MAPPING ANTI-CASTE DISCRIMINATION POLICY IN ELECTION MANIFESTOS IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Political parties contest elections and form governments every five years in India. Election manifestos are important documents to analyze the policies proposed and also to understand the ideology of different parties. This study assesses the anti-caste discrimination policies in the election manifestos of national political parties in India (INC, BJP, CPI, CPI(M), NCP, TMC) released for the 2019 and 2014 general elections. The caste system is a central feature of Indian society, and it influences every aspect of society—social, economic, and political. The Constitution of India promulgated to create a society based on universal principles of justice. It bears provisions to uplift the Dalit and the backward castes. This study assesses two main research questions: Do the manifestos propose policies to uplift the Dalits and the backward castes? If so, what are these promises? Do party ideologies play a role in formulating anti-caste discrimination policy in electoral manifestos? And this study has incorporated manual content analysis method to analyze the election manifestos. This study shows that the anti-caste discrimination policies proposed by political parties are less effective in achieving the constitutional goals of abolishing caste and untouchability. This study also shows that these policies on anti-caste discrimination are given different priorities according to party ideologies. Moreover, caste is subsumed to class in explaining inequality. By contrast, all party manifestos focus on developing infrastructure, administrative reforms, and the economy.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ACRONYMS

BAMCEF	All India Backwards and Minorities Employment Federation
OBC	Other Backward Classes
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party (Political party formed by Dalit and backward castes)
BJP	Bharatiya Jana Party (a Hindu nationalist political party)
CPI(M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPI	Communist Party of India
INC	Indian National Congress
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (Hindu Nationalist organization)
SC	Scheduled Caste
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TMC	Trinamool Congress
NCP	Nationalist Congress Party

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Adivasi   Aboriginal tribe

Bahujan   Means the majority, i.e., backward castes, Dalit, and Tribals together. This
                 term has been popularized by the Bahujan Samaj Party.

Brahmin   The priest caste and highest rank in the four-fold varna hierarchy

Chaturvarna   Social hierarchy in Hinduism(four classes)

Dalit   Former Untouchable caste

Kshatriya   A warrior caste the second rank in the four-fold Hindu

Shudra   Slave rank in the four-fold varna system

Vaishya   Trader Caste, third varna

INTRODUCTION

Parties in representative democracies contest elections, form governments, and legislate policies. While parties are not policy-making bodies, they have policy preferences and often share the future policy framework in their manifestos during elections.[1] The ruling party philosophy guides the government.[2] Political parties in India form governments every five years at the federal and state levels, and they potentially have enormous resources to eradicate the caste problem.

Indian society is highly hierarchical and socially diverse. This hierarchy in society is prevalent in all the religions of the Indian subcontinent, but the basis is the Hindu caste system. The Constitution of India promulgated in 1950 was intended to create an alternative society in India based on universal principles of justice. The fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, Part III (Articles 14-18) guarantee equality and oblige the state to protect all citizens from discrimination. The directive principles of state policy (Articles 38-39) inform the government that it must secure a just social order for citizens. There must be equality in social, economic, and political avenues. The Constitution obliges the state to ensure that there is no concentration of wealth, to abolish inequality in status and opportunities, not just among individuals but also among groups. Constitutional historian Glanville Austin calls the Constitution of India a manifesto of social revolution.[3] It was one of the first state documents in the world to guarantee affirmative action in education and employment. Yet, caste not only survives but thrives in India. A cursory glance at socio-

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[1] Dennis Kavanagh, The Politics Of Manifestos, Parliamentary Affairs, Volume XXXIV, Issue 1, Winter 1981, Pages 7–27.

[2] Verma, M.L. "Do Political Parties Matter to Public Policies? Evidence from Select European Countries." Sociological Bulletin 49, no. 2 (2000): 229-52.

[3] Glanville Austin, Working a Democratic Constitution , The Indian experience Oxford Press, New Delhi, 1999. p7.

economic development indicators of different groups discussed in later chapters reveals that Indian society is still highly unequal.

In democratic countries, elections offer an opportunity for political parties to talk to the voters. In a society where social differences are very strong, it becomes more relevant that parties cater to the socially weak segments Dalits and other backward castes who are on the margins represent large segments of the population in India. Their voting can make and unmake governments. In this context, examining whether party manifestoes propose anti-caste discrimination policies is extremely relevant. The manifestos of political parties are an essential source to learn their policy position. This thesis uses manual content analysis to study the manifestos. This thesis analyzes the 2014 and 2019 election manifestos of national parties in India. There is a dearth of literature on manifestos in India compared to the work on manifestos of parties in Western democratic countries. This thesis seeks to address the gap in the literature.

This thesis examines the following research questions:

1) **What policies are proposed to empower the Dalit and the backward castes in the manifestoes?**

2) **How do party ideologies influence anti-caste discrimination policies proposed in electoral manifestos?**

3) **What level of priority do party electoral manifestos give to reducing caste-based inequality?**

To understand these questions, an attempt was made to study literature on manifestos and political processes. Some of the prominent works on this theme are by Kavanagh Dennis (1981), Walgrave and Nuytemans (2009), R.K.Tiwari (2019), Shankhdher (1973), Aditya Sondhi (2017); Thomas Däubler (2012). These and other works are discussed in the literature review section of the thesis. However, the limitation of the literature is that none

of them have paid adequate attention to study deprived sections— the policies in the manifestoes—and their implementation. This study attempts to fill that gap.

To conduct this study, I used manual content analysis and coded the manifestos, which are discussed in the methodology section of this thesis.

This research document is divided into three chapters. Chapter 1 presents a literature review on the topic. This chapter also discusses the various research methods used to study party positions and describes the different forms of content analysis: automated and manual content analysis, expert surveys, and the comparative manifesto project. Finally, this chapter discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each method and provides the methodology adopted to study the manifestos. Based on the assessment, I chose manual content analysis to study the manifestoes for this research.

Chapter 2 provides a background of caste-based inequality in India. It mainly discusses the caste system and its function in creating an unequal society. This system is a limiting factor in creating equal access to wealth, power, and status for most people while giving privileges to a small minority. This part also discusses the Dalits' (formerly untouchable) socio-economic conditions in the 21st century and the impact of anti-caste movements on political parties. Moreover, it assesses the plausible reasons for the emergence of the Bahujan Samaj Party (a party formed by Dalits and the backward castes at the national level). Finally, this chapter provides a brief background of the Indian national political parties: INC, BJP, NCP, TMC, CPI, and CPI(M).

Chapter III provides the results obtained using manual content analysis. The thesis concludes that party ideologies play a crucial role in framing anti-caste discrimination policies in party manifestos. Policies addressing caste and towards its eradication are few compared to other promises.

CHAPTER 1 - METHODOLOGY & LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part of the section assesses the methods that are currently in use to analyze party manifestos — automated content analysis, the framework of Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP), and expert survey — this assessment would be helpful to choose the suitable method for this thesis. This chapter also discusses the selection of manifestos for this thesis. The second part of this chapter has the literature review on party politics and election manifestoes in India.

1.1 AUTOMATED VERSUS MANUAL CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis is also known as text mining, and it is concerned with fragments rather than generality.[4] Text is said to be independent of the sender or the receiver.[5] It is a popular method to observe changes in the political parties' policies and ideology, and text material is categorized to generate data for analysis[6]. Content analysis is of two types: manual and automated—in manual methods —the human beings code the manifesto. In automated methods, the computer plays an essential role in coding the manifesto and is mainly a word count method.

The automated content analysis method saves time and is efficient compared to the traditional method of content analysis (manual) — it is time-consuming, expensive, require skilled labor, and is a monotonous and labor-intensive job.[7] In automated content analysis, the computer is programmed with algorithms[8], and the two popular algorithms widely used

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[4] Pierce, Roger. "Using Content Analysis." In Research Methods in Politics, Sage Publications, London, 2008 pp 263-278.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Wong, Paul. "Coding and Analysis of Documentary Materials from Communist China." *Asian Survey* 7, no. 3 (1967): 198-211.

[7] DeWeese, L. Carroll. "Computer Content Analysis of Printed Media: A Limited Feasibility Study." The Public Opinion Quarterly 40, no. 1 (1976): 92-100.

[8] Ray, L.,. A natural sentences approach to the computer coding of party manifestos. In: Laver, M. (Ed.), Estimating the PolicyPosition of Political Actors. Routledge, London, 2001 pp. 149-161.

are word score[9] and word fish.[10] Automated methods rely on the frequency of words in a manifesto to gauge the party position.[11]

However, in reality, the text is an aggregate of words and doesn't rely on a single word for the meaning. The arrangement of words in a sentence changes the meaning of the sentence. One of the challenges of context dependence is homography[12]; for example, the word "lead" has two meanings: one is an attribute of leadership qualities, and the other is metal[13]. This leads to measurement bias, as the probabilistic relationship between indicators fluctuates over time and in different contexts[14]. Parties' priority on the same issue varies, so the word choices vary according to the importance the party attaches to that issue. According to Laver et al. (2003), words have a directional association — tax is exclusive to the right[15] . In this context, validation becomes necessary when using automated methods[16]. Hripcsak et al. (1995) argue that the use of computer software for content analysis involves a significant amount of money, and it also requires the operator to be tech-savvy[17].

1.2 EXPERT SURVEYS

The expert survey is a popular method for studying policy positions of the parties, and expert surveys incorporate the priori diction method to find about a party on a predefined

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[9] Word scores : gives policy positions scores based on the word count. It requires a reference text. it is a simple to use method compatible with many applications and it requires no assumptions either distributional or functional (Benoit and Laver 2003).

[10] Word fish like word score is an algorithm. It treats words as data and extracts the policy position by scaling frequency of words and does not require reference text unlike word score (Slapin and Proksch 2008)

[11] Grimmer, Justin, and Brandon M. Stewart. "Text as Data: The Promise and Pitfalls of Automatic Content Analysis Methods for Political Texts." Political Analysis 21, no. 3 (2013): 267-97.

[12]Two words are spelt similarly but they have different meanings

[13] Ray, L.,. A natural sentences approach to the computer coding of party manifestos

[14] Robert Edward Mitchell, The Use Of Content Analysis For Explanatory Studies, Public Opinion Quarterly, Volume 31, Issue 2, Summer 1967, pp 230–241.

[15] Laver, Michael, Kenneth Benoit, and John Garry. "Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data." American Political Science Review 97, no. 2 (2003): 311–31.

[16] Ruedin, Didier, and Laura Morales. "Estimating Party Positions on Immigration: Assessing the Reliability and Validity of Different Methods." Party Politics 25, no. 3 (May 2019): 303–14.

[17] Hripcsak, G. , Friedman, C. , Alderson, P.O. , DuMouchel, W. , Johnson, S.B. , & Clayton, P.D.. Unlocking clinical data from narrative reports: A study of natural language processing. Annals of Internal Medicine, 122,9(1995) 681-688.

scale left-right scale. In addition, surveys involve the expert interacting with people to find the party's position instead of relying solely on text material. This is advantageous as experts can cross-verify, and accordingly, this can inform their decision.[18]

Party positions on policies and ideology can also be identified with the help of expert surveys,[19] and experts can adapt to the changing times.[20] According to Marks et al. (2007), the advantages of an expert survey are that this method is economical in contrast to other methods. It is also authoritative, and typically[21] experts are political scientists who know where the political parties stand on various issues and the political competition.[22] However, expert surveys sometimes can lead to obscurity when the experts fail to give crucial details: criteria adopted to measure, reference of the parties, party bureaucracy, and party sympathizers.[23]

Marks et al. (2007) argue that expert surveys play a significant role in measuring party policy, and expert judgment is straightforward.[24] Expert survey of national party positions of European integration 1999 has demonstrated internal consistency among the experts.[25] The inconsistencies attributed to an expert survey — decision of an expert on the choice of time, position of the party, conceptualization of the left-right role of a party — can

[18] Ruedin and Morales, Estimating Party Positions on Immigration: Assessing the Reliability and Validity of Different Methods.

[19] Huber, John, and Ronald Inglehart. "Expert Interpretations of Party Space and Party Locations in 42 Societies." Party Politics 1, no. 1 (January 1995): 73–111.

[20] Robert Rohrschneider and Stephen Whitefield, Introduction in The Strain of Representation: How Parties Represent Diverse Voters in Western and Eastern Europe Oxford Scholarship Online: November 2003 , 10.1093/0198296614.001.0001

[21] Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe,Marco R. Steenbergen,, Ryan Bakker, Cross validating data on party positioning on European integration, Electoral Studies, 26 (2007) 23 38.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Budge, I. Expert judgements of party policy positions: Uses and limitations in political research. European Journal of Political Research 37, 103–113 (2000).

[24] Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe,Marco R. Steenbergen,, Ryan Bakker, Cross validating data on party positioning on European integration.

[25] Liesbet Hooghe, Ryan Bakker, Anna Brigevich, Catherine De Vries, Erica Edwards, Gary Marks, Jan Rovny, Marco Steenbergen, Milada Vachudova, Reliability and validity of the 2002 and 2006 Chapel Hill expert surveys on party positioning. European Journal of Political Research 49(5) (2010) 687–703.

be rectified by structuring the survey design.[26] Expert surveys are based on comprehensive knowledge, which includes observing the political behavior of the party, the leaders, and this additional observation and knowledge increase the validity of the expert judgments[27].

The limitations of the expert survey are that it is a subjective judgment of the expert, and this varies from expert to expert.[28] In addition, the knowledge of the expert on parties remains in doubt — they would probably know more about the parties that are visible in the public domain via media and less about the parties which receive less media coverage.[29]

1.3 COMPARATIVE MANIFESTO PROJECT

According to Werner et al. (2011), the comparative manifesto project aims to measure the policy position of the political parties that contest elections. The coders collect the manifesto of the parties.[30] All the coders undergo a similar training process as they have to apply the same judgment for coding the manifesto's text.[31] The manifesto's text is unitized and coded; however, sub-headings and section labels are not considered texts, and introductory remarks are ignored.[32] The unitizing text means to dissect text into quasi sentences that contain one statement or message. If a natural sentence contains more than one quasi sentence (two different policy aspects), the sentence is split.[33] The coding covers 56 categories of major policy areas, which can be compared between parties and elections across times and countries.[34]

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Gary Marks, Liesbet Hooghe,Marco R. Steenbergen,, Ryan Bakker, Crossvalidating data on party positioning on European integration.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Werner, A, Lacewell, O, Volkens, A Manifesto Coding Instructions, 4th fully revised edition - May 2011. Available at: https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/down/papers/handbook_v4.pdf.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

According to Petry and Pennings (2006), the chief objective of CMP is to estimate party policy across many countries.[35] The classification scheme is developed to accommodate the manifestos in a comparative and longitudinal perspective.[36] Independent researchers who have compared the coding with expert judgment have concluded that CMP data is better.[37] Questions on the accuracy of CMP results can be solved by incorporating a reliability test.[38]

Ian Budge (2001) argues that the choice of CMP produces good results because manifestos are the best public document material as they are drafted for a mass audience.[39] The points mentioned in the manifestos are essential to analyze and have a clear understanding of a party's position on varied issues because no other documents represent the aggregate views of the party.[40] Studying manifesto texts has an edge because the party's statements are made at a specific date and time.[41] This is advantageous compared to expert judgments, which are ambiguous about the period and method adopted to locate parties. The CMP coding measures the party movement in acceptable ways.[42] Similarly, McDonald (2006) argues that CMP data on voting patterns in Western parliamentary democracies has emerged accurate.[43]

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[35] Petry, F., Pennings, P. Estimating the Policy Positions of Political Parties From Legislative Election Manifestos 1958–2002. Fr Polit 4, (2006). 100–123.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Budge, Ian. "Validating Party Policy Placements." British Journal of Political Science 31, no. 1 (2001): 210-23.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Michael D. Mcdonald ,Parties in democracy, democracy in parties: lessons from Ian Budge and the CMP data J. Bara, A. Weale (Eds.), Democratic Politics and Party Competition, Routledge, London (2006), pp. 82-104.

