

## **‘On the Question of “Inclusive” Growth: Reflecting on the Realities and their Regional Dynamics’**

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### **Abstract**

Economic exclusions based on social identity has been widely acknowledged in the academic discourses. Most of these studies- both theoretical and empirical- significantly concentrate on caste and gender based discrimination in the labour market. However, the practices of discriminations in the capital markets are not adequately studied. In this context, this paper attempts to map trajectories of economic liberalization and capitalist modernization, which officially launched in India in 1991, in dismantling the primordial social identities in the national capital market. By drawing empirical evidence from the Economic Census 2005, the paper tries to critically extend the argument of ‘stigma and regions of accumulation’ by Barbara Harriss-White and Kaushal Vidyarthi (2010). The limitations set by the conventional social distribution of wealth on the lines of caste and the unequal access to resources hampers the economic transformation of the historically marginalized communities. Therefore, paper argues that economic modernization and liberalization, without questioning the existing unequal distribution of resources become futile and it instead reproduces new forms of marginalization.

Keywords: Inclusive Growth, Exclusion, Caste, India, Socially Regulated Economy.

### **Introduction**

Inclusiveness is a multidimensional concept. According to Planning Commission of India “Inclusive growth involves lowering the incidence of poverty, broad-based and significant improvement in health outcomes, universal access to school, increased access to higher education and improved standards of education, including skill development. It should also be reflected in better opportunities for both wage employment and livelihood, and in improvement in provision of basic amenities like water, electricity, roads, sanitation and housing” (Planning Commission, 2011). The Commission further states that “along with special incentive for meeting specific needs, the basic strategy arising from inclusive growth is to make disadvantaged groups full

participants in the market economy... Entrepreneurship should also be promoted in rapidly growing sectors such as retail, tourism etc.” (Planning Commission, 2011).

Inclusion is the most passionate term in the contemporary political and policy discourses as well as in the academic debates in India. The contemporary relevance of inclusion is explained by the history of ‘exclusion’ which has been undergone by a huge chunk of India’s population for thousands of years. The exclusion or social exclusion is “the inability of an individual to participate in the basic political, economic and social functioning of society. And it involves the denial of equal opportunities imposed by certain groups in society upon others”(Buvinic, 2005 as quoted in Thorat and Newman, 2007). Thus, it involves not only the act of restricting access but also the consequences that follow it, principally the forms of deprivation (Thorat and Newman, 2007).

The discrimination based on identity as a particular kind of exclusion has been widely acknowledged by the academic debates cutting across the ideological and discipline barriers. There is a lack of theoretical framework as well as the empirical studies on the issue at least in the field of economics, however, many scholars have tried to hypothesize the caste and gender based identity discrimination especially in the labour market (Lal, 1988; Thorat, 2001; Harriss-White; Mohanty, 2001).

This paper tries to map the regional dimensions of caste-based discriminations in the ‘capital markets’ of India and how far the process of liberalization and the ongoing capitalist modernization which began in 1991 has been able to dismantle the primordial social identities. Though there are a large number of studies on the issues of discriminations in the labour market, but there is a neglect towards the capital markets in evaluating the nature and process of inclusion of the historically deprived sections of the society such as the SCs and STs into the market economy not as labour but as the entrepreneurs. It may be because of the general notion that it is too early to look for that. The paper makes an attempt to unravel the capacity of the market lead mechanisms in dismantling the shadows of “inefficiency” and “incompetence” created by the discriminations based on the archaic social identities such as castes.

