

Inequality in India: Caste and Hindu Social Order

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1 Understanding the Structure of Hindu Social Order

The structure of Hindu social order is hierarchical in nature and 82 per cent of the Indian population is Hindu according to 2011 Census. The origin of Hindu Social Order is traced from the sacred text of Hindus – the *Rigveda*. The tenth chapter (91st Hymn) of this text reveals that there are four groups better known as *Varna*. These groups are arranged in hierarchical manner one above the other. The first group, Brahmin, occupies the top position in this hierarchy. The second group is Rajanya (later known as Kshatriyas), third is Vaishya. The Shudras come last in the hierarchy according to the Rigveda. In this way the book-view of the Hindu Social order depicts only four Varnas (classes) in it. Yet, anthropologists and sociologists have included a fifth group – the *Ashprishyas* (literary translated as untouchables) better known as Dalits in the Hindu Social Order (Kumar 2014). Therefore, the full scheme of the Hindu social order has five major social groups arranged in a hierarchical manner with Brahmins at the top and Dalits at the lowest level (see fig.1). Further, the book-view of Hindu Social Order does not only mention the hierarchical position of the four Varnas, they have also prescribed various socio-economic, political, educational and religious functions of each Varna (Kakar 1992). These functions were necessary for the members if they were to achieve renunciation, that is, if they want to escape from the death and birth cycle. Apart from functions there are special duties (Dharma) for the males of each Varna to be followed (Mathur 1991: 68; Ghurey 1979: 48-51). However, in this scheme untouchables (Dalits) have been completely excluded from every sphere of life. In this manner the aforesaid Hindu Social Order allocates multiple rights and privileged status to Varnas located higher up in the hierarchy and denies the same to those who are out lower in the hierarchy or to those who are out of the pale of Varna scheme. It is this unequal distribution of rights and privileges in a social structure, which also bears religious legitimacy which produces extreme forms of inequality in Indian society.

2 Defining the Structural Location and Social Exclusion of Dalits

It follows from the above that Dalits are the fifth class of five-fold social structure of the Hindu social order. Here we have used structure as defined by Nadel. Nadel (1969:5) argues that, "we arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behavior the pattern or network (or 'system') of relationships existing between actors and in their capacity of playing roles to one another". The definition of structure when applied to Hindu social structure tells us that Dalits were accorded stigmatized status in the society. They were denied all the human rights and were forced to perform the filthiest occupations. They were supposed to serve the other classes of Hindu Social Order. In this sense Dalits were excluded in every walk

Figure 1: Hindu Social Order

of life. In this context the term 'social exclusion' can be defined as "a multi-dimensional process, in which various forms of exclusion are combined: participation in decision making and political processes, access to employment and material resources, and integration into common cultural process. When combined, they create acute form of exclusion that finds a spatial manifestation in particular neighborhoods" (Madanipour et. al 1998: 22). However in the Indian context as far as social exclusion of Dalits is concerned we have to add to the elements of religious justification of such exclusion based on Dharma and Karma. Moreover, social exclusion for Dalits is ascriptive in nature. Accordingly, exclusion of Dalits can be depicted in the following manner (see table 1 in the appendix). It is this nature of social exclusion which has produced the extreme form of inequality for Dalits in Hindu social order who came to be constitutionally known as Scheduled Castes and politically as Dalits. According to the 2001 census they number approximately 170 million (see table 2).

The structural location of the Dalits and the process of their social exclusion, as discussed above, results in the construction of a unique consciousness of Dalits, which is depicted through their worldview, their orientation towards life and nature etc. This consciousness cuts across the boundaries of different castes found among the Dalits and unites Dalits cutting across the caste, regional and linguistic identity. Therefore sociologically speaking, the Dalits can be defined as social group who have following characteristics:

1. Unique structural location in the Hindu Social Order
2. Cumulative and collective social exclusion because of their structural location
3. Long history of cumulative and collective social exclusion because of their structural location
4. Unalterable social identity and status even when they attain educational, economic and spatial mobility
5. Construction of consciousness anchored in the historicity of cumulative and collective social exclusion because of structural location.

This definition of Dalits also highlights the fact that Dalits are different from Scheduled Tribes (STs), women and poor persons belonging to caste Hindus.

3 Understanding the Difference of Dalits vis-à-vis Other Marginalized Groups

The logical question then would be how are Dalits different from other groups? At the outset, an economically poor person is different from a Dalit because he (or the group of economically poor persons) may be deprived in economic spheres especially in terms of income necessary to participate in the economy. But he may not be necessarily deprived in social and cultural spheres, i.e. he may not face the same type of exclusion in the social and cultural life either in his neighbourhood or in the society at large as Dalits face. We can argue that a poor may be economically or politically deprived or may be in both but he is generally not excluded from the social and cultural spheres. But an ex-untouchable is deprived in all spheres, the social, economic, political, educational and religious spheres. That is why Oommen has rightly pointed out: "If proletarian consciousness is essentially rooted in material deprivations [...] Dalit consciousness is a complex and compound consciousness which encapsulates deprivations stemming from inhuman conditions of material existence, powerlessness and ideological hegemony" (Oommen 1990:256).

