



**WORKING
PAPER**

147

**CITIZENSHIP, DIFFERENCES
AND IDENTITY:
DALIT WOMEN AND
POLITICAL INCLUSION**

v. Vijayalakshmi

CITIZENSHIP, DIFFERENCES AND IDENTITY: DALIT WOMEN AND POLITICAL INCLUSION*

V. Vijayalakshmi

Abstract

The paper examines issues related to citizenship and political participation of dalit women. The disadvantages of caste, class and gender and the exclusionary mechanisms entrenched in hierarchical social relations have had differential outcomes for dalit women in citizenship and politics. The experience of marginality, which they encounter, defines how identity is perceived and constructed. The participation of dalit women in citizenship is constrained by high levels of deprivation, minimal participation in civil society, and low political activity of any kind.

Introduction

The introduction of the 81st Constitutional Amendment Bill on the reservation of seats for women in parliament¹, and the strong opposition to the Bill across party lines, has given new salience to the discourse on citizenship and gender relations in India.² While one may not entirely agree with the content of the Bill, and the demand by the political parties for sub-quotas (for Other Backwards Castes or OBCs),³ the debate between the supporters and the opponents raises at least three crucial issues. First, moving away from minimal requirements of citizenship such as the right to vote and participate in elections, the nature of citizenship remains a contentious issue for women and the subaltern groups. There are practical problems in the assumptions of interconnectedness of equality in democratic citizenship and in political participation (particularly in electoral politics). Second, 'political inclusion' is more notional than effective when there are zones of citizenship that are in practice exclusive, and there is differential social and political integration of disadvantaged groups. The question here is not merely about extending rights but is also of the state of societal and political relations. Third, the emphasis on differences among women, on differences in political goals and opportunities, is gaining significance.

* This paper is based on studies on panchayats and civil society in Karnataka and Kerala carried out at the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore, and financially supported by Ford Foundation. I am grateful for suggestions and comments from Peter De Souza, Anand Inbanathan, Poornima Vyasulu, Manohar Yadav and the participants at the seminar on 'Dalits, discrimination and the struggle for equal citizenships' 15 and 16 November 2002, Goa, where the paper was presented. E-mail: vijayalakshmi@vsnl.com

In a social situation characterised by hierarchies of inequality, what does all this mean to political representation of dalits,⁴ particularly to dalit women? The pervasive position of disadvantage and marginalisation that dalits face in different areas of life space (i.e. economic, political, social, civil society) has to a certain extent accentuated dalit identities.⁵ Where transgressive identity of subaltern groups has political significance, dalit identity provides a framework for action and gives meaning to their experience. Discursively this emphasises the differences with the *dominant other*,⁶ and on building political strategies based on these differences. What is crucial in determining their bargaining power in politics and citizenship is the articulation of active (where discrimination is emphasised) and politicised identities. While bringing to the fore the hegemonic power relations in citizenship (and political representation), the identities of marginalisation are not effectively formed. Representation of dalit political perspective has been situational, and sometimes even contradictory. It is either maintaining rigid boundaries and exhibiting subversive tendencies, or conforming and passively accepting inequalities. Within the dynamics of caste and vote bank politics, the question is: what are the political possibilities these pose for dalit women?

In examining some of these issues, in the first section the paper examines what citizenship means for dalit women. Following this, the discussion on dalit identity looks at how dalit identity and differences are perceived both by dalits and by other groups. The social and political processes in local government are used as cases to understand the constraints that dalit women face.

Locations and Social Interactions Boundaries of Citizenship

Citizenship in a normative sense is a collection of the rights and duties that govern and define social and political interactions. It delineates how people interact with each other, the obligations of the political and economic institutions, and does not stem from social position or economic status. Despite legal provisions, and state institutions and practices that are designed to ensure the rights of the citizens, rights and duties are often not reflected in social and political reality. Social groups are differently placed in citizenship relations, constrained/facilitated by their social locations. It follows then that their bargaining and negotiating capacities depend on these positions. While there is an emphasis on greater equality, the issue in the case of disadvantaged groups is not merely of recognition

and status. It has to do with having rights to entitlement to participate actively in citizenship and the status of dignity and equality in treatment from others. Often, there is no overt social closure, but at the same time inclusion is tied to everyday social relations producing differential participation. There is a tension, as Young (1998) points out, between inclusion, participation and equality of treatment.

For women, the core elements of citizenship, i.e., the dimensions of integration and experience of marginality, are intricate, undermining women's active citizenship. The gender order, the differential access to resources that men and women have, and the subordination of women within the household acts against women's full attainment of rights of citizenship. The multiple responsibilities of women within the household, and the asymmetrical power relations, undermine women's development as active citizens (see Phillips, 1993). Women's marginalisation is not uniform and differences exist across caste and class groups. Caste and class create a different quality of life, status, dissimilar experiences of domination and oppression, and marginalisation, which take precedence over the common experiences that women share. Among dalits, the group disadvantage is intense because of the absolute poverty faced by the majority.⁷ In addition to material disadvantage there is relative deprivation in social and human resources in comparison to other groups.⁸ For dalit women it is triple oppression through the gender order, social (caste and class) hierarchies and lack of capabilities. Caste and class cannot be separated when exploring the lives and marginalisation of dalit women.

To make sense of the powerlessness confronting dalit women in citizenship it is useful to map what Friedman (1992:26) refers to as 'popular-struggle terrain'. The resistance to dalit women playing a greater role in political affairs can be better understood if we examine their levels of inclusion/exclusion from important domains of life space.⁹ The four domains that are considered here are private (household), state (policies), political (political organisations and elective positions), and civil society. These domains are complex entities that are hierarchical, and gendered. Each domain has a core area that is the source of power. Dalit women's status in each of these domains has consequences for their effective participation in citizenship and its outcome.

Household and Access to Resources

Most women, irrespective of their social background, encounter the disadvantages related to the gender order. Gender analysis indicates that

the household is not entirely a woman's sphere. The division of the household into spaces of consumption and decision-making and the differential values attached to them are responsible for inequalities of power in the private sphere. Women are involved in consumption activities but not in decision-making. Household income in most of the low income households is not pooled, and women's income is spent on the essentials of daily living. Thus, women have limited savings for economic independence, and they are responsible for the sustenance of members of the household.

Dalit households also conform to this general pattern, and in a majority of cases these households are below the poverty line and in the low income category.¹⁰ Women's labour is subsumed in the household labour and subsistence activities. While it is essential for women to take up hired labour, they do not have the autonomy to participate in political activities. Srinivas (1962, 1977) pointed out that the consequence of *sanskritisation* among lower castes, particularly dalits, has neutralised liberal spaces within the household and marriage, and made gender relations rigid.¹¹ There have not been significant changes since the 1960s and 1970s when Srinivas made these observations, and one of the ways by which dalits exhibited social mobility was by withdrawing dalit women from the public space. Irrespective of changes in the economic status and material improvement there are indications of sanskritised practices (Deshpande, 2001b). Rigid gender relations that were more characteristic of upper castes (Liddle, et al, 1986), have been imbibed by the dalits, who emulated upper caste practices. Deshpande (2002) in an analysis of the section on women's autonomy in National Family and Health Survey (NFHS-II for 1998–99) draws interesting insights on variations in the autonomy of dalit and non-dalit women within the household. Dalit women showed less autonomy compared to women who belonged to OBCs and other caste groups on decisions related to health, access to household income, and major purchases. Contrary to the assumption that Scheduled Caste women enjoyed greater autonomy in terms of physical mobility, the analysis showed that they had only marginally higher freedom compared to women from other caste groups.¹² Private space has become more *proper* and ritually correct as seen by the dominant castes for dalit women, moving away from the earlier less restrictive practices, resulting in their subordination within the household.¹³ This has consequences for women's political participation because the emphasis on sanskritised practices restrained them from actively participating in public roles.

