

# Changing patterns in indias cast system essay



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- Decision:

The album of the modern universe is portrayed by category and caste systems, the mere contemplations of societal inequality in human society. Class and caste are the signifier of the societal stratification. The division of society into categories or strata, which form a hierarchy of prestigiousness and power, is an cosmopolitan characteristic of societal construction. In this paper chiefly focus on the basic construct of caste and category of society and in Indian context the altering tendency of the caste system.

### **What is Caste:**

' Caste ' is the name of an ancient societal establishment that has been portion of Indian history and civilization for 1000s of old ages. Wikipedia states that, " A caste is a combined societal system of, endogamy, civilization, societal category, and political power. "

" Any of the familial, endogamic societal categories or subclasses of traditional Hindu society, stratified harmonizing to Hindu ritual pureness, particularly the Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra castes " .

### **The nature and map of the caste system:**

The statutory committee study in 1930 stated about the nature and map of the caste in India as,

" Every Hindu needfully belongs to the caste of his parents and in that caste he necessarily remains. No accretion of wealth and no exercising of

endowments can change his caste position and matrimony outside his caste is prohibited or badly discouraged ” .

Renowned bookman Paul H. Landis has remarked as,

“ No ambitious immature Indian of a lower category can of all time trust to be a Brahmin. Here the category differences are strong that the lowest category, the Harijans are non allowed even to touch the garments of the highest or Brahmin category. They ( Harijans ) die in the hope that they will be reborn into a better category ” .

From the assorted statements it becomes clear that caste continue to be an overwhelming influence in the societal, economical and political life of the state. The Indian small town system is tied up with caste hierarchy.

### **Beginning of caste: some positions**

Caste or more exactly ‘ varna ’ for which the former a Lusitanian equivalent word, has come into broad usage in comparative literature in recent old ages. It has been an invariable dimension of the societal development in India during the last 3500years. During the Rigvedic period the Aryan community had started dividing into categories – Brahma, Kashata and visa. It is merely in one of the ulterior anthem ‘ purushasuktha ’ that a mention has been made to the four categories of Indian society. The names of the four categories were given in the sukta as Brahma, Rajanya, Vaisya and Shudra. The earlier division into these groups or subdivision or Varna represented division of labor and division of societal merchandise. The original in dwellers, portrayed as blackish people were called as ‘ Dasas ’ by the Aryans, the encroachers. These Dasas were over powered by the Aryans

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and when the conquered category were transformed into a service category, new dealings of production came into being. The Dasas were known as the ' Sudras ' the 5th caste in the Aryan crease of the Indian society.

Phule ' s theory of the caste system was that it was created by the Aryans or Iranis Bhats or Brahmins. Before the coming of Irani Brahmins, Indian society was a casteless or egalitarian agricultural community. The Grammarian Patanjali ( Bc. 200 ) noticing on panninis regulation classified the states of his times as ' Abrahmaniko Desah ' ( non-Brahmin states ) and ' vrshalak desah ' ( Brahmin states ) . Dr. B. R. Ambedkar attempted to turn out that the Shudras originally constituted the solar Kshatriya caste of the Vedic Aryan society, but that since the Brahmins refused to execute ' upanayana ' for them they were pushed down to the 4th caste.

### **Definitions of caste:**

The word caste is derived from the Spanish word " caste " , intending strain, race, strain or heredity. The Portuguese, when they came to India used the term to place the caste divisions.

In the words of Madan and Majumdar, " caste is a closed group " .

To C. H Cooley, " When a category is some what purely familial, we may name it a caste " .

The most normally cited specifying characteristics of caste are the undermentioned:

Caste is determined by birth - a kid is " born into " the caste of its parents.

Caste is ne'er a affair of pick. One can ne'er alter one ' s caste, leave it, or

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take non to fall in it, although there are cases where a individual may be expelled from their caste.

Membership in a caste involves rigorous regulations about matrimony. Caste groups are " endogamic " , i. e. matrimony is restricted to members of the group.

