

Opinion towards Political Involvement of Okkaliga Community In Shimoga and Chikkamagaluru Districts of Karnataka State

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Abstract:

The purpose of the study is to explore the Political Participation of Okkaligas: A Case Study of Shimoga and Chickmangalore Districts in Karnataka. To understand the current political practices of Okkaliga people and what influences and informs their method of political participation. Since, the study is ex-post facto research, the descriptive, analytical, conceptual and empirical methods are used. Because, the study engaged and used both primary and secondary sources of data. The required primary data were gathered directly from the sample under study through the usage of a well-structured questionnaire. Researcher Selected 500 respondents in total, of two districts i.e., 500, out of the total 250 with 50% from Shimoga District and 250 with 50% from Chickmangalore District. 73% of survey respondents who agree that political participation is an essential for Indian democratization process, likened to a mere 14% of respondents who do not think that political participation is important to create more democracy in India.

Introduction:

Caste is a social phenomenon of Indian society. By participating in the modern political system, caste is now exposed to divisive influences and a new form of integration resulting from a new scheme of universalist-particularistic relationships. Caste has gained an influential position in Indian politics. On the unitary hand, a structure of divisions and accommodations, caste provides to politics and on the other hand, a cohesive element which absorbs tensions and frustrations. It becomes divisive when the question arises of national integrity. But regarding a locality or group matter, it gives a cohesive force by uniting people of a caste. The formation role of caste association is also playing as important part in influencing voting patterns. Even political parties are considering caste as a vote bank. This enabled the lower castes to

be politically influential on the basis of numerical preponderance. In selecting candidates for elections, political parties often consider the caste composition of constituencies. Sometimes several castes are using politics in their effort to ameliorate their conditions or to achieve their goal. Reservation policy is another facial expression where we can understand that caste system also influences Indian politics.

Need of the Study:

Establishment of casteless society is an established and pronounced goal of every major political party in India. But at the same time, castes and caste system is very much well rooted in the socioeconomic and political structure of our society.

Today a serious problem with which nation faced is as to what is the relationship of caste and politics in India are the hold facts on politics weakening or strengthening? Is the caste exerting its heavy pressure on politics of India? These are some of the serious problems which face we today into so far as caste and politics is concerned.

During British days for quite some time, Indians had no share in running their own administration. Accordingly, it is difficult to establish relationship and influence of caste on politics. When however, the system of election started in the country, it became clear that caste is exerting its pressure on politics. Each caste, community and religion tried to have maximum seats in the elected bodies. Since seats in the legislatures were reserved for major religions, therefore, hold of caste became still tighter. It was however, after India became free that the establishment of a casteless society became one of the objectives of our political set up.

Statement of the Problem:

The purpose of the study is to explore the political participation of Okkaliga community. The topic of the study is “Political Participation of Okkaligas: A Case Study of Shimoga and Chickmangalore Districts in Karnataka”.

Objectives:

The research has four main objectives,

- To understand the current political practices of Okkaliga people and what influences and informs their method of political participation.

- It seeks to examine the contemporary methods of Political participation used by Okkaliga to influence Government policies in Karnataka.
- It will examine any changes in political participation over time by entering into a historical overview of Okkaliga civic engagement.

Hypotheses:

On the basis of above objectives, following Hypothesis have been set:

- This community failed to expand their activities/influence beyond the region of old Mysore in Karnataka.
- In Karnataka politics, Okkaliga community is highly engaged in political activities.
- These activities however fall outside of the conventional forms of participation such as voting and move into the area of unconventional activism.
- After backward class movement, the Okkaligas in Karnataka are playing dominant role in Karnataka politics.

Methodology:

Since, the study is ex-post facto research, the descriptive, analytical, conceptual and empirical methods are used. Because, the study engaged and used both primary and secondary sources of data. The required primary data were gathered directly from the sample under study through the usage of a well-structured questionnaire. The secondary data, on the other hand, are gathered from government gazettes, bulletin, magazines, journals, newspapers, articles, and relevant textbooks, materials from the internet, term papers and archival documents on the subject area. Consequently, the population for the study was taken from the Okkaliga who reside in Shimoga and Chickmangalore Districts of Karnataka State at the time of carrying out this area work. Purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents for the administration of the questionnaire. The questionnaire contained both closed and open-ended questions and was divided into two main sections. Each of the sections addressed a specific segment of the study. The beginning part of the questionnaire solicited information on the socio-economic position or personal background of the answers. The second section dwells on the electoral behaviour, party membership/partisanship attachment, membership of volunteer organization,

membership of religion group, access to sources of information such as radio, TV and the cyberspace. Hence, the study is partly based on historical, descriptive, analytical and empirical methods. For this, scheduled questionnaire is prepared and information is collected from the identified respondents.