Apart from the gender rationales in pursuing active citizenship

roles, there are also practical constraints. It needs to be considered whether dalit women can withdraw from the labour force to pursue active political and citizenship roles. Although affirmative action enables dalits to access education, jobs, and elective positions, high levels of deprivation make it difficult for most of them to utilise these benefits. Low levels of human capital, limits on time and demands for their labour by the household contribute to the disadvantages in political participation. In the panchayats, we observed that the burden on time was greater for dalit women as they have multiple responsibilities of carrying out household and economic activities. Understandably the political role received lower priority when their time was vital for reproductive and subsistence activities. Women were responsible for looking after the needs of the entire family, maintaining the cattle and sheep, and contributing time for social reproduction. They contributed substantially to the family labour and household income and found it difficult to take time out for political activities. Dalit women did not have the 'surplus time' to effectively participate in political activity or carry out their responsibilities as representatives.

Dalit women's role in the economy is limited to subsistence activities. The assets owned by dalits are limited and women's labour contribution has only consumption value. While there is no gender disaggregated data on the status of dalit women, figures on the poverty of Scheduled Castes explain their economic and social deprivation. Nearly 60 per cent of the Scheduled Castes in rural areas have monthly income of less than Rs.380, while it is less than 30 per cent for other groups (National Sample Survey, 1999–2000, Report No. 472). In urban areas, 33 per cent of the Scheduled Castes have a monthly income of less than Rs.425, and it is 13 per cent for other caste groups (ibid.). In land ownership, only 3 per cent of the Scheduled Castes have land holdings of 4 acres and above.

State Interventions and Outcome for Dalits

Since Independence, the state perspective on Scheduled Castes has been that the economic deprivation of Scheduled Castes is related to the low ritual status of their castes. Thus the state's intervention in both these areas was seen as essential for the integration of Scheduled Castes into the development and political process (See Beteille, 1965). The state response to address the marginality of the dalits was mainly through the policy of affirmative action in education, employment and elective positions.¹⁴ While reservations for the dalits certainly enhanced political

representation, their achievements in the areas of education and employment are not encouraging. The jobs reserved for dalits are either under utilised because of lack of suitable candidates or there are delays in filling up the reserved posts. The larger issue, however, has not much to do with affirmative action not being utilised but the scope it presents to dalits in the context of economic reforms taking place in the country. The changes in economic policy and the expansion of the private sector provides limited scope for dalits, because of minimal entrepreneurial activity among dalits. The poor quality of education that they receive curtails their absorption into the work force in the private sector since only those who have access to better education fare well.

There have been demands from a section of dalits for reservation of jobs in the private sector. The reservation policy provided opportunities to access education and employment but it could not develop comparable capabilities to avail the opportunities created by the opening of the market. While drawing lessons from the American model of diversified assets, as was pointed out in the Bhopal Dalit Declaration, can be one of the alternatives, it is essential to shift from reservation as the only option to enhance human capabilities.

There is skewed utilisation of the reservation programmes between men and women, with men in a relatively more advantageous position to utilise the measures provided by the state than women. The lack of minimum capabilities among women arising from limited access to education has led to the underutilisation of reservation facilities. The educational level among women continues to be low. Among Scheduled Caste women, 72 per cent in rural areas and 45 per cent in urban areas are illiterate (see Deshpande, 2000).¹⁵ While gender inequalities in general and the low income levels of Scheduled Caste households have been contributing factors, the failure of the government to ensure compulsory quality schooling reduces women's opportunities in the government provisions of employment. Interrelated disadvantages such as low status of caste, economic backwardness, illiteracy, and limited occupational choice, all contribute to make the problems of dalit women far more difficult to surmount. While the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001) makes specific mention of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, it is too early to comment on the policy agenda that may follow.

Caste-based reservation has also led to differential utilisation of benefits between various sub-groups among dalits. The most common perception among dalits is that the reservation in education and

employment is being cornered by a small section of urban -based dalits who are also well off. These dalits comprise the *creamy layer*, while a large section of dalits lack minimum capabilities even to make use of any of these provisions (Radhakrishnan, 2002). There is greater articulation of these differences within the dalit community, whether it is among the more deprived Mahars and Mangs or the dalits from the Marathwada region (who are educationally and economically more backward) compared to the dalits of Vidarbha in Maharashtra. Similarly dalits of Telangana feel more deprived than dalits in coastal Andhra (Guru 1999), and so also the 'left hand' group in Karnataka are unhappy about the cornering of privileges by the 'right hand' group.

Civil Society and the Organising of Dalit Women

An important aspect of the marginalisation of dalit women in citizenship and political participation is their low participation in civil society associations. The electoral space available through affirmative action did not enhance inclusion in civil society. Three issues are vital in this respect. First, the nature of interface of the dalit organisations/movements with mixed group associations and movements. Second, the participation of dalit women in dalit associations and other civil society organisations. Third, the extent of representation of the interests of dalit women in civil society associations (both dalit and non-dalit associations).

Dalit forums continue to have a peripheral position in civil society. The reasons for tensions in the interface between the dalit and non-dalit associational activity are as much internal as are external factors perpetuating the social hierarchy within the civil society space. The bourgeois nature of the women's movements is not adequately prepared to address issues of dalit women, their disadvantages and marginality leading to the alienation of dalit women from the women's movement. It is, however, the internal problems among dalits, at different levels, in organising dalit groups and expressing group identity, which are of greater concern in consolidating their position in the civil society. Counter-mobilisation while essential for dalit assertion, was not used strategically, thereby weakening their links with other civil society associations and movements. The expression of group identity is also hindered by *jati* differences among dalits. The civil society space is thus not effectively used either because of overemphasis on boundary maintenance or not using the active identity (i.e. marginalized status as identity). This is reflected in the various civil society activities. For example, the farmers' movements in different states do not have adequate dalit presence and

their agenda do not include issues of wagedworkers and landless labourers who are predominantly dalits. The limited presence of dalits in KSSP (and its core group) in Kerala or the Raitha Sangha in Karnataka are just a few examples.¹⁶

The dalit movement(s) since before Indian Independence has gone through various phases of rigour and relapse, leaving a certain ambiguity about whether they can be defined as movements (see Oommen 1990, Shah 1990).¹⁷ The activity has also been regional with intense action in Maharashtra and a few other states, while more scattered and counteraction in other states. Dalit literature in the local language has been an empowering space for dalits where they could articulate their experiences and their point of view.¹⁸ This has been in many ways a contributing factor in the formation of dalit associations in Maharashtra and Karnataka (see Charsley 1998, Yadav 1998, Mane 1994).¹⁹ The *bahujan*²⁰ politics of Kanshi Ram in the late 1970s gave depth to dalit claims in electoral politics. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was an outcome of the political wing of the trade union Backward and Minorities Communities Employees Federation in the late 1970s, to unify the oppressed dalits and the majority backward and minority communities. In the 1990s, the BSP has had electoral victories in UP, Punjab and Bihar.