According to Dinas and Geminis (2010), scholars interested in studying longitudinal data on party positions face an uphill task due to a shortage of substantive data sets.[44] At the same time, comparable cross-national party positions are available in abundance. Thus, scholars have to turn to data produced by CMP even though the project's validity has been disputed.[45] Empirical findings state that the hypothesis could be wrong due to the poor quality of data and theories of voting.[46] Laver et al. (2003) state that cross-validation becomes difficult if only one longitudinal source is used for party positions.[47] The supporters of automated text analysis have stopped considering CMP as a gold standard[48] in favor of expert survey estimates.[49] The left-right scale has been subject to intense criticism for the flawed method adopted to create the left-right index.[50] Scholars have also criticized CMP, stating that over many years CMP has been consistently using the same set of codes for the quasi sentences[51] and a single coder for each manifesto.

Based on the above assessment, this thesis shall adopt manual content analysis to achieve accuracy in estimating the party position as automated content analysis centers on word frequency. Even though automated content analysis saves time, the results have to be validated. It is not an accurate method as the meaning of the words in the sentences depends on the context. While expert data could be reliable as a subject expert with comprehensive

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[44] Dinas, Elias, and Kostas Gemenis. "Measuring Parties' Ideological Positions With Manifesto Data: A Critical Evaluation of the Competing Methods." Party Politics 16, no. 4 (July 2010): 427–50.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Laver, Michael, Kenneth Benoit, and John Garry. "Extracting Policy Positions from Political Texts Using Words as Data." American Political Science Review 97, no. 2 (2003): 311–31; Slapin, Jonathan B., and Sven-Oliver Proksch. "A Scaling Model for Estimating Time-Series Party Positions from Texts." American Journal of Political Science 52, no. 3 (2008): 705-22.

[48] Benoit, Kenneth and Laver, Michael Estimating party policy positions: comparing expert surveys and hand-coded content analysis. Electoral Studies 26(1) 2007.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Gabel, Matthew J., and John D. Huber. "Putting Parties in Their Place: Inferring Party Left-Right Ideological Positions from Party Manifestos Data." American Journal of Political Science 44, no. 1 (2000): 94-103.

[51] Ruedin, Didier, and Laura Morales. "Estimating Party Positions on Immigration: Assessing the Reliability and Validity of Different Methods." Party Politics 25, no. 3 (May 2019): 303–14.

knowledge prepares it, there is a lack of such data on anti-caste discrimination and party manifestos. CMP is focused on the left-right scale, and its method of dissecting quasi-sentences from texts is time-tested. However, this thesis shall adopt the quasi-sentences technique from CMP to analyze the manifestos of national political parties in India.

1.4 CASE SELECTION

Content analysis is a popular method to analyze the manifestos to know the party position on policies, and this is a comparative study of the 2019 and 2014 election manifestoes of the seven national parties in India - Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC), Communist Pary of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M), Trinamool Congres (TMC) and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) - on their anti-caste discrimination policy promises. The manifestos were downloaded from the official party websites.

Currently, there are 1841 parties registered with the election commission of India, amongst which only 7 are recognized as national parties and 48 as state parties. The remaining 1786 are unrecognized parties (ECI, 2017). Recognition[52] is essential for the parties because the party candidates get a common symbol to contest. The seven national parties recognized by the Election Commission are All India Trinamool Congress (TMC), Indian National Congress (INC), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Communist Party of India (CPI), and Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). However, I analyze BJP, INC, TMC, NCP, CPI, and CPI(M) manifestos for this thesis. The BSP election manifestos are not available. Thus, this

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[52] According to Representation of the People Act, 1951 and Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, if A political party wants to be recognized as national , then it has to secure six percent of the valid votes in a four or more states in India and win at least four or more seats to the Lok Sabha. Similarly a state party is recognized if it secures not less than six percent of the votes to the state legislature and two members elected to the state legislature.

study maps a) anti-caste discrimination policies in parties' manifestos, b) the priority and space given to these policies in the manifestos, and c) the number of policies dedicated in the manifestos to remedy the caste issues in India.

Election manifestos are the official documents of the party, and they help analyze the party's ideology[53]. In some cases, the manifesto also becomes draft legislation[54]. Parties have an obligation to enforce the manifesto if it wins the elections,[55] and elections in India are contested on the party manifesto. This thesis shall adopt manual content analysis to know the party's position on caste discrimination through its manifesto. It shall draw from the quasi-sentence technique from CMP, "As sentences in manifestos often include various issues, it is necessary to unitize them into these smaller units to extract the full information."[56] For example, the Indian National Congress, in the 2019 election manifesto, proposed, "Congress promises to set up an Equal Opportunities Commission,"[57] this shall be considered a unit from the text for analysis.

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[53] König, T, Moritz Marbach, and Moritz Osnabrügge, 2013 "Estimating Party Positions across Countries and Time—A Dynamic Latent Variable Model for Manifesto Data." Political Analysis 21, no. 4 (2013): 468-91.

[54] Dennis Kavanagh, The Politics Of Manifestos, Parliamentary Affairs, Volume XXXIV, Issue 1, Winter 1981, Pages 7–27.

[55] Dunu R,2004. "From Promises to Performance: Political Manifestos and Budget 2004-05." Economic and Political Weekly 39, no. 32 (2004): 3583-585.

[56] Dolezal, M., Ennser-Jedenastik, L., Müller, W., & Winkler, A. (2016). Analyzing Manifestos in their Electoral Context A New Approach Applied to Austria, 2002–2008. Political Science Research and Methods, 4(3), 641-650.

[57] Congress Manifesto 2019.p40.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.5 PARTY POLITICS

1.5.1 FUNCTIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

The study on democracy automatically leads to the study of political parties.[58] Political parties are essential to the survival of democracy, and they enrich democracy in countless ways — the existence of political parties is synonymous with political liberties.[59] According to Sartori (1976), political parties are political groups recognized by the state apparatus to contest elections (as cited in Jupp 1978). Political parties also represent the interests of large sections of the population, namely the working class.[60] This makes it possible for the cooperation of people in political affairs.[61] They help fix accountability on the part of the government for its failures and successes. They help the public make a retrospective judgment on policies.[62] The presence of mass parties provides a sense of representation.[63]

Political parties are gatekeepers. They decide which interest groups and socio-economic elites shall have access to decision-making bodies (Morlino 2001).[64] For example, Greece is well known to have a robust party organization. It is the parties that control society. Like in Italy, democratic consolidation was achieved through parties and not by the state and the elites.[65] Aldrich (1995) argues that while politicians can be selfish and probably not

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[58] Lai, Brian, and Ruth Melkonian-Hoover. "Democratic Progress and Regress: The Effect of Parties on the Transitions of States to and Away from Democracy." Political Research Quarterly 58, no. 4 (2005): 551-64.

[59] S. C. Stokes, Political Parties and Democracy, Annual Review of Political Science Volume 2, 1999 , pp 243-267.

[60] Giovanni Sartori, Party Types, Organisation and Functions, West European Politics, 28:1,2005, 5-32.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Pharr, Susan J., Robert D. Putnam, and Russell J. Dalton. "Trouble in the Advanced Democracies? A Quarter-Century of Declining Confidence." Journal of Democracy 11, no. 2 (2000): 5–25.

[63] Del Valle Ruiz, Álvaro Gómez. "The Slow Death Of Western Democracy And What Comes After." Journal of International Affairs 71, no. 1 (2017): 161-74.

[64] Pelizzo, Riccardo; Nwokora, Zim : Party System Change and the Quality of Democracy in East Africa, AGDI Working Paper, No. WP/17/0512017, African Governance and Development Institute (AGDI), Yaoundé,2018

[65] Ibid.

think beyond an immediate election, and politicians are affected by coordination problems during elections,[66] parties ease these problems as they don't exist merely for a single election.[67]

According to Maxwell and Steven (2003), rightly so, the party is a collective body that formulates goals for the future. In this way, parties regulate politicians' behavior to act in a cooperative manner[68] Parties' function is to integrate democracy with not only the voters and politicians but for the society as a whole. Strong parties enrich democracy. During times of crisis, such as stalemates in the legislature, they effectively mediate and resolve the disputes between warring groups.[69] The disciplining function of parties helps to conduct the affairs of the legislatures in a democratic order without which the legislature would descend into chaos.[70]

Political parties put a check on dangers to democracy, and Franking (2001) states that parties shield democracy from despotism by resisting the tendency to erase the separation between legislative and executive power. Even in non-democratic regions, parties, through coordination and collective action, help achieve democracy.[71] The Indian National Congress party is one such example. It was part of the independence struggle and played a massive role in India's freedom from British colonialism.[72] Strong parties act as

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[66] Aldrich, John H.. Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America, University of Chicago,Chicago, 1995.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Levitsky, Steven, and Maxwell A. Cameron. "Democracy without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Change in Fujimori's Peru." Latin American Politics and Society 45, no. 3 (2003): 1-33.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Franklin, James C. "The Role of Party-Led Dissent in Redemocratization: A Comparative Study." Party Politics 7, no. 5 (September 2001): 567–80.

[72] Taylor, David. "The Indian National Congress: A Hundred-Year Perspective." The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, no. 2 (1987): 289-306.

anchors for opposition movements and provide the support required to sustain a mass movement for democracy.[73]

1.5.2 POLITICAL PARTIES AND SOCIAL CLEAVAGES

According to Savleis (2006), recent studies on the social origins of parties show that though parties are simple associations of interest, they are born from deep divisions within the society.[74] This shift in understanding has laid the foundation for more serious research on the social bases of political parties[75] Huntington (1968) points out that the relationship between the social force and the political institution determines the development of the political community in a society.[76] This Social force can be an ethnic, linguistic, economic, or status group. Their interaction with modernization sometimes can produce new forms of social forces based on occupation or class.[77] In this context, the role of a political organization is to maintain order or broker peace and resolve disputes. The power of the group is enforced through political institutions.[78]

Lipset (1960) argues that in a modern democracy, conflict among groups is expressed through political parties.[79] Class divides are generally translated into politics, and even religious divides get translated but not with the same intensity; though gender divides are visible, but they have been scarcely translated.[80] However, the situation has changed in recent years. Identity and ethnic issues have major political outcomes compared to class-

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[73] Tarrow, Sidney, Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics.: Cambridge University New York1994.

[74] Siavelis,. Party and social structure in Handbook of Party Politics (eds) Richard S. Katz And William Crotty, Sage Publications, 2006 pp 362,361

[75] Ibid.

[76] Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies,Yale University Press,1968, pp 8,9.

[77] Ibid., p. 8.

[78] Ibid.,pp.10,11.

[79] Lipset, Seymour Martin. "Party Systems and the Representation of Social Groups." European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes De Sociologie / Europäisches Archiv Für Soziologie 1, no. 1 (1960): 50-85.

[80] Ibid.

based politics. In most countries, far-right groups are coming to power by deflecting class issues - poverty, unemployment, housing, etc.

For any research that studies society and politics, Sartori(1969) argues that we need to study the given society's influence on a party and simultaneously the party's influence on society. To quote him:

> "With specific reference to the party topic, real political sociology calls for a simultaneous exploration of how parties are conditioned by the society and the society is conditioned by the party system. To say that a party system is a response to a given socioeconomic environment is to present half of the picture as if it were the complete picture. The complete picture requires, instead, a joint assessment of the extent to which parties are dependent variables reflecting social stratification and cleavages and, vice versa, of the extent to which these cleavages reflect the channeling imprint of a structured party system." (Satori 1969: 214)

This current study on Anti-caste discrimination policies and election manifestos also attempts to study the influence of society on parties and the influence of parties on society.

1.5.3 PARTIES AND PARTISANSHIP

Tormey (2016) states that partisanship in elections has reduced over the last five decades. Voters have become more close to various non-party groups, and there is a decline in voters identifying with the parties.[81] There is also a lack of trust in politicians. Party membership has reduced signifying, and there is a general lack of interest in politics.

Scholars involved with voting behavior affirm that voters have placed more reliance on campaign promises since the 1960s, party identification has declined.[82] This declining

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[81] Simon Tormey ,The Contemporary Crisis of Representative Democracy, Papers on Parliament no.66 (2016) available   at https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Senate/Powers_practice_n_procedures/pops/Papers_on_Parliament_66/The_Contemporary_Crisis_of_percentE2percent80percentA6.

[82] DeSart, Jay A. "Information Processing and Partisan Neutrality: A Reexamination of the Party Decline Thesis." The Journal of Politics 57, no. 3 (1995): 776-95.

partisanship can be explained by the priority electors place on the parties' policies rather than an ideological commitment of the electors to the party.[83] Social changes in western societies seem to have resulted in the way people relate to political parties and politics. This phenomenon is attributed as the cause of the decline in partisanship. It can be assumed it is for the same reason partisanship has declined elsewhere.[84]

Crisis in present democracies can be explained by how a party adapts to the changing conditions in society.[85] According to Al-Garbi(2020), maintaining a unique identity appears difficult for the parties today.[86] Similarly, Del Valle Ruiz (2017) argues that electoral gains motivate the parties to issue an appeal that can net a broad section of the voters cutting across religion, race, gender, and ethnicity.[87]In the real world, this change has manifested in the voter realignment in the USA, with former democrat voters flocking to the republican party and the democratic party, which once opposed the abolition of slavery, has become the party of the minorities.[88]

According to Schmitt & Holmberg (1995), new forms of mediation groups have emerged and are disrupting the traditional role of the parties. The links between parties and the people have weakened[89]. Similarly, Tormey (2016) argues today's activism has advanced at challenging injustices: climate change, labor issues, and minority rights.[90] The growth of electronic social media has augmented it. As a result, we see a revolution in how political

[83] Schmitt & Holmberg,. Political parties in decline? In H-D. Klingemann, & D. Fuchs (Eds.), Citizens and the state. Oxford University Press, 1995pp. 95-133.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Abramowitz, Alan I., and Kyle L. Saunders. "Ideological Realignment in the U.S. Electorate." The Journal of Politics 60, no. 3 (1998): 634-52.

[86] Al-Gharbi ,White men swung to Biden. Trump made gains with black and Latino voters,14 Novermber 2020. Available at Why?https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/nov/14/joe-biden-trump-black-latino-republicans

[87] Del Valle Ruiz, Álvaro Gómez. "The Slow Death Of Western Democracy And What Comes After.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Schmitt & Holmberg,. Political parties in decline.

[90] Simon Tormey ,The Contemporary Crisis of Representative Democracy, Papers on Parliament no.66.

mobilization is taking place to contest injustices.[91] However, Huhtanen (2015) argues that parties adapt to change and take up new functions. This crisis is not only for political parties but also for a whole range of political activities in the world.[92] In no democracy have the parties been replaced as primary agents of representation. Studies have shown that parties have done a decent job of adapting to change in the circumstances of a society.[93]

1.6 MANIFESTOS AND ELECTION MANDATE IN INDIA

According to Walgrave and Nuytemans (2009), opposition parties rather than the party in power(government) tend to be more innovative in crafting a manifesto.[94] It tends to be fluid and appealing because they only have the manifesto as the sole instrument to attract the voters,[95] and this aptly applies to the elections in India.

Shivam Shankar Singh (2019) points out that during the Tripura state elections in 2018, while various parties made several promises, one promise that struck peoples' imagination was raising the salary of government employees made by the BJP.[96] The state had about one lakh sixty thousand government employees and another half lakh pensioners. The promise was to increase the salary by two times. That single promise alone netted BJP more than ten percent of the state's total electorate, thus helping them win the elections.[97]

According to Roy (2004), every political party in India wins elections pledging that it shall carry out functions — to develop the state. If it achieves power, it is because of the

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Huhtanen, Tomi. "Can Political Parties Evolve If the Political System Does Not?" European View 14, no. 1 (June 2015): 59–67.

