A Study of Multiculturalism in India

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Abstract: - **Multiculturalism is the phenomenon of multiple groups of cultures existing within one society, largely due to the arrival of immigrant communities, or the acceptance and advocacy of this phenomenon. The culture of India has been shaped by its long history, unique geography and diverse demography. This review paper provides a comprehensive overview of multiculturalism in India.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The term 'multiculturalism', however, has not been used only to describe a culturally diverse society, but also to refer to a kind of policy that aims at protecting cultural diversity. Although multiculturalism is a phenomenon with a long history and there have been countries historically that did adopt ulticultural policies, like the Ottoman Empire, the systematic study of multiculturalism in philosophy has only flourished in the late twentieth century, when it began to receive special attention, especially from liberal philosophers[1]. Multiculturalism describes the existence, acceptance, and/or promotion of multiple cultural traditions within a single jurisdiction, usually considered in terms of the culture associated with an aboriginal ethnic group and foreigner ethnic groups. This can happen when a jurisdiction is created or expanded by amalgamating areas with two or more different cultures (e.g. French Canada and English Canada) or through immigration from different jurisdictions around the world (e.g. Australia, Canada, United States, United Kingdom, and many other countries)[2].

The Indian caste system describes the social stratification and social restrictions in the Indian subcontinent, in which social classes are defined by thousands of endogamous hereditary groups, often termed jātis or castes.Religiously, Hindus form the majority, followed by Muslims. The statistics are: Hindu (80.5%), Muslim (13.4%), Christian (2.3%), Sikh (2.1%), Buddhist, Baháʼí, Jain, Jew and Parsipopulations. India's state boundaries are largely drawn based on linguistic groups; this decision led to the preservation and continuation of local ethno-linguistic sub-cultures, except for the Hindisprachraum which is itself divided into many states. Thus, most states differ from one another in language, culture, cuisine, clothing, literary style, architecture, music and festivities.[3] A country's economic potential flows above all from its human capital, from the many talents, unique cultures and heritage of its people. We don't fully appreciate the value that our immigrants represent. Too often, we take our multiculturalism for granted.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Prof. Dr. Dominic KV [5] Multiculturalism is defined as the state of co-existence of diverse cultures.

Culture includes, racial, religious, linguistic, etc. which may have differences and distinctions in customary behaviours, cultural assumptions and values, patterns of thinking and communicative styles. It also aims at the preservation of different cultures and their identities within a unified society as a state or nation. 'Multiculturalism' is now used not only to define disadvantaged and maginalised groups like tribals, linguistic-cultural-religious minorities, LGBT, disabled, etc., but also immigrants who may come under ethnic, religious minorities as well as minority nations and indigenous peoples. Multiculturalism is applied by the government, philosophers, politicians, writers, critics and scholars for human society alone, but to me it includes non-human beings, plants and the planet itself.

According to Rochana Bajpai [7] India is home to policies of legal pluralism in religious family law (Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Parsi), territorial autonomy for several linguistic and tribal groups, as well as quotas in legislatures, government jobs and educational institutions for caste and tribal minorities. Indian debates illustrate the insufficiency of liberalism as a framework for comprehending and evaluating multiculturalism. In Indian arguments, considerations of national unity and development, communitarian conceptions of secularism, and democratic values of equal status and dignity, have been significant. A multicultural theory that takes as its starting point the experience of Asia and Africa will need to go beyond liberal frames and grapple with a range of traditions – religious, socialist, radical democratic- for the justification of group rights. The Indian case highlights the need to distinguish between multicultural rights in general, and minority rights in particular. India's multinational federalism that recognizes the claims to self-government of several linguistic and tribal groups, is an important example of a multicultural policy that is not a group-differentiated right, and has weakened protections for religious and other minorities in several cases.

According to Beteille 2003[11] Most of the major religions of the world such as Hinduism and Buddhism, originated in this land while others, such as Christianity and Islam, though came from outside has remained and grown in it for a thousand years and more. This great profusion of linguistic, religious and other customs and usages was associated with a multitude of castes, communities and tribes each of which was bearer of a particular sub-culture or even subsub-culture which is transmitted from generation to generation

According to Sreelekha Mishra, C. Bharath Kumar [14] As India is a multi-ethnic, multi-language, multi-caste, multi-religion country, the inclusive growth of the country depends on the development on these different minority groups and

this inclusive growth demands all social groups to get equal access to services and opportunities for economic and social development. Marginalization of these groups or perceived lack of advantage of these groups is a threat to India. It may result in conflict only which does not gel well with the idea of India.

According to Harihar Bhattacharyya [19] Multicultural concerns have long informed India's history and traditions, constitution and political arrangements. Much of the writings on Indian history, culture and politics are marked by some kind of multicultural concern. The Indian Constitution as the source of these policies can be said to be a basic multicultural document, in the sense of providing for political and institutional measures for the recognition and accommodation of the country's diversity.

According to Dr. Debiprasanna Pattanayak [25] In the context of Indian diversity consisting 3000 mother tongues, 4600 castes and communities, 4000 faiths and beliefs, 45000 plaint/biological species, 65000 animal varieties, one would expect that the Indian Development Planning would be based on multiplicity of approaches and practices. One would expect that Indian celebrates its diversity, diversity of its languages, cultures, world views and creativity. But unfortunately the reverse is the case.

III. CONCLUSION

Multiculturalists take for granted that it is "culture" and "cultural groups" that are to be recognized and accommodated. Yet multicultural claims include a wide range of claims involving religion, language, ethnicity, nationality, and race. The Republic of India's state boundaries are largely drawn based on linguistic groups; this decision led to the preservation and continuation of local ethno-linguistic sub-cultures, except for the Hindi sprachraum which is itself divided into many states. Thus, most states differ from one another in language, culture, cuisine, clothing, literary style, architecture, music and festivities. In this paper, multiculturalism in India was studied and conclude that The view that the various cultures in a society merit equal respect and scholarly interest. Multiculturalism is an unstoppable trend worldwide, and countries such as Brazil, Canada, Singapore, UK, Germany, Switzerland, India, USA, Australia and New Zealand are leading the way and India is a country which has Multiculturalism in its DNA.

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