### **Overview of the Literature**

Harris and Vidyarthi (2010) focuses on the market freedom and changes in the economic position of Dalits and Adivasis over the first decades of liberalization (from 1991 onwards). After

analyzing Indian scenario the authors stated that though “all of the major social-economic theorist, whatever their differences, have predicted that capitalist modernity would destroy archaic forms of exchange”. But in reality, “identities like caste are not just ignored or confined to the past but are reworked as regulator-not only in the economy but also inside the state apparatus” (Harris-White and Vidyarthee, 2010; 320-321). Their analysis shows that, “SCs have entered mining, quarrying and construction and are most consistently prevented from entering trade, transport, food, hospitality and service sectors, the last of which is driving Indian growth. STs have a relative disadvantage in all sectors of the non-agricultural economy but have been able, with the help of improvements in literacy to move into services-though, it is likely, at the low end” (*Ibid*; 332). This social exclusion in the market lead developmental activities (their inability to become the owners of capital rather than continuing as labourers) is having a strong regional dimension also. Thus “India has a series of regions of relative advantage and disadvantage for SCs and STs”. Thus they reinstate that “caste persist as a component of India’s social structure of accumulation”, irrespective of the so called liberalization and globalization.

Heyer (2010) is also taking part in this discussions and through her year’s long experience with this so called ‘socially regulated Indian economy’, she asserts that “markets are deeply embedded in social, political and cultural structures which are as necessary for their functioning in liberalizing and globalizing economies as in any other economies”. Because according to her, “the role of ‘traditional’ institutions may increase as competition becomes more aggressive and state withdraw”. Based on her field survey in the villages of Tamil Nadu, a state that is at the forefront of industrialization and urbanization in India, she pointed out that though “their mode of operation has changed, but the outcomes have remained very much as before” (Heyer, 2010).

Thorat and Newman (2007) provide a theoretical background to the study of discrimination with particular reference to the caste system. In an attempt to triggers off the debate over policy remedies, their paper triedto provide theoretical context to answer the fundamental questions like “how caste affects individuals' economic lives, how the economy interacts with caste values and attitudes, and what behaviour produces persistent inequality and deprivation for groups based on their caste, ethnicity or religion”. Accordingly, the exclusion from the access to market, in the name of caste rigidities, has series of adverse consequences on both income distribution and economic growth. Therefore, the major policy directions involves economic empowerment

through improving the ownership of assets like agricultural land, capital for business, entrepreneurial skills and educations, and the equal opportunity measures such as reservations are essential. But unfortunately, according to them, there is a considerable disagreement for the latter measure since it has been widely argued that “labour and other markets generally work in a neutral manner and access to job and other markets is therefore determined by merit and efficiency alone. As such there is no need of safeguards against possible market discrimination. Thus while the policies for general economic empowerment of discriminated groups through human capital investment find favour, policies that guarantee access, particularly to employment, are fraught with disagreement. This is a struggle between social ideals, but fundamentally as well, one that is based on disagreements about the empirical state of market”.

The political economic explanation for the varying status of the India’s states with respect to their success in the implementation of various social welfare measures has been debated by Harriss in his 1999 paper. Drawing a framework of analysis from Church’s (1984) ‘typology of political regimes in different states’, he tried to differentiate the political systems of different states in terms of the balance of caste/class power, and the nature of their resultant party system. According to him this difference is important since it has the potential to influence the policy process and the performance of the state. But it doesn’t mean that it will persist for quiet long, rather, “where stable, relatively well-institutionalized parties compete for their votes, the political system is likely to be more responsive to the needs and interests of poorer people”, by even challenging the locally dominant castes/classes power structure.

While there is a general notion that the economic modernization will do melts down the social primordialities and consequent discrimination, it would be interesting to look into the nature of inclusion which has been witnessed by the Indian economy especially after the post liberalized era. Because such an overlook will enable us to know the nature of the inclusion under this dominant economic structure and to look at the credibility of such assertions in the planning documents. Therefore, this study tries to test the following hypothesis, which is drawn out of the general notion of social reformist capacity of this neutral growth.

#### Hypothesis

We propose here that the modernization or liberalization of the economy would dismantle the archaic forms of exchange, by empowering the historically socially-disadvantaged sections like

Dalits and Adivasi to become the owners of capital rather than continuing as labourers. Therefore this study “concerned with SCs and STs as owners of capital rather than as labourers”, because we assumes that becoming the owners of capital is a positive indicators of economic assertions (or upward mobility) of these under-privileged social groups and which is a necessary condition for the economic inclusion.