Furthermore, the social exclusion of an ex-untouchable is so overpowering that even though he attains economic and political mobility or even beyond the national boundaries through his hard labour, he is not accepted by the castes located higher up in the caste hierarchy as an equal. His social identity remains stigmatized and his achievements are basically associated with that social identity. Some examples in this regard can make the fact clearer. Firstly, it is a fact that as soon K.R. Narayanan became the president of India in spite his high educational achievements and political experience, every one tried to evaluate his ascendance to the presidential post only on the basis of his caste identity. Most of them argued the Narayanan was elevated to the post of president because he belonged to Dalit community (Kumar 2007). Secondly, if we take the Dalit Diaspora as another example, the issue of social exclusion of Dalits becomes even clearer. It is true that amongst Indian Diaspora, "caste was increasingly an aspect of culture rather than social stratification [...] [however] the stigma of caste did not die out completely" (Jain 2003, Kumar 2004). Jain (2003: 74) makes amply clear how the caste stigma exists with the Dalits even though they have transcended the national boundaries. In his own words, "Women of high caste married to low caste men [...] looked down upon their husbands [...] and even told their children how their fathers were of a lower caste than them". The caste stigma and consciousness haunts the Dalits in Diaspora in spite of their economic mobility, whenever they visit their ancestral village. The villagers still look down upon them. Another impact of social exclusion of Dalits is the loss of 'social capital' that could give them the potential to develop consciousness and motivation for their amelioration. Moreover, because of lack of this consciousness, they could not revolt against the existing unequal Hindu Social Order for long. Their cultural co-option in the Hindu Social Order, even though they were formally not the part of Varna hierarchy, was affected by the artificial consensus. The artificial consensus was of course part of Hindu hegemony legitimized by the Karma theory, which makes people believe in the deeds of previous births determining one's status in the present.

The exclusion of tribals comes more from their geographical location and independence of their social system. As far as women are concerned their primary exclusion comes from patriarchy and the role which they have been assigned. Hence we will not include economically poor, tribals and women in the definition of Dalits. Having defined the term Dalit on the basis of their structural location, exclusion, history of exclusion and construction of unique consciousness and understanding the difference between Dalits and other marginalized sections of Indian society let us not analyze nature of their exclusion.

4 Atrocities as an indicator of Social Exclusion

In continuation with the type of exclusion Dalits face, let us just elaborate on the nature and numbers of atrocities perpetrated on them by the so-called upper castes. Atrocities on Dalits have historical mooring. However the worrisome part is that even after 64 years of constitutional safeguards and anti-atrocities acts the atrocities on Dalits continue unabated. The number of atrocities perpetrated by the so called upper castes on Dalits can be seen in the table 3 which is self-explanatory. That is why Dalits have to run to United Nation Human Right Commission to find a solution of Human Right violation in India. Apart from different types of atrocities, experienced by Dalits as a community, atrocities of Dalit women need special mention. It further substantiates the point of structural location and inequality experienced by Dalits vis-à-vis the so-called upper castes.

5 Atrocities on Dalit women

A number of social scientists have accepted that Dalit women are triply exploited on the basis of gender, class and caste (Priyadarshini 2004, Rege 2006, Kumar 2009 a). In this context, one has to understand the nature and significance of rape of Dalit women. Data released by the National Crime Record Bureau and National Commission for Scheduled Castes shows that during 1991-2001 approximately three Dalit women were raped daily (see table 2). However what is important for us to note here is that the rape of a Dalit woman is not only a sexual assault on Dalit women, rather it assumes a much higher level of caste atrocity. We can easily infer that the rape of the Dalit women results because of her location in the caste structure of Hindu Social Order. We can cite five reasons for the same. One, although all the Dalits are treated as untouchables but a Dalit woman becomes touchable for so-called upper castes for this heinous act of rape because the victimizer knows the victim cannot do anything against him. Neither the local people will protect her nor will the police and administrative machinery come to her rescue as they are dominated by so-called upper castes. Second, Dalit women's rape is, on a number of occasions, a group activity in which so-called upper castes invade the Dalit localities and rape Dalit women, in a group, without caring whether she is very aged or just a child. Third, had the rape of Dalit women been only a sexual act, then the victim (Dalit Woman) would have been left alone after the assault. However, it has been observed often that her private parts are desecrated, murdered or burned alive after the rape. Fourth, the rape of Dalit women is a caste act because Dalit women are raped when Dalit males or the Dalit community try and assert for their fundamental and human rights that are enshrined in the Constitution of India. Last but not least, the Dalit women are raped to shatter the morale of the members of the caste by bringing shame to the whole community. It has lifelong psychological impact.