Caste rank besides involves regulations about nutrient and food-sharing. What kinds of nutrient may or may non be eaten is prescribed and who one may portion nutrient with is besides specified.

Caste involves a system dwelling of many castes arranged in a hierarchy of rank and position. In theory, every individual has a caste, and every caste has a specified topographic point in the hierarchy of all castes. While the hierarchal place of many castes, peculiarly in the in-between ranks, may change from part to part, there is ever a hierarchy.

Castes besides involve sub-divisions within themselves, i. e. , castes about ever have sub-castes and sometimes sub-castes may besides hold sub-sub-castes. This is referred to as a segmental administration.

Castes were traditionally linked to businesss. A individual born into a caste could merely pattern the business associated with that caste, so that businesss were familial, i. e. passed on from coevals to coevals. On the other manus, a peculiar business could merely be pursued by the caste associated with it -members of other castes could non come in the business.

**Social construction and cultural facets of the caste system:**

The nature of caste system in India can be studied as a societal structural system and as a cultural system standing for the alone characteristic of Indian civilizations:

**Social Structural Aspects:**

The caste system is a hierarchy of values in footings of the construct of pureness and dross.

It is organized as a characteristic familial division of labor.

It is committed to organic coordination with the larger communities.

Dumont, the Gallic sociologist used the term ' homo-hierarchy ' meant for the minority resistance and common repulsive force in the inter-caste relationship.

There is a batch of cooperation particularly in the socio-religious lines between assorted castes.

**Cultural Aspects:**

The cultural or symbolic system of caste has the undermentioned of import things:

A hierarchy of values in footings of the construct of pureness and dross.

Familial transmittal of psychological traits with in caste groups.

The constructs of karma and punarjanma giving one ' s attitudes and ways of life.

Committedness to caste business of caste manner.

Tolerance of different manners of life of other castes.

## **What is Social Class?**

A societal category may be defined as a stratum of people of similar place in the societal position continuum. The societal place of the George is non the same as that of the college president ; a pupil will non recognize them in precisely the same mode. Most of us are regardful towards those whose societal place we believe to be above our and are condescending to those whom we consider socially below us. The members of a societal category position one another as societal peers, while keeping themselves to be socially superior to some and socially inferior to others. The members of a peculiar societal category frequently have about the same sum of money, but what is more of import is that they have much the same attitudes, values and ways of life. Social category is a really of import from a societal stratification. Class system is cosmopolitan phenomena. Nowadays categories are in increasing and new categories are coming into being in assorted parts of the universe. Class system in a society in determined by economic conditions, occupational conditions, abilities, familial factors, educational factors etc. Every society is gradated into assorted societal categories and each category has its position in society. To understand more about societal category 1 has to depend on some definitions given by societal scientists.

## **Definition of Social Class:**

T. H. Marshall defined by saying that " A system or construction of societal category involves foremost, a hierarchy of position groups and secondly the acknowledgment of the superior-inferior stratification and eventually some grade of permanence of the construction " .

In the word of Ogburn and Nimcoff, " By a societal category we mean one or two or more wide groups of persons who are ranked by the members of the community in socially superior and inferior places " .

To Lapiere, " a societal category is a culturally defined group that is accorded a peculiar place or position within the population as a whole " .

## **Features of the Class:**

Social category is a really of import from of societal stratification in the modern times. Following are the chief characteristics of category:

Hierarchy of position groups:

In the category system, everyone has its ain position. In other words societal category is a position group. Based on their characteristics and resources, some people occupy high position, some in-between position and yet some others rest at the lowest place. In modern complex society each category feels that they belong to a specific group.

Class- Consciousness:



In the category system every societal category develops category consciousness and the position consciousness consequences in psychological separation.

