



‘An analysis of Dalit Empowerment: approaches to breaking the culture of silence in Uttar Pradesh India’

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Summary

The aim of this study is to explore the different approaches of empowerment to break the culture of silence among Dalit in Uttar Pradesh. This study explores the implications of right based empowerment through Dalit Movement and Poorest Area Civil society (PACS) program. It is manifested that both the agency relatively successful in catalysing the Dalit communities for political gain as well as for effective realisation of rights and entitlements up to certain extent. It is concluded that in spite of its potential the existing tension and non-cooperation between the agencies and lack of strong ideological perspective influences the empowerment process negatively. The study suggests that emphasis should be given to reduce the tension and gaps between the agencies by exploring and creating space for each other so that the Dalit empowerment can make its most significant contribution.

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List of Abbreviations

BAMCEF	Backward and Minority Castes Employees Federation
BSP	<i>Bahujan Samaj Party</i>
CBO:	Community based organizations
CDHR	Centre for Development And Human Rights
CHR&GJ	Centre for Human Rights and Global Justice
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DFID	Department for International Development
DIHR	Danish Institute for Human Rights
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HR Watch	Human Rights Watch
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NACDOR	National Conference of Dalit Organisations
NGO:	Non-governmental organization
PACS:	Poorest Areas Civil Society (PACS) Programme
PDS:	public distribution system
RBA	Rights based approaches
RIP:	Republican Party of India
SC	Scheduled Castes
SCF:	Scheduled Caste Federation
SDC:	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
TPDS:	Targeted public distribution system
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF:	The United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nation Research Institute for Social Development
UP:	Uttar Pradesh

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Preface

This thesis is made as a completion of the Master of Arts in Human Rights at the School of Global Studies University of Sussex.

It was important for me to carry out a research that really interests me. Moreover I wanted to specify a research question as per my work experience with the communities which I gained prior to pursue this degree. My engagement with the Dalit communities in Allahabad District of Uttar Pradesh, India exposed me to the culture of silence experienced by the Dalit in their day to day life. This culture of silence at many instances acts as a barrier for the community empowerment process which I involved with. In this study, I have reviewed the Dalit Movement and Poorest Area Civil society Program with the help of secondary sources such as academic journal, organisational and government publication. This review suggests that there is a need of holistic approach to break the culture of silence among Dalit communities which create obstacles in their empowerment. Moreover, it highlights gaps and tension between the agencies along with the strengths and weaknesses of both the agency.

I would like to express my sincere gratefulness to number of people who have contributed directly and indirectly in my learning process and specially completing my Research study.

First of all, I thank Dr Martin Webb for his supportive guidance. His ideas, comments and suggestion on various theoretical and textual issues helped me to define my research question and build my argument in a constructive ways. I am also greatly indebted to Dr Nigel Eltringham for his guidance throughout the course and especially for assigned appropriate supervisor for my dissertation. I would like to thank my family members who supported me mentally throughout the process. Further, I would like to give thanks to all individual, organisation, and department whose publications, I have used in my dissertation. They provided me the content for argument and subject matter for discussion.

Last but not least, I would like to thanks Ford Foundation without which the research would never have taken place. Especially, I would like to extend my gratitude to Ford foundation International Fellowship programme team members for their support and guidance throughout my course.

I dedicate this study to my beloved Father, who was a great motivation for me but unfortunately he passed away during my course.

Introduction

1.1. Background

In the world's largest democracy, *Dalit* (also known as Untouchables, Harijans, Scheduled Castes) still encounter socio-economic, political and religious segregation (Michael 1999, p.4-5), due to caste-based discrimination. Nearly 160 million Indians are born into this group and are called *Dalit*, or 'the broken people' (International *Dalit* Solidarity network 2004). This group represents a community who are still struggling to break out of decades-long mental bondage of oppression and inhuman existence (NACDOR 2006, p.16). The constitutional and legal provision to protect and promote the Dalits into mainstream society is used as a mask to cover the discrimination and exploitation faced by this group from the upper caste (Ajay 2010, p.54), and suggests that Dalits are widely included in the mainstream of society, although in reality still they suffer the most in Indian society.

To help these groups break this bondage, Dalit protest and resistance movements have been originated at various periods, and presently the political parties and Dalit NGOs have been engaged with the struggle of Dalit liberation (Viswanath 2009, p. 182). Dalit empowerment has become the theme for many organisations working with a rights based approach to address the issues of Dalit exclusion.

The rights based approach emphasises the participation and empowerment of the community and focuses on the law and legal systems, policy, transparency, and accountability, role of the state (DIHR 2007, P. 15). Thus it identifies the marginalised Dalit as active leaders in the process, and identifies the need to empower them to raise their critical consciousness to generate the courage to confront and to negotiate.

The rights based approach is focused on creating awareness among Dalit communities, helping them in their daily struggle, and encourages them to access and avail their constitutional legal rights (Bob 2008, p. 3 – 8). In this context empowerment could be defined as a process of deliverance which emphasises enabling the disadvantaged to exercise their rights, access resources, and actively participate in the decision-making process (SDC, 2004, p.19). This empowerment process helps the Dalit community to internalise the burden of the problem, and encourages them to emerge as a pressure group to speak out for their rights.

The agency of the Dalit movement in UP is focused on acquiring political rights, whereas the agency of Poorest Area Civil Society (PACS) Program is focused on empowerment of socially excluded communities, through civil society organisation to fight for their rights and non-discriminatory entitlements. These agencies promote and energise resistance within the community through empowerment and change in the existing political and economic order (UNRISD 2006, p.III). This agency identifies the marginalised as rights holders and works towards their meaningful and systematic inclusion and empowerment (DIHR 2007, p.4). Both agencies adopt a range of strategies, including information, advocacy, capacity-building, partner networking, peer support, and technical assistance to empower the marginalised (UNICEF 2007, p. 17), to break their culture of silence and speak out for their own rights.

However in spite of the political gains of BSP and various NGO involvements in the state, the Dalit are still experiencing exploitation and marginalisation, which needs serious attention. The trends and tension between the agencies need proper analysis and realistic evidence to understand the strengths and weaknesses as well as the gaps between the agencies which could help to reduce risks and tensions, and build on the synergies between the agencies to increase the effectiveness of the empowerment process to break the culture of silence of the Dalit community with the rights based approach.

1.2. Study Rationale

In spite of effective initiatives adopted by the agencies and the maximum political gains of *Bahujan Samaj Party* (BSP) the culture of silence still persists among the majority of the Dalit community in the state. This study discovers the strengths and weaknesses of the initiatives and holistic approaches to address the existing gaps. The main motivation for this study comes from my past engaged with the Dalit communities in the state of Uttar Pradesh. I experienced the culture of silence among them, due to the deprivation of access and control over entitlements, which at times acts as a barrier to advocate for their rights.

1.3. Research Questions

- Why have the rights components been emphasised in the process of Dalit empowerment? What does the rights based approach means to different actors engaged in the Dalit empowerment process?

- Can the evolving focus on the rights based approach help to bring positive changes in favour of poor and marginalised Dalit by strengthening existing efforts to realise rights and inclusion through empowerment, or is there reason for attention?

