



## IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BACKWARD CLASSES: A STUDY IN CHITTOOR DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

### Economics

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### ABSTRACT

The history of backward classes goes back to the colonial state of India. It is difficult to give any precise acceptable definition of caste (Sharan, 2003; Venkatesu, 2021). The task becomes all the more difficult when we try to define backward castes as they do not enjoy a uniform socio-economic status. However, most of the scholars in social anthropology consider all the castes other than dwija (the twice-born who have the right to wear the sacred thread) as backward castes (Jassal, 2001; Jha, 2002; O'Hanlon, 2010; Rout, 2017; Srinivasan, 1980). In Andhra Pradesh, the commissions identified 103 castes as BCs. The socio-economic background of these castes is not uniform and there are wide variations among them. Andhra Pradesh is one of the two states in the country to initiate democratic decentralisation a process on the lines of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee Report in 1959 (Dafter, 2020; de Xavier, Kolayekar & Mukhopadhyay 2021; Dutta, 1982; Mukherji & Ghosh, 2017; Nadakarni, Sivanna & Suresh, 2018; Rodriguez-Pose & Sandall 2008; Sanwal, 1985; Suresh, 2017; Williams & Thampi, 2013).

### KEYWORDS

#### INTRODUCTION

The history of backward classes goes back to the colonial state of India. It is difficult to give any precise acceptable definition of caste (Sharan, 2003; Venkatesu, 2021). The task becomes all the more difficult when we try to define backward castes as they do not enjoy a uniform socio-economic status. However, most of the scholars in social anthropology consider all the castes other than dwija (the twice-born who have the right to wear the sacred thread) as backward castes (Jassal, 2001; Jha, 2002; O'Hanlon, 2010; Rout, 2017; Srinivasan, 1980). In Andhra Pradesh, the commissions identified 103 castes as BCs. The socio-economic background of these castes is not uniform and there are wide variations among them.

Andhra Pradesh is one of the two states in the country to initiate democratic decentralisation a Process on the lines of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee Report in 1959 (Dafter, 2020; de Xavier, Kolayekar & Mukhopadhyay 2021; Dutta, 1982; Mukherji & Ghosh, 2017; Nadakarni, Sivanna & Suresh, 2018; Rodriguez-Pose & Sandall 2008; Sanwal, 1985; Suresh, 2017; Williams & Thampi, 2013). The process of decentralization in the state can be broadly divided into six phases. In every phase, the successive governments, except during the 1960s and 1970s, where the Panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) positions were occupied by the rural upper class and upper castes, evaded the implementation of its own expert committees' recommendations and undermined the PRIs and their leadership.

This is more so when the other backward classes (OBCs) and weaker sections, during the 1990s, entered into these institutions through reservation or in open competition; the state curtailed the powers, funds, functionalities and the status of PRIs and made them 'decorative ornaments' or 'institutions'. There have been no serious efforts made by the Government, during the last five decades to make the decentralization process more meaningful in terms of empowerment of citizens and improvement in the delivery of services at the local level and altering the rural socio-economic structure. The state leadership, which has been controlled by the upper caste and class over the years in the state, is not willing to allow the marginalized sections of the society to participate in the development process of the state.

Therefore, the decentralization process in the state has to be understood more from the class and caste perspectives, along with the other variables such as economic reforms, the conditionality of donor countries. Thus, the genuine empowerment of marginalized sections and also PRIs in the state is still a work in progress. (Bala Ramulu & Ravinder, 2012). Caste associations, which came into existence during the pre-independence period while working for their caste interests, helped the emergence of Backward Classes Associations. The Backward Classes Association or federation of caste associations emerged in the post-independence period. This paper analyses the trends and limitations of these organizations in the Backward Castes mobilization. The Backward Castes Mobilization in the residuary State of Andhra Pradesh, despite its humble beginning, has been

gaining from strength to strength, and today the Backward Castes constitute one of the most preponderant forces in the fast-moving dynamics of state politics

This paper is presented only for research. The population of Andhra Pradesh according to the 2011 Census of India is 4.98 Crore, of which the population of Backward Classes projected from Smart Pulse Survey is approximately 2.15 Crore i.e. 43.17% of the total population. There are 139 Communities among Backward Classes in the State of Andhra Pradesh. They are divided into five (5) Groups as mentioned below.

S. no	Group	Number of Communities
1	BC -A	51
2	BC -B	27
3	BC-C	1
4	BC-D	46
5	BC-E	14

TOTAL 139

Sources: Budget Allocations to Backward Classes for the Year 2022 – 23

Group	Nature of the Communities
BC-A	Aboriginal Tribes, Vimukti Jatis, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes
BC-B	Vocational Groups
BC-C	Scheduled Caste converts to Christianity
BC-D	Other Castes
BC-E	Socially and Educationally Backward Classes among Muslims

An Act has been made (Act No. 13 of 2019) providing statutory basis to BC Sub-Plan and it was notified in A.P. Gazette on 19-02-2019. According to the Act, 1/3rd of the funds from Plan outlays shall be earmarked for the Backward Classes. The Government is committed to incur an expenditure of Rs. 75000 Cr. for the next 5 years period @ Rs. 15,000 Cr. per year under BC Sub Plan to secure direct and quantifiable benefits to the individuals /households / habitations of BCs to bridge the developmental gaps between the BCs and other developed communities.