[93] David M. Thompson, Is the Internet a Viable Threat to Representative Democracy?, 6 Duke Law & Technology Review 1-20 (2008).

[94] Walgrave, Stefaan, and Michiel Nuytemans. "Friction and Party Manifesto Change in 25 Countries, 1945-98." American Journal of Political Science 53, no. 1 (2009): 190-206.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Shivam Shankar Singh, How to win an Indian election: What political parties don't want you to know, Penguin Random House India, Gurgaon,2019.

[97] Ibid.

manifesto, so it has a moral and trust obligation to deliver the promises that it has made.[98] Similarly, Thachil argues that the implementation of the Congress election promises of 2004- helped it secure the mandate in the 2009 elections, which can be seen as the emergence of programmatic politics in India.[99]

According to Apoorvand (2019), since the last decade, social groups from marginalized sections in India are putting pressure on the parties to include their demands in the manifestos.[100] This shows that people are interested in election promises. The manifesto is the only document to crosscheck if the party that achieves power is implementing the promised policies or not.[101] Similarly, Däubler (2012) argues that the manifesto is an official party document. Party members cannot afford to retract from implementing policies in the manifesto upon winning the elections because they would lose trust among the populace and would be charged for being deceitful and deceptive. No political party could afford such a label in a competitive setting.[102]

According to R.K.Tiwari (2019), Jawaharlal Nehru considered the election manifesto as an important document.[103] He stressed to the Congress party members that the party shall contest elections not on individuals but on principles and objectives, and he extolled the contesting candidates to root their campaign on the manifesto and invoke it in every speech they make in the elections, and also distribute copies to the masses and explain aims and objective of the Congress party.

[98] Roy, Dunu. "From Promises to Performance: Political Manifestos and Budget 2004-05." Economic and Political Weekly 39, no. 32 (2004): 3583-585.

[99] Tariq Thachil,. Do Policies Matter in Indian Elections?26 April, 2010. Available at https://casi.sas.upenn.edu/iit/thachil.

[100] Editor,The Print,. What matters more to Indian voters in elections: campaign slogans or party manifestos? 2019.Available at https://theprint.in/talk-point/what-matters-more-to-indian-voters-in-elections-campaign-slogans-or-party-manifestos/216352/

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid.

[103] R.K.Tiwari, Political Parties, Party Manifestos And Elections In India, 1909–2014, Taylor & Francis Group, New York 2019 p 105.

Reka Saxena (1994) argues that drafting an election manifesto in a diverse country is not simple for parties. It is an intricate process that involves the incorporation of vocabulary that can attract a diverse population. The parties carry out brainstorming exercises within the party. They reach out to voters and elicit their opinion. The parties stress taking the people's opinion in a diverse setting as it could help them prepare a draft that appeals to most people (p. 100).

While there is no particular standard to draft a manifesto: they are sometimes utopian, pragmatic, universalistic, and local, but all with a prime motive to capture the imagination of all sections of the people. Kavanagh D (1981) argues that parties in Britain were responsible for directing the government's policies, and they fight elections based on manifestos and pledge to implement them.[104] Although parties also fuel a popular demand in the elections with little or no thought on the feasibility of the implementation,[105] parties tend to use language that is vague and ambiguous to help them justify if it cannot implement a particular promise.[106] Kavanagh is correct when he point out that manifestoes have become a tool to attract voters in the contemporary times.

According to Aditya Sondhi (2017), the legitimacy of the party poll promises has been challenged in the Supreme Court in *Subramaniam Balaji V. State of Tamil Nadu*. However, the Court held that the promises to induce an elector in the manifesto could not be read as corrupt practices covered under the election laws. The Court directed the election commission of Indian to issue guidelines on manifestos in consultation with the political parties in India[107]. However, the parties opposed any guidelines that would infringe their

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[104] Dennis Kavanagh, The Politics Of Manifestos, Parliamentary Affairs, Volume XXXIV, Issue 1, Winter 1981, pp.7–27.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Aditya Sondhi .Election in The Oxford Handbook of the Indian Constitution(Ed) by Sujit Choudhry, Madhav Khosla, and Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 10.1093/law/9780198704898.003.0012.

right to freedom of speech and expression.[108], the election commission issued guidelines —
that nothing in the manifesto shall vitiate the election atmosphere, nothing repugnant to the
Constitution of India, and the parties shall include those policies that are feasible to
implement. Parties were to supply a copy of the manifesto to the commission within three
days of releasing it.[109]

According to Mahajan and Singh (2018), the Constitution of India through the
directive principles of state policy and the fundamental rights lays a framework for the
country's social-economic development, it is imperative the political parties adopt these
principles while framing the manifesto.[110]Electoral mobilization centers around the groups
that have been out of power for a long time. There has been an increased voter turnout from
the minorities, but the election promises are generic —*roti, kapada aur makaan* (food,
clothing, and shelter),[111] and so far, the manifestos are not about the real social-economic
change of the people, and the manifestos are devoid of structural reforms needed for India.

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[108] Election Commision of India, Manual on Model Code of Conduct, Document 21 - Edition 1, Election Commission of India,2019 New Delhi pp 114,115.
[109] Ibid.,p. 16.
[110] Krishan Mahajan &. Yogesh Pratap Singh, . Election Manifesto: Legal Reality or Illusion, *TNNLU – LR* 2018.
[111] Ibid.

CHAPTER 2   CASTE, SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITY & THEIR IMPACT ON PARTY POLITICS

This chapter provides a brief background on the caste system in India and the events that led to its evolution in the present form. It also looks at the role of a caste for the current socio-economic inequality in Indian society and the impact of anti-caste movements on party politics. Finally, this chapter also provides a brief sketch of the national political parties in India.

Manusmriti, a Hindu scripture delineating laws of conduct for the Hindus, places Brahmins (priests) on top. Right below them in the hierarchy are Kshatriyas (warriors). Below them are Vaishyas (traders, merchants). Below them, the Sudras(slaves) were placed, and below them were Ati-Sudras (untouchables and slaves).[112] Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya are considered the Dwija or twice-born castes[113] with ritual superiority and dignity as it ascends in the order. [114] Untouchables (Panchama) were not part of the Chaturvarna. They remained outside it.

The Manusmriti also states that Sudras cannot demand wages. They have to serve the classes above them, and they are prohibited from studying.[115] Punishment for violations was severe: if they recited the Vedas, their tongue was cut, and if they heard Vedas, molten lead was poured into their ears. Such were the penalties.[116] Untouchables lived outside the village; their life was even more miserable, and they faced a double disability. They were

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[112] *Dr.Ambedkar , Writings And Speeches*, Volume 3 pp 25,26.

[113] Borgström, Bengt-Erick. "On Rank And Hierarchy : Status In India And Elsewhere." *European Journal of Sociology* / Archives Européennes De Sociologie / Europäisches Archiv Für Soziologie 18, no. 2 (1977): 325-34; Dwijas or the twice born wear a thread that flows over their body

[114] Gupta, Giri Raj. "Religiosity, Economy And Patterns Of Hindu Marriage In India." *International Journal of Sociology of the Family* 2, no. 1 (1972): 43-53.

[115] Ibid.,p 43.

[116] Ibid.,p.26.

untouchable, and they were also treated as slaves. Their duty was primarily to take up jobs considered polluting: disposing of the dead animals, digging graves for the caste Hindus, maintaining the graveyards, and all other work deemed unclean by the society.[117] Manu smriti also declared that the Brahmins are called Bhoodevas (Gods on the Earth), and they are above the law.[118] Criminal jurisprudence treats all four varnas differently.[119]

Brahmins were given minimal punishment or no punishment for the most heinous offenses a person can commit. Manusmriti prohibits inter-caste marriages, inter-dining, and the punishment for crossing this line was ex-communication.[120] Manu also restricts change of vocations, which means a Sudra cannot become a priest, or a Vaishya cannot become a warrior. However, a Brahmin can become a warrior or king if he chooses to. Brahmins have the liberty to change their vocation whenever it pleases them.[121] If others attempt to change, the punishment was ex-communication or death.[122] Hindu law of *Karma* was invoked to explain Sudras' and untouchables' low birth.[123] Sudras and Panchama (untouchables) were denied education and the right to bear arms —the two most important things for any rebellion.[124] As a result, Chaturvarna was sacrosanct for hundreds of years without a rebellion.[125]

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[117] Dr.Ambedkar, Chapter 4 Outside the Fold, Book I—Untouchables Or The Children Of India's Ghetto Part I—What It Is To Be An Untouchable*, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings And Speeches* Vol. 5, Dr. Ambedkar Foundation Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 2014 pp 19-23.

[118] Ibid., p. 328.

[119] Ibid., pp 27-31.

[120] Ibid., p.292.

[121] Ibid., pp 276 -278.

[122] Ibid., pp 326, 328.

[123] Ibid. ,p. 465.

[124] Dr.Ambedkar,The Hindu Social Order: Its Unique Features,Vol-3 pp 125,126.

[125] Ibid.

2.1 CASTE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Membership to any caste is only by birth in that caste, and matrimonial relations with people from other castes are absent.[126] As stated by B.R.Ambedkar: " the superimposition of endogamy over exogamy means the creation of caste."[127] It is maintained by violence[128] and by denying women fundamental rights.[129] In the state of Haryana, which accounts for twenty-five percent of the country's 'dishonor' killings, it was found that in 52 percent of the cases, only the girl was murdered by the family[130] , and in 10 percent cases only the boy; and in 38 percent of the cases both the boy and the girl[131] were murdered. The father's involvement was in 73 percent of the cases of murder, and the brother was involved in 53 percent of the cases.[132] Manusmriti obliges that women at all times shall be dependent on man [133] and is subjected to man's control,[134] and women at all times must treat him as a god. Women do not have the right to worship[135] .

For thousands of years, Dalits were forced to take up unclean jobs in Hindu society, such as scavenging, tanning, disposing of the dead, maintaining the graveyards, etc. They were prohibited from interacting or participating in the social activities of Hinduism, and even today, many eateries don't serve the Dalits in rural areas. Entering the Hindu temples'

[126] Dr. B. R. Ambedkar ,*Castes In India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*,1917 available at http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/txt_ambedkar_castes.html.

[127] Ibid.

[128] D'Lima, Tanya, Jennifer L. Solotaroff, and Rohini Prabha Pande. "For the Sake of Family and Tradition: Honour Killings in India and Pakistan." *ANTYAJAA: Indian Journal of Women and Social Change* 5, no. 1 (June 2020): 22–39.

[129] " Enforced widowhood if her husband dies;Burning women along with her dead husband; Child marriage to control excess women" Dr. B. R. Ambedkar *Castes In India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development*,1917.

[130] Deol, Satnam S. "Honour Killings in Haryana State, India: A Content Analysis." *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences* 9, no. 2:192–208, 2014.

[131] Ibid..

[132] Ibid.

[133] Omvedt, Gail. "Towards a Theory of 'Brahmanic Patriarchy'." *Economic and Political Weekly* 35, no. 4 (2000): 187-90.

[134]Ibid.

[135] Ibid.

gates was beyond imagination, and they were prohibited from drawing water from common wells. If any upper-caste Hindu accidentally touched an untouchable, he would purify by performing religious rites.[136] Even today, most of the scavenging work in India is done by Dalits. TATA Institute of Social sciences (TISS) report on manual scavenging states that workers are made to enter manholes and sewage tunnels without any protective gear. An average of 261 workers die every year, and about 31 percent (10,122) were reported ill during the survey period 2014-15. [137]

In 2011 a joint survey(India Human Development) conducted by the University of Maryland, US and National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER),[138] Delhi, in India, found that untouchability is common in rural India. The practice of untouchability is high among Brahmins, 52 percent of the total respondents, followed by other upper castes at 24 percent. It was also found that among Non-Hindu religions, practicing untouchability was prevalent, such as Jains at 35 percent and Sikhs at 23 percent. Barring Hindus, other religious tenets do not ascribe to caste rules, but the higher castes converting into these religions have not given up practicing caste. Just 5 percent of Indian marriages are inter-caste.[139]

The caste-wise breakup in the percentage of people incarcerated in India's prisons: Scheduled Castes constitute 22 percent; other backward castes 37 percent, and Scheduled Tribes 12.13 percent. Muslims are disproportionately languishing in prisons at the same time. A study conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) found

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[136] Ibid.

[137] Shaileshkumar Darokar ,Manual Scavengers: A Blind Spot in Urban Development Discourse, *EPW* Vol. 53, Issue No. 22, 02 Jun, 2018;

[138] Amit Thorat, Omkar Joshi The Continuing Practice of Untouchability in India Patterns and Mitigating Influences,*EPW* Vol. 55(2020) Issue No. 2.

[139]Ibid.

that 47 percent of all Supreme Court judges between 1950 to 2000 were Brahmins.[140] During

the same period, 40 percent of the associate judges in the High Court and Lower Court were

Brahmins. Manu declared Brahmins alone can be Judges.[141] While the estimated population

of the Brahmins in India is no more than 5.3 percent,[142] out of the 14 Prime Ministers of

India, six were Brahmins, six other upper castes, and two were from other backward

castes[143]

The Government of India enacted the Prevention of Atrocity Act,1989 to protect the

SC/ST communities against hate crimes perpetrated by the upper castes. However, there has

been a lackadaisical approach in implementing the legislation. Only 25.2 percent of cases

resulted in conviction in crimes committed against the Scheduled Caste, whereas 62.5

percent resulted in acquittal; similarly, in the case of the Scheduled Tribes, 22.8 percent of

cases resulted in convictions 75.3 percent of the cases in acquittals.[144] The benches in the

court are dominated by upper-caste judges who turn a blind eye to the social reality. Even

before the ink could dry in the Constitution, the reservation policy (affirmative action) for

the lower castes was challenged. The Supreme Court ruled against caste-based reservation

in the s*tate of Madras vs. Smt. Champakam Dorairanjan*[145] Simultaneously, the Parliament

[140] S. Anand (Editor), Arundhati Roy (Introduction) B.R. Ambedkar (Author), *Annihilation of Caste:The Annotated Critical Edition,*Verso, 2014, New York, Pg 28; Brahmins In India,4th June 200, available at https://magazine.outlookindia.com/story/brahmins-in-india/2347837
[141] *Dr.Ambedkar , Writings And Speeches*, Volume 3.p 279.
[142]Ibid.
[143] Rajat Ghai ,*The office of Prime Minister: A largely north Indian upper-caste, Hindu affair*, May 7,2014,available at https://www.business-standard.com/article/opinion/the-office-of-prime-minister-a-largely-north-indian-upper-caste-hindu-affair-114050700846_1.html ; Prime Ministers of India, https://knowindia.gov.in/general-information/prime-ministers-of-india.php
[144] Rahul Singh**,** Status Report On The Implementation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes(Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 and Rules 1995, National Dalit Movement for Justice (NDMJ) – NCDHR, New Delhi,2020; *Crime in India 2018, Statistics Volume* II National Crime Record Bureau, National Crime Records Bureau (Ministry of Home Affairs) Government of India, New Delhi , 2019.
[145] State of Madras Vs. Smt. Champakam Dorairanjan AIR 1951 SC 226 and held that right to equality was violated by the caste-based reservation policy, The state government of Tamil Nadu issued an order in 1950 to reserve seats in educational institutions for marginalized castes, commonly known as Communal order(G.O). which restricted the number of seats in Government Colleges for certain castes.

amended the Constitution to override the judgments of the Supreme Court. Soon the court started to innovate rules to subdue the affirmative action policy in India.

