Social Dominance Orientation Among Different Social Groups Leads to Cast Discrimination Attitude and Communal Violence in India
(Breaking a vicious cycle through Ambedkar thoughts)

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Abstract:

This paper examines the social dominance perspective in the Indian context. Using social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) as guiding theoretical frameworks, we tested three hypotheses within a sample of 106 college students from a region where to severe communal violence had taken place from last five years. In particular, we have hypothesized that social dominance orientation (SDO) and caste discrimination attitude (CDA) would both make high contributions in communal violence. After accepted this hypothesis, we further extended our study to investigate the influence of Ambedkar thoughts to marginalize the social dominance orientation and caste discrimination attitude. A result of this study shows that Ambedkar thoughts intervention is much useful to reduce the SDO, CDA and communal violence from society. The theoretical implications of these findings are discussed.

Key words: *Social Dominance Orientation, Cast Discrimination Attitude, and Communal Violence*

India is famous for its complex social systems. Indian society has been divided into several Jaati and Upjaati (castes and sub-castes) and imposed an unjust, oppressive and draconian code of conduct and functions by discriminatory cast system on individual especially on aparticular community in which it is decided that these people or society should do specific work. During 18th and 19th-century various social reformers like Saint Kabir, Jyotiba Phule, Shahu Maharaj, Dr. Ambedkar, Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, have fight for equality and establish modern and secular India. However, each social reformers and their thoughts become confined in each caste group. The new generation is forgetting the contributions of these reformers. Day by day, communal forces are becomingstrong. It is quite necessary to stop social dominance orientation from different social groups. Indian society has been divided into several Jaati (castes) and Upjaati (sub-castes) and imposed anunjust, oppressive and draconian code of conduct and functions by discriminatory cast system on individual especially on specific community In India the caste system is a classification of people into four hierarchically ranked castes called varnas. They are classified according to occupation and determine access to wealth, power, and privilege. The Brahmans, usually priests and scholars, are at the top of this system. Next are the Kshatriyas, or political rulers and soldiers. They are followed by the Vaishyas or merchants, and the fourth are the Shudras, who are usually laborers, peasants, artisans, and servants. At the very bottom of thecaste system are those considered as untouchables?

Caste is a closed social stratum that determines its member's prestige, occupation, and social relationships. In each caste, social relations between members of different castes are severely limited and formalized. In the caste system, upper castes compete for the services of the lower castes. Higher caste people exploit the lower castes. The attitude of the upper castes has always been to consolidate and maintain their high social status.

Discrimination is an action that denies social participation or human rights to categories of people based on prejudice. This includes treatment of an individual or group based on their actual or perceived membership in a certain group or social category, "in a way that is worse than the way people are usually treated." It involves the group's initial reaction or interaction, influencing the individual's actual behavior towards the group or the group leader, restricting members of one group from opportunities or privileges that are available to another group, leading to the exclusion of the individual or entities based on logical or irrational decision making.

According to UNICEF and Human Rights watch,caste discrimination affects an estimated 250 million people worldwide. Discrimination based on caste, as perceived by UNICEF, is prevalent mainly in parts of Asia, (India, Bangladesh, Nepal,China,Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Japan),Africa and others. As of 2011, there were 200 million Dalits or Scheduled Castes (formerly known as "untouchables") in India. More than 165 million people in India continue to be subject to discrimination, exploitation and violence simply because of their caste. In India's "hidden apartheid," untouchability relegates Dalits throughout the country to a lifetime of segregation and abuse. Caste-based divisions continue to dominate in housing, marriage, employment and general social interaction—divisions that are reinforced through economic boycotts and physical violence.

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Social Dominance Theory was first formulated by psychology professors Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto. The theory begins with the observation that human social groups tend to be organized according to group-based social hierarchies in societies that produce aneconomic surplus. These hierarchies have a trimorphic (3-form) structure. This means that these hierarchies are based on (1) age (i.e., adults have more power and higher status than children), (2) gender (i.e., men have more power and higher status than women), and (3) arbitrary-set, which are group-based hierarchies that are culturally defined and do not necessarily exist in all societies. Arbitrary-set hierarchies can be based on ethnicity (e.g., Whites over Blacks in the U.S.), religion, nationality, and so on. Human social hierarchies consist of a hegemonic group at the top and negative reference groups at the bottom. More powerful social roles are increasingly likely to be occupied by a hegemonic group member (for example, an older white male). Males are more dominant than females, and they possess more political power. Most high-status positions are held by males. Prejudiced beliefs, such as racism,sexism,nationalism, and classism, are all manifestations of this same system.

