

Youth, Caste and Politics in India

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Abstract

This article examines castes and politics with reference to the cultural and political practices of educated youth in India. Through ethnographic fieldwork in Uttar Pradesh, we show how a common sense of youth and caste influences politics during elections. The youth of the universities of North India are developing new cultures belonging to different castes, classes, and religions and joining various caste associations that play an important role during the elections.

Keywords

India; caste; class; youth; politics.

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Introduction

In 2020 we discussed with students, at C.C.S University, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh (UP). A section of students belong in their early 40s and came from the different castes, Chamar, Thakur, Gurjar, and Jat caste, so a Dalit (low caste in caste hierarchy). Most of the students had been living in Meerut for a long time, during which time they had repeatedly failed to acquire a government job but they get benefits from post-doctoral fellowships run by the central government for quality in research programs.

This article builds on in-house caste and policy research conducted at Meerut in 2019-2020 to explore young men's perceptions of castes and their role in politics. Contrary to the conventional understanding of caste in India, we argue that the crisis of education and employment in Meerut is at the moment and the related feeling among young people, in which new opportunities for friendship, camaraderie, and intense evil have emerged among the poorest Dalits and the richest senior men of the caste.

In addition, sometimes young people, regardless of caste and class differences, sometimes gathered to start collective protests against the state. Drawing on follow-up research conducted in 2019-20, we show how a sense of friendship and solidarity gradually eroded as some young men capitalized on their local political influence. Higher-caste 'fixers', as well as a new breed of Dalit politicians pursuing self-interested strategies, are undermining cross-caste youth solidarities from within. An increasing number of young men are unemployed, and the prevalence of male breadwinner norms means that joblessness affects men most directly in UP. Other aspects BJP declare that they fill-up 5 lack posts in a different department.

The big section of Dalit, Muslim, and middle-caste young men in Meerut decide the who makes the government in the state assembly. The student-level politics 'fixers', including Jats and Dalits, whose work undermines collective protests.

In this paper we focus instead on caste and politics in special reference to youth, situations in which caste like or dislike any particular party in west Uttar Pradesh specific concern in Meerut and Baghpat district.

In some places, it is speed and movement that best characterize people's experiences (Simone, 2005), and in other situations, people shuttle between panic and forms of inertia (Appadurai, 2002; Hoffman, 2006, Bayart cites evidence: an increase in the number of international migrants occupying detention centers on the outskirts of industrialized countries, an increase in the number of detainees in the US

and parts of Europe and people being forced to move between countries in the southern world After the war or financial collapse.

Thomas Hansen (1996) describes how widespread exclusion from secure employment led lower-middle-class young men in Bombay in the 1990s to craft identities as Hindu nationalist political bosses and act as provocateurs during anti-Muslim agitations. Prem Chowdhry (2009) studied unemployed Jat (middle caste) youth in Haryana who is involved in violent political action on panchayats councils. Similarly, Martin Rogers (2008) argues that educated, unemployed Dalits on a college campus in southern India tend to move into castes.

There is also significant evidence of divisive and orderly understanding and cooperation in modern India, and this literature suggests other possibilities regarding young people's practice of political change and perception of political power.

Such remarks echo some of the new work on youth in public policy. Anirudh Krishna (2002) described educated unemployed youth in rural areas of West India in the 1990s working with people from other castes to help the poor in their negotiations with the state (Gooptu, 2007; Kamat, 2002).

This review of recent work on youth offers a framework for reflecting on the politics of caste in UP. Were young men mobilizing across caste and class boundaries? Or did they pursue narrower, reactionary, caste- and class-based strategies?

Caste and Politics in Meerut, UP

Young men coming of age in the early 2000s in UP faced a 'perfect storm' of socio-economic trends, the cumulative effect of which has been to create a generation of frustrated youth.

Young people are prepared in different ways to deal with these uncertainties. The UP population can be roughly divided into three social sections. Hindus from the upper castes (mainly Brahmins and Thakurs) make up about 20% of the population. These castes dominated wage labor, local government bureaucracy, and land ownership in many parts of the UP. The second bloc of middle-class Hindu households often controls access to political and economic power in the rural areas of the state. This category of households includes Jats in the northwest and Yadavas in the southwest and east. The rest of the UP population is made up mainly of Muslims, Dalits, and the poorer sections of the so-called Other Backward Classes (OBCs): castes that are legally identified as superior to the Dalits in the caste hierarchy but suffer from social and economic disadvantages. The UP has an elite between Muslims and Dalits. But Muslims, Dalits, and poorer OBCs tend to have few tangible assets and tend to work in conditions of exploitation and insecurity.

