



Efforts for Social Inclusion During India's Development Process: A Critical Appraisal

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Abstract

India's constitution has rightly prepared the base for social inclusion during the development process keeping the history of India's social phenomena. Based on the provisions of constitution, successive union and state governments have taken measures to include the various sections of the society in their development approach. This paper has done a critical appraisal of the major measures from the Land Reforms to Jan Dhan Yojana that have been implemented for social inclusion and unraveled the limitations, deficiencies either in policy or in implementation process due to which Inclusive growth/development in India still an unfulfilled agenda of the development goals. Secondary data has been taken for the analysis. Paper has concluded that, in view of the experience, to achieve the social inclusion to make it realize the dreams of constitutional framers, the marginalized sections of the society (In fact, they are majority in number -Bahujans) shall become the givers in political and economic fields in view to get the equal social status and become the reflection of real social inclusion and inclusive growth/development.

Key-Words: Marginalized, Land Reforms, Jan Dhan Yojana, Constitution, Majority-Bahujans.

Introduction:

Constituent Assembly to frame India's constitution has the members from various fields of experience with different socioeconomic backgrounds. Due to the above reason, constitution has become the reflection of aspirations of various sections of the society. Preamble of the constitution itself talks on socio, economic and political justice and it does a stress on equality and dignity of lifestyle. In fundamental rights, in directive principles to state policy, the constitution of India has paved the way for the establishment of an egalitarian society in India. The constitution has not only called different sections of the society with different names like Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Backward Classes (BCs) and Religious Minorities wise Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrians/Parsi (Government of India-Ministry of Minority Affairs-2022) but also has inserted some special provisions to make them include in the process of

development. Providing an adequate space for the above sections in every development aspect is a social inclusion process.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out the measures for social inclusion during India's development process
2. To find out the positive elements that the measures had for social inclusion
3. To find out the limitations/deficiencies that the measures had in policy and in implementation process.
4. To suggest the measures for social inclusion for inclusive growth/development.

Hypotheses:

1. India's constitution has the sufficient provisions for social inclusion process.
2. Successive Union and State governments have implemented many measures for social inclusion
3. Measures for social inclusion have limitations/deficiencies either in policy or in implementation process or in both segments.
4. Required additional aspects for social inclusion

Methodology:

It is an analytical study based on secondary data. Constitutional provisions, policy frame work and implementation process for social inclusion since the Independence have been used for the objective analysis.

Constitution, the Guiding Bible for Social Inclusion:

Directive principles to state policy, Fundamental rights and other special provisions along with the preamble of constitution of India has well versed words with the spirit of social inclusion for social justice. "The concept of social justice engrafted in the Constitution consists of diverse principles essentially for the orderly growth and development of personality of every citizen. Social justice is thus an integral part of justice in the generic sense. Justice is the genus, of which social justice is one of its species; Social justice is a dynamic devise to mitigate the sufferings of the poor, weak, dalits, tribals and deprived sections of the society and to elevate them to the level of equality to live life with dignity of person." (Shridevi S. Suvarnakhandi, 2020).

Some of the Constitutional Provisions in addition to preamble, which talk towards social inclusion in the process of economic development as follows:

1. Article 38: State to secure a social order for the promotion of social, economic and political justice and welfare of the people.
2. Article 39: The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to sub-serve the common good;

that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment

3. Article 46: It is the duty of the state to promote educational and economic interests of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.

4. Article 330 and 332: There shall be reservations to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the House People and Legislative Assemblies of States.

5. Under article 340 a commission shall be appointed by the president of India to investigate the conditions of backward classes (India's Constitutional Provisions, 2022).

Land Reforms the First Ever Efforts for Social Inclusion:

After Independence, India has put the first and the best ever efforts for social inclusion by adopting the policy of land reforms. Abolition of intermediaries, tenancy reforms and distribution of surplus land among the especially scheduled castes and tribes and other backward classes. Under the tenancy reforms, it was advocated to provide ownership rights to the tillers/tenants of the land. Putting the limitation on the size of land holdings and distribution of surplus land to the poor is seen as bloodless red-revolution in India's economic history. Making the poor as part of development process is seen as progressive step but making the deprived sections of the society as part of ownership to natural resources is undoubtedly a bold and revolutionary step.

A Strong Public Sector Provided the Way for the Social Inclusion:

In tune with the directive principles of state policy, India has adopted the policy of strong public sector for the faster industrialization and social justice. In addition to the preventing accumulation of wealth in few hands, the downtrodden has got the opportunity of dignified employment in the organized modern public sector. The children from remote corners of society and regions got an opportunity to enter the urban mainstream environment paving the way for the socially inclusive Indian urban life. It, mainly, became possible, because of the affirmative action of reservations in education and employment to historically deprived sections of the society and paved the way for social inclusion.

The Programmes for Eradication of Poverty and Unemployment and the Social Inclusion:

India in the beginning of Its Independence, has adopted a growth strategy to provide employment and to eradicate poverty. However, due to the experience of first two decades, India has initiated the policy of implementing special programmes to provide wage and self-employment. These programmes were designed in such a manner so that poor especially scheduled castes, tribes and other backward classes will get the space in development process in addition to having a livelihood source. Food for Work Programme during the 70s to Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme-MGNREGS since 2006 (wage

employment) and Integrated Rural Development Programme -IRDP during 70s to Pradhan Mantri MUDRA (Micro-Units Development and Re-finance) Yojana since 2015 have given their lifting hand to the downtrodden to sustain their lively hood and to improve their financial wellbeing paving the way for some sort of social mingle of scheduled castes, tribes and other backward classes too.