1.4. Organisation of the dissertation

To understand the Dalit empowerment process to break the culture of silence I have focused my literature review on the framework of the rights based approach. The **introductory** section gives the background and rationale for the dissertation and the following chapters build the discussion and argument. **Section two** reviews the links between the culture of silence and social exclusion, and how they influence each other and influence the citizenship and identity of the individual, followed by the situational analysis of culture of silence among Dalits in India. **Section three** discusses the situation of Dalits and initiatives to break the culture of silence in the state of Uttar Pradesh, and **Section four** highlights the initiatives of the Dalit movement and PACS in empowering the community to claim their rights and entitlements. **Section Five** analyses the initiatives with the rights based framework to identify strengths and weaknesses, and similarities and differences between the approaches of the agency. **Chapter Six** is the conclusion and recommendations that both agencies have tremendous potential to empower the Dalit, and should support each other and create space for each other to enhance the output of empowerment process, within the rights based framework.

1.5. Methodology

The paper is based on desk research and was completed through the process of analysis of diverse sources of information published in various academic journals, websites and reports, with appropriate acknowledgement to the original authors. The case study analysis was made by using the parameters of CR2 right-based framework (Brocklesby, Hobley, Scott-Villiers 2010, p.73) to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in the approaches of agencies. Primary data has not been used in the study, and neither was any kind of interview nor questionnaire used. Thus, the study may appear as a collection of documented findings. The word limit has restricted me to explaining the agencies and their community empowerment initiatives to break the culture of silence in detail.

Culture of silence and Dalit empowerment: Appraisal of literature

Empowerment can be perceived differently by different people based on their perspectives and situations. Moreover much argument surrounds the distinction between empowerment and the rights based approach but practically they overlap, and the overall perspective is acquiring power over decision making processes (Anthem 2011, p. 1). Furthermore all the agencies working with the rights based framework give emphasis to empowerment of the most deprived sections of society, so effectively explaining the empowerment process to break the culture of silence among the Dalit community. Therefore I have focused my discussion of empowerment with in the preview of the rights based approach.

2.1 Culture of silence

The ‘culture of silence’ is a situation defined by Paulo Freire, which denotes the relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor (Freire 2005, p. 45 – 46). The oppressors, or the dominant members of the society, tend to make decisions on behalf of the oppressed. This situation has made the oppressed dependent on the oppressor, who is known as the ‘expert’. They in turn neglect the needs and experience of the oppressed, while making decisions on their behalf. These experiences of humiliation, suppression, and ignorance create a culture of silences in the marginalised sections of society (Fritze 1993, p.3 & Petschulat 2010, p. 24). Imposed silence does not mean the absence of responses, but it indicates that the responses lack critical quality. As Zerubavel (2006, p. 9) stated, silence involves active avoidance which refuses to acknowledge the presence of things because of fear of engaging in dialogue with the oppressor (Vital Smarts 2010, p.3). This restricts individuals from effective participation in the mainstream society, and slowly they internalise negative images of themselves and feel incapable of self-governance, and outcast. Furthermore the muteness prohibits the individual from creatively taking part in the transformation of their society (Freire 1970 a, p. 50). This in turn leads to exclusion from political processes. (Gibson 2006, p. 321).

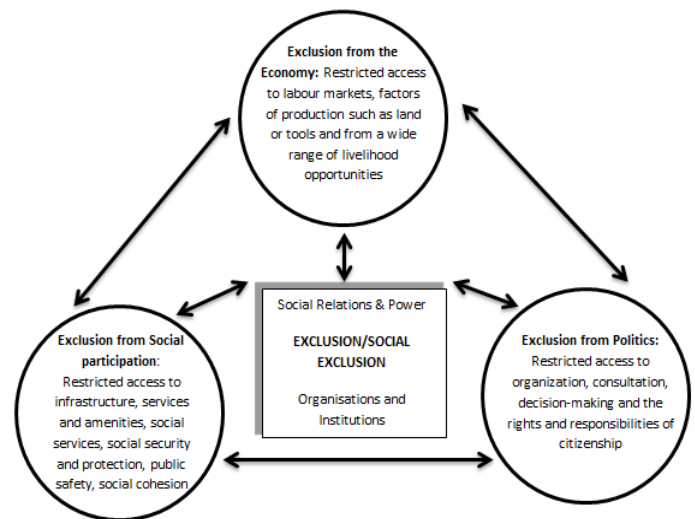
The Department of International Development (DFID) defined social exclusion as;

A process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age, disability, HIV status, migrant status or where they live...(DFID 2005b, p.3).

From the above definition it is clear that social exclusion restricts the individual in accessing their rights and entitlements. Moreover it prohibits them from accessing the opportunities required for maintaining a reasonable standard of living. Furthermore it creates hindrance in free and full participation in the economic, social, and political life of the community. Thus the excluded groups receive differential treatments which deny their access to employment, land, and social services, such as education and health (PACS 2011, p. 3). Beall and Piron defined social exclusion by condition or outcome and dynamic process. As a condition it is defined as a state which prohibits the excluded individual from participating fully in society. As a dynamic process it reflects the social relations and institutional obstacles that prohibit the excluded individuals to access livelihoods, human development, and equal citizenship (DFID 2005 a, p.9).

Figure 1: How Social exclusion relates to different spheres of development activity

Figure one shows the dynamics of exclusion operating through social relations and the various institutions based on power. Power relations play an important role in the dynamics of exclusion. Furthermore it demonstrates that the oppressed are excluded from economy, social participation, and politics, which are the important components of citizenship.



Source: DFID 2005, P. 9 1

Citizenship reflects the relationship between the individual and the state. It provides the rights to the individuals to work live and participate in the political process. Isin and Wood (1999, p.4) defined citizenship as;

Citizenship can be described as both set of practices (cultural, symbolic and economic) and bundles of rights and duties (civil, political, and social) that define an individual membership in a polity.

Thus the citizen is both ruler and ruled with a minimum level of autonomy, judgement and loyalty, and has rights to enjoy and responsibilities to deliver (Gunsteren 1998, p.11). Now the question arises, that if individual lacks any one parameter then should they be considered

a citizen? In contrast to social exclusion this is important to analyse, as socially excluded individual are prohibited from enjoying citizenship in society.

Citizenship, rights, and obligations, exist at individual, group and societal levels (Janoski 1998, p.11) The capability of certain groups to act as citizens and the degree of rights (formal and substantive) to enjoy as citizens completely depend on their position on a range of exclusion and inclusion (Lister 1997, p.36). If the individual stands on the verge of exclusion then the enjoyment of rights are minimal, while on the other side the enjoyment is maximum. These states of citizenship cause several challenges in political contestation, social inequality, economic dependency, cultural devaluation. Envisioning inclusive citizenship demands special attention to institution and access, identity and agency, association, and collective action (Kabeer 2002, p. 19 – 22), which is only possible through the empowerment of the marginalised community to raise their voice against injustice.

2.2 Breaking the Culture of silence

Breaking the culture of silence acknowledges the importance of the rights based approach and its role in empowering the community to fight for their rights. The 1997 Human Development report had a strong emphasis on the intrinsic connection between rights and human-centered development (UNDP 1997, p. 94 - 98). DFID defined RBA as the process of empowerment based on the principles of participation, inclusion, and fulfilling obligations. Participation aims at empowering people to realise their own rights, whereas inclusion aims for the building of an inclusive society based on values of equality and non-discrimination, and the principle of fulfilling obligation targets to strengthen the institutions and policies, so that the rights of the individual are ensured through the state and the duty bearer (Anthem 2011, p. 2).

