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Social Hierarchy in India, the Case of the Untouchables

Thesis submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of *Master* in English Literature and Civilization.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Dedication

To my mother, father and my family, thank you for supporting me throughout my studies. Your encouragement has made it possible for me to come this far and to write about what I am passionate about. I dedicate this work to you. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our university teachers including my great supervisor DR MOUSSAOUI.

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Abstract

Historically Dalits have the lowest social status in Indian society. They were generally segregated and banned from participation in Hindu social life. This problem is the product of the caste system that is deep-rooted in society. The purpose of this memoir is to examine the social hierarchy in India and the various aspects of the Indian caste system with the classification of peoples in society with their social, religious, economic, and political roles. This memoir analyzes the history of the caste system and explains the theories of the birth of caste in Indian civilization. After having defined the caste system historically and culturally, we examined the birth and spreading of the Dalit movement or low caste mass movements during the 19th and 20th centuries. Then we moved to tackle the origins of the Dalits as the case study with their characteristics, problems, and behaviours, along with some social and religious conditions of life such as Inter Caste Marriage and education with characteristics of partner in marriage. The third chapter is about the different problems faced by the Untouchables and the crimes against Dalits as the lower caste with their women as well, analyzing their historical revolution to the results of that social movement.

Keywords; Untouchables, Varna, Inter-marriage, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vishyas, Dalits, India, high Caste, Caste system, Ambedkar.

Table of content

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgments.....	II
Abstract	III
Table ofContents.....	IV
List of Graphs.....	VII
List of Acronyms.....	VIII
General Introduction.....	01
Chapter One:The Social Hierarchy in India.....	03
Introduction.....	04
I- The Definition of the Caste and its Origins.....	05
II-The Origin of The Caste System.....	07
III-The Three Main Theories of the Beginning of the Caste System.....	08
IV-The Most Famous Castes in India.....	10
1-THE BRAHMIN CASTE.....	10
2-KSHATRYA CASTE.....	12
3-VISHYAS CASTE.....	15
4-THE UNTOUCHABLES.....	16
V-WORLD RELIGIOB IN INDIA	19

VI.-Pyramid of the Social Classes in India Caste System in Order.....	21
Conclusion.....	22
Chapter Two: Origins,Characteristics, and Social Problems of the	
Untouchable.....	23
Introduction.....	24
I. The Origin of the Dalits	26
II. Characteristics of the Untouchables.....	27
III. The Problem of Poverty.....	27
IV. Journal of Social Work in the Global Community.....	29
V. Beliefs and Behaviors.....	30
VI. The Making of Untouchables and the Politicisation of Castes	31
VII. Inter Caste Marriage.....	32
VIII. Education and Characteristics of Partners.....	33
IX. Equal in law but Unequal in Caste.....	33
Conclusion.....	35
Chapter Three: Untouchability between Religion and Policy.....	36
Introduction:.....	37
I. The Dark Side of the Untouchable Life.....	38
1. Social Problems	38
2. Religious Problems.....	38
3. Economic Problems	39

4. Public Disadvantages	39
5. Educational Problems	40
II. Crimes against Dalits in India	40
III. Crimes against Dalit Women.....	41
IV. Resistance and Progress.....	42
V. The Revolt of the Untouchables	42
VI. Are Dalits a Hindu or British Creation.....	45
VII. Dalit Women Movement.....	46
VIII. Are Dalits Obligated to Live their Untouchability?	47
Conclusion.....	49
General conclusion	50
Bibliography	52

List of Graphs

I -World Religions in India.....	20
II - Pyramid of the Social Classes in India's Castes	22
III-Journal of Social Work in the Global Community.....	30
IV-The Level of Healthcare, Education, Welfare and Participation in Politics in the Indian Society.....	45

List of Acronyms

SHI: Social Hierarchy in India

NHRC: National Human Rights Commission

HRC: Human Rights Committee

OBC: Other Backward Castes

ICM: Inter Caste Marriage

ISS: India Social Institute

DWM: Dalits and Women Movement

DC: Depressed Classes

NCRB: National Crimes Record in Bombay

General Introduction

The present study sheds light on more precisely on studying the case of Untouchables from different aspects, beginning with the historical origins of casts where people in India are socially differentiated through class, religion, region, tribe, gender, and language. Although this or other forms of differentiation exist in all human societies, it becomes a problem when one or more of these dimensions overlap each other and become the sole basis of systematic ranking and unequal access to valued resources like wealth, income, power, and prestige. The Indian Caste System is considered a closed system of social stratification, which means that a person's social status is obligated to which caste they were born in. There are limits on interaction and behavior with people from another social status.

This research will be exploring the caste system in India, based on Untouchables. The Untouchables, who are they, and why they became Untouchables, In addition to their religious and political background into four hierarchically ranked castes called Varna and their impact on India today. However, to narrow the scope, the questions guiding this thesis are:

- 1-What are the main castes in Indian society and their roles?**
- 2-What are the crimes and problems faced by the untouchables?**
- 3-What is the dark side of the untouchables and its relation to religion and policy. In addition, do they get past it?**

The sources used in this thesis are a mixture of primary and secondary elements: public and social documents, speeches, notes, biographies, memory, and academic articles, and books. The analysis places special importance on public documents, speeches, and statements made by senior officials before and during the review process.

Chapter One:

The Social Hierarchy in India

Introduction

India is usually considered as a society that does not change. Considering the social and religious conditions at first look, it would come to mind that India is not changing. What we can say is that this prejudice is not entirely true. The subject of this chapter is The social hierarchy in India and the Indian social system And shed light on the caste system regarding the history of the main casts and The first Appearance of Social Classes and the reason for being untouchables with detailed of the four social castes. Brahmas, Kshatriya, Vishyas, and Shudras(The Untouchables), with giving extra details about the social life of all of them and their roles in society taking into consideration the political and religious aspects such as the first upper class or the powerful caste that dominate the Indian life with enjoy their Healthcare ,Education ,welfare and political participation such as the decision makers and priests to Ksatriyas the army domination to protect the Brahmins and India in whole and Vishya that work in industry, agriculture and trade to serve the social elements then the lower Classe the Dalits or Untouchables that has no rights in country except to serve others based on political reasons created by the upper class and religious orders or methods in Buddhist religion ad children of god.

I- The Definition of the Caste and its Origins

The Indian caste¹ system is one of the main historical dimensions, where the population is differentiated through classes, gender, tribe, religion, and language; these differentiations exist in all human societies. The trouble of variation of dimensions leads to a serious social problem. The social problem was determined through many sources like wealth, income, power, and prestige. The caste system in India has appeared as a closed system of stratification that means that each person is obliged to follow a private caste where he was born, to interact and behave with peoples of other classes.

The caste system in India is considered as an important part of ancient Hindu traditions since 1200 BC; the Portuguese travelers to India were the pioneer discoverers of the concept “caste” in the 16th century.

The word “caste” comes from the Spanish and Portuguese word “casta,” which means (race). India contains 3000 castes and 2500 sub-castes.

The dominant Indian castes are:

Brahmins: the first caste system of the highest upper class. They were responsible for education by working as teachers and related to sacred knowledge as the priests

Kshatryas: is one of the four Indian castes systems it is the second social class after the Brahmins, it includes the warrior warriors and rulers.

