



AN STUDY ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract :

After independence, the position of lower castes in the social ladder was not good. They were treated as untouchable. So, on the moral ground, the government had provided reservation for the upliftment of lower castes. But, after 75 years, the reservation has created the gap between lower caste in itself; High economic class and lower economic class and higher economic class in SCs and STs defend a reservation for maintaining the status quo. The same scenario is in socially and economically backward class also like Maratha, Jats, gurjars etc. is demanding reservation despite high living standard. New reservation on the basis of economic background is based on moral duties which is implicitly part of the constitution. The objective of the research is to know the need of economic based reservation, To understand the concept of economic based reservation, to study the Government Schemes For economic based reservation, to study the various laws for and in favour of economic based reservation. The research method followed here is empirical research. It deals with both primary and secondary sources of data and various secondary sources are collected from books, journals, articles. a total of 208 samples has been taken note of which is taken through a random sampling method . The statistical tool used here is graphical representation and SPSS frequency table. The findings of the research is Respondents agreed that economic based reservation is required, income tax return/property ownership documents to be made primary mechanism to prove the qualifications for economically weaker section reservation, economic base reservation is better than caste-based reservation in the present scenario of the country.

Keywords : *Reservation, economic criteria, poor, opportunities, economic weaker section, discrimination.*

Introduction :

The idea of reservations has always been vociferously resisted by the dominant social forces in the country, right from colonial times. It was suggested that reservations were a British machination to “divide and rule” India. the history of reservations in India, Bhagwan Das highlighted the importance of English being instituted as the official language which served to further insulate Dalits and backward castes from employment and educational opportunities. With the Poona Pact, 1932, the disprivilege faced by Dalits was accentuated once again as their identity was subsumed under the Hindu fold. The age-old caste system of India is

responsible for the origination of the reservation system in the country. In simple terms, it is about facilitating access to seats in the government jobs, educational institutions, and even legislatures to certain sections of the population. These sections have faced historical injustice due to their caste identity. As a quota based affirmative action, the reservation can also be seen as positive discrimination. In India, it is governed by government policies backed by the Indian Constitution. Article 340 of constitution mandated that the government identify classes which were socially and educationally backward and implement measures to remove such difficulties so as to improve their

conditions. Also Article 340(1) provided for the appointment of a Commission to investigate the condition of backward classes Article 46 of the Constitution, a Directive Principle of State Policy urges the government to protect the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the society.

Reservation in state services led to divisions and enmity among government employees, vitiating the atmosphere at the workplace. Eradication, not perpetuation of caste was the objective of the reservation policy but Caste Based Reservation only perpetuate the notion of caste in society. Reservation was introduced to ensure that the historically underprivileged communities were given equal access to resources but irrespective of the economic progress they continue to remain socially disadvantaged. Reservation destroys self-respect, so much so that competition is no longer on to determine the best but the most backward. Reservations are the biggest enemy of meritocracy which is the foundation of many progressive countries. It has become a tool to meet narrow political ends through invoking class loyalties and primordial identities. The dominant and elite class within the backward castes has appropriated the benefits of reservation and the most marginalised within the backward castes have remained marginalised. Reservation has become the mechanism of exclusion rather than inclusion as many upper caste poots are also facing discrimination and injustice which breeds frustration in the society.

However in today's time one of the major roadblocks to this equality is the Reservation System. In 2019 the government announces the 10% reservation in educational institutions and government jobs for economically weaker section of upper caste category. ... For example, in the State of Tamil Nadu, the caste-based reservation stands at 69 percent and applies to about 87 percent of the population. Reservations on the basis of caste and not on the basis of condition are bad and unacceptable. Fair and just reservations to uplift the people with poor

conditions of life, those who don't have meals to eat, clothes to wear and no home to live in. They shall be made on the basis of factors such as gender as women are more disadvantaged than men since primitive times, domicile, family education, family employment, family property, family income and if any disabilities and traumas. The process of reservation should be such that it filters the truly economically deprived individuals and bring them all to justice. Thus reservations are anti-thesis of development and equality. We don't need reservations based on castes or religion but only to actually provide aid to those who have minimal resources; and merit should be given equal and due importance in admission procedures as well employment opportunities. This way we would be successful in removing caste discrimination and unite the economically rich together in helping the economically poor, irrespective of their castes

