, members of these groups prefer to refer themselves as Dalit a Hindi word meaning oppressed or downtrodden.
There are the different castes included in scheduled castes category with the purpose of clubbing and provision of facilities to them. In Maharashtra 59 castes are included in such category. The major dominated SC castes are Mahar(Baudh), Chambhar, Dhor, Mang, Khatik and Holar etc.

Prof. B.C Vaidya in his article in Marathi has mentioned about the concentration of Mahar (Baudh), Chambhar and Mang castes in Maharashtra. According to him the caste Mang has been concentrated in Pune, Satara, Sangli, Osmanabad, Latur, Nanded, Parbhani, Jalna, Aurangabad, Buldhana, Yawatmal, Akola, Amrawati and Vardha Districts. On the basis of this the present study was proposed to find out the socio-economic conditions of the Mang and Mahar people in the villages selected in the Pune districts.

STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEMS

The Mang and Mahar castes are facing different socio-economic problems. There are certain changes that have taken place in the productive sectors of the economy through which the social structure has also changed due to reservations yet there are large sections of population among these castes which are unaware of their rights i.e. right to livelihood, education, employment etc. these problems have encouraged the researcher to find the causes behind them and to suggest appropriate measures. Following are the problems:

1) To understand the issue of reservation policy and to analyse whether it is still relevant to improve socio-economic position of these castes.

2) To study in detail the historio-legal and social development of the reservation policy.
3) To try and generalize the mentality of the people belonging to the open category and the above mentioned castes towards the reservation policy.

4) To evaluate the criteria selected for reservation, whether they are justifiable.

5) To try and make this study an applied research so that observing causal explanations and drawing interrelationships between the caste system and the reservation policy and to enable to develop a better alternative which will best suit present day situation.

**OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:**

The present study has the following objectives:

1) To check on the universality of law of reservation policy and specificity of its applications.

2) To study the inclusive activity availed by the agency of the Central and State Governments including the response of the people belonging to these castes.

3) To draw relationship between the visibility and the policies of the Central machinery and the critical evaluation of the mass leaders of these castes.

4) To analyse the political socialization and the power game within the inter and intra group relations i.e. vote bank politics.

5) To evaluate the criterias of reservation policy, whether they are still justifiable.

6) To understand practicality of reservation policy and mentality of the masses, their leaders and the policy administrators.

7) To observe the development of these castes and the nature of development.
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Territorial parochial approach -

The Mahar and Mang castes are spread over Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa, and Madhya Pradesh with different culture and names. It was beyond the capacity of the researcher to approach to all the places from different states. With this limitation the researcher has decided to collect the data from selected villages of Pune district situated in Western Maharashtra only. More stress is emphasised on the statistical and secondary data rather than primary data. All the interviews were conducted on the basis of restructured, controlled schedules. Because of illiteracy of the respondents or low educational level, information given by the respondents has been supposed the basis of his study. The study does not cover entire life style of these people.

Sub-castes not included in detail-

There are different sub-caste groups among the Mahar and Mang castes with different names according to their traditional work. All types castes groups were not found but only rope, broom maker and music player groups were found in major form. Therefore, all the respondents were from the sample families were previously related to such occupations.

CHAPTER SCHEME:

1. The theme of the present study has been drafted through the following chapters:
2. The first chapter deals with the introductory remarks about profile of the study area, objectives, hypotheses, limitations and methodology used for selection of samples.
3. The second chapter studies these castes through the historical evidences and incidences. The second part of this chapter elaborates the review of literature relating to concepts of the topic.

4. The third chapter consist of Socio-economic status of Mahar and Mang castes involving social mobility, social stratification.

5. The fourth chapter studies reservation policy of the government its origin, growth and recent trends.

6. The fifth chapter deals with judicial creativity towards rationationalisation of reservation.

7. The final chapter consists of the suggestions and conclusions made by the researcher

**HYPOTHESES :**

1) The state plays the role of protector, provider, and entrepreneur.

2) Changing needs of the people and the concept of distributive justice-is a relative concept.

3) Reservation policies still a debatable issue.