6 Internal Differentiation between Indian Women and Patriarchy

Rape of a Dalit woman raises two further issues, related to the category of Indian women and patriarchy in India. It becomes clear from the nature and scope of rape of Dalit women that there exists an internal differentiation within the category of Indian women. It is so, because we have yet to observe such type of heinous crimes against the so-called upper caste women. Moreover, in such cases of atrocities the so-called upper caste women have seldom protested against their own men and have never come forward to hand over their male counter parts to the police. The second issue is that there is a qualitative difference between so-called upper caste patriarchy and

the Dalit patriarchy at least on three accounts. One, Dalit patriarchy has never attacked the savarna localities and raped so-called upper caste women in groups. Second, they have never committed such crimes of desecrating or murdering the victim after the sexual assault of so-called upper caste women. Finally, they have yet to use such heinous act to break the collective morale of so-called upper castes. One can argue that the Dalits do not have courage to do these acts. If we accept this argument then there emerges another that why do Dalits do not have such courage; and the answer is because of their structural location in the Hindu Social Order which debars them from any social or cultural capital which can save them after doing such crimes. However, these are available for the so-called upper caste patriarchy.

7 Caste and Social Capital: Polity, Civil Society and Communalism

Indian social structure is based on the Caste system as discussed earlier. What is important to note in this regard is that this system is endowed with social and cultural capital. This system brings in charisma, respect, networks and symbolic traits - like values of hierarchy in food habits, in ways of greetings, in residential exclusion etc., of the society for individuals who are born in the so-called upper castes. While for other castes located at the fourth and fifth rung in the social structure it results in stigma, disrespect, exclusion from resources and cuts them off with any types of networks. For the fifth class/Varna there exists an extreme form of exclusion. This social and cultural capital emanating from caste has produced domination of so-called upper castes in most of the spheres of Indian society but it is rampant in the functioning of Indian democratic politics and Bureaucracy, Judiciary, Industries, Universities, Media and is now getting extended to civil society organizations (Non-Governmental Organizations). Further, this social and symbolic capital of caste also influences the relationship between Hindus and Muslims in many towns of India. However, social scientists have yet to analyze the impact of caste in conceptualization of communalism in India.

8 Caste and Personality Cult in Indian Polity

Caste with its social and cultural capital has influenced Indian politics the most since its inception (Rudolph & Rudolph 1987). However, caste has benefited the so-called upper castes the most at the highest echelons of Indian polity. Since independence in 1947 till the last election for the 16th Parliament, with minor exceptions, it is they who dominate. Whether in government or in opposition it is they who have dominated the democratic politics. Whether it was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, or his daughter Indira Gandhi, or Rajeev Gandhi son Indira Gandhi, and then after the demise of Rajiv Gandhi his wife and son dominated the Indian politics. Their domination has been so complete that there is general saying that Congress (I) can only survive till some-one from Nehru-Gandhi family is at the helms of Party's affair. Apart from this when the opposition came to power it was Brahmins - Morarji Desai and Atal Bihari Vajpayee became the Prime Minister of the country. In contemporary times a right-winger supported by Rashtriya Swaymsewak Sangh (RSS) - an organization committed to Brahmanical values, has become the Prime Minister whose cabinet is dominated by so-called upper castes.

It is not that that only the Individuals of the so-called upper castes dominate but their social and symbolic capital start getting reflected in their day to day functioning. For instance, the symbolic capital of Brahmins was observed when India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on

14th August 1947 sat on a yajna performed by the Brahmins to celebrate the event of a Brahmin becoming first Prime Minister of India and wore the Raja Dand (Aristocratic Scroll) given to him by the Brahmins (Ambedkar 1979: 149). In the same vein Anderson described the ceremony in his own words, "To hallow the solemn occasion, Nehru and his colleagues sat cross-legged around sacred fire in Delhi while [...] priests [...] chanted hymns and sprinkled holy water over them [...] Three hours later, on a date and time stipulated by Hindu astrologers, the stroke of mid-night on 14th August 1947, Nehru [...] assured his broadcast listeners [...] their 'tryst with destiny' " (Anderson 2012: 103). It was not surprising that once Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru became the Prime Minister of India most of the offices of Government of India were dominated by Brahmins.

By mere observation one can argue that the domination of Brahmins grew more as soon as the second generation leaders took the reign after the demise of first generation leaders like Nehru, Patel, Ambedkar etc., and Indira Gandhi became the Prime Minister. Within no time Indira Gandhi acquired such domination in Indian politics that she was hailed as, 'India is Indira and Indira is India', especially after her crucial role in helping Bangladesh. After her sad demise in 1984 Rajeev Gandhi, along with his so-called cabinet started dominating the Indian polity, After the demise of Rajeev Gandhi another Brahmin P.V. Narsimha Rao, with the blessing of Sonia Gandhi (widow of Rajeev Gandhi) dominated the Indian polity. After Narsimha Rao another Brahmin Atal Bihari Vajpayee along with his cabinet again dominated by the so-called upper castes ruled till 2004. After Vajpayee from 2004 till 2014 although Prime Minister in India was a Sikh but as President and Vice president Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul Gandhi belonging to Nehru-Gandhi family had full control over the government. Rahul Gandhi created his young brigade with a dozen of young ministers who belonged to so-called upper castes. In 2014, just newly formed government headed by Narendra Modi, whose caste identity is still not clear, has a cabinet which is dominated by so-called upper castes. So after independence the 67 years of Indian politics reveal the domination of so-called upper castes.

