Factors Determining Equality Of Marginalised Section In India: A Critical Review

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Abstract

This study aims to provide an overview of the factors that determine the equality of marginalized sections in India. Marginalization refers to the social process by which certain individuals or groups are pushed to the edges of society, denied access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making power, and subjected to various forms of discrimination and exclusion. In the context of India, marginalized sections include Dalits (formerly known as "untouchables"), Adivasis (indigenous tribal communities), religious minorities, women, and individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Marginalized communities in India include Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities, women, and individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Achieving equality for these sections is essential for building a just and inclusive society. By understanding and addressing the factors discussed in this study, policymakers, activists, and stakeholders can work towards creating a more equitable society in India. This study serves as a foundation for further research and advocacy, emphasizing the urgency and significance of promoting equality for marginalized sections to foster inclusive development and social harmony.

Keywords: Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities, women, economically disadvantaged, caste-based discrimination, untouchability, social exclusion, economic disparities, political representation.

Introduction

India, a diverse and multicultural nation, has long grappled with the challenge of achieving equality for its marginalized sections. These sections encompass Dalits, Adivasis, religious minorities, women, and individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The struggle for equality is a critical aspect of building a just and inclusive society, where every individual, regardless of their social background, can access equal opportunities and live a life of dignity. Understanding the factors that determine the equality of marginalized sections in India is crucial for addressing the systemic barriers they face. This complex issue encompasses various dimensions, including social, economic, political, and cultural factors. By delving into these factors, we can gain insights into the challenges faced by marginalized communities and devise effective strategies to promote their equality and empowerment. Figure 1 shows the various aspects of marginalisation:
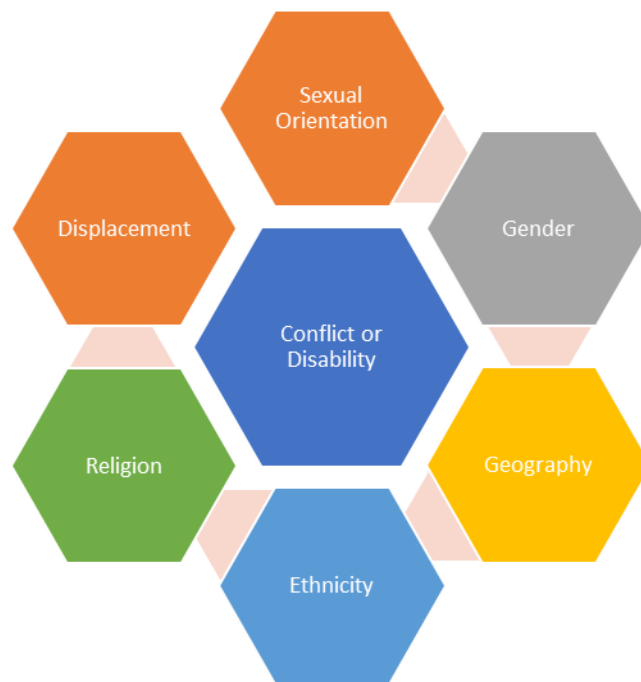
Figure 1 Various Aspects of Marginalisation

Socially, one of the primary factors perpetuating inequality is caste-based discrimination. The hierarchical caste system deeply entrenched in Indian society has marginalized Dalits and Adivasis for centuries. Discrimination, untouchability practices, and the stigma associated with lower castes have resulted in social exclusion, limited access to education, employment opportunities, land, and basic services for these communities. Overcoming caste-based marginalization requires addressing deeply ingrained prejudices and dismantling social structures that reinforce caste-based discrimination. Economic disparities also contribute significantly to the inequality faced by marginalized sections. Poverty, lack of access to quality education, healthcare, and productive resources further marginalizes these communities. Economic empowerment, equitable distribution of wealth, and targeted interventions to uplift the economically disadvantaged are essential for achieving equality and bridging the socio-economic gap.

Religious and ethnic minorities in India also face marginalization based on their religious identity. Discrimination, exclusion, and violence against religious minorities pose significant hurdles to their equality and social integration. Promoting religious harmony, protecting the rights of minorities, and fostering inclusivity are crucial in ensuring their equality and dignity. Cultural factors, such as social norms, traditions, and practices, play a role in perpetuating the marginalization of certain communities. Discriminatory customs, social prejudices, and stereotypes reinforce inequalities and hinder social integration. Challenging these cultural barriers and promoting inclusivity require fostering awareness, cultural sensitivity, and a collective commitment to dismantling discriminatory practices.

By comprehensively understanding and addressing the factors determining the equality of marginalized sections, policymakers, activists, and stakeholders can work

collaboratively to build a society that upholds principles of justice, equal opportunities, and human dignity for all. This study aims to provide insights into these factors, paving the way for further research, advocacy, and action toward achieving equality and empowerment for marginalized sections in India.

Literature Review

Patnaik and Jha (2020) sheds light on the intersectional dynamics of caste, class, and gender in the context of energy access in India. The study critically examines the adoption of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) as a clean cooking fuel and its implications for marginalized communities. The authors argue that access to LPG is not solely determined by economic factors but is also shaped by social hierarchies. Caste plays a significant role in determining access, as lower caste communities often face discrimination and limited access to government welfare programs. Additionally, the study highlights how gender norms and roles further exacerbate the disparities, as women from marginalized communities bear the burden of traditional cooking practices and face challenges in accessing LPG. Overall, the article emphasizes the need for a more inclusive approach to energy policy that addresses the multidimensional nature of marginalization in India.

