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Title:

Multiculturalism in India: An Analysis

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Author:

Dr. Ketankumar S. Bhosale

Associate Professor in Political Science, Sathaye College (Auto.) Vileparle (E) Mumbai

Abstract:

Multiculturalism is an amalgamation of different races, nationalities, languages, religions, classes, gender, etc. It's a view that people from different cultures have equal rights. It's geared toward assuming a common political culture that all can participate in. It supports cultural coexistence. Multiculturalism is a philosophy of evidence, acceptance of Different culture under a same jurisdiction. India is a land of diversity. It is a blend of multi religious and ethnic group. Every state has not only their language but they have their different food habits, dress code, religion, culture etc. The cultural diversity of India has been saved by its long history it's geography and diverse demography. India has historically been a multicultural society. North-East is one of the most Culturally diverse areas of the world. It is the home to about 200 tribes. The term unity in diversity fits perfectly with the regional landscape. Since every linguistic community irrespective of their size and population in northeast nurture idiosyncrasies their cultures. This Article is an effort to look at the multiculturalism in Indian society, ethnic groups' and its contemporary challenges.

Keywords:

Multiculturalism, Amalgamation, Indian Society, Diversity, Contemporary Challenges, Ethnic Groups

Introduction:

One of the key modern ideas in political science is the concept of multiculturalism. Culture and multiculturalism are strongly intertwined. We define culture as the common methods of living, thinking, and comprehending the world in which we place ourselves and other people on different planes. One of the distinctive features of human society is culture. Every culture is unique to its civilisation. However, it is also evident in today's society that individuals from many cultural backgrounds make up this society. Multiculturalism has grown as a result of a society's diverse cultural makeup. In a postmodern world when human life and ideas are fragmented, it seeks to restore a sense of completeness. By increasing the degree of economic, social, and cultural integration of minority communities into the host culture, it promotes their full participation in society. Multiculturalism has been used as a descriptive phrase to describe cultural diversity. As a normative phrase, it suggests that communal variety is positively endorsed, even elaborated, and usually founded on respect and acknowledgement of various groups.

Multiculturalism as a Concept:

"Multiculturalism" literally translates to "multiplicity of cultures." It is the idea that multiple cultures can live in harmony and equality within a single nation. People of various races, cultures, languages, and faiths can be found in a society or nation. They speak different languages, have diverse cultures, and hold varying religious beliefs. This plurality and diversity of cultures, customs, religions, and so forth are acknowledged and validated by multiculturalism. It accords these various societal cultural diversity equal consideration. The Swiss coined the term 'multiculturalism' in 1957 to describe their nation, which has four spoken languages and a variety of religious beliefs. In the 1960s, it was once more developed in New York, USA. In the 70's the concept reached in Australia and Canada who officially declared themselves as multicultural states. Then after it had reached to Western Europe. But as a whole the concept of multiculturalism got its first legal implementation through the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988.

The main characteristic features of multiculturalism are as under:

- 1) Multiculturalism believes on Multiplicity of cultures.
- 2) It is a concept that denotes that several different cultures can co-exist peacefully and equitably in a single country.
- 3) It recognises and accepts all cultures of the society as equal.
- 4) A multicultural society grants equitable status to distinct cultural and religious groups.
- 5) It gives equal respect to all kinds of people in a society.
- 6) Multiculturalism helps people to acquire a sense of tolerance and peace towards other cultures.
- 7) It also helps us to connect with people of other cultures and know how to co-operate with them.

Multiculturalism and Democracy:

One of the major concerns in modern politics is the issue of ethnicity, group identification, and cultural plurality with governments or politics. More precisely, language or cultural disparities and multi-ethnicity are current issues that have threatened democratic norms and regulations. These distinctions become more pronounced, and occasionally they serve as the basis for political conflict. Cultural differences have become a source of numerous political and social conflicts as a result of the state's evolving modern social structure. Multi-ethnic and cultural communities have shifted towards socio-political movements for a variety of reasons. Their identity crisis is actually one of the main causes of these movements. Therefore, it is necessary to observe the many ethnic movements that are organised by the multi-ethnic minority. Democracy and multiculturalism go hand in hand. The majority culture is typically identifiable in contemporary democratic systems, while minority cultures are considered distinct from the majority culture. In general, multiculturalism placed a strong emphasis on providing minorities with equal standing and status within a state. Multiculturalism holds that no person or group can be denigrated based only on their unique language and culture.