How, in a democracy, is it possible that members of castes with numerical minority dominate the national politics in such a big numbers while members of castes with numerical majority are side-lined or subjugated? Even if handful leaders of the numerical majority castes acquire some positions, with their hard work and dedication, and try to assert they are unceremoniously thrown out of their parties. This phenomenon can only be answered through the structural design of caste and the social, cultural and symbolic capital enjoyed by the so-called upper castes who are numerically in minority. At the outset because of their structural location these castes have enjoyed ritual privileges since millennia, which exist in fragments even today. It is much more rampant in rural areas. Apart from ritual domination the so-called upper castes, because of their structural location, also enjoyed privileged position in different institutions like education, economy, polity, etc. Further, some two hundred years back when the British introduced modern institutions of governance, production, education, communication etc., these castes benefitted the most. Within a short period they virtually monopolized the modern institutions - judiciary, bureaucracy, industry, university, media etc. For structural and historical reasons they also developed networks in the aforesaid institutions. This network exists at local, regional, national and international (Indian Diaspora) level. Hence we can observe that so-called upper castes enjoyed high ritual status because of their location in the social structure but because of their caste networks in the secular institutions they start enjoying high status in the secular realm also. This merging of high ritual status and secular status because of their structural location helps the so-called upper castes to garner charisma in the local area. The so-called upper caste individuals use their pedigree, historicity, life chances and networks to get access to different administrative functionaries and the political organizations. This further enhances their status. The local people throng to them to get their petty and day to day works done, further giving them clout. The local population starts revolving around their personality because they become conscious of their access to

different institutions. On the other hand there is no Social capital for the castes located at the lower echelons of the caste hierarchy. For them it is caste stigma and exclusion in both ritual and secular realm. Therefore nobody wants to associate themselves with them. People are afraid to annoy the local so-called upper caste politicians. Sometime it is because of fear and sometime it is uncertainty of lower strata candidates' chances to win an election.

The ritual status of minority so-called upper castes mixed with secular status gets further enhanced when their members exploit their social networks with cultural and symbolic capital by relating it to print and visual media. The media persons oblige because they find caste (Varna) affinity with the politicians belonging to so-called upper castes. It is common man's knowledge that Indian media (print, TV, radio) is almost exclusive domain of so-called upper castes¹. This domination of so-called upper castes in media helps them in magnifying the impact of political acts of so-called upper caste leaders. The modus operandi remains simple. Small little deeds of the so-called upper caste political leaders, are, more often than not, blown out of proportion. The example of Bharatiya Janata Party's 'Shining India Campaign' in 2004 General election and Aam Aadmi Party's campaign in 2013 elections amply prove the point. Further, media also hides the shortcomings of these politicians saving them from embarrassments.

Contrary to this, the numerically dominant castes, like Dalits, suffering from stigma because of their structural location do not have a high ritual status, any pedigree, neither any network nor secular power; most of them are first time politicians. They, individually neither can influence local administration, functionaries of the party nor the media. Their most significant political achievements are blacked out or given a negative spin (Kumar 2009, 2014b). The sum total of these processes is that the members of numerically dominant castes cannot cultivate 'personality cult' which cuts across their own caste and is accepted even by members of other castes including the so-called upper castes.

9 Relationship between Caste and Corruption in Democracy

Is there any relationship between caste and corruption in India? It is important to ask this question because most of the rules, informal or formal, have been formulated by the so-called upper castes. Moreover, they dominate the major formal and informal institutions. Yet, in analysing the nature and causes of corruption we never take cognizance of caste of the lawbreakers. However, when it comes to the jatis placed lower in the jati hierarchy there is labelling and stereotyping that they are corrupt. That is what one social scientist, without any empirical data dubbed the 90 per cent of the Indian population – the SCs, STs, and OBCs – as the most corrupt². An astonishing part of the debate was instead analysing the statement on a methodological and epistemological basis most of the so-called upper caste Social Scientists and few Dalits as well defended the social scientists in the name of freedom of speech and expression. But the fact remains that nobody could remove the existing stigma and stereotyping of the jatis placed lower in the jati hierarchy. It is in this biased state of affairs the analysis of the structural location of corruption in Indian society is necessary. Can we sociologically define corruption? No doubt there exists a narrow definition of corruption propounded by the law of the land, that is, misuse of public office for

¹Anil Chamadia, chairman, Media Studies Group (MSG), which along with political scientist Yogendra Yadav conducted in 2006 a survey of 37 media organizations boasting a national presence. Not a single Dalit held the top 10 positions in any of the organizations. The MSG also surveyed 116 IIMC-trained correspondents and found that, till June 2011, only six of them were Dalit.

²Ashis Nandy in a discussion on 'The Republic of Ideas' at the Jaipur literary festival, 24- 28 January 2013 (India) made this remark: "It is a fact that most of the corrupt come from the OBCs (Other Backward Classes) and the Scheduled Castes and now increasingly Scheduled Tribes".

personal gain. But this definition does not reveal much and does not give a deeper understanding of the mechanism of corruption prevailing in Indian society. That is why we have to ask, is corruption an inbuilt mechanism of the informal and formal structures of the society or does it emerge with the time because of different institutions of governance? Secondly, we have to also ask whether the level of corruption increases with the increase in the level of development. Thirdly, we have to also analyse whether there are certain institutions in the society which socialize the members of the society in corrupt practices?

