



Assessing the Implementation of Atrocity Acts (2016) In Raisen District: A Perception Study Among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Communities

Sarita Nayak, Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Dr. C.V. Raman University
Dr. Richa Yadav, Professor, Department of Sociology, Dr. C.V. Raman University

Abstract

This research study explores the experiences and viewpoints of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes populations in Raisen District, Madhya Pradesh, regarding the application and interpretation of the Atrocity Acts (2016). Examining the perceptions of the marginalised populations they were intended to safeguard and the effectiveness of their enforcement, this research seeks to analyse the practical effects of these Acts. Examining the efficacy of the legislative framework in tackling caste-based prejudice and atrocities in the area, this article employs a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, including surveys, interviews, and data analysis. This study aims to provide suggestions to improve the effectiveness and execution of the Atrocity Acts by understanding the perspectives and experiences of the local communities. The ultimate goal is to promote social justice and equality in Raisen District and beyond.

Keywords - Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Caste-based discrimination, Social justice, Equality

Introduction

Despite legislative frameworks intended to safeguard marginalised populations, caste-based prejudice has persisted in India for a long time. In 2016, lawmakers attempted to address the issue of atrocities perpetrated against vulnerable communities by passing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The Madhya Pradesh district of Raisen exemplifies both the difficulties and the potential benefits of this Act's implementation.

In this study, we will look at how the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes groups in Raisen District feel about the Atrocity Acts (2016) and how they were put into practice. This research aims to provide significant insights into the efficacy of the legal framework in combating caste-based discrimination and atrocities by studying both the implementation of the Acts and the community views towards them.

This study's importance rests in the fact that it may provide lawmakers, activists, and other interested parties with information on the practical challenges of enforcing anti-discrimination laws in a particular geographical setting. The study's overarching goal is to add to the continuing conversation on equity and social justice in India by illuminating the experiences and perspectives of underprivileged groups in Raisen District.

This study will explore the intricacies of the implementation process and the stories of individuals impacted by caste-based discrimination using a mix of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, including as surveys, interviews, and data analysis. In doing so, it hopes to provide actionable suggestions for making the Atrocity Acts work better and for fostering more equitable and inclusive communities in Raisen District and beyond.

Literature review

Legal efforts have not been able to eradicate the widespread societal problem of caste-based discrimination, which has deep historical roots in India. A major legislative attempt to tackle this issue was the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of crimes) Act, 2016, which provides a thorough framework for preventing and prosecuting crimes against marginalised populations.

Numerous studies have shed light on the pros and cons of anti-discrimination legislation in India and how they have been put into practice. Factors like as societal attitudes and law enforcement capabilities played pivotal roles in the substantial regional inequalities in execution of the Atrocity Acts, according to Kumar's (2018) research on the statutes' efficacy in different states.

Based on their research of the Atrocity Acts' enforcement in several Madhya Pradesh districts, Singh and Sharma (2019) concluded that community involvement and legal knowledge are





crucial for successful implementation. On the other hand, they pointed out that the judicial system had gaps in enforcement because of bureaucratic incompetence and prejudices based on caste.

In addition, research has looked at how groups belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes feel about anti-discrimination legislation. Many community members in Madhya Pradesh voiced worries about the pervasiveness of caste-based discrimination in daily life, and Ramesh (2020) interviewed them and found a mix of optimism and scepticism over the effectiveness of the Atrocity Acts.

Few studies have examined how the Atrocity Acts were perceived and put into practice in the particular setting of Raisen District. There has to be strong legal safeguards and community empowerment programmes since research like Patel et al. (2017) have shown how common caste-based violence and prejudice are in the area.

According to the research, there are a number of elements, such as the ability to implement the laws, societal attitudes, and community involvement, that determine how successful the Atrocity Acts are in fighting caste-based discrimination. Policymakers, activists, and academics in India's pursuit of social justice and equality will benefit greatly from the findings of this study, which seeks to add to the existing literature by investigating how the Acts were seen and put into practice in Raisen District.

Objectives of the study

- To identify the key challenges and barriers in the effective enforcement of the Atrocity Acts within Raisen District.
- To explore the perceptions, attitudes, and awareness levels of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes communities towards the Atrocity Acts in Raisen District.
- To examine the impact of the Atrocity Acts on the prevalence of caste-based discrimination, violence, and social exclusion in Raisen District.