The channels are open for occupational interchange in a class economy. A buyer can become a seller, and a laborer can become a businessman and vice versa.[146] However, the Vaishya business differs fundamentally. Its foundation is in the caste system,[147] sanctified by the Hindu religious scriptures (Manusmriti), allowing only the Vaishyas to either trade or run a business. Professor Kancha Ilaiah argues that a Vaishya does not fit into the definition of an entrepreneur.[148] Vaishya extracts money from his buyers, and his interest lies in capital accumulation for himself. After that, he spends it on a self-salvational spiritual process of Hinduism, which dehumanizes them further.[149] A survey of Corporate board members of the top 1000 companies with combined assets of the companies account for four-fifths of the market capitalization of companies listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE)[150] reveals that the social composition of the corporate board members was: 92.6 percent were from higher castes: with Brahmin 44 percent and Vaishyas 46 percent and the other backward castes 3.8 percent and Scheduled Castes 3.5 percent[151]. Moreover, 40 percent of the wealth of people listed in Forbes is inherited, and they also had state patronage in growing their wealth. [152]

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[146] Kancha Ilaiah, *Post-Hindu India: A Discourse in Dalit-Bahujan, Socio-Spiritual and Scientific Revolution,* New Delhi, 2009 pp 160,162.

[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ajit, D., Han Donker, and Ravi Saxena. "Corporate Boards in India: Blocked by Caste?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 47, no. 32 (2012): 39-43.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Gandhi, Aditi, And Michael Walton. "Where Do India's Billionaires Get Their Wealth?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 47, no. 40 (2012): 10-14.

The annual income in rupees of SCs: 89,356; STs:75,216, OBCs 104,099 and Brahmins 167,013, and other Hindu higher castes is 164,633[153]. This clearly shows the connection between social position and income in India.[154] The Constitution of India entitles Dalits and backward castes in-state industry, but the 1991 economic reforms unleashed privatization of the state industries, leading to massive unemployment among Dalits[155]. Studies show that the practice of discrimination in recruitment in the private job market is high.[156] Those with Hindu upper-caste names were more likely to get responses for their applications. In addition to the loss of jobs, the state also started to privatize education.[157] Most of the job-oriented courses (STEM)[158] were taught by private colleges, which charge a huge amount of fees.[159] Even if the Dalits and the backward castes students aspire to join such courses, there is no entry without paying the fees—the non-access to good education results in unequal human resource capabilities.[160]The data on funds allocated for Dalit development reveals that approximately forty billion dollars was allocated over the last

[153] Nitin Kumar Bharti , Wealth Inequality, Class and Caste in India, 1961-2012, WID.world WORKING PAPER N° 2018/14,*World Inequality Lab*, November 2018.

[154] Tagade, Nitin, Ajaya Kumar Naik, and Sukhadeo Thorat. "Wealth Ownership and Inequality in India: A Socio-Religious Analysis." *Journal of Social Inclusion Studies* 4, no. 2 (December 2018): 196–213..

[155] Prakash Louis. "Affirmative Action in Private Sector." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 33 (2004): 3691-692

[156] Thorat, Sukhadeo, Paul Attewell & Firdaus Fatima Rizvi ,Urban Labor Market Dis crimination, Working Paper Series, Volume 111, 01, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi,2009.

[157] Sukhadeo Thorat and Khalid Khan, Private sector and Equity in Higher Education: Challenges of Growing Unequal Acess, India Higher Education Report 2016: Equity Edited by N V Varghese, Nidhi S. Sabharwal, C M Malish, SAGE Publishing India, Nov 20, 2017 p.93.

[158] Science, technology engineering and mathematics.

[159] K.S.Chalam Modernization and Dalit Education: Ambedkar's Vision, Rawat Publciartions,Jaipur,2008 p 89

[160] Ibid.

three decades. [161]Very little was spent on scholarships, loans, housing for the Dalits.[162] Much of it was diverted to non-Dalit-oriented projects.

In addition to this, the higher educational institutions harbor a toxic environment for the Dalit students, leading to suicides and dropouts. For example, professor Thorat's report[163] on a premier medical college in New Delhi revealed that upper caste students avoid talking to the Dalit students. As a result, about 84 percent of the Dalit students reported isolation in that college.[164] This captures the plight of the Dalit students in higher education institutions of India.

2.2 IMPACT OF ANTI-CASTE MOVEMENTS ON PARTY POLITICS
2.2.1 RISE OF BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY

Though universal adult franchises provide political equality by one vote, one value, but on the social and economic plain, they remained unequal. This frustration is expressed in the form of organized protests across the cities in India.[165] The democratic demands of the Dalits and backward castes have been to rectify the institutional mechanism to access constitutional rights. However, the social movements that emerged to champion these demands also failed as they lacked the genuine transformative quality[166]. For example, in 1985, six Dalits were brutally killed and scores injured by an upper-caste mob in

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[161] Nikhil M. Babu, Rs 2.8 Lakh Crore Allocated For Dalits, Adivasis Not Spent By Government available at https://thewire.in/rights/dalit-adivasi-government-spending; Unspent money for Dalits/tribals, $42.6 billion = 8.times;https://www.sabrangindia.in/article/unspent-money-dalitstribals-426-billion-8-times-agri-budgetagriculture-budget/381909/

[162] Ibid.

[163] Prof. Sukahdeo Thorat, Report Of The Committee To Enquire Into The Allegation Of Differential Treatment Of Sc/St Students In All India Institute Of Medical Science, Delhi 2007, available at http://www.nlhmb.in/Reportspercent20AIIMS.pdf;

[164]Ibid.

[165] Pushpendra, Dalit Assertion through Electoral Politics. Economic and Political Weekly, 34(36(1999), 2609-2618.

[166] Kothari, Rajni. "Rise of the Dalits and the Renewed Debate on Caste." Economic and Political Weekly 29, no. 26 (1994): 1589-594.

Karamchedu village in Andhra Pradesh. The conflict started after a Dalit boy objected to a group of upper-caste men defiling the water tank. When the upper caste men were assaulting the Dalit boy, a Dalit woman raised her steel bucket to deter the upper caste men.[167] However, the woman's actions prompted retribution from the men. The upper-caste mob descended on the Dalit hamlet with weapons to massacre and injure Dalits on sight.

In another caste massacre in a village known as Tsunduru, which took place in April 1991, a dispute arose when a Dalit boy accidentally touched the seat of an upper-caste person with his leg in a theatre and[168] the upper caste man, unable to digest that a Dalit could confront him, mobilized his fellow caste men and descended on the Dalit hamlet and massacred 8 Dalits, and injured scores. In this case, the dispute did not arise between landlords and laborers, the Dalit man was a post-graduate degree holder.[169] The never-ending violence on Dalits shows that society in India continues to sustain Dalit exclusion and produce new forms in maintaining the status quo[170]. According to Chatterjee(2011), the society in India is devoid of civility and has promoted retributive violence against Dalits claiming citizenship rights, as cited in Suryakant Waghmore(2013).[171] This phenomenon has given rise to the Dalit politics of protest.

BAMCEF (workers union of the Backward Castes, Dalit, Adivasi, and religious minorities)[172] founded the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in 1984. Central to its programme is

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[167] Berg, Dag-Erik. "Karamchedu and the Dalit Subject in Andhra Pradesh." *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 48, no. 3 (October 2014): 383–408.
[168]Ibid.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Suryakant Waghmore,Civility against Caste: Dalit Politics and Citizenship in Western India.,SAGE Publications New Delhi,2013.
[171]Ibid.
[172] Ian Duncan Dalits and politics in rural North India: The Bahujan Samaj party in Uttar Pradesh, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*,1999 27:1, 35-60.

the annihilation of caste, political power for the Dalits and the backward castes.[173] In Kanshi Ram's[174] opinion, "political power is the master key that will open India's locks for the emancipation of the Dalits."[175] The election slogans of BSP reflected the social inequality perpetuated by the caste system, and the following are some of its slogans [176]

"Jiski jitni sankya bhari uski utni bhagidari
The political representation shall be proportional to the percentage of a given community in the population.

85 par 15 ka raj nahin chalega nahi chalega
The majority, which is 85 percent, are under the rule of 15 percent, and this shall not last.

Vote hamara raj tumhara nahi chalega, nahi chalega
We have the votes, you have the power, and this should not last.

Tilak, tarazu aur talwar, inko maro joote char
Tilak symbolizes the Brahmins (priests); Tarazu means the scales symbolizing the Vaishya (traders); Talwar means sword, symbolizing the warrior castes; and should be hit with shoes."[177]

These slogans reflected India's social reality and mobilized the Dalit and other backward castes in India. The phenomenal rise of BSP in the late 20th century marked the shift of the Dalit vote en bloc from the Congress party in the northern belt (Uttar Pradesh and Bihar). This development could be seen as a sign of asserting their rights as they have been highly neglected for decades in postcolonial India.[178]

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[173] Gundimeda, Sambaiah. "The Bahujan Samaj Party: Between Social Justice and Political Practice." *Social Change* 44, no. 1 (March 2014): 21–38.

[174] one of the founders of BSP

[175] Teltumbde, Anand. "Maestro of Identity Politics." *Economic and Political Weekly* 49, no. 40 (2014): 28-31.

[176] Christophe Jaffrelot,*India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of the Lower Castes in North India*, C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd,London 2003, p. 397.

[177] Ibid.

[178] Pushpendra,. Dalit Assertion through Electoral Politics.

2.2.2 MANDAL MOVEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON PARTIES

Implementing the Mandal Commission Report[179] by Prime Minister VP Singh was a watershed moment in Indian politics.[180] In opposition to the reforms, the upper caste youth launched riots in Delhi and other state capitals[181] They felt the new reforms could limit their opportunities in government jobs. Simultaneously BJP and RSS were rattled as these reforms struck the core of their mission — homogenizing Indian society based on the Hindu identity. To change the narrative of the Mandal Commission —the upper caste, the BJP, and RSS —organized the movement for Babri Masjid's demolition.[182]This helped BJP grow by leaps and bounds in India at the cost of the social justice agenda[183]. The polarization in the northern part of India significantly benefited the BJP as a large percentage of upper caste votes transferred to the BJP. This also fueled the non-Dalit lower castes to organize on the OBC category.[184]

2.3 BACKGROUND OF THE NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES
2.3.1 INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (INC)

The Indian National Congress traces its roots to the Indian Union 1885, started by a retired British civil servant Allan Octavian Hume,[185] who sympathized with the aspirations of the Indians. However, the initial leaders were British educated Indians. The party also

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[179] quotas in educational institutions and employment to non-Dalit lower castes known as other backward castes(OBC).

[180] Omvedt, G.1990). 'Twice-Born' Riot against Democracy. *Economic and Political Weekly, 25*(39), 2195-220.

[181] Chinnaiah, Jangam. BJP and Reservations: Quota Politics or Electoral Convenience? Economic and Political Weekly, 38(30), 2003, 3143-3145.

[182] Jaffrelot,Christophe, Rise of Hindutva has enabled a counter-revolution against Mandal's gains,2021 available athttps://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/hindu-nationalism-mandal-commission-upper-caste-politics-modi-govt-7181746/; Jangam Chinnaiah 2003.

[183] Omvedt, Gail, The Anti-Caste Movement and the Discourse of Power." Race & Class 33, no. 2 (October 1991): 15–27.

[184] Jaffrelot, Christophe. "The Rise of the Other Backward Classes in the Hindi Belt." The Journal of Asian Studies 59, no. 1 (2000): 86-108.

[185] Hanes, W. Travis. "On the Origins of the Indian National Congress: A Case Study of Cross-Cultural Synthesis." *Journal of World History* 4, no. 1 (1993): 69-98.

had a committee based in London. During its early years, it was moderate to the idea of the Indian freedom struggle.[186] When M.K.Gandhi returned to India from South Africa,[187] he started to organize protests against the tax laws and other economic policies of the British under the Congress banner.[188]

In 1929 under the leadership of Nehru at the Lahore session, Congress declared complete independence for India.[189] After the British left India, Congress was the dominant national party in India, and the task of drafting the constitution was in India.[190] The constituent assembly was formed, and most members of the constituent assembly were from Congress. Nehru dominated Congress from 1950 till his death in 1964, and he was also the first Prime Minister of independent India, securing victories in three parliamentary elections.[191] Under his term as a Prime Minister, he sought a mixed economy (Fabian socialism).[192] The public enterprises thrived during this period,[193] at the same time there were also private enterprises. After his death, the baton was passed to his daughter Indira Gandhi in 1966.[194] However, there were frictions in the party about her leadership. According to Srinivasulu,K (2002), post-independence, the Congress party unleashed agrarian reforms, i.e., abolition of Zamindari system,[195] which benefited the peasant castes:

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[186] Rag, Pankaj. "Indian Nationalism 1885-1905: An Overview." Social Scientist 23, no. 4/6 (1995): 69-97.

[187] McLain, Karline. "Gandhi's Ashrams: Residential Experiments for Universal Well-Being in South Africa and India." Utopian Studies 30, no. 3 (2019): 462-85.

[188] Brief history of Congress available at https://www.inc.in/brief-history-of-congress

[189] Ibid.

[190] Kochanek, Stanley A. *The Congress Party of India: The Dynamics of a One-Party Democracy*.Princeton University Press, Princeton 1968.

[191] Kaviraj, Sudipta. "The General Elections in India." Government and Opposition 32, no. 1 (1997): 3-24

[192] Venkataish Suabahah ,Nehrus Economic Policy available at   https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/nehrus-economic-philosophy/article18589548.ece

[193] Sharma, Brij Kishore. "Jawaharlal Nehru's Model Of Development." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 73 (2012): 1292-302.

[194] Kaviraj, Sudipta. "Indira Gandhi and Indian Politics." *Economic and Political Weekly* 21, no. 38/39 (1986): 1697-708; Dasgupta, Swapan. "The Life of Indira Gandhi." *Third World Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1985): 738-45.

[195] a coercive revenue collecting system in vogue during the Mughal and British period – an intermediary was tasked with collection of taxes.

Kamma, Reddy, and Kapu, and Congress which sought to popularize its progressive image successfully co-opted the left image and strengthened itself among the peasant castes who became the core supporters of the party in the countryside.[196] But, after the demise of Indira Gandhi, there has been a significant change in the party's ideology[197]

The general election of 1977 carved its place in Indian history with opposition parties (Janata party) defeating the Congress party was not witnessed since the formation of the congress party. The 1990s Mandal and mandir issue further dented congress fortunes with upper castes migrating to the BJP and the lower castes to various Janata party factions and the BSP. Thus, Congress soon emerged as a catch-all party.[198] However, the Constitution of Congress party[199] provides reservations for women/SC/ST/OBC/Minorities in all committees including Congress Working Committee (CWC) an imporant decision making unit in the party.

2.3.2 NATIONALIST CONGRESS PARTY (NCP) AND TRINAMOOL CONGRESS (TMC)

NCP was formed in 1999 by expelled Congress workers.[200]Prominent among them was Sharad Pawar, who also served as the chief minister of Maharashtra. The reason for their expulsion was for challenging the leadership of Sonia Gandhi, president of Congress. However, the NCP is strong in Maharashtra with the base of Maratha, a landowning caste,[201] and was in power for few terms,[202] and the party claims to be centrist. It has 5 MPs in

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[196] K. Srinivasulu, Caste, Class and Social Articulation in Andhra Pradesh: Mapping Differential Regional Trajectories, Overseas Development Institute, Working Paper 179 ,London 2002.

[197] Puri, Balraj. "Era of Indira Gandhi." *Economic and Political Weekly* 20, no. 4 (1985): 148-50

[198] Rai And Kumar,2017 The Decline of the Congress Party in Indian Politics, EPW Vol. 52, Issue No. 12, 25 Mar, 2017.

[199] Constitution Of The Indian National Congress,2007 available at https://eci.gov.in/candidate-political-parties/constitutions/

[200] Datar, Abhay, and Vivek Ghotale. "Maharashtra Cabinets: Social and Regional Profile, 1960-2010." *Economic and Political Weekly* 48, no. 36 (2013): 37-42.

[201]Ibid.