¹Collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name; claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine; professing to follow the same hereditary.
Kerbo, Dr. Harold, HISTORY OF THE INDIAN CASTE SYSTEM AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIA TODAY. CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY : San Luis Obispo. 2010. p13

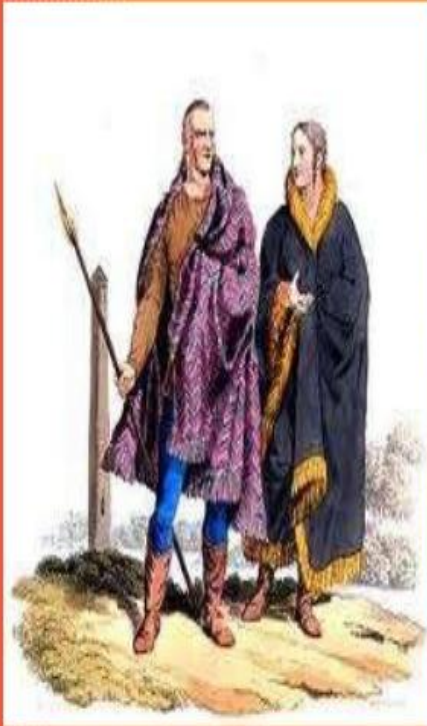
Vishyas: they were the third caste system in the Indian society, they also focus on religious education because they hope to be among the previous two castes, their activities is to work as rulers in agriculture and rearing cattle farmers, traders, and merchants.

Shudras: are the fourth caste system in Indian society, they were considered as the lowest class or untouchables, laborers.

The members of the high castes enjoy more wealth and opportunities, while lower castes people work in small and hard jobs such as untouchables, who do such as toilet cleaning and garbage removal, they were considered dirty, they lived in separate places separated by walls, they also had to spend their lives in impurity to be recognized as (Children of God) according to Gandhi.

II- ORIGINS OF THE CASTE SYSTEM:

Origins of the Caste System



The Aryans

- Indo-European Aryans invaded India in 1500 BC
- They were warrior people who established control and began to restructure Indian social classifications
- Under their influence Indian people were divided into five different social groups

III-The Three Main Theories of the Beginning of the Caste System:

The Religious Theory: it explained the Varna foundation when the primal man destroyed himself to create the Indian human society.

The Brahmans were created from his head.

The Kshatryas were created from his hands.

The Vishyas were created from his thigh.

The Shudras were created from his feet.

Other theories claim that this caste system is created from the Brahmin body organ, who is the world's creator.

The Biological Theory: it declares that both animated and unanimated existing things are three qualities:

Sattva: wisdom, intelligence, honesty, and goodness with all positives.

Rajas: passion, pride, valor.

Tamas: dullness, stupidity, lack of creativity.

The Brahmans inherited Sattvas.

The Kshatryas inherited Rajas.

Shudra inherited Tamas.

The creation of Varnas, Jat, and untouchables, explained on the social-historical theory which declares that the caste system started with the Aryans arrival in India around 1500 BC from south Europe and north Asia, before that they were other Indian communities of different origins such as:

Negrito: have similar features to Africans.

The Mongolies: have Chinese features.

The Austroloids: like to primal Australians.

The Dravidians: from the Mediterranean area, and they were the most prominent community.

The Aryans established some social and religious rules to secure their states, which allowed them to be priests, warriors, and businessmen in society.

The Shudra Varnars are the simple workers; the society contained most of the communities before the Aryans' arrival.

Dalits: were not allowed to touch and come around the highest castes because they believed that illnesses could be spread through physical interaction and air, so they should stay away from the other high classes.

The appearance of Buddhism comes as a reaction to the violence of Hindu society over the lower classes, around the 6th century.

The Buddha born in the warrior caste, and reject any system of the cast by mocking , also rejecting the priests who claimed to be the head while gathering many castes in his society. One of his most saying is: "birth does not make someone a priest or an outcaste." The British helped a lot in developing the caste system, especially with the lack of sympathy and money between the Christian and Hindu.

The discrimination began against the lower class with the British law consist of giving extra privileges to them. Moreover, the upper class cries a lot when they know that they will drink water with the lower class from the same taps.

In Hinduism, the priest builds upon the past decision and privileged birth so that Brahmins enjoyed their upper birth. However, the lower class suffers from their lower birth.

IV-The Most Famous Castes in Indian Society:

1-Brahmins: the first caste system of the highest upper class.

Brahmanical Hinduism: is a very ancient religion in India it dominates the Indian society deeply it is based on the beliefs of Hinduism, Brahmins occupy the upper of the four castes, and it was recognized as the highest, they had a separate role related to teaching, study and sacrificing (the priests) for the rest they believe that their position as a (God of the Earth) and that the world under God, and God under Mantra and Mantra under Brahmins².

Brahmins had a long existence before Hinduism, but they gradually declined and lost their position from the royal family; this loss made them mad and resentful they did their best to regain their lost benefits. The Brahmin was conscious that the reason behind following; Buddhism was the rejection of animal sacrifices especially that of the cow, the champions of Hinduism in the 5th century says that the cow killing was a mortal sin and a real murdering to Brahmins. In their history, it is forbidden for both Hinduism and Brahmin to eat meat, particularly beef-eating.

²The class created first by the creator god, HISTORY OF THE INDIAN CASTE SYSTEM AND ITS IMPACT ON INDIA TODAY. CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY : San Luis Obispo.2010.p13.

So they should take a further step ahead and stop meat-eating completely and legislating laws that forbade killing cows and not eating the meat of dead cows, so when they made the cow as a sacred animal, it is naturally a sin for the beef-eating. This decision was taken by Brahmins in only a trick to keep supremacy over Buddhism.

Brahmins in the highest caste were responsible for education by working as teachers and related to sacred knowledge as the priests.

Brahmins ruled the Indian empire; they also worked as military leaders and government administrators.

One of the most famous members of the Brahmin is (Jawaharlal Nehru), the first prime minister.

The Brahmin Caste today:

The Brahmin make five percent of the total population of India, they work as priests' services and other jobs with the upper castes.

In the twentieth century, they found that no more than eight percent of adults Brahmins males worked as priests or teachers, whereas the others all work with the other castes such as stone-cutting, industry, agriculture. This category of Brahmins and after working with the lower class, they were considered as unclean and impure persons, so they were excluded from priesthood and spiritual guides and military elites.

The forbidden activities to Brahmins include weapon manufacturing, or use, killing, butchering or hunting animals, and all jobs related to death.

Brahmin was vegetarian with Buddhism beliefs, except for some who drink milk or eat fish.

The Brahmins

- Members of the highest caste
- Priests and teachers of Sanskrit
- Performed religious duties and preached Dharma
- Only caste allowed to teach and attend school



2-Kshatryas: is one of the four Indian castes systems it is the second social class after the Brahmins, it includes the warriorhood and forms 80% of the Indian population, its origin is related to a king called Rajan who protected the tribes³

The term Kshatryas derived from Kshatra, which means the authority and domination with power for all successful leaders in the war.

Kshatryas never escape from war; he shows the courage and manhood of patient skillful warrior in the combat. The Kshatryas were considered as the pre-supreme caste in Buddhism, and they were in competition with the Brahmins caste, they devoted and spent all their time and submitted themselves to God. They never think in reward but to serve society through their protective quality with their courage and spiritual leadership to lead others to victory.


They were located in the northern half of India, today most of them are landowners, and they were also vegetarians and have never eaten beef or drink alcoholic, which may set them apart from the Brahmins.

The Brahmin man is allowed to marry a Kshatrya woman, but a Kshatrya man is not allowed to marry a Brahmin woman, only Kshatrya Vishay and Shudra woman. The Brahmin and Kshatryas form only 20% of Indian society. One of the Kshatryas leaders says that the particular race created to protect humanity in the Kshatryas.