Hans (2013) explores the experiences of Dalits, who are traditionally considered the lowest caste in the Indian social hierarchy. The paper also traces the historical marginalization of Dalits and examines the social and political efforts towards their inclusion. It states that despite some progress, Dalits continue to face systemic discrimination and exclusion in various aspects of life, including education, employment, and access to basic services. The author highlights the importance of affirmative action policies and legal measures in challenging caste-based discrimination and promoting inclusivity. Furthermore, the article emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that addresses both the economic and social dimensions of Dalit empowerment to achieve true inclusion and social justice. Geetha (2014) delves into the complex relationship between science education, equity, and social mobility in the context of government schools in India.

The paper critically examines the challenges faced by students from marginalized backgrounds in accessing quality science education. It also argues that government schools, which cater primarily to marginalized communities, often lack the necessary resources and infrastructure to provide a quality science education, perpetuating educational inequity. The author explores how social and economic factors intersect with caste and gender to further marginalize students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The article underscores the need for policy interventions that prioritize equitable access to science education and address the structural barriers that hinder social mobility for marginalized students in India.

Bhardwaj's (2017) research delves into the complex issue of marginalization within Indian society. The article critically analyzes the concept of marginalization and its impact on various social groups in India. The author also highlights the multidimensional nature

of marginalization, which encompasses social, economic, and political aspects. The author emphasizes the historical context of marginalization in India, tracing its roots to caste-based discrimination and unequal power dynamics. By exploring the experiences of marginalized groups such as Dalits, tribes, and religious minorities, the author sheds light on the structural and systemic factors that perpetuate marginalization in Indian society.

Narula (2010) examines the initiatives undertaken in India for the mainstreaming of marginalized populations and focuses on various government policies and programs designed to address the social exclusion faced by marginalized groups in India, particularly in the education sector. The author explores the different approaches and strategies employed by the Indian government to ensure inclusive education for the marginalized, including reservation policies, affirmative action, and educational support programs. The article discusses the positive outcomes and challenges associated with these initiatives, highlighting the progress made in terms of enrolment rates and access to education for marginalized communities. The article contributes valuable insights into the policies and initiatives aimed at mainstreaming marginalized populations and their impact on education and development in India. Dhavaleshwar and Banasode (2017) explore the role of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as a social worker advocating for the rights of marginalized sections of society and delve into the life and contributions of Dr. Ambedkar, who played a crucial role in advocating for the rights and empowerment of Dalits, formerly known as untouchables, in India. The paper also provides a comprehensive analysis of Dr. Ambedkar's social work, highlighting his efforts to uplift the marginalized sections through political activism, legal reforms, and social movements. By analyzing the leader's work, the authors underline the importance of social workers in addressing the issues faced by marginalized communities and the impact they can have in creating a more inclusive society.

Patwal and Agarwal (2019) explore the concept of marginalization and provide an analysis and commentary on its implications. The paper highlights the negative consequences of marginalization, emphasizing how it perpetuates social inequality and hampers development. Through a critical lens, the authors shed light on the various aspects of marginalization and its impact on marginalized groups within society. Bhatty (2014) critically examines the elementary education policy in India and assesses whether it has upheld the constitutional objective of equality. The review delves into the complexities and challenges faced in implementing education policies that aim to ensure equal access and opportunities for all children. The author evaluates the effectiveness of these policies in addressing the educational disparities among different social groups in India and provides valuable insights into the gaps that still exist in achieving equitable education.

Mishra (2015) explores the relationship between globalization, social justice, and marginalized groups in India. The article critically analyzes the impact of globalization on marginalized communities, highlighting both the potential benefits and the adverse effects. Mishra's work delves into the socio-economic implications of globalization and

the challenges faced by marginalized groups in their pursuit of social justice and inclusive development within the globalized context. Roy (2020) focuses on the intersection of climate change, forest conservation, and marginalized communities in the Indian Sundarbans. The article discusses the challenges faced by the marginalized people living in this ecologically sensitive region and the dilemmas they encounter in the face of climate change and conservation efforts. By shedding light on the complex relationship between environmental policies, climate change, and the livelihoods of marginalized groups, the author emphasizes the need for inclusive and sustainable development strategies.

Singh and Pattanaik (2020) delve into the issue of wage discrimination against women in India through the lens of social hierarchy. The authors analyze the intersectionality of gender and social hierarchy in perpetuating wage disparities. Their work critically examines the structural and societal factors that contribute to unequal reward for equal work and sheds light on the need for gender-sensitive policies and practices to address this form of discrimination. Goodnight (2017) explores the application of critical race theory in the Indian context, particularly within the context of schooling and education. The article examines how social identities and discrimination manifest within the Indian education system, drawing parallels to the concepts and frameworks of critical race theory. By critically analyzing social identities and discrimination, the author highlights the importance of addressing these issues to promote equality and inclusivity within Indian schools.

Gupta (2018) presents an analysis of the challenges faced by marginalized people in India. The article identifies and discusses various socio-economic, political, and cultural barriers that marginalize certain groups in society. Gupta's analysis sheds light on the complexities and multi-dimensional nature of marginalization in India and calls for comprehensive measures to address these challenges and promote inclusivity and social justice.

Conclusion

The journey toward equality is ongoing and requires sustained commitment from all stakeholders. It demands collaborative efforts, policy reforms, and societal transformation. Recognizing the inherent value and potential of every individual, irrespective of their social background, is crucial for building a just and inclusive society. By addressing the factors determining the equality of marginalized sections in India, we can create a society that values diversity, upholds human dignity, and provides equal opportunities for all. It is a collective responsibility to strive for a future where marginalized communities can live with dignity, empowerment, and equality, thereby fostering social harmony and sustainable development in India.

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