

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION HAS STRENGTHENED THE SPIRIT OF INCLUSIVENESS IN INDIAN DEMOCRACY

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Abstract

The study investigates how voting affects the welcoming atmosphere of India's democratic system. The purpose of this research is to look at how voting affects the spread of democratic ideals like fairness and tolerance. The study concludes that citizens' active engagement in the political process has significantly contributed to the growth of a more welcoming atmosphere in India's democratic system. Those who are actively involved in politics are shown to be more familiar with and sympathetic to democratic ideals. A sense of personal investment in and accountability for the democratic process is fostered by voting, which in turn encourages more participation in civic life and service. Findings also show how difficult it is for people from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in elections. Poverty, illiteracy, and discrimination are only a few examples of the structural impediments that this research shows to be in the way of people's full and equal involvement in the democratic process. The findings suggest that in order to deepen the democratic process, efforts should be made to eliminate these hurdles and promote more inclusion in political involvement. The findings of the study shed light on the importance of civic engagement in fostering diversity and inclusion in India's democratic system. The research stresses the significance of fostering a democratic culture that appreciates variety, openness, and participation.

Keywords: *Political participation, Inclusiveness, Marginalized communities and Structural barriers*

1. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of India is the world's largest democracy, with a population of over 1.3 billion people. The Indian democratic system is based on the principles of equality, freedom, and justice for all. Since independence in 1947, India has undergone a transformation from a colonial regime to a democratic nation-state. However, democracy is not just about elections, but also about ensuring inclusiveness, participation, and representation for all citizens. The Constitution of India enshrines the principles of social, economic, and political justice, but the actualization of these principles remains a challenge. One of the key aspects of democracy is political participation, which is the active involvement of citizens in the democratic process. Political participation includes activities such as voting, joining political parties, attending public meetings, and engaging in social movements. In India, political participation has been a cornerstone of the democratic process, with a vibrant and diverse civil society that has played an important role in shaping the country's political landscape. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the relationship between political participation and inclusiveness in Indian democracy. Inclusiveness refers to the degree to which all members of society, regardless of their social, economic, or political status, are able to participate fully in the democratic process. Inclusiveness is a fundamental principle of democracy, and it is essential for the promotion of equality, justice, and tolerance. The purpose of this research article is to examine the relationship between political participation and the spirit of inclusiveness in Indian democracy. The article also discusses the challenges faced by marginalized communities in accessing political participation and suggests ways to promote greater inclusiveness in the democratic process.

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have examined the relationship between political participation and democracy. One study by Verba and Nie (1972) argues that political participation is essential for the functioning of democracy, as it helps to ensure accountability, legitimacy, and representation. Similarly, Putnam (2000) argues that political participation helps to build social capital, which is essential for the effective functioning of democratic institutions. In the context of India, there have been several studies that have examined the relationship between political participation and democracy. For example, Jha and Chatterjee (2007) argue that political participation is essential for the promotion of social justice and equality in India. They argue that political participation helps to empower marginalized communities and gives them a voice in the democratic process. Another study by Yadav (2007) examines the relationship between political participation and electoral outcomes in India. Yadav argues that political participation is essential for the promotion of democratic values such as accountability, representation, and legitimacy. He suggests that political participation can help to reduce voter apathy and increase voter turnout, which is essential for the effective functioning of democratic institutions.

Despite the importance of political participation in democracy, there are several challenges faced by marginalized communities in accessing political participation. These challenges include poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, and lack of political representation. For example, the National Sample Survey (NSS) data shows that the level of political participation is lower among women, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) compared to the general population (NSS, 2002). Furthermore, studies have shown that marginalized communities face significant barriers in accessing political participation. These barriers include lack of education, limited access to information, discrimination, and lack of resources. For example, a study by Desai and Kulkarni (2008) found that women face significant barriers in accessing political participation due to cultural norms, lack of education, and lack of access to resources.