The male children in Kshatryas must be emasculated, but females have to be gentle, and they were not allowed to marry outside their caste except with Brahmins.


³Political rulers and soldiers. They were the ruling class and often times collaborated with the Brahmins as they reigned over their kingdom. In ancient India, history of the Indian caste system and its impact on India today. California Polytechnic State University : San Luis Obispo.2010.p14

THE KSHATRIYA CASTE



The Kshatriya

- Ranked below the Brahmins
- Functioned as warriors or army leaders
- A part of the military and ruling elite



THE CASTE SYSTEM OF ANCIENT INDIA, SLIDERSHARE.NET.

-Vishyas: they were the third caste system in the Indian society, they also focus on religious education because they hope to be among the previous two castes, their activities is to work as rulers in agriculture and rearing cattle, but most of the time , Vishyas come to be landowners, and they were responsible for the two previous castes according to some historians who say that Vishyas dynasty comes as a reaction to unequal and unfair rulers⁴.

Vishyas could be compared to the middle class of today's society, they form the most essential caste of society since they symbolized the backbone of the economy and without them, the Indian civilization could be less developed and might have collapsed,they changed from agriculture to trade since most of them were wealthy. The Vishyas helped spread the Buddhism religion by using their wealth, they were considered as the most important social class because they were similar to the majority of people today.

The central role of the Vishyas is to sacrifice by giving gifts, agriculture, and trade with landowners, and later they give agriculture to Shudra caste when they become strong with their commerce.So they turn to work in hospitals and temples.

Although Vishyas playing an essential role in society, they are still considered among low castes with Shudra (the untouchables).

⁴The Vaishyas were considered and expected to be weak in comparison to their rulers, and were infinitely exploitable and regenerative. History of the Indian Caste System and Its impact on India today. California Polytechnic State University : San Luis Obispo.2010.p14

THE VAISHYA CAST

The Vaishyas



- Below the Kshatriya
- Traders, cattle farmers, minor officials, merchants and artisans
- Owned their own business or farm land
- There were many more people in this caste than the Kshatriyas or Brahmins

4- The Untouchables:

Shudra. Most of them were artisans and laborers, they were the product of the upper class. Shudradid does not face discrimination such as untouchables from the other upper classes, they were not permitted the same rights and proprieties as the other three classes, and they were prohibited from practice their social or religious activities or to access to temples⁵.

Since they were created from the feet of the God,which means they were not competent to perform sacrifices, so they were unable to share their life with the other castes.This injustice of social behavior pushed them to convert to other faiths such as Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam. Another historical theory says that the untouchables are the production of Shudra's father and Brahmin mother, so they become the target of social discrimination. They were prohibited from accomplish their religious practices, and lived out of the villages, also separated from the rest of the community.Most of them were hunters and arrow-makers, wood-makers, and dead animals disposers with earth workers.

Mahatma Jotiba Fule(1827—1890)

The Greatest Shudra of Modern India who made the lower classes of Hindus conscious of their slavery to the higher classes, and who preaches the gospel that for India social democracy was more vital than independence from foreign rule.Since they suffer from unequal rights, they were excluded socially and had no right to marry from the other castes.They rising to support the liberation movement for the untouchables and looking for equality

⁵The word 'Dalits' in Hindi means the 'oppressed', and has thus become a politically and socially empowering term used by the ex-untouchables to address themselves. ¹⁰ <http://southasia.oneworld.net>

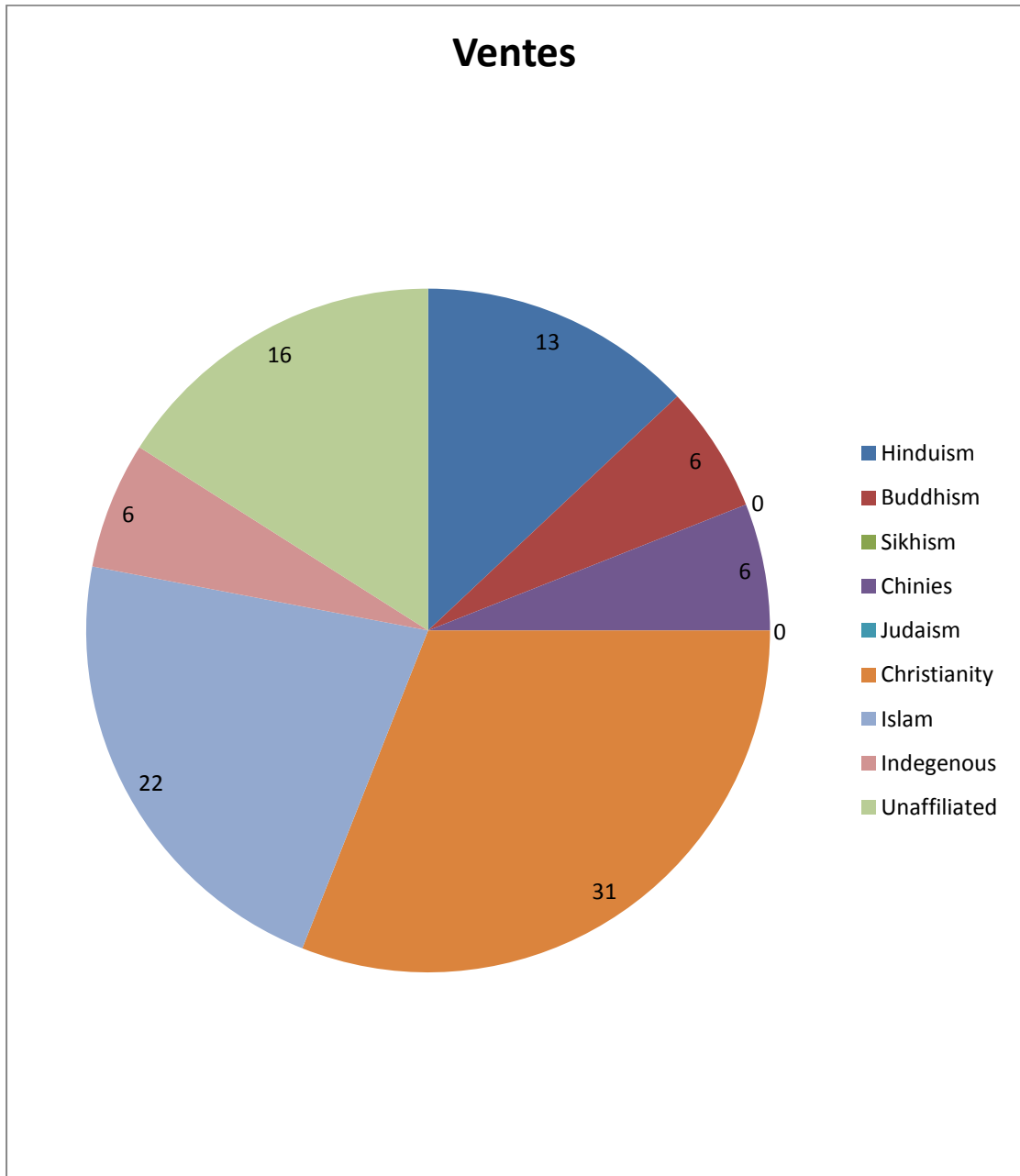
THE SHUDRA CASTE

The Sudras

- Below the Vaishyas
- Servants and farmhands
- Did not own their own land and businesses
- Were employed by members of higher castes
- The most populous caste