The success of the BSP in Punjab and UP is attributed to the emergence of a new class of government officers belonging to the Scheduled Castes (Chandra, 2000). In UP, the BSP was successful in forming the government thrice with the support of BJP. Mayawathi, a dalit woman, headed the government all three times, and she wields considerable control over the party.²¹ There have been programmes (developing Ambedkar villages) and laws that directly benefited dalits introduced during Mayawati's short terms as the chief minister in 1995, and 1997 (Jaffrelot, 2003) and later during her term in 2001. The BSPs image as a dalit party does not fully reflect reality, since the Scheduled Castes do not account for a majority of office bearers or MLAs (ibid.). In the political progression of the BSP, women's participation has been minimal and no specific measures have been taken to improve their status. Significant initiatives have not been taken to ameliorate the condition of dalit women. Dalit parties in other states, for example, the Republican Party of India in Maharashtra or the Dalit Panthers of India (DPI) and Puthiya Tamizhagam in Tamil Nadu, although not as successful as the BSP, have made their presence felt in electoral politics. They are, however, confined to dalit communities and play a moderating role in electoral equations in the region, where they have a significant presence.

The dalit movement organisationally continues to be androcentric. The participation of women in the activities and in the decision-making bodies of the dalit organisations is minimal. There are several barriers to generating any interest in dalit identity politics and mobilisation of the group. The presence of dalit women is insignificant even in dalit political parties such as BSP. While lack of qualified women (more from the point of their ability to win elections) is often given as an explanation for inadequate women's representation, no measures have been taken to focus on the specific interests of dalit women. If one were to look at women's participation in dalit forums in Maharashtra which has had a longer history of dalit movements, women's issues continue to be peripheral to the movement. It is a catch-22 situation as issues pertaining to women do not find adequate emphasis in the dalit organisations, since they do not want to dilute caste interests. For example, in the various divisions of the Republican Party of India (RPI) such as the Ambedkar, Gavai and Athavale wings, women's issues (particularly the atrocities against dalit women) are seen as marginal to the caste interests.

The situation is no different in dalit forums in other states or at the national level. In the Dalit Sangharshana Samithi (DSS) in Karnataka, for example, gender differences in political participation are evident. While the larger problem is the weak organisational links with dalits living in rural areas, the membership of women in DSS and in the decision-making forums has been minimal. The DSS wanted to underplay caste and made class as an issue. But subsequent years have shown that *jati* differences among the Scheduled Castes recurred and proved divisive. In our study of Karnataka panchayats, we have seen that DSS formation at the village level had strong identification with a particular caste, and broader dalit issues or problems related to participation in panchayats were sidelined because of the strong caste focus. Intervention by the DSS was based on the representative's *jati* identity and it was not seen as a group problem or concerning dalit women (Charsley, 1998).²² Dalit Women's Federation, the women's wing of DSS, started in 1984 with the specific aim of taking up issues related to atrocities against dalit women, is now defunct.

At the national level, the lack of any sustained agenda, and factionalism and politicisation of specific caste groups has divided the dalit women's forums. The National Federation of Dalit Women formed in 1995 underscored caste identity as the crucial factor in dalit mobilisation (see Guru 1995). The forum aimed to neutralise the non-dalit and leftist women's forums which undermined the significance of caste in social and economic relations. But it did not succeed in establishing its presence

as the networking was weak and there were problems in having a sustainable agenda of action. Linkages with the mainstream women's groups have also been fragile. The Dalit Women's Association in Nagpur and Samvadini in Bombay are the only two independent dalit women's organisations, which have been able to sustain their presence. A common problem with all these associations is the poor grassroots presence, where oppression is actually far greater. There is greater need to raise awareness about their basic citizenship rights, particularly at this level. While the dalit forums have been able to link up with global networks and have been successful in publicising discriminatory practices in international forums, there has been limited efforts at the grassroots level.

The emphasis on the differences between dalit and non-dalit women has been strongly articulated in seminars and protest rallies by dalit women forums. There was aggressive opposition to the idea of their participation in women's forums (which was not caste-based mobilisation). These women are of the opinion that emphasis of dalit identity and counter positioning is emancipating, and wanted their own space to articulate their experiences of disadvantage and marginalisation, which are distinct from that of the other (non-dalit) women. This is often extended to excluding non-dalits from the dalit women caucuses, as the 'outsider' to the group cannot empathize with their experiences. Further, they did not want to be engulfed by the broader issues of gender discrimination addressed by the women's organisations.

These dalit women mobilisations raise many questions for feminist politics. One of the main problems with women's activism has been the limited engagement with issues related to politicisation of caste and community, so that it does not affect the pursuing of women's issues. Feminist politics has not been able to evolve effective strategies to engage with the politicisation of caste and religion, that have become central political discourse in the country. Divisions within the women's movement are inevitable if it is not responsive to the issues of dalit women and also women from minority groups.

Electoral Politics

Dalit presence in electoral politics can be attributed more to affirmative action than voluntary inclusion into the political process. While there have been instances of political mobilisation of dalits, as a group they do not comprise a vote bank like the backward castes. This is reflected in the slow increase in the number of elective positions occupied by dalits. For example, the percentage of dalit MPs in the Hindi belt has increased

from 15.76 per cent in 1952 to 18.22 per cent in 1998, (Jaffrelot, 2000). The BSP, which is predominantly dalit, included backward caste and minority candidates, to increase its vote share and number of seats.²³

Except in local government where there is a sub-quota for women belonging to Scheduled Castes, dalit women are few in number in parliament and in the state legislatures. A dalit woman becoming the chief minister of UP thrice, in a state that is the biggest in the country and is otherwise under the political domination of the upper castes, is an atypical case. In general, there is indifference towards supporting women (dalit or non-dalit) for electoral positions in most political parties. The opposition to even the tabling of the Women's Reservation Bill in parliament is a pointer to the resistance to including women in electoral politics. While care is taken not to show any overt sex-based exclusion, gender accountability is not on the agenda of political parties including the major national parties. Dalit women occupy very little space within the political parties both at the national and regional levels. This is also true of the dalit parties such as the RPI in Maharashtra or the Dalit Panthers of India (DPI) and Puthiya Tamizhagam in Tamil Nadu and the BSP. The leftist parties also reflect the trend found in other political parties. For example, in Kerala the significant presence of left parties has given scope for expectation of more diversity in their party forums. In both the left parties (CPI and CPI(M)), party leadership positions are dominated by the upper castes and men. Although overt caste based discriminatory practices may not be found, candidates continue to be selected based on caste strength. While women are active in the party cadre, very few have risen to leadership positions.

In the institutions of local government, group-based quotas for women, and sub-quotas within this for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and backward castes, have enabled the election of dalit women. This, however, did not enhance dalit mobilisation of interest representation nor did it have the desired impact on their social relations (Vijayalakshmi and Chandrashekar, 2002, Agarwal 1994). There is no single opinion on the extent to which inclusion of disadvantaged groups has changed the political representation at the local level. Evidence from different parts of the country suggests variations in the effect that the inclusion of dalits has had on the polity, as well as on the political participation of groups which now find representation. There are studies that point out that increase in the political participation of dalits, particularly at the village level, has neutralised elite dominance (see Pai 2000), though there is also evidence to counter such claims (Jeffrey et al, 2001). Our studies of

local governments in Karnataka and Kerala present a mixed picture. In Karnataka the inclusion of dalits in elective positions has given them a significant presence (in terms of numbers) in electoral politics. The dominant caste members were less rigid in allowing the Scheduled Caste members to enter their houses and there was less hesitation among those of upper castes to visit the colonies of the Scheduled Castes at least during elections. But this has not changed the power equations, i.e., it has not reduced the political power of the dominant castes (Vijayalakshmi and Chandrashekar 2002). In Kerala there is no overt assertion of dalit identity in the panchayats as caste identity is moderated by the left party ideology. While this can be attributed to the predominant presence of the leftist parties, it does not imply that caste equations do not matter in electoral politics in Kerala. What we observed was that, except for very few seats, the bulk of the seats to which Scheduled Castes contested were the seats reserved for them.