But UP's political economy has also changed significantly over the last twenty years, especially as a result of the rise of the pro-Dalite Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). The BSP held power at the UP state level four times between 1993 and 2003 and won a landslide victory in the 2007 state elections opportunities in the community and reshape the symbolic landscape of UP to reflect Dalit pride.

Most young people have some sense that they can finally find a job. Private entrepreneurs have played an important role in instilling hope in the youth. They tried to increase enrollment in private colleges and various educational centers and schools, telling young people that if they could get the right diploma package, they would "finally" create prestigious jobs.

In 2004 and 2005, many Dalits hoped that if the pro-Dalit BSP came to power on its own at the UP, they would be more likely to take up positions in local political organizations. But this political aspect of waiting was less prominent than the general feeling among Dalits, one shared by the Jats and Muslims, about the need to manage too much time and delay.

In Meerut, young people tended to gather in hangouts connected to the flow of transport and information outside the city. Around 8 in the morning and again at night, they often stood together at the crossroads of the main roads near the Meerut Stadiums. These sites served as a meeting place for unemployed young people seeking to expand their network of contacts and as a kind of "perch" from which young people could observe the movement of goods, images, and people in and out of Meerut (Jeffrey, 2010a).

Tea counters and street corners were also places of social interaction. Men's dormitories at CCSU differed somewhat on the basis of caste and religion. Indeed, there was a specially designed dormitory for the Dalits in the Meerut area, which the lower caste students said was important in protecting them from intimidation by the upper caste. However, behind the tea counters, the Jats, Dalits, Muslims, and other castes often mingled quite freely, amicably, and in many cases even warmly.

What distinguished the forms of solidarity that appeared in the Meerut teahouses was their desire to transcend caste boundaries and religious boundaries. The sharing of savory snacks and tea and the oral transmission of cigarettes between Dalits, high school students, and Muslims marked the end of the caste's perception of contamination through food sharing or contact with one's saliva.

Spaces of Politics

In this research article, we focused that how youth play important role in politics on the behalf of the caste factor. First of all, we focused that the youth in

Meerut passing their important time in political discussion and this activity is very harmful to the academic growth of the student. In the last election, we can observe the important change in the perception of the youth approach through these street corner discussions youth politically focused on the behalf of nationalism and the caste factor decrees for the mind of youth. As a result, the Bhartiya Janta Party take the advantage of this change and the local party decline the vote bank and struggle for the make the identity of the party and its agenda. In Meerut, the special tee corner is important for the political discussion among the youth and youth to increase the knowledge about the political activity and determine the voting behaviors of the family and friends.

Most of the Students from widely varying caste and class backgrounds worked together to protest against the university administration and bureaucracies to protect the right of the students, and these demonstrations mostly started at tea stalls in Infront of the university and local leaders give support to the students and use the student in local politics at the time of the local election of state and National election.

Unemployment is the key factor for the mobilization of youth and the current time government also focused on this issue. This is a hot issue in the youth's mind because students have to wait for degree certificates that served as the most charged indicators of students suffering in the context of corruption.

After listening to a student's appeals through the different Chenal for assistance, students would call together those present in the hostel and nearby university and local areas to make contact with friends via cell phone. He then discussed possible courses of action with his confidants and, in many cases, proceeded to organize demonstrations that involved students from a wide variety of backgrounds, including Muslims and Dalits.

To conclude politically motivated young men studying in university and higher education institutions in Meerut were significant in generating collective student protest: middle-caste social reformers,

By 2020, however, the political atmosphere in Meerut city was markedly more subdued. Changes in rules around student union elections were one factor. The spirit of leadership of the BJP, banned student union elections in universities and colleges in UP. From time to ti,e the political leader raise their voice to conduct the election on the higher education institution and universities.

The most important factor in the erosion of collective student action was the growing presence of middle-strata-class student leaders who undermined protests

from within. Mainly Jats usually captured the top posts in the university unions because of the strength of the student in local areas and on university campuses.

Many student leaders protest against corruption within the university and administrative offices, which were reported in favorable terms by friends within local newspapers and television stations and this news make the possibilities in local politics in different political parties and some of the students make money through the movement raised by the student leaders at the time to time/

During the last 10 years has won a position in the union, most student leaders concentrated on making money, for example by arranging backdoor admission to colleges affiliated with CCSU and acting as intermediaries between the university administration and private educational entrepreneurs. The present time this game is over due to the advancement of information technology the university administration makes the all procedure online and transparent for all and one is the important factor the RTI is also responsible for declining the corruption level.

