

Caste, Inequality in Rajasthan: An Analysis

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Abstract

Rajasthan economy is characterized by slow growth rate, wide gap between State and National per capita income caused partly by rapidly increasing population, hostile physical environment, frequent visitations of drought and famine, inadequate infrastructure, and low productivity in many sectors besides its poor inheritance at the time of its formation and long international border.

Rajasthan State has highest proportion of Scheduled Castes population (averaging over 17.2 percent) and Scheduled Tribe population (12.6 percent). The Scheduled Caste population is mainly concentrated (20 percent and above) in the districts of Ganganagar, Sawai Madhopur, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Churu and Dausa. The Scheduled Tribe population is mainly concentrate in Banswara, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Chittorgarh and Sirohi districts. This area is known as Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).

The Social Justice & Empowerment Department in Rajasthan has mainly concentrated its programs towards the educational and socio-economic development of the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes along with welfare of handicapped, destitute and needy children, women and aged persons.

This paper analyses inequality in Rajasthan within the context of caste-based discrimination. It shows the difference between Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST), other backward castes (OBC) and others. Rajasthan government Expenditure on SC, St and OBC shows that the government has special concern and commitment for the well-being of the socially disadvantage groups, as they still continue to lag behind the rest of the society due to their social and economic backwardness. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe households have poorer indicators of human development and lower income compared to other households in Rajasthan State.

This paper also evaluates mean monthly per capita consumption expenditure, enrollment rate (6-14years), mortality rate between SC, ST, OBC and others.

Keywords: Caste, Reservation, Consumption Expenditure. Per Capita Income, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, Enrollment Rate, Mortality Rate, Quota, Discrimination.

Introduction

Rajasthan State is significantly rural, with more than three quarters of the population still living in rural Areas. It is characterized by slow growth rate, wide gap between State and National per capita income caused partly by rapidly increasing population, hostile physical environment, frequent visitations of drought and famine, inadequate infrastructure, and low productivity in many sectors besides its poor inheritance at the time of its formation and long international border.

Rajasthan State has highest proportion of Scheduled Castes population (averaging over 17.2 percent) and Scheduled Tribe population (12.6 percent). The Scheduled Caste population is mainly concentrated (20 percent and above) in the districts of Ganganagar, Sawai Madhopur, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Churu and Dausa. The Scheduled Tribe population is mainly concentrate in Banswara, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Chittorgarh and Sirohi districts as shown in Rajasthan State Map. This area is known as Tribal Sub Plan (TSP).

Rajasthan is a Welfare State, committed to the welfare and development of its people in general and vulnerable section. The Constitution of India is a master piece and authentic source of social engineering. It provides special safe guards in favors of the Scheduled Castes with a view to maintaining proper balance in Indian society and guaranteeing of social equilibrium and ensuring to serve as an effective