To break the silence, individuals need a voice, and a way of speaking out and securing an answer which determines competence. Weakening in the level of competence increases the inability to raise the voice (Brocklesby, Hobley, Scott-Villiers 2010, p.35). To make the voice of excluded citizens heard there is an urgent need to honestly listen to unheard voices, but simultaneously there is a need to understand and acknowledge the tensions and complexities and further emphasis on individuals awareness on their rights and capacity to transform the reality' (Freire 1970 b, P. 5). Therefore the first step is to lift the 'curtains of culture of silence' and provide opportunities to all actors, and to examine critically the deeper cultural and structural issues which act as barriers to inclusive practice in their institutions

(Shevlin, Kenny & Shevlin 2002, p. 167). Secondly, creating critical consciousness which Freire referred to as 'conscientization' which believes that individuals knowing about issues have the potential to deepen their awareness of socio-cultural reality, which moulds their personality and builds their capacity to transform the reality of their lives (Freire 1974. P. 21 – 22).

This consciousness building enhances social justice claims in the 'politics of recognition' which is the overarching theme of all social movements (Fraser 2008, p. 3 – 5). Building critical consciousness associated with empowerment means, 'a process and an outcome of collective identity and political praxis, resulting in a capacity in thought and action to address the condition and position of marginalisation' (Rinaldo 1998, p. 234). Lister (2004, p.8) claimed that it deals with the power which is generated through the process of capacity-building and, 'can be witnessed in the very process of participation, as confidence and self-esteem grow'. Furthermore, Freire (1970 b, p.477) claimed that liberation is not possible without cultural action for conscientisation, and through the cultural action process maximum potential consciousness can be generated among the uncritical masses.

2.3 Role of Agency

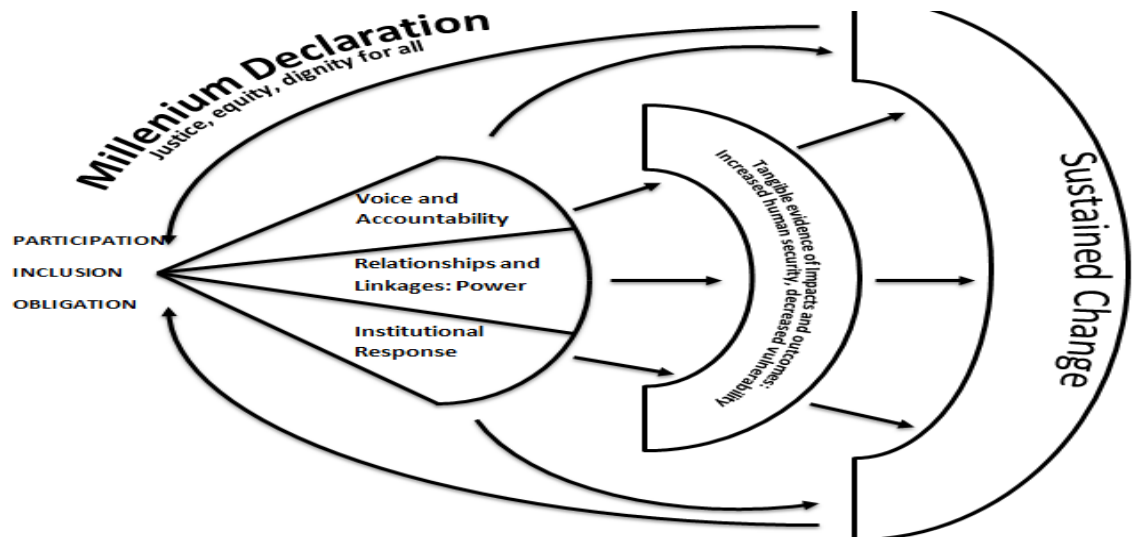
In the process of Dalit empowerment the agencies play important roles. Based upon the nature and functions, Foley and Edward (1996, p. 38-39) distinguished the civil society organisation into two types, civil society-I and civil society-II, which are recognised as Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and Social Movement by Bandene (UNRISD 2006, p.3). The first type refers to association networks which are run voluntarily and promote collective trust, and work towards strengthening democracy within the state. It generally ignores association and network which create conflict or challenge the state. The second one refers to the association which puts special emphasis on action, and moreover it challenges the state to ensure protection of various rights of individuals. It has a tendency to promote and energise resistance in the community through empowerment. NGOs believe in capacity building by transforming knowledge, whereas social movement are focused more on capacity mobilisation (UNRISD 2006, p.12). Thus although both agencies act for marginalised communities, they separate themselves from each other on certain grounds.

In this context it is important to understand the added value of development which encourages active participation of citizens in the process of voice claim. The rights based development planning and impact assessment framework (Brocklesby & Crawford

(forthcoming) cited in Brocklesby, Hobley, Villiers 2010 p.71 – 73) is an effective tool to analyse the agencies' initiatives, and to understand the progress made to bring the sustained changed through community empowerment initiatives.

This framework illustrates whether and how the process achieves the impact and outcome in voice claims, and has effective participation in the governance process. It depicts both the

Figure 2:CR2 Right- based framework for analysis, appraisal and assessment



Source: Brocklesby and Crawford (forth coming) cited in Brocklesby, Hobley, Villiers 2010 p.73

process and product of intervention in achieving justice, equity, and dignity for all. The three principles of the rights based approach, participation, inclusion and obligation, form the base of the framework, and this represents how the three principles influence the whole initiatives in voice and accountability, power relations, and institutional responses. This framework provides an analytical base which can effectively be used to analyse intervention, and means a full comparison between different interventions.

2.4 Culture of silence among the Dalit in India

To understand the culture of silence among the Dalit, it is important to understand the caste system (*varna vyavastha*) which is a firm determinant of power, economic inequality, and poverty (Zacharias, Vakulabharanam 2009, p.1). Historically this was designed by the Brahmins, the Hindu priests, to exercise their superiority over the marginalised and less educated people (Kethineni and Humiston 2010, p.101).

In spite of various attempts including two wide movements led by Gandhi and Ambedkar, and the government sponsored affirmative action programs in the field of education, politics and economic institutions, the situation of the Dalits has not changed appropriately (Corrie

1995, p. 395). The Dalits are still poor and deprived of their basic human rights, and treated as social inferiors by the upper castes (Kethineni and Humiston 2010, p.100).

Many of them continue to experience severe discrimination and violence just because of their inferior position in society (Bob 2008, p. 3 – 4). Even after five and half decades of state intervention, Dalits remain at the bottom of most human development indicators (Chakraborty, Babu & Chakraborty 2006, p. 2478). Almost 70 per cent of the Dalit population live below the poverty line, because most of them are landless labourers with few openings for upward occupational mobility. Most Dalits are still engaged in their low status traditional professions to sustain their livelihoods (Corrie 1995, p.400). According to the study conducted by Action Aid in 2000, different forms of ‘untouchability’ are still practiced in different parts of the country which is highlighted in Table One (Thorat, Mahamallik & Venkatesan 2007, P. 45 – 50).

Table 1: Denial of Access to Basic Public Services & Discriminatory Treatment in Public Services (pooled data from 11 states).