Open system:

Social category system is an unfastened one in society. The societal place of one person is based up on the factors like his profession, personal virtues, self-respect and wealth. The more an single develops his abilities so as to be utile to society better he is placed in the societal hierarchy. In the category system a individual can travel upward or downward, depending upon his personal attainments, virtues and demerits, abilities and disablements.

Objective Factors:

Economic status, profession place, instruction, wellness, race etc are objectives factors of the societal category system. Class consciousness ensuing from the feeling of high quality and lower status are to the called as subjective factors. When these subjective factors integrated into the nonsubjective 1s, category organisation occurs.

Class is non merely an economic division:

Karl Max and Engels have the sentiment that category division and economic inequalities entirely lead to category difference. Harmonizing to them societal categories originate merely from economic conditions. But our sociologists like Mac Iver reference that economic factor is merely one of the factors for the beginning of category system.

Class is not merely an occupational division:

It is incorrect to see societal category as an occupational division. It is curtailing the range of the societal category. The standard of high and low, superior and inferior can not be specifically applied to professions.

Social mobility:

Class system involves greater range for societal mobility. Harmonizing to A. Sorokin, societal mobility is of two sorts ; Horizontal and Vertical. Horizontal societal mobility is motion from one societal position to another societal position of the same degree. E. g. An applied scientist who is working in the Ford motor company goes to general motors co. as an applied scientist of the same class. Vertical societal mobility is the motion upward or downward e. g. A Director moves down to the place of an Assistant Director.

### **Social Class: Marxian Position**

The basic framework for the moral force of societal alteration was laid down by Karl Marx through his mercenary reading of history and theory of category battle. Opening the first chapter of their Communist pronouncement, Karl Marx and Engels stated:

“ The history of all hitherto being society ( i. e. all written history ) is the history of category battle ” .

Marxian theory, mercenary and economically oriented, positions category attitudes and category consciousness as basically a contemplation of economic conditions. Under the Marxian construct there are merely two categories viz. junior-grade Bourgeois capitalists and the labors or the on the

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job category. Marx ' s distribution of the categories was chiefly on economic footing that had comes as a topic of unfavorable judgments to sociologist like Mac Iver. Karl Marx conceived the relation between these two categories basically based on the agencies of production, followed by the development of the Bourgeoisie category up on the on the job category. Sing categories and their relation with each other Marx has set three premise in ' selected correspondence ' .

Classs are bound up with peculiar historical stages in the development of production.

Classs are bound to take a battle between two categories viz. Petty Bourgeois capitalists and the on the job category.

The category battle between those two categories needfully leads to the absolutism of the labors by over throwing the governing capitalist from power.

Marx and Engles have described categories as economic struggle groups that are divided on the footing of the ownership of the assorted instruments of production. Thus it is believed that an industrial society is connected with two classes- petit larcenies Bourgeoisie capitalist and proletarate workers. Before the industrial revolution there were merely two categories, ' Landlords ' and the ' Agriculturists ' .

### **Class system in India:**

In small town India, where about 74 per centum of the population resides, caste and category associations overlap. Harmonizing to anthropologist

Miriam Sharma, " Large landowners who employ hired labors are overpoweringly from the upper castes, while the agricultural workers themselves come from the ranks of the lowest — preponderantly Untouchable — castes. " She besides points out that household-labor-using owners come from the ranks of the in-between agricultural castes. Distribution of other resources and entree to political control follow the same form of caste-cum-class differentiations. Although this congruity is strong, there is a inclination for category formation to happen despite the importance of caste, particularly in the metropoliss, but besides in rural countries.

In an analysis of category formation in India, anthropologist Harold A. Gould points out that a three-level system of stratification is taking shape across rural India. He calls the three degrees Forward Classes ( higher castes ) , Backward Classes ( in-between and lower castes ) , and Harijans ( really low castes ) . Members of these groups portion common concerns because they stand in about the same relationship to land and production — that is, they are large-scale husbandmans, small-scale husbandmans, and landless labourers. Some of these groups are pulling together within parts across caste lines in order to work for political power and entree to desirable resources. For illustration, since the late sixtiess, some of the middle-ranking cultivating castes of northern India have progressively cooperated in the political sphere in order to progress their common agricultural and market-oriented involvements. Their attempts have been spurred by competition with higher-caste landed elites.