[202] Suhas Palshikar, and Nitin Birmal. "Maharashtra: Towards a New Party System." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 51 (2004): 5467-472.

Parliament.[203] Mamata Banerjee launched TMC[204] in 1998. She was a Congress worker in West Bengal, and her grievance with the Congress party was that the CPI(M) government was treated softly by the Congress party.[205] She won the 2011 West Bengal assembly elections for the first time[206] The party has been winning elections in West Bengal since then, and in the 2019 general elections, it won 22 seats in West Bengal.[207]

2.3.3 BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

The BJP has its roots in Bhartiya Jan Sangh,[208]a political wing of the Hindu Mahasabha. BJP was formally inaugurated in 1980 with a split from the Janata Party. However, the party is guided by the RSS (a paramilitary organization), and it loans its cadre to the BJP from time to time guide on organization and ideology.[209] Members of the RSS canvas for the BJP during elections[210] and it tasted success in elections in 1989 by capitalizing on the anti-Muslim feeling and subsequently demolishing the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and currently it is the single largest party in the Parliament.[211] Upper castes still dominate the party leadership. [212]However, the text of the constitution of the BJP[213]

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[203] https://loksabha.nic.in/Members.

[204] Dwaipayan Bhattacharyya. "Making and Unmaking of Trinamul Congress." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 14/15 (2004): 1529-537.

[205]Ibid.

[206] Sen, Suhit. "The Left Rout: Patterns and Prospects." *Economic and Political Weekly* 46, no. 24 (2011):14-16.

[207] https://loksabha.nic.in/Members

[208] Bharatiya Janata Party available at https://www.britannica.com/topic/Bharatiya-Janata-Party; BJP's foundation day: Brief history of the achievements and failures of the party available at https://indianexpress.com/article/research/bhartiya-janata-party-narendra-modi-bjp-bjps-37th-foundation-day-brief-history-of-the-achievements-and-failures-of-the-party-4601637

[209] Banerjee, Sumanta. "Civilizing the BJP." Economic and Political Weekly 40, no. 29 (2005): 3116-119.

[210] Padmaja Nair, Religious Political Parties and their welfare work: relations between the RSS,the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Vidya Bharti Schools, International Development Department, University of birmingam,Working Paper 37-2009.

[211] Members of the 17 Lok Sabha, available at https://loksabha.nic.in/members/PartyWiseStatisticalList.aspx

[212]Ruhi Tewari And Pragya Kaushika, We analyzed 1,000 BJP leaders & found the party remains a Brahmin-Baniya club, available at https://theprint.in/politics/ambedkar-on-its-agenda-but-bjp-has-little-place-for-dalits-is-still-a-brahmin-baniya-party/91449/

[213] Constitution and Rules of Bhartiya Janata Party,2004 available a https://eci.gov.in/candidate-political-parties/constitutions/

mandates that the Dalits are to be accommodated in almost all the committees from the local to the national levels.[214] Besides, it also has a separate Dalit, other backward castes, women wing to reach out to these sections and has created visible national level leadership among other backward classes. However, the world vision of these leaders does not empower the backward classes in India.[215]

2.3.4 COMMUNIST PARTIES IN INDIA

The Communist Party of India was founded in 1920 in Tashkent (USSR) by exiles from India living in the Soviet Union.[216] One of the early struggles for land reforms was initiated by the Communist-led struggle against feudalism in Telangana (Hyderabad state) in 1946. Armed cadres seized land, approximately a million acres, distributed among the landless, and canceled usurious loans.[217] However, the armed struggle was crushed by the military by 1951,[218] and soon after annexing Hyderabad state, it paved the way for the entry of landed gentry, who then made attempts at repossessing the land. Nevertheless, the struggle brought the issue of land reforms into popular politics. By the time of India's independence, it adopted a democratic method of attaining power through participating in elections.[219] However, in 1964 it split into CPI and CPI(M) due to political and organizational differences.[220] The primary difference between the radical Marxist Leninist

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[214]Ibid.

[215] Kancha Illaiah Shepherd, Chapter 4, *The Rise of Modi, Buffalo Nationalism,A Critique Of Spiritual Fascis*m, Sage Publications, New Delhi 2019.

[216] Formation of the Communisr Party of India, available at https://cpim.org/history/formation-Communist-party-india-tashkent-1920.

[217] P.Sundaraiah, *Telangana People's Struggle And Its Lessons*,Foundation Books,New Delh,2006 p.83.

[218]Ibid.

[219]Alam, Javeed. "State and the Making of Communist Politics in India, 1947-57." *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, no. 45 (1991); https://cpim.org/party-programme; Windmiller, Marshall. "Indian Communism Today." *Far Eastern Survey* 23, no. 4 (1954): 49-56.

[220] Katrak, Savak. "India's Communist Party Split." *The China Quarterly*, no. 7 (1961): 138-; T.R..Sharma, The Indian Communist Party Split of 1964: The Role of Factionalism and Leadership Rivalry, Studies in Comparative Communism, Volume 11, Issue 4, Elsevier, Winter 1978, Pages 388-409; https://cpim.org/party-programme.

parties and parliamentary Communist parties is on method of struggle, democratic and armed struggle. The leadership of the Communist parties in India lacks lower caste members. The CPI, since its formation in 1925, has had only one general secretary from the lower caste (Dalit).[221] He was elected general secretary in 2019, and in the case of CPI(M), there has not been anyone from lower castes as general secretary. There is none from the Dalit caste[222] in the politburo since its formation in 1964. However, the CPI constitution specifies that there shall be special attention to providing adequate representation from the backward castes at the National Council.[223] However the CPI(M) Constitution and organizational rules do not mention anything about Scheduled Castes/Backward caste appointments in the party.[224] But 2015 Organizational report,[225] however, provides the social composition of the party membership. It also provides the mismatch in the members' social composition and leadership.

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[221] Kancha Ilaiah Shepherd, A New Cast,2019 available at
https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/d-raja-communist-party-of-indiageneral-secretary-general-secretary-cpi-5846100
[222]Kancha Ilaiah Shepherd , Communist leaders continue to harm India by claiming they recognise class but not caste,2018 available at https://scroll.in/article/904775/continuing-indifference-of-communist-leaders-towards-caste-discrimination-in-india-is-worrisome.; Also see Ruhi Tewari,At the end of CPI(M)'s big meet, yet again, no bid for diversity in politburo, central committee 22nd April 2018 available at https://theprint.in/politics/at-the-end-of-cpims-big-meet-yet-again-no-bid-for-diversity-in-politburo-central-committee/51723./
[223] Constitution of Communist Party of India available at https://eci.gov.in/candidate-political-parties/constitutions/
[224] Constitution of CPI(M)& Rules Under the Constitution 2006 available at https://eci.gov.in/candidate-political-parties/constitutions/
[225] Report on Organization,Adopted by the Plenum on Organization, 2015 available at https://www.cpim.org/documents/plenum-report-organisation

CHAPTER 3 ANALYSIS OF ELECTION MANIFESTOS, RESULTS, AND DISCUSSION

This section provides methodology adopted to locate anti-caste discrimination policy in 2014 and 2019 general election manifestos of the National political parties (NPPs). It highlights results and contextualizes the results of the manifestos and highlights the key findings from the study

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The policy statements on caste have been dissected from the election manifestos of the National Political Parties-Indian National Congress (INC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India(Marxist) (CPI(M)), Trinamool Congress (TMC). Manifesto has been obtained from the party websites. Most of the manifestos tend to have a section on the empowerment of Dalit (officially known as Scheduled Castes (SC)) and other non-Dalit backward castes (OBC). In that section, the parties convey the means to eradicate caste discrimination in India. Policies are exclusively for the empowerment of Dalit and other backward castes.

3.1.1 CODING

This thesis employs i) the coding technique from Manifesto Coding Instructions, 2021 (5th edition) to code the sentences to dissect the policy statement. For example, "a) One sentence is quasi sentence b) if a sentence contains more than one unique argument, then it shall be split." This method improves the accuracy of the statement. [226]

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[226] Annika Werner, Onawa Lacewell, Andrea Volkens, Theres Matthieß, Lisa Zehnter, Leila van Rinsum, Manifesto Project's Handbook Series 5th edition May 2021 available at https://manifesto-project.wzb.eu/

ii) The numbers in the graph represent the total number of promises (policies) under that category in the party manifesto. This can demonstrate the level of importance the party is attaching to the category for example, in the Congress party manifesto:

 a) In the Economic empowerment category, there are 3 policies, i) giving tax relief to the backward caste entrepreneurs; ii) Government shall procure 4 percent from the industries owned by backward castes; iii) government shall provide agricultural land to the backward castes.

B) Anti-hate category, there is only 1 policy which is to strengthen the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

The policies listed in the manifesto are enumerated under the below-mentioned categories. This helps measure the policy preference of the party's strategy to combat caste discrimination. These categories have been identified in the manifesto of the parties. These are also the basic demands of the Dalits and the backward castes to combat caste discrimination[227] and policies found in the party manifestos.

Anti-Hate Policy: This category covers, anti-hate policy mentioned in the manifestos, and it includes the total number of policies, for example, in CPI, 2019 election manifesto — "to end manual scavenging in all its forms"[228]; CPI(M), 2019 "Strict punishment against practices of untouchability."[229]

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[227] Javed Anand Dateline Bhopal,2nd feb,2002 available at
https://www.sabrang.com/cc/archive/2002/feb02/bhopal.htm.
[228] Communist Party of India, Election Manifesto, 2019 available at
https://www.communistparty.in/post/election-manifesto-of-the-communist-party-of-india-for-the-17th-lok-sabha-elections-2019.
[229] CPI(M) Election Manifesto 2019,p. 25.

Quotas: The Constitution of India mandates caste-based quotas in state educational institutions and employment, and the promises on quotas to be extended to private institutions, for example, CPI(M) manifesto: "Reservation in jobs & education in the private sector for SCs," "Congress promises to fill all backlog vacancies reserved for SCs."[230]

Administrative issues: The section shows how parties plan to ease the administrative bottlenecks faced by backward castes to receive funds or solve their grievances—" CPI(M) Manifesto,2019 "Strengthening the National Commission for Backward Classes"[231]; "Restoration of SC/ST sub-plan both at the center and the state."[232]

Economic Support: This section includes the policies to alleviate poverty among the sections. This includes promoting entrepreneurship among the backward caste sections as their percentage of business ownership is minuscule, access to credit facilities, tax waiver, increasing wages. For example, BJP Manifesto,2019, "We will support entrepreneurial ventures started by individuals from Scheduled Castes and other backward castes."[233]

Scholarships: This category covers the scholarship promises in the manifestos, for example, Congress election Manifesto 2014, "post-matric scholarship to help students pursue studies in colleges and universities in India."[234]; Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship shall be extended to students belonging to Other Backward Classes."[235]

Capacity Development: This focuses on the parties' strategy to help the backward caste youth and students – catch up with other communities in India. For example – Nationalist

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[230] Congress Election manifesto,2019, p.40.
[231] CPI(M) Election Manifesto,2019, p.27.
[232] CPI Manifesto, 2019.
[233] BJP,Election Manifesto,2019,p.19.
[234] Congress Election Manifesto,2014, p. 22.
[235] Ibid.,p. 23.

Congress Party(NCP) Election Manifesto 2014: "To conduct programs relating to employment potential of Scheduled castes candidates through coaching, guidance, and training."[236]

Housing: Provide Adequate housing, improve sanitation, provide water and electricity, and build infrastructure in Dalit and backward caste habitations. For example, CPI(M), manifesto 2019 " Ensuring house sites, houses, sanitation, water."[237]
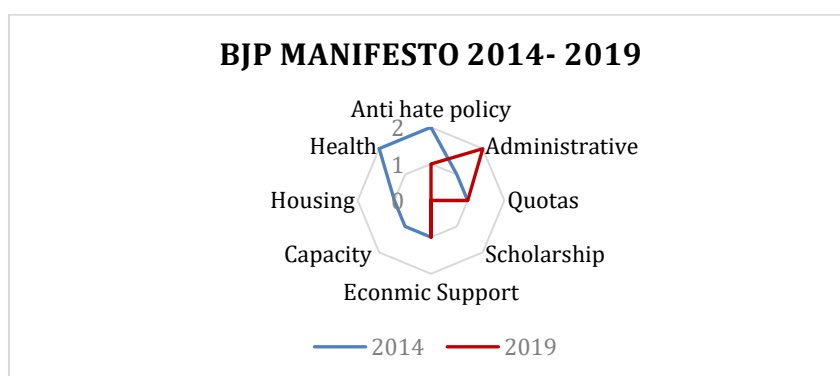
3.1.2 RESULTS

FIGURE 1: BJP ELECTION MANIFESTO

Figure 1 of the BJP 2014 manifesto covers the socio-economic development of the Dalit and the backward classes. The manifesto emphasizes the development of entrepreneurship and says that it is committed to empowerment. The manifesto pledges eradication of untouchability and manual scavenging.[238] It doesn't invoke the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act,1989, and no mention of caste-based reservation. The manifesto also has a policy of enabling Information technology among the Dalit and backward classes[239]. It says that the money earmarked for the Dalits in the budget would not be

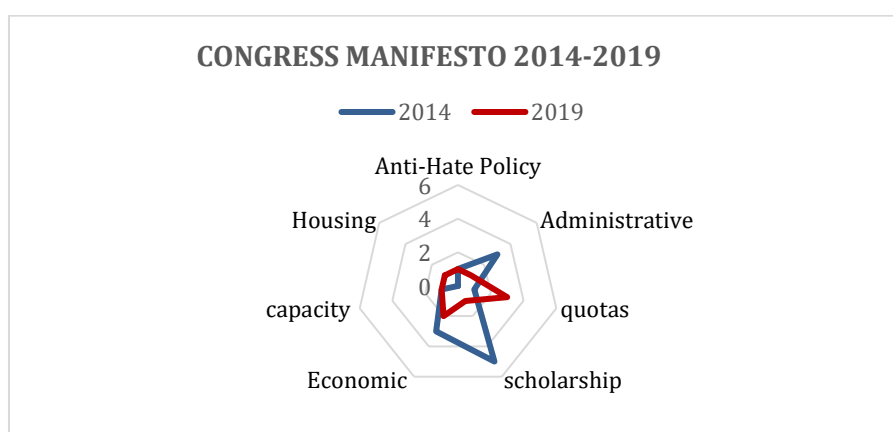---

[236] Nationalist Congress Party(NCP) Election Manifesto 2014, Available at http://ncp.org.in/stories/formedia/1026/title/ELECTION-MANIFESTO.

[237] CPI(M) Election Manifesto,2019.

[238] BJP,Election Manifesto ,2014, p.16.

[239] Ibid.,p.11.

diverted to other purposes.[240] In the BJP manifesto 2019, there are only three policies — one of them is supporting the Dalit and backward caste entrepreneurs. The other is that— it is committed to honoring the existing constitutional policy for the welfare of the backward classes and the Dalits[241]. It has promised, "to accelerate the adoption of mechanized cleaning to ensure occupational health and safety for Safai Karamcharis(cleaning workers)." [242] Unlike 2014, the 2019 manifesto has not made clear on eradicating untouchability and manual scavenging.