### **Data Sources and Methodology**

The Economic Census 2005 and the Census of India 2001 are the major sources of data. With all its shortcomings, the Economic Census is the only source of aggregate data in respect of unorganized non-agricultural sectors of the economy and was launched by the Central Statistical Organization in 1976.

#### **Methodology**

The participation of different social groups into various sectors of economic activities can be calculated with the help of an index called participation index as used in Harriss-White and KaushalVidyarthee’s paper (2010). The indices of participation (PI) is given as  $SC$  or  $ST$  enterprises (SCE) in sector  $i$ , state  $x$ /total enterprises in sector  $i$ , in state  $x$ / $SC$  or  $ST$  Population (SCP) in state  $x$ /total population in state  $x$ .

The cross sectional analysis has been employed to understand the regional dimensions of this nature and process of participation. And finally, the methods of correlation has been used to figure out the determinants of the regional dimensions of the participation index across the country and across various sectors.

### **Results and Discussions**

The analysis of the Economic census data vis a vis the census of India data for the last one and half decades after the liberalization and “institutionalized” integration of Indian economy with the global market, shows that the Dalits are still at the margins with respect to their inclusion into the market economy as the (active) entrepreneurs or the owners of the capital. The table shows (table:1) that, for both the SCs and the STs, the population has been increased over time during 1990-2005 as well as the number of firms also grew, but their share in the ownership of the firms is showing a different picture. For the STs, the percentage of firms owned by them to the total

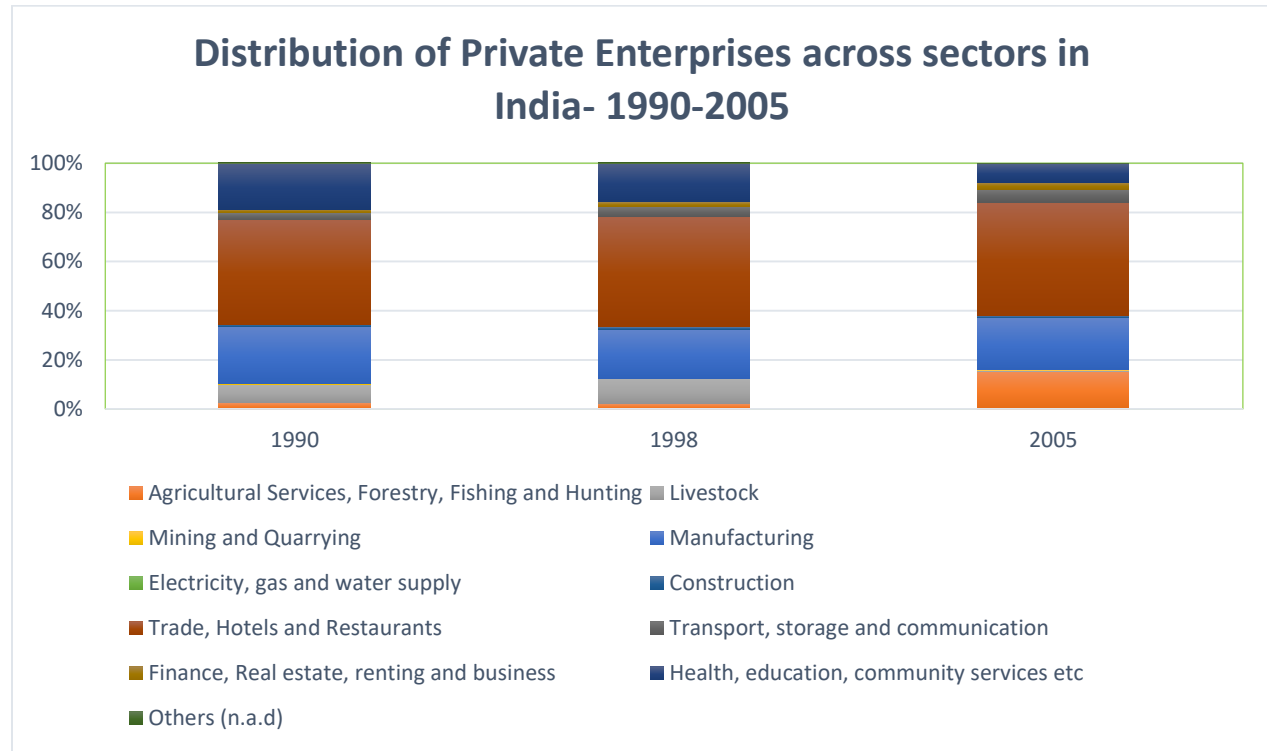
number of firms recorded in the country has been increased during 1990 to 1998, but surprisingly, this momentum could not be sustained for long and the period of 1998-2005, showed a downward tendency. But still as compared to 1990, the percentage of firms owned by them is more during 2005. But the story of the SCs are totally opposite to it, the period of 1990-98 witnessed a sudden decline in the percentage of firms owned by them from 9.9% to 8.76%. But the period of 1998 to 2005 witnessed a very slight increase in this percentage, but still it is lesser than as compared to 1990.

