

Social Cohesion and Dalits in an Equiposing Century

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ABSTRACT

Confining oneself to the popular opinion i.e. doxa is a complicated phenomenon that synoptically overruled and marginalized the dalit population of India since time immemorial. Accepting the dominant opinion as the standard modus operandi of the society is a challenge for any society that would enliven social cohesion and thereby cause the simulation of social capital among the groups associated. This paper intends to share a perspective on the reservations, as an expression of doubt qualifying overall approval of a plan or statement that appropriately equipoise the different social aspects of life. As a novel venture it tries to extend a bird's eye view on the marginalization as a custom that apparently becomes an equipoise and would equate or normatively hypothesize the future of the marginalized especially the dalits of India. Deconstructive analysis of the equiposing elements related to social cohesion is expected to unleash the possible reservations that normalize the abnormal.

1. Introduction - Social Cohesion

Social cohesion is a widely discussed topic which describes as Janmaat (2011) explains; the factors that uphold the society watertight rather divided and making it falls. Chan and Chan (2006) defines social cohesion comprehensively connecting the primacies of a society that include a dynamic relationship between the members of a society with explicit behaviour based on the norms and customs upon which the members are mutually related through helping, trusting and holding a willingness and belongingness. Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2011) clearly lists out the comprehensive nature of a cohesive society such as a sense of belonging, active participation, trust, inclusion and upward mobility. It vividly states the characteristics of social cohesion which facilitate the well-being, inclusion, deepening and expansion of the opportunities and positive mobility of the marginalized communities by fighting the untoward atrocities and social maladies. Social cohesion is predetermined by certain conditions, though it is considered a universal phenomenon, where the local or regional living conditions of people with integrity, trustworthiness, intentional participation in the social actions and promoting the wellbeing of each member. A society said to have social cohesion would possess equality or would be egalitarian and thereby must qualify the same with the essential features of equality such as equal opportunities, accessibility to services i.e. education health etc; (Janmaat, 2011).

Social cohesion in India, a nation of collection of minorities, is worth to analyze with its affinity and submission to the common or popular rather mythological beliefs than scientific dependency. Group affinity in India often symbolizes the common rituals shared by the members of the group which have been mostly designed on the backdrops of religion as well as the 'Varna System'¹. Upholding the society in its real spirit is problematic and bonhomie exposed is hubristic and insolence.

¹ An extensively discussed system in Dharma sastras that divides the society into four varnas, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vysyas, and Shudras.

The definition-bound mutual relationships and oneness among the members of Indian cohesiveness primarily ersatz or underpinned with the caste dynamism that is habitually 'Brahmanic'² therefore, it is imperative to discuss the equiposing nature of the present century that relives the Brahmanic remnants disapproved by modernity.

Social cohesion as defined by Schiefer and van der Noll (2016) focus on the quality of relationship between the members and descriptively characterize the cooperative unity among them. The said quality of the togetherness found in a neighbourhood has been qualified by their relationship with other community members, self identification of one with the group and the readiness, receptivity or adhesiveness of one with the community's norms and common goal. Sharing a common goal in Indian context is an empirically proven utopia when we assess the quality of togetherness among the Indian collective that is principally divided on caste system. The social cohesion and the cooperative-unity found among the upper castes while following the popular customs tempt to equipoise the events that challenge their existence as well as the outcomes of such customs on the deprived classes even when it exceeds the limits of tolerance. Equiposing is a challenge to human rights and existence of the dalit communities of India in different dimensions as it directly constitutionalize the customs that are indifferent and inhumane.

2. Reservations³ on Equiposing⁴

Reservations, as mentioned above considered as an expression of doubt that qualifies overall approval of a plan or statement, are concerns of progressive minds as we perceive the happenings in the present century in the light of its true

² Brahmanic here denotes the social functioning of popular social rules that authorize the existence of caste hierarchy according to the Varna System.

³ Here it denotes 'a feeling of doubt or uncertainty about something'.