In metropoliss other groups have vested involvements that crosscut caste boundaries, proposing the possibility of organizing categories in the hereafter. These groups include comfortable industrialists and enterprisers, who have made successful attempts to force the cardinal authorities toward a pro-business stance ; administrative officials, who depend upon higher instruction instead than land to continue their places as civil retainers ; political officers, who enjoy good wages and fringe benefits of all sorts ; and the military, who constitute one of the most powerful armed forces in the underdeveloped universe.

Economically far below such groups are members of the humble lower class, which is taking form in both small towns and urban countries. As the privileged elites move in front, low-ranking humble workers remain economically insecure. Were they to fall in together to mobilise politically across lines of category and faith in acknowledgment of their common involvements, Gould observes, they might happen power in their sheer Numberss.

India ' s quickly spread outing economic system has provided the footing for a cardinal alteration — the outgrowth of what high journalist Suman Dubey calls a “ new vanguard ” progressively ordering India ' s political and economic way. This group is India ' s new in-between category — Mobile, driven, consumer-oriented, and, to some extent, forward-looking. Hard to specify exactly, it is non a individual stratum of society, but straddles town and countryside, doing its voice heard everyplace. It encompasses comfortable husbandmans, white-collar workers, concern people, military forces, and countless others, all actively working toward a comfortable life.

Ownership of autos, telecastings, and other consumer goods, sensible net incomes, significant nest eggs, and educated kids ( frequently fluent in English ) epitomize this diverse group. Many have ties to kinsmen populating abroad who have done really good.

The new in-between category is dining, at least partly in response to a doubling of the wages of some 4 million cardinal authorities employees in 1986, followed by similar additions for province and territory officers. Unprecedented liberalisation and opening up of the economic system in the 1980s and 1990s have been portion of the image.

There is no individual set of standards specifying the in-between category, and estimations of its Numberss vary widely. The mid-range of figures presented in a 1992 study article by analyst Suman Dubey is about 150 to 175 million — some 20 per centum of the population — although other perceivers suggest alternate figures. The in-between category appears to be increasing quickly. Once chiefly urban and mostly Hindu, the phenomenon of the devouring in-between category is burgeoning among Muslims and comfortable villagers every bit good. Harmonizing to V. A. Pai Panandikar, manager of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, cited by Dubey, by the terminal of the 20th century 30 per centum — some 300 million — of India ' s population will be in-between category.

The in-between category is bracketed on either side by the upper and lower echelons. Members of the upper category — around 1 per centum of the population — are proprietors of big belongingss, members of sole nines, and vacationists in foreign lands, and include industrialists, former maharajas,

and top executives. Below the in-between category is possibly a 3rd of the population — ordinary husbandmen, tradespeople, craftsmans, and workers. At the underside of the economic graduated table are the hapless — estimated at 320 million, some 45 per centum of the population in 1988 — who live in unequal places without equal nutrient, work for pittances, have undereducated and frequently sallow kids, and are the victims of legion societal unfairnesss.

### **Changing Pattern of Caste system in India:**

Despite many jobs, the caste system has operated successfully for centuries, supplying goods and services to India ' s many 1000000s of citizens. The system continues to run, but alterations are happening. India ' s fundamental law warrants basic rights to all its citizens, including the right to equality and equal protection before the jurisprudence. The pattern of untouchability, every bit good as favoritism on the footing of caste, race, sex, or faith, has been lawfully abolished. All citizens have the right to vote, and political competition is lively. Voters from every stratum of society have formed involvement groups, overlapping and cut acrossing castes, making an germinating new manner of incorporating Indian society.