The majority of politically active student leaders during the last years felt angry about their unemployment by the failure of the BJP, which won power on its own in UP during the last legislative assembly election. They said that the BJP had been 'de-radicalized' after its election victory in 2017, and that its leaders were more interested in power politics in Delhi than connecting with their main support base. The student leader said: 'The BJP started as a movement in the 1990s with the Ayodhya Mandir Movement. The senior figures in the movement cycled across UP spreading the word. Yogi Aditya Nath's decision to give Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) seats and positions such as district president of the BJP to local Brahmins, Jats, and Gurjar was a particular point of frustration. While student leaders defended the practice, arguing that it was necessary to avoid accusations of casteism, most saw it as evidence that the party had been captured by the richest, upper castes. During the last years, the dispute between the Thakur and Gurjar make the political issues for the BJP regarding the ownership of the historical identity.

To the field experience, the age plays important role in the thinking about the politics. Today youth play a very important role in politics in the last two elections in this area we can analysis to the traditional pattern of thinking about politics changing rapidly in youth. Youth change the perception of the politics and nationalism is so high in the mind of youth and we can analyze the caste dominancy in the last two election decrees rapidly so that the local party defeats the political crag in the youth's mind and BJP gain the benefits of this change.

Political awareness among the unmarried youth was more in comparison to the married respondents. We can analyze that as the responsibility of family increases,

the political awareness decreases among the people. We analyzed that in the Indian political system, the unmarried people were more successful in politics, as we find some important faces of the Indian political system were unmarried.

During the study of the political discussion among people, we find out that in rural areas the family size also decreases and joint family at present time decreases rapidly in our society because the human being is more rational in the present time and they also act for own benefits before some time the joint family was in majority and only one main person of the family take the important decision of family and others members to follow the instructions of that man. There was a mechanism in political aspects few politically active people shorted out the problems of the villagers through the political leader and they also vote at the time of elections. As well as the social structure change in the Indian village the social problems also change. After the independence the problem was to make the road and efforts to make the infrastructure of the rural area and the community leader also prefer the work in the community are such as the Barout seat of parliament member most of the time after independence occupied by RLD and this party was known Jats dominant party because of party leaders belong this caste and most of the work also done in jats land in this area such as road , school, degree college, powerhouse etc. because of this the jats also dominant in this area and other caste deprived of developmental work if we conclude the political awareness changing slowly and the Jat vote bank replace from RLD and make space in BJP and the believe in RLD slowly down at the present time the jat caste make the space in the BJP and have effective leaders in the party. The villager also engages in other sector and raise the political awareness and vote according to their participation in the political occupation play a very important role to determine the political awareness among the people. In the rural area only educated youth argue on the bases of logic some of the respondents no answered on the bases of the logic and the service man also have the knowledge about the politics and argue on the bases of facts.

At present time the income level of respondents uplifts and the caste factor in rural areas is less effective. Today the lower caste respondents have own property and uplift their position in rural areas as we observe in the field the distance among the caste decreases and caste change in the class slowly because of the faction group also being active in grass root politics and in Panchayati raj also these factions work fast to the position in local politics in local administration. We study the political aspects in rural areas, we find out that caste is an important factor in local politics. The voting behavior of human beings in especially rural areas on the bases on the caste. It is observed that in the rural areas, the nuclear family joint family change

into the nuclear family there is some important factor for this change increasing role of IT in the rural area is the key factor for this change rapidly.

Some of the respondents were active in the politics and they also worked as an agent in the politics local to-parliament elections also political leader contact only these people and these local leader contact to the rural people and mobilize them on the caste factor as well as the local interest of the people they also involve to the political leader in the personal dispute of the agriculture land and the road to reach their field.

Today also the individual believes that the caste participation is also important to fulfill the interest of the caste as researcher observe in the field at the time of data collection caste is an important factor to influence the political perception and participation in the politics. Which caste easily make pressure on the political party and then easily fined the representation in politics. Recently the one movement by the Tyagi caste make pressure on the BJP to realize from the jail the Tyagi caste political representative Sri Kant Tyagi and the effect come out in the recent election of Khatouli legislative election at end of 2022'

As well as we study the historical facts of the state politics, we find that the state politics were affected by the caste equation in the 1900s the BSP was ruled on the caste politics and make empowered the scheduled caste at this time. In the last one decade, it is important that the caste equation in the reset position some respondents highlight that the caste factor was replaced in this time by the caste factor and the BJP successfully effect to the voter mindset on the behalf of the nationalism and replaced to the caste factor in Utter Pradesh.

