

Why Should Youth Join Politics – A Study

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Abstract

This paper attempts to study consistent trend of increasing **political participation of educated youth** further, he commented that ‘It looks as though the day was not far off when Rampura would be a dormitory of Mysore’ (Srinivas, 1976: 233). In recent times, things have changed in such a fashion that one Indian scholar argues that the Indian village is vanishing; that it ‘is shrinking as sociological reality, though it still exists as space’ (Gupta, 2005a). The changes in the village society in West Bengal, a state of India, have probably been more spectacular in the Indian context, particularly during the last three decades. During this period, as a scholar says, ‘rural West Bengal has been subjected to extensive governmental intervention in the form of land reforms and democratic decentralization’ (Bhattacharyya, 2009: 59). The specificities of **rural politics** that have been mainly addressed in these contemporary researches are the roles and impacts of the deeply entrenched Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and organized party machineries in the countryside and the effects of various land reform measures on the agrarian structure of the state. This needs to be paired with societal long-term goals: if young people don’t understand the political system, if they don’t know their rights and duties as citizens, they won’t be interested in hearing about detailed political work. Sadly, schools in India often don’t fully integrate civic education into their curriculum, let alone teaching about how the government functions.

Key words: Youth, elections, politics, vote, rural areas, India, political participation

Introduction

If we look at the figures, India is a young democracy, as 50% of the population has not crossed 25 years of age and 65% of the population is below 35 years of age. As per the 2012 data, India still elects the oldest cabinet, and only 12 Members of Parliament are below 30 years of age. Democracy is the buzz word in Indian politics. But, what is the reality?. India is a democracy where a majority of the population below 40 years of age elects candidates above 60 to power. We should ask the question “Are we really satisfied with the way our country is being governed?” Should it not bother us that usually the 60 above population takes retirement, whether they are in a government office or working in the corporate sector? In politics, it is exactly the opposite. Social media has become an everyday-life tool, especially for young people. Like many elements of our lives, political discussions have moved on to the platform. Therefore the youth can be reached by connecting public discourse on traditional media with the one on social media that currently seem to run in parallel. Politicians active on social media are therefore more popular among young generations and they find posting regular, meaningful updates absolutely worthwhile.

Three principles, however, are important to keep in mind: First, social media is social and its power has to be harnessed accordingly. Politicians should take users seriously. If someone reacts or responds, this should be treated as a digital letter from a citizen, and be listened to. In fact, accounts that only post and don't respond are rarely successful. Consequently, a politician's social media strategy should include a component that frequently monitors the engagement and allows for reflection on the decision maker's own positions. Second, young people shouldn't be underestimated.

Objective:

This paper intends to explore and analyze how **education** has a major role to play in helping the **youth** in the participating democratic processes in rural areas that will help them in securing a overall societal growth.

These conflicts reflect state policies that underpinned and contributed to agrarian deterioration and crisis. The dominant classes, including both larger higher-caste and intermediate landholders, responded by attempting to preserve their social positions and modes of accumulation by thwarting the attempts of poorer peasants and rural laborers to improve their livelihoods. The initiatives of these classes have included both economic devices and extra-economic coercion, and in many instances they have produced as well a new unity and "closing of the ranks" among the landholders. (Walker 2008:595). There are various examples of such high-caste dominance, from the use of private armies by upper-caste landlords in Bihar to caste based atrocities on agricultural laborers by landholders in Tamil Nadu. As Le Mons Walker argues further, in a neoliberal context, such new forms of violence (often in the shape of caste-based atrocities) form the political and social corollary to the economic internal colonization of the poor (Walker 2008:595). Therefore, the reconfiguration of caste relations as a result of contemporary land struggles and how such struggles themselves are being shaped through traditional caste-based hierarchies, are both important areas to explore. The *Rajarhat* story is a prime example of this. While theoretical constructs such as ABD, market-led forces of dispossession around land struggle, etc. give this paper its analytical grounding and connect to the wider phenomenon of capitalist accumulation, the challenge is to make sense of such associated reconfigurations of social dynamics on the ground.

The youth often creates ideas with guidance from experienced people. I feel that given the chance, the youth can do so much more if they join politics on a larger scale with elders supporting them.

Why Should Youth Join Politics?

Politics should not be seen as the participation of experienced and old people. When young people join politics there might be more innovation ushered into digital India. Equal participation of youth in politics could lead to:

- Improvising more fresh and innovative ideas.
- Young people have more enthusiasm towards the betterment of society.
- Policies which involve the youth could be framed by young people rather than older politicians, who are probably less likely to understand the contemporary problems faced by the young people.
- By making politics accessible to the youth, the negative perceptions of politics can slowly be erased.
- Elder politicians have to prove their loyalty to their political parties by supporting their authoritarian practices because of the long term commitment to their parties. Young people are at an advantage because ideas dominate their commitment.
- The involvement of youth in politics leads to civic engagement which is broader than political engagement, as it includes services to the community through involvement in various sectors of development.
- Young people who participate actively in their community from early on are more likely to become engaged citizens and voters.

So in order to have a better “young” citizenship and participation, politics is the best tool to lead the country to a better future.

Conclusion

To fully comprehend why the rural youth is not entering politics, we must address the larger issue of migration. The large majority of the youth do not choose to live in the villages instead, they wish to migrate to some urban areas. According to a 2012 study, India had 139 million internal migrants, the majority of them being under the age of 30. This internal migration is mostly by the rural youth migrating in search of better jobs, more commonly in the corporate sphere. The job opportunities in the corporate sector have become increasingly popular, as these jobs are usually high paying, secure, and well respected. Simultaneously, in recent times, jobs in rural areas are being labeled as don't have 'dignity of labor'. This unreasonable claim often drives parents to encourage their children to seek jobs outside the villages which might garner them more respect. Furthermore, rural India faces a multitude of issues from illiteracy and

unemployment to the lack of basic infrastructure of health and sanitation. Hence, leading the youth out of the agrarian lands and into highly urbanized cities. Political determination and concrete action can accomplish much. The right balance of young India and experienced politics could lead to the cleansing of politics and restore the public's faith in the political system.

“No one is born a good citizen, No nation is born a democracy. Rather both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth” — Kofi Annan.

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