

75 Years of Indian independence and untouchability

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Abstract

The study aims to examine the violation of article 17 of Indian constitution in rural India with special reference to Hingoli tahasil, Maharashtra state. Constitution of India provides equal rights and opportunities to each citizen. Article 17 is about practice of untouchability which is emanated from caste system. Now India is celebrating 75 years of Independence. We will analyze the data collected from villages in Hingoli tahasil. We found that the practice of untouchability is continuing in rural India

Keywords: Article 17, Indian constitution, untouchability

Introduction

Discrimination based on caste in India has long history. Indian people live in paradox. By law all citizens are equal whereas old custom, ritual, traditions are full of segregation. According to sociologist caste system in India is closed regarding marriage and kinship alliances. Caste groups are hierarchy based on their ritual status, from pure to impure [1]. Untouchability is emanated from caste system. They are now known as Scheduled Castes (SCs). India is far away from the declaration that the society is in equal sphere. SCs are still facing the practice of discrimination in their daily lives.

75 years of Indian Independence have not had the desired impact on these socially, economically and educationally paralyzed group. Few SCs gain education and moved to urban areas. It doesn't mean that whole SCs modernized and able to compete with upper caste. SCs are still remain outside the main stream of development [2, 3]. Their exploits have not stopped yet. Atrocities against them did not decrease. The case of Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, the death of Meghwal for growing his moustache, the incident in Rajasthan is even worse than the case of Meghwal, a student who lost his life after touching the water pot in the school are sufficient to prove the practice of untouchability in India. Crime against Scheduled Caste (SC) is increasing day by day. In 2021, 50,900 cases were registered in India. Maximum 55 percent cases of crime against SC were registered in Hindi heartland Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in India [4]. In this view we examine the status of untouchability in Hingoli tahsil area. To what extent it is abolished? To what extent it is effective?

Hingoli tahasil

Hingoli tahasil is in Maharashtra state of India. According to 2011 census of India, population of Hingoli tahasil is 269546 of which 138326 males and 131220 females. Most of the people are depends on agriculture. The total population of scheduled caste people is 43335 of which 21477 are males and 20858 are females [5].

Methodology

The study analyses the present scenario of the untouchability in Hingoli tahasil Maharashtra India. For the

aim of investigation, we have collected data from 45 villages by means of questionnaire.

Interpretation of data collection

Article 17 of Indian constitution is about untouchability. Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden by the article 17. The enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. Now, following table represents responses received against questions.

Table 1: Caste wise responses frequency table regarding article 17

Do you know that according to Article 17 of the Indian Constitution, practicing untouchability is a crime?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	3	5.9	5.9	5.9
	Yes	48	94.1	94.1	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

Let us test this by using following hypothesis

H0: Article 17 of Indian Constitution is known to people

H1: Article 17 of Indian Constitution is not known to People.

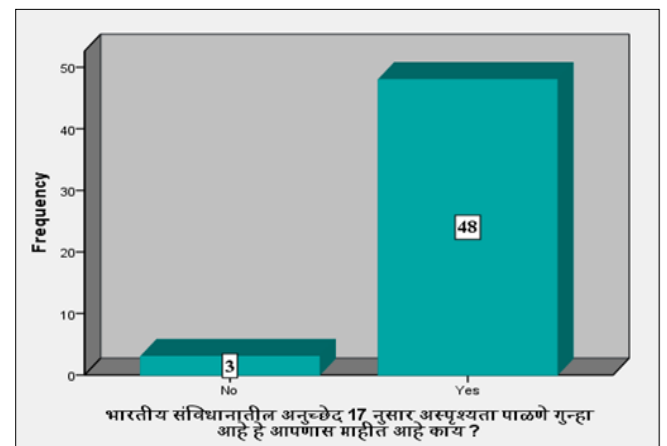


Fig 1: graph of the frequency of respondent regarding Article 17

Table 2: table of answers received from respondent regarding article 17

Count				
		Do you know that according to Article 17 of the Indian Constitution, practicing untouchability is a crime?		Total
		No	Yes	
Response Category	OPEN	2	12	14
	OTHERS	1	2	3
	SC	0	34	34
Total		3	48	51

Table 3: Chi square test table of the regarding article 17. (a. 4 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .18.)

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.994 ^a	2	.018
Likelihood Ratio	7.517	2	.023
N of Valid Cases	51		

From table 3, the calculated asymptotic (p value) value 0.018 is smaller than 0.05 i.e. $0.018 < 0.05$, so we accept null hypothesis. Therefore, people accept that article 17 of Indian Constitution is known.

Table 4: table regarding the common watershed

Do all the villagers use the same watershed?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	17	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Yes	34	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

However, form the table 4, it is clear that 34 responses have accepted that they use the same water shed and 17 i.e. 33.3% responses have accepted that they do not use the same water shed.

Table 5: table of frequency of respondent about entering in temple

Are scheduled caste people in the village allowed to enter the temple if they are Hindus?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	13	25.5	25.5	25.5
	Yes	38	74.5	74.5	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

From table 5, it is clear that 25.5% respondent accept that SCs are not allowed to enter the temple. Table 6, reveals that 39.2% respondent accept that SCs are served food in a separate row in the village.

Table 6: table of frequency of respondent about food serving in a separate row

Is food served in a separate row for scheduled castes in the village?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	31	60.8	60.8	60.8
	Yes	20	39.2	39.2	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

Table 7: table of frequency of respondent about eating at homes of SCs

Are the villagers ready to eat at the homes of Scheduled Caste people?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	12	23.5	23.5	23.5
	Yes	39	76.5	76.5	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

From table 7, it is observed that 23.5% respondent accept that villagers are not ready to eat at the homes of SCs.

Table 8: table of frequency of respondent about experience of discrimination

Any experience you have with regard to observance of discrimination (untouchability) with Scheduled Caste people.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		9	17.6	17.6	17.6
	No	28	54.9	54.9	72.5
	Yes	14	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	51	100.0	100.0	

From table 8, it is clear that 27.8% respondent accept that they have experienced discrimination in their life.

It should be note here that it is known that article 17 of Indian Constitution forbidden untouchability. It is offensive. However, form table 4-8, we found that watershed for SCs and upper caste is different, SCs are served food in separate row, SCs are not allowed to enter the temple.

Conclusion

In the nutshell, from the above discussion we can see that untouchability is not over yet. It is there in one form or another. Untouchability persists even if people do not accept it openly. No matter how much the upper caste people beat the drum that they do not follow untouchability, the duplicity in their behavior is exposed. Indians are aware about article 17 of Constitution. However, they practice untouchability. It means that they accept that the do not follow Indian Constitution.

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Conflict of Interest: NIL

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