People who are higher on Social Dominance Orientation tend to endorse hierarchy-enhancing ideologies, and people who are lower on Social Dominance Orientation tend to endorse hierarchy-attenuating ideologies. Social Dominance Theory finally proposes that the relative is counterbalancing of hierarchy-enhancing and -attenuating social forces stabilizes group-based inequality.

Communal violence is a form or structure of violence that is perpetrated across ethnic or communal lines, the violent parties feel solidarity for their respective groups, and victims are chosen based upon group membership. The term includes conflicts, riots and other forms of violence between communities of different castes, religious faith or ethnic origins. Communal violence is found in Africa,Europe,Americas,Asia,and Australia. The term was constructed by the British colonial authorities as it wrestled to manage violence between religious, ethnic and disparate groups in its colonies, particularly Africa and South Asia, in early 20th century.

The Indian law defines communal violence as, "any act or series of acts, whether spontaneous or planned, resulting in injury or harm to the person and or property, knowingly directed against any person by virtue of his or her membership of any religious or linguistic minority, in any State in the Union of India, or Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes within the meaning of clauses (24) and (25) of Article 366 of the Constitution of India".

Communal violence, in different parts of the world, is alternatively referred to as ethnic violence, non-State conflict, violent civil unrest, minorities' unrest, mass racial violence, inter-communal violence and ethnoreligious violence. Caste discrimination, Social dominance, and communal violence are the destructive determinants for social development. If we have to keep integrated and united India. We have to eradicate these destructive determinants from our society.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has spent his life infighting against the exploratory system in India. To annihilate the exploratory

system he gave a message of 'To Learn, To Organize and To Fight' to his followers. After Indian independence, he wrote Indian constitution in such a way that it is based on liberty, equality, and fraternity that are the Buddhist principles. He was the architecture of Indian constitution. To ruin the exploratory system from Indian society he frames a law in which it is assumed that to practice discrimination is a legal offense. India is multicultural and multi-caste system society and if Dr. Babasaheb did not include the principle of secularism India doesn't remain as an integral.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar has run several movements such as 'Chavadar Lake', 'Black Ram Temple Entry' and so on. He wrote several books, plenty of volumes of speeches hadbeen published by theIndian government that gave continuous inspiration to youngsters in India to fight against theexploratory system. His thoughts, his movements, and his whole life path play a model role for today's Indian generation.

Objectives

1. To find out whether Ambedkar thoughts intervention is beneficial or not to reduce the tendency of social dominance orientation among posttest condition.

2. To investigate whether Ambedkar thoughts intervention is beneficial or not to reduce the attitude of caste discrimination among posttest condition.

3. To search whether Ambedkar thoughts intervention is beneficial or not to reduce the attitude of communal violence among posttest condition

4. To find out the relationship between Social Dominance Orientation and Caste Discrimination Attitude.

5. To find out the relationship between Caste Discrimination Attitude and Communal Violence.

6. To find out the relationship between Communal Violence and Social Dominance Orientation.

Hypotheses

1. The Social Dominance Orientation among the postgraduate students will be reduced significantly due to Ambedkar thoughts intervention.

2. The Caste Discrimination Attitude among the postgraduate students will be reduced significantly due to Ambedkar thoughts intervention.

3. The Communal Violence attitude among the postgraduate students will be reduced significantly due to Ambedkar thoughts intervention.

4. There will a positive and significant relationship between Social Dominance Orientation and Caste Discrimination Attitude.

5. There will a positive and significantassociation between Caste Discrimination Attitude and Communal Violence.

6. There will a positive and significantassociation between Communal Violence and Social Dominance Orientation.

I. METHOD

Design

Pre and post design was employed for the present study. Ambedkar thoughts were used as an intervention between pre and post condition.

Sample

106 post graduates students from Kolhapur and Sangli city were selected for this study as a sample. The samplewas selected by using random sampling method. Their age range was 21 to 25 years. The male-femaleratiowas kept 1:1.

Tools

➢ **Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDOS):** Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto were developed this scale. This scale consists 16 items with five alternatives. First eight items are negative, and last eight items are positive. A high score on this scaleindicates strong tendency toward Social Dominance Orientation.

➢ **Caste Discrimination Attitude Scale (CDAS):** Self-developed Caste Discrimination Attitude Scale was used to collect data. This scale consists of 24 items with five alternatives. 10 items are positive and 14 items are negative. A high score on this scaleindicates a high attitude toward caste discrimination.

➢ **Community Violence Scale (CVS):** Self-developed Community violence scale was used to collect data. This scale consists of 15 items with file alternatives. Nine items are positive and sixitems are negative. A high score on this scaleindicates a high attitude towardCommunity Violence.