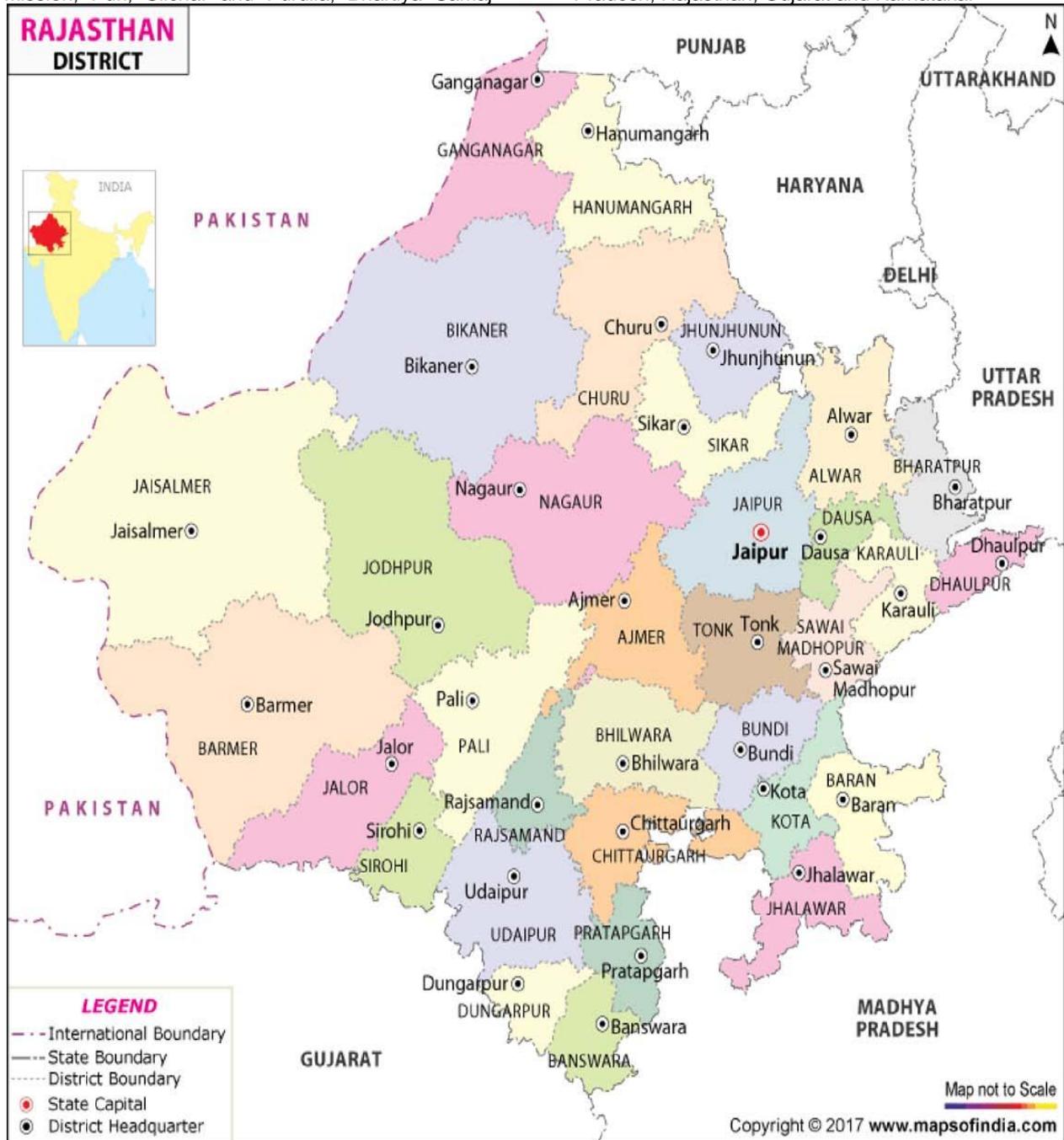
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instrument of social engineering. The state has been put under obligation to strive hard to promote the welfare of the depressed classes and secure a stable social order in which social, economic and political justice is provided to them all on equal footing with other sections of the Indian society¹.

Number of voluntary organizations promotes welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Among them, the important organizations working nationwide(All India Character) are; Harijan Sevak Sangh, Delhi; Indian Red Cross Society, New Delhi, Ramakrishna Mission, Narendrapur, Bhartiya Adimajati Sevak Sangh, New Delhi, Ramakrishna Mission, Puri, Silchar and Purulia, Bhartiya Samaj

Unnati Mandal, Bhivandi and Servants of Society, Pune in Maharashtra. The Government also provides grants-in-aid to voluntary organizations of local character working among Scheduled Castes.

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, envisages preventive measures, and states have to evolve schemes, among others, for economic and social rehabilitation of such victims. All States and Union Territories except Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland have specified special courts for trial of offences under the act. Special courts have been exclusively set up for the above in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Karnataka.



