

Reservation becoming a social dilemma-a case study conducted in Laopati village of Tinsukia district of Assam

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Abstract

Dr. Bhim Rao Ram ji Ambedkar is the great Political Leader of the 20th century of India's Dalit peoples. He is also famous as the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. By criticizing the prevailing caste system, Dr. Ambedkar believed that it always facilitated the class character of a society. As an intellectual of the Dalit people, he was quite aware of the social inequality practiced within the so-called caste system of India. According to Ambedkar, Caste system was utterly irrational, inefficient, and a hindrance to the advancement of social production and general prosperity. He continuously fights for the separate political representation of the Dalits, the preferential reservation in education and governmental employment and for constructing their distinct cultural identity. So it was a noble attempt made by Dr. Ambedkar to initiate the reservation policy to uplift the socio-economics conditions of weaker class and also to a maintain equilibrium among varied class in Indian society at that time. This paper tries to highlight the social compulsion of the constitution makers regarding the reservation of that period and also analyzing the present scenario of reservation politics in India. It is a case study conducted in Laopati Village under Saikhowa Block of Tinsukia district of Assam. The Laopati Village is old revenue S.T village. The Socio-economic condition of this village is not the up to the mark. After the 58 years of implementation of Reservation this village still lagging behind in achieving a sound Socio-economic status. There is an attempt has been made in this paper to understand the changing characteristics of the reservation techniques and also to realize the administration and peoples orientation towards this aspect by using Laopati Village as a symbol of the nation.

Keywords: Reservation, facilitating, education, scholarship, social dilemma, opportunities

Introduction

Reservation is not a new phenomenon in Indian context. It has a long History in India. In ancient Vedic period Varna system (Brahmin, Khatritya, Vaishya and Sudra) was prevailed where each was assigned a specific function and on the basis of which persons position in the society was determined. Later on Caste base societies were developed where the status of a person was determined by Birth. These Castes were latter on divided into various sub-castes. As a result a Hierarchy was developed in traditional caste system. The socio-economic inequality in societies led the lower castes to raise their voice. With the arrival of British imperialism in India it even threatens the national unity for some time. The Britishers used the caste and religious divisions of Indians for pursuing their policy of Divide and Rule. The Inclusion of Communal Electorates was a landmark steps in this regard.

In independent India several steps were taken in order to tackle this problem, the preamble of the constitution enlisted the slogan of justice in socio-economic and political field without any discrimination. Articles 15,16,38,46,164,275,332, 334,335,338,340,341,342, 366 of the constitutions related with the provisions to protect the interest of weaker classes of people. In India the basis of reservation are social, political, economy and education. At the beginning the policy of reservation was adopted for 10 years and was designed as an adhoc policy. It has been however in operation for 50 years and is now schedule to continue for ten more years i.e. up to 2010 for the present. "It is so because, reservation techniques has not really benefited all the targeted people, therefore the governments felt the necessity to continue the policy so long

as the persons belonging to the covered caste and classes are not in a position to get it its benefits and get developed"^[1].

During their stay in India the British have morally and materially ruined India and have brought her on the verge of decay and after their departure the situation was not much change as our representatives and governmental officials taking the same path. As these people continuously use the system as an instrument to fulfill their own interest the general people have no way to think for better. Dr. Ambedkar therefore opined for a revolutionary change in the whole system, as he believed reforms here and there are of no use and cannot be effective in undoing the wrong done to our society. The outcome of Reservation policy was therefore result of some innovative ideas of Ambedkar. "Dr. Ambedkar had very innovative ideas about the socio-economic reforms in India. In respect of schedule caste he had made a specific suggestion that all the wasteland in the country should be put in list 1 of the constitution for settling schedule caste people on them. Though the suggestion was not accepted it was a socially ingenious product of a mind that was concerned with basic things for people- land, education, and social reforms political power"^[2].

Methodology

The Methodology and procedure of the study is carried out through the following steps-

- 1. Design of the study:** The study has been done with case study method.
- 2. Sample:** 112 households of Laopati village.

3. **Tools used:** Short interaction and interview with the villagers
4. **Procedure of collection of Data:** Investigation; visit to each individual family

The case Study

It is a case study conducted in Laopati Village under Saikhowa Block of Tinsukia district of Assam. The Laopati Village is old revenue S.T village. The number of population in this village is 583 (including the children's) and out of

which 289 are male and 294 are women. It is situated in the Northeast part of Tinsukia District Assam. The Socio-economic condition of this village is not the up to the mark. After the 58 years of implementation of Reservation this village still lagging behind in achieving a sound Socio-economic status. There is an attempt has been made in this paper to understand the changing characteristics of the reservation techniques and also to realize the administration and peoples orientation towards this aspect by using Laopati Village as a symbol of the nation.