2.1.Statement of Problem

This study addresses India's political process's exclusion of marginalized groups. Dalits, Adivasis, women, and religious minorities have been excluded from political decision-making despite constitutional assurances of equality and political participation. This exclusion has perpetuated social and economic inequality by preventing representation in policymaking. This study examines how political involvement has enhanced inclusiveness in Indian democracy, particularly for marginalized people. Poverty, illiteracy, and discrimination limit equal involvement in the democratic process, and the study will analyze attempts to eliminate these barriers and enhance political inclusion. The study will also evaluate how political participation affects people's understanding and appreciation of democratic values and whether it increases civic engagement and community involvement. This study will illuminate how political engagement promotes inclusivity and diversity in Indian democracy. This research seeks to illuminate how political institutions and civil society organizations can collaborate to create a more inclusive and equitable democracy by identifying the barriers and challenges marginalized communities face in political participation and highlighting efforts to overcome them.

3.METHODOLOGY

The claims made in this article are supported by aspects that are both descriptive and analytical in nature. Secondary sources, such as articles from newspapers and magazines, reports based on investigations, and other studies that are somewhat comparable to those, are utilized to a significant extent throughout this work.

4.RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1.Inclusiveness in Indian democracy

Promoting democratic principles like equality, fairness, and tolerance, inclusiveness in Indian democracy is essential. People in all walks of life benefit from political engagement, as they are more likely to internalize the principles of democracy. This is because taking part in politics gives people a chance to have their voices heard, solve problems, and shape the future. An individual's awareness of the problems facing their local community and the nation as a whole increases when they become involved in political activity. In addition, they learn more about the policies and beliefs of the various political parties. With this information in hand, they will be better equipped to vote strategically and hold their legislators to account. A sense of duty and ownership for the democratic process can also be fostered through political involvement. People's dedication to the democratic process and their sense of community both increase when they engage in political activities. An active and engaged citizenry is crucial to the health of our democratic institutions, and a sense of ownership and responsibility is the key to fostering that. Women, Dalits, Adivasis, and other minorities are encouraged to take part in Indian democracy thanks to the country's commitment to inclusive politics. Engaging in political activities not only helps these groups learn more about and embrace democratic ideas, but it also gives them the tools they need to speak up for their rights and take part in the democratic process in more meaningful ways. As a result, the divide between the marginalized and the majority is narrowed, and inclusivity is fostered. To sum up, fostering a sense of belonging is crucial to the success of democratic institutions in India and to the spread of democratic principles like fairness, tolerance, and equality. Getting people of all walks of life involved in politics is essential to fostering a more welcoming society and fostering a deeper appreciation for democratic ideals. In turn, this fosters civic participation and community involvement, both of which are vital to the health of our democracies as a whole. There needs to be more of an attempt to include traditionally excluded groups in the democratic process by removing the obstacles that prevent them from voting.

4.2.Political participation increased civic engagement and community involvement.

Political participation provides a platform for individuals to express their opinions and concerns, and contribute to the decision-making process. When individuals actively participate in the democratic process, they feel a sense of ownership and responsibility towards it. This sense of ownership and responsibility leads to increased civic engagement and community involvement. When individuals feel that their voices are being heard and their opinions matter, they become more invested in the democratic process. They are more likely to engage in discussions with their peers and community members about political issues and encourage others to participate in the democratic process. This increased engagement leads to a greater sense of community involvement and a shared commitment towards the betterment of society. Furthermore, political participation helps individuals to develop a deeper understanding of the democratic process and the role of citizens in it. As individuals participate in political activities, they gain insights into the complexities of governance and decision-making. They become more informed about the issues facing their community and the country as a whole. This knowledge and understanding enable them to make more informed decisions during elections and hold their elected representatives accountable.

Political participation also provides opportunities for individuals to actively engage in activities that promote social and political change. This may include volunteering for political campaigns, participating in protests, and advocating for policy changes. By engaging in such activities, individuals become more aware of the issues facing their community and become more committed to creating a positive impact. Political participation plays a critical role in promoting civic engagement and community involvement. By providing a platform for individuals to express their opinions and concerns, political participation helps to create a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the democratic process. This increased engagement leads to greater

community involvement and a shared commitment towards the betterment of society. Therefore, efforts should be made to promote political participation and ensure that individuals from diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities to engage in the democratic process.