Denial of Access to Basic Public Services (pooled data from 11 states).				
Public sphere	% of villages where practiced		% of villages where not practiced	villages surveyed
Water facilities	48.4	(255)	43.5	527
	20.5	(75)	68.2	365
	35.8	(186)	57.0	519
Entry into private/public health centre/clinic	Potter will not sell pots	(74)	72.4	348
Entry into public transport	Entry into village shops	(41)	87.0	447
Discriminatory Treatment in Public Services (pooled data from 11 states).				
Separate seating in restaurants/hotels	32.7	(144)	58.0	441
Separate utensils in restaurants/hotels	32.3	(145)	58.1	449
Tailor will not take measurements	20.8	(96)	70.1	462
Untouchability during transactions in shops	18.5	(87)	73.8	470
No seating / last entry in public transport	12.8	(57)	82.9	444
Discriminatory treatment in private clinics	8.7	(24)	83.7	276
Note: Figures in brackets are number of villages where form is practiced. Villages where status of practice is ambiguous are excluded from both ‘practiced’ and ‘not practiced’ categories. Total surveyed villages exclude villages where relevant institution/site is absent.				

Source: Thorat, Mahamallik & Venkatesan 2007, P.46

This revealed that the existing practices of denial of public services and discriminatory practices in public services strongly prevail across the country, and it denies the SCs enjoyment of their entitlements. Although positive discrimination provides opportunity to the Dalits, the political rights of Dalits, including the right to vote and right to stand for election have been denied by upper caste members through booth capturing, denial of access to polls, extortion, and violence (CHR&GJ and HR Watch 2007, p. 43).

From the above discussion it is revealed that in spite of constitutional and special initiatives measures discrimination still prevails in the country and this decade long inferior position, geographical and social isolation has forced them to be detached from the cultural, political and civic life of the country (Economic and Social Council of France 1994, p. 4).

Breaking the culture of silence among Dalit in Uttar Pradesh

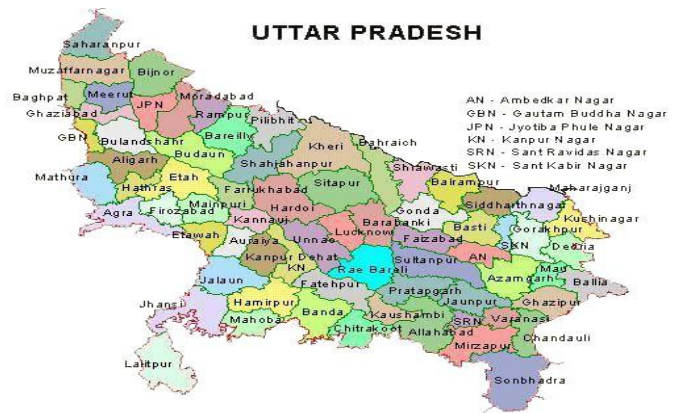
3.1 Background

Figure 3: Map of Uttar Pradesh, India

The state of Uttar Pradesh is the fifth largest and the most populous state of India. Administratively the state is divided into 71 districts, 311 *tehsils* and 820 development blocks. Almost eighty per cent of its population reside in rural

areas, and more than 70 per cent of the work forces in the state are engaged in agriculture and agricultural related work (Baxis 2010, p.4). According to the 2001 census the scheduled caste (SC) population in the state of UP is 35,148,377, which is 21.1 percentage of the total population. The concentration of the Dalit population is rural-centric as around 87.7 percentage of the Dalit population resides in the villages. They live in almost all areas of the state, but their concentration is highest in Sonbhadra district (41.9 per cent), followed by Kaushambi (36.1 per cent) and Sitapur (31.9 per cent) districts and Baghpat has the lowest proportion of SC population, with eleven percent (Census of India 2001).

The incidence of poverty is high in the state compared to other states. As far as poverty is concerned in rural UP the caste system has played a major role in structuring individual identity, limiting economic choices, and reinforcing patterns of consumption consonant with the identification of Dalits as social inferiors (Kapur, *et al.*, 2003, p.40). In spite of many socio-economic development programs they lag behind others. The incidence of poverty was lower in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala during 1970, but by 1993 -94 this had increased in both of these states. Presently, although the state has shown some positive signs many poor have low consumption levels and are vulnerable to income and other shocks which push them back into poverty (Kozel, & Parker 2003, p. 387). Furthermore they claim that the poor in UP are highly vulnerable due to their low caste status, which is the root cause of social exclusion and social marginalisation. This inculcates their powerless and voiceless quality, which prohibits them access and influences the institutions of the state, and the resources within the state for their betterment.



3.2 Initiatives of Dalit empowerment

With the political attainment of BSP in the state it has been widely considered that Dalit have moved from the periphery to the centre in the power structure. Attention is only given to the role of BSP in the process of Dalit empowerment, whereas actually various other agencies have also widely contributed. Jaoul (2007, p. 192) stated that along with the BSP other agencies like the BAMCEF (Backward and Minority Castes Employees Federation) and the Bharatiya Dalit Panthers represent non-political activism in the Dalit movement. On the other hand organisations like the Dalit Foundation and others are addressing the issue of improper implementation of the provision ensured through policy (CDHR 2010, P.15). The two decades long experience of the Dalit movement and various initiatives taken by different agencies to empower the Dalit communities has pushed the agenda to national and international forums (Govinda 2006, p.182). With capacity mobilisation BSP came into power in the state. Many NGOs through capacity building initiatives have succeeded in addressing the non-implementation of policy and schemes and political empowerment of leaders at a local level. Such initiatives have helped many to enter politics and help others to access and avail the benefits of schemes. In spite of this achievement many Dalits who are not in the position of confrontation still remain at the periphery and are experiencing exploitation, which is reflected in human wellbeing indicators, such as education, health and nutrition. During the BSP regime no doubt there has been slight improvement in most indicators, but compared to national level standards the state has downwards movement in almost all the indicators (Mehrotra 2006, p. 4266).

Empowerment initiatives of Agency in Uttar Pradesh:

This section discusses the Dalit Movement in UP and the Poorest Area Civil Society (PACS) Programme of DFID UK as a case study, to capture the trends and outcomes of the empowerment process.

4.1 Dalit Movement in Uttar Pradesh

The Dalit movement is considered the most influential movement in India concentrated around the issues of untouchability. It was initiated in the nineteenth century with the influence of Jyotiba Phule, and later strengthened under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. It is misunderstood by many as a fight against the non-Dalit, and particularly against Brahmins, but in reality this is a movement for social democracy, rooted in the values of liberty, equality and fraternity (Avatthi 2010, p.1).

In the history of the Dalit struggle UP has been an important place for various socio-political and historical reasons, such as the economic backwardness of the state and the political populism (Pai *et al.*, 2006, p. 2144). The uniqueness of the Dalit movement in UP is the strategy of using the state as an important medium to bring the social change. The emergence of *Bahujan Samaj* party is the demonstration of such perspectives (Singh 2010, p.1).

The first phase (1956-1969) of the movement was not completely a Dalit agenda, but Dalit issues were highlighted in the whole process of land reform which was established to bring improvement in the quality of life by enhancing social and economic equality and equity. The unsatisfactory distribution and failure of land reform could not assist the Dalit movement because the strong caste based social structure and bondage of Dalit to land owners in the state negatively influenced the process of strengthening the mass base (*ibid.* p. 3-6).