#### Review of Literature

The review of literature is essential for understanding the research and hence the literature has been collected from books, journals, Reports and websites and presented below.

Bharti and Chancel 2019). There is hardly any discussion offinancing the social measures required to reduce inequality and to combat poverty. In fact, social spending has been reduced in recent years compared to investments in infrastructure (Bharti and Chancel 2019). Public expenditure on education, health, and social security

remains very low in India. An important way forward could be taxing the top-income groups. Wealth taxation is the best way of raising fiscal resources. These taxes, if used to fund public services, can reduce inequality and can be used for improving the basic living conditions of the masses by making investments in education, health, and infrastructure which will improve opportunity and raise the growth potential

Thomas Piketty termed India's education and job reservation system as 'the most systematic affirmative action policy ever attempted anywhere' (cited in Mehta 2020). These policies have significantly reduced inequalities between the old disadvantaged castes and the rest of the population.

Mehta 2020. There's little doubt that reservation policies have been a great leveler in the context of India's unequal social structure and the centuries of exclusion entrenched by it. Its major success lies in the fact that a sizeable section of India's middle class consists of OBCs, SCs, and STs.

Ghatak 2021. There is growing economic discontent with joblessness and inflation among large sections of the people, but this discontent is often directed against underrepresentation in public institutions, and not against inequalities and disparities per se. Social justice demands are seldom located in the realities of inequality and redistributive challenges emerging from it. It is worth pointing out in this context that a redistributive policy such as the 'Nyuntam Aay Yojana' (NYAY) or a minimum income guarantee scheme that the Congress promised in the 2019 general elections had few takers. Under the scheme, 72,000 rupees per year would be transferred to the bank accounts of women members of the country's poorest 20 per cent of families. But it just did not appeal to voters. It didn't do so partly because the details of the scheme were not properly spelled out, and it wasn't widely publicized.

This redistributive mechanism also faced huge opposition from the corporate sector and corporate-controlled media. For the current government, faith, rather than caste or class divisions, has emerged as a major differentiator between citizens, in contrast to the previous decades when politics and policy were driven by the constitutional promise of equal status for all; even though it was not fully realized, it remained a goal. The Citizenship Amendment Act (2019), which allows Non-Muslims from three neighboring countries to fast-track their citizenship by creating an exemption from the 'illegal migrants' category on the basis of religion, is the most striking push against intergroup equality.

### Objectives of the Study

The present study has set the following objectives:

- The main objective of the study is to study whether the developmental programmes implemented for OBCs exclusively or as part of other programmes have affected them in a positive way influencing the overall development of the OBCs.
- Other objectives are:
- To enquire about the impact of development programmes on social status; aspirations of OBCs about personal and family development and educational development of the children.
- To examine the impact of development programmes on economic status in respect of occupation employment income and property ownership (house, land, cattle, etc.).
- To analyze the impact of development on political awareness, aspirations and participation in political activities and mobilization of OBCs.
- To study the problems faced by the OBCs in availing the benefits of the developmental programmes and to elicit suggestions of the beneficiaries to solve these problems, and
- To evaluate the policy of development of OBCs and offer suggestions to overcome the loopholes and for improvement of the quality of development programmes.

### Hypotheses

1. The present study has formulated the following hypotheses.

The main hypothesis of the study is that the development programmes for OBCs impact them in a positive way and bring about development.

The development programmes create aspirations among OBCs to

- a) Develop their personal life and family;
- b) Develop their social status and Education

- c) Enable the beneficiaries to improve education of their children.
3. The development programmes also enable the OBC beneficiaries to improve their economic status in respect of
  - a) Occupation
  - b) Employment
  - c) Income and
  - d) Property (house, land, cattle, etc.).
4. The development programmes help improve the political awareness, aspirations and participation of beneficiaries in political activities and mobilization.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Sampling Design

The study was conducted by selecting a total of sample of 300 respondents from three Mandals (Blocks) of Chittoor district, namely Yerpedu (100), Bangarupalyam (100) and Kuppam (100). These three Mandals were selected from the three revenue divisions (Tirupati, Chittoor and Madanapalle) of Chittoor district respectively. The Mandals and villages were selected through multi-stage sampling. The respondents were selected by simple random sampling from different villages.

#### Fieldwork and Field Area

The field work was done for seven months during November 2022 to May 2022. Field work was conducted in three Mandals of Chittoor District, namely, Yerpedu, Bangarupalyam and Kuppam as described above. The number of villages covered in each of the Mandals and the sample selected from each village.

#### Data Collection

Both the secondary and primary data were collected for the study. The secondary data about the different developmental programmes for OBCs were collected from the offices of BC Corporation, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Chief Planning Officer (CPO) and the respective offices of MPDOs.

The primary data were collected from the selected respondents as stated above by personal interview schedule method. The respondents were enquired with whether they had utilized any of the development programmes.

#### Limitations of the study

The study has the following limitations: The Central and State Government have been implementing several developmental programmes but the limited and impact oriented programmes have been considered for the present study. The sample size is confined 300 only due to equal distribution in all mandals in three revenue divisions.

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