Reservations are not unique to India. To name a few Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are countries where reservation system exists. However Quotas are very rare in countries but affirmative action has been in force all over the globe. The United States has Affirmative Action, The United Kingdom has the Equality Act 2010, Japan has policies to help the Burakumin, who are considered the outcast group of Japan., Brazil has Vestibular, Canada has Employment equity (Canada) which affects aboriginals and minorities, China reserves positions for ethnic minorities and women, Finland has quotas for Swedish speakers, Germany has quotas in their Gymnasium system, Israel has affirmative action, Macedonia has quotas for Albanians, Malaysia has the Malaysian New Economic Policy, New Zealand has affirmative action for Maoris and Polynesians, Norway requires 40% of the PCLs boards to be women. Romania has quotas for Romas, South Africa has Employment Equity, South Korea has affirmative action for Chinese and North Koreans, Sweden has general affirmative action. In 1969, the United Nations hosted the Convention on the Elimination of All

Forms of Racial Discrimination which encourages states to take affirmative actions for the disadvantaged groups.

Object :

1. To know the need of economic based reservation.
2. To understand the concept of economic based reservation .
3. To study the Government Schemes For economic based reservation.
4. To study the various laws for and in favour of economic based reservation.

Literature Review :

1. Chin, A., & Prakash, N. (2010). The Redistributive Effects of Political Reservation for Minorities: Evidence from India. Centre for REsearch and Analysis of Migration. doi:10.3386/w16509. This study indicates that increased political representation positively decreases the poverty for the Scheduled Tribes, especially in rural areas. The paper ventures as far as to say that if representation of STs is increased by a percentage point, there is an experienced 1.2 percentage decrease in poverty levels in India. However, this study specifically indicates that this is not the same scenario in case of reserved seats for SCs. This study looks at the variations in poverty reduction between Scheduled groups(SC& ST) and the general population. By using the poverty gap index as a poverty measure, the study addresses the depth of poverty, not just the number of individuals living under the poverty level. Therefore, this study stands out in its findings that political reservations reduce poverty among STs.
2. Ghurye, G. S. (1950). Caste and class in India. Bombay: Popular Book Depot. Said that This study describes that the social structure is an important factor where people are divided by language or by religion but the case distinctions grounded on race or on occupation. These are some grounds for mutual distrust and enmity which makes it hard for such people to co-operate or for each section to recognize equal rights to the other.
3. Blunt, E. (1969). The case study of northern India. Delhi: S. Chand & Co.

Where This study describes the evolution of caste system and various aspects of its current situations. The study shows that a little group of educated youth oppose the castes structure for the last 30years and also mentioned that the modern conditions the customs have been materially modified. The study stresses that social reformers and politicians are helping in raising the standard of living of the depressed classes. The researcher says that the caste groups are a homogenous group of people who have the same amount of economic and socio-political status. It seems probable that in the course of time, until the nation will change the customary restrictions of the current social structure which is built based on the Case it will not be possible to achieve the goal of removing untouchability etc.

4. Galanter (1984) provides a rich analysis of the various affirmative action policies (employment, education and political representation) for the SCs and STs, but does not quantify their effects. More recently, a number of papers have estimated the impact of political reservation (Duflo (2005) offers a review). Some institutional features of India's political reservation policy enable researchers to convincingly identify its effects.
5. Pande (2003) takes advantage of the time lag between when a new census count is taken and when its results are applied to political reservations in the state legislature to identify the effect of minority representation in the state legislature on policy outcomes. She finds that increasing minority representation increases transfers to minorities: ST reservation increased spending on ST welfare programs, and SC reservation increased the share of state government jobs set aside for minorities. Additionally, ST reservation lowered education spending and overall government spending. These results clearly establish that legislator identity matters for policy outcomes
6. Khemani, 2004; Rao and Singh, 2001 said that Though items like education, social security and social insurance, and labor

are under joint jurisdiction, in practice, state governments assume much of the responsibility. The primary way in which state legislative assemblies can affect outcomes in the state is through the allocation of state government spending. During the span of our data, 1960-2000, state governments undertook over half of total government expenditures in India (Khemani, 2004; Rao and Singh, 2001).