⁴ A situation in which things are perfectly balanced; here the act of purposive and erroneous balancing of social evils through different interventions.

value, spirit and nature. Definitions by experts and researchers show social cohesion as the base of any society that explicitly demonstrates definite structures. Cohesive societies will have traits or characteristics that potentially relate the social units like people, communities, organizations and the areas (McCracken, 1998) that would strengthen interrelations, values as well as a common identity that fosters trust and belongingness within the society (Jenson, 1998). At the core it might be a universal proposition or moral adherence with the true spirit of living but surfaces multipart and obligatory suppositions that in effect replaces the core to the periphery.

Opinions at our disposals too support an off-putting cohesiveness sensibly seen among the diverse societies largely represented with theoretical value. The heterogeneous communities would have more complex social dynamism thereby such groups would face more challenges to maintain social relationships cohesively in their own ethnic groups or with other groups. (Putnam, 2007) Indian social system, with its accurately present discourses and practices, validates this emphatically.

'People live together' at this moment sounds good but the potential vulnerabilities at different strata of lives live along with us in varied forms. Traits of the group that set the tone of life through shared customs and practices or decisively upholds the unwritten constitution of that particular territory that was commonly or popularly followed. 'People lie together' becomes a more acceptable or a morally binding custom once it gains acceptance among the society built upon common traits. Rape or lynching would be welcomed and the reception will be ratified by the societies across the nation that shares trust and belongingness of a particular kind. Caste killing in the name of honour and pride in fact is an offshoot of the cohesive habits of the society that shares common traits, customs and beliefs. The advancements that the modernity brought into the fore would disappear in front of the caste-ists as the syncretism seen in Indian society is an abode of castes that endorses cohesiveness through popular beliefs and rituals i.e. doxa. Specific to Indian context, once oppressed turns the coat to play the oppressor as the minds crave for the pseudo paramountcy assured by the brahmanical order is discernible if anything challenges the popular and intimate beliefs or rituals though it is counterproductive and unscientific.

The marginalized dalit communities are, mostly the victims as the social capital they possess is perpetually concreted with lesser humane. Humanity among the Indian mainstream human cohesive groups is the outcome of the predispositions of the Darwinian Hitler's rhetoric or a supremacistic psychotherapy. Portes and Vickstrom (2011) have the estimation that the social capital that is communitarian in nature rely mostly on the structural elements that are universal and intrinsically jelled within the society, not on the immediate closeness or networks that produce social capital at present. Structural factors include the level of inequality, standard of living, education and the ethnic composition of the society. In the view of Gavin Bradshaw (2009) on social cohesion in South Africa pauses many challenges that deprive the idea of social cohesion stretching from racial identity conflicts, economic policies, accelerated crime records, polarization on sensitive

and specific issues, land reforms etc. This is grossly knitted with the consecrated socialization and deconstruction of the existing norms by which the society thrived for long till the invasion of an outside force. Affluent communities across the world are better cohesive as the defined power relations strengthen their capitals vertically and horizontally and thereby produce equipoising deliberations to play homeostasis.

3. Social Cohesion, Social Institutions and Equiposing

Social institutions organize the societies, maintain the social order and address the basic as well as universal matters of social life. Society exhibits institutionalized behavioral patterns that regulate its members through explicit unremitting and structured patterns. Legitimation of these patterns with the norms predominant and the systemic approval creates definite and organized social order⁵. This order cannot be called as universal unless it encloses social inclusion at its core. Social cohesion however positive the concept is technically potential to produce social insularity and marginalization through its unflinching binding nature between the people in cohesion (Banfield, 1958). The patterns that design the social order are intricately interwoven with the individuals and their actions, thoughts, attitudes etc; and by and large inclusive not impulsive (Green & Han 2009). This is based on consensus not on coercion; but the reality seen in Indian societies contradict with the very nature of the cohesive imperatives. Heavily dependent caste bound collective of India flow through the meadows of blissfulness for the upper castes and through the heartbreaking terrains for the lower castes.