Today the mindset of the respondent changes rapidly and they believe that the caste participation is important to the real development of the caste as well as the caste representative in the politics and they also highlighted that the only at the time of election did political party use as a voter and to continue development of caste and caste representation it necessary to make political pressure on the political party which can be seen today politics.

Conclusions

Most of the respondents are politically active in the politics in local as well as national level politics, they believe that the real development is possible through the political participation of humans. Society governs by politics and it will be determining the political status of humans as well as groups or any caste. Nowadays present time is the time of social movement in local politics in 2021 BKU conducted the KISAN at the UP gate in Delhi and make a temporary shelter for the farmer

who involves in this movement and this movement is more affected by the caste politics as well as KISAN politics. This movement makes strong to caste politics in Utter Pradesh and rearrange the political equation of the local politics and Jat caste rise in this movement especially the son of Mahender Singh Tikait lead this movement and make pressure on the central government to backfoot on three laws on KISAN bill.

In rural areas today also, newspaper is an important source of the political information for the people. Today is the era of the globalization and information technology is at its peak but the villager is not as an important instrument to for find about the information about the political activity. Caste is the most important factor which affects the political behavior of voters in Indian politics. When we go through the political history of India, we find out that caste in politics play important role in contemporary India. Few respondents were well knowledgeable about the population of caste and accurate representation in the politics some other backward castes and Dalits also blame that the representation of the lower caste in politics on the low compression of the higher caste after the independence the higher caste capture the political system and rule to the OBC and Dalits also.

Many castes run their magazine also to motivate the youth of a particular caste and the achievements of the caste. During the study, we observe that the caste has an association with increasing the awareness level of caste and making the collective perception about the political party. During the last decade it is important to factor the caste vote is not bound by any political party such as sin west Utter Pradesh Rashtriya Lok Dal lost their caste vote bank and the Jat vote moved toward the BJP. Today we can observe that the after the dispute between the RAJPUT and Dalits in Saharanpur the distance between the both castes increase rapidly and caste-specific schools also open in many villages, especially in lower castes the political leader also motivate to increase the caste specific schools. The radical approach is rapidly increasing in the politics during the last decade.

Present time caste plays an important role that believes the majority of the respondents and associations are involved in a different kinds of work such as to motivate open library for youth development in rural areas. This is the contra dictional approach in a way the globalization impact on youth makes secular and caste-like factor decrease among the youth in another way the caste association increases in each caste to awaking the caste and modified the approach to the people. The majority of the respondent believes that the caste conference not increase the awareness among the rural areas only the 19.66% of respondents accept that the caste association plays a very important role to increase the awareness among the people. Today that

is the trend for organizing the conference is to make aware the people of the general perception of the politics and make aware the common man to increase the awareness of caste interest.

Respondents believe in the caste association and people increase the participation in the development of caste awareness and to make sure the political participation. Today is the era of political development of the caste association and to make sure the political perception among the people and the local people believes that the politics are the key to the overall development of people and that political participation is a must for the realm development of human to make beneficial policy and take advantage from that policy.

We find out in the interaction with the people at the time of election the caste leader also influences to the voting behavior of human beings. Many times it will be seen that the famous political leader of a particular caste invites to influence the state politics such Stars of the movie also invite for the mobilization of the vote in favor of a particular political party or candidate. After the independence, the inequality in participation in the caste was also found out at the state and national levels also. Some higher caste makes more participation in comparison to the ratio of the population and some backward and lower castes, do not apocopate participate in the government and many times the lower post is occupied by the lower caste political leader and they are also satisfied with that position. Caste association is the major instrument to unit the caste vote and make the solidarity among the caste and vote in favor or against the particular party in recent times the impact of the TYAGI movement also affect the political behavior of the caste to vote in favor of the RLD and RLD candidate Madan Bhaiya win the election on the bases of the caste politics. one important factor was the Gurjar and Jat vote combined in favor of Madan Bhaiya on the bases of caste equation the set win by the Madan Bhaiya so we can conclude many time it seen the caste unite himself to vote the caste political leader so we can say caste is an important factor in Indian politics.

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