4) Reservation should not be made on caste basis alone.

5) Social benefits of reservation policy should spread to the identified target groups.

6) Merit will not become causality and mortgage the future of India.

7) Removal of corruption, irregularities in the implementation of the policy has further polarized the sectional divide.
8) This policy has to be made more rational and scientific and cannot be scraped at this stage.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Providing justice to all: Reservation policy is likely to satisfy and uplift all those sections of the society which are discontented and had suffered injustice and insults for decades. If fundamental rights are to be guaranteed to all, then, they are to be guaranteed to the weaker section also. Reservation is one of the means of guaranteeing such equality. Competition becomes just only when participants are equal. But considering the comparison between Mahars and Mangs. It is pertinent to note that for equal justice, opportunities should also be equal but for that the groundwork required is education, skill development which is far more among the Mahars than any other scheduled caste. Why this difference among them is question to be answered.

2. Reservations are not made on caste basis alone: It is wrong to say that reservations are made only on caste basis and hence such a policy is likely to perpetuate casteism. For example, Rajputs in Bihar are not included in the lists of backward classes where as Rajputs in Gujarat are included: similarly, the Yadav of Bihar and U.P. are included but not the Yadavs of Haryana; Patels of Gujarat are included but not of Bihar. Reservations are made on the basis of educational and economic backwardness also.

Further, to remove inequalities of castes, action on caste lines are necessary. Upper castes monopolized the privileges and high income occupations for centuries. To remedy this situation jobs must be preferentially allotted to the
backwards and admission for them in education institutions must be provided, until parity is restored. This case is not only with the upper and lower castes. Among these castes itself the polarization is taking place. Mahars and Mang sub-castes have shown vast variations and again this question is to be answered.

3 Economic factor as a criterion will help only the poor among the Forwards: A poor member of a forward community will definitely fare better than the poor among the SC’s, ST’s and OBC’s. This is quiet natural because the forwards are mostly literate and are in touch with the latest developments. Further, they are in regular social contract with the other forwards who have already progressed. Possessing upper caste culture helps them to be at ease with the ways of those who judge merit. Whether the well off among these castes of Mahars and Mangs allow further access to their own sub-castes is to be observed.

4 Merit will become causality: the argument that reservation policy damages the principle of merit is untenable. If merit were to be the sole factor for providing opportunities to the people, then the country should have progressed a lot with the leadership of the ‘so called merited’ people. Administration by the ‘meritorious’ for the last 45 years has been unable to implement land reforms and programmes to remove untouchability and backwardness among the masses of India. But again it is difficult to change human mentality. It is the will of the politicians, bureaucrats, civil society to accommodate merit among the protective discrimination policy.

5 Influence of caste is present in the current product: Reservation is sought not to compensate for the past wrongs, but for removing the injustice in the present
dispensation, where the forward castes continue to grab all the privileges. The
handicaps experienced by SC’s, ST’s and OBC’s are nothing but accumulated
effects of exploitation at the hands of upper castes people who reserve the
privileges for themselves. But this case again is seen among the Mahars and the
Mangs and their sub-castes.

6 Lower castes do not have benefits of connections which the upper castes have:
Proper socio-economic and political connections are an important asset among the
forward castes. Because of such connections even the poorest among the upper
castes are able to get benefits without much difficulty. Whereas the lower castes
people are always at a disadvantage in establishing such useful socio-economic
connections. Same is the case between the castes and sub-castes among the
Mahars and Mangs.

7 Reservation is to be made meaningful through other efforts: It is unscientific to
believe that reservation alone can bring about widespread changes among all the
members of the backward classes. On the contrary, various other measures such
as widespread education, increase in infrastructural facilities in the area where the
SC’s, ST’s and OBC’s live, are very much necessary. Reservation facility is to be
supplemented through other efforts. Excellent examples are Bharat Nirman
scheme and concessions like freeships, scholarships, at the primary, secondary,
higher secondary, graduation, post graduation levels. Even stipends are given to
them for attending competitive exam coaching classes conducted by various
Universities under the U.G.C curricula. Here again a question arises that why is it
that it is only the Mahars castes that are having access more than others in both
the central, state government, quasi, semi-government posts, and also in matters of education, employment and other areas.