In general, multiculturalism placed a strong emphasis on providing minorities with equal standing and status within a state. Multiculturalism holds that no person or group can be denigrated based only on their unique language and culture. All cultures should be treated with equal respect and acknowledgement, according to multiculturalism. Here, we can use the Sikhs in Canada who wear turbans as an example. The government of that nation ruled that it was legally required for both motorbike riders and drivers to wear helmets. The Canadian government, however, complied with the Sikhs' demand that they be prohibited from wearing helmets when driving in order to maintain their ancient customs.

Additionally, every Indian cultural community has been granted cultural rights by the constitution. "Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language script or cultures of its own shall have the right to conserve the same," according to Article 29 of the constitution. The politicisation of culture is a challenge that liberal democracies, particularly those in the third world, have been dealing with in recent years. To win elections, a number of political parties have turned culture into a campaign topic. They even have no qualms about inciting cultural conflicts amongst different multicultural groups.

As previously said, cultural disparities among the populace have given rise to numerous ethnic movements. Because it grants these other cultures equal respect and acknowledgement, multiculturalism can therefore be quite important in such circumstances. In this regard, we can conclude that the governments of many liberal democracies have made some progress in granting these diverse ethnic and cultural groups equal rights. For instance, these populations now enjoy a number of liberties in contemporary democratic states, such as the ability to travel freely, organise, and express themselves freely.

Multiculturalism in India:

In terms of language, caste, religion, culture, and ethnicity, India is the most amazing country in Africa. India's diversity differs greatly from that of the United States and other Western nations. The distinction is that Indian cultural variety is inherent or inherited, whereas Western developed nations must implement their multicultural policies to provide justice to foreigners or internally migrated cultural minority communities. The idea of "unity amidst diversity" is the foundation of Indian society. Over the course of its lengthy history, India has welcomed numerous individuals from around the globe. They arrived here as invaders, traders, migrants, and eventually made this their permanent home. Therefore, despite the fact that India is home to a diverse population, each with their own cuisine, languages, attire, castes, faiths, and geographical areas, they all have a common civic culture. With over 1800 languages (400 of which are spoken) and more than 100 distinct communities based on caste, religion, and language, multiculturalism is a reality in Indian society today. Foreigners have lived in the nation for many centuries. As early as the seventh century A.D., Muslim troops had occupied it. In addition, Europeans arrived in Kollam, Kerala, as early as the sixteenth century. As a result, India has a shared civic culture even if its population is diverse, with each group having its own food, dialects, dress, castes, religions, and geographical regions. Multiculturalism is a reality in Indian society today, with over 100 different communities based on caste, religion, and language, and over 1800 languages, 400 of which are spoken. The country has had foreign residents for many centuries. It has been occupied by Muslim forces as early as the seventh century A.D. Furthermore, as early as the sixteenth century, Europeans began to settle in Kollam, Kerala.

On February 27, 2002, the Godhra city in Gujarat state saw sectarian violence between Muslims and Hindus as a result of the Godhra fire. This led to the Godhra incident. On that day, a sizable Muslim mob assaulted and forcibly stopped a train known as the Sabarmati Express. 58 Hindu pilgrims, including women and children, were consequently burned alive. Large-scale reprisal massacres against Muslims were sparked by this attack. Once more, we can use the Shiv Sena, a Maharashtra regional political party, as an example. Bal Thackeray established the far-right political party on June 19, 1966. This party supported the expansion of Maharashtra's Maharashtrian population's power and influence.