Dalit women in local government provide insights into the failure of the process of inclusion –the sites of marginalisation and subordination– as well as how they dealt with such situations in the political space. While the presence of dalit women in panchayats can be attributed entirely to the reservation of seats, occupying elective positions in itself did not lead to decision-making power in their functioning as representatives (Vijayalakshmi and Chandrashekar 2001; Vijayalakshmi 2002). They had to confront not only inequalities of gender but also hegemonic caste relations. The election of dalit women to reserved seats is not an indication that there are no discriminatory practices. Dalits in general are only elected to seats reserved for Scheduled Castes. The issue is 'involuntary exclusion',²⁴ where it is not the unwillingness on the part of the dalits to contest unreserved seats, but they were forced out from competing for these seats. In both Kerala and Karnataka, there were not many cases where individuals from Scheduled Castes were elected to unreserved seats. There were instances, however, where dalits who had filed their nomination papers for general seats in Karnataka were forced to withdraw.

Discrimination is also present in the seats reserved for women (i.e., not for any specific community or class).²⁵ For example, in Karnataka and Kerala seats reserved for women (general) are contested only by women who belonged to upper/dominant castes. In Kerala, dalits have higher levels of human capabilities, which are in many ways higher than in the rest of India. There is, however, no significant difference in the electoral prospects for dalits or for dalit women. The electoral space is still not a level playing field, and only a few instances were observed

where dalit women were elected to seats reserved for women (any caste). The significance of caste in political participation can be discerned in the entire process. It influenced their nominations, election as representatives, contesting for executive positions and participation in the activities of the local government. There were many instances where women from dominant caste groups, who had no noticeable attributes that distinguished them from others, succeeded in getting support for their candidature and won elections in constituencies reserved for women (general). Dalit women found it difficult to secure candidature for such constituencies, sometimes even when they were better equipped. In exceptional situations when dalit women contested general seats, they needed many favourable factors in order to win against women from dominant castes. If there were no reservations at all for women belonging to Scheduled Castes, it is unlikely that they will be supported as candidates.²⁶

The most frequently held view on why general seats should not be contested by dalits was that since seats in proportion to their population are reserved for dalits, claims for other seats were not justified. The point, however, is that even in predominantly dalit dominated constituencies in Karnataka, if a seat was not reserved for dalits, the upper caste individuals contested these seats. While this is justified as bartering support, where dalits supported non-dalit candidates in predominantly dalit constituencies and vice versa, this is an asymmetrical exchange, and the dominant caste groups are the ones who had benefited to a greater extent in such situations. In the dalit-reserved seat (even in a predominantly non-dalit constituency), the support was less significant as only dalits can contest for the post. In Kerala there have been a few instances where women candidates contested against men for seats reserved for Scheduled Castes. These women were teachers and although not active in politics had winning potential as they were respected by the community. One of the reasons for preferring them as candidates was also that the political party wanted women who had the potential to win but were not too interested in playing an active role.

While overt display of domination has changed in the public space since Scarlet Epstein documented the enactment of a play by dalits in a Mysore village (where the 'king' and the 'prime minister' sat on the floor as a mark of respect to the upper caste audience) there is still the maintenance of such an image of authority of the upper castes by dalits and of subordination for themselves (see Epstein 1962).²⁷ The unwillingness to accept dalits in elective positions is more pronounced in the case of executive positions (even when they were reserved for

Scheduled Castes). Dalits were prevented from seeking nomination or from contesting for the post of the president. This involuntary exclusion was, however, made to appear as voluntary withdrawal. This was found not only in one of our study districts in Karnataka,²⁸ but are also reported elsewhere in the state and other parts of the country.²⁹ The most common practice, as in the case where there was only one dalit woman member, is by not proposing the name, which is a procedural requirement for nomination as president (in case there are no other candidates). After a period of six months when the seat had to be filled according to the rules, the dalit woman representative was intimidated and compelled to give a letter stating that she does not want to contest for the post of president. Out of seven such instances in our study, there was only one case where the dalit woman member sought legal redressal for being prevented from occupying the President's post. In yet another incident in Karnataka (as reported in the press), a dalit woman member in a gram panchayat was prevented from becoming the president (although the post was reserved for Scheduled Caste women). She appealed in the high court and was nominated after the court ordered that she be confirmed as President.

In all the instances in various states, such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka or the northern states (Uttar Pradesh, Punjab) where dalits were prevented from contesting for the president's post or made to resign, it was confined to gram panchayats and not found in the upper tiers. While Kerala might appear as a contrast to this general trend, the point to be noted is that political parties played a moderating role. Unlike in other states, in Kerala, elections to gram panchayats are based on party identity, as is the case in the upper tiers in all the states. When political parties are involved in elections, they ensure that there is no overt opposition to candidates from any community, as it would affect their election prospects and the image of the party.

Inclusion in electoral positions is an issue of recognition and presence, while marginalisation, the core issue is not adequately addressed. Dalits have always been perceived as different, inexperienced, and ill equipped for the post they occupied. Most dalit representatives are of the opinion that dominant caste women representatives command respect because of their caste. Usually this is manifested by using less polite language while interacting with dalit women. There is scepticism among dalit women that reservation alone would improve their position in local politics and give them enough leverage to change the power relations in their favour.

Looking at the multiple disadvantages of dalit women arising out of entitlement deprivation, their constraints on time and labour within the household, social exclusion in political space, and weak associational activity, the question is, can a group simultaneously be disadvantaged and assertive? Two factors are crucial in providing an answer to this question. First is the nature of group and identity politics. Second, as marginalized citizens, to what extent is the identity of marginality used as an agency of change and resistance, for opposing subordinating practices?

Fractured Identity

Participation in electoral and non-electoral politics points out that where citizenship for dalit women is concerned the principle of equality cannot be assumed. The asymmetrical power relations that dalit women encounter, resist, passively accept and withdraw from, are vital from the point of their role in citizenship and in political participation. While there is always inclusion/exclusion operating in citizenship, experiences of exclusion can clearly be discerned in the way differences are constructed. The construction of differences is rooted in their marginal position and discrimination which is an everyday reality. Differences are articulated by emphasising their identities of caste or economic status or both, which played an important role in their political participation. The differences and the fissures in the *gemeinschaft* is at different levels—among women i.e., between dalit and non-dalit women, and among dalits. Both are crucial in the context of active citizenship and political participation of dalit women. The differences among women in many ways influenced the emphasis dalit women gave to political identity and not gender identity.

The perception of the differences among dalits and non-dalits worked both ways. If the group identity is perceived as stronger and as a threat, efforts towards preserving the 'natural order' is intense even if it meant resorting to intimidation or coercion. It, however, also determined the responses of the disadvantaged groups, in eliciting collective/passive response or withdrawing all together. Since dominant/upper caste identities are closely aligned with the political process, they do not see their own assertion of caste identity as problematic for the disadvantaged caste groups. On the other hand, even mild dalit assertion of caste identity was not seen by dominant/upper castes as the natural outcome of the discriminatory social practices, and is considered a reason for upper/dominant caste backlash. In panchayats, instances where dalits wanted to contest general seats was viewed as deviation from the social standards that the dominant caste groups saw as natural.

There are often overt expressions of opposition to dalits becoming the chairpersons of panchayats. In Tamil Nadu for example, in areas where dalits and dominant caste Thevars lived, dalits were prevented from contesting seats reserved for Scheduled Castes. When prevention was not seen as a possibility Thevars supported weak Scheduled Caste candidates and later made them resign.³⁰ The situation was even worse when the dalit representatives continued as panchayat representatives, since they had to face the backlash of non-cooperation and intimidation from upper/dominant caste representatives. In each of these situations of opposition to dalits becoming presidents of panchayats, in TN or in Karnataka as was mentioned earlier in the paper, there was group consolidation and concerted action to undermine the presence of the dalits by dominant caste groups, and passive acceptance of this among dalits. The advantages of the convergence of class and caste positions were in favour of dominant caste groups resulting in considerable disparity in the distribution of power.