8 Social benefits of reservation do spread very rapidly: Various studies and observations have revealed that even though only a few families are going to be benefited directly out of reservation, the social benefits of the reservation are going to spread very rapidly. It means reservation facility can create a new awareness, self confidence, courageousness, adventurous spirit and self respect among the backward castes/ classes. But this is happening only at the horizontal level among these castes and not at the vertical level.

( NOTE: All the above conclusions are based upon the detailed study done by the researcher in the chapter 3 dealing with the socio-economic progress among the Mahar and Mang castes.)

POSSIBLE MEASURES

1 Poverty and economic criteria should be the basis of reservation: Reservation is required for the people who are generally poor. Irrespective of castes, class, region, religion, or sex to which they belong, must be assured of help through reservation. If reservation is given in this way it can be regarded as just and appropriate. But the present reservation policy benefits a small elite fringe among the lower castes.

2 Reservation contributes to the perpetuation of castes:
Modern independent India visualizes a casteless society. Attempts to provide reservation on the basis of caste will only enhance the importance of castes and the caste mindedness and ‘caste patriotism’. Reservation policy will only lead to
the reversal of historical cycle by enlivening the castes. In other words, reservation will create a backward moving society.

3 Removal of corruption should be our first priority, but not reservation: From the point of view of national development what is more important is an honest administration, and not an administration by the inefficient and meritless people belonging to all castes including open castes. Reservation will only add to the corruption because people try their level best through all possible means to reap the benefits of reservation.

4 There are other better solutions to the progress of backward castes: It is wrong to think that reservation alone is the master fixer of solutions to the problems of backward castes. Social and economical backwardness is mostly due to the habits and attitudes of the people. These could be changed through the spread of education including what can be called a ‘cultural revolution’.

5 Reservation is only a political game and nothing else: The haste with which the reservation policy came to be introduced during V.P. Singh’s administration itself makes it evident that it is more a political gimmick than a considered scheme for the amelioration of the problems of the backward classes. Political parties and their leaders wanted to create a permanent ‘vote bank ‘through the implementation of reservation policy. This has lead to caste identity becoming stronger. Political socialization itself is being indoctrinated on the caste basis.

6 Fear experienced by the SC’s and ST’s:
Reservation policy has vertically divided the Hindu population into ‘forward communities’ and ‘backward communities.’ It has fanned the fire of animosity,
ill-will, jealousy, contempt and hatred between these two communities. Instances of clashes and conflict between the two have been on the increase ever since the policy of reservation came into force. Hence, it has created terror and horror in the minds of the economically weaker SC’s, ST’s and OBC’s. Further the clashes between the backward castes on the one hand, and SC’s on the other, have also increased. Continuous attacks on some sections of SC’s by the backward caste communities in Bihar, can be sited here as examples.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 1

(Footnote)

a  B.Kuppuswamy “Social change in India”(1975) p.62
b  Justice K. Subbarao” Defender of faiths”(1967) p.21


32. Dr. P. Jagadeesan, *Marriage and Social Legislations in Tamilnadu.* (Madras 1990) p.31 Srinivasa Pillay and like-minded colleagues founded the Hindu Progressive Improvement Society in November 1852. The major aims of the Society were the promotion of widow remarriage, the encouragement of female education and the uplifting of the depressed classes”

33. Quoted in Marc Galanter. *Competing Equalities* (Oxford 1984) p.21


38. Sir Harcourt Butler, *India Insistent* (1931) p. 73 the policy announcement was made by the then Secretary of State for India Edwin Montagu.


42. S.S. Jaswal, Reservation policy and the Law. (New Delhi 2000), op.cit pp. 97-98

43. Dr. P. Jagadeesan, Marriage and Social Legislations in Tamilnadu. (Madras 1990), op.cit pp. 97-98.


45. J. R. Kamble, Rise and Awakening of Depressed Class in India (New Delhi 1979) p. 86.

46. Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, Hoped that by releasing Gandhi, he would be able to reach an agreement with him. In March 5, 1931 Gandhi-Irwin Pact was announced and ‘civil disobedience’ was discontinued. Again as per the agreement Gandhi took part in the Second Round Table Conference held from September to December 1931. But the conference failed to solve the problem of ‘communal representation’ in the legislative bodies.