10 Defining Corruption: Broader definition in Indian Context

In a generic sense, corruption can be defined as a mechanism by which, a numerically small section of society collectively or individually denies majority of its people a plethora of rights and privileges whether it is 'Human Rights for dignified existence', 'equality: economic, political and social', 'liberty of occupation, residence and religious practices, fraternity etc. By doing this numerically smaller group monopolizes religious, political, economic, educational and judicial institutions etc. Historically this mechanism is created, at the inception of the society, through religious texts and sanctions. Later they are legitimized socially by theories of Dharma and Karma. The traditional structures created, in this fashion; do not die in modern times. But they remain alive changing their form and style of functioning and influence keeping the monopoly of the numerically small section of the society intact. The existing dominance in and composition of modern institutions of governance, production, and education in India amply prove the point.

11 Corruption: The Narrow Definition

However in contemporary times in India the so-called leaders against corruption have promulgated a very narrow definition of 'Corruption'. According to this definition 'corruption can be defined as misuse of a government or public office for personal gains'. In other words how a government servant or a politically elected member or a judge misuse their office is called corruption. This is very reductionist and sweeping definition because of different reasons. One, this definition has taken cognizance of corruption in government offices only. That means this assume that by nature people are honest but they become corrupt when they join the government institutions. But the fact is that individuals are not born in parliament, bureaucracy, or judiciary. They are born in society which socializes them before they join institutions of governance or public life. That means we can argue that the institutions by nature are not corrupt rather there is something wrong with the people who man them or run them.

In this context, it is important to note that this definition does not take note of corruption induced by social sector. This is the second lacuna of the narrow definition of corruption. For instance, every year numbers of women are burnt alive because of dowry. After burning their bride the groom's parents bribe the police so they are not caught. One can call it a crime. But I will call it social corruption because out of greed certain people commit this act and then indulge in corrupt practice. Similarly, corrupt practice comes to fore when huge offerings of gold and silver are made to temples without any transparency? Nobody gives a receipt of donation neither one knows whether a person has paid income tax on that gold. Further, temple income is also not taxed even though temples have gold worth trillions of rupees. Thirdly, the narrow definition does not take into account of corruption that exists in and because of private sector and civil society organizations. Again the fact is that corporate sector and big industrial houses have lobbyists to

get them government contracts and bribe the government employees to grant them concessions in the tax, excise and import duty by making laws for legitimizing their act. Industrial houses do not pay their labourers even their minimum wages. They now have higher and fire policies as well. Is this not corruption? But this narrow definition of corruption does not take all this into account. However the narrow definition of corruption reveals certain important facts. Most importantly this definition reveals that corruption is a caste phenomenon.

12 Is Corruption a Caste Phenomenon?

Generally it is propagated that corruption is a faceless enemy. However, according to the analysis of both the broader and narrow definition of corruption we can argue that corruption is not a faceless enemy but has an identity of caste. According to broader definition of corruption, corruption can be defined as "a mechanism by which, a numerically small section of society denies majority of its people a plethora of rights and privileges whether it is 'Human rights for dignified existence', 'equality: economic, political and social', 'liberty of occupation, residence and religious practices, fraternity etc. By doing this numerically smaller group monopolizes religious, political, economic, educational and judicial institutions etc." Going by the aforesaid definition of corruption, who are the people who have made such structures in ancient period which denied majority of people from plethora of rights for thousands of years? Who were the people who monopolized the institutions of governance, education, and production? Of course the so-called 'upper-castes'! They could do this because they misused their ritual and social position in the society. And hence they were responsible for a corrupt social order from its inception which was in-equal and devoid of equality, liberty and fraternity (Ambedkar 1994).

If that was the case in ancient period when there were no modern institutions of governance what was the condition in colonial period during the British. In this context Phooley had written long ago in 1873 that, "The Brahmin despoiled the lower classes not only in his capacity as a priest, but also in the capacity of a Government officer, as the Brahmins had monopolized all higher places of emoluments, the village police Patil being a tool in his hands. He was the temporal and spiritual adviser of the ryots, the money-lender in their difficulties [...] In the capacity of a Mamlatdar, a supervisor exploit him, in the Engineering Department, an officer in the Revenue and Public Works Departments he was there to exploit him, league with the Kulkarni, or the lawyer or the money-lender who were Brahmins. So there was nepotism, bribery and jobbery because of the domination of one caste in the administration" (Keer 1974: 116).

In the same vein Ambedkar has also highlighted the relationship between caste and corruption. According to him, "The Police and the Magistrate are sometimes corrupt. If they were only corrupt, things would not perhaps be so bad because an officer who is corrupt is open to purchase by either party. But the misfortune is that the police and Magistrate are often more partial than corrupt. It is this partiality to the Hindus and his antipathy to the untouchables, which results in the denial of protection and justice to the untouchables" (Ambedkar 1982: 105).