Dalit Firms in India 1990-2005					
Years	Total no of Firms (millions)	% ST Population	% ST firms	% SC Population	% SC Firms
1990 (1991)*	22.2	8.1	2.9	16.5	9.9
1998 (2001)*	27.7	8.2	4.4	16.2	8.4
2005**	42.2	8.40	3.61	16.42	8.76
Source: * From Harris and Vidyarthee (2010; 323), ** Compiled by the author from Census of India (2001 and 2011) and Economic Census 2005 data. (Table: 1)					

The Economic Census data shows that between 1990 and 2005 the number of firms grew from 22.2 million to 42.2 million. When we compare the percentage share of each sectors to the total private enterprises in the country with the share of each sectors to GDP, we can see that for agriculture, though its share in the GDP has been decline over time between 1990-9, but still the number of private firm under this category has been increased. While manufacturing sector on the other hand, showed a declining tendency in terms of total number of enterprises, but still it could maintain its contribution in the GDP. For trade, hotels and restaurants and finance and real estate both the number of firms and the GDP contribution increased during this period.

Finance, insurance, real estate & business, construction and trade, hotels & restaurants were the major constituents of the GDP growth during 2005-06. But the table 2 and 3 shows that in all these sectors both SCs and STs Participation was disproportionately low and which show the existence of negative discrimination in the market against them(the participation index is less than 1). SCs in Fishing and STs in Forestry and hunting activities showed a sign of positive discrimination and high participation and both are associated with their traditional occupation. Thus it has to be noted that, the empirical evidence in a way are contradicting with our hypothesis that, “the modernization or liberalization of the economy would destroy the archaic forms of exchange, by encouraging the historically socially-disadvantaged sections like Dalits and Adivasi

to ‘do away with’ their inability to become the owners of capital rather than continuing as labourers”. Because here markets are not able to ensure the equity in the economic incorporation of Dalits and Adivasis, this is consistent with the results of another study by Harris and Vidyarthee (2010).



Source: 1990 and 1998 data from, From Harris and Vidyarthee (2010; 324), 2005 data has been compiled by the author from the 5<sup>th</sup> Economic Census, 2005. Both 1998 and 2005 data adjusted to compare with 1990 data.

<b>The Distribution of Private Enterprises across sectors and the Sectorial contribution to GDP (at factor cost at constant (2004-05) prices) in India 2005-06</b>								
Sector in 2005	Total Enterprises (SC+ST+OBC+Other)	% of Firms	% of GDP	Growth Rate of GDP	% SC Firms	% ST Firms	% OBC	% Gen
Agricultural Services	5146150	13.691	15.46	5.53	9.08	4.19	46.94	36.37
Livestock	143016	0.38	-	-	10.67	5.51	47.31	29.25
Forestry and Hunting	252490	0.672	1.93	1.79	13.65	46.25	16.04	9.87