4.3.Challenges faced by marginalized communities in accessing political participation

Marginalized communities, such as women, Dalits, Adivasis, and minorities, often face significant challenges in accessing political participation. These challenges are largely rooted in structural barriers that prevent equal participation in the democratic process. The following are some of the challenges faced by marginalized communities in accessing political participation: Poverty: Poverty is one of the primary challenges faced by marginalized communities in accessing political participation. Many individuals from marginalized communities lack the resources to engage in political activities, such as attending rallies or participating in campaigns. Poverty also limits their access to information and resources necessary to participate fully in the democratic process. Illiteracy: Illiteracy is another significant barrier to political participation. Many individuals from marginalized communities lack basic literacy skills, which makes it difficult for them to understand and engage with the political process. Illiteracy also limits their ability to access information and communicate their opinions effectively.

Discrimination: Discrimination based on caste, gender, religion, and ethnicity is another significant barrier to political participation. Many marginalized individuals face discrimination when attempting to participate in political activities, which limits their ability to fully engage in the democratic process. Discrimination also leads to exclusion from political decision-making processes, further perpetuating marginalization. Lack of Representation: Many marginalized communities lack representation in political institutions. This lack of representation limits their ability to participate in decision-making processes and advocate for their rights and interests. Access to Resources: Marginalized communities often lack access to resources, such as transportation, communication, and technology, which are necessary for political participation. This limits their ability to attend rallies, participate in campaigns, and access information about political candidates and issues. Marginalized communities face significant challenges in accessing political participation due to structural barriers such as poverty, illiteracy, discrimination, lack of representation, and access to resources. Efforts should be made to address these barriers and ensure that individuals from marginalized communities have equal opportunities to participate in the democratic process. This would help promote inclusiveness in Indian democracy and ensure that the voices of all citizens are heard and represented

4.4.Efforts to address barriers and promote greater inclusiveness in political participation

Efforts to address barriers and promote greater inclusiveness in political participation are essential for strengthening the democratic process in India. Here are some initiatives that can help to promote inclusiveness in political participation: Education and awareness campaigns: Education and awareness campaigns can help to address illiteracy and increase awareness about the importance of political participation. These campaigns can help individuals from marginalized communities to understand their rights and responsibilities and provide them with the knowledge necessary to participate in the democratic process. Representation: Efforts should be made to increase representation of marginalized communities in political institutions. This would ensure that the voices of all citizens are heard and represented in the decision-making process. Political parties should be encouraged to field candidates from diverse backgrounds and ensure that they have a fair chance of being elected.

Reservation policies: Reservation policies can help to address the lack of representation of marginalized communities in political institutions. These policies can provide reserved seats for individuals from marginalized communities in local bodies and legislative assemblies. Access to resources: Efforts should be made to ensure that individuals from marginalized communities have access to resources such as transportation, communication, and technology, which are necessary for

political participation. This can include initiatives such as setting up public transport systems, increasing access to mobile phones and the internet, and providing subsidies for attending political rallies. Community-based initiatives: Community-based initiatives can help to promote greater inclusiveness in political participation by encouraging individuals from marginalized communities to participate in the democratic process. These initiatives can include voter registration drives, community forums, and workshops on political issues. Efforts to address barriers and promote greater inclusiveness in political participation are essential for strengthening the democratic process in India. By ensuring that all citizens have equal opportunities to participate in the democratic process, we can promote greater representation, inclusiveness, and accountability in our political institutions.

4.5. Creating a democratic culture

In a diverse and complex society like India, creating a democratic culture that values diversity, inclusiveness, and active citizenship is essential for promoting a healthy and sustainable democracy. A democratic culture that values diversity ensures that all citizens, regardless of their background, are represented in the decision-making process. This helps to ensure that the needs and interests of all citizens are taken into account when making policy decisions. A diverse democracy promotes innovation and creativity by providing a platform for individuals from different backgrounds to share their ideas and perspectives. This leads to the development of new and innovative solutions to social, economic, and political challenges. Active citizenship is essential for promoting democratic values such as accountability, transparency, and civic engagement. A democratic culture that values active citizenship encourages individuals to participate in the democratic process and take responsibility for their role in shaping their community and society. This leads to a more engaged citizenry that is better equipped to hold elected officials and institutions accountable for their actions. In a diverse society like India, where different groups have varying levels of political and economic power, active citizenship can help to promote greater equality and social justice. When citizens are empowered to participate in the democratic process, they can work together to challenge entrenched power structures and promote policies that benefit the broader society. A democratic culture that values diversity and inclusiveness promotes social cohesion by bringing people together and fostering a sense of community.