7. Still, many scholars like, Rai (2002); Chalam (1990); Desai (1984) and others have opined that the caste system contradicts the principle of secularism of the country rather than uplifting the weaker communities. They said, reservation needs modification that a community falls under the reserved category are not fixed forever. They can be improved if equal opportunity is given and proper policies are in place.
8. Rai (2002) opined that one of the aims of preferential treatment might be compensatory justice. It is to provide counterbalancing benefits to those individuals who have been wrongfully injured in the past so that they could be brought up to the level of wealth and welfare that they would now have had if they had not been disadvantaged. This is the process through which a nation can minimise inequalities.
9. Shah (1985) opined that the high class families among the poor are benefiting the fruits of reservation more than the lower class families of the same caste or community. Therefore, he recommended that the persons belonging to reserved category, who controlled the economic and political resources, and the persons with certain occupations and relatively large landholdings belonging to the traditionally low castes have to be excluded from the benefits of reservations.
10. Bharti, Indu (1990). Politics of Anti-Reservation Stir. Economic and Political Weekly.25 (6), pp. 309-10. Said that Our current reservation system accounts for almost 50% with an additional quota of 10% for the economically weaker upper caste in the pipeline. What we fail to understand is why this idea of a reservation was introduced. It was introduced to bring the lower castes at par with the upper caste at that time, in the hope that one day all of us will be at par with each other on social and economic terms. While this system has been in place for almost 70 yrs, now I think it's time for some reform. The government needs to ensure that the reservation it provides should actually benefit the economically weaker section of the society irrespective of their caste.
11. Bhambhri, C. P. (2005). Reservation and Casteism. Economic and Political Weekly. 40 (09), pp. 806-08. Said that When the concept of caste reservations was brought in India, Dr. B R Ambedkar, the chief architect of Indian constitution added a rule that these reservations should exist only for 15 years, and can be renewed for another few years if the need is still there. It's been 67 years since the constitution came into force. So, it's time for a relook into the caste reservation system.
12. Chalam, K. S. (1990). Cast Reservations and Equality of Opportunity in Education. Economic and Political Weekly, Said that If we analyse the statistics of below poverty line people, we can observe that there are poor people in all communities including communities that fall under OCs. Caste based reservations are discriminatory towards poor of OCs. For example, if 2 poor people with same score in the exam, one belongs to OBC and another belongs to OC applies to the last seat available in a college that allows reservations, person that belongs to OBC will get the admission, and the one that belongs to OC won't. If a student who belongs to SC applies to the same seat, he will be chosen. Why should people be discriminated based on birth? If the reservation system is based on economic status, both students would have equal chances to grab that seat.
13. Choudhary, K. (1993) in the New Reservation Policy. Economic and Political Weekly said that , Caste divisions are hatred among communities is increasing due to reservations. Many communities in several states of India are fighting to give them reservations. And the consequence is people are increasingly associating with their caste. The interesting fact is that before the first caste census by British

government (1881) in India, many people do not even know what their caste is. From then, the idea of caste is deeply ingrained in the Indian society. Now the reservations are making the situation even worse.

14. Choudhary, K. (1990). Reservation for OBCs: Hardly an Abrupt Decision. Economic and Political Weekly. Said that Instead of adding new communities to the reservation quotas, continuously removing people that do not need reservation benefits will ensure that the reservation benefits will reach only for deserving ones. Efforts from people like voluntarily giving up reservation also helps a lot. This process can slowly eliminate the concept of reservation.
15. Desai, A. and Sonalde D. (2011). Caste in 21st Century India: Competing Narratives. Economic and Political Weekly. Said that Brahmins, Baniyas, Muslims & Christians all will be eligible for this quota in jobs and education. It mainly extends to economically backward people of the unreserved category. It does not validate citizens who are availing the benefit of any other kind of reservation. Also, the Constitutional Amendment states, it applies only to initial appointments and not to promotions.
16. Kumar, V. (2005). Understanding the Politics of Reservation: A Perspective from Below. Economic and Political Weekly. Said that In light of 103rd amendment, The economically weaker sections of the society will be getting in jobs and higher education. From a third person perspective, reservation will no doubt benefit the needy but critically it also violates certain norms set by the apex court. (A nine judge bench in the case of Indira Sahney v. Union of India)
17. Misra, A. (1994). Reservation is not the Issue. Economic and Political Weekly. Said that Majority of lower castes have stepped up the social ladder and are now on an equal status compared to the general population. Hence, there is no need for reservation anymore. Reservation only provides a limited and short-term solution to the historical injustice issues. Reservation is obviously a tool to address social and educational backwardness,