Fishing	346127	0.921	0.88	5.88	19.96	4.4	52.10	18.47
Mining and Quarrying	78467	0.209	2.65	1.31	12.08	7.2	42.01	30.78
Manufacturing	7970129	21.204	15.34	10.1	10.37	4.27	45.55	34.90
Electricity, gas and water supply	28267	0.075	2.06	7.1	2.76	1.06	17.35	22.01
Construction	307436	0.818	7.93	12.79	14.9	4.63	39.02	36.95
Wholesale and retail	15865876	42.21	14.89	11.65	8.59	3.2	36.99	46.76
Hotels and restaurants	1404416	3.736	1.56	17.4	6.69	3.51	42.76	40.73
Transport, storage and communication	2045072	5.441	8.61	11.82	12.29	3.26	31.05	44.45
Financial intermediation	166337	0.443	6.09	15.82	2.36	1.08	20.12	33.11
Real estate, renting and business	954755	2.54	9.04	10.56	6.59	2.16	33.53	50.99
Public administration and defense	89563	0.238	5.6	4.34	1.12	0.8	5.41	8.22
Other Community and social services	2788756	7.42	13.54	7.07	5.42	1.43	24.80	25.44
Extra territorial organization	1294	0.0034	-	-	6.41	3.23	33.15	29.30
Other services	-	-	7.94	9.08	-	-	-	-
Total	37588151	100	100	9.48	8.76	3.61	37.81	39.04

Source: Enterprises' data from economic census, 2005 and GDP from CSO.(Table: 2)

<b>Participation of SCs, STs and Non-SC/ST in Various Economic Activities, 2005</b>						
Sector in 2005	% of Firms	% of GDP	Growth Rate of GDP	Participation Index		
				ST	SC	Non-SC/ST
Agricultural Services	13.691	15.46	5.53	0.512	0.560	1.102



Livestock	0.38	-	-	0.67 2	0.65 9	1.013
Forestry and Hunting	0.672	1.93	1.79	5.64 2	0.84 3	0.343
Fishing	0.921	0.88	5.88	0.53 7	1.23 2	0.933
Mining and Quarrying	0.209	2.65	1.31	0.87 8	0.74 6	0.963
Manufacturing	21.204	15.34	10.10	0.52 1	0.64 0	1.064
Electricity, gas and water supply	0.075	2.06	7.10	0.12 9	0.17 0	0.521
Construction	0.818	7.93	12.79	0.56 5	0.92 0	1.005
Wholesale and retail	42.21	14.89	11.65	0.39 0	0.53 0	1.108
Hotels and restaurants	3.736	1.56	17.40	0.42 8	0.41 3	1.104
Transport, storage and communication	5.441	8.61	11.82	0.39 8	0.75 9	0.999
Financial intermediation	0.443	6.09	15.82	0.13 2	0.14 6	0.704
Real estate, renting and business	2.54	9.04	10.56	0.26 4	0.40 7	1.118
Public administration and defense	0.238	5.60	4.34	0.09 8	0.06 9	0.180
Other Community and social services	7.42	13.54	7.07	0.17 5	0.33 4	0.664
Extra territorial organization	0.0034	-	-	0.39 4	0.39 6	0.826
Other services	-	7.94	9.08			
Total	100	100	9.48	0.44 0	0.54 1	1.017
Source: Economic Census, 2005						(Table: 3)

Now we have to look at whether these macro story has any regional specificities, since one of the seminal papers on the same issue by Harris and Vidyarthee (2010) shows a regional dimension of this uneven economic incorporation of the SCs and STs.

#### Regional Dynamics:

The 2005 Economic Census data shows that across the states (see appendix I), Dalit's participations are comparatively better-off in the states of Assam and Odisha while the Adivasis

are doing well in the states of UP, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It is important to state here that, these states have low proportions of SCs and STs to their total population respectively. Thus it can be stated that “where SCs and STs are each relatively most densely distributed in the population, they are each relatively least densely distributed as owners of firms”(Harris and Vidyarthee, 2010; 325).Such a tendency has been noticed by the earlier studies as well.