Research methodology

A qualitative approach was used to conduct the research methodology for the perception study on the implementation of the Atrocity Acts (2016) in Raisen District. The study aimed to understand the experiences and perceptions of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs) communities in depth. The research technique is outlined below: In order to dig deep into the target populations' lived experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about the implementation of Atrocity Acts, the study utilised a qualitative research approach. Researchers may glean insights into the subjective experiences of participants and capture the intricacies of social events via qualitative research's rich descriptive data. Participants were recruited from the STs and SCs communities in Raisen District using a selective sample technique. These participants had either direct experience or knowledge of caste-based discrimination, violence, and the judicial system. Victims of atrocities, community leaders, activists, and local authorities were among the participants chosen to reflect the diversity of thought and experience among the target areas. To better understand the social dynamics, relationships, and contextual elements impacting the execution of Atrocity Acts in Raisen District, researchers used participant observation techniques. Through observation, researchers were able to see community members' activities, routines, and relationships. The study's goal was to share its results with people via scholarly articles, papers, presentations, and outreach events. Improving the execution of Atrocity Acts may be achieved via debate, increased awareness, and the incorporation of findings into policy and advocacy initiatives when shared with relevant stakeholders. The perception study sheds light on the reality of caste-based violence and discrimination in Raisen District and provides strategies for effectively addressing these issues by using a qualitative research methodology based on the experiences and perspectives of marginalised communities.

Case studies

The First Case Study: "Failure of Justice: A Dalit Family's Struggle for Redress"

Context: The difficulties in carrying out the Atrocity Acts are shown by the instance of the Dalit Singh family. In their hamlet in Raisen District, the family endured brutality and prejudice



5 March 2023 (Sunday)



based on caste in 2021. In March of 2021, villagers from the ruling caste attacked Mr. Singh and his boys, claiming that they had invaded "upper-caste" home. The assailants verbally and physically assaulted the family, hurling casteist insults at them. Even though a complaint was filed under the Atrocity Act, the culprits were not promptly punished by the police. In response, the Singh family faced several challenges in seeking redress. They were afraid to testify because the ruling caste would intimidate them. The probe was further slowed down by bureaucratic red tape and corruption among the local police. Conclusion: This case shows how institutional prejudices and structural problems hinder Raisen District's ability to effectively enforce the Atrocity Acts. There is an immediate need for change and responsibility as oppressed groups like the Dalits are still being wronged and discriminated against, even if there are legal protections against it.

The Second Case Study: "Community Empowerment through Collective Action: A Success Story"

Unlike the Singh family, the Patel community in a rural area was able to successfully address caste-based abuses via grassroots efforts. Patel community leaders, in response to the pervasiveness of caste prejudice and violence, collaborated with local NGOs and activists to launch a number of awareness campaigns and legal literacy programmes. Educating community members about their rights under the Atrocity Acts and fostering unity among oppressed groups were the goals of these initiatives. Positive results were achieved as a result of the Patel community's combined efforts. By bringing attention to the issue and encouraging cooperation, the community become more watchful in their response to acts of prejudice and aggression. Furthermore, due to the increasing involvement with legal systems, atrocities were reported more promptly, which enhanced the response of law enforcement. The importance of community mobilisation and empowerment in combating caste-based inequalities is shown by the success of the Patel community's project. To complement legal measures and create significant change in the execution of Atrocity Acts, grassroots movements must unite and provide a voice to the marginalised.

Discussion

The aforementioned case studies provide a detailed analysis of the Raisen District Atrocity Acts' execution, which has consequences for more generalised debates on social justice, institutional change, and community empowerment.

Institutional Biases and Systemic Obstacles: The first case study shows how institutional biases and systemic obstacles make it hard to implement Atrocity Acts effectively. The Dalits and other oppressed people still endure bigotry, brutality, and injustice, even though laws have been passed to protect them. In light of this, it is clear that law enforcement institutions need fundamental changes to eliminate bias based on caste and guarantee legal equality.

The second case study shows how community empowerment may be a game-changer when it comes to fighting caste-based inequalities. The Patel community contributed to a more watchful and aggressive stance in the fight against prejudice and strengthened its resistance to crimes via collective action, awareness campaigns, and legal literacy programmes. In addition to legislative measures, bottom-up tactics are crucial for fostering social change, as this highlights.

The relevance of solidarity and cooperation among activists, civil society groups, and disadvantaged communities is highlighted in both case studies. Communities can make their voices heard, increase their influence, and ensure that institutions respect justice and equality when they band together and pool their resources.

Accountability and Policy Reforms are Necessary: These case studies' results highlight the need for immediate policy changes to fill in the blanks and fix the problems with the execution of Atrocity Acts. Things like making the legal system more accessible, making police departments more responsive, and making accountability and monitoring more robust are all part of this. In addition, government officials, police officers, and the general public need to be educated about the reality of caste-based violence and prejudice via sensitization programmes.

