

# Social Exclusion, Inclusive Growth and Other Backward Class in India: Some Reflections

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**Abstract:** Inclusive growth refers both to the pace and pattern of growth, which are considered interlinked and therefore it need to be addressed together. The growth process creates a new economic opportunities that are unevenly distributed. Indian Society is characterized by multiple form of exclusion associated with social identities such as caste, class, gender etc. So, addressing such forms of exclusion requires inclusive policies to overcome deprivation faced by each of these groups. The development startles of the last several years makes new social groups believe that the gains of social economic and Political development has not been shared equally for these excluded groups. Therefore those who have been excluded from Social, economic and political development are now seeking solution to their groups specific problems. It is in this background, this paper explains the social exclusion, inclusive growth and case of Other Backward Class in India who are excluded from the mains of the society.

**Keywords:** Social exclusion, inclusion, OBC, Reservation.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The word "inclusive" has become not only fashionable but also quite relevant for India. The Oxford Dictionary has defined inclusive as "not excluding any selection of society". Rapid and sustained poverty reduction requires inclusive growth that allows people to contribute to and benefit from economic growth (OECD). Rapid Peace of growth is unquestionably necessary for substantial poverty reduction, but for this growth to be sustainable in the long run, it should be broad-based across sectors (wacziarg, 2003). Inclusive growth refers both to the pace and pattern of growth, which are considered interlinked, and therefore in need to be addressed together. The idea that both the peace and pattern of growth are critical for achieving a high, sustainable growth record, as well as poverty reduction, is consistent with the findings in the Growth Report. Strategies for Sustained Growth and Inclusive Development (Commission on Growth and Development, 2008) The Commission notes that inclusiveness- a concept that encompasses equity, equality of opportunity, and protection in market and employment transitions is an essential ingredient of any successful growth strategy. Growth is Pro-poor if and only if the incomes of poor people grow faster than those of the population as a whole, i.e., inequality declines. However, while absolute Pro-poor growth can be the result of direct income redistribution schemes, for growth to be inclusive, productivity must be improved are new employment opportunities created. Inclusive growth is about raising the face of growth and enlarging the size of the economy, while leveling the playing field for investment and increasing productive employment opportunities, Policies for inclusive growth are an important component of most government strategies for sustainable growth.

While same level of growth is obviously a necessary condition for sustained poverty reduction, and strong average growth has been accompanied by a sharp reduction in poverty, the evidence is clear that growth by itself is not a sufficient condition. Growth does not guarantee that all persons will benefit equality. Growth can bypass the poor or marginalized groups, resulting in increasing inequality. High and rising levels of income inequality can also reduce the growth rate itself. High inequality also has implication for political stability and social cohesion needed for sustainable growth (ADB 2007 and 6). Hence, reducing inequality has become a major concern of development policy, a concern that has generated interest in inclusive growth.

Very recently, the report of the Eminent Persons Group that was initiated by the Asian development Bank (ADB, 2007) made reference to the term 'inclusive growth', which emphasizes ensuring that the economic opportunities created by growth are available to all-particularly the poor to the maximum possible extent.(See also Ali and Zhueng 2001). The growth process creates a new economic opportunities that are unevenly distributed. The poor are generally constrained by circumstances or market failures that constrain them from availing these opportunities. As a result, the poor generally benefit less from growth than the non-poor. Thus, growth will generally be not pro-poor if left completely to the markets. The government, however, can formulate policies and programmes that facilitate the full participation of those less well off in the new economic opportunities. We may thus define inclusive growth as growth that not only creates new economic opportunities, but also on that ensures equal access to the opportunities created for all segments of society, particularly for the Other Backward Classes.

Indian society is characterized by multiple form of exclusion associated with social identities such as caste, class, gender etc. in various spheres of our society, polity and economy. So, addressing such forms of exclusion requires inclusive policies to overcome deprivation faced by each of these groups. The development strategies of the last 64 years makes new social groups believe that the gains of social economic, and political development has not been shared equality by these excluded groups. Therefore those who have been excluded from social, economic and political development are now seeking solution to their group-specific problems. It is in this background, this paper explains the inclusive growth and case of Other Backward Class in India who are excluded from the mainstream of the society.

## II. THE CONCEPT

Social exclusion in its general form was first developed by Lenoir in the mid-1970s. Literature categories to the group of excluded persons including those who have been denied, "a livelihood, secure, permanent employment, earnings, property, housing, consumptions levels education and cultural capital, the welfare state, citizenship and legal equality, democratic participation, public goods, nation or dominant race, family and sociability, humanity, respect, fulfillment and understanding" (Sen, 2005). At present, one recognize a wide range of domain being affected by the process of social exclusion. Buvinic stated the meaning of social exclusion as "the inability of an individual to participate in the basis political, economic and social functioning of the society", and goes on to add that social exclusion is "the denial of equal access to opportunities imposed by certain groups of society upon others" (Burvinic, 2005). This definition indicate three important features for social exclusion- firstly, its effects on culturally defined groups, secondly, the fact that it is embedded in social relations (the processes through which individuals or groups are wholly or partly excluded from full participation in the society in which they like, and finally, it delineates the consequences of exclusion (Hann, 1977). Thus, the outcome of social exclusion in terms of low income and high degree of poverty among the excluded groups depends crucially on the functioning of social and economic institutions through a network of social relation, and the degree to which they are exclusionary and discriminatory in their outcomes. Social exclusion has a sizeable impact on an individual's access to equal opportunities if social interactions occur between groups in power/subordinate relationships. The groups focus on social exclusion recognizes that people are excluded because of ascribed rather than achieved features beyond individual agency or responsibility (Buvinic, 2005).