however, it does not have solutions for all social and economic ailments.

18. Maitra, P. (1990). Caste Reservation and Technological Change. Economic and Political Weekly. said that High economic class and lower economic class and higher economic class in SCs and STs defend a reservation for maintaining the status quo. The same scenario is in socially and economically backward class also like Maratha, Jats, gurjars etc. is demanding reservation despite high living standard. Reservation on the basis of economic background may pave the way for a casteless society which was initially purpose of Dr Ambedkar's reservation system.
19. Rajkumar Buyya in Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, April 2002, said that the quota for the economically poor among the upper castes has been seen essentially as a poverty alleviation move dressed up as reservation. Reservation to the weaker sections is an positive affirmative action needed for their welfare. The 103rd Constitutional Amendment Act though is a beneficial move for the "forward poor". It is prudent to look at other alternatives to alleviate the conditions of EWS.
20. Vani K. Borooah Amaresh Dubey Sriya Iyer in journal Development and Change said that, the economic criterion, the members of the constituent assembly also discarded the proposals to permit reservation in a time-bound frame and envisaged its continuity until factors causing social backwardness e.g. non-representation or poor share in the state services come to an end. Where as the caste based reservation was never aimed at economic empowerment of the poor. The idea was always to disavow caste-monopoly in the public sector.

Methodology :

The research method followed here is empirical research. It deals with both primary and secondary sources of data and various secondary sources are collected from books, journals, articles. a total of 208 samples has been taken note of which is taken through a random sampling method . The sampling frame taken by the researcher and the

independent variables which are used in the survey are age , gender , education , occupation and the dependent variables are Do you agree that economic based reservation is required , Should income tax returns property ownership document be made the primary mechanism to prove

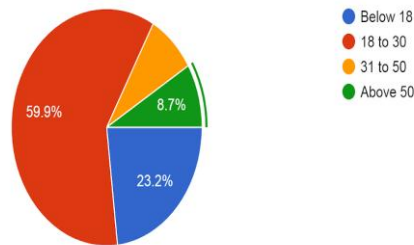
qualification for the economically weaker section reservation, Do you agree that economic-based reservation is better than caste-based reservation .

The statistical tool used here is graphical representation and SPSS frequency table.

Analysis

Independent Variables

1) Age



(Figure 1)

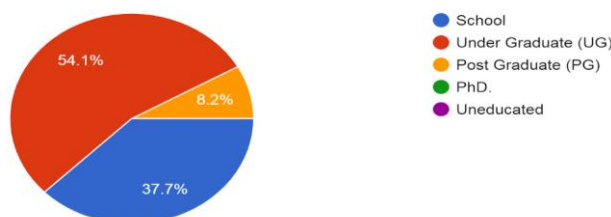
age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 18	48	23.1	23.2	23.2
	18 to 30	124	59.6	59.9	83.1
	31 to 50	17	8.2	8.2	91.3
	Above 50	18	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	207	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		208	100.0		

Legend

From this graph we observe that most of the respondents are from the age of 18 - 30 which is 59.9 % of response and then we

have age of below 18 which is 23.2 % of response. For this research we got on;y few response from the age category of 31 to 50 and above 50