Public conversation on Caste-Based Discrimination and Social Justice: The case studies should encourage further public conversation, activism, and study on the topic. The realisation of a





more equal and inclusive society may be advanced when stakeholders participate in critical conversation and share information in order to generate new ideas, rally behind legislative changes, and find creative solutions.

To sum up, there are substantial obstacles to enforcing Atrocity Acts, but the case studies also show signs of agency, resilience, and community-led projects that might lead to revolutionary transformation. Stakeholders can dismantle caste-based systems, promote social cohesiveness, and advance the cause of justice for all marginalised populations by learning from both achievements and mistakes.

Conclusion

Finally, the perception research that looked at how the Atrocity Acts (2016) were put into action in Raisen District shed light on the complexity of caste-based violence and prejudice and how those issues were attempted to be resolved. Numerous important findings are derived from qualitative case studies that centre on the experiences of communities belonging to Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs): Systemic hurdles to justice persist for oppressed populations, such as Dalits, even though the Atrocity Acts established a legislative framework to address such issues. Racial profiling, acts of brutality, and the subsequent lack of accountability expose systemic biases and prejudices in the police force.

In order to combat inequalities based on caste, the report stresses the need of community empowerment and grassroots efforts. Underrepresented groups may stand up for themselves, form solidarity, and fight back against injustice by organising, raising awareness, and participating in legal literacy programmes. A thorough overhaul of the judicial system and law enforcement organisations is necessary to fill the inadequacies in the execution of the Atrocity Acts. Programmes to raise awareness among government officials, better avenues for victims to seek justice, and systems to hold authorities accountable for following the law are all part of the solution. Solidarity and collaboration are crucial for activists, civil society organisations, and members of marginalised groups to raise their voices, pool their resources, and bring about real change. When people work together in solidarity, they help build a society where everyone feels welcome and valued.

This study's results highlight the critical need to combat violence and prejudice based on caste immediately. Legislators, NGOs, and community leaders all have a role to play in ending caste discrimination and inequality in society. They should make social justice and reforms a top priority. Ultimately, the research provides optimism for future advancement by highlighting the importance of community resilience, advocacy, and collaborative action in the face of ongoing problems. Stakeholders may help bring about a society where everyone, regardless of their class or caste position, is treated with decency, fairness, and equality by reflecting on the insights given and making a commitment to long-term efforts.

References

- Scheduled Castes & the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989, Author : Taxmann, As amended by the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act 2015 [Act No. 1 of 2016].
- Scheduled Castes (SCs) in India - Socio-economic Status and Empowerment, Author : by Arjun Y. Pangannavar, 2014
- Legally Combating Atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Author : T.R. Naval, 2003
- Commentary On The Scheduled Castes & The Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1999, Author : Yawer Qazalbash (Advocate), 2013
- Atrocities on Scheduled Castes the Law and the Realities, Author : H.S.Saksena, 2010
- The Scheduled Castes (People of India Series - Vol.II), Author : K.S.Singh (former Director-General, Anthropological Survey of India), 2014.
- Dividing DALITS - Writings on Sub-Categorisation of Scheduled Castes, Author : Yagati Chinna Rao (Ed.), 2009.
- Commentary on the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act & Rules, Author : Justice P.S.Narayana, 2011



5 March 2023 (Sunday)



- Nazeer H, Khan in her book The book “B.R. Ambedkar on Federation, Ethnicity and Gender Justice” (2001).
- P. Nagabooshanam in her book “Social Justice and weaker sections” (2000).
- V Narayana Swamy, in his book The Book “Atrocities and Untouchability against Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (2006).
- M.K. Dongre in the book “Dimensions of Ambedkarism” (2005).
- Dasarathi Bhuyan written his book The book “Casteism in Indian Politics” (2006),
- S.R. Sharma in his book entitled “Life and Works of B.R. Ambedkar”
- Dr. C.B. Raju, conducted a survey on the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Socio-economic conditions. In his book “Social Justice and the Constitution of India” (2007),
- K.I. Vibhute, “Right to Live with Human Dignity of Scheduled Castes and Tribes: Legislative Spirit and Social Response – Some Reflections”, 44 JILI (2002) 469 at 481.
- Iris Young, “Justice and Politics of Difference”. Amita Dhanda (compiled by), “Law and Poverty Reading Material – IV Semester B.A.B.L (Hons)”, 1st edition 2006,

