

Social Exclusion and Violation of Human Rights with Special Reference to the Shabar Community in the District of Purulia

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Abstract: Today's world is popularized in the name of Human Rights, Human Security, Good Governance, etc. In this study, I just focus on the critical study of how social exclusion leads to the violation of human rights. India is now the largest democratic country in the world and committed to establishing liberty, equality, and fraternity in the social, political, and economic spheres. But the truth is India has been lagging to do the same and uplift the downtrodden people who are socially excluded. Shabar people who live in the district of Purulia are deprived of their human rights just because they are socially excluded and denied to give them dignity and other opportunities and, also merged into mainstream society.

Keywords: - Human Rights, Democracy, Shabar Community, etc.

Introduction: -

Today in the age of globalization human rights have become a very fashionable word. In the process of democratization, the concept of human rights has gained high significance. From the beginning of civilization, the relationship between society and the individual is crucial. Aristotle stated that man is by nature a social and political animal. So for the well-being of an individual and to enjoy human rights one has to be a part of society. But sometimes we have seen society is not for all especially since it is divided in terms of caste, creed, gender, wealth, class, and financial condition. So the stratification of society leads to social exclusion which extremely denies some people to enjoy human rights. In this paper, I highlight how social exclusion and human rights are interrelated and actually how social exclusion violates human rights. For this study, I focus on the critical study of the Shabar community who are socially excluded and deprived of human rights lives in the district of Purulia.

LITERATURE REVIEW:-

Sandip Ghatak in his paper "Social Exclusion and Dalits in India:- A Note on Violation of Human Rights" sketch out how social exclusion leads to the denial of the development process and alienates the people from the accessibility of households, right to education, and also from adequate standard of living life. He also mentioned in his paper how socially excluded people lost their human rights as well as suffered from untouchability and atrocities from other people in society.

Mallika Ramacharan also highlights some remarkable points in the paper "Poverty, Social Exclusion and the Role of a Comprehensive Human Rights Framework" that Poverty and social exclusion both condition relate to the denial of or absence of resources, opportunities, or rights which affects participation in society on equal terms with others.

Rodolfo Stavenhagen in his book "Peasants, Culture and Indigenous Peoples Critical Issues" highlight some monumental points towards the violation of human rights especially draws the impact of globalization which badly affected the distinct cultural rights of the indigenous people and also articulated some alternative ideas on how socially excluded people are losing their own culture, customs, language and fundamental living style and also their regimes like land and resources.

Mahasweta Devi in her book "Tribal the Sons of Soil in The Book of the Hunter" published in Bengali as "Byadhakhanda" in 1994 outburst the original manuscripts of the lifestyle of the Shabar people. She has also done a fabulous job to uplift the injustice of Shabar people into the limelight. People come to know about Shabar people who are denied their basic rights in terms of food, shelter, culture, etc.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the relationship between human rights and social exclusion
2. To analyze the socio-economic condition of the Shabar community living in Purulia.
3. To evaluate how the Shabar community was deprived of basic opportunities and development.
4. To find out the alternative approach to how the Shabar community people may be empowered and give them justified dignity.

Research Area- Shabar community lives in various blocks from the district of Purulia.

Methodology:-

Primary Data and secondary data are collected from various books, Journals, and data and also followed by interviews. Mainly the paper is written based on the observational method.

Relation between Social Exclusion and Human Rights: -

At the outset, we need to understand the meaning of the concept of social exclusion and human rights then we should look forward to the discussion of the correlation between them. Basically "Social Exclusion" is a multidimensional concept. There is an ambiguity in the meaning of social exclusion as it encompasses the western and Indian contexts. The term "Social Exclusion" was originally coined by Rene Lenoir, in France in 1974 to refer such kind of people who are mentally and physically challenged, suicidal people, abused children, single parents, multi-problem householders, marginal, social persons, and other social misfits. Amartya Sen illustrated the Indian context of social exclusion in his book "Social Exclusion: Concept, Application, and Scrutiny" where he mentioned that the idea of social exclusion has conceptual connections with well-established notions in the literature on poverty and deprivation.