## III. CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

Reservation is one of the recommendations of the Indian constitution to uplift certain sections of society, which were denied of equal opportunities. The reservations for the backward classes are of three broad categories, Political, Educational and Employment. For the first, the constitution provides for reservation of seats in proportion to their numbers for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled tribes in the Lok Sabha in its Article 330, and in the Vidhan Sabha in Article 332. These provisions do not exist for the Other Backward Classes. Secondly, an implication exists in the constitutional provision- Article 15(4), which allows the state to make any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes. Thirdly, the constitutional provisions as modified from time to time are Article 16(4), Article 16(4 A), Article 16(4 B), Article 335 and Article 320(4). These article provide explicitly for reservation in educational institutions for the backward classes and the authority of the state to make any required changes as the required situation and time.

#### IV. RESERVATION AND OTHER BACKWARD CLASS

In so far as Other Backward Classes are concerned, the Government of India for the first time issued an office memorandum on the August 13, 1990, providing reservation of 27 percent of the vacancies in civil posts and services under the Central Government for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes. The said order was to take place from August 7, 1990. Writ petitions were filed in the Supreme Court questioning the said memorandum along the applications for staying the operation of the memorandum. It was stayed by the Supreme Court. Another official Memorandum was issued on September 25, 1991, modifying the earlier memorandum dated August 13, 1990. The modified order provided that within the 27 percent of the vacancies Civil Posts and Services under the Government of India reserved for SEBC preference shall be given to candidates belonging to the poor section of the SEBCs. In case a sufficient number of such candidates are not available, unfilled vacancies shall be filled by other SEBC candidates.

The Supreme Court in its judgment dated November 16, 1992, in a Writ Petition (Civil) No.930 of 1990. Indra-Sawhney etc. Vs. Union of India and Others declared the official memorandums dated August 13, 1990 and September 25, 1991, issued by the Government of India unenforceable for want of valid identification of the backward classes of citizen qualified for reservation under Article 16 of the Constitution of India. The Apex Court directed the government of India to re-examine the question of identification of the backward classes of citizens in accordance with the principles and directives contained in the respective judgments of the nine Judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court in this case the pass appropriate order providing for reservation under Article 16(4).

The Government of India appointed an Expert Committee to recommend the criteria for exclusion of the creamy layer, i.e. the socially advanced persons/sections from the benefits of reservation for Other Backward Classes in Civil Posts and Services under the Government of India. Consequent to the consideration of the Expert Committees recommendations, the Government issued orders in modification of the orders dated August 13, 1990.

On 11 April, 2008 Supreme Court announced the verdict on the PIL filed against government order of implementing 27 percent reservation for the Other Backward Class in the institutes of higher learning. The policy was announced by the Human Resource Development Minister in 2006, but was not implemented due to the stay order of the Supreme Court. The government order was challenged in the Supreme Court on the ground that it violates 93<sup>rd</sup> Amendment of Indian Constitution. 93<sup>rd</sup> Amendment of Indian Constitution is related with article 15 in which after clause 4 the following clause was inserted, "(5) Nothing in this article or in sub-clause (g) of clause (1) of Article 19 shall prevent the state from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the SCs and STs so far as such special provision relate to their admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30. In its verdict Supreme Court had clearly stated that, "The Constitution (Ninety-third Amendment) Act, 2005 does not violate the "basic structure" of the constitution so far as it relates to the State maintained institutions.

Those who are opposed to this affirmative action of the government are seems to be the biggest advocate of merit, which according to them will go down once the reservation will be implemented. The argument of merit lacks any substantial logic and reasons and much to do with the understanding of self-Supremacy. Merit is not the birth right of any individual and some section in the society because of the historic reason in which role of rigid and prevailing caste system is evident. Caste system is an integral part of the Hindu Society and because of this Hindu Society remained divided on caste lines. According to the caste system some section of the society are not fit to get education and due to this discrimination this section was excluded from the mainstream.

It is a time to realize the fact that exclusion can never lead to exclusive growth of any nation. Every effort should be taken to ensure that the deprived section of India should get appropriate support to come in the basic arena of competition.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Inclusive growth has remained a prime concern for the government of India as a way to reduce poverty and disparities. In this sense, the title of the Approach Paper on the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan. "Towards Faster and More Inclusive Growth" reflects the need to make growth "more inclusive" in terms of benefits flowing through moire employment and income to those sections of society which have been by passed by higher rates of economic growth witnessed in recent years. The

recognition of the need for more inclusive growth by our planners is a welcome shift in emphasis from mere increase in growth rates to improvement in standards of living of poor people through increase in employment opportunities as well as better delivery systems to ensure access to intended benefits by intended beneficiaries.

Other Backward Class needs special attention to shed the tag of backwardness like other backward communities as they constitute around 52 percent of India's population as per Mandal Commission Report, Though 27 percent post have been reserved for them since 1993, their representation in central as well as State Governments is low. Other Backward Class should be included in the Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowships Programmes. The appointment on contract/ ad hoc in Central and State government institutions for the reserved post must be abolished and regular appointments are to be made against these vacancies. There should be provisions for reservation of seats in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies for the Other Backward Classes.

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