

"Caste Based Discrimination in Maharashtra: With Special Reference to Pune City"

Gadade Kashinath Nandkumar, Research Student, Department of Sociology,
Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

Abstract:-

This research paper examines the 'Caste Based Discrimination in Maharashtra: With Special Reference to Pune City. This is an empirical study it deals with attitude of Non-SCs towards SCs and investigates what are the reasons behind discrimination. For the present research researcher used snow ball sampling method for selection of 50 samples from SCs viz. Buddhist, Mahar, Matang and Chamar from pune city those are lived in mixed society.

Keywords: - Caste, Discrimination.

Introduction

The Caste System is one of the most significant features of the Indian Society. It is a powerful tool of social discrimination. In India, caste discrimination is traditionally rooted in the Hindu Caste System. Caste Discrimination is not related to only uneducated and rural people but also with educated and urban people. This discrimination in the society is based on Caste; therefore the Sociologist G. S. Ghurye says that, 'without a proper understanding of caste, our study in Sociology will not be complete.

Caste System is a social evil that is present in the Indian Society the ancient times. Numbers of social evils have been prevalent in the Indian Society since centuries and caste system is one of them. As Mumtaz Ali Khan said, "Though the caste system as such has undergone significant changes for the last several decades, the role of the caste system is still prominent. In spite of Modernization, Urbanization and Westernization caste system is still a governing principle of the Hindu Social Order"¹. Therefore, we observe that the caste discrimination involves massive violation of social, religious, cultural, political, and educational rights.

History of Caste System -

Generally caste system is associated with Hindu religion. As per Rig Veda (early Hindu text) there were four categories known as Varna system. It consist Brahmin, Kshariya, Vaishya and Shudra. Also there was a fifth category that was even inferior to Shudras and that was of Chandals, Nishadas, Panchamas or Untouchables who are out of Varnas. These were the persons who used to perform tasks of removing faeces or dead animals. They were not allowed to enter into temples, drink from same water source etc. Due to this Varna system Indian society was divided into various castes and sub-castes. In this system the individual's caste was determined by birth and different occupations of different castes were fixed. So untouchability is the most common form of discrimination that is based on caste system in India.

Review of Literature -

Review of earlier research studies is essential to formulate an appropriate perspective for any further study. It is of vital significance in any study in order to collect up-to-date information about what has been thought and done in the

¹ Mumtaz Ali Khan, 1994, Identity Formation and Self Identity Among Harijan Elite, Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, pp. 210-211

particular area. For the review researcher used various reputed journals, published books, thesis etc.

Patwardhan² investigated 360 SC families of some castes viz *Mahars, Mangs, Chambhars, Dhor and Holars* of Poona city. According to her the factors like the change of occupation, education, political participation, *Sanskritilization*, caste association, the criterion of residence and life style etc. are connected with individual and group mobility also.

Sharma³ studied the pattern of interaction between the upper caste and the untouchables or scheduled castes. He has studied a multi-caste village named 'Machhara' 20 km from Meerut on the Meerut-Lucknow Road in Western U.P. He concluded that untouchability is observed by Brahmins in social aspect of life, where it is not so in political aspects. The Brahmins and Scheduled Castes are diametrically opposed to each other with respect of reasons for untouchability.

Mishra P. K.⁴ studied about 'Untouchability in South India'. In many villages, the untouchable members are not allowed to adopt modern symbols of higher status such as houses, clothes etc. The members who have attempted to adopt such symbols were beaten or killed all over the south. They could not have been allowed to sit with savarna as in socio-cultural functions.

Shah A.M.⁵ discussed in his article about the relation between purity/impurity and untouchability and changes taken place in modern times. He mentioned that the ideas of purity/impurity and untouchability played a crucial role in separating one caste from another, and in arranging them in a hierarchy. According to him due to the process of industrialisation, urbanisation, westernisation, modernisation, secularisation, rationalism, humanitarianism radical changes have been taking place in the entire culture of purity/impurity.

Karade⁶ focused on occupational mobility among Schedule Castes. In the study of Kolhapur city he focuses on the transition of Scheduled Caste and social movement in India. He focuses on trends of inter-generational occupational mobility of the Scheduled Caste among three generations. According to him the second generation of Scheduled Caste is highly mobile as compared to their father's generation. He found that, the awareness of occupational mobility is very high in the converted Buddhists compared with other 56 Scheduled Castes in Maharashtra.

² Patwardhan Sunanda, 1973, Change among India's Harijans: Maharashtra – A case study, Orient Longman, New Delhi.

³ Sharma S. S., (July 1986), "Untouchability, A Myth Or A Reality - A Study of Interaction Between Scheduled Castes And Brahmins In A Western U.P. Village", An Article Published In Sociological Bulletin, Vol. 35, (1), Published By Indian Sociological Society, New Delhi, p.p. 68-79.

⁴ Mishra P.K., (Jan-Mar 1999), "Untouchability in South India", an article published in The Eastern Anthropologists, Vol. 52 (1), p.p.

⁵ Shah A.M., (Sept-Dec.2007), 'Purity, Impurity, Untouchability: Then and Now', an article published in Sociological Bulletin, Vol. NO. 56 No. 3, P.p. 355-368, Published by Indian Sociological Society.

⁶ Karade Jagan, 2009, Occupational Mobility among Scheduled Castes, Cambridge Scholars Publication, U.K. Pp.143.

Gaikwad⁷ done an empirical study of *Aurangabad* City. He has taken 200 respondents who are employees and students of SC communities viz. *Mahar, Mang, Chambhar* and *Dhor*. This study is regarded with the perception of SC beneficiaries on state and social changes. In this study, he reported that, the SCs show a positive attitude towards educational facilities and the protective discrimination policy in the bringing changes.