The differences among women is a reflection of the conflict at the much broader level between dalits and non-dalits. There was a marked difference in the perception of caste, class and gender factors in political participation among women belonging to various groups. In panchayats, dalit women considered caste and class factors as affecting their status and the power relations, while women from dominant/upper castes attributed it to gender asymmetries. A large number of Scheduled Caste women representatives lacked basic human entitlements and were not in a position to produce a counter discourse against the existing subordinating practices of the dominant caste groups. For dalit women the elective position, the authority associated with it and the sense of 'being there' is social mobility.³¹

Dalit identity is seen as beneficial only up to a point and there is a demonstration of what is considered as approved identities. Dalit women neglected deliberately or otherwise the use of marginality as identity and there is an emphasis of political identity associated with their elective position. The political identity that they wish to affirm has its share of problems. Dalit women have had to deal with the identity of their subaltern roles and its conflict with their political identity. The low status of their occupation ensures that the core issue they have to deal with is acceptability as representatives, and they are thus in a disadvantageous position in negotiating the political space. In panchayats, social mobility gained through electoral positions was more demanding for dalit representatives as they had to keep up to certain expectations of the

elective position from other representatives and from ordinary citizens. One of them is the unacceptability of wage labour, which meant they had to give up their occupation if the political identity was of any significance. Their occupational options were linked both to the caste to which the women belonged and their limited human capital and they were not in a position to explore occupations that had greater social acceptability. To quote one example from our study, a woman gram panchayat president who had earlier earned a living as a wage labourer stopped going for wage work, as it was perceived to be below the dignity of her panchayat status. She intended to take up wage work after her term in the panchayat ended.³² Upper caste representatives were emphatic that it would be difficult to accept as chairperson someone who worked in a menial occupation.³³ Political opportunity for these women had a price, and it often involved foregoing a substantial proportion of the household income. Those who could not give up wage work the identity of their subaltern role circumscribed the application of the identity of elective position.

While the disadvantaged caste and class position makes dalit women a distinct group, identifying the constraints did not result in shared identity. There was a limited formation of active and politicised identity based on discrimination against them. To gain political benefits the dalits belonging to relatively more advantageous sub-groups reinforced the hierarchy within the dalit community. The scattered *gemeinschaft* is the result to responses of dalit women as individuals, using strategies of accommodation. Politicisation of marginalisation is seen as in conflict with individual benefits, and not something that would coalesce into a sub-culture beneficial to the group. By de-linking with the group identity, the situational power, for example, of elective position is used to enhance individual position. The emphasis on differences among dalits undermined the marginalisation and was not a unifying factor in their struggle against oppression by the dominant castes and landowning communities. There was downplaying of the caste identity and dalit women sought an alternative identity that was different from their disadvantaged position.

The most conspicuous cleavages between dalits were *jati*, religion, and class differences. These differences have a bearing on the identity politics of the dalits as a group. First, the emphasis of *jati* identity among the higher Scheduled Castes was an outcome their advantage over the most backward castes groups that actually form the majority of the Scheduled Castes. These differences also include the distinction maintained between the castes that were earlier *untouchables* and those that were considered *touchable*. Further the untouchable castes are

divided and often adopted new names to distinguish themselves from others and maintain a separate identity. For example, in southern Karnataka the right hand (*Balagai*) and left hand (*Elagai*) hierarchy among the Scheduled Castes was also evident in the political space.³⁴ The castes belonging to the 'right hand' are considered ritually superior. This not only posed problems to the unity of dalits, but also was more divisive since in the political process the Scheduled Castes belonging to the right group was preferred over the left.³⁵ The identity of caste groups referred to as *Adi Karnataka* and *Adi Dravida* was not uniform across the state. In Mandya district, representatives who identified themselves as *Adi Karnataka* were Holeyas. It needs to be pointed out that young members of these communities who used to be present when the representatives in the villages (in gram panchayats) were interviewed were particular that their caste should be recorded as *Adi Karnataka* and not as Holeyas. These differences are not uniform and in other parts of the state the Holeyas referred to themselves as *Adi Dravida* where Madigas the left castes referred to themselves as *Adi Karnataka* (see Karanth and Charsley 1998). The limited success of the Adi-Jambava mobilisation of the Madigas (a larger caste group in terms of numerical strength) to counter the dominance by other Scheduled Castes is another example of the differences among the dalit caste groups. The hierarchy was externally sustained and the right hand identity was reinforced since preference was shown to this group over the *left hand* castes. Similar hierarchies could be seen between *Mala* and *Madiga* in Andhra Pradesh, *Parayar* and *Pallar* in Tamil Nadu.

Second, there is also distinction between the converts to other religions such as Buddhism and Christianity and the dalit groups who retain their Hindu identity. The conflict between the neo-Buddhists (who were formerly Mahars) and Mangs, Chamars, Mohis and Dhors who maintain their Hindu identity is one of many such differences (Kakade, 1990). The controversy over conversion at the national level and ordinances preventing conversion at the state level has given new political salience to the religious identity of dalits over those who chose to remain within the Hindu religion. Dalits who chose to convert considered it liberating (from the stratified Hindu religion) and emancipating, and as also giving them a political identity distinct from the Hindu right. There are differences among dalits on ordinances constraining religious freedom. But sharing either of these perspectives is clearly aimed at reinforcing dalit identity.

There is clearly a blocked identification among dalit women with

others in their group sharing similar experiences. Accountability to subaltern interests was minimal, and their political participation as is the case in panchayats was more of passive accommodation. Mendelsohn (1986) noted the distance between dalit members of parliament from their caste group. Underplaying one's own caste identity was seen as crucial to deal with the asymmetrical power relations. Subservience and accommodation undermined their political and citizenship rights. The more visible aspects of this consent are conforming to the standards set by (dominant) others of what comprises their political participation. This also required construction of their identity that does not involve assertion of their caste identity.

Identity is also situational with selective emphasis. Dalit identity, crucial for their inclusion in panchayats, was subtly underplayed after getting elected as members. The possibility of organising as a single group did not appeal to most dalit women as they did not want to be seen as only Scheduled Caste members but wanted acceptability also from non-dalits. Dalit women tend to see identity more as a negotiated construction of the situation they find themselves in rather than as a mechanism of 'group assertion'. The identity that is emphasised by them is appropriate for the given situation. While identity of disadvantage and marginality is used in one situation, to get political support when they contested elections, in others they withdraw from such an identity. By withdrawing from the identity of the caste background and more importantly not emphasising caste identity, dalit women in panchayats received protection from the elite and made their continuation in the new, hostile political environment possible. To enhance their position in the political equations in panchayats it was important, according to them, to dissociate from the politicisation of caste identity. In the construction of political realities it was seen by dalits that emphasising caste identity and making caste discrimination an issue would alienate them from political power centres. Instead, most women found it convenient to relate to more passive identities such as class position, political party or the faction they supported rather than on 'caste *discrimination*' a politicised identity.