FIGURE 2: CONGRESS ELECTION MANIFESTO

In Figure 2, 2014, the Congress manifesto emphasized scholarship targeting the youth and college students from the Dalit and the backward classes students. In addition, it sought to initiate capacity-building measures by establishing special schools that impart quality education[243] For example, "Congress will provide Scheduled caste entrepreneurs easy access to credit and other incentives like tax rebates."[244] The manifesto also pledged to enact a special law to prevent diversion of the funds earmarked for the development of Scheduled Castes.[245] In addition to filling the backlog posts reserved for the Scheduled

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[240] Ibid.,p.16.
[241] BJP,Election Manifesto ,2019, p. 33.
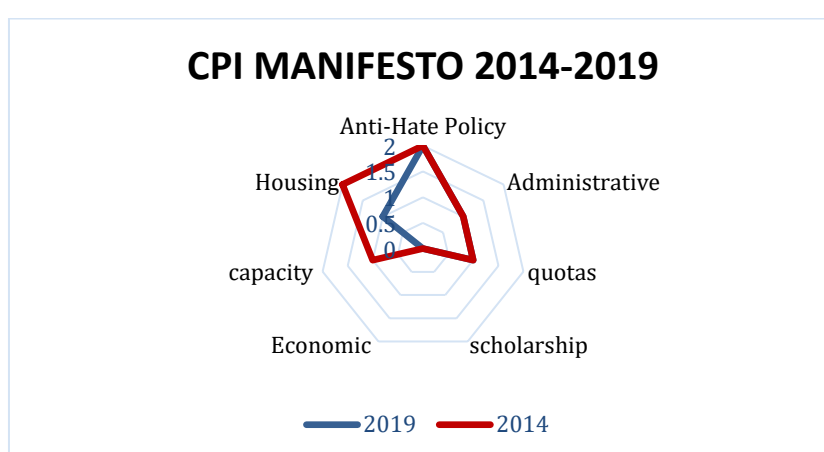[242] Ibid.
[243] Congress Election Manifesto,2014, p.22.
[244] Ibid.,p.23.
[245] Ibid.,p.22.

Castes and the backward castes. The 2014 manifesto promises that the Congress party shall initiate a dialogue on reservation for the Scheduled Castes in private sector employment.

Furthermore, it pledges to strengthen the Prevention of Atrocity Act. The 2019 manifesto promises to establish the "Equal Opportunity Commission to prevent discrimination in the private sphere."[246] It promises to fill the backlog posts, and the manifesto also pledges to extend the quotas in state educational institutions to private educational institutions.[247]

FIGURE 3: CPI ELECTION MANIFESTO

As demonstrated by Figure 3, the CPI manifesto 2014 covers four keys issues concerning the Dalits. Its emphasis on the abolition of manual scavenging and rehabilitating the workers associated with it. To strengthen the SC/ST Prevention of the Atrocities Act,1989 and pledges to have a reservation in the private sector, the manifesto also promises legislation to prevent the misuse of the funds earmarked for the welfare of Scheduled Castes[248]. In the 2019 election manifesto, it repeated all its promises made in 2014.[249] It adds
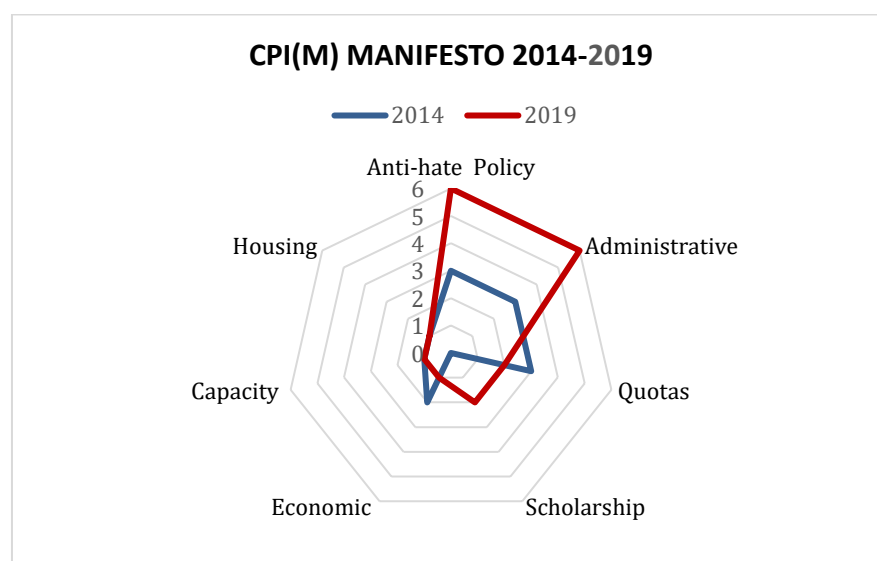
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[246] Congress Election Manifesto, 2019 p.40.

[247] Ibid.,p.41.

[248] Ibid.

[249] Communist Party of India, Election Manifesto, 2019 available at https://www.communistparty.in/post/election-manifesto-of-the-communist-party-of-india-for-the-17th-lok-sabha-elections-2019

another policy on skill development of the backward classes from the funds obtained from Corporate Social responsibility (CSR) funds.

FIGURE 4: CPI(M) ELECTION MANIFESTO

In the 2014 manifesto, the CPI(M) pledged to abolish the caste system and forms of oppression associated with the caste system.[250] It places a thrust on strengthening the laws to protect the Scheduled Castes from oppression[251]. The manifesto pledges policies to ease the administrative procedure for the backward classes to realize the benefits of the affirmative action policies.[252] The manifesto also emphasizes credit facilities for the self-employed from Scheduled Castes, and in addition, it promises them market linkages.[253] It promises to fill the backlog quotas in employment and pledges to implement caste-based reservation in the private sector. It pledges poverty alleviation programs for the other backward castes similarly on the lines of the Scheduled Castes. It also promises to ensure adequate housing and infrastructure. It promises to strengthen the legislation on manual scavenging and to rehabilitate the workers forced into scavenging work.
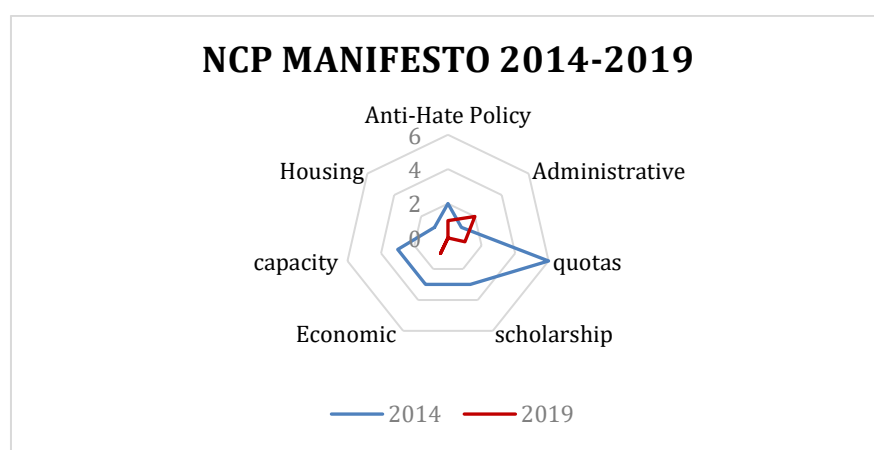
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[250] CPI(M) Election Manifesto,2014, p.26
[251] Ibid.
[252] Ibid., p.28.
[253] Ibid., p 26.

Similarly, in 2019, the CPI(M) manifesto pledges that the party shall abolish the caste system[254]. It repeats the welfare measures mentioned in 2014[255] It adds another critical policy to enact an anti-discrimination law to prevent discrimination in the private sphere. Another unique pledge it makes —"to place the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act,1989 under the IX Schedule of the Constitution, insulating it from judicial review by the Supreme Court and the High Courts."[256]

FIGURE 5: NCP ELECTION MANIFESTO

The 2014 manifesto of the NCP emphasizes the socio and economic development of the Scheduled Castes and the backward castes.[257] It promises that that funds meant for the development of the Dalits shall not be diverted. It promises to implement manual scavenging to prevent the practice and rehabilitate the workers pushed into this practice. NCP 2014 manifesto pledges to improve the infrastructure in Dalit habitations.[258]It also promises to fill the backlog of job quotas, and the manifesto includes a policy to accommodate the Scheduled Caste converts in affirmative action programs. The manifesto also includes extending the OBC quota to all higher educational institutions. The manifesto pledges

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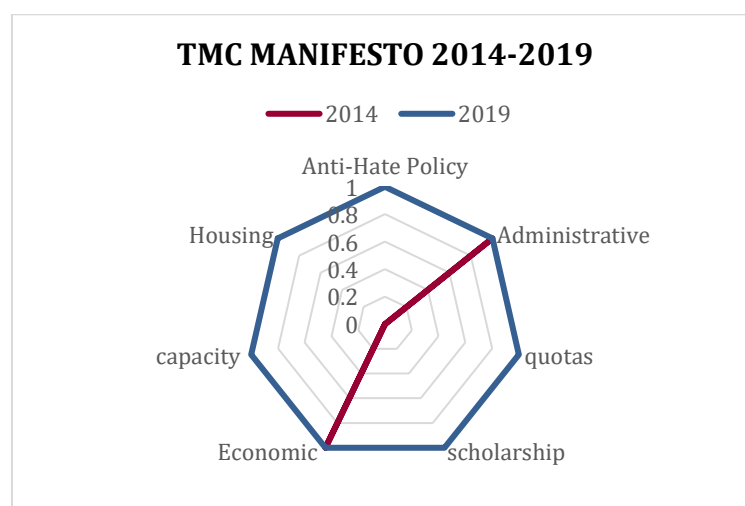[254] CPI(M) Election Manifesto,2019, p.24.
[255] Ibid., pp.25,27.
[256] Ibid., p. 25.
[257] Nationalist Congress Party, Election Manifesto,2014.
[258] Ibid.

scholarship to the Dalit and the backward castes students and capacity building.[259] It also promises to enable access to financial credit to the Dalits and increase farmworker wages, directly benefiting the Dalits and the backward castes. In 2019 the NCP manifesto didn't repeat the policies it had in the 2014 manifesto but covers only three policies[260]: safeguarding reservation for the Dalits; to create a conducive environment for the Dalit students in colleges and universities. It pledges to prevent the diversion of funds meant for the welfare of the Dalits.[261]

FIGURE 6:TMC ELECTION MANIFESTO

The TMC 2014 general election manifesto the part recognizes that it is conscious that the Dalits and the other backward castes comprise the majority of the population and are marginalized."[262]The manifesto provides two promises regarding caste— one is administrative — issuing a caste certificate. This document provides a recognition that a person belongs to a particular caste to receive affirmative action benefits and another and one other is that it shall empower the Dalits and the backward castes economically.[263] However, in the 2019 manifesto, the manifesto repeats its 2014 promise of easing administrative procedures to issue caste certificates.[264]In addition, it promises that it shall

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[259] Ibid.

[260] Nationalist Congress Party, Election Manifesto,2019, p.20.

[261] Ibid., p. 20.

[262] Trinamool Congress Election Manifesto,2014, p.4.

[263] Ibid.

[264] Trinamool Congress Election Manifesto,2019, p. 29.

provide scholarships and increase quotas in education to the backward castes throughout the country.[265] It also promises a fast-track court to deal with caste atrocity.[266]

3.1.3 AGGREGATE STUDY OF THE MANIFESTOS OF 2014-2019

This section provides an aggregate study of the national manifestos on the below-mentioned categories. This contrasts the anti-caste category with other categories present in the manifesto. This could help analyze the party position on anti-caste and other categories in the manifesto. Figure 7 demonstrates the 2014 election manifestos of national parties, and figure 8 demonstrates the election manifestos for 2019.

CODING

The policies listed in the manifesto are enumerated under the below-mentioned categories. This helps measure the policy preference and coded by incorporating the unitizing method from Manifesto Coding Instructions, 2021 (5th edition) to code the sentences to dissect the policy statement. For example, "a) One sentence is quasi sentence b) if a sentence contains more than one unique argument, then it shall be split." accuracy of the statement. [267] These categories have been identified in the manifesto of the parties.

FOREIGN POLICY

This category covers international affairs and friendly relations with other countries. For example, the congress 2019 manifesto promises that "Congress affirms its firm belief in non-alignment, independence of thought and action, and increased bilateral engagement in its relations with other countries of the world"[268] and Similarly CPI(M) 2014 Manifesto

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[265] Ibid., p. 28.

[266] Ibid., p. 32.

[267] Annika Werner, Onawa Lacewell, Andrea Volkens, Theres Matthieß, Lisa Zehnter, Leila van Rinsum, Manifesto Project's Handbook Series 5th edition May 2021

[268] Congress, Manifesto 2019, p.27.

says: "Strengthening multilateral forums like the UN to deal with all disputes between countries." [269]

OTHER SOCIAL GROUPS

This category covers religious minorities, senior citizens, children, women, transgender. For example, in CPI(M) in 2019 manifesto promised:" Enacting the 33 percent Women's Reservation Bill to reserve one-third seats in Parliament and State Assemblies for women immediately".[270]The BJP in 2019 manifesto promises, "We will strengthen the Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana to ensure that poor senior citizens in need of aids and assistive devices receive them in a timely manner."[271]   .

LABOUR

This covers industrial issues, labor rights, payment of wages, trade unions. For example, CPI(M) 2019 manifestos promise "Ensuring strictest implementation of all labor laws including the law on interstate migrant workers[272]

ENVIRONMENT

This category covers the environment-related issues in the Manifesto, for example, the Congress promises in 2019 manifesto promises "We will constitute, by law, an independent, empowered and transparent Environment Protection Authority (EPA)[273]

CASTE

This category covers policies related to anti-caste discrimination in the election manifestoes for example in CPI, 2019 election manifesto — "to end manual scavenging in all its forms"[274]; CPI(M), 2019 "Strict punishment against practices of untouchability."[275] For example, BJP Manifesto,2019, "We will support entrepreneurial ventures started by individuals from Scheduled Castes and other backward castes."[276]

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[269] CPI(M) Manifesto, 2014.

[270] CPI(M) Manifesto 2019, p.22.

[271] BJP Manifesto 2019, p. 34.

[272] CPI(M) Manifesto,2019, p. 21.

[273] Congress Manifesto, 2019. P. 51 .

[274] Communist Party of India, Election Manifesto, 2019 available at https://www.communistparty.in/post/election-manifesto-of-the-communist-party-of-india-for-the-17th-lok-sabha-elections-2019

[275] CPI(M) Election Manifesto 2019, p. 25.

[276] BJP,Election Manifesto,2019,p19.