Objectives of the study

1. To Study the attitude of Non-SC's towards Scheduled Caste People.
2. To Find out reasons of discrimination with Scheduled Caste People.

Research Methodology

1. Sampling Method and Sample Size

For this research researcher has used Non-Probability sampling method, within this method researcher has used Snow Ball sampling method for selection of 50 Samples. These sample selected from those Scheduled Castes is numerical high in the Pune city e.g. *Buddhist, Mang, Mahar* and *Chambhar*. The present research is an empirical study of SC's peoples who are living in the mixed society in Pune city.

2. Source of Data

i) Primary Data

For the collection of primary data researcher used interview scheduled and observation method.

ii) Secondary Data

Researcher has used published research books, articles in reputed journals, news papers, internet etc. for the collection of secondary data.

3. Tools and Techniques

The Interview Scheduled and Observation Method used for data collection along with the statistical package for social science (SPSS) and Excel used for making a plain and cross tabulation as well as pie charts.

Results and Discussion

Table No. 1
Distribution of Respondents on the basis of Gender and Scheduled Caste
Category wise cross tabulation

Gender	Scheduled Caste Category				Total
	Buddhist	Mahar	Matang	Chamar	
Male	20	6	5	12	43
	40.0%	12.0%	10.0%	24.0%	86.0%
Female	5	1	0	1	7
	10.0%	2.0%	.0%	2.0%	14.0%
Total	25	7	5	13	50
	50.0%	14.0%	10.0%	26.0%	100.0%

⁷ Gaikwad Shankar, 1999, Protective discrimination Policy and social change: An analytical study of state action on Scheduled Castes in Aurangabad city, Rawat Publications, New Delhi.

Table 1 shows that out of 50 respondents, 43 (86.0%) respondents are males and only 7 (14.0%) respondents are females. In this table, majority respondents 25 (50.0%) are from Buddhist Community and out of 7, 5 (10%) women are from Buddhist Community. The distribution of another community, namely Mahar 7 (14%), Matang 5 (10%) and Chamar 13 (26%). This table shows that total number of female respondents is less than male respondents.

Table No. 2

Distribution of respondents on the basis of attitude of Non-SCs towards SCs

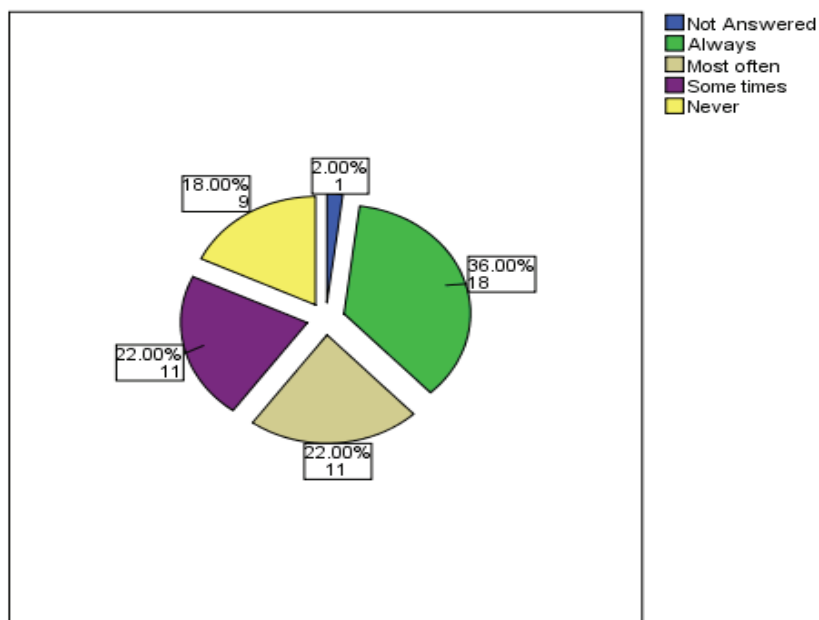


Table No. 2 Shows that out of 50 respondents majority respondents 18 (36.0%) experienced caste discrimination attitude of Non-SCs and 9 (18.0%) respondents did not have experience this problem. This table shows that majority 40 (80.0%) respondents experienced caste discrimination attitude by Non-SCs. It means attitude of caste discrimination is not only faced by rural peoples but urban people also. It is existed from ancient society to till today modern society in various forms.

Distribution of respondents on the basis of reasons of discrimination

Reasons of Discrimination	Frequency	Percent
No	9	18.0
Economic consideration	1	2.0
Lack of Education	2	4.0
Ethnocentrism	31	62.0
Traditionally Hindu Mentality	4	8.0
Not Answered	3	6.0
Total	50	100.0

Table No. 3 shows that out of 50 respondents, 9 (18.0%) have said that 'No, we have not been discriminated by Non-SCs and only 3 (6.0%) respondents did not answer. Remaining 38 (76.0%) respondents have discriminated by Non-SCs. In this table we can observe that out of 50 respondents, majority 31 (62.0%) respondents have experienced discrimination because of ethnocentric attitude of Non-SCs and 4 (8.0%) respondents have mentioned that stereotype mentality of Non-SCs.

Conclusion

Indian Society is divided into various categories on the basis of caste system. With the above results and discussions we can conclude that, Even though Government has implementing various legal and constitutional safeguards for SC's and ST's the problem of caste based discrimination still presented in Indian Society in various forms. The problem of caste discrimination is not only faced by rural and uneducated peoples but urban and educated peoples also. Caste Discrimination is social evil in our country and it is a major obstacle in the process of Social Integration.

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