49. A modern Indian historian alleges that the Communal Award of Prime Minister Mac Donald was Donald was aimed at ‘divide and rule’ Bipin Chandra, India’s Struggle for Independence. (New Delhi 1999) p.290

51. Six days after the pact between Ambedkar and Gandhi, the latter started Harijan Sevak Samaj. (Servants of the Untouchables’ Society) and its weekly journal Harijan.

52. The Government of India Act 1935. It is to be noted that Gandhi gave the name Harijan (people of God) to the depressed classes. But this name they resented for they consider the term patronizing and condescending. In 1990 the Government of India prohibited the use of this word to denote the depressed classes. In fact the term Harijan acquired a pejorative meaning among the upper caste people and thus caused a psychological untouchability.

53. *Gazette of India Part I* July 7, 1934

54. In fact it was the socio-political undercurrents, which were responsible for this progressive step. The native kings of Travancore always encouraged education and this led to political awareness of the backward classes. They joined with the religious minorities of the state formed Joint Political Congress. Some powerful backward Classes even threatened that they would embrace some other religion like Christianity or Buddhism. The then Dewan of the Travancore in a tactical move to throw open all Hindu Temples under the Government management to Hindus of all castes. See Robin Jeffrey, *The Decline of Nayar Dominance* (Landon 1976) pp. 259-260.


57. The sixth item in the Objective Resolution moved by Nehru in the Constituent Assembly read: “Wherein adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes…”


60. Marc Galanter went to the extent of saying, “The Constitution sets forth a general programme for the reconstruction of Indian society. In Spite of its length, it is surprisingly undetailed in its treatment of the institution of caste and existing group structure in Indian society. “Competing Equalities”. (1984) p. In the Constituent Assembly, S. Nagappa expressed doubts about the implementation of these provision.


63. Ibid at p.150. “The very inclusion of Dr. Ambedkar in the present Dominion Cabinet is a change of heart of the caste Hindus that the Harijans are not anymore to be neglected.

64. Shri. V. I. Muniswamy Pillai (*Madras general*).

inappropriate to call Dr. Ambedkar ‘the father of the Constitution’ If any people are entitled to be called so, they are Nehru and Patel. But I would like to call them the presiding Deities, the sources of ideas of the Constitution-the real makers of the Constitution. I would like to attribute fatherhood to them as well as the members of the Drafting Committee in common. But would not like to single out Dr. Ambedkar for this honour. We may call him. More appropriately, the ‘mother’ of the Constitution-and I am not using it in any deprecating or jocular sense. Dr. Ambedkar had to bear, in fact, other’ ideas and nurture them and bring them out as his own, and this he did remarkably well.


67. The period has been extended from time to time by means of Constitutional Amendments. The Constitution (Seventy-ninth Amendment) Act 1999 section 2, that provided for the special representation to cease after sixty years (from the commencement of the Constitution). It means that the reservation of seats for the SCs and STs would continue up to 2010.

68. This Clause 4 was added by the Constitution (First Amendment) Act 1951.

69. For further discussion see Chapter IV

70. Anirudh Prasad, Reservation, Policy and Practice in India (New Delhi 1991), op.cit. p. 112.

72. The Post independent socio-political scene would vouch for it. See the Conclusion (chapter IV).

73. Constitutional provisions regarding the powers of the CMs.

74. CAD Vol. II pp. 1-36 Dr. Ambedkar said “Let me give an illustration. Supposing for instance reservations were made for a community or a collection of communities, the total of which came to something like 70 per cent of the total posts under the state and only 30 per cent are retained as the unreserved. Could anybody say that the reservation of 30 per cents as open to general competition would be satisfactory from the point of view of giving effect to they first principle namely that there shall be equality of opportunity. It cannot be in my judgment.”