EDUCATION

This category covers the party promises on education-related for example, in the 2019 manifesto, the BJP promises that "We will establish National Institutes of Teachers' training. These institutions would provide four-year integrated courses that would set the standards for quality teachers in our schools"[277] and CPI(M) in 2019 manifesto promised "Public expenditure on education to be 6 percent of GDP."[278]

SECURITY

This category covers the issues related to internal security, the police. For Example, Congress 2019 manifesto promised "Congress will work with State Governments to increase the strength of State police forces"[279] Similarly, BJP in the 2019 manifesto promised "we will continue to take steps for ensuring the security of India's long coastline."[280]

INFRASTRUCTURE

The infrastructure category covers the developmental projects that the party plans to take up, for example, laying roads, building bridges, airports, etc. for instance, BJP 2019, Manifesto promises, "We will aim at next-generation infrastructure which will include gas grids and water grids, regional airports and wayside amenities along national highways."[281]

ADMINISTRATIVE

This category covers the governance reforms, which include increasing courts, village and town administration. For example, the BJP in 2019 promised "Minimum Government and Maximum Governance." [282]

ECONOMY

This category covers the issues related to the economy, taxation, banking, providing credit, etc. for example, the BJP in 2019 manifesto promised that "we will launch a new scheme to provide collateral-free credit up to 50 lakh rupees for entrepreneurs."[283]
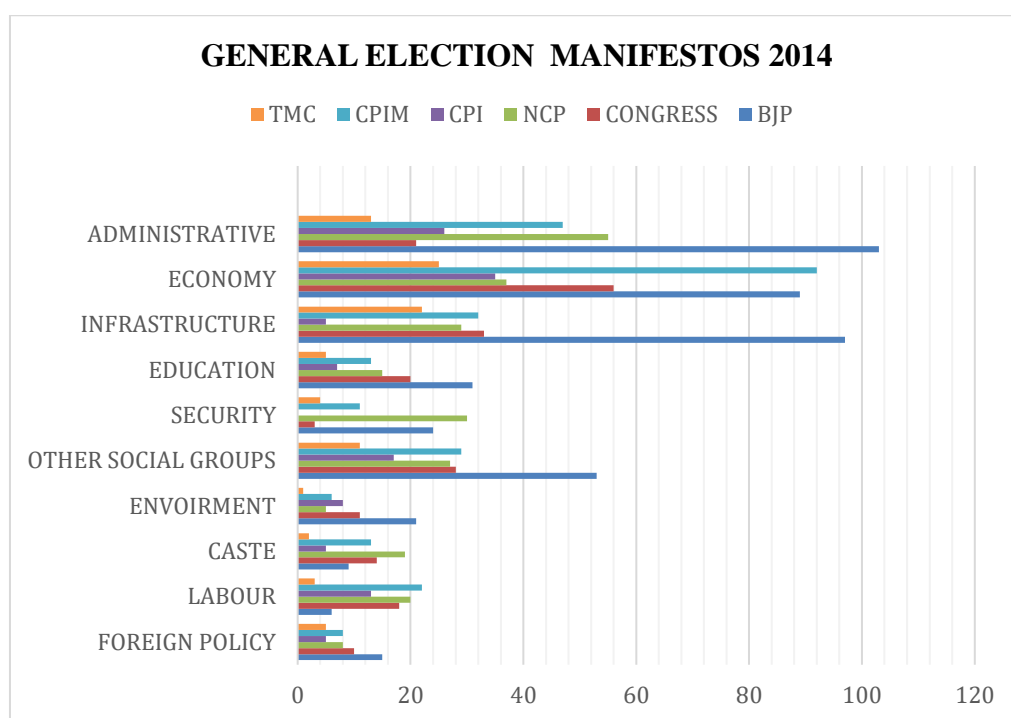
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[277]Ibid., p.29.
[278] CPIM 2019, p. 28.
[279] Congress Manifesto 2019, p.26.
[280] BJP Manifesto 2019, p.12.
[281] Ibid., p. 20.
[282] Ibid., p. 24.
[283] Ibid., p.19.

GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTOS 2014

FIGURE 7: 2014 GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTOS

Figure 7 demonstrates the aggregate policies of the six national party manifestos. In the 2014 election manifestoes, the economy and the infrastructure and administrative reforms occupied the dominant position in the party manifestos —for example, BJP manifesto focuses on infrastructure development [284], governance, and rectifying administrative lapses[285] similarly Congress[286] and CPI(M)[287] also prioritize these areas. The national parties' manifesto also covers other social groups— women, senior citizens, disabled.[288]The manifesto also included sizable policies to benefit the poor, middle class, working class. Particularly the CPI(M) and CPI have included a section on policies for the working class[289] followed by NCP and Congress, allotted a fair percentage of policies to ameliorate the conditions of the Dalit and the backward castes. However, overall the policies

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[284] BJP Election Manifesto,2014,pp. 18,32-34.

[285] Ibid., pp 4-13.

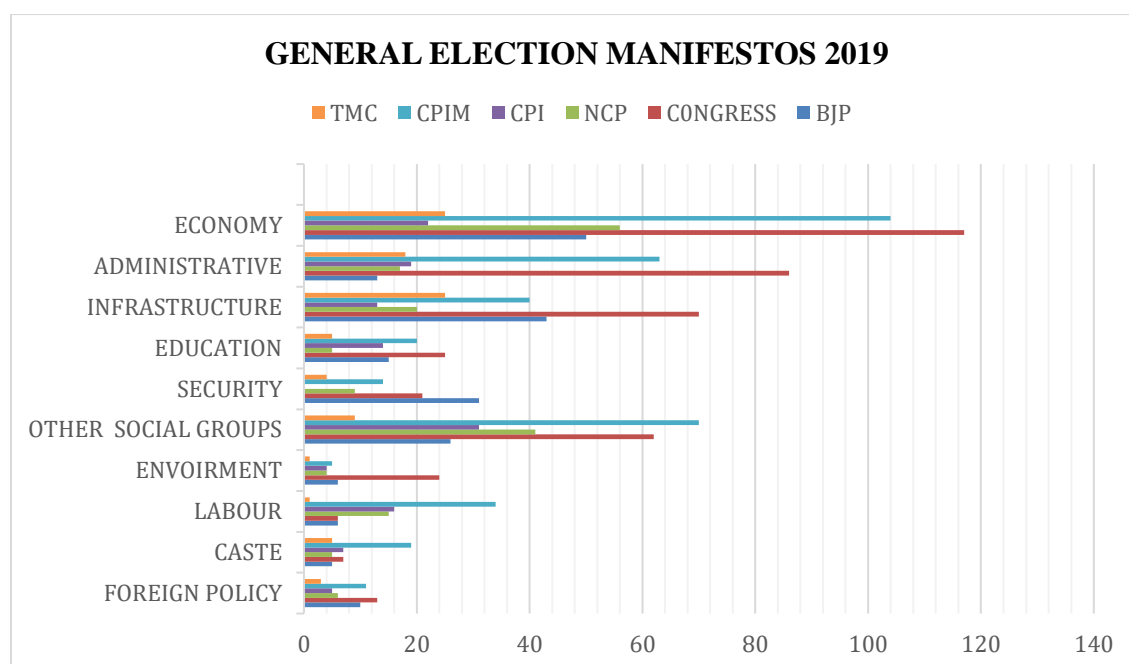[286] Congress Election Manifesto 2014 pp 17,36-39,43,44.

[287] CPI(M)Election Manifesto,2014 pp12-17.

[288] See BJP Election Manifesto,2014 pp. 19-22; Indian National Congress,2014, pp 24-26; CPI(M) Election Manifesto 2014 pp 23-24.

[289] CPI(M) Election Manifesto 2014, pp20-22.

under the anti-caste discrimination are few compared to the categories on the economy, administrative, and infrastructure

FIGURE 8: 2019 GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTOS

Figure 8 shows the aggregate policies of the six national parties for the 2019 general manifestos. Similar to 2014 manifestos, economy and administrative, and infrastructure occupy dominant positions.[290]However, there has been a significant reduction in BJP manifestos in these areas.[291]At the same time, Congress has increased its promises in these spheres compared to its 2014 manifesto.[292] BJP 2019 manifesto has reduced policies even to other social groups, i.e., women, senior citizens, compared to its 2014 manifesto.[293] At the same time, Congress and the CPI(M) have increased the promises to the other social groups—women, child welfare, senior citizens.[294] In the caste category, the overall parties priority remains static without any increase except CPI(M) in the 2019 election manifesto[295]

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[290] NCP Election Manifesto,2019, pp.7-12.

[291] BJP Election Manifesto,2019, pp.17-23.

[292] Congress, Election Manifesto 2019 pp.35-45.

[293] BJP, Election Manifesto 2019,pp. 31-35.

[294] Congress Election Manifesto ,2019:39-45;CPI(M) Election Manifesto 2019 pp22-28.

[295] CPI(M) Election Manifesto 2019, pp.27,47.

increased its promises exponentially for the betterment of Dalit and other backward castes in the 2019 manifestos

<center>**II**</center>

3.2 DISCUSSION

This section deals with the analysis with regard to seven national parties in the order Indian National Congress, Nationalist Congress Party, Trinamool Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party, Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India(Marxist), and the Bahujan Samaj Party has left out as there is no published manifesto. The themes are quotas in employment and education and prevention of violence against Dalits and economic empowerment and administrative grievance of Dalits and other backward castes. The section also discusses how the philosophy of the party influences in framing the election manifesto.

The Indian National Congress party's 2019 and 2014 manifestos emphasize the importance of scholarships, quotas, and solving the administrative grievances of the Dalits and the backward castes in India. And to make the law on the abolition of manual scavenging stringent. The Congress in 2019 manifesto promises an Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC),[296]though this promise is unique, but was long overdue [297]— the union cabinet in 2014 approved setting up the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). There is no promise of quota in private employment. The 2014 Congress manifesto only pledged to create a consensus on the reservation in the private sector.[298] BJP manifesto 2014,2019 elections

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[296] Congress Election Manifesto ,2019, p.40.

[297] Sachar, Saiyid Hamid, T.K. Oommen, M.A. Basith, Rakesh Basant, Akhtar Majeed, Abusaleh Shariff, Social, Economic, and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India, Prime Minister's High-Level Committee, Government of India, New Delhi, 2006 p 240; see also Sourav Datta, Anti-Discrimination Bill: India needs comprehensive law to punish prejudice, uplift diversity, March18,2017 available at https://www.firstpost.com/india/anti-discrimination-bill-india-needs-a   comprehensive-law-to-punish-prejudice-encourage-diversity-3340830.

[298] Congress Election manifesto ,2014, p.23.

manifestos also don't mention quotas in the private sector. However, CPI, CPI (M) manifestos in 2014, 2019, and NCP in 2014 included reservations in the private sector in their manifesto.[299] Congress seeks to encourage entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Caste —provide access to credit.[300]

When the Congress government was privatizing the economy in the 1990s, Amartya Sen (2013) remarked: if you don't create the safety nets. The reforms will exclude vast sections of people, and only a few would benefit (as cited in Rudra 2017).[301] The reliance on privatization of the state industries also marks the deviation of the Congress Party's philosophy — Fabian socialism.[302] The Congress' 2014 election manifesto also includes the party pledge on foreign direct investment in education and, at the same time, privatizing educational institutions.[303] Since the 1990s, Scheduled Castes alone have lost more than three hundred thousand jobs due to the privatization of state industries.[304] According to D.Raja (2021), privatization is a direct assault on reservation policy. It removes the access to education and employment to the SC/ST/OBC.[305] Currently, there is an absence of policy to give these sections access to jobs in the private sector.[306]

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[299] CPIM Election Manifesto 2019, p. 25, Nationalist election Manifesto,2014; CPI,2014.

[300] Congress Election manifesto, 2014, p. 23.

[301] Rudra, N., Tirone, D.C. Trade, Politics, and the Poor: Is Sen Right and Bhagwati Wrong?. *St Comp Int Dev* 52, 1–22 (2017).

[302] Mohan, Jag. "Jawaharlal Nehru and His Socialism." *India International Centre Quarterly* 2, no. 3 (1975): 183-92.

[303] Congress Election manifesto, 2014, p.11.

[304] Sravasti Dasguota,.SC-ST creamy layer is insignificant, inequalities still glaring: Dalit chamber of commerce14th April,2021 available at https://theprint.in/india/sc-st-creamy-layer-is-insignificant-inequalities-still-glaring-dalit-chamber-of-commerce/639027/

[305] D.Raja, By dismantling public sector, Modi govt is sacrificing the very concept of welfare state to please corporates, 11 February,2021 available at https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/opinion/by-dismantling-public-sector-modi-govt-is-sacrificing-the-very-concept-of-welfare-state-to-please-corporates

[306] Thorat Sukhadeo, On Reservation Policy for Private Sector." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 25 (2004): 2560-563.

According to the Congress 2014 manifesto ─ reservations in the private sector would have to be discussed with the industrialists.[307] However, there is no constitutional bar on the state from promulgating a law to implement reservations in the private sector.[308] It appears that by invoking dialogue with industrialists, Congress yielded to the pressure from industrialists who are typically drawn from trading castes in India[309] The Indian industrialists have opposed the proposal as a setback to economic liberalization and harming merit.[310]

Some industrialists suggested that affirmative action should be voluntary for companies.[311] However, this massive job loss due to privatization has fueled the demand for reservations in private companies, particularly BSP, and left parties have raised the issue consistently. After the emergence of BSP, Congress lost the Dalit votes, particularly in Uttar Pradesh and other north Indian states.[312]However, Congress reserved jobs for the upper castes based on the economic scale way back in 1991. The Supreme Court of India struck down that the Constitution doesn't permit in *Indrashwney*1992, the congress government in 2003 in almost all the states it rules issued an ordinance having such a quota. Upper caste groups demanded the economically weaker section(EWS) quota, and the Congress and the BJP were quick to accept it, and Congress already lost its upper caste voters in north India.[313]The move would only benefitted the BJP because the Hindutva flavor doled out by

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[307] Congress Election manifesto, 2014, p.23.

[308] The Superem Court of India in *Ashoka Kumar Thakur vs Union Of India & Ors (2008) 6 SCC I,* and *Society For Un-Aided P.School Of Rajashtan vs U.O.I & Anr (2012) 6 SCC 1* uheld quoats in private educational institutions

[309] Damodaran, Harish, India's New Capitalists - Caste, Business and Industry in a Modern Nation, permanent Black, New Delhi , 2008.

[310] Thimmaiah, G. Implications of Reservations in Private Sector. *Economic and Political Weekly,* 40(8), (2005). 745-750; Bajaj, Devoid of merit: reservations will kill indian private sector. The Times of India, 21 September 2004. Available at: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/857345.cms

[311] Thimmaiah, G. Implications of Reservations in Private Sector.

[312] Sanjay Kumar and Praveen Rai, The Decline of the Congress Party in Indian Politics Vol. 52, Issue No. 12, 25 Mar, 2017.

[313] Sanjay Kumar and Praveen Rai, The Decline of the Congress Party in Indian Politics.

BJP appeals to the upper caste bias,[314] and the Hindu upper-caste naturally attracted to the pro liberalization, pro-globalization these policies favor the upper caste elite.[315]Hindutva as philosophy emphasizes the traditions which include the smritis and the scriptures.[316]

Though Congress made Chief ministers from the Dalit and the backward castes as early as 1960[317]however it was not consistent, and most Congress-ruled state governments since India's independence had upper caste chief ministers till the 1990s.[318]The emergence of parties representing the backward caste has pushed both Congress and the BJP to accommodate Dalits and the backward castes into the party and the government in terms of a cabinet position,[319] At the same time, Congress says that it's party presidents were from different social backgrounds, the party's ropes were always with the Hindu upper caste leaders.

Both TMC and NCP are breakaway factions of the congress party in the late 1990s, and NCP is strong in Maharashtra[320] and TMC in West Bengal.[321] NCP in 2014 manifesto promised quota to the upper caste and TMC in 2019, and 2014 manifesto promised policies for alleviating poverty among the economically backward upper castes. The TMC manifesto recognizes that the Dalits and the backward castes are the majority of the population, but it does not announce the policies in proportion to their population.[322]

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[314] Bidwai Praful ,.Rethink upper-caste quotas, June 10, 2003 available at
https://www.rediff.com/news/2003/jun/10bidwai.htm
[315] Ibid.
[316]Ibid.
[317] NYT editor, Damodaram Sanjivayya Dead; Head of India's Congress Party , 1972
https://www.nytimes.com/1972/05/08/archives/damodaram-sanivayya-dead-head-of-indiascongress-party.html
[318] Dilip Mandal,Congress has never been a party of OBCs, but something's changing now, 2019 available at https://theprint.in/opinion/congress-has-never-been-a-party-of-obcs-but-somethings-changing-now/204518
[319]Ibid.
[320] Ibid.
[321] Suhas Palshikar, and Nitin Birmal. "Maharashtra: Towards a New Party System." Economic and Political Weekly 39, no. 51 (2004): 5467-472.
[322] Dwaipayan Bhattacharyya. "Making and Unmaking of Trinamul Congress; James Mayers. "Transformation of Opposition Politics in West Bengal: Congress(I), Trinamul and 1998 Lok Sabha Elections .

Central to NCP and TMC manifestos is the upliftment of religious minority (Muslim) both these parties rely on this group for votes.[323] NCP 2014 manifesto announced a slew of promises for the upliftment of Dalit and the backward castes. It also promised quotas in the private sector.[324] But in 2019, it doesn't repeat the promises it made in 2014, and the promises to the Dalit and the backward castes have reduced.