There is, however, a significant urban–rural difference in the way dalit women deal with differences and perceived identity. While associational activity is virtually absent in rural areas, in urban centres the dalit women's movement, which is moderately active, but lacking the aggressive stance of their male counterparts, is the space which they use to articulate differences and emphasise dalit identity. Associational activity by dalit women is projected as parallel to the (mainstream) women's

organisations, sending clear indication of opposing what is constructed as mainstream. These women reject notions of their own marginality and with it the idea of the dominant other (upper/dominant caste and class groups) and their acknowledgement of the marginality of dalit women. Creating their own space is one way of dealing with issues of subordination, and countering the broader women's platforms. A section of dalit women's movement even refused to be a part of the mainstream women's organisation and denied space within their forums to women who were non-dalits. Their criticism of (mainstream) women's organisations and women's movement was that they rarely represented the interests of the dalit women. This criticism is justified, as the mainstream women's organisations do not address the question of marginalisation of dalit women. The arguments that are often put forth are that claims of different groups among women would weaken women's fight against gender discrimination. The voluntary alienation from the women's movement and counter positioning furthers the differences among women and does not succeed in taking forward specific issues concerning dalit women.³⁶ The main problem of the urban dalit women organisations is their limited connections with the rural women, and minimal role in making effective use of the provisions made for dalit women in the urban and rural local bodies.

Conclusion

Constraints and experiences of dalit women in citizenship and political participation show that the linkages between the democratic citizenship and the political and social development of individual freedom is not a linear progression. Citizenship does not provide them the core elements, what Young (1998) refers to as common life and being treated in the same way as others. For dalit women the norms of equality in citizenship have many fissures—of gender order, hierarchical caste and class relations and entitlement disadvantage. A long history of exclusion from political power needs many favourable conditions to resist the dominant social order. Associational activity that provides opportunities for social participation, for democratic involvement and active citizenship is found lacking among dalit women. The late entry of disadvantaged groups into the political process means that the rules of the game are set and the privileged groups define the standards according to which all will be measured (Kymlicka 1998). The social and political processes constrained the articulation of the interests and needs of the dalit women and even the authority of the elective position as is the case in panchayats, could rarely be exercised. Broad claims of inclusion of dalit women in elective

positions without significant presence in political parties and other associational activity (which are in a position to influence policy) did not yield the desired results. Dalit women's citizenship and political participation should be seen in the context of a hierarchical and hegemonic social structure. Mechanisms of participation should, therefore, address the constraints emerging out of entitlement failure including their social exclusion.

Can dalit women, facing deprivation in different areas of life space, be critical agents in the politicisation of marginality? The solution is envisaged as a process where there is recognition and articulation of inequality. It is important that dalit women articulate domination that exists in different forms in social and political processes and gender is only one facet of the inequality that persists. In discourse among third world feminists, the intersecting areas of disadvantages of caste and class among women has been recognised (see Mohanty, 1988). In building solidarity among women as a political strategy, the implication is also that a certain alignment and emphasis of women's interests is located in class, caste and gender systems. Feminist politics in India, however, has neglected to address issues of communal identity of women thereby allowing the identities of caste and religion to take precedence. There is need for critical thinking on the response to dalit women issues within the women's movement, which has been one of extending sympathy without providing adequate space for politics of difference.

Notes

¹ The Bill was first introduced in the 1996-97 winter session of Parliament. It proposed a reservation of one third of the constituencies for women, with a rotation of seats at each successive election. While the major political parties do not overtly oppose the Bill, consensus eludes the passing of the Bill. The opposition to the Bill is for provisions of sub-quotas for women belonging to backward castes and classes.

² This is in contrast to the absence of discussion of any kind in Parliament on the issue of one third of seats being reserved for women in the institutions of local government.

³ A reservation of 25 per cent for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is envisaged in the proposed bill.

⁴ The term 'dalits' used in the paper refers to the group of castes that comprise the Scheduled Castes.

⁵ Social development indicators point out that Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are the most disadvantaged sections of the population.

⁶ 'Dominant other' as it is used here refers to non-dalit castes who are powerful and influential; whose members use their caste position to influence social and political interactions in their favour and to subordinate certain castes (such as scheduled castes). It refers to numerical strength, possession of land or other assets, political power, and includes most of the local elites.

⁷ 'Gender-caste development index' constructed by Deshpande (2001a) shows that Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women are more disadvantaged on economic as well as other indicators such as education.

⁸ This distinction is made by Sen (1983,1985) in his discussion on poverty.

⁹ Friedman (1992), used four overlapping domains of social practice while discussing exclusion/inclusion. They are the state, civil society, corporate economy, and political community.

¹⁰ Households below the poverty line have an average annual income of Rs.16,000, p.a..

¹¹ Srinivas (1962,1977) pointed out that there was a relation between caste and gender relations. To achieve social mobility, the lower castes needed, in addition to economic mobility, adoption of the cultural practices of ritual purity. This also meant more rigid gender norms like the

sanskritised castes. There was a difference in the conjugal relations between the less sanskritised castes and sanskritised high castes. In the former the relationship was more egalitarian.

¹² There are also indications that the patriarchal arrangements of the means of production determined the autonomy of women, where lower caste women had more freedom compared to upper caste women (see Sangari, 1995).

¹³ For example, the views expressed by dalit intellectuals such as Kancha Iliiah.

¹⁴ The Constitutional provisions for the amelioration of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes include Article 46, Articles 330, 332, 334, 335, 338, 341 and 342. Article 15 is on equality in citizenship that 'the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, sex, place of birth or any of them'. Despite these provisions the differences and disadvantages persist and dalits continue to be underprivileged.

¹⁵ This is in comparison to 49 per cent of rural women from other castes and 25 per cent in urban areas. The OBCs have lower literacy levels (64 per cent in rural areas and 39 per cent in urban areas) compared to the castes in the category of 'others'.

¹⁶ Caste in Kerala continues to be a basis of civic and social engagement, see also Heller, Patrick, 2000.

¹⁷ Oommen (1990) refers to this as periodic concerted effort of primordial collectives seeking to overcome deprivation within the hierarchical social system.

¹⁸ In the context of popularising dalit literature based on the Ambedkar ideology in Maharashtra, the credit should go to Eleanor Zelliot, Gail Omvedt and Barbara Joshi who translated them into English and presented them in conferences and literary and political journals (Charsley 1998). While the literature is predominantly the output of male writers, the paucity of efforts to encourage and further the literary efforts of dalit women needs to be pointed out. The previous effort to bring together dalit women's literary outputs was almost two decades back, during the Dalit women's Literary Conference in 1986.

¹⁹ The Dalit Sangarsh Samithi (DSS) in Karnataka has its roots in the dalit protest literature (*dalit sahitya*) and the association of the Dalit Writers and Artists Organisation (Dalit Lekhaka Kalividara Sangha) formed in 1976.

The DSS took shape in the early 1980s, comprising teachers and young educated dalit men. The consciousness-raising effort is seen to diffuse from the state and district level to the village level.

²⁰ *Bahujan* comprise the oppressed dalits, the (majority) backward castes and the minorities.

²¹ This was unprecedented because while there had been dalit chief ministers in Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Bihar, none of them was a woman (see Jaffrelot, 2003).

²² While our study of panchayats was in Mandya and Udipi districts, Charsley also pointed out similar fragmentation in DSS in the southern districts of Karnataka. He also pointed to the divisions based on affiliation to DSS and affiliation to Ambedkar Sangha, mainly based on caste.

²³ The recent setback which Mayavathi had to face (September 2003) with one third of her party MLAs forming a separate group and supporting the Samajvadi Party headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav, is seen as the upper/dominant caste backlash. To broaden the base of the BSP, Mayavathi had given party tickets to a large number of candidates from dominant caste groups.

²⁴ Used by Brian Barry who refers to voluntary and involuntary exclusion in the discussion on social exclusion.

²⁵ There was only one case in our study districts where a dalit woman contested the women's (general) seat in the taluk panchayat.