Scope and Limitations of the Study:

The present study has certain limitations, which must be considered for the purpose of specific study and limited nature of research to be undertaken. The present study has been conducted in Shimoga and Chickmangalore Districts. It is going to be focused only on the political participation of Okkaligas in political institutions in the state of Karnataka. The study has to focus on the impact of political participation on the development of Okkaliga Community.

Sample of the Study:

Table: District Wise Sample Distribution

Sl. No.	District	Sample	Percentage
1	Shimoga	250	50
2	Chickmangalore	250	50
	Total	500	100

Researcher Selected 500 respondents in total, of two districts i.e., 500, out of the total 250 with 50% from Shimoga District and 250 with 50% from Chickmangalore District. Researcher Selected 310 male respondents with 62% and 190 Female respondents with 38%. out of the total 500 respondents, 5% are from presidents and vice presidents of panchayat raj institutions belonging to Okkaliga community 15 respondents with 3% are presidents and mandalpachayaths and talukpanchayats, 50% respondents with 10 are chairpersons/presidents of Gram Panchayats 15% respondents with 3 are ZP members, 15% respondents with 3% are from MPTC/Talukpanchayat members, 200 with 40% are from ward members of gram panchayats, 200 with 40% are general public belonging to Okkaliga community.

Source of Data

To meet the aims of the subject field, primary as well as secondary sources of data, were gathered for the cogitation. The primary source data were gathered directly from the elected representatives of the types of Panchayats and peoples belongs to Okkaliga community.

The secondary information was collected from reference books, thesis abstracts, conference proceedings, articles published in the refereed journals, reports of the Ministry of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, working papers, Gazetteers, Human Development Reports, unpublished papers and monographs of the research institutions operating on democratic decentralisation. The books of the District Statistical Offices, Gram Panchayats, TalukaPanchayats, and ZillaPanchayats also served as sources of secondary information. The websites of the State and Central government departments, National and International organisations working on democratic decentralisation were reviewed periodically.

Table: Tools and Techniques Used in the Study

Tools Used	Respondents	Techniques adopted	Sample
Structured interview schedule and Check List	Elected representatives belong to Okkaliga community in Gram/Taluk/ZillaPanchayats and Common peoples who belongs to Okkaliga community.	Interview	500

1.10 DATA PROCESSING

The empirical data collected according to the above methodology from the study was subjected to editing with reference to semi-structured interview schedules. Errors like blank entries, incomplete entries, wrong entries, and logical errors were set in the field itself after completion. The qualitative data was measured by assigning numerical values and were subjected to coding. It was served by developing a coding key. By adverting to the coding key, the data from the 500 semi-structured interview schedules was transferred to the master chart. The data from the master chart was then keyed into the computer in a Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The frequency distribution tables, percentage, pie diagram, bar charts, and bi-variant

tables, Mean, Standard Deviation and Chi-square, and Rank-correlation tests were computed utilizing the same software. Consequently, analysis and interpretation were made with inferences.

Major Findings:

- Okkaligas with a higher level of education are more likely to believe that voting influences the government than those with below intermediate level of education.
- Gender was the primary influencing factor as 69% of female respondents cited that they did not take part because of security and safety issues or because their families did not admit them to participate for the sake of their guard. On the other hand, the share of male respondents who cited the same ground was only 20%.
- 73% of survey respondents who agree that political participation is an essential for Indian democratization process, likened to a mere 14% of respondents who do not think that political participation is important to create more democracy in India.
- When appearing at the percentages of participation in each conventional political action, it is evident that reading about politics in newspapers is high, where 46% of the okkaligas said that they occupy in this activity very often or often, and 30% stated that they say about politics in newspapers sometimes. While talking about politics with other people is among natural processes with high participation, other actions are comparatively low: trying to convince friends to vote the same, attending political meetings or rallies, and spending time working for a political party or a prospect.
- The majority of poor people from Okkaligas are enabled to fight the election due to lack of non-mobilization of votes and lack of economic resources.
- The rich people among Okkaligas are able to win the elections due to economic status and with mobilization capacity.
- The present working status of political institutions is facilitating environment to come up a welfare programme of Okkaligas.