In the BJP 2014 manifesto, the section on Dalit and backward caste begins with "identity politics and tokenisms, have not led to any tangible results for the SC, ST, OBCs." So with these lines, one can infer that the party is averse to caste-based affirmative action, and the BJP in 2014 and 2019 manifestos did not mention caste-based reservations.[325] In the 2014 manifesto, it has committed to eradicate untouchability and manual scavenging. It pledges it shall not divert funds[326] , but there have been significant lapses in releasing scholarships and spending the money to develop the Scheduled Castes[327]—the BJP manifestos 2014 and 2019 manifesto promise that Dalit and backward classes entrepreneurs would be supported. Unlike the 2014 manifesto, in 2019, it does not mention eradicating untouchability or manual scavenging explicitly, instead it states –machines shall be deployed to protect the cleaning staff.[328] And the only tangible promise it made— backward class entrepreneurs shall be supported[329]. Another policy that is not conspicuous in the BJP 2019 manifesto is enacting the "Citizenship Amendment Bill for religious minority communities from neighboring countries escaping persecution."[330]—this is aimed at a section of Hindu Scheduled Caste voters to grant citizenship to Hindu Scheduled Castes who

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[323] MH Lakdawala, NCP gaining ground in Maharastra as Muslim voters back the party avilable at https://www.milligazette.com/Archives/01012002/0101200220.htm

[324] NCP Election Manifesto,2014.

[325] BJP Election manifesto 2014, p.16 and BJP Election Manifesto 2019 p33.

[326] BJP Election manifesto, 2014, p.16.

[327] Nikhil M. Babu, Rs 2.8 Lakh Crore Allocated For Dalits, Adivasis Not Spent By Government .

[328] BJP Election Manifesto,2019 p.33.

[329] Ibid., p.19.

[330] Ibid., p.12.

migrated from Bangladesh. It was an important pledge in the BJP manifesto. Narendra Modi launched the 2019 general election campaign from a Scheduled Caste bastion (Thakur Nagar) in West Bengal.[331] The upper caste shifted their loyalty to BJP in West Bengal after it formed the federal government. This policy helped BJP grab the mandate from TMC and CPI(M) in West Bengal and win 18 parliamentary seats.[332] The Scheduled Castes were traditional voters of CPI(M) in West Bengal. This raises several questions of why the citizenship issue to the migrants was not settled by the TMC and CPI(M) in West Bengal.

The 2019 BJP election manifesto includes the promise of a ten percent reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS). This caters to the poor among the upper caste.[333]It repeats the construction of Ram Mandir, the abrogation of article 370 — removing the special status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, and the enactment of the citizenship amendment bill. These were aimed at its base voters. The non-mention of the word reservation for Scheduled Castes and other backward castes in the BJP election manifesto and the prominence given for the right-wing agenda can be explained by the influence of the RSS and the upper caste base of the BJP. According to Golwalkar, the former chief of RSS, the RSS is not for equality but harmony. He justifies the basis of the caste system as a system of corporate social personality[334]. He also popularized a myth — that the quotas were envisaged for about ten years —special privileges based on caste create vested interests to remain a separate entity— this would harm integration with society —affirmative action benefits should be based on the economic conditions of the people.[335] However, except for

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[331] Abhishek Law, PM Modi woos Bengal's Matuas, meets 'Boroma , 02, February 2019. available at https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/national/pm-modi-woos-bengals-matuas-meets-boroma/article26162960.ec.
[332] Ayan Guha, Is There A Second Wave of Dalit Upsurge in West Bengal? EPW Vol. 54, Issue No. 2, 12 Jan, 2019.
[333] BJP Election Manifesto 2019, p.33.
[334] M.S.Golwalkar,. Bunch of Thoughts Jagarana Prakashana. Bangalore,1966.
[335]Ibid.

the quotas in the legislature, there is no sunset clause for caste-based quotas in education and employment. Quotas in the Constitution were envisaged to remain as long as caste-based discrimination exists in India.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat called for reviewing the reservation policy during the Bihar 2015 state elections, and the BJP lost.[336]According to Anand Teltumbde, The BJP's idea of India is based on Ram Rajya (a Hindu God's rule).[337] It plans to introduce religious epics as compulsory in the school curriculum.[338] This Ram Rajya (Reign of Ram) shall exclude the Dalit, backward castes, and other minorities.[339] It sustains caste. Ram was known to protect the caste system. For example, during his reign, he killed a Shambuka, a Sudra, for learning. According to Manusmriti (the Constitution of Hinduism), Sudras were not supposed to learn. They were to remain slaves.[340]

In 2018 BJP was defeated in five state assemblies in two of these states. It was in power for three consecutive terms. RSS, rattled by the BJP performance, declared that it was losing upper caste support[341]. Stung by the erosion of votes from its base, i.e., the upper caste voters, the BJP sought to revitalize its base through a 10 percent quota for economically weaker sections. i.e., the poor among the upper caste[342]. In 2019 the BJP won most of the parliamentary seats and thereby started to enforce the controversial policies it

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[336] Ajay Singh, From quota to perception management, how the BJP lost psy-ops in Bihar,30th ,October 2015, available at https://www.firstpost.com/politics/from-quota-to-perception-management-how-the-bjp-lost-psy-ops-in-bihar-2489460.html

[337] Anand Teltumbde, Return of the Mandir, *EPW* Vol. 53, Issue No. 10, 10 Mar, 2018.

[338] Ibid.

[339] Ibid.

[340]Ambedkar,The Annihilation Of Caste, 1936 available at https://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/mmt/ambedkar/web/readings/aoc_print_2004.pdf;

[341] Ajoy Ashirwad Mahaprashasta, Optics, Not Welfare: The Politics of Appeasement Behind the 10percent Reservation,08, January,2019 available at https://thewire.in/politics/reservation-economically-backward-upper-castes-narendra-modi-rss-bjp

[342] Dheeraj Mishra , Exclusive: Eye on Caste Vote Bank, Documents Show How Modi Rushed 10percent EWS Quota Law 27,January,2020 available at https://thewire.in/government/ews-quota-consultation-law-ministry

promised — construction of Ram Mandir at a disputed site (demolition of a mosque) — quotas for the EWS. According to Bheemeshwar et al.(2019), the EWS category is triple in higher educational institutions without quotas.[343] The policy is not based on empirical findings.[344] Reservation was introduced in India to tackle caste-based stigma, and lower castes were not allowed to study or take up vocations.[345] According to Amartya Sen(2019), if the whole population is included in the reservation, it amounts to the removal of the reservation.[346] Though the EWS reservation does not have constitutional validity, it was dismissed by the Supreme Court in *Indrashwney*1992 judgment. However, the BJP went to the extent of amending the Constitution to give it validity.[347]

At the same time, quotas for Dalit and the backward castes in employment and education are purposefully left empty by the employers. They create barriers to make it difficult for the backward castes to get a job or study at an educational institution. They have invented the creamy layer concept — an income test for the backward castes.[348] The BJP government wants to make it more strict, even though many bottlenecks exist for the backward caste candidates to study at an educational institution or get a government job.[349] The new policy on income criteria shall exclude a large number of the OBC from getting

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[343] Bheemeshwar, A Sunny Jose Pindiga Ambedkar Vikranth Sagar Reddy V S Nishikanth 2019, New Reservation Policy Is It Empirically Justifiable?, EPW Vol. 54, Issue No. 23, 08 Jun, 2019

[344] Ibid.

[345] Ashwini Deshpande, Rajesh Ramachandran, The 10percent Quota Is Caste Still an Indicator of Backwardness? Vol. 54, Issue No. 13, 30 Mar, 2019.

[346] PTI, "Muddled Thinking," Says Amartya Sen On 10percent Reservation Policy 09, January, 2019 avilable at https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/amartya-sen-on-10-percent-reservation-job-quota-reservation-in-2019-muddled-thinking-1975313.

[347] Partha Chatterjee, The 10percent Reservation Is a Cynical Fraud on the Constitution 18 Jan,2019, Avialable At https://thewire.in/government/the-10-reservation-is-a-cynical-fraud-on-the-constitution.

[348] Chaudhury, Pradipta. "The 'Creamy Layer': Political Economy of Reservations." Economic and Political Weekly 39, no. 20 (2004): 1989-991.

[349] Shoaib Daniyal, For India to overcome inequality, reservations are key. BJP government must stop diluting OBC quota 19th July 2020, available at https://scroll.in/article/965067/the-modi-government-must-stop-diluting-the-obc-quota

quotas.[350] There were no protests against the EWS quota for the upper caste, however the upper castes unleashed riots against quotas for the backward castes during the implementation of Mandal Commission recommendations.[351]

CPI,2014 and 2019 manifestos emphasize that reservation in the private employment sector for the Dalits and eradication of manual scavenging, and the implementation of the reservation in the private sector. While CPI and CPI(M) manifestos are similar in many ways, CPI(M) 2019 manifesto promises a significant number of policies for the welfare of the Dalit and the backward castes, such as the promise of reservation in the private sector. However, most of the schemes were repeated from 2004 in the 2009 election manifesto[352]. The CPI(M) 2014 and 2019 election manifestos promised that the party shall abolish caste — this is a unique development, this was not mentioned in earlier manifestos.[353] Ambedkar extolls the socialists' parties to work towards abolishing the caste system[354] as early as the 1930s. It is important to see if the Communist parties would consider "caste as a contradiction" in India and make changes in the non-election party program because the CPI(M) and CPI view India as semi-colonial and semi-feudal,[355] and the contradictions that exist in India are: between 1) imperialism and the people of India; 2) feudalism and the masses; 3) capital and labor, and 4) within the ruling classes. [356]

The CPI(M) considers the struggle of the Dalits and other backward castes for betterment will be successful only when the fight against caste is tied to the struggle against

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[350]Dilip Mandal, How BJP is undoing three decades of Mandal gains and still getting OBC support 08, July,2020 available at https://theprint.in/opinion/with-creamy-layer-hike-bjp-undoing-3-decades-of-mandal-gains-getting-obc-support/456497/.

[351] Omvedt, Gail. "'Twice-Born' Riot against Democracy.

[352] CPI(M)Election Manifesto,2004 p 16,; CPI(M)Election Manifesto,2009,pp.24,25.

[353] Ibid.

[354] Ambedkar,Annihilation of Caste,1936.

[355] CPI(M), Party Programme available at https://cpim.org/party-programme.

[356]Ibid.

economic exploitation.[357]The CPI(M) resolution on the Dalit question released in 2006[358] elucidates that the interests of three classes - namely imperialists, landlords, and bourgeois leadership - defend the caste system by protecting the pre-capitalist landlord system. The resolution also explains that there has been no change in the condition of the caste system even after many decades of India's independence. The overhaul of land laws would strike a blow to the caste system and untouchability. The CPI(M) 22nd congress resolved that caste-based reservation shall be extended to the private sector.[359] The resolution also mentioned that a separate front for Dalits could help them in their empowerment.[360] Politics based on caste, religion, and region are a challenge to the left politics.

The CPI(M), after winning elections in Bengal and Kerala, initiated land reforms.[361]For example, the Communist government's first legislation in West Bengal was to amend the West Bengal Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 1977, and register the sharecropper (tenant). According to Bardhan et al. (2014), the CPI(M) government made certain tenant rights could be inherited by the cultivators, and eviction by landlords was made a punishable offense. In addition, it increased the share of the produce to the sharecroppers.[362] This was followed by land distribution to the landless. About 37 percent of the distributed land was provided to the Dalits and 19 percent to the Tribals.[363] As a result,

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[357] 20th congress Political Resolution, CPI(M) available at https://cpim.org/tags/political-resolution-adopted-20th-congress.

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the domination of landed gentry in rural Bengal in economic, social, and political spheres has been reduced[364]. The condition of the rural masses has improved to a certain extent, and Dalits' participation in local governing bodies significantly enhanced.[365] The crime rate against the Dalits and Adivasis in West Bengal is low compared to other parts of India. However, the dilemma of the Communist parties in India over the caste question is their understanding of "base and superstructure" given in Marx's *Preface to Critique of Political Economy*— "that economy is the base on which the superstructure lies."[366] However, this is not a rigid concept as the Communist parties in India elucidate it.[367]

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CONCLUSION

Election Manifestos are official party documents, and in some cases, they are legislated. Analyzing them gives insight into the government's future policies.[368] This study has given me practical experience that manual content analysis retains — the meaning of the sentences and provides accuracy while predicting the policy preference. Though, automated methods would take a fraction of time compared to manual methods. However, incorporating automated analysis could have posed several challenges in policy prediction because it relies on keyword search. For example, the word "poor" in the manifesto was widely used in the section on development to refer to the status of people being poor and also in administrative reforms to refer to deficiency in service, so this was one of the issues with the automated content analysis and English language is replete with words which have similar meanings and parties in the manifestos tend to use neutral words. Therefore, it would require a person to contextualize the meaning of the word in the sentence. However some of the limitations of the manual content analysis method as pointed by Mikhaylov et al. (2012) ─ human coding also has potential problems with reliability since different coders[369] attach different meaning to the same text.[370] The data generated by human coders also need to be validated. Cording categories are sometimes ambiguous and overlap.

It was beneficial to use Manifesto Coding Instructions (5th edition) guidelines. They tell what text is helpful for analysis, and they stipulate when to dissect sentences if there are two different policy positions in one statement. Due to the complexity of political issues in India, the category scheme from the Manifesto coding guidelines could not be used.

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[370] Ibid.

The categories for this thesis are contextualized to the issues in India and easily relatable to the issues in India, nevertheless, the coding instructions have a universal appeal, and they help make the study on manifesto coherent and logical.

The key findings in the manifesto study are the central focus in the party manifestos, which is to build infrastructure, improve the economy, and carry out administrative reforms. Parties are at ease promising developmental projects in high numbers. However, Dalits and the backward caste put together are the largest populations in India. Their economic and social life is precarious, and studies have shown that discrimination is high. The promises for their upliftment were not proportionate either to their plight.

Though the socio-economic upliftment clauses in the Constitution are a model to promote social and economic justice in India, the parties have been inconsistent in their use. Parties have firmly catered to their bases in the manifestos. Promises have changed in election cycles; for example, the BJP's 2014 manifesto was rooted in developmental agenda and administrative reforms for the country, focusing on development, but in 2019 the development agenda was reduced. The promises are more focused on its base voters. The Congress' 2014 manifesto was less on infrastructure and administrative reforms but catered to base. However, its 2019 and 2014 manifesto is replete with promises for the economic empowerment of the Dalits and the backward castes but doesn't promise reservation in the private sector. It has quickly emerged as a catch-all party catering to all sections of Indian society. The poll promises of 2014 reveal it has transcended its Fabian socialist roots and has undergone a transformation as it places reliance on the private sector to distribute public goods. BJP has not made sizable promises for the welfare of the Dalits and the backward castes. Both in 2019 and 2014, it appears that it has been careful to balance its traditional vote base, i.e., upper castes. The promise of quota for the poor among the upper caste also helped BJP ride to power in 2019, though this policy contravenes the law.

Similarly, CPI(M) and CPI have been consistent on quotas in the private sector for the Dalits, and the manifestos have emphasized alleviating the socio and economic conditions of the Dalits and the backward classes. The critical development of the 2014 and 2019 election manifestos is the recognition by CPI(M) to abolish caste. This is a unique development. None of the manifestos of the other national parties have mentioned the abolition of caste. While West Bengal is a fortress for the communist parties (CPI(M) and CPI), the promise of citizenship to the lower caste migrants from Bangladesh helped the BJP breach the fortress. The typical policy in all the party manifestos has been to promote entrepreneurship among the Scheduled Castes, and this policy is a result of the economic reforms launched in the 1990s. The future research questions include, how does a party make inroads into a social group if it doesn't have a policy in its manifestos, and why does a social group in India, particularly Dalits and the backward castes, vote for a party that promises them nothing? Do the political parties consult these social groups while drafting the manifesto.

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