2) Education



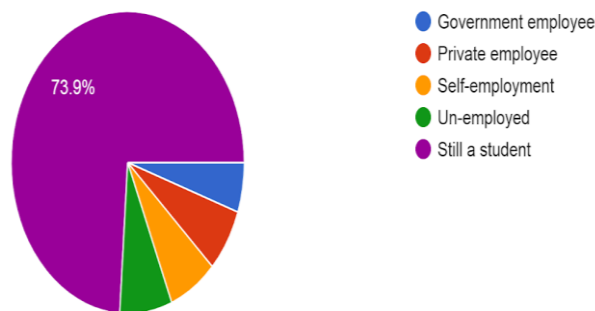
(Figure2)

Education					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	School	78	37.5	37.7	37.7
	Under Graduate (UG)	112	53.8	54.1	91.8
	Post Graduate (PG)	17	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	207	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		208	100.0		

Legend

From this graph we observe that most of the respondents are pursuing undergraduate degree about 54.1 % in this survey and then we have people who did their schooling who responded 37.7 % for this research survey. There are few post graduate respondents who had responded to 8.2 % of responses.

3) Occupation



(Figure 3)

Occupation					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Government employee	11	5.3	5.3	5.3
	Private employee	14	6.7	6.8	12.1
	Un-employed	29	13.9	14.0	26.1
	Still a student	153	73.6	73.9	100.0
	Total	207	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		208	100.0		

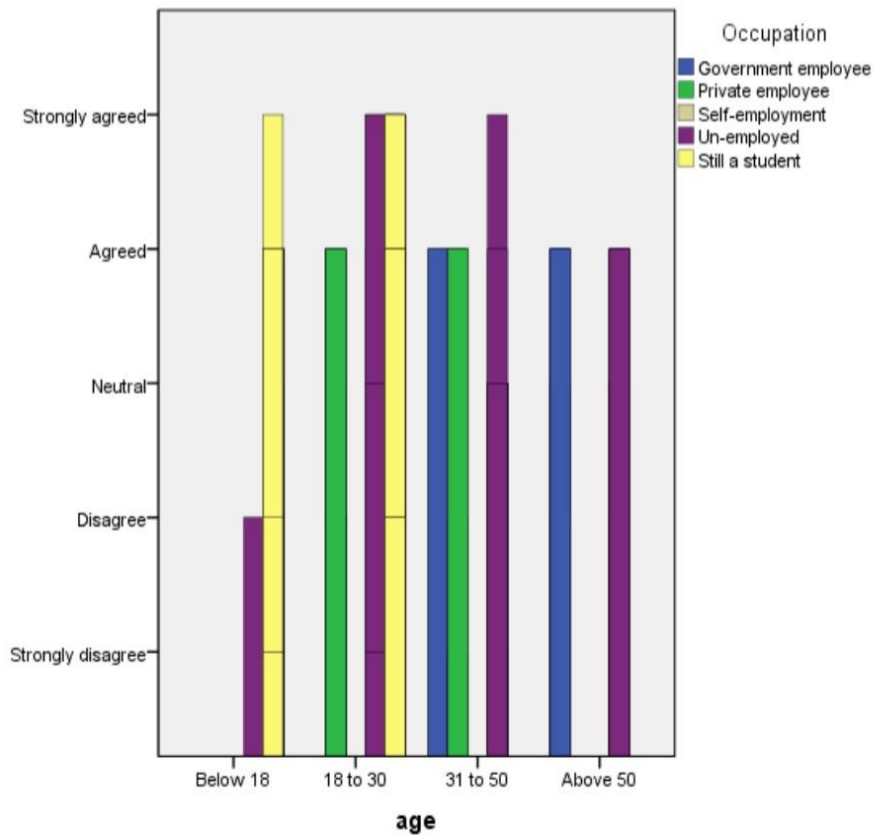
Legend

From this graph we get to know that most of the respondents who responded for this survey are still a student and then we

have private employees, self employed and unemployed persons and we have small amounts of response from government employees.