²⁶ For example, in the panchayats in Andhra Pradesh prior to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, the representation of dalits was scattered and that of dalit women was minimal, see Reddy 1989.

²⁷ Scarlett Epstein describes the stage play enacted by dalits for the dominant Vokkaligas after the harvest season. While enacting the role of king and the prime minister, the dalits did not sit on a chair on the stage. Instead they squatted on the floor, which was a reflection of hierarchical relationship..

²⁸ In Udipi district in Karnataka there were seven instances (in two taluks we studied) where Scheduled Caste women were prevented from contesting for the post of president.

²⁹ For example, in Madurai district in Tamil Nadu, the dominant caste Thevars prevented the dalit representatives from getting nominated to the post of president and even filing nomination papers during elections. In Pappapatti gram panchayat, Thevar representatives ensured that the dalit candidate who was their nominee was elected to the post of president, against a dalit candidate who had the support of the dalit community but could not win as the other members did not support him. The dalit president resigned immediately after swearing in, conceding the demands of Thevar representatives. In Keeripatti gram panchayats, dalit candidates were prevented from filing nomination papers.

³⁰ Elections were not held in Pappapatti and Keeripatti, panchayats reserved for Dalits as the Thevars, who are dominant caste in the area were opposed to dalits representing them.

³¹ Participation in the functioning of the panchayats was low among women representatives who belonged to Scheduled Castes. Incumbents of high ranking political positions (in the political parties and MLAs and MPs) want to support 'weak candidates' so that they could have control over the functioning of panchayats. Educated and assertive women of the Scheduled Castes were not preferred, as it was seen to create difficulties in getting their easy compliance in the management of the panchayats.. This was seen in all the tiers among women.

³² Wage labour was an indication of the lowest economic level. As such those who were in this position were not respected due to their poverty.

³³ There were reports of similar instances elsewhere too. There was a press report about a gram panchayat president who was actively engaged as a sweeper, which was considered as demeaning to the office of president.

³⁴ This is a social categorisation (not by the government) of the castes included within 'Scheduled Castes' as belonging to 'right hand' and 'left hand'. In south Karnataka where this distinction is predominant and used to refer to *Holeya* and *Madiga* castes (both formerly untouchable castes).

³⁵ To give an example, where a 'left' Scheduled caste woman was a possible candidate during panchayat elections, another woman belonging to the 'right' category was preferred.

³⁶ There were clashes in the women's association meetings and in the campaigns.

References

Agarwal, Bina, 1994. *A field of one's own: gender and land rights in south Asia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Beteille, Andre, 1965. *Caste, class and power: Changing patterns of stratification in a Tanjore village*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Chandra, Kanchan, 2000. 'Rising Scheduled Castes: Explaining the success of Bahujan Samaj Party,' *Journal of Asian Studies*, 59(1):26-61.

Charsley, Simon R., 1998. 'Caste, cultural resources and social mobility', in Simon R. Charsley, and G.K. Karanth (eds.), *Challenging untouchability Dalit initiative and experience from Karnataka*, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Deshpande, Ashwini, 2000. 'Recasting economic inequality,' *Review of Social Economics*, 58 (3): 381-99.

Deshpande, Ashwini. 2001a. "Casting off servitude: caste and gender disparity in India," in Kathleen Blee and France Winddance Twine (eds.) *Feminism and Anti-Racism: Inter-national Struggles for Justice*, Ch. 15; pp. 328-48. New York: New York University Press.

Deshpande, Ashwini. 2001b. "Caste at birth? Redefining disparity in India." *Review of Development Economics*, 5(1): 130-44.

Deshpande, Ashwini, 2002. 'Assets versus autonomy? The changing face of the gender-caste overlap in India', *Feminist Economics*, 8(2), 2002, 19-35.

Epstein, T. Scarlett, 1962. *Economic development and social change in South India*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Friedman, John, 1992. *Empowerment: The politics of alternative development*, Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.

Guru, Gopal, 1999. 'The dalit movement in mainstream Sociology', in S. M. Michael (ed.) *Dalits in modern India: Vision and values*, New Delhi: Vistaar Publications.

Guru, Gopal, 1995. 'Dalit women talk differently,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30:41/42:2548-50.

Heller, Patrick, 2000. 'Degrees of democracy: Some comparative lessons from India', *World Politics*, 52(4):484-519.

Jaffrelot, Christophe, 2003. *India's silent revolution. The rise of low castes in North Indian politics*, Delhi: Permanent Black.

Jaffrelot, Christophe, 2000. 'The rise of the other backward castes in the Hindi belt', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 59(1): 86-108.

Jeffery, Roger, Craig J. Jeffrey and Patricia M. Jeffery, 2001. 'Social and political dominance in western UP: A response to Sudha Pai', *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 35(2): 213-235.

Kakade, S.R., 1990. *The Scheduled Castes and national integration: A study of Marathwada*, New Delhi: Radiant Publication.

Karant, G.K., and Simon R. Charsley, 1998. 'Beyond untouchability? Local experience and society wide implications' in Simon R. Charsley, and G.K. Karant (eds.), *Challenging Untouchability Dalit initiative and experience from Karnataka*, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Krishna, Anirudh, 2003. 'What is happening to caste? A view from some North Indian Villages', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 62(4):1171-93.

Kymlicka, Will, 1998. 'Multicultural citizenship' in Gurpreet Mahajan (ed.) *Democracy, difference and social justice*, Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Liddle, Joanna and Rama Joshi. 1986. *Daughters of Independence: Gender, caste, and class in India*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.

Mane. D.A., 1994. 'Dalit movement in Karnataka', in Sandeep Pendse (ed.) *At cross roads: Dalit movement today*, Bombay: Vikas Ayayan Kendra.

Manor, James, (1989), 'Karnataka: cast, class, dominance and politics in a cohesive society', in Francine R. Frankel and M.S.Rao (eds.) *Dominance and state power in modern India: Decline of a social order*, Volume I, Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp.322-361.

Mendelsohn, Oliver, 1986. "A 'harijan elite' ? The lives of some untouchable politicians," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 21(2): 501-509.

Mitra, S., (ed.) 1990. *Politics of positive discrimination: A cross national perspective*. Bombay: Popular.

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, 1988. 'Under the Western eye: Feminist scholarship and colonial discourses,' *Feminist Review* 30: 61-89.

National Sample Survey, 1999–2000, Report No. 472, *Differences in levels of consumption among socio-economic groups*, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, New Delhi.

Oommen, T.K., 1990. *Protest and change: Studies in social movements*. New Delhi: Sage publications.

Pai, Sudha, 2000. 'New social and political movements of dalits: A study of Meerut district', *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 34(2): 189-220.

Phillips, Anne, 1993. *Democracy and difference*. Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Pinto, Ambrose, SJ, 2000. Is reservation the answer for dalit empowerment, *Journal of Rural Development*, 19(4) 635-51.

Radhakrishnan, 2002. 'Sensitising officials on dalits and reservations' *Economic and Political Weekly*, 37: (7) 653-59.

Reddy, Ram, 1989. 'The politics of accommodation: caste class and dominance in Andhra Pradesh, in Francine R. Frankel and M.S.Rao (eds.) *Dominance and State power in Modern India: Decline of a Social order*, Volume I, Delhi: Oxford University press, pp. 265-321.

Sangari, Kumkum, 1995. 'Politics of diversity. Religious communities and multiple patriarchies', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30:3381-3392.

Sen A., 1983. 'Poor relatively speaking', *Oxford Economic Papers*, 35.

Sen, A., 1985. A sociological approach to the measurement of poverty: A reply to Professor Peter Townsend, *Oxford Economic Papers*, 37.