Cohesive attitude inside the family and kinship, the axis of the society turns into the epicenter of caste-ist eruptions upon which the thoughts and social behaviour are groomed, as it is bound by the varna system. Theoretical support through the times scares the lower rung with beliefs and rituals that are mostly unaware along with the well prevailing educational backwardness where education is a primary organ of the society. Family in effect, climbs the ladder in Indian society up or down upon which the social capital they build as the group in cohesion makes a unit set apart from the layer lower or upper to them. It is pathological to note that the cohesive habits of an Indian social group, otherwise not challenged by the individuals or organizations, are designed according to the caste system and are not expected to have more social capital than which they are capable to acquire as a predisposed social unit. Green A and others in their work on Education, Equality and Social Cohesion, opine that the social capital possessed by the groups might not contribute to the entire society's social capital nor can we conclude the richness in habits, customs etc; as symbols of social cohesiveness. Social harmony rests not in the alliance between the social groups and cohesive patterns within the groups do not correlates with inter-group patterns of social cohesion (Green et al, 2006).

Religion plays an important role in the formation of social capital as well as social cohesion. The social capital formed on

⁵ <https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/sociology-and-social-reform/sociology-general-terms-and-concepts/social-institutions#A>

the basis of religions will definitely be associated with the groups that affiliated to it, therefore the cohesion among across the religious practices fall vulnerable to the unexpected. The challenge here is the normative commitment of the apostles of the religion that would uprightly unite behind the tyranny caused by their religion histrionically and do equipoise insanity sane. Spiritual heads of any religion possess necessary social capital derived through his/her religious affiliation, identity, family, relatives, friends, education and the network of cohesive identical groups. This capital achieved through cohesiveness equilibrates any violations and customizes the rule of law accordingly. Living with the reminiscent suppressive past continued to constitute the decisions of the multitude at different situations of their lives. The social institutions including family, education, economy, polity and all other allied arenas predominantly play their role with a 'Varna backdrop' visibly and invisibly.

Surpassing humanity through equipoising history by reinflating the remnants of mythological but still pervasive rituals of the proponents of the system is another reservation prominent in the present. Life of dalits still not yet began to access the social, economic and political independence and capitals⁶ though the country said to have one of the best constitutions in the world. For example, social protection and employment status would not imply the social security and social protection. Social cohesion in accordance with its efficacy constructs social capital by which the members of the cohesive groups build their lives successfully. This social capital cannot stand independent to the social institutions, organizations, culture, economy and the public policies framed by the polity. John Helliwell (2001) substantiates this by stating economic outcomes influence the social capital, thus has greater significance. In addition Robert Putnam (2000) writes the significant association of social capital with the public policies that encompass the society through different interventions in various fields of operations such as healthy living, social well-being, people's participation in democracy and responses of governments to its stakeholders etc; Social capital formed through influential cohesiveness definitely would encompass inclusion of socio-economic, political and cultural capitals that shape the lives indeed.

4. Conclusion

Social institutions in India are not yet been complied with mechanisms to counter caste menace, gender issues, crimes including rape and most importantly the same being equipoised with un/popular theoretical and cultural provisions found in the popular customs in the present on a large scale through practices of well-liked cohesive groups. Along with this all encompassing commoditization of physical as well as emotional needs of individuals, even the very personal interests or wishes of people, is in its zenith and the time marks anything and everything acceptable by diluting the wellbeing of the nature itself. Capitalistic fiscal policies look for business opportunities anything under the sky with a profit motto and theoretically assist the practices to grab the same through hook or crook. Dalit communities in India should able to redefine the modes of acquiring social, economic and symbolic capitals

through necessary education to counter the system of indifference. History of our geographical territory is the sole source that can counteract the equipoising attitude of the majority. Authentic books and people who authentically read these books are the agents of change and the expectation of the present for the future.

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⁶ Concept of Pierre Bourdieu, a French Sociologist.