Dependent Variable With Independent Variable

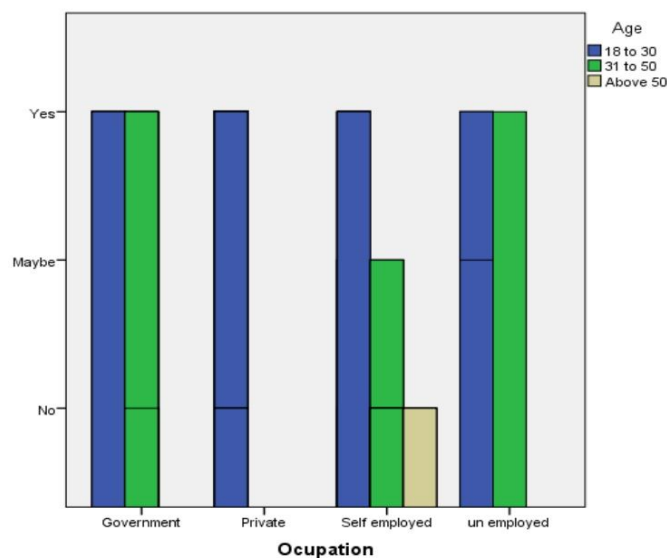
1) Do you agree that economic based reservation is required



(FIGURE 4)

Legend : that economic base reservation is required or not.
 Age and occupation is compared with a question whether the respondents agree

2) Should income tax returns property ownership document be made the primary mechanism to prove qualification for the economically weaker section reservation ?



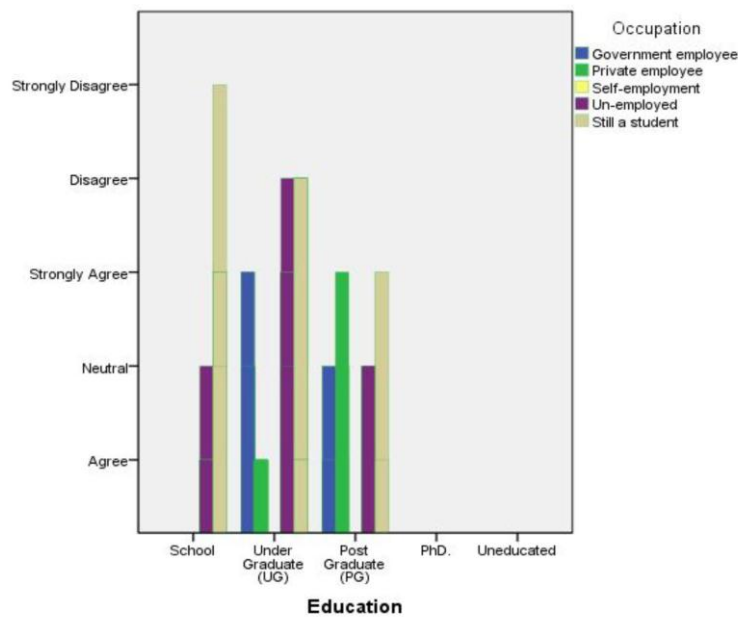
(FIGURE 5)

Legend :

The occupation in the age compared with the question whether should income tax returns property ownership documents to

be made the primary mechanism to prove the qualification for the economically weaker section reservation.

3) Do you agree that economic-based reservation is better than caste-based reservation



(FIGURE 6)

Legend :

The education and occupation is compare with the question whether do the respondents agree that the economic based reservation is better than caste-based reservation

Result

From the figure 4 we came to know that majority of the respondents who are in the age of 31 to 50 and 50 above who are in government employees are agreed that economic based reservation is required and the respondents who are still students and unemployed who are in the age category of 18 to 30 and 31 to 50 said that they strongly agree that economic based reservation is required for the present country. But the unemployed who are in the age category of below 18 said that economic-based reservation is not required.

From figure 5, we came to know that majority of the respondents who are Government employees and unemployed have said that income tax return/property ownership documents to be made primary mechanism to prove the qualifications for

economically weaker section reservation and above 50 years who are self employed said that reservation should be considered by the profit or loss from the business and not through the income tax return/ownership documents which should be the primary mechanism to prove the qualifications of economically weaker section reservation. From figure 6, we came to know that majority of the respondents have strongly agreed that the economic base reservation is better than caste-based reservation in the present scenario of the country and some who are unemployed and doing school and Post graduate and a government Employee you have done post graduate said that they are neutral that both reservation for economic based on caste-based are required to uplift the people. The unemployed and the students who are doing their undergraduate disagreed that economic base reservation is better than caste-based reservation and the students who are doing their schooling strongly disagree that economic base reservation is better than caste-based reservation.