The second phase was marked with the formation of All India Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF) the only political party for Dalits, but it failed to influence the political domain in the state (Bandyopadhyay 2000 p.940 -941). In 1957 the SCF was transformed into the Republican Party of India (RIP), but again did not provide a productive political equation in state politics, which can be seen from the election results shown in table two.

Table 2: Performance of Lower Castes Parties in UP State Assembly elections (1951-1969)

Year	Seat Contested	Total seats	Won	Deposit Lost	Vote % of total polled votes	Vote % in seats contested
All India Scheduled Castes Federation (SCF)						
1951	32	(347)	0	20	1.49	8.48
Republican Party of India (RPI)						
1962	123	(430)	8	97	3.74	12.32
1967	168	(425)	10	139	4.14	10.08
1969	172	(425)	1	146	3.48	8.26

(source: Singh 2010, p.5)

The third phase of the Dalit movement began in the 1980s with the leadership of Kanshiram. His contribution to the movement in the state was remarkable, as he emphasised mobilisation of people for political movement by avoiding the militant approach of the Dalit Panthers (Pai 2006, p.5). He used the basic principles of representative democracy, i.e. rule of the majority as a political strategy, demonstrated in the party slogan *jiski jitni sankhya bhari, uski utni bhagidari* (share in power according to the ratio in population). Initially he formed a non-political organisation called the All India Backward and Minority Castes Employees Federation (BAMCEF). Furthermore he formed the political organisation called *Shoshit Samaj Sangharsh Samiti*, known as DS-4, in 1991. This organisation was transformed into a fully-fledged political party known as BSP in 1984 (Jaoul 2007, p. 196). The vision of the organisation was based on the Ambedkar ideology, ‘political power is the key to all problems’ (Teltumbde 2006, p. 4531). BSP was successful in mobilising the Dalit community for political participation along with BAMCEF, the Buddhist Research Centre, and DS-4, and could observe in the state assembly elections between 1989 – 2011.

In the 2007 election BSP emerged as the single majority party in the state, and this was made possible by the strategy of, ‘social engineering adopted by the party which emphasised bringing the Brahmin and Dalit to one platform for the political process. To strengthen its political base it shifted the party’s ideology from *bahujan samaj* (majoritarianism) to *sarvajan samaj* (whole society). This was justified with the logic that this collision provided

an opportunity for the two groups to come together on the political platform, and it reduced the atrocities caused by the upper caste to the Dalit (Verma 2007, p. 2647).

From the above case study it is revealed that the Dalit movement was initiated to fight against discrimination, and transformed into a political movement with the emergence of BSP. It focussed on the political mobilization with the Ambedkar ideology. The present form of the Dalit movement in UP is, 'characterised by a pattern of coexistence of a highly centralized and authoritarian Dalit party with a strong but fragmented grassroots movement, composed mainly of former BAMCEF and Dalit Panther activists'(Jaoul 2007, p.214). The new agenda of *Sarvajan* forced the BSP to lose its identity as a Dalit political party. Consequently the political priorities have changed and concentrate on a threefold agenda.

The first one established a centralised party rule, the second was Dalit – Brahmin collision in politics, and the third continued with the politics of symbolisation of Dalit culture, which was successful in maintaining the vote bank among the Dalits (Singh 2010, p.13). This indicates that the agenda of the BSP has become more power-centric rather than people-centric. It focused on BSP being the largest political party in the state, as well as in the country, by maintaining its preferences among the Dalit and widening its horizon among non-Dalit. The third agenda forced the BSP to neglect the socio-economic development of the Dalit communities who are still under deprivation, but committed to build statues of Ambedkar, Mayabati and Kanshi Ram throughout the state.

The development priorities of BSP initially focused on Dalit and Dalit dominated areas but now it has decided to expand this program to all villages irrespective of their caste composition. The expansion of the program diluted the attention of the government to implement the program effectively for the empowerment and upliftment of Dalit. At this juncture most Dalit feel that BSP has lost its ideology of Dalit upliftment. Dalits are forced to share their benefits and political advantages with the Brahmins and other upper castes due to the unavailability of other political options (Singh 2010, p.9). Lack of coordination between the BSP and the grassroots activists raises serious questions about the future of the movement (Jaoul 2007. p.216.)

4.2. Poorest Area Civil Society (PACS) Programme :

The Poorest Areas Civil Society(PACS) Programme is an initiative of the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID), to empower socially excluded communities to access and avail a fairer share of India's development gain through civil society organisation (DFID 2012., p.4).The PACS program areas were identified on the basis of a list of 108 'poorest' districts in India identified by the committee of the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Government of India in 1997 (PACS 2007 a, p. 3).

In its first phase from 2001 – 2008 it covered over 19,564 villages in 94 districts of six states including UP, with the help of more than 665 civil society organisations, and helped the citizens to demand and avail more than £125 million of entitlements (DFID 2012, p. 5). In the second phase (2009 – 2016) it concentrated on 90 districts of these states.

The uniqueness of the PACS program is its rights based approach with two broad objectives of enabling the poor to realise their rights and entitlements through just and democratic means, and strengthening the capacities of CSOs associated with the program to have a better long-term impact in remote and underdeveloped areas where government and market reach are limited (PACS 2007 b, p.7).

UP was one of the first states to initiate the PACS program, and presently it is functional in seventeen districts out of 71. With the help of nineteen partners it covers around 3230 villages and 67 wards in 72 blocks of seventeen districts. The program focuses on non-discriminatory access to sustainable livelihoods and rights to basic services for socially excluded groups in the state. To achieve the objectives PACS have identified three thematic areas for intervention; access to basic services of education, health and nutrition, and sustainable livelihoods through MGNREGA, claiming rights over revenue land, and access to resources and markets (PACS 2012). All these thematic areas emphasise the empowerment of the socially excluded community through capacity building initiatives.

With PACS, the CSOs in UP are focused on improving local self-governance, women's empowerment, social cohesion and policy advocacy. It also focused on strengthening local self-government because it believes that *panchayati raj* institutions are the best platform where the voice of the poor can be expressed properly (PACS 2004, p.11). PACS targets increased access of entitlement such as grain from the public distribution system (PDS), availing the benefits of social security schemes, and the allotment of occupational land under various land distribution efforts. The PACS project in Bundelkhand in UP which is

backward and feudal in nature gives a clear picture of how civil society can make a difference in the entitlement of benefits of various schemes (PACS 2008, p.26).

Through the PACS intervention in this area around 629 families gained possession of 1,182 acres of land, and 259 families had the benefits of *Indira Awas Yojana* (IAY). 2,385 families received *Antyodaya* ration cards, and 407 families received BPL ration cards. In addition, 1,314 children were given scholarships amounting to Rs 38 lakh, 139 people took old age pensions, and 102 widows also received a pension. Moreover 3,000 demands were made for entitlement of the benefits of PDS and other social security schemes and scholarships, which is a record in the Lalitpur area (PACS 2007b, p.15). To address the issues of NREGA state wide *rozgar yatra* was organised in 2006 by the partners of thirteen districts, led by the National Conference of Dalit Organisations (NACDOR), a federation of more than 300 grassroots Dalit organisations, which had immediate impact. For example one day after the *yatra* on June 23rd, 2006, the district collector of *palia* in Lakhimpur Kheri district ordered a four-day campaign to receive applications from villagers seeking employment.(PACS 2008, p.48). Likewise throughout the intervention area around 83118 applicants were registered under NREGA schemes, out of which 73300 were issued a work card, and 38403 families gained a job (PACS 2007c, p.2)

In Lalitpur District 74 Dalit representatives from the community based organisation elected as the *panchayat pradhan*, 58 women and seventeen men (PACS 2007b, p.41). Although this showed a positive result of achieving the entitlement, assessment of welfare schemes in PACS program areas reports indicated that almost 95 per cent of the respondents in UP were receiving a pension of Rupee 150 per month. Performance of the targeted public distribution schemes (TPDS) is worst in UP (PACS, 2007b, p 1- 15).

