



REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.7631 (UIF)

VOLUME - 11 | ISSUE - 8 | MAY - 2022



DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSIVE POLITICS: AN ANALYSES OF CONSTITUTIONAL SAFEGUARDS

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ABSTRACT:

With India's rich diversity and intricate socio-political environment, inclusive politics is an extremely important topic. This study explores the idea of inclusive politics, its importance in the Indian context, its obstacles, and the chances it presents to promote a more just and representative democracy. This article aims to shed light on India's ongoing journey towards a more pluralistic and inclusive political system by analysing the historical evolution, policy initiatives, and recent advancements in inclusive politics.



KEY WORDS: pluralism, democracy, women's empowerment, reservation, and religious polarisation in inclusive politics.

INTRODUCTION

Any thriving democracy must be built on inclusive politics, and India, the largest democracy in the world, is no different. India's population is varied, encompassing a range of ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural groupings. As such, the country's political environment is a complicated fabric that requires careful consideration of inclusivity. This study examines the idea of inclusive politics in the Indian context, evaluating its historical development, present difficulties, and potential benefits.

The Development of History The path India has taken towards inclusive politics begins with its fight for freedom from British colonial control. Prominent figures such as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi underscored the significance of social justice and representation for underrepresented minorities. The Indian Constitution was framed as a result, enshrining the values of equality, secularism, and affirmative action. The Constitution's reservation system is a perfect illustration of inclusive politics in action. Reserved seats in governmental entities and educational institutions have been granted to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in order to guarantee their representation and advancement. Over numerous centuries, inclusive politics in India have undergone a complex historical evolution.

There have been several stages in India's pursuit of inclusive politics: In ancient India, between 1500 BCE and 600 CE, there were several different political structures, such as oligarchies, republics, and monarchies. Certain republics, like the Vajji Confederation, allowed members of various social and economic classes to participate, exemplifying inclusive governance. Participants from a variety of

backgrounds were able to participate in discussions and decision-making processes because of the notions of "Sabha" (assembly) and "Samiti" (council).

Mauryan Empire (322–185 BCE): Under Emperor Ashoka, the Mauryan Empire is renowned for its dedication to advancing social justice and inclusivity. Ashoka's decrees supported animal welfare as well as religious tolerance and the well-being of all citizens. This was an example of inclusive governance in its early stages.

Mughal Empire (1526–1857): Despite being foreign conquerors at first, the Mughal emperors embraced a policy of religious tolerance and incorporated a number of Indian customs into their governance. This strategy made it possible for people of various faiths to take part in governance, which increased inclusion to some extent.

Colonial Era (1757–1947): Communities in India experienced severe divisions as a result of British colonial authority. But it also unintentionally laid the groundwork for contemporary Indian politics. The fight for inclusive politics began with the establishment of the Indian National Congress (INC) and the demand for representative government. Leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi placed great emphasis on involving every segment of society in the fight for independence. 1947 until the present, post-independence: After India gained independence in 1947, a democratic republic dedicated to inclusive politics was established.

Major advancements of India's Constitution: When the Indian Constitution was being drafted, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar laid the groundwork for inclusive politics. Equality, secularism, and affirmative action as a means of uplifting historically underprivileged communities were enshrined in it. The purpose of the quota system was to give Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) reserved seats in governmental bodies and educational institutions. This was a big step in the direction of underprivileged people getting political representation.

Panchayati Raj Institutions: By creating Panchayati Raj Institutions, local communities were to be involved in decision-making, promoting inclusive, grassroots politics, and decentralising power. Women's Empowerment: One way to give women more political clout was to provide them seats in local government and legislative assemblies.

Modern Difficulties and Possibilities: In India, caste-based politics, intercommunal conflicts, economic inequality, and gender inequality have all been obstacles to inclusive politics in recent years. However, there are ways to advance inclusive politics, such as through social awareness campaigns, electoral changes, and grassroots movements. India's efforts to promote inclusive politics face significant challenges that limit the nation's ability to ensure fair representation and participation for all of its citizens. These difficulties have their roots in the historical legacies, current issues, and complex social fabric of India.

The following are a few of the main obstacles to inclusive politics in India: Politics of Identity: Political parties and movements with a caste foundation frequently put the needs of particular caste groups first, which might exclude others. This kind of identity politics has the potential to widen social divides. Disagreements between various religious communities may result from the communalization of politics, in which political parties exploit religious identities to get votes. Subgroup Marginalisation: Religious minorities, like Christians and Muslims, can experience prejudice and marginalisation in political representation and procedures.