V-World Religions in India



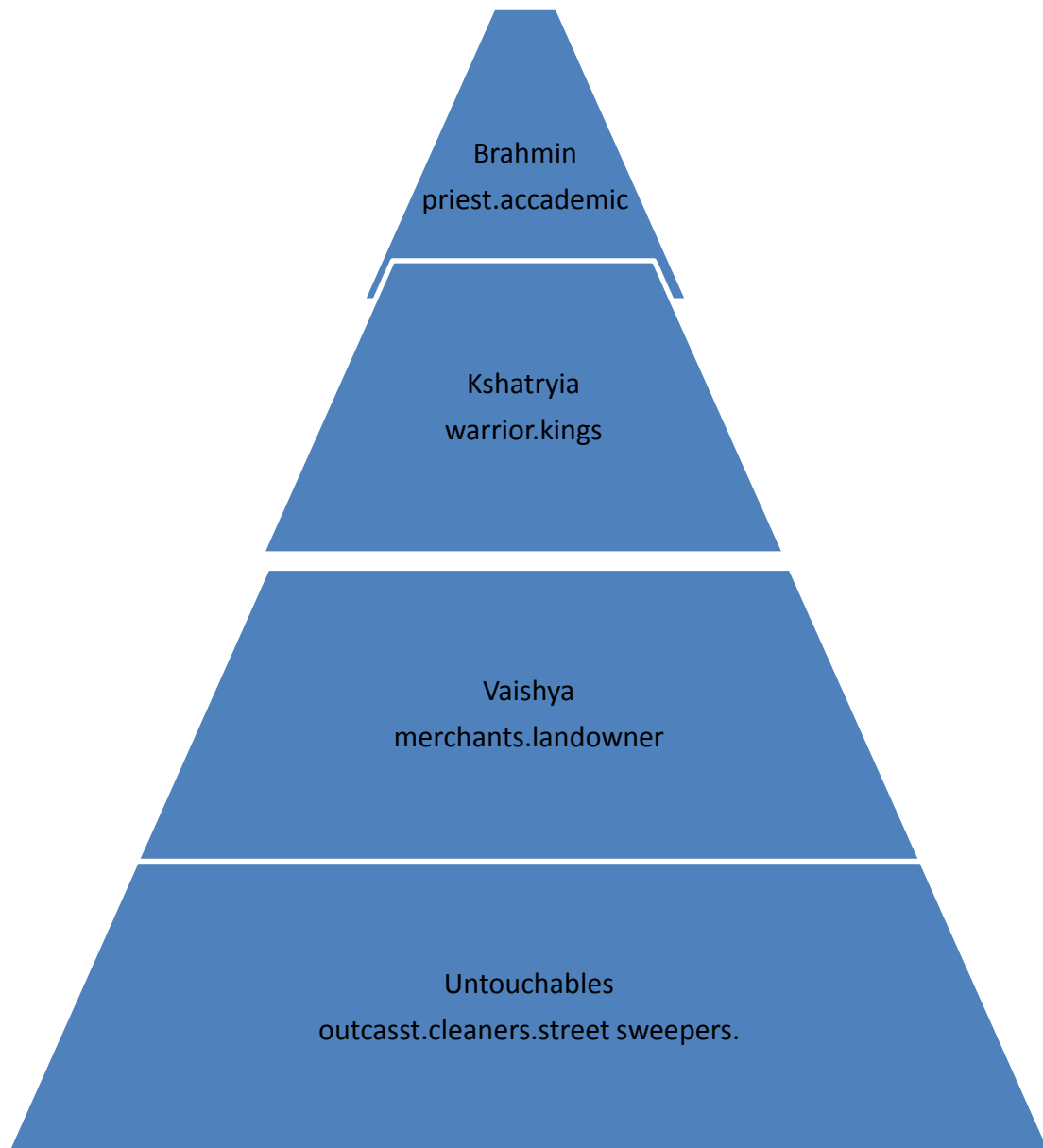
RELIGION IN INDIA (2011censu

The raw data above explain that the most dominant religion in India is Christianity, with 31% of India population, including Roman Catholics. Eastern Orthodox of all sorts and Protestants

The Secondmost significant slice is Islam that considered as the fastest-growing religion in the world

The third place in that ranking is the unaffiliated religion that means those who claim no religious Beliefs (Atheists .Agnostics, Secularistsnon-believers). India, which is the motherland of various cultures, had always been attractive to the external people. Her traditions and the system of castes that found to be weird for us made it more interesting. We, as human beings, and most of the people around the world think that most of the Indian traditions are strange, but we can easily claim that they have their traces. The caste system is such a tradition where we –the others- all think that it is unique and stand the test of time. Most people think it as an insensitive tradition, which puts hundreds of millions of societies under slavery and serving others under the name of religion or social classification.However, when with a little bit of reading, the researcher should quickly understand that our societies had similar applications in most cases with some social differences.

VI-Pyramid of the Social Classes in India Caste System in order



Kwj2772, 29may2008, Pyramid of Caste System

Conclusion

The first Chapter shows the different castes system in Indian society. It starts with general data about the castes of the history of India. It explains the main theories about social class creation. It describes the main castes in detail with their principles roles in India from Brahmin and kshatrya to Vishyas and Shudra after that giving more description to these castes in the form of pyramids with the characteristics of each caste. In addition, the organization with the roles of each caste through society according to religious and political reasons.

Chapter Two:

Origins, Characteristics, and Social Problems of the Untouchables.

Introduction

Dalits have the lowest social status in Indian society, and they were prohibited from participating in the Indian social life, they faced various problems makes them unable to use governmental opportunities suggested.

Most of the Dalits did not enjoy their higher political status even though they get higher education and good jobs so that they avoid any contact with the upper caste.

The concept of Untouchability is purely Indian creation is written in the culture and philosophy of society to separate the privileges between the upper and lower class. It takes the term of the broken men through the depressing group of humanity, and it is divided from the Sanskrit .deal .to crack and split from the society with a particular way of live and special conditions of broken peoples who still faced violence, and destruction of property and sexual violence against untouchables.

Untouchables or Dalits

Untouchables or Dalits: is a group of people in Indian society; they were living outside the villages and the caste system of India. More than 160 million of Indian people are considered among that low caste, they were considered less than human beings, since they suffered from various constraints; for example, they were not allowed to drink with other cast members of Indian society casts from the same cup of tea or water, as well as they were not allowed to work in particular jobs and living in huge humiliation and impurity by the other three castes that seek for keeping them in their low place.

More than 90% of all the poor people and 95% of illiterates were Dalits, more than 25455 crimes cases were committed against them in 2000, every hour two Dalits were attacked, and every day more than three women are raped, and two Dalits houses are burned down, and two persons are killed. These numbers of crimes are committed against the untouchables is real and existed in the Indian society because it is supported by the official Indian government and people were taught that religiously in Hinduism and most of the crimes were committed by officers of the police.

Most of the Dalits were not taken seriously by police, such as murder or torture. Most of the cases were rejected or dismissed, and more than 60% of the police officers were summoned in the court.

Despite the famous reality that untouchables were prevented when India adopted its constitution in 1950, discrimination still exists against Dalits and become more aggressive in 1989 which force the legislation to prevent and protect Dalits, and make the parade of naked people on the street as an illegal practice and not to force them to eat excrement then, taking their land or polluting the water used for drink or

agriculture and ever by giving the extra right for those group of people such as: vote and protecting their homes.

When the Dalits start to ask for their human rights and resist against the unequal practices, they suffer from the exile and violence that they faced every day.

The lax laws formed to protect Dalits does not work since more than 80% of the total population suffered from Hinduism's domination that believes that each one of the four castes is born to live his past such as Brahmins who were priests and teachers, Kshatriyas who were rulers and scholars with Vishyas which represent merchants and traders to Shudra (the untouchables) and the laborers who were considered impure and polluted by birth and do jobs that are unclean and with less amount of money.