Castes themselves, nevertheless, far from being abolished, have certain rights under Indian jurisprudence. As described by anthropologist Owen M. Lynch and other bookmans, in the spread outing political sphere caste groups are going more politicized and forced to vie with other involvement groups for societal and economic benefits. In the turning metropoliss, traditional intercaste mutualities are negligible.

Independent India has built on earlier British attempts to rectify jobs suffered by Dalits by allowing them some benefits of protective favoritism. Scheduled Castes are entitled to reserved electoral offices, reserved occupations in cardinal and province authorities, and particular educational benefits. The fundamental law mandates that one-seventh of province and national legislative seats be reserved for members of Scheduled Castes in order to vouch their voice in authorities. Reserving seats has proven utile because few, if any, Scheduled Caste campaigners have of all time been elected in non-reserved constituencies.

Educationally, Dalit pupils have benefited from scholarships, and Scheduled Caste literacy increased ( from 10.3 per centum in 1961 to 21.4 per centum in 1981, the last twelvemonth for which such figures are available ) , although non every bit quickly as among the general population. Improved entree to instruction has resulted in the outgrowth of a significant group of educated Dalits able to take up white-collar businesss and battle for their rights.

There has been enormous opposition among non-Dalits to this protective favoritism for the Scheduled Castes, who constitute some 16 per centum of the entire population, and attempts have been made to supply similar advantages to the alleged Backward Classes ( see Glossary ) , who constitute an estimated 52 per centum of the population. In August 1990, Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap ( V. P. ) Singh announced his purpose to implement the recommendations of the Backward Classes Commission ( Mandal Commission — see Glossary ) , issued in December 1980 and mostly ignored for a decennary. The study, which urged particular



advantages for obtaining civil service places and admittance to higher instruction for the Backward Classes, resulted in public violences and self-immolations and contributed to the autumn of the premier curate. The upper castes have been peculiarly inexorable against these policies because unemployment is a major job in India, and many feel that they are being unjustly excluded from stations for which they are better qualified than lower-caste appliers.

As an act of protest, many Dalits have rejected Hinduism with its stiff ranking system. Following the illustration of their august leader, Dr. Ambedkar, who converted to Buddhism four old ages before his decease in 1956, 1000000s of Dalits have embraced the religion of the Buddha. Over the past few centuries, many Dalits have besides converted to Christianity and have frequently by this agencies raised their socioeconomic position. However, Christians of Dalit beginning still frequently suffer from favoritism by Christians — and others — of higher caste backgrounds.

Despite betterments in some facets of Dalit position, 90 per centum of them live in rural countries in the mid-1990s, where an increasing proportion — more than 50 per centum — work as landless agricultural labourers. State and national authoritiess have attempted to procure more merely distribution of land by making land ceilings and get rid ofing absentee landlordism, but evasive tactics by landholders have successfully prevented more than minimum redistribution of land to tenant husbandmans and labourers. In modern-day India, field custodies face increased competition from tractors and reaping machines. Similarly, craftsmans are being challenged by spread outing commercial markets in mass-produced mill

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goods, underselling traditional common duties between frequenters and clients. The spread of the Green Revolution has tended to increase the spread between the comfortable and the hapless — most of whom are low-caste.

The growing of urbanisation ( an estimated 26 per centum of the population now lives in metropoliss ) is holding a far-reaching consequence on caste patterns, non merely in metropoliss but in small towns. Among anon. crowds in urban public infinites and on public transit, caste associations are unknown, and observation of pureness and pollution regulations is negligible. Distinctive caste costumes have all but vanished, and low-caste names have been modified, although castes remain endogamic, and entree to employment frequently occurs through intracaste connexions. Restrictions on interactions with other castes are going more relaxed, and, at the same clip, observation of other pollution regulations is worsening — particularly those referring birth, decease, and menses. Several turning Hindu religious orders draw members from many castes and parts, and communicating between metropoliss and small towns is spread outing dramatically. Kin in town and state visit one another often, and telecasting plans available to immense Numberss of villagers vividly portray new life styles. As new businesss open up in urban countries, the correlativity of caste with business is worsening.

