

CASTE IN GLOBALISATION CONTEXT: THE PERCEPTION OF INTERNATIONAL AID AGENCIES

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Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to understand the working of international aid agencies with the marginalized groups of India. I argue that the functioning of these agencies is not innocent and the same can be revealed by critical understanding of the internal dynamics of their operation, particularly in the broader field of empowerment of marginal communities that they are engaged with. Despite the fact that the International aid agencies have their imprints in India for decades, there is no visible or substantial change in lives of the communities they seek to change. Those, particularly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, other marginalized communities continue to be at the lower strata of the society devoid of socio-political, economic and welfare measures of the so-called egalitarian state. One reason that led to the failure of these agencies is their un (conscious) inability to understand the socio, political and cultural dynamics of Indian caste system. Without proper understanding of the caste system, one cannot comprehend the resultant systematic exclusion, which in fact led to the perennial poverty of these communities. Furthermore, the paper seeks to understand the institutional setup of these aid agencies in India and argues thereby that any developmental, reformist and empowerment agenda adopted by such agencies is inherently 'exclusive' and therefore bound to fail in the promises that they make. This paper critically views the aid agencies' mainstream perception of caste discourse, their lack of will to include the members of the marginalized communities into their policymaking bodies. Moreover, I argue that any developmental intervention without the active participation of marginalized communities will be a charade in the name of charity. The paper divided into 6 sections. In the first section, I look at the role of caste in modern context, synthesizing the views of scholars such as K Sathyanarayana, Susie Tharu, G Aloysius, Gopal Guru, Sundar Sarukai, N. Sukumar and AS Ajith Kumar and argue that caste is reconfigured and more rampant in modern times. In the second section, I argue that, with the formation of Brahmanical caste based organizations across the countries, caste has become a world problem; third section is about understanding of caste in international aid agencies. In the fourth section, I draw your attention on the caste diversity and staffing practices of international aid agencies in India, which disproportionately occupied and operated by privileged sections with Brahmanic cultural capital. In the fifth section, I argue for the need of challenging the caste in conscious level to symbolic boundaries. The sixth chapter is the conclusion and seventh one is the annexure, list out the Brahmanical caste based organizations formed in the countries across the world, eighth one is the table that indicates the diversity and accountability in the aid agencies in India

Keywords: Caste, India, Aid Agencies, Modernity, Globalisation, Discrimination, Diversity