In contemporary times, even if we consider the narrow definition of corruption, then what picture emerges? According to narrow definition of corruption, corruption can be defined as, 'misuse of public office for personal gains'. In this context let us analyse who are the people who dominate and monopolize the modern and secular institutions viz. Polity, Judiciary, Bureaucracy, Industry, University and Media? Again the answer is the so-called Upper-castes! This can be proved on the basis of composition of the three institutions namely- Judiciary, bureaucracy, and Media. The available data clearly shows that these institutions are totally monopolised by the so called upper-castes (for Judiciary and bureaucracy see 4th National Commission for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe report 1996-7 & 1998-9, Pages20-22). According to this report there

are only 3% of SC and ST in High Courts as judges and Additional Judges. Now there is no SC and ST Judge in Supreme Court of India. Further this report says that Brahmins, Rajputs, Kayasthas, and Baniyas constitute approximately 83% of Class - I government and Non-government services. SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities roughly constituted only 13% and rest were other castes. That means in these institutions again so-called upper-castes are directly responsible for corruption.

13 Corruption and Socialization

True individuals do not become corrupt in a day or two. Rather there is a long drawn direct and indirect process of socialization for the same in the society and culture where they live. If we take the Hindu society in particular then we can find institutions, ways and means in which people are socialized from the childhood which facilitates the practice of corruption in the society. The individual and groups are not only socialized into the institutions which gives them legitimacy to exploit the others but the individuals socialized in such a way that they willingly pay without making any fuss. For instance the young ones are socialized by observing their parents willingly making an offer in cash or kind to priests at the time of multiple rituals performed in the home or in the temples. Children are also told to offer to gods and goddesses whenever there is an exam or some result of competitive exam is about to come. For instance Phooley in his book, *Cultivator's Whipcord* (1883) has described, "[...] how a Brahmin priest persecuted a Shudra farmer all the year round from cradle to cremation, from pregnancy to pilgrimage, and how all this exploitation was done under the cloak of religion and its unending rites and rituals" (Keer 1974 :183).

In their youth they are socialized to demand dowry in marriage and keep demanding from the bride's family for all their lives. And parents of girls are socialized to pay dowry helplessly. It is not only the individuals are trained to offer and demand but they are trained for not giving what is due to someone. For instance in the villages the so-called upper castes have a habit of not paying for the labour of the Dalits and other artisan classes. Landlords do not pay minimum wages to landless labourers. The Priests are not supposed to work and produce instead socialized to survive on the hard labour of others and accumulate capital in the temple as their private property without using it for public good. That is why Indian temples have been found to possess gold and silver worth trillions of dollars beside ready cash. The moneylenders specifically the Vaishyas are trained to lend loans to villagers at an exorbitant rate of interest. They exploit the masses by manipulating their records as the masses were illiterate and powerless. Even dacoits make offerings to Goddess Kali for big haul. Above all the Hindus are also socialized the way out of sin or these corrupt practices. The way is simple. Keep your gods-goddess happy by offerings or keeping fast, chanting Mantras and by taking dips in holy -river like Ganges. In medieval ages Nazrana (Tribute), Shukrana (Thanks Giving), and Zurmana (Fine) continued to socialize people in illegal practices. In modern times the huge gifts the elite' exchange on the eve of the different Hindu festivals especially on Diwali is akin to socialization and initiation in the corruption. In this way we can argue that Indians have many structures and processes which train individuals to indulge in corrupt practices later in the life. And they do not hesitate to give or take bribes. Therefore, it is my observation that once we understand the structure of Indian society we can understand the structures of the corruption easily.

14 Caste Conceptualization of Communalism

Communalism, in India, has been analysed through perspective of religion only. However, the more effective way to analyse it would be through perspective of caste and its structure. Social scientists have argued that Communalism does not emerge as a natural process it is artificially

created because of competitive politics (Brass 2003). In general parlance 'communalism' can be defined as a process through which invention of an 'Other' takes place in a society. This 'othering' is done at the religious pretext. Another related question in this regard is that who are the forces who have the capacity to construct this 'Other' and on what basis? Specifically, in India this other-ing has been done on the basis of the fact that a particular religion-Islam has come from outside India. In this context if one tries to identify the exact forces who construct the 'other' in Indian society. It is obvious the deprived and excluded castes located at the lowest ebb of the caste hierarchy without and cultural and symbolic capital cannot construct the 'idea' of the 'other'. Then who constructs the other? It is in this context we are aware that Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) categorically constructed the 'other' on the bases of holy land and father land. We very well know who constitutes the highest echelons of the RSS- of course the so-called upper castes specifically Brahmins, because it is they who can only be head of the institution (Golwalkar 1966). According to this thought the Hindus have both their father and holy land in India. Muslims and Christians both have father land in India but holy land outside India. According to this thought, "The new-comers should bring about a total metamorphosis in their life-attitudes and take a rebirth [...] Mere common residence or birth and growth in our land cannot imply that the loyalties, qualities, and pattern of life exist amongst all its residents" (Golwalkar 1966: 127). Later on the basis of same divisive ideology the so-called upper caste dominated political mobilization further communalized Indian society (Jaffreot 1996). In this background it becomes clear the the ideologues of RSS belong to the so-called upper caste. Therefore, it becomes obvious that the so-called upper castes are only capable of constructing the 'other' against whom battle can be pitched. This possible again because it is only they enjoy higher ritual and secular status because of their structural location.