1. The Origins of Dalits

According to Ambedkar⁶ the social reformer of India, Untouchables is the result of Brahmanism policy, and the concept of untouchables originated from the Aryans.

According to American scholar George I Hart, certain occupational groups are the result of supernatural forces the society was under the Brahmin influence and could adopt the concept untouchables from them.

According to the British anthropologist John Henry, the origin of untouchables back to the prohibition of accepting other casts from cooking because they were from the low casts that are polluted and impure.

⁶Ambedkarsaid that untouchables came to India around 400 AD as a result of the struggle for supremacy between Brahmanism and Buddhism when they be allowed to govern india.

According to Indian texts,untouchables is first used and mentioned by the Indians itself, because of the sins that were committed by them, in addition to the unethical behaviors and acts as well as were considered as the outcasts which mean under human it worshipsGod on the upper caste temples in 1936 with the help of Gandhi to Dalits to convert to Hinduism from Buddhism because of the racism and inadequate treatment of the Dalits ethnicities on India.

II. Characteristics of Untouchables

According to the anthropologist” Scral Pinto”, the modern untouchables used for people whose work related to bodily fluids and meat of the Indian society:

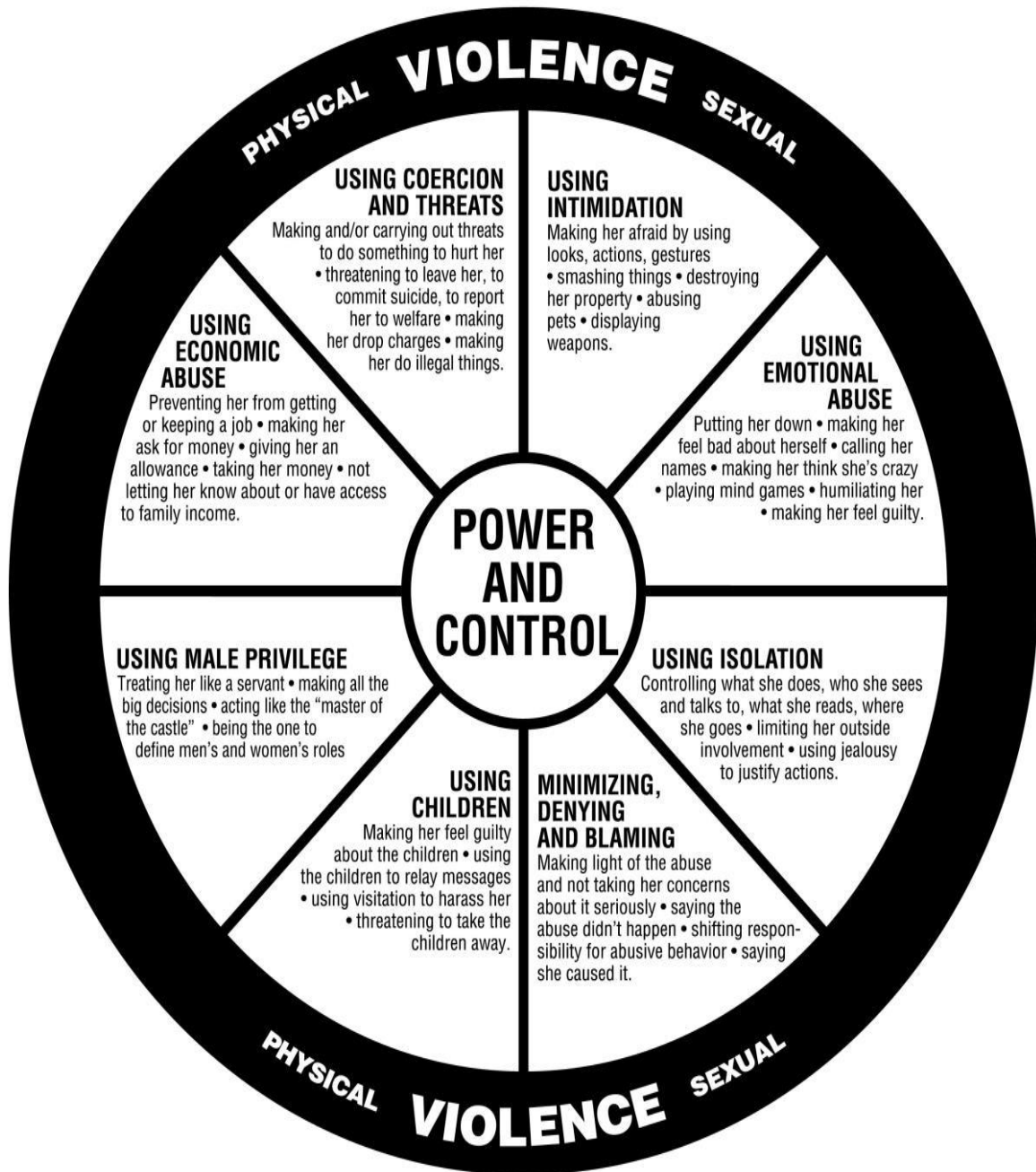
- They were not allowed to eat with others.
- They were living in separated stalls out of villages.
- Eating in separate restaurants.
- Seating in a separate arrangement in events, and festivals.
- They were prohibited from being inside places of public worship.
- They were not allowed to hold umbrellas or wearing sandals in front of others.
- Not allowedto enter other cast homes.
- Not allowed to use common village paths.
- Prohibition of marrying from other castes⁷.

⁷Manali S. Deshpande,2010,history of the caste system and its impact on india today,p12.

III-The Problem of Poverty

Most of the untouchables are poor and dependent. They accept very low daily wages for both of male and female, more than 70% of them are illiterate, so they find it difficult to compete with others in the jobs market, politically they vote according to their landlords' order, they were living in poor housing condition

The problem of untouchables make them easy victims of landlords in 1978 the newspapers reported that 15070 cases of violation against untouchables, the police failed only 51% of them and the court did not pass most of the judgments and cases and dismissed most of them because of the lack of evidence and because it is against the rich landlords.



Bhandari & Hughes, 2017

V-Beliefs and Behaviours

The submission of untouchables explained as a nature of their belief system ever since, they accept the domination of the Hindu beliefs about fate and their creation is to play their role of that position and the transmigration of their souls with relation to the pollution which is the most basic of the caste system.

The Marxism theory declares that the untouchables did not care about the production related to the society according to their false consciousness so that, the obedience of them is not related to the Hindu beliefs but due to economic dependency.

The Economic dependency is the personal protection of the caste since they did not participate or share the other castes ideas such as Brahmins, Kshatryas, Vishyas and Shudra.

So that Brahmins occupy the top of the five folds but untouchables still at the degree of impurity. The main concept of untouchables is around purity and pollution since the social classification theoretically explained Brahmin as gods that should be pure and served by protection of Kshatryas as kings and warriors against any aggression or internal civil war to the Vishyas the traders that should feed all with Shudra who plays their role as servants whereas untouchables do the most challenging jobs related to blood decay and death⁸.

⁸Fiona Margaret, **Transforming Dalit Identity**, Masters of Development Studies degree February 2008,p. 62.

VI-The Making of Untouchables and the Politicization of Castes

The theory of untouchable caste is today top fixed in scholarly thinking for Indian society that many scholars take their unity for a gift that the most significant changes and transformation of power relationships occur at the local level. Furthermore, many Dalits refused to accept their destiny of their children, more than seventy different Dalit organizations work for the Dalits rights, and many social movements existed for the same reason.