Under PACS special initiatives were given to the formation and strengthening of the community based organisations (CBOs). In Maharajganj district, a larger, community-based organisation (CBO) known as the *Musahar Manch* was promoted. Around 10,000 Musahars from 73 villages of Maharajganj district are members of those CBOs who were politically voiceless and their representations in the local self-government were almost absent. These CBOs are taking strong action against Dalit atrocities in the area, and are working to ensure the entitlement of government schemes (*ibid.* p. 21 – 28).

Although the PACS initiatives have brought positive changes through community empowerment, the situation is still not favourable for the Dalit. External evaluation of the PACS program in Lalitpur areas identified that on the one hand there was an increase in community expectation through the advocacy initiatives and pressure building efforts, but on the other there was a lack of improvement in the government's response to meet these demands, and the reason was found that the PACS program failed to build strong links with the administration. No doubt the civil society organisation and the community based organisations are working tremendously, but could not demonstrate strong advocacy initiatives at district level (PACS 2007b, p.15). Also in Maharajganj District, although the *Musahar Manch* has emerged as an alternative force to raise the voice of the *musahar* in the region it still has not gained the confidence of other village communities, and although the district administration has been considerably sensitised about discrimination and exploitation issues, still the local upper caste people continue to maintain their discriminatory practices against the community (*ibid.* p. 29).

Discussion

“Speaking out” is one of the most important acts of freedom in a democratic society (Rhoades, Statham 1998, p.10). Every citizen has the right to speak out freely against injustices which affect their quality of life. The theoretical discussion revealed that social position and powerlessness leads to exclusion of Dalit, which generates a culture of silence. To enjoy their rights as citizens the culture of silence need to be broken, which is possible by raising awareness and critical consciousness building through the process of empowerment.

In the process of empowerment with the rights based perspective, the Dalit movement and the PACS are committed to empower the Dalit communities so that they will make their own decisions actively, rather than being the passive objects of choices made on their behalf (Anthem 2011, p. 2). In spite of their engagement the situations of the Dalit are not changed effectively, but the empowerment process provides them with the opportunities to understand and critically analyse the situation and fight for their rights. This initiative provides opportunities to some Dalit members to travel from the periphery to the centre of politics to a certain extent. On the one hand the Dalit movement provides opportunities to Dalit leaders to come into the radius of decision making, but on the other the NGO approach has helped the most marginalised communities to access and be entitled to the policy ensured benefits.

Both agencies intervene with a definite process which emphasises the principles of the rights based approach; participation, inclusion, fulfilment of obligations, and working towards the overall goal of justice, equality and dignity for all. In many instances however, the agencies draw a line of separation between them and intervene separately. The rights based framework mentioned in the literature review helped to understand this gap and relationship, and even the strengths and weaknesses of the agencies, as this captured both the process and product of intervention. To expand the discussion I have concentrated my discussion on the four key areas of the ideological difference, the space for participation, the power structure within the process, and the institutional responses which influence the process of breaking the culture of silence.

5.1 Ideological base

Ideology is the cultural resource for framing activity of the agency (Snow& Benford, n.d., p.9). Based on the activities and approaches discussed in the previous chapter it is clear that both the agencies demonstrate of the rights based approach to protect the civil and political

rights of the Dalit by addressing the root cause of inequality and exclusion. The original goal of the Dalit movement was to end exploitation and oppression and achieve equality, liberty, and community. The Dalit movement emphasised more strongly social change through political power. It focused on capturing the state power by the Dalit, with the belief that if the Dalit come into the power then they would achieve enough social, economic and political benefits by using state power, and this would improve their social status (Singh, 2010, p.1 - 2). Thus the Dalit movement put the political project as its top priority. The PACS perspectives are differently based on the UN millennium development goals which promise to liberate the citizens from extreme poverty and multiple deprivations. It promised to reduce the gap in wellbeing status between the socially excluded and the general population, by enhancing the non-discriminatory entitlements of livelihood and the services. The Dalit movement talked about social justice based on the 'politics of recognition', while PACS focused on the redistributive claims of social justice, seeking a more just distribution of resources and goods between citizens (Fraser 2008, p.1).

Both the claims visualise and define injustice differently. The Dalit movement considers injustice as a cultural phenomenon which is rooted in social patterns of representation, interpretation, and communication. It considers Brahmanism/ Hinduism as the historical basis of social stratification and the root cause of social inequality because, "Hinduism meant the lack of liberty, the negation inequality for all groups but especially for women and untouchables, and destruction of community" (Singh 2002, p.299). The NGOs consider the injustice in socio-economic parameters and believe that the cause is rooted in the economic structure of society, which leads to exploitation, economic marginalisation, and deprivation, which act as a barrier in accessing social services and other amenities – such as education, health services, food security schemes and housing. They lead to lower educational levels, and lower access to food and public housing (PACS 2011, p. 5).

However both the agencies are ideologically committed to claiming justice for the Dalit for example, in the Dalit movement identity acts as a mobilising force to encourage the Dalit to join in the struggle, because the struggle is by Dalit and for Dalit towards recognition and identity. The PACS programme recognises poor people not as beneficiaries, but as active rights holders. The concept of rights holders and duty bearers introduce an important element of accountability into development work, and moves focus to where it should be; development by people, not for people. Hence the agencies have different but equal importance in the process of Dalit empowerment.

5.2 Institutional Responses: (Approaches to claiming rights)

Cultural action for freedom is a formula for building consciousness among people defined by Paulo Friere. According to UNRISD (2006, p. III) both the movement and NGOs are act as agencies to bring freedom by building consciousness and empowerment. The main strategy of the Dalit movement was, 'educate, agitate, organise (Gorringe 2005, p.346), because the central to the Dalit movement was searching for independence and equality. It focused on empowering the Dalit community in their political rights so that they could stand alone and recognised as equal and responsible citizens of the independent state. The Dalit movement engaged in consciousness rising and demonstration towards internal and spiritual changes like 'slave's rejection of slavery', and also social struggle and political dialogue and political organising (Singh, 2002, p.299). Although the rise of the Dalit Panthers bifurcated the Dalit movement into violent and non-violent approaches, in the state of UP the violent approach did not influence the approach much, due to the influence of Ambedkar's ideology, which believed violence was an ineffective method to bring change to society. The mobilisation process generated 'we' feeling and brotherhood among the Dalits to join together and fight for their rights. This mobilisation led to mass support, and ultimately the formulation of the *Bahujan Samaj* party by Kanshi Ram. The slogan *jiski jitni sankhya bhari, uski utni bhagidari* was used to sensitise the community to effectively participate in the political process of the state.