Having identified the caste as the factor constructing the 'other' let us analyse the other fact about communalism that is its operationalization. It is a fact that the so-called upper castes can formulate the ideology to produce an 'Other' but, they do not have numerical strength to wage a battle against the constructed 'Other'. Therefore, they need the castes located lower in the caste hierarchy to operationalize this ideology. But why should these castes join hands with the so-called upper castes to operationalize their agenda? The answer is, because of want of acceptance within the Hindu social order. As the so-called lower castes have been excluded from every sphere of life, by implementing this ideology, they think that they can get an opportunity to prove the point that they are part and parcel of the Hindu Social Order. A second reason for operationalization of this ideology by the so-called lower castes is that, these castes live in the close vicinity of the minorities and more often than not they have similar occupational and economic status. That means they have same type of business- like selling vegetables, chicken, fish, goat meat or offering services like cycle mechanic, as carpenter, black smith, etc. to name just a few. That is why, we see, that the epicentre of communal violence is always geographical spaces where these communities live. For instance, if we take example of Kanpur, Varanasi, Allahabad, and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh the communal riots have taken place between the so-called lower castes *Khatiks* and Muslims who are involved more or less in the same types of profession and live side by side in the same localities. However, as the communal violence is spreading from urban to rural areas in India relationship between caste and communalism is becoming stronger. It is so because only the members of so-called upper caste have weapons and strong network to lead the attack against minorities. This is not one way process. The so-called Upper-Castes among minorities do the same. Hence, on the above analysis of Communalism we may put this preposition that the explanation of Communalism through caste perspective is must.

15 Conclusions

To conclude it is amply clear from the above discussion that inequality is the product of caste structure in India. The caste structure is responsible for the distribution of rights and privileges among the 82 per cent of Indian population known as Hindus. It is because of this arrangement few castes have acquired unprecedented social, cultural and symbolic capital in Indian society. In turn certain castes like Dalits have been completely debarred from any type of capital. The social and symbolic capital of so-called upper caste transcends the secular sphere and helps them to gain access to modern secular institutions which were supposed to be established on universalistic principles. Hence, with the congruence of ritual and secular status the so-called upper castes enjoy overpowering dominance in the society in general and in the institutions of governance, production, education etc. in particular. This leads to marginalization and exclusion of castes located lower in the caste hierarchy, especially the Dalits. We have seen in the paper how Dalits face a cumulative and long history of social exclusion. Various types of atrocities, particularly atrocities on Dalit women, substantiate the point that their inequality emanates from their structural location in the Hindu social order. The case of Dalit women also reveals the internal differentiation of Indian women and Indian patriarchy. If the so-called upper caste woman is exploited on the basis of gender and class, the Dalit woman is triply exploited on the basis of caste, class and gender. This is precisely because of her location in the caste structure.

Apart from this by a specific case of politics in India we have also shown how the so-called upper castes dominate the political institution which is of course the product of their structural location and social capital. This results in personality cult and has furthered the clout of the so-called upper castes. Along with this the paper has related the rampant corruption to the structure and socialization process in the hierarchical caste structure. Explicitly the paper focuses on the division of labor produced by the structure of the Caste and the contempt which it generates for menial labor. The abnegation of menial labor by the so-called upper castes produces exploitative institutions and appropriation of fruits of other's labor, which results in corruption in the society. The so-called upper castes who dominate the modern institutions of governance often misuse the public office for their personal ends however they are seldom caught and stigmatized. Last but not the least, we have also analyzed in the paper how structure of caste produces communalism. The paper has highlighted that there are two components of communal ideology one formulation and second implementation of the same. We have proved the preposition by highlighting the fact how the communal ideology is constructed by the so-called upper castes and implemented by the so-called lower castes. The ideology and communal conflict leads to violence in the society and mistrust on the communities giving rise to their exclusion from the formal and informal institutions on society and thereby inequality in the society.

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Table 1: *Representation of social exclusion of Dalits*

Types of exclusion		Nature of Exclusion
Social Exclusion	1	Denial of existence in the Rigveda
	2	No reference in the varna scheme
	3	No right to sacred thread
	4	Exclusion from <i>ashramas</i>
	5	No prescription of dharma
	6	Exclusion form <i>Purushartha</i>
	7	Exclusion from predestination
Practice of Untouchability	8	Residential exclusion (in the South of the village)
	9	Denial of acceptance and access to water
	10	Denial of accepting of food
	11	Restriction on sitting together
	12	Restriction on celebrating festivals together
	13	Denial of entry into house
	14	Denial of entry into kitchen
	15	Denial of entry into temples
	16	Restriction on taking meals with other castes during ceremonies
Atrocities	17	Rape of Dalit Women (a caste atrocity)
	18	Murder of a Dalit
	19	Grievous Hurt
	20	Arson/loot
	21	Ridicules in society and sacred tests
	22	Denial of wearing of clothes/shoes/turbans etc. similar to upper castes
Hazardous/Stigmatized Occupation	23	Cleaning Human excreta
	24	Scavenging /cleaning manholes
	25	Midwifery role by Dalit Woman
	26	Removing Carcasses
	27	Grave digging/Burning dead/Drum beating at the time of death
	28	Piggery/Butchery/toddy tapping
	29	Cleaning of soiled clothes
	30	Denial of taking out marriage and funeral processions
Political Exclusion	31	Denial of participation in electioneering process
	32	Denial of participation in the decision making processes in Panchayt
	33	Exclusion from institutions of governance
Economic Exclusion	34	Denial of freedom of occupation
	35	Denial of access to property in history
	36	Denial of financial loans from banks and other financial institutions