Dalits in India have become increasingly well organized since 1970, politically minded and asking for their constitution and aiming for progress. They all work against child labor and violence against women.

One of the most famous activists who raised the Dalit position in the first half of the 20 century is Dr. Ambedkar⁹.

Dr. Ambedkar was one of the first Dalit ever who receive high education. He worked as a lawyer in India, and as a head of the drafting committee for the Indian news constitution in UK and USA. He was appointed by Jawaharlal Nehru defending the prohibited caste race and sex discrimination, Dr. Ambedkar was considered as the hero for many Dalits in India. Dr. Ambedkar considered Untouchability as a serious complex problem for Indians since Gandhi consider him as the most powerful political combatant according to his charismatic social justice leader to be documented .

⁹Caroline Johanne Lillelund,2013,*Personal Emancipation or Cultural Recognition: A Dalit Dilemma*, 2013p. 23.

VII-Inter-caste Marriage

The Indian caste marriage is so different from the other countries because it is based on some social conditions related to the religious beliefs and cultural transmissions with linguistic groups, ...etc.

These social roles changed the marriage to be modern and take the name of westernization. It has its own impact through the changing role of men and women in marriage practices

The Indian partner role in marriage is very high through choosing a partner by oneself without any kind of discrimination between males and females. In 2011, in a survey, they asked female "how long have they known their husbands before marriage?" 82% of women's answers were "less than a month", and in another question. «Who chose your husband?", 95% responded "with parents or other familiar or relatives, " but fixing a marriage is the responsibility of parents in all religions.

The Indian inter-caste level is based on the educated population and the economic situation of both of the families on the caste.

The Indian ICL is very low, and its increase is very slow comparing with the other marriages because it has a religious constraint on society. (Few marriages within the same family). Moreover, the problem of inter-caste marriage appeared in Indian textbooks.

While most of the women faced educational discrimination from investment toward their education finance, most of them stop studying in the primary schools.¹⁰

¹⁰Presented at the Seventieth Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination February 2007 CASTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS OR SO-CALLED UNTOUCHABLES IN INDIA

VIII-Education and Characteristics of Partners

According to some socialists who determined the age between wife and husband by five years, (husbands are older than wives are).

The big problem of the population is that they were with zero levels. 22% of men and 39.6 % of women have zero years of education while both of them had less than five years of education¹¹.

IX-Equal in law but Unequal in Caste:

The famous expression created by the Indian Brahmins who support the 'Casteism', and social discrimination to keep the caste separation and the Dalits suffer as servants, this social position obliged them to struggle against the caste discrimination and poverty with using education and self-empowerment as weapons to defend against and prove themselves with democracy.

The Dalits ensure have to set many efforts in order to study and work for further education at high level to prove themselves on the social and political levels to be able to face the social discrimination, racism and casteism with asking for equality from the state in political and democratic level against the dominant groups. (Equal by law p 335)

¹¹Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination February 2007, CASTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS OR SO-CALLED UNTOUCHABLES IN INDIA, p. 47.

These well-educated categories created a social group called (Dalithood) which contains some Dalits activists from different regions to use education against any exclusive and caste discrimination to face the upper class.¹²

¹²Smita narula .equal by low ,unequal in caste .the untouchable condition in critical race perspective p259.

Conclusion

The above discussions show the actual face of division of India. This type of discriminatory approach threatens Indian democracy and social stability. And if the Dalits start a struggle for their rights, the Indian political and social order will run into serious trouble. The Indian constitution and universal human rights demand that all Indians, who must respect religion, caste, region, ethnicity, and gender, enjoy equal rights and protection of the state. Hopefully, the Indian state and society will meet this challenge. In addition, they faced the different problems they faced, such as poverty, inter-caste marriage, equality, education, and social status.

Chapter Three

Untouchability between Religion and Policy

Introduction

After the Indian independence from Great Britain in 1947, there were new rules related the upper class with the lower class that preserve the right and duties for both to realize equality and live in peace and harmony. However, the lower class (the untouchables) continued practicing their daily lives separately from the rest.

Although wealth and power were less associated with the caste and become a less significant part of life to shape the country into what it is today and the role of religion, politics, and economy in many aspects of the caste system in India.

The first appearance of the word Dalit or untouchable comes from Marathi that means; the ground is broken or reduced to pieces, which means those who have been broken down by those above them in an effective way.

Just after the colonial period, caste has been viewed as a manner of production of unequal social relations also of, the political mobilization, but they were suffering from several problems.

I. The dark side of the untouchable life

1.Social problems

Most of the Dalits' social problems revolved around the concept of purity and pollution according to their shallow position in the society and have no right to own sort of properties such as agriculture, industry, or trade. Untouchables should practice small and hard jobs for higher caste; they were not allowed to live in the main villages with the other castes only if the bourgeoisie and leaders needed them. Dalits are literally an out-caste class, and they were considered contaminated from birth and should be avoided and marginalized due to their previous actions, They have been given the worst jobs, things which many beliefs will contaminate the spirit (killing rate,preparing dead bodies) Dalits are being punished from actions committed during their past lives. They live in the worst conditions imaginable They should marry from the same social class, and If someone from the upper caste comes their way, they should throw themselves face-first on the floor ¹³.

2. Religious problems

Most of the religious problems and constraints the untouchables have faced were the denial of rights of entering temples that still exclusively served by the Brahmins.

Dalits had no right to worship God, and the myth of the caste system that God created them from the feet is only to serve other castes, and all their creation and position in life is for that reason¹⁴.

¹³Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, THE UNTOUCHABLES WHO WERE THEY AND WHY THEY BECAME UNTOUCHABLES,chapter three p28.

¹⁴Fiona Margaret, Masters of Development Studies degree February 2008,Transforming Dalit Identity,p31.

3. Economic problems

Most of the Dalits had to face many economic problems such as the low reward of their services and have no right to start or carry out their own business; they were prohibited from any engagements in any profession of the other castes. The lack of freedom to choose any occupation related to their ability but just to clean streets from pollution and remove dead cattle. Their role is only to undertake agricultural work since they were just laborers and landless.

Dalits were prohibited from sharing any economic strategy all over all aspects of life, and they were not able to share any place in politics, administration, or any public post. Their first ability to vote was after the independence equality. They organize themselves to fight for their right by the leadership of Ambedkar in 1980 to reform Hindu society and remove the Untouchability as well.

4. Public Disadvantages:

Untouchables were not allowed to use public utilities such as wells or enter or get closer to any of the Brahmin homes because they believe that they may desecrate them, they do go near them only in urgent cases.

Public transportation was forbidden for them as well since they are other castes' priority, which obliges them to use traditional transportation means. In addition to that, they cannot go to educational institutions, schools, universities, and colleges. Dalits had no right to use the same source of water that is used by other castes or even enter shops, coffee shops, or restaurants¹⁵.

¹⁵ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination February 2007, CASTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS OR SO-CALLED UNTOUCHABLES IN INDIA, p33.

5. Educational problems

Dalits have been deprived of any right to be educated; they were not allowed to use public educational institutions, since they were living in isolation out of the villages as tribes which they find it difficult to study.

Most Untouchables were suffering from contagious diseases, so they could not study with children of other castes; they were even forced to sleep during the day to work at nighttime. Moreover, for other casts, untouchables should not study because they did not need or deserve knowledge¹⁶.

Many scholars were wondering about the phenomenon that makes Dalit students started to fail in schools and could not achieve their goals and asking about the reasons behind their low educational performance than other castes of community even in the same schools. So overall, they discover that they suffer a lot in their educational environment since Dalit children do many struggles to achieve their aims, even the daily academic works because of the social phenomenon they faced besides the lack of economic sources and income.