According to Silver (2004), social exclusion is a multidimensional process of progressive social rupture, detaching groups and individuals from social relations and institutions and preventing them from full participation in the formal, normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live

So in a general sense, Social Exclusion means a kind of social division or social alienation. We can say that social exclusion is a process that denies recognizing all those opportunities and arrangements to a certain individual or a group of people in a specific society. Especially social exclusion blocks some people to access basic opportunities in society and leads to deprivation and disempowerment. In general social exclusion refers to that condition that refuses to give social recognition to a certain group of people and also denies providing them with the enjoyment of human rights and other opportunities enjoyed by other people and groups of people from the same society. As defined by India in an ILO country case study, it is "the denial of the basic welfare rights which provide citizens positive freedom to participate in the social and economic life, and which thereby render meaningful their fundamental negative freedoms."

Another side, there is also some ambiguity about the concept of human rights. When we talk about human rights there is also difficult to define who human beings are. Human rights referred to inherited, natural, fundamental rights which fulfill the basic necessity of human beings. So these are exceptional in the sense that every individual as a human can enjoy these rights without any condition and irrespective of caste, creed, gender, class, and so on. The concept of human rights emphasized the principle of humanity as it means anybody as a human being may enjoy some basic rights which are inalienable, universal, and very natural, and also without these rights, no one can survive as a human. UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948) defines human rights as

Social exclusion and human rights both concepts are both very opposite to each other. There is a correlation between social exclusion and a lack of access to fundamental human rights. Social exclusion cuts across all other forms of exclusion. Socially excluded people suffer from multiple disadvantages and discrimination based on identity and also from the deprivation of human rights.

Socially excluded people are denied the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to social security, the right to the highest attainable standard of health, the right to participate in political processes, and the right to equality before the law. Social exclusion cuts across all other forms of exclusion. Socially excluded people suffer from multiple disadvantages and discrimination based on identity.

Brief introduction about the Shabar community: -

The study highlights that Shabar people are termed as socially excluded people. Before we try to examine why are they excluded from mainstream society and denied to recognize their basic human rights. First, we should know who Shabar tribal people are.

In Anthropological study, the Shabar community is identified by the name of Munda, Shoara, Lodha, Kheria, etc. The Shabar group is a most primitive Adivasi ethnic group inhabited West Bengal, Orissa, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh. This is also popularized that the Shabar community once upon a time used to live in the triangle of forest areas shared by the Bangla (West Bengal), Bihar (Now in the area of Jharkhand), and Odisha. It is also very controversial about the origin of Shabar or Kharia. According to S.C.Roy (1937), the Hill Kharia represents the archaic form of the more evolved Dudh and Helki Kharias of Ranchi. He believed that the center of dispersal of the Hill Kharia was the Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. In support of this, he mentioned the occurrence of a few Oriya words in the dialect of the Hill Kharia of Singhbhum and Manbhum districts. Dasgupta (1971) too, in course of linguistic study, found a few Oriya words in the dialect of the Hill Kharia of the Purulia district. During the colonial regime the Shabar was labeled as a 'criminal tribe' under the Criminal Tribes Act, of 1871, and still suffer from social stigma and ostracism in modern times.

Shabar Kharia and Kharia are not synonymous; rather there are a lot of differences between the two in respect of their linguistic, ethnic, and topographical features. This group has been unique in its language, culture, and social position in the Kharia community. They have some distinct types of features. Shabar community used to live in a forest area far from civilized and urbanized society. They were always close to nature and they did not have any interest in cultivation, also for food they depend on hunting wild animals and birds as well as reptiles, and sometimes they used to take some fruits. They also used to collect some food from the forest which helped them economically. They have their own indigenous culture also as well as their language.