Continued on next page

Table 1 – *Continued form previous page*

Educational Exclusion	37	Denial of right to education in history
	38	No tradition of Education
	39	Exclusion from becoming knowledge givers
	40	Exclusion from curriculum (from lower level to higher education)
	41	Absence of owners of Educational institutions
Religious Exclusion	42	Exclusion from the different structures of religion (priesthood, Matha)
	43	Religious legitimacy for hierarchy of the social structure
	44	Religious legitimacy for social exclusion
Enemy Within	45	Oppressor of the same religion
	46	Oppressor of the same region

Source: Kumar, Vivek, 2007, 2014.

Table 2: All India Scheduled Caste Data 2001

		% of SC Population 2001	% of literate SC 2001	SC Population below Poverty Line 2004-05		Drop out of SC's Classes I-X(2005-06)
				Rural	Urban	
	India	16.3	54.7	36.8	39.9	70.5
1	J & K	7.6	59.0	5.2	13.7	55.7
2	Himachal Pradesh	24.7	70.3	19.6	5.6	50.2
3	Punjab	28.9	56.2	14.6	16.1	65.7
4	Chandigarh	17.5	67.7	*	*	73.5
5	Uttarakhand	17.9	63.4	54.2	65.7	–
6	Haryana	19.3	55.4	26.8	33.4	64.8
7	Delhi	16.9	70.8	0.0	35.8	23.9
8	Rajasthan	17.2	52.2	28.7	52.1	82.7
9	Uttar Pradesh	21.1	46.3	44.8	44.9	72.5
10	Bihar	15.7	28.5	64.0	67.2	90.5
11	Sikkim	5.0	63.0	*	*	84.9
12	Arunachal Pradesh	0.6	67.6	*	*	40.6
13	Nagaland	NSC	NSC	*	*	–
14	Manipur	2.8	72.3	*	*	2.4
15	Mizoram	Neg.	89.2	*	*	–
16	Tripura	17.4	74.7	*	*	74.9
17	Meghalaya	0.5	56.3	*	*	74.2
18	Assam	6.9	66.8	27.7	8.6	72.1
19	West Bengal	23.0	59.0	29.5	28.5	54.6
20	Jharkhand	11.8	37.6	57.9	47.2	–
21	Orissa	16.5	55.5	50.2	72.6	71.8
22	Chhattisgarh	11.6	64.0	32.7	52.0	–
23	Madhya Pradesh	15.2	58.6	42.8	67.3	65.9
24	Gujarat	7.1	70.5	21.8	16.0	63.2
25	Daman & Diu	3.1	85.1	*	*	6.9
26	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1.9	78.2	*	*	26.1
27	Maharashtra	10.2	71.9	44.8	43.2	54.2
28	Andhra Pradesh	16.2	53.5	15.4	39.9	70.2
29	Karnataka	16.2	52.9	31.8	50.6	65.8
30	Goa	1.8	71.9	*	*	76.8
31	Lakshdweep	NSC	NSC	*	*	–
32	Kerala	9.8	82.7	21.6	32.5	16.3
33	Tamil Nadu	19.0	63.2	31.2	40.2	46.5
34	Puducherry	16.2	69.1	*	*	19.0
35	A&N Islands	NSC	NSC	*	*	–

Sources: Census of India 2001, Primary Census Abstract, Scheduled Castes: Table A-8, Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, p. no. xIvi (% of SC), Iiv (% of literacy in SC), SC Population Below Poverty Line 2004-05 (source: State-Wise Percentage of Population Below Poverty Line by Social Groups, 2004-05, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, accessed from <http://socialjustice.nic.in/socialg0405.php> on 24.05.2014), Dropout Rate of SCs (accessed from planningcommission.nic.in/sectors/sj/Literacy%20of%20SCs_STs.doc accessed on 24.05.2014).

Table 3: Atrocities on Dalits Committed by Upper Castes

Years	Murder	Grievous hurts	Rape	Arson	Others	Total
1991	610	1706	784	604	13944	17646
1992	732	1677	896	596	30174	34075
1993	632	1783	1006	685	28356	32462
1994	587	1968	1157	745	33186	37643
1995	688	2156	1142	1729	30589	35305
1996	543	4585	949	464	23482	30023
1997	513	3860	1037	389	22145	27944
1998	516	3809	923	346	20044	25638
1999	506	3241	1000	337	20009	25093
2000	486	3098	1034	260	18664	23742
2001	763	4491	1331	332	14383	33501

Source: Annual Reports of Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Government of India, New Delhi.