They lost the educational opportunities and sometimes became unaware of the importance of education even though the government provided the primary schools for free. Many parents send their children looking for work and money.

II-Crimes against Dalits in India

Untouchables in India faced many forms of violence. According to Human Rights Watch report, poorly treated, inhuman and were discriminated of over 165 million people in India in all forms of cruelty against Dalits, that is for them related to

¹⁶Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination February 2007, CASTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS OR SO-CALLED UNTOUCHABLES IN INDIA, p33.

heredity in nature, caste system, birth and the irrespective of faith practiced by individuals related to the traditional system.

The Brahmin domination and caste division are through the practice of social classes under the order of religion, politics, and economy owners; more than half of the Dalit population faced the caste system crimes¹⁷.

III- Crimes against Dalits women

Dalit women suffered a lot and more than Dalit males. They were exposed to all colors of hate and violence. They were harshly treated, beaten up, and raped by order of the upper class when the male makes any kind of crime or trouble or commits any mistake against the upper class. One of the social crimes against Dalits is related to a woman of 42 years when the police found her son with a girl of the upper class is related to 2001. Additionally, because of the higher class family's local position, she was raped and burned alive with her husband and her two sons.

A lot of Dalit women were assaulted by the landlords of the upper class and police officers. The study found that the police demand the bribe from Dalits for nothing they did by order of the upper class to rape women or punished the man illegally. Thousands of Dalit girls forced into religious practices under the expression of (servants of God) the girl dedicated to being married in temples and forced to have sex with the upper-class community¹⁸.

¹⁷Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination February 2007,CASTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS OR SO-CALLED UNTOUCHABLES IN INDIA,p36.

¹⁸The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination February 2007,CASTE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DALITS OR SO-CALLED UNTOUCHABLES IN INDIA,p41.

IV- Resistance and Progress:

In some states in India, caste conflicts become warfare by burning homes and massacring the peoples by the Dalits group. The new Dalit movement of activists' trade, union, and other NGOs that is democratically organized demand their rights peacefully that consist of high wages and more equality inland distribution and condemning discrimination.

V- The Revolt of the Untouchables:

The story of the untouchables movement against the injustice of Hindu society has two stages, one of them is because of the protests that had failed the Hindus and the second one is the government by the declaration that all the public utilities and institutions are open to all citizens including the untouchables with giving the rights to wear any kind of clothes with extra rights such as schools, buses, trams...etc. But in reality, untouchables cannot use any of them, the road used by the Indians is the same used by all castes, but Dalits should avoid roads that are near to the temples and religious buildings, they must take another path to be safe.

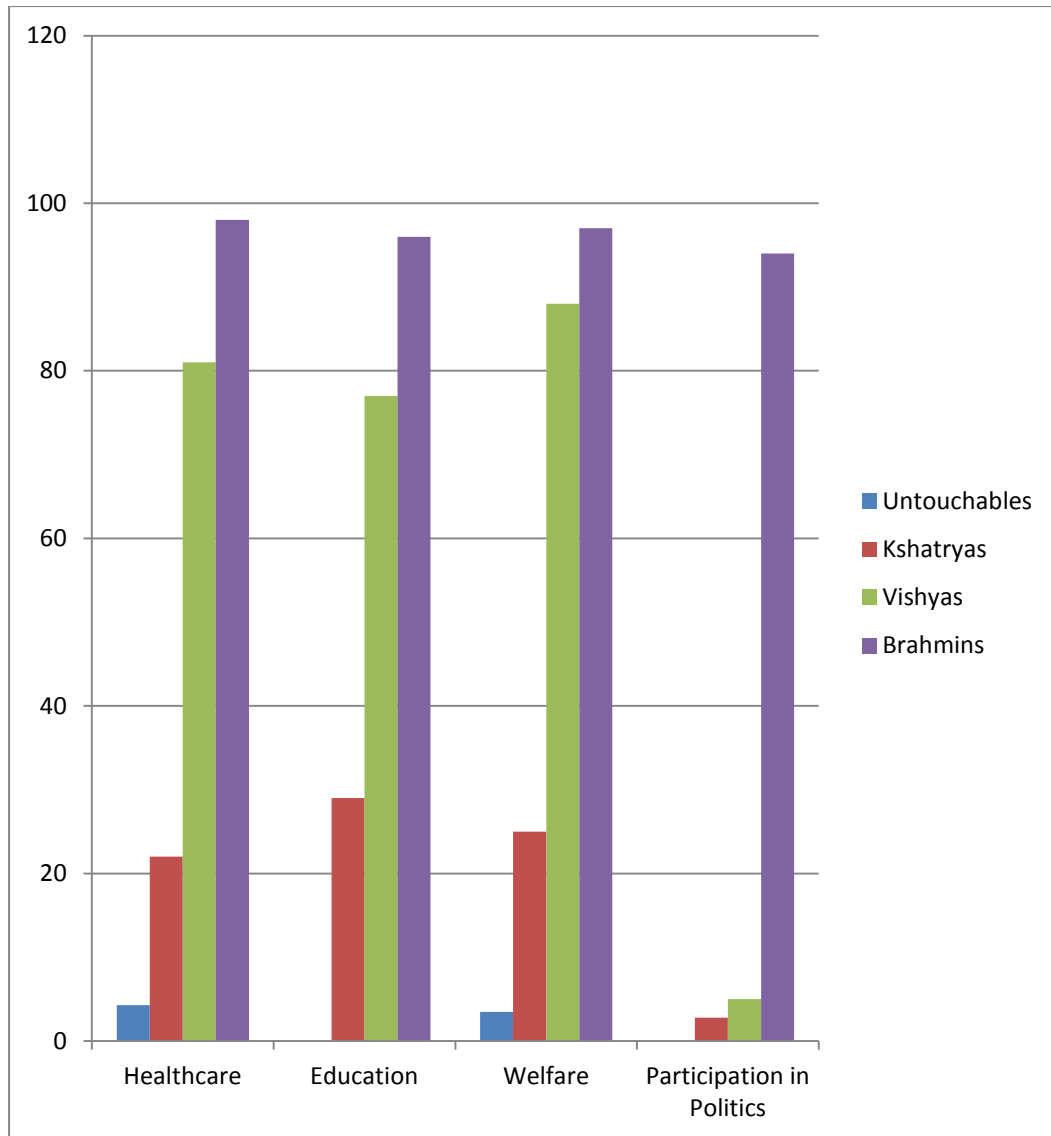
The untouchables were suffering a lot with the lack of water in their daily lives until the legislative council of Bombay passed the resolution that the untouchables were allowed to use water sources.

The untouchables held a conference in their village under the name "For civil disobedience and for going to our goal."

When the Hindus knew about that, they committed 144 crimes against Dalits, prohibiting them from participating in that conference telling them to go to courts and try to get their rights.

The dates fixed for that conference were 25th.26th.27th of December 1927 giving them the right to use the public water sources and for the civil disobedience and civil equality of all Indian castes with the respect of each other under the organization named «Dalithood » that serve and defend Dalits' rights.

The Level of Healthcare, Education, Welfare and Participation in Politics in the Indian Society.



Ambedkar, B.R. (2006).

It was shedding light on four casts (Untouchables, Kshatryas, Vishyas and Brahmins) in the 19th century. It is clearly seen that there is somehow social injustice according to the statistics given here.