The PACS approach to raising the voices of the Dalit to demand their rights was different. It focuses on the formulation of a stronger civil society organisation and on issues affecting the life of socially excluded communities by empowering the Dalit communities on their rights and entitlements. Their second strategy was enhancing the better representation of socially excluded community representatives in the local political institution so that they would have a greater voice in committees at village/block/district level, government decision-making bodies, and could influence the decision making process in favour of the socially excluded groups.

After analysing both models it can be seen that both agencies have worked towards organising the Dalit communities and raising critical cognisance among them. They both educate and extend practical support to analyse the contexts, power relations and the denial or violation of rights, build their capacity to challenge and change self-perceptions, and mobilise to engage with power structures, and create new spaces for engagement. In the Dalit movement capacity mobilisation was emphasised, whereas PACS stressed the capacity

building of the marginalised, so that they could demand their entitlements and rights through collective action.

5.3 Voice, participation and accountability:

The foremost component in the process of empowerment is voice participation and accountability (Brocklesby, Hobley & Villiers 2010, p. 71). Here some questions arise. Whose voice counts? Who organises and who participates? From the discussion it is clear that both the agencies work for the voice of Dalit who are voiceless due to the power of the social and administrative structures. Dalit empowerment initiatives provide them the opportunity to express their voice, and participate and contribute in the decision making process.

The Dalit movement has influence over the politics of UP and also national politics, and gives the Dalit voice a political platform. Many Dalit leaders, including Mayawati, a Dalit woman who completed four terms as Chief Minister of UP, have had the opportunity to become actively involved in politics and the decision making process which was the goal of the Dalit movement. Even today human wellbeing (education, health and nutrition) indicators show the alarming situation of the Dalit in the state (Mehrotra 2006, p.1 -2); still they face discrimination and exploitation by the upper caste in the state. To reduce this gap NGOs mobilise the voices of the marginalised by empowering the most disadvantaged section of society through building their capacity on their rights and entitlements. For example PACS identified the Dalit as marginalised and voiceless, like the *Musahar* communities in the state of Uttar Pradesh, and women in particular whose voice does not count in society.

Voice is productive when the actors participate effectively, hence the agencies' emphasis on the participation of the community, at agency level and in the political arena. In many instances however, their effective participation remains just in participation. For example in Dalit politics, the participation of the community remains at their casting of vote, whereas in NGO level participation of people is framed narrowly as a methodology to improve the performance of project, rather than as a process to nurture critical consciousness and decision making as the bases for active citizenship (Miller, Veneklasen, Clark 2005, p.31) . As far as active participation is concerned, due to affirmative action the Dalits are achieving political positions, but in reality they are less influential in the decision-making process. Likewise due to the pressure of civil society organisation through activism opportunities are

created for the participation in the policy discussion. However when the discussion took place the voice of the marginalised was amplified by the middle class activist or professional rather than by the Dalits themselves.

Here I would like to emphasise the participation as two contested terms; active and passive. In both models the space for the active participation is limited for the most disadvantaged groups; however the NGO emphasis is on promoting leadership among the most disadvantaged. Therefore the principle of participation creates a common ground of interaction and solidarity for both agencies, because the Dalit movement emphasises political gain as an indicator to break the social barriers, and the NGO supports political empowerment of disadvantaged groups and promoting them to politics.

With accountability the question arises, is accountability an upwards concept? Or it is a mutual concept? Both models demand transparency and accountability in the system and structure of government functioning, but their practice is quite different. From a practical point of view, in the Dalit movement accountability is treated as an upwards concept; for example just to expand the horizon of BSP the strategy changed through the social engineering process, and the BSP was not bothered about the interest of non-political groups and Dalit mass (Heath & Kumar 2012, p.41). The NGO however, considered transparency and accountability as important strategies to encourage the active participation of marginalise but in many instances it just became rituals to show that the organisation was transparent and accountable.

5.4 Transformation of Power: relationship and linkages:

The rights based approach emphasised engagement to challenge and transform the visible and hidden form of power relation, and the creation of new relationship based on solidarity, equity, and the common good (Miller, Veneklasen, Clark 2005, p. 32). The transformation of power depends upon the process of empowerment and initiative to change the balance of power. In the case of the Dalit movement the aim was to transform the power from higher caste to the Dalits with the expectation that this transfer of power would liberate them from the bondage of exploitation. The NGO believes that the effective participation and involvement of Dalit representatives into the decision-making process could influence the policy at implementation level. The Dalit movement helped the BSP to power, but the power relation could not change, especially in greater access to services, assets, justice and equality. Various studies have shown that the number of atrocities was quite high during the

regime of BSP. Dalit were still facing exclusion in accessing their rights and claims. For example the improper implementation of various public schemes and policies like the NREGA and SSS, are quite strong in the state (Planning Commission 2009, p.1-5). To fill the gap and help the deprived community through non-discriminatory access the NGO sees the power relation from an inclusion perspective. It emphasises formation and strengthening the mass base, sometimes referred to as community based organisation, thus mobilising the power at the base. To raise voices they have built their capacity to understand the burden of the issues, and negotiate and bargain with the system and structures for better entitlement of rights. To strengthen the power relation aspect they have adopted a networking strategy with likeminded organisations. In controlling the process however, again the NGO professional plays an important role. The power structure in the NGO model depends on the perspective of donor agencies and professionals, especially in the decision making process but it creates a sense of individual empowerment of the individual to provide them the dignity and platform to engage and negotiate with existing power structures.

5.5 Tangible impact and sustained change:

Both agencies have influenced the life of the Dalit communities in different ways. The Dalit movement is not just the agitation of the Dalit for social change, but it is a well-designed process in the developmental and political premises, which aims at political empowerment of marginalised communities. Ambedkar emphasised the economic development in the Dalit movement, with the objective that the most marginalised section should not be excluded from the developmental process. The BSP narrowed down the Ambedkar vision into short-term social policies exclusively for the scheduled castes. During the first three tenures of BSP in the state of UP major social policies for scheduled caste were introduced. Concentration on capturing state power was a prime objective of the Dalit Movement to improve social and economic conditions, but over time BSP concentrated on fulfilling the political priorities, and neglected the socio-economic development of the state (Singh 2010, p 11-12). The recent political moves of the BSP in the form of social engineering to strengthen the base of the party have disappointed many Dalit community members and leaders. It is difficult for them to accept that the vision of social change dreamt of by Ambedkar and Kanshi Ram could come true with the association of Dalits and upper castes in the political process. Although the affirmative action in the politics of UP has provided many Dalit leaders with the opportunity to enter politics, and the social engineering process has helped the upper castes and Dalit leaders to improve their interaction but it is mainly

restricted to politics. Still the discriminatory feeling and practices of the upper caste people continue in the state and many are victims of those practices. Political moves in the Dalit movement have strengthened the affirmative action of the state to empower the Dalit, but in reality accessing benefits and claiming rights have become issues.

The PACS program, led by CSOs is to help the community to access and avail the benefits of entitlement. Today, after the first phase of its implementation the initiatives have been able to build an extensive network of NGOs, and through this network initiated various community based organisations who are giving a voice to their own communities. These CBOs help deprived communities to access entitlements through advocacy initiatives, sensitise them and build their capacity to effectively participate in local self-governance, and enter the PRI system to effectively participate in and contribute to the decision-making process at different level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The culture of silence represents the dominant social relation between citizens, which developed negative and suppressed self-images. This pushes them into the trap of exploitation and marginalisation. The study finds that Dalit face a cultural and normative history entrenched in discrimination based on their position in social structures. Despite state efforts to translate human rights into legislation and affirmative action to promote rights entitlement, the Dalit in India experience exploitation and lead an oppressed life. To make systems and structures effective to ensure the rights of the Dalits, various agencies have engaged with the RBA approach.