Caste associations have expanded their countries of concern beyond traditional elect emulation and local political relations into the broad political sphere of province and national political relations. Finding power in Numberss within India ' s democratic system, caste groups are drawing

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together closely allied subcastes in their pursuit for political influence. In attempts to solidify caste bonds, some caste associations have organized matrimony carnival where households can do lucifers for their kids.

Traditional hierarchal concerns are being minimized in favour of beef uping horizontal integrity. Therefore, while pollution observations are worsening, caste consciousness is non.

Education and election to political office have advanced the position of many Dalits, but the overall image remains one of great unfairness. In recent decennaries, Dalit choler has been expressed in Hagiographas, presentations, work stoppages, and the activities of such groups as the Dalit Panthers, a extremist political party demanding radical alteration. A wider Dalit motion, including political parties, educational activities, self-help centres, and labour organisations, has spread to many countries of the state.

In a 1982 Dalit publication, Dilip Hiro wrote, " It is one of the great modern Indian calamities and dangers that even good intending Indians still happen it so hard to accept Untouchable mobility as being legitimate in fact every bit good as in theory. . . . " Still, against all odds, a little clerisy has worked for many old ages toward the end of liberating India of caste consciousness.

### **Factor lending to caste alteration:**

The chief factors responsible for the alterations of caste system are:

Modern instruction:

Modern instruction is one of the major factors for weakening of the caste. It has gone to do negative impacts upon casteism. As modern instruction is

profoundly ingrained into the values such as autonomy, equality and fraternity, it gives no topographic point for grey societal immoralities and patterns like casteism. Education besides encouraged inter-caste matrimony. The feeling of untouchability and bias are being bit by bit eliminated from the head of the kids of all caste.

#### Industrialization:

With the coming of industrialisation people of all castes were forced to happen out employment in mills in large metropoliss. In the industrial centres members of different castes came into common contact, made harmonious relationship with other and forgot the caste barriers.

#### Urbanization:

Industrialization, transit and widened communicating are the chief factors responsible to diminish the sentiment of the caste from the people to a greater extent. Higher caste members who moved to urban countries for prosecuting employment found it hard to retain their caste thoughts and pattern.

#### Significance of wealth:

In the past power of money was non much ruling factor in the society. Today wealth is replacing caste as the footing of societal prestigiousness. In other words money has become a determinant factor for act uponing human life at present.

#### Rise of Patriotism:

Patriotism bound up with the construct of ' universal brotherhood ' has opened up new volumes in inter-caste dealings. It seems to hold helped to a considerable extent in shortening the bias of casteism from the head of people in rural countries.

Consequence of societal reforms:

Social reform motion had besides gone to a wider extent in decreasing caste bias from the upper caste heads. Social reformist like Babasaheb, Ambedkar, Balgangadhar Tilak, Ranade had done a batch for taking caste differentiation and bias from the head of Indians.

### **Decision:**

The strength of caste themselves, of the person ' s fond regard to his ain caste, it may be claimed that the traditional caste system has been deeply altered. In that system each single caste had its ascribed topographic point and co-operated with each other castes in a traditional economic system and in ritual. No uncertainty there was ever some competition between castes and there were alterations in place in the hierarchy of prestigiousness ; but there was no generalised competition. It is quit otherwise with the modern caste associations, which exist in order to vie for wealth, educational chances and societal prestigiousness in a much more unfastened society. The category involvements and demands of the toiling people, the hapless and the oppressed, has mostly been expressed in the signifier of caste political relations. Articulated within the constructions of India ' s democracy, this caste based political relations has succeeded in supplying important alleviation to the lower castes, who form the overpowering bulk of India ' s

toiling multitudes. Following hebdomad, this column will look at the effects of lower caste political relations in modern-day India.