II. PROCEDURE

Participated students have been administered social dominance scale (SOD), caste discrimination scale (SDS) and communal violence scale (CVS) to assess their level on each psychological scale. Those who secured ahigh degree of social dominance, caste discrimination, and communal violence only remained in the study, participants who have average and low level on this scale were excluded from the study, out of 178 only 59 students remained in the study. After the sample selection, Ambedkar thoughts intervention have been initiated in which various one-day workshops on Ambedkar thoughts, reading sessions on writings and speeches of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, poster exhibition and movies were presented during the graduation. After a couple of years social dominance scale (SOD), caste discrimination scale (SDS) and communal violence scale (CVS) were re-administered to the 46 students. 13 students were droppedfrom this intervention program.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the results of the t values on pre and posttest on Social Dominance Orientation, Caste Discrimination Attitude, and Communal Violence. The mean value of social dominance in pre-condition is 62.81 and post condition it reduced to 34.78, which indicates that the social dominance level reduced drastically after the Ambedkar thoughts intervention. The t value of these two conditions is 16.11 which are significant at 0.01 level of alpha. The mean value of caste discrimination in pre-condition is 97.33 and post condition it reduced to 44.26, which indicates that the caste discrimination attitude level reduced drastically after the Ambedkar thoughts intervention. The t value of these two conditions is 28.75 which are significant at 0.01 level of

alpha. The mean value of the communal violence in pre-condition is 62.19 and post condition on it reduced to 53.96, which indicates that the social dominance level reduced after the Ambedkar thoughts intervention. Computed t value of these two conditions is 5.50 which are significant at 0.01 level of alpha.

Table No.1: Showing t values of pre and posttest Conditions on Social Dominance Orientation, Caste Discrimination Attitude, and Communal Violence

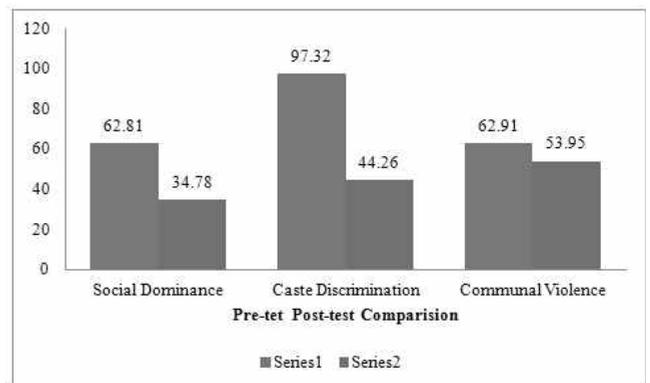|	Testing Condition	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	significance
Social Dominance	Pre-test	58	62.81	6.074	102	16.11**
	Post-test	46	34.78	10.484		
Caste Discrimination Attitude	Pre-test	58	97.33	6.778	102	28.75**
	Post-test	46	44.26	10.965		
Communal Violence	Pre-test	58	62.19	10.534	102	5.50**
	Post-test	46	53.96	3.876		

** Significant at 0.01 level

Figure 1

Table No. 2: showing the correlation between Social Dominance Orientation, Caste Discrimination Attitude, and Communal Violence

	Social Dominance	Caste Discrimination Attitude	Communal Violence
Social Dominance	1	.854**	.368**
Caste Discrimination Attitude		1	.381**
Communal Violence			1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Dalits in India has become a target of prejudice and discrimination from the ancient period. Social psychologists have tried to understand why people discriminate the other group peoples on African and Jew context. However, prejudice and discrimination against Dalits have received the little attention of social psychologist. The relation between

social dominance orientation and discrimination has been researched by worldwide psychologists (Nicolas, M. et. al, 2005; Henry, P. J. and his colleagues, 2005) Table 2 shows the Pearson's Product Moment correlations between Social Dominance Orientation, Caste Discrimination Attitude, and Communal Violence. There is a positive and significant correlation between Social Dominance Orientation and Caste Discrimination Attitude as well in Social Dominance Orientation and Caste Discrimination Attitude, which is significant at 0.01 level of alpha. The correlation between Caste Discrimination attitude and Communal Violence is also positive and significant which is also significant at 0.01 level of alpha. In the research conducted by Henry, P. J. and his colleagues (2005) found that the American sample demonstrates the typical patterns of social dominance such that those who are higher in social dominance orientation tend to support greater violence toward the Middle East.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

1. Ambedkar thoughts intervention is much useful to reduce the Social Dominance Orientation, Caste Discrimination Attitude, and Communal Violence among the postgraduate students.

2. There is positive and significant correlation between Social Dominance Orientation and Caste Discrimination Attitude.

3. There is positive and significant correlation between Social Dominance Orientation and caste discrimination.

4. There is a positive and significant correlation between Caste Discrimination attitude and Communal Violence.

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