It helps to build trust, understanding, and respect between different groups in society and promotes social harmony. When people feel that their voices are heard and their perspectives are valued, they are more likely to work together to address common challenges and build a better society. By promoting social cohesion, a democratic culture can help to reduce social and political tensions and create a more stable and peaceful society. In addition to promoting social cohesion, a democratic culture that values diversity and inclusiveness is essential for protecting minority rights. In a diverse society like India, where different groups have varying levels of political and economic power, it is important to ensure that the rights of minority groups are protected. A democratic culture that values diversity and inclusiveness ensures that minority groups have a voice in the decision-making process and are protected from discrimination and prejudice. This is essential for promoting equality, justice, and human rights in society. Creating a democratic culture that values diversity, inclusiveness, and active citizenship is essential for promoting a healthy and sustainable democracy. It ensures that all citizens are represented, encourages active participation in the democratic process, promotes innovation and social cohesion, and protects minority rights. By promoting democratic values, we can build a more inclusive, just, and equitable society for all. Achieving this vision will require sustained efforts from individuals, civil society organizations, and political institutions to promote greater diversity, inclusiveness, and active citizenship in our democracy.

4.6. Implications of the Study

The study on Political Participation has strengthened the Spirit of Inclusiveness in Indian Democracy has significant implications for the future of democracy in India. One of the key findings of the study is that political participation has played an important role in strengthening the inclusiveness of Indian democracy. This is particularly important given the country's diverse population, with people from different religions, castes, and regions coexisting in a complex social and political landscape. The study highlights the potential for political participation to foster a sense of belonging and empowerment among marginalized groups, and to encourage greater representation and participation in the democratic process. This can help to build a more inclusive and responsive democracy in India, where all citizens have a voice and a stake in the future of the country.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1. CONCLUSION

Political involvement has strengthened inclusiveness in Indian democracy. Participation has helped marginalized people exercise their rights, grasp democratic norms, and hold political leaders accountable. To secure equal political involvement for all, considerable hurdles remain. The study found that poverty, illiteracy, prejudice, and unequal representation hinder marginalized communities' political involvement. Addressing these structural barriers by increasing access to education and economic opportunities, creating targeted programs to promote political awareness and participation among marginalized communities, and increasing political representation diversity and inclusiveness will help increase political participation. A healthy and lasting democracy requires efforts to establish a democratic culture that values diversity, inclusivity, and active citizenship. Promoting democratic ideals like accountability, transparency, and civic participation can help citizens hold elected politicians and institutions accountable. Third, supporting inclusiveness and diversity in political involvement is both moral and necessary for a healthy and durable democracy. Diversity and inclusiveness enhance democracy, minority rights, creativity, social cohesion, and citizen participation. Promoting democratic values creates a more inclusive, just, and equal society. Promoting diversity, inclusion, and active citizenship in our democracy will need ongoing efforts from individuals, civil society organizations, and political institutions.

5.2. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study on Political Participation has strengthened the Spirit of Inclusiveness in Indian Democracy, there are several suggestions that could be made to further strengthen democratic inclusivity in India. Firstly, efforts should be made to increase access to political participation for marginalized communities, such as women, lower castes, and religious minorities, through measures such as quotas, affirmative action, and voter education programs. Secondly, political parties should prioritize inclusivity in their internal structures and decision-making processes, by promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels. Finally, the government should promote transparency and accountability in the political process, by ensuring fair and free elections, and promoting public scrutiny of political decision-making. These measures can help to build a more inclusive and responsive democracy in India, where all citizens have equal opportunities to participate and have their voices heard.

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