Shah, A., 1996. 'Job reservations and efficiency', in *Caste: Its Twentieth Century Avtar*, (ed.) M.N. Srinivas, New Delhi: Penguin.

Shah, G., 1990. *Social Movements in India: A review of the literature*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Srinivas, M.N., 1952. *Religion and society among the Coorgs of South India*, London: Oxford University Press.

Srinivas, M.N., 1962 *Caste in Modern India*, London: Asia publishing house.

Srinivas, M. N., 1977. 'The changing position of Indian women', *Man*, 12:221-38.

Vijayalakshmi, V. and B.K.Chandrashekar, 2001. 'Gender Inequality, differences, and identities: Women and local governance in Karnataka'. Working Paper no. 72, Bangalore. Institute for Social and Economic Change.

Vijayalakshmi, V., 2001. 'Gender accountability and political representation in local government'. Working Paper no. 102, Bangalore, Institute for Social and Economic Change.

Vijayalakshmi, V. and B.K. Chandrashekar, 2002. 'Authority, powerlessness and dependence: Women and political participation'. Working Paper No. 106, Bangalore. Institute for Social and Economic Change.

Yadav, Manohar, 1998. 'Career of dalit movement in Karnataka', *Journal of Social and Economic Development*, 1(1):107-127.

Young, Iris 1998. 'Polity and group difference: A critique of the ideal of universal citizenship', in Anne Phillips (ed.) *Feminism & Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Walby, Sylvia, 1994. 'Is citizenship gendered?' *Sociology*, 28(2) :379-96.

ISBN 81-7791-102-3

© 2004, Copyright Reserved

The Institute for Social and Economic Change,
Bangalore

Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC) is engaged in interdisciplinary research in analytical and applied areas of the social sciences, encompassing diverse aspects of development. ISEC works with central, state and local governments as well as international agencies by undertaking systematic studies of resource potential, identifying factors influencing growth and examining measures for reducing poverty. The thrust areas of research include state and local economic policies, issues relating to sociological and demographic transition, environmental issues and fiscal, administrative and political decentralization and governance. It pursues fruitful contacts with other institutions and scholars devoted to social science research through collaborative research programmes, seminars, etc.

The Working Paper Series provides an opportunity for ISEC faculty, visiting fellows and PhD scholars to discuss their ideas and research work before publication and to get feedback from their peer group. Papers selected for publication in the series present empirical analyses and generally deal with wider issues of public policy at a sectoral, regional or national level. These working papers undergo review but typically do not present final research results, and constitute works in progress.

Recent Working Papers

- 108. MD NAZRUL ISLAM AND AMITAYUSH VYAS**
Decentralised Governance: A Review of the Idea and Issues
- 109. AMALENDU JYOTISHI AND R S DESHPANDE**
Land Transaction in Tribal Economies: A Study from the Scheduled Areas of Orissa
- 110. R S DESHPANDE AND K V RAJU**
Monitoring Poverty and Human Development Indicators: A Framework
- 111. D RAJASEKHAR**
Action Research for Poverty Alleviation
- 112. ANAND INBANATHAN AND D V GOPALAPPA**
Fixers, Patronage, 'Fixing', and Local Governance in Karnataka
- 113. M GOVINDA RAO**
State Finances in India: A Critical Review
- 114. D RAJASEKHAR AND R R BIRADAR**
People, Government and the NGOs
- 115. DUKHABANDHU SAHOO AND MAATHAI K MATHIYAZHAGAN**
Economic Growth in India: Does Foreign Direct Investment Inflow Matter?
- 116. GAGAN BIHARI SAHU AND D RAJASEKHAR**
Credit Flow to Indian Agriculture: Trends and Contributing Factors
- 117. SATYAPRIYA ROUT**
Joint Forest Management in Orissa: Challenges and Opportunities
- 118. DEEPIKA M G AND R S DESHPANDE**
Trade Policy and Determinants of Trade in Agriculture
- 119. SITAKANTA SETHY**
Rural Poor's Participation in Decentralised Multilevel Planning and Development
- 120. G S SASTRY AND R JAGANNATHA RAO**
Emerging Development Issues in a Resource Region
- 121. MEENAKSHI RAJEEV**
Collusion in Corrupt System: a Game Theoretic Approach
- 122. L VENKATACHALAM**
Theories of Failure, Failure of Theories and Non-Market Valuation: A Survey
- 123. L VENKATACHALAM**
Factors Influencing Household Willingness to Pay (WTP) for Water: A Case Study
- 124. K GAYITHRI**
Who Benefits from Industrial Incentives? A Study of Capital Investment Subsidy in Karnataka
- 125. V VIJAYALAKSHMI**
Accountability and Governance: Local Government in Kerala and Karnataka
- 126. SHASHI KOLAVALLI AND K V RAJU**
Protecting Drinking Water Sources: A Sub-Basin View
- 127. K GAYITHRI**
Reducing Fiscal Deficit: Canadian Experiment and Lessons for India
- 128. V VIJAYALAKSHMI**
Scheduled Tribes and Gender: Development Perceptions from Karnataka
- 129. MEENAKSHI RAJEEV**
A Search for a Theory of Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of the Foundry Industry in Howrah and Coimbatore
- 130. M SIVAKAMI**
Does Labour Force Participation Enhance Autonomy of Poor Women/ Evidence from Tamil Nadu, India
- 131. MDNAZRUL ISLAM SNSANGITA**
Decentralised Governance and People's Participation: Lessons from West Bengal
- 132. R S DESHPANDE AND M J BHENDE**
Land Resources and Policy in Karnataka
- 133. T V SEKHER**
Sensitizing Panchayats on Health Issues through Television: Experiences of A Pilot Project
- 134. M JAYA KRISHNA**
Small-Scale Industries in the Era of Globalisation: An Explorative Study
- 135. HRUSHIKESH MALLICK**
Interaction Between Twin Deficits: Indian Experience in the Macroeconomic Reform Period
- 136. ANAND INBANATHAN AND OM PRAKASH**
Silk Reeling and Health: Lifestyle and Quality of Life of Workers
- 137. SATYAPRIYA ROUT**
Conflicts over Natural Resources and Legal Pluralism: A Case Study from Orissa
- 138. ANAND INBANATHAN**
Affirmative Action and Dalits: Political Representation in Panchayats
- 139. ASSEETHARAMU**
Beneficiaries of Public Services
- 140. MADHUSHREE SEKHER**
Indigenous Institutions and Forest Conservation: User- Group Self-Initiatives in India
- 141. MD NAZRUL ISLAM**
Social Capital in Making Decentralised Governance Effective: A Study in West Bengal
- 142. N SIVANNA M DEVENDRA BABU**
Panchayat Jamabandhi in Karnataka: A Case of Transparency and Accountability in Good Governance
- 143. M DEVENDRA BABU**
Finances of Panchayats in Karnataka: A Policy Paper
- 144. MD NAZRUL ISLAM**
Decentralised Governance, Transparency and Accountability: Empirical Evidence from West Bengal
- 145. K N M RAJU, P H RAYAPPA K V RAO, M SIVAKAMI**
Normative and Actual Provision of Antenatal Health Care Services in Karnataka
- 146. D RAJASEKHAR**
Micro-Finance and poverty Alleviation Issues Relating to NGO Programmes in South India

Price: Rs. 30.00



ISBN 81-7791-102-3

INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Prof. V.K.R.V. Rao Road, Nagarbhavi P.O., Bangalore - 560 072, India
Phone: 0091-80-23215468, 23215519, 23215592; Fax: 0091-80-23217008
Grams: ECOSOCI, Bangalore - 560 040
E-mail: kvraju@isec.ac.in, Web: <http://www.isec.ac.in>