The rights based approach is most effective to break this culture of silence, because it utilises the principles of the international human rights system to protect and promote the rights of the individual. It lays the foundation for citizen participation as well as state accountability and action (Kapur, Duvvury 2006, p. 9). It works to strengthen the capacities of the citizen who are the rights holders to make their claims. It also forces the duty bearer to meet the obligations of the rights holders (DIHR 2007, p.9). Hence this approach puts the citizens in power to bring change to their own lives, and simultaneously brings changes in their own communities, and puts pressure on the power elite to improve the social inclusion of poor and marginalised people. Furthermore RBA is capable of addressing the root cause of inequality, and exclusion at various levels including legal, political, social, cultural and economic. This is the reason why there is increasing recognition in the Dalit empowerment process.

The potential dynamics and tensions between the agencies termed as social movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) deliver different meanings of the rights based approach to the different actors engaged in the process of empowerment. This challenges achievement of overall goals. Activists engaged with the social movement claim that it challenges the power, whereas actors engaged in the NGO claim that it challenges policy. Such divisions are evident from the Dalit empowerment process in UP. This ideological difference creates tension and confusion between the agencies and forces them to consider themselves as different, and criticise instead of supporting each other. Both the agencies have the potential to contribute to filling the gaps in the process of implementation. For instance the Dalit movement, focused on the political empowerment of excluded groups and their integration into local or national politics definitely helps some Dalit leaders to enter the political sphere, but their positioning does not provide all the marginalised to move from the

periphery to centre, or even ensure the constitutional entitlement to the poor and marginalised. This is evident from the implementation status of various social security schemes and NREGA during the BSP regime. The PACS initiatives addressed policy implementation issues so that policy meant for the Dalit could reach the marginalised and improve their standard of living, and ensure their economic, cultural and political rights. For a Dalit who is deprived of basic services and entitlement, gaining benefit from entitlement is more important than political power for the Dalit party. The entitlement of the policy cannot however always provide them with the opportunities to speak out for themselves and their community which the political sphere can provide. Hence both ideologies for the Dalit empowerment are appropriate and important.

Furthermore, with strategy, both of them focus on consciousness building and sensitisation which is important to formulate the issues. Consciousness building helps the individual to understand issues more deeply and motivates them to address the root cause. For example movements like the Dalit movement are highly innovative and rhetoric in nature and translate and highlight the issues from the perspective of violation of Dalit human rights. Movement members search for new ways and make it more dramatic to make their views known and articulate their demands, and sometimes even break the law to achieve this. The NGOs however have fixed priorities and agendas, with specific strategies to achieve change in society. Furthermore in no circumstances can it break the law to achieve goals (Earle, 2004, p.1 – 4). It plays the role of filling the gap between the service provider and rights holders through negotiation lobby.

Moreover it is clear that movements are structurally not static and are evolutionary in nature, whereas the NGO are well defined and have a static structure. The initiation of the Dalit movement and the formulation of BSP, and now the social engineering strategy to spread the political dimension, are typical demonstrations of the evolutionary nature of the movement. Whereas PACS is well defined, DFID is guided by logical frame work approach. The human resources within the movement are from the community, while in the NGO they are middle level professionals who may or may not be from the community. From the resource mobilisation perspective, the movement claims that it does not depend on the money of the aid agencies from the north, whereas NGOs completely depend on this aid. These structural and ideological differences further widen the tension between these two agencies, which lead to non-cooperation and influence the process of community empowerment negatively in breaking the culture of silence.

Additionally, leadership and sustainability are the biggest challenges in the process of Dalit empowerment. Although both agencies claim that individuals engaged in the process have the opportunity and influence in the decision-making process, in reality in many instances the interests of the deprived are neglected and never considered, thus they passively engaged in the process of community empowerment. In the Dalit movement the process is led by the power elite among the Dalit, whereas in NGOs it is led by the middle level professional. Starting from translating information for empowerment to making decisions in the whole process they sometimes participate without understanding the perspectives and vision. Sustainability of the empowerment is another challenge. While the movement or NGO initiatives are at their peak, the community leaders by being together dare to confront the duty bearers. But when the momentum of the movement is slow down or the NGO project is over, the empowered leaders lose their emotion, ethos, and inner fire, which again push them to the vicious circle of culture of silence.

Although there is tension between the agencies, there are instance where the NGO and the movement support each other. For example the PACS programme is engaged with building community based organisation, and transforming it in to people's organisations as an alternative political force. The alternative political force in turn supports the movement by promoting Dalit rights and ensuring the entitlements, which is the agenda of NGO. Secondly the promotion of the leaders into politics as discussed shows the perspective of Dalit movement of acquiring political space. PACS also focuses in promoting the leaders in grassroots politics which is the breeding ground of Dalit politics. Thirdly in many instances the small movement is supported by the NGOs, although not directly by the donor NGO but by the community based organisations formed by the NGOs.

Hence in spite of tension between the agencies, and challenges in the agency of movement and NGOs in the process of community empowerment, still there is necessary space and opportunity for them to strengthen the empowerment process. In this context the challenges for the development professional is to minimise the gaps between the two agencies. Thus to reduce the gaps and overcome the challenges there is a need of an holistic approach, which would need interaction between the two agencies and a common ground to interact and fill each other's shortcomings. For example critical consciousness building is the main element in strengthening the movement, and this is an area where the NGO can play an important role in encouraging the right type of atmosphere for mobilisation of community around the issues.

Furthermore, in the area of claiming rights in many instances this can be achieved through negotiation and peaceful demonstration which can be done effectively by the NGO, whereas some issues need rhetoric representation which can be done by the movement. Thus common ground should be created between the agencies so that they can support and help each other for better results.

Both agencies should stick to the perspectives and ideologies so that they can create the desirable changes within the community. This is evident in the Dalit movement, how perspectives change and create dissatisfaction among leaders and community members. Furthermore both the agencies should focus more on the building of perspective and revisiting of perspective among the leaders frequently rather than mass assembly for a particular event, because this will give them the proper direction and spirit to struggle and sustain their capabilities, moreover providing them with the choice to join the struggle by understanding it, and I believe that this will sustain their voice for the struggle during and after the process.

Finally the academic world can play an important role in filling the gaps by highlighting the complex relationship between the two agencies and changes in their relation over a period of time in giving a voice to the community to speak out for their rights, because ironically the relationship between these two at different level is neglected.

To summarise, the rights component has the potential to accelerate the empowerment process as it emphasises the rights of the individual and is focused on raising the critical consciousness through capacity building, mobilising them to create a space for critical engagement within the power structure. Furthermore it addresses the needs of the Dalit from the rights perspective rather than charity, and provides them with the opportunity to claim their rights rather than to receive. Although it has potential the existing tension and non-cooperation between the agencies, and a lack of strong ideological perspective has a negative impact on the empowerment process. To maximise the output of empowerment the tension and gaps should be reduced and both agencies should provide and create space for each other in their intervention. Furthermore both agencies should give emphasis to the most vulnerable and marginalised Dalit.

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