Human Development Approach the Way for Social Inclusion:

India has adopted a human development approach too, especially after 1990 during 8th five-year plan and thereafter by giving importance to education and health. Definitely education and health facilities has given an opportunity to the downtrodden to strengthen their capacity to enter the main stream. Reservations in educational institutions have been provided to scheduled castes and tribes later to other backward classes also. Free access to public health institutions has been given to all including the marginalized sections.

LPG Era and Social Inclusion:

With the implementation of liberalization, privatization and globalization-LPG policies since 1991, social inclusion policy seemed to be took a backseat. However, it was, again, soon realized that the just growth does not fulfil the development goals. Hence, it was again stressed for the reforms with human touch. This idea of growth with human touch was materialized in the form of inclusive growth policy and later with the concept of financial inclusion.

Inclusive Growth Approach and Social Inclusion:

Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) has advocated the inclusive growth approach (Document Eleventh Five Year Plan, 2022) and the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) has stressed for more inclusive growth (Twelfth Five Year Plan Document,2022). During this approach, it was clearly mentioned in the planning documents that, Scheduled Castes, Tribes, Backward Classes, Minorities and women shall be given the priority in the development process. It was stressed that all types, all levels of education shall be made accessible to all sections of the society to achieve the inclusive growth. Later financial inclusion is also stressed to achieve the inclusive growth.

Financial Inclusion for Social Inclusion:

It was thought that inclusive growth process also requires the providing access to institutional financial services to all sections and to all regions. Providing financial access to all the sections , all the regions was first started in the year 2010 by Government of India in the name of Swabhiman Scheme. In the year 2014 the above scheme was converted as Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana-PMJDY under which, a saving account without

any minimum balance, with an overdraft facility and an accident insurance etc. have been provided. This financial inclusion process of poor can be termed as one of the finest tools that India has adopted for the social inclusion agenda.

The Critical Appraisal of Social Inclusion Tools During India's Development Process:

As we have gone through the India's constitutional provisions and others policies that were deemed to implemented are ought to be helped for the social inclusion process as the Indian society is deeply asymmetrical in nature. Though constitutional provisions seem adequate to address the social inclusion process as we have mentioned many provisions in this regard, still not providing reservations to Other Backward Classes-OBCs expressively, is a hidden lacuna that Indian constitution has. Just the direction by the constitution to study the status of Backward classes by a commission did not sensitize the Indian political administration for a long period. After so many hiccups, at all India level, two commissions were formed to study the status of backward classes but the recommendations of the first commission were kept a side and a single recommendation (27% reservation in employment) out of 40 recommendations of second commission/mandal commission, was implemented partially after the 46 years of India's Independence (in 1993) and the reservations in educational institutions was implemented after the 61 years of India's Independence (in 2008) (Prof.S.Simhadri,2020). This is the best example of indifferent attitude of Indian state towards the social inclusion process.

As we mentioned the policy of land reforms has given a golden opportunity for social inclusion process, but the policy framework itself has given the leakages to the guidelines by giving so many exceptions to the maximum size of land holdings. As the owners of big size land holdings were the first to aware of the provisions of the upcoming guidelines/acts, they have done everything to skip the land ceiling acts and they are almost successful in the matter. Because of which a high level of concentration of land ownership still an open fact in India. "Five facts, gleaned from the 2011-12 [agricultural census](#) and 2011 [socio-economic caste census](#) and this correspondent's data, summarise the failure of India's land reforms:

- No more than 4.9% of farmers control 32% of India's farmland.
- A "large" farmer in India has 45 times more land than the "marginal" farmer.
- 101.4 million--or 56.4%--of rural households own no agricultural land.
- Only 12.9% of land marked--the size of Gujarat--for takeover from landlords was taken over by December 2015.
- Five million acres—half the size of Haryana—was given to 5.78 million poor farmers by December 2015." (Sumit Chaturvedi, 2016).

Though the Public Sector Units (PSUs) have provided a meaning full employment to scheduled castes and tribes for their economic upliftment, this sector has not given a minimum representation to Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Though reservations for OBCs implemented in 1993, prior to that, in 1991 itself privatization of PSUs has already been initiated. With the fastening of privatization process, the hope on public sector for social inclusion is gone (Selvam Jesiah,2008).

Human development approach is one of the tools that may help the poor to increase their capacity building, but the history of budget allocations to these sectors gives a sad picture rather than a hope for social inclusion (Dr.M.A.Malik, 2020). The programmes for eradication of poverty and unemployment always stood for witness as temporary daily livelihood mission rather than an empowerment process, so no hope for social inclusion with this meagre so-called welfare schemes/employment schemes (including self-employment schemes) (Shailendra Kumar and Amit Mitra, 1993).

Inclusive growth approach was implemented during the economic reforms period and stressed on financial inclusion and all levels and all types of education for all. We have already quoted that what happened to the budget allocations to education sector, the financial inclusion process with the schemes like PMJDY/ Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) in LPG era are testing tools only as the maximum amount one can get under PMMY is only Rs.10 lakh, it is a big question, how can one compete with large/mega business houses with this bare investment (Mudra Offerings,2022).

The Way forward for Social Inclusion/Conclusion

The constitution of India itself has recognized Scheduled Castes (SCs), Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Religious Minorities (RMs) and has provided the provisions for their inclusion in the development process. But the efforts that were put so far has not given the desired results for the social inclusion, and still the most of poor are from STs, SCs, BCs and Minorities especially from Muslims. These sections not only facing economic poverty but also carries a social stigma with many types of humiliations in a day-to-day life. The solution is unity among them, the constitution has given universal adult franchise of right to vote, if the unity is achieved among the BC, SC, ST and Minorities, they will become the givers and no more will be the takers and it will be the ultimate solution for and of social inclusion.

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