Economic Discrepancies: There are considerable economic discrepancies in India. People from low-income families might not have the means or chances to participate in politics, either as candidates or as voters, in an efficient manner. Gender Disparities: Despite initiatives to advance gender equality and set aside seats for women in local authorities, women are still underrepresented in political institutions at all levels. North-South Gap: Disparities in the region, especially the north-south gap, can result in unequal resource distribution and representation. States in the north frequently have greater political clout and influence.

Political Dynasties: Families and dynasties often have sway over political parties, which can stifle up-and-coming leaders and create an air of exclusivity. Corruption and nepotism: These two factors within political parties have the potential to keep qualified people out of politics and impede the development

of inclusive democratic processes. Lack of Political Literacy: Many people are not well-educated or politically savvy, which makes it difficult for them to participate actively in politics. Marginalisation of Adivasis (Tribal Populations): In spite of affirmative action policies, certain tribal populations are still subjected to social and political marginalisation as well as discrimination. Disparate access to chances for education and employment might make it more difficult for marginalised groups to engage in politics successfully.

Media Bias: slanted reporting and media ownership have the power to shape political narratives and public opinion, occasionally favouring particular interests or groups over others. Absence of election reforms: Election Reforms: Calls have been made for electoral reforms to improve accountability and openness, but these reforms have not moved quickly, which could compromise the fairness of the voting process. Political leaders, civil society organisations, and regular people must work together to address these issues. A more inclusive political environment in India can be fostered by taking steps like raising political consciousness, reforming the educational system, tightening laws governing campaign funding, and advancing social and economic equality. India presents a multitude of avenues for advancing inclusive politics, thus contributing to the development of a more just and representative democratic framework. Strengthening the nation's democratic fabric requires addressing the issues and seizing these chances.

The following are some significant chances for inclusive politics in India: Localised Movements: Community Empowerment: By encouraging marginalised groups to participate in politics and decision-making, grassroots movements and community-based organisations can empower marginalised communities. Campaign Finance Reform: By lowering the impact of money in politics and levelling the playing field, campaign finance reforms can improve the competitiveness of candidates from a variety of backgrounds. Political Education: By supporting initiatives that raise public knowledge of political issues and provide citizens with an understanding of their rights and obligations, political education can increase public participation. Economic Empowerment: Programmes that focus on generating jobs and developing skills might help marginalised people become more politically engaged.

Women's Representation: Women's involvement in politics and decision-making can be increased through supporting and enforcing gender quotas in political entities. Extending Reservation: In order to guarantee more participation in legislative bodies, reservation regulations should be widened to encompass more excluded communities. Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions: Decentralised decision-making and inclusion can be encouraged by enhancing the capabilities and operations of local self-governance organisations like Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Youth Engagement: Encouraging youth to engage in politics can infuse the political sphere with new ideas and perspectives. Advocacy and Accountability: In order to promote inclusive policies and hold political leaders responsible for their deeds, civil society organisations can be extremely important. Press and interaction: Media Responsibilities: Promoting impartial and accountable journalism will lessen the impact of polarising narratives and help create a more educated electorate. Fostering Interfaith Harmony: Efforts to foster communication and mutual comprehension between various religious groups can assist in reducing religious hostilities in the political sphere.

Strengthening Constitutional Safeguards: More inclusive political environments can be achieved by improving the application of constitutional clauses pertaining to social justice, secularism, and inclusion. Online Engagement: Politics can be more approachable for a larger audience, especially young people and marginalised groups, by utilising digital channels for political engagement and information sharing. Encouragement of community input in participatory decision-making processes helps guarantee that policies and initiatives are tailored to the varied demands of the populace. Creating Alliances: To build a more inclusive and representative political force, it can be beneficial to support coalitions and alliances between various communities and interest groups.

CONCLUSION:

India's democratic system is based on inclusive politics. Even if the nation has implemented measures like affirmative action to move the country in this direction, there are still numerous obstacles to be overcome. Economic inequality, gender inequality, and divisions based on religion and caste still have an impact on how inclusive Indian politics are. Still, there are encouraging prospects for a more inclusive and representational political system, such as grassroots movements and election reforms. India has to keep moving in the direction of inclusive politics in order to preserve the democratic principles found in its Constitution and guarantee that every person has an equal say in determining the course of the country.

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