The sectoral analysis says a different stories. The STs are better represented in all the three sectors (primary, secondary and tertiary sectors) UP, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Himachal Pradesh. But in states like Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal the STs’ participation is proportionate to their population share. States of Orissa showing a positive participation both in the primary and secondary sector. The all India figures shows the pathetic situation across all the sector but the primary sectors are comparatively better off. The regional stories of SC’s participation are different, at all India level they are also not proportionately included in any of the sectors. But they are doing comparatively better in the secondary and primary sectors. Assam and Orissa are the two states where the SCs are proportionately participating in all the sectors. They are comparatively doing well in secondary sectors of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh and also in the primary sectors of West Bengal, but their participation in the tertiary sector is very meager across all the states except Assam and Orissa.

While comparing with the summery findings of Harris and Vidyarthee (2010) (see table: 4), it can be seen that SCs are still advantageous in agricultural sectors of eastern regions while in the western regions also the primary sector is significant, but it has to be noted that here the Dalits are incorporated into the traditional sectors like forestry and hunting related sectors. Their analysis shows that the SCs are participated comparatively better in the manufacturing sectors of northern region, but our results show a sectoral shift to the construction. It can be argued that over years the process of deskilling is taking place and the market is incorporating them in a way market needed that is what Thorat termed as “unfavorable inclusion and unfavorable exclusion”. The STs regional pattern has also changed and the recent data shows that they are restricted to certain sectors within the primary activates like forestry and hunting and thus it can be argued that thoughthe economic development is taking place the incorporation of the tribal in to the higher order services are not taking place as it has been expected.

Summary of Regions of Incorporation of Dalits in India
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SCs	East advantaged: west disadvantaged	North advantaged: South disadvantaged	Relative advantage everywhere	Relative disadvantage everywhere
	Agriculture	Non-agricultural in general and manufacturing	Mining; quarrying; construction	Trade; transport; storage; finance; real estate; services
STs	East advantaged: west disadvantaged	North advantaged: South disadvantaged	Patchy/no pattern	North and South-east advantage
	Agriculture	Manufacturing; trade	Mining; quarrying; construction; trade; transport; storage; communications;services	Non- agriculture in general
Source: Harris and Vidyarthee (2010; 332)				(Table: 4)

**Explaining the Patterns**

In order to explain the emerging regional patterns of the degree of inclusion of the dalits and Adivasis in to the modern economic developmental trajectories as active entrepreneurs, the variables such as literacy, access to land and poverty ratio have been used. The literacy rate availed from the census of India 2001 has been used as a proxy indicator for the levels of skills of the people, while the percentage of landless households under each categories and the poverty ratio (accessed from the planning commission) has been used as the indicators of barriers to the market. The analysis of correlation among these variables with the participation index across different sectors, primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, of the economy showing an interesting story.

For SCs: there is a low correlation coefficient has been recorded between the participation index across all sectors and the poverty ratio and the percentage of landless SC households. Which shows that, the role of this (barrier) variables are very high in determining their low levels of participation. But it is very interesting to note that the participation index in the tertiary sector and the conditions of landlessness and poverty ratio are showing even a negative relationship. Because, it is known that the entry into the tertiary sector, particularly, require a certain minimum capital base, but the historically deprived sections of the society, like the dalits, won't be able to compete under this conditions since they are lacking this capital stock and thus they will get

automatically put aside to the system. Therefore, it can be argued that any kind of economic modernization and liberalization, without questioning the existing unequal distribution of resources become totally futile and it rather reiterate the archaic forms exploitation and discrimination and marginalization in other ways.

<b>SC: Correlation Matrix</b>				
<b>Variables</b>	<b>PI:Primary</b>	<b>PI:Secondary</b>	<b>PI: Tertiary</b>	<b>PI:All Sectors</b>
% Landless households	0.078	0.028	-0.045	0.034
Poverty Ratio	0.163	0.122	-0.008	0.056
Literacy rate	0.107	0.160	0.145	0.154
PI: Participation Index Source: Calculated by the Authors.				