- The majority of respondents from membership, training, and occupational background are mobilizing funds for whatever candidate or party during the time of elections.
- The representatives belonging to okkaligas have understood the purpose of political reservation.
- Political parties are giving importance while selecting under reservation quota by using up his personal contacts other than his commitments to his caste. It is also seen that the caste or category will only aid to the minimum level but his winner in the elections depends upon his personal doings of the society.
- In the study area agricultural, self-employment is the major programs are being carried on by the government and Panchayat Raj institutions.
- The highest number of illiterate and school dropout respondents belonging to Okkaliga community is working in political institutions in the several talks of Shimoga and Chickmangalore Districts.
- In Thirthalli Taluk of Shimoga District gram Panchayats there exists a majority representation of Okkaligas i.e., 35% are 68% are female and male respectively.
- In Shimogataluk, there exists the second highest number of gram panchayat members belonging to Okkaliga community.
- There exists a 36 % of representation belonging to a male Okkaliga community and less than 16% of representation belonging to female Okkaligas in the institutions of gram Panchayat in Hosanagara Taluk of Shimoga District.
- There exists a smaller number of representations of the male members and less than 5% of female members belonging to an Okkaliga community in the institutions of gram Panchayat in Soraba Taluk of Shimoga District.
- There exists a more male representation of okkaligas and medium female representation belonging to okkaligas in the institutions of gram Panchayat in Bhadravathi Taluk of Shimoga District.
- There exists less than 10% representation of male and less than 2% of female representation belonging to an Okkaliga community in the Shikaripura Taluk of Shimoga District.

- There exists less than 15% of male representation belonging to Okkaligas and less than 5% of female representation belonging to an Okkaliga community in the Sagara Taluk of Shimoga District.
- In the working of Zilla Panchayat institutions in Shimoga district, there exists regular male and female participation of Okkaligas in Shimoga Zilla Panchayat.
- In the Shimoga district, there exists average participation of male and female in the working of gram Panchayats belonging to Okkaliga Community.
- In the working of Taluk Panchayat institutions in Shimoga district, there lives a regular representation of male and partial participation female.
- In the working of Zilla Panchayat institutions in Chickmangalore district, there exists a nominal male representation and around 20% of female participation belonging to an Okkaliga community in Chickmangalore Zilla Panchayat.
- There exists a smaller number of political participations of both male and female belonging to an Okkaliga community in the institutions of gram Panchayat in Kadur Taluk of Chickmangalore District.
- In the institutions of Taluk Panchayat at Chickmangalore district, there exist a normal number of political participations of male members belonging to Okkaliga community and positive participation of female belong to Okkaliga community.
- On that point is more political participation of male and female belonging to an Okkaliga community in the working of gram Panchayat in Sringeri Taluk of Chickmangalore District.
- In the working of gram Panchayat in Mudigere taluk there exists more participation of male and females belonging to Okkaliga community.
- In the working of gram panchayat in Koppataluk there exist major participation of male and normal participation of female belonging to Okkaliga community.
- In the working of gram panchayats in Chickmangalore taluk there exists positive participation of Okkaliga community.
- In the working of Zilla Panchayat at Chickmangalore district, there exists more participation of Okkaliga community.

- In the working of political institutions in the Chickmangalore District, there exists the higher level of participation of respondents from agricultural and Business background belonging to Okkaliga community.
- In the working of political institution in the region of Chickmangalore District, their lives the higher participation of respondents from the higher income groups belonging to Okkaliga community.

Policy Implications:

The following are the policy implications:

- The government has to create an environment for the effective involvement of Okkaliga community in the working of political institutions.
- The government has to create awareness among the people belonging to Okkaliga community for more political participation.
- The government has to take steps for the effective and more participation of people belonging to Okkaliga community in the institutions of gram-panchayats.
- There is a need to reserve few seats to the people belonging to Okkaliga community in State Legislative Council.
- There should be free atmosphere for the involvement of people belonging to Okkaliga community from the good educational, younger age and better economic backgrounds.
- The government has to implement more and more schemes for the sustainable development of rural Okkaliga community.

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