It promoted the idea that as Maharashtra belonged to the Maharashtrian people, they ought to be given precedence over foreigners or immigrants. its party frequently uses violence against members of other communities in order to achieve its goal. Its supporters have even set fire to the cricket pitch where an Indo-Pakistan match was supposed to take place. The Babri Mosque dispute is another instance of communal violence that India has experienced. A mosque was constructed at Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in the 16th century by Babar, the chief commander of the Mughal Empire. It is reported that a temple dedicated to Lord Rama existed before the mosque was constructed, and the temple was demolished to make way for the mosque.

As a result, there has been conflict between Muslims and Hindus ever since. This issue turned into a political one when India gained its independence. The Babri Masjid grounds were ordered to be unlocked by the Faizabad district court in February 1980 so that Hindus might pray at the location, which they believed to be the birthplace of Lord Rama. A Karseva was organised in December 1992 by the organisations that supported the construction of Ram Mandir. Lacs of people travelled to Ayodhya for that reason, and on December 6 of that year, tensions increased. The destruction of the Babri Mosque demonstrated once more how unsuccessful secularism and multiculturalism are. As a result, it is evident that Indian society does not now enjoy the benefits of a diversified society.

Currently, a nation rich in tradition and heritage has been ripped apart by the atrocities of religious and communal conflicts. However, it might be argued that we may be heading towards a utopian

future in which cultural differences are eliminated with the introduction of contemporary education and the globalisation of the younger generations.

The Challenges of Multiculturalism in India:

The multicultural movement began in the early 1970s, first in Canada and Australia then later in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and other countries. India has always had a diverse population. There are over 1,632 distinct languages and dialects in India. According to the 2011 census, around 79.80% of the population is Hindu, 14.23% are Muslims, 2.3% are Christians, 1.72% are Sikhs, 0.7% are Buddhists, 0.37% are Jains, and 0.66% are of other religions. The Indian Constitution lists 22 official languages. Religion, language, and other similar elements continue to remain prevalent in public life even though the Indian Constitution states that the state is secular.

Similar to the components of a salad bowl, which add to the dish's overall composition, each culture's unique traits are still identifiable within the vast Indian community. Ideologies such as Sarva Dharma Sambhava, Unity in Diversity, and Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam are among the cultural aspects of India. Somewhere in the multiculturalism principles, these components can be found. By including clauses protecting minorities and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, or race, the Indian constitution has embraced multiculturalism.

However, it is regrettable that India's pluralism has recently turned into a battlefield. The seeds of multicultural society were sown by a number of social movements. Different types of identity politics are based on caste and religion. The culture of "us and them" is a product of identity politics. The attraction between Muslims and Hindus has grown as a result of numerous terror attack occurrences. Bigotry is also becoming more prevalent in other areas. In India, multiculturalism undermines the common good in favour of a minority interest by placing the interests of particular groups above the interests of the entire population. It causes conflict amongst individuals from various backgrounds. In Indian societies, multiculturalism may give rise to extremist movements.

It leads to conflicts between various groups of people who are members of various castes, cultures, and faiths. Without a doubt, multiculturalism accepts all cultures equally, but whenever citizens are subjected to pressure, they worry that the multicultural society will cause them to lose their cultural identity.

Conclusion:

Over the past 75 years, India has been renowned for its thriving democracy and unity in diversity. This is due to the fact that Indian multiculturalism embraces diversity and, by providing each community with equal standing and variety, strengthens democracy. Multiculturalism is in danger. occurs when a group begins to think narrowly, judging itself superior to others, and exhibiting prejudice and hostility towards other groups. Every Indian should defend the nation's unity and integrity, preserve peace and harmony, fulfil their fundamental responsibilities, and respect the freedoms and rights that the constitution guarantees to all segments of society in order to combat the discrimination that multiculturalism poses. Everyone should emphasise the common core of all religions and advance accurate interpretations of them. Every person has a responsibility to increase public sentiment against communalism, religious fundamentalism, and discrimination based on culture and religion.

India now requires a "Democracy of Cultures" as well as a "Culture of Democracy." Within the framework of shared citizenship, the Indian people must have the freedom to express and maintain their various linguistic, regional, and religious identities. It is our responsibility to prevent "Multicultural India" from turning into a "Monochromatic India."

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