It is worth to mention here that, though the percentage of literates and participation index is showing a positive relationship, but the coefficient of correlation is very meagre. This can be either due to the inadequacy of literacy rate as an indicator to capture the levels of disparity in skills or due to the less role it has in eliminating the caste based discrimination in the capital market to ensure a dalits

<b>ST: Correlation Matrix</b>				
<b>Variables</b>	<b>PI: Primary</b>	<b>PI: Secondary</b>	<b>PI: Tertiary</b>	<b>PI: AllSectors</b>
% Landless households	-0.204	-0.215	-0.234	-0.218
Poverty Ratio	-0.192	-0.083	-0.117	-0.107
Literacy rate	-0.212	-0.265	-0.269	-0.261
Source: Calculated by the Authors.				

to become an entrepreneur.

In the case of STs, the degree of landlessness and poverty continued to be as a restricting variable in determining the rate of participation in the capital market. But one of the interesting thing has to be noted here is the inverse relationship showed between the literacy rate and participation index.

Though the states of Kerala, HP and Tamil Nadu showing a positive tendency in terms of participation along with higher literacy rates, but the inclusion of them in to non-primary sectors are poor. But Assam, on the other hand, showing a tendency of negative discrimination against STs though they are showing a comparatively high literacy rate. It is the case with Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, MP and Uttarakhand as well. But in the states of UP, though the literacy rate is poor, but still the participation index of the ST across all the sectors shows a disproportionately higher participation by them.

### **Conclusion**

The question of caste based discrimination cannot be set aside while looking at the path of India's economic development. The paper had critically examined the effectiveness of the new liberal strategies of economic development in dismantling archaic structures of exploitation, which has rooted socially, and ensuring a more inclusive and effective paths of development. The analysis of the Economic census data for the last one and half decades after the liberalization and institutionalized integration of Indian economy with the global market, shows that the Dalits/Scheduled Castes are still at the margins with respect to their inclusion into the market economy as the active entrepreneurs or the owners of the capital. It is highly interesting to note that, though the sectors such as finance, insurance, real estate & business, construction and trade, hotels & restaurants were the major constituents of the GDP growth during 2005-06, but the participation of SCs and STs into these sectors was disproportionately low and which show the existence of negative discrimination in the market against them. At the same time their high degree of participation into the sectors like fishing (for SCs) and forestry and hunting activities (for STs) make us to argue that they are still confined to those sectors which are associated with their traditional caste-based occupation. Though one can counter argue that it is better to do well in a sector which is known to them for quite along period of time, but it can be contradicted with the very notion of development as a structural transformation and why such a structural transformation is negated for these categories alone.

Thus it has to be noted that, the empirical evidence in a way are contradicting with our hypothesis that, ‘the modernization or liberalization of the economy would abolish the archaic forms of exploitation, by empowering the socially-disadvantaged sections like Dalits and Adivasi to become the owners of capital rather than continuing as labourers’.The 2005 Economic Census shows that across the states, Dalit’s participations are comparatively better-off in the states of Assam and Odisha while the Adivasis are doing well in the states of UP, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. It is important to state here that, these states have low proportions of SCs and STs to their total population respectively. Thus, it can be stated that “where SCs and STs are each relatively most densely distributed in the population, they are each relatively least densely distributed as owners of firms”(Harris and Vidyarthee, 2010; 325). The analysis further shows that the literacy has not played any role in determining the distribution of entrepreneurship across the social groups. But the barriers set by the traditional caste-based distribution of the assets and resources like land and the resultant predominance of incidence of poverty is still playing an important role in restricting the economic transformations of the Dalits. Therefore, it can be argued that any kind of economic modernization and liberalization, without questioning the existing unequal distribution of resources become totally futile and it rather reiterate the archaic forms exploitation and discrimination and reproduces new forms of marginalization.

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