Discussion

Through figure 4 we came to know that in the present scenario of the country the economic base reservation plays a vital role as the world or the country moving into globalisation and people started comparing others with economic status rather than caste status so the respondents also said that they agree on the requirement of economic base reservation in the current situation of the country. Through figure 5 we came to know that income tax returns and the property ownership documents to be made primary mechanism to prove the qualifications of economically weaker section reservation because the main drawback for this economically weaker section reservation is to determine the economic status of a person and the solution for this problem is to calculate the person's economic status through their income tax returns and property ownership documents. So through this we can easily calculate the status of the economically weaker society people and can provide reservations through them. Through figure 6 we came to know that economic base reservation is better than caste-based reservation in 21th century. While drafting or Indian Constitution the major problem was discrimination of a person through caste so they brought reservation by caste-based. But in the current present scenario the main issues for the discrimination of people can be said as economic status as the country goes through the globalisation where people mainly sees the economic status of a person rather than a caste of the person. And also many upper caste people in the present 21st-century or suffering from economical problems where they couldn't afford to study or to get an employment. So to clear these problems economic base reservation could be the better solution when it is been compared with the caste-based reservation in this present 21st-century

The study dealt with the Origin and evolution of the reservation system in India followed by the introduction and implementation of providing reservations for the Economically

Weaker Sections of the general category people. The study also analyzed various debates on providing reservations based on the economic status, existing reservation system and social structure along with the perceptions of the people as the study investigated and collected data about the awareness and opinion of the people on providing the reservations for the Economically Weaker Sections of the society.

Limitation

There are some limitations while working on this research work. The sample size is one of the major drawbacks in this research, in which the sample size has been limited to 200 samples. The sample was also taken from online because of the lockdown restrictions for covid-19 thread which forms a major drawback in this research

Conclusion And Suggestion

The reservations based entirely on economic criteria is not a perfect solution but the need of the hour is to fix a time period for scrapping the reservation system rather than extending it to eternity. The concept of reservation on being upgraded and extended even though it has a positive impact on the students belonging to EWS category it still negatively impacts the meritorious students on their fair opportunities. Reservation benefits should also be regulated maybe like restricting the benefits only to the first two childrens of the family without considering the number of children they have or maybe restricting the reservations only till the undergraduate program and further educations should be based on the merits and not based on the reservations or atleast there must be an way to identify the first generation learners and extending upto two generations. The reservations should be regulated to make sure that opportunities are being fairly given to all the meritorious students despite their social/economic conditions and by this way the quality of the students will be increasing. The intention in which reservation was brought was commendable but the way in which the reservation is progressing

closely tied with the politics has made political parties, civil societies, scholars and layman to ask a basic question of revision of reservation with the progress of time. Since all political parties one or the other way tried to appease one section of the community at any point of their political career has made all political parties to have double standards on reservation. When Dr. Ambedkar proposed reservation for certain constituencies at that time our forefathers didn't think to give reservation on basis of caste lines for educational institutes, later with the progress and dissents from different caste groups aiming for political consolidation and political power has over a period of time pushed a political system to work in favor of reservation immaterial of the ideology but the bigger purpose and the larger question of reservation uplifting the poor, needy and oppressed is lost in politics. So it's time, with the available data the study emphasize that reservation over a period of time should move towards allotting on the basis of economic front then merely on caste identity, with this progressive notion reservation can be more inclusive, dynamic and accommodative of all caste groups also, evolving technologies in identifying the needy through Aadhar or Bank accounts makes reservation to work exactly where it is intended to. And also the idea of social justice lies not just at societal and political level it also lies at economic level only through the fulfillment of economic needs of the citizens of the country immaterial of the caste, creed and religion economic justice can be provided. Which makes reservation on the basis of economically weaker section a reality sooner. The reservation should support affirmative action more than the appeasement politics for vote bank. To aid all the above mentioned facts cleaner politics, corrupt free governance and a visionary leadership is essential.

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