Table 1: Living Condition of the Village (Out of 112 households)

Types of House	No of House	Place of Defection		Source of Light		Source of Fuel		Drinking Water	
Pucca	17(15.17%)	Sanitary	8(7.14%)	Electricity	32(28.57%)	L.P.G	36(32.14%)	Pipe supply	-
Semi Pucca	28(25%)	Non Sanitary	80(71.42%)	Kerosene	80(71.42%)	Kerosene	-	Tube wells	112(100%)
Kattcha	67(59.82%)	Open Space	24(21.42%)	Others	-	Firewood	76(67.85%)	Others	-
Total	112		112		112		112		112

Source: Data collected from the Laopati village on 13th Oct 2015

After considering the data's enlisted in the table one it can be said that the living standard of this village is really poor. As most of the living houses are kattcha, the owners of these houses are not yet provided sufficient raw materials or money by the government to develop the same. Indira Yabas Jojyona houses are there but the constructions of the houses are very poor, especially those houses made by the contractors. As the table shows most of the households use non-sanitary latrines, the people at their own costs constructed the sanitary latrines. There is no any public defection place in the village. In case of light most of the households use kerosene but due to the poor communication and supply condition sometime people has to wait for a week or even for a month. Likewise in case of fuel the fewer number of people who uses L.P.G has to come out at least 10k.m from home. Tube wells are the basic sources of drinking water. During the period of flood there was a scarcity of drinking water.

Table 2: Educational attainment (Out of 583 people)

Qualification	Number of People
H.S.L.C passed	41(7.03%)
H.S.S.L.C passed	17(2.91%)
Graduation	22(3.77%)
Post-Graduation	1(0.17%)
Technical Diploma and Others	2(0.34%)

Source: Data collected from the Laopati village on 17th oct 2015

There is only one L.P and one M.E. School in this village. Within five and six kilometer radius there is no any higher secondary school. Only a few educated people living in this village. In recent years due to the implementations of Axom Sarba Sikahsa Mission Abhijyan the rate of illiteracy is gradually decreasing. But we are still not sure that, in near future there will be a number of highly educated people available to this village.

Table 3: Occupational status (Out of 583 people)

Types of occupation	Number of people
Government	23(3.95%)
Non-Government	9(1.54%)
Self (Business, shop)	16(2.74%)
Casual (seasonal works)	10(1.71%)

Source: Data collected from the Laopati village on 21st oct 2015

As the table shows there is a little number of people who are associated with government jobs. Out of these government jobholders all are teachers working in the village schools. Because low educational standard people are unable to seeking their place in Nongovernmental activities. Some young people trying to become self-employed through establishing small shops, poultry farms, tea gardens etc. in the village. The average yearly income of each family of this village is less than 10,000 Rs. This village is totally agricultural based village. Most of the People in this village are cultivators. They harvest crops only once in a year. But there is no irrigation system in the village. People even today applied the traditional methods. Therefore the production is always average and it is not use as a business purpose.

Communication: There is only one connected gravel road from National Highway. Especially during the rainy season the condition of the by roads in the village become worst. A sub-branch of post office is also working but it has yet not provided up-to-date facilities.

Housetead land: In the village the Myde and Eksonia land are limited. Almost all the lands are either ceiling or grazing. Most of the people constructed their houses in ceiling surplus land. Earlier this village was regularly affected by flood. But for last four or five years, it is not much affected.

These are little about the present socio-economic conditions of the village. As mentioned earlier it is a very old village dominated by "Sonowal community". This tribe has a rich heritage of culture and age old traditions. The people of this village even today paid respect to these. Therefore this village has a unique identity in map of Assam.

This village presently facing the problems:

- a) Poor supply and distribution system of the administration.
- b) Illiteracy and unavailability of up to date information.
- c) Migration of talent from the village.
- d) Unused Human Resources
- e) Less private initiatives.
- f) Negligence of political powers
- g) Poor Road facilities.
- h) No surplus agricultural production.

Suggestions

1. For sustainable development of the village there is a need to improve the conditions of the roads. It is more often seen that wherever there is good road linkage, the non-farm developments (None planned development) take place. With the better communication facilities up-to-date information's will be flows to the village.
2. Most of the land of this village is not Myde, Lack of proper information people are not understands the utility of the Myde land and thus they are being deprived of formal banking system. In this regards awareness is essential.
3. The unemployed youth should provide proper guidance in other to make them self-employed. For this the trainings of driving, electrician, welding etc. should be organized in the village by the district authority and give them License. It will help them employment in the private sector.
4. The professional micro-finance institutions should be encouraged. Micro finance seems to offer a viable alternative to get financial resources to the people.
5. In Reservation Target groups should be identified and programmes should be properly implemented.
6. There is not enough strictness in the existing system. The various instruments of the present system are inadequate to recognize the actual weaker people. If one generation provided with reservation facilities, the next generation should restrict from it.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above-mentioned discussion it is found that the present condition of the Laopati village is really poor. As it is a village directly falling under reservation the present condition of the village reflects the status of other villages of same category prevailing all over India. What we found here only the development of underdevelopment. It is the time that governments should take these matters seriously. Central as well as the state government has announced a number schemes for the upliftment of the schedule Tribes people but how far these schemes benefits the peoples of interior places like Laopati, future will tell. Never the less the implementation of rural and other developmental programmes at a large scale is much needed in these areas and the concerned authority needs to supervise these regularly. Then proper result of reservation can be expected which will in turn benefit the real weaker as once dreamed by Dr. Ambedkar..

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