Now Shabar community people are inhabited within seven blocks in the district of Purulia in West Bengal. Kulabohal is a village situated in Hura block very famous for the study of the Shabar community. They are all living in rural areas which are very rooted in communication. Among the Shabar community, a minimum number of people have agricultural land and depend on it. Let others don't have any property through which they can earn something to live life simply. Sometimes they engaged as a daily worker and sort of work in surrounding by the minimum wage. Their lifestyle is not similar at any cost to a civilian's. Some of them don't have their own house. We cannot imagine or believe how they are living without self-observation. They live in a hut. They eat what they produce and collect by begging. Now "Rice Beer" becomes a prominent food of them as it is used for drunk and alcoholic purposes which curse them in a good manner. They earn but not for development. They spend their earnings on drinking wine. After the end of the day when some of them return to their homes, their awkward situations are made by them. The literacy rate of the Shabar community people is not more than 5% to 10%. They are not much more interested to go to school. They also don't have an interest in participating in the political process or other social processes. They are just excluded from mainstream society. They are very far behind the civilized lifestyle. They don't have any political representatives who can raise their voices for them in a participatory democracy.

Socio-Cultural Status of the Shabar:-

After the independence, the constitution makers solemnly and devotedly committed to establishing India as a democratic country based on social justice and human rights. That's why Chapters III and IV incorporated fundamental rights and directive principles respectively to ensure political and social and economic justice. Indian parliament also adopted the national human rights act in 1993 to enhance and promotion of the scope of human rights in India. Now India is popularized as the largest democratic country in the world. Despite all these, there are so many shortcomings and challenges in the name of the ethnic problem, Dalit Issue,

regional disparities and so many things to resolve. The Shabar communities who are excluded from mainstream society now become so engendered and pathetic also. Some years ago and still now the people surrounding them think about them as a criminal and if anything happened in the name of a dacoit, loot is going to assume or blame the Shabar Kharia would be responsible. The Changing nature of the society and rapid development of civilized society adversely affected the distinct features of Shabar. They are lagging far away from mainstream society and losing their primitive culture and are also unable to protect their own culture and habituate them into mainstream society. The expansion of civilized society already displaced them from the forest and scarcity of food to which they were accustomed. The community has almost lost its linguistic identity since the language is on the verge of extinction. It is because of urbanization and modernization through Bangla and again because of the resurgence of Santali as a dominant language among the minority languages that Shabar Kharia as a language is endangered. The poverty and starvation and the social stigma that they experience in their daily life They are fear to merge themselves into the mainstream society which resulted in a lack of education and denial of social, political, and economic rights. They don't have any voter card, Adhar Id proof, or any other government identity proof which ensures some government facilities in some areas. They are also deprived of the accessibility of social recognition and cultural rights.

The government has taken some positive initiatives to uplift the Shabar people and run some projects and drive programs to help them and empower them. In this regard, civil society comes into play a vital role to provide them with basic needs in this region. So many individual efforts and some voluntary groups engaged to uplift them and merged into mainstream society. They are providing food, education self-sufficiency training like how to cultivate, fishery, etc. The administration also has taken some bold steps for their empowerment and eradication of poverty. Special Educational dive program has been taken from the end of the government and provides them house and other facilities like food, electricity, and so on. District administration is very cautious about them and organizes some special camps for providing them with government identity cards and other facilities also.

Conclusion:-

Besides the government efforts, several NGOs are engaging to work for them and always provide basic opportunities to them. But we need to think of an unconventional way to address their problem and how they can be socialized and mobilized to mainstream society. We need to find out the solution-based research why they are not showing their interest to get opportunities from the government. Civil society may play a pivotal role to upgrade them into mainstream society from vulnerability. The state has to take responsibility to give them all the opportunities and secure them from the violation of human rights. Now we need to look after these kinds of socially excluded people very carefully and give them a special opportunity to protect their own culture rather than merge them into mainstream society. The state should take alternative policies for the sake of promoting them and giving them equal importance. Another important thing that should not overlook is that we need to find out the reason why the Shabar people do not show encouragement to uplift them into mainstream society. If it would be possible to make assure them that their distinct culture will not be demolished at any cost could be a better option for their protection of identity.

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