Concerning firstly, the healthcare received by the Indian people, it is clearly seen that the Brahmins and somehow the Vishyas enjoy the most of it, while we can see that Kshatryas and Dalits did not receive the proper treatment and healthcare they must receive, and that is all because upper-class people were considered above the rest of the Indian people, and for their social rank, their lives matter a lot. Secondly, for education, still, we can see that Brahmins and Vishyas' children, go to schools, attend colleges and universities, and receive education to be leaders and rulers in the future, while untouchables do not have the right to study and learn, they are doomed to stay illiterate, for the reason that they should stay under the rules and the feet of the upper class, even if one of the untouchable cast members make efforts and self-study, they will not be considered as educated and will be treated like the rest of his cast members as illiterate.

Thirdly, for welfare, still, the upper class enjoys the unique lifestyle they live and all rights and eligibilities that set them apart from the Kshatryas and Dalits. Fourthly, as we observe in the graph, there is zero participation in politics for the untouchables, their voice does not count in making any laws or any sorts of elections. At the same time, we find that the Brahmins, who happen to be rulers and of high rank in society, having the biggest share in the decision making and political matters in the country.

To sum up, untouchables are deprived of their rights in education and having a voice in politics. Therefore, they live their lives in darkness and illiteracy as well as in total sufferance because they cannot get back any of their civil rights.

VI-Are Dalits a Hindu or British Creation?

The caste system is organized by Hinduism's sacred texts thousands of years old and controls all key domains of life, including location, occupation, and marriage. Untouchability is considered as illegal social practice and clear discrimination, this division is well used by the British colonization because it helps the colonizer in domination and authority through other Castes by the creation of tables between the four casts of the same country by using the numbers of each caste system to serve the particular goals of the colonizer and pretending the caste services.

For example, the British colonizer ask for Brahmin helps to his army and plan strategy with promises for reservation of kingdom and government for them as leaders, kings, teachers and priest son the other hand colonizer ask for untouchables help and services for the same reason with different methods with promises of helping them to realize their hopes and wishes for social equality and rejection of discrimination and slavery with giving them the rights to practice their religious Beliefs in temples and to be able to be traders and own money with land in privacy, moreover, the British colonizer gives the Dalits some political rights such as form the Dalithood organization that defend their rights to be an essential part of Indian society and share the local administration and contribute in politics to be a governess of political authority

VII-Dalit Women Movement:

Seven women aged 19-24 walked into the police station looking tired, angry, and confident. They want to meet the police officer asking for justice about the rape and murder of a 13 year Dalit girl after two days from finding her body in the village ; at first the police officer ignore the incident that had happened in saying (she is one of us, if it is here today ; it would be us tomorrow).

Manisha 29 year Dalit women one of the seven women, it was the first time she had seen the insides of the police station, the discrimination against girls and Dalit women and the selective abortion,

She and her group left the police station to meet the victim's family then went to the police station to find that the case was closed, and no arrests are there with facing the police expression (forget getting justice).

It is sure that the Dalit women have been left outside the Dalit movement to be forced to fight their own rights under the title Dalit women Movement¹⁹.

VIII- Are Dalits Obligated to Live their Untouchability?

Most of the theorists argued that untouchables are not obliged to live in impure conditions by other castes. However, they accept their life according to their personal beliefs of the caste fragmentation that puts them at the last part to serve others in different villages and even to motivate others from their own caste to do their work correctly and being devoted in doing it, that is according to their great tradition, and their beliefs that the lower casts are quite different in Hinduism because they will not go to heaven only through their Untouchability. After all, all their activities are acts of worship to God, and their success is through Brahmin satisfaction.

The false consciousness is the primary constraint that blinds them to see the truth for revolting against the discrimination they face every day.

Untouchability is obligatory, but Slavery was not A person is permitted to hold another as his slave. There is no compulsion on him if he does not want to. Nevertheless, untouchable when he is born he is subject to all the disabilities of an Untouchable, and there is no escape since untouchability was heredity From the

¹⁹Guro Warhuus Samuelsen, *The Remaking of Caste Identity Dalit Activists in New Delhi*, Master's Thesis in South Asian Studies, p. 9.

parents it passed to the children: “They were the born impure; they were impure while they lived, they died in the death of the impurity.

The term Untouchable conveys the meaning of contempt and discrimination. Then Gandhi gave another name to the Untouchables Harijans or ‘Children of God.’ After many Untouchables converted to Buddhism, they were called new Buddhists or neo-Buddhists. They address themselves as the new Buddhists or Buddhist simply because they felt that neo- Buddhist “has pejorative , One of the Indian Buddhists told that: “It makes me feel very sad to hear such words as ‘out-caste’ and ‘ex-untouchable’ and ‘Dalit’ and ‘depressed classes’ and ‘scheduled castes’ and so forth. All those words draw too much attention to hardship. I like words that make me think of friendship and joy. That is why I say to people, ‘Please, if you have to call me something, just call me a Buddhist.’ ”⁴² The Shudras and Untouchables were not allowed to build houses with a tiled roof, and They were also forbidden to use cultured languages.

They could not wear sacred thread because wearing it was proof of honor prestigious birth. Marriage with women of higher castes was not accepted. If a Shudra man touched a woman of the Brahmin castes, he would be punished. However, and when anuntouchable died, the dead body could not be cremated in the Hindu cremation.

Conclusion

As already mentioned earlier in this chapter, The notions of Untouchability is a British creation during the Indian colonization in order to make a separation between the four casts to be dominated, and well-controlled under the social constraints build by the colonized sociologists with –social,religious, economic and educational problems with many crimes committed against that group and women particularly which lead them to resist and revolt against that social crimes to ameliorate their position in the health,education,welfare and policy under the name of Dalithoodmovement.On the other hand, Untouchability is related to religion more them society and colonization because it is considered as a way of life and beliefs with obedience to God.

General Conclusion

Few studies have examined the Indian social hierarchy in detail, and there are few descriptions on the case of untouchability since it is considered as a small social group that is not well known or considered among the social caste. There are few descriptive evidence and close study on the Dalits subject.

This study tries to contribute something to the Indian society especially the Dalits Based on the caste and its origin with The history of India and the main castes to The first appearance of social classes in detail then the case study (the untouchables) based on their origins, characteristics and problems faced such as poverty, beliefs, Education, Healthcare and Inter caste marriage.

On the third Chapter, the researcher discusses the dark side of the untouchables in form of graphs and the Crimes against Dalits especially women and their motives to accept it and study if they were obliged to accept it and what is the reasons with taking into consideration the origin of that creation (religious or political) to the solutions adopted to pass that problem and discover that religious constraints are more powerful than the political measures.

From my studies, I was naturally focused on the past of the caste system. The beginning went as far as the 15—century BC. Considering the birth of the caste system, we saw that it was first introduced to India by the Aryan invasions 1.500 B.C. Yet we are not sure whether there had been any social structure in India similar to the caste structure before the Aryan times. But it can be assumed that the lost Indus Valley civilization had its own social structure build on professions regarding the complex urban life they were living. Hopefully, that researcher can see how interesting similarities can be observed when the caste system is studied in detail.

With the help of the caste system, we can have a wider look at the class structures and class relations and how they affect the course of history.

On the other hand, with the help of the caste system, we can observe an outstanding demand for change from depressed people and classes. We can understand the nature of relations between the upper and depressed classes of society (the untouchables).

The Indian caste system has played a significant role in shaping the occupations and roles as well as the values of Indian society. Religion has been the constant push towards this stratificationsystem for centuries, beginning with the Aryans and continuing down a long road of unfortunatediscrimination, segregation, violence, and inequality. Hinduism was the backbone of the purity pollutioncomplex, and it was the religion that influenced the daily lives and beliefs of the Indianpeople.

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