Objective of the Study

1. To study the socio-economic factors which have been responsible for differences in the level of benefits accruing to different categories of Backward Castes.
2. To study the present bottlenecks and limitations of Backward Castes development and corrective measure.
3. To evaluate the mean monthly per capita consumption expenditure between Sc, ST, OBC and other households.
4. To evaluate the enrollment rate (6-14) between Sc, ST, OBC and other.
5. To evaluate the mortality rates between Sc, ST, OBC and other.

Need the of Study

Rajasthan has traditionally been classified as a state ranking low on human development. For the three decades of development up to the early 1980s, the state exhibited slow progress on almost all economic and social and health indicators. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe are particularly in disadvantage as compare to the rest of the population. The position of SC and ST is not same in rural and urban areas. This paper evaluates mean monthly per capita consumption expenditure, enrollment rate (6-14years), mortality rate between SC, ST, OBC and other.

Methodology

Secondary data would be used, which were compiled from the following sources:

1. Budget Estimates, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur.
2. Social Welfare Department, GOR, Jaipur.
3. Statistical Abstracts, GOR, Jaipur.
4. Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), GOR, Jaipur.

Additional information is obtained through census reports, five year plan documents, educational technical surveys and other published and unpublished reports. Some information is obtained from various Rajasthan government offices, Non Government Organization (NGO).

Review of Literature

Even though there is not much literature available to analyze the impact of various development programs under taken on backward castes in Rajasthan, In recent years numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate individual programs being executed on backward castes and to highlight constraints to the development of backward caste economy in different parts of the state.

Ranjan Kumar Biswas², The aim of the constitution is to uplift the backward castes so that they may enter the main stream of national life as early as possible. Article 14 has accepted equality as the foundation of social justice. But the structure of Indian society (Including Hindus, Muslims, Christians) is based on caste hierarchy and inequality. This is the basic contradiction in the current Indian situation even five decades after the adoption of the constitution. The social structure is based on caste and all the social, educational and economic disabilities arise as a result of the practice of caste inequality. Each caste

is structured on the basis of endogamy and so preserves its identity. Each caste whether "backward" or "more backward" "depressed" or "more depressed" desires that the reservation of seats in college and jobs in the government should be on the caste basis. The concepts of "equal opportunity" and "social justice" sound hollow when we take into account the realities of social life. Backward castes exist in reality but the Constitution speaks only of backward castes. As a result any movement by the State Governments to develop criteria on the basis of caste is struck down by the courts as they violate the Constitution.

EAS Sharma³ Say that the state's attitude towards the adivasis since independence has ranged from neglect to a disregard of constitutional obligation. The growth of Naxalite activity in the adivasi tracts has brought down the heavy hand of the state and the tribals are caught between the Naxlities and the government.

A R Vasavi⁴ says that recent debates on cast based reservation have called attention to the need to fine-tune the process of selection of candidates but have overlooked the deeper problems that confront the average Scheduled Caste person. Socialization patterns, experiences in the public sphere and the educational institutions compound the subjection of dalits personhoods, leading to the loss of agency, orientation and sense of self-worth. Recognizing this is imperative for the public and for all institutions so as to enable, intergraded and scaffold the talents, skills and worth by scheduled community members.

Rhea Amleida says that nearly ten percent of India's population comprises 'denotified nomadic tribes', and that umbrella holds thousands of various communities classified under SC,ST and OBC. Exploring Rajasthan's 'Criminal Bawariya Tribe continues to live in Exile.

Rashmi Drolia in her article "Tribal woman injured in Baster firing; police claim she is lower rank cader" says that in Raipur the encounter claimed by was fake, locals didn't admit her in hospital immediately rather it was on third day that she was taken in Bhadrachalam.

Pooja Shanker says that the Indian government and prominent personalities, including social activists and politicians, have stepped forward to encourage the conservation and translation of these unread voices and to share their literary gems with the world. The project of Indian Literature in Tribal Languages and oral Traditions to preserve and educate people.

Omer Farooq Khan says that Pakistan's government has agreed in principal to merge the lawless tribal regions bordering Afghanistan that served as safe havens for terrorist for decades into the Northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

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Here we analysis selected indicators by groups like: SC, ST, OBC and others. Table shows selected indicators by groups like Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Castes (OBC) and others. This table indicates that SC, ST are particularly in disadvantage as compare to the rest of the population. Here we will see that position of SC and ST is not same in rural and urban areas. In rural areas SC group is deprived. Per Capita consumption expenditure average is showing that SC people are spending only Rs.415.03 monthly and the same average of ST is Rs.684.88 in urban areas which is lowest among other groups.

So far as enrolment rates are concern of the group 6-14 years in rural areas rates are lowest among SC group and the same is lowest in urban areas in ST groups. So we can say in rural areas SC and in urban areas ST people are not getting good opportunity in enrolment according to Table.

The mortality rates also show high difference in category "under 5 year age" for SC and in case of child it is also high for SC. This table indicates that SC/ST households have poorer indicators of human development and lower income compared to other households. Here SC shows poor indicators of human development in rural area and ST shows poor indicators of human development in urban areas.

Table: Selected Indicators By Group

Selected Indicators By Group				
	SC	ST	OBC	Other
Mean Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure(Rs)				
Rural	415.03	450.73	512.34	630.69
Urban	768.13	684.88	847.59	1148.61
Enrollment Rates 6-14 Years-Olds				
Rural	59.30%	60.80%	71.30%	79.00%
Urban	76.50%	74.50%	85.90%	89.60%
Mortality Rates				
Under 5	15.50%	14.10%	12.30%	10.90%
Child	6.70%	4.40%	3.90%	3.00%

Source: World development group,"India-Report: Rajasthan- Closing the development gap,"2011, Published by- World bank Organization

Conclusion

Rajasthan government has special concern and commitment for the well-being of the socially disadvantage groups viz., the Scheduled Castes(SCs), the Scheduled Tribes(STs), Other Backward castes(OBCs) and Minorities, as they still continue to lag behind the rest of the society due to their social and economic backwardness. Here we have some conclusions.

1. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe households have poorer indicators of human development and lower income compared to other households.
2. Here Scheduled Castes shows poor indicators of human development in rural area and ST shows poor indicators of human development in urban areas.
3. The mean monthly per capita consumption expenditure shows variation in consumption expenditure (which is also shows living standard of a castes) of backward castes as compare to

other. Here backward households have poorer indicators of human development and lower income compared to other households.

4. Budget Estimate is always more as compare to Actual Account according to Rajasthan budget document. There is so many types of heads for development of Scheduled Tribe but there is a high irregularity in government expenditure and many heads shows nil amount.

Suggestion

1. Nothing state needs to make concerted efforts to improve the social and economic conditions of the weaker section by increasing the level of literacy among them, giving alternative job opportunities.
2. While poor dalits need state support in various ways to improve standard of living, there is need to push them into the market economy.
3. Educational infrastructure must improve. Other than the standard suggestions of building extra rooms in one-room schools and appointing more teachers in one-teacher schools, and so on, there is also need to ensure regular water supply and sanitation in the school premises.
4. There is a need of Budget Management for Backward castes so that miss management at high and low level of government organization is restricted and the difference between Budget Estimate and Actual Expenditure should be meet out.
5. Comprehensive and focused implementation of various programs through:
 - i. Effective leadership and Management
 - ii. Motivation
 - iii. Monitoring
 - iv. Evaluation.
6. Special effects should be made in remote and backward areas under "Area Projects".
7. Financial Support:
 - i. Central government should give to priority for timely releasing of funds and assistance for different welfare programs.
 - ii. Additional budget should be provided for welfare of backward castes.
 - iii. Generating additional funds through donors and other social and religious institution.

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Footnotes

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