# DECOLONISING EDUCATION: CRITICAL REFLECTIONS FROM INDIA

## *LA DESCOLONIZACIÓN DE LA EDUCACIÓN: REFLEXIONES CRÍTICAS DESDE LA INDIA*

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## ABSTRACT

Educational development within the postcolonial Indian Nation-state is integrally connected with the colonial history. Much like other postcolonial nations, modernisation of Indian society through education is a product of the "local history" and the "global design" of colonialism and contemporary processes of globalisation. The modern colonial imaginary has been predominant in shaping the "subject lessons" learnt by modern Indian elites. Though there were missionaries, some benevolent Europeans, and native intellectuals committed to the cause of education for the uplift of the Indian masses, the British Raj mostly promoted the education for the elites. This modern colonial imaginary also shaped Indian nationalism and the nationalist freedom movement led by the elites of the Indian society. Within a diverse class, caste, multi-ethnic and religious context, often this nationalist imaginary led to the suppression of subaltern voices. The establishment of the Modern Indian nation-

state with a democratic constitution drafted by a constituent assembly with representation from all sections of the diverse Indian society (including 15 women from diverse backgrounds) and chaired by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a dalit[1] scholar and intellectual, promised the establishment of democracy and social justice. However, this paper argues that the constitutional promise cannot be fulfilled without decolonising the aims and objectives of education that serves the interest of specific elite groups. In order to decolonise education, it would be of utmost importance to align the aims and objectives of education with that of democratic education.

**KEYWORDS:** decolonisation, education, democracy, social justice, India

### *RESUMEN*

El desarrollo de la educación en el estado-nación de la India postcolonial se vincula íntegramente con la historia colonial. De manera muy similar a otras naciones postcoloniales, la modernización de la sociedad india mediante la educación es un producto de la "historia local" y del "diseño global" del colonialismo y de los procesos contemporáneos de globalización. El imaginario colonial moderno ha sido predominante a la hora de moldear los "temas de las lecciones" aprendidos por las élites indias modernas. Aunque hubo misioneros, algunos europeos benevolentes, e intelectuales nativos comprometidos con la causa de la educación para elevar las masas indias, el Raj británico promovió fundamentalmente la educación para las élites. Este imaginario colonial moderno moldeó igualmente el nacionalismo indio y el movimiento nacionalista de libertad liderado por las élites de la sociedad india. En un contexto de castas, multiétnico y religioso diverso, a menudo este imaginario nacionalista desembocó en la supresión de las voces subalternas. El

establecimiento del moderno estado-nación indio con una constitución democrática redactada por una asamblea constituyente con representación de todos los sectores de la diversa sociedad india (incluyendo 15 mujeres provenientes de diferentes contextos) y presidida por el Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, un académico e intelectual 'dalit'[2], prometió el establecimiento de la democracia y la justicia social. Sin embargo, el presente trabajo sostiene que la promesa constitucional no puede ser cumplida sin la descolonización de las aspiraciones y objetivos de la educación que sirve a los intereses de grupos de élite concretos. Para descolonizar la educación, sería fundamental alinear sus pretensiones y objetivos con los de la educación democrática.

**Palabras clave**: *descolonización, educación, democracia, justicia social, India*

## 1.    INTRODUCTION

Speaking in the Constituent Assembly on 4 November 1948, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the chair of the Constituent Assembly that drafted the modern Indian constitution, said:

> Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realise that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top-dressing on an Indian soil which is essentially undemocratic [B. R. Ambedkar] (Roy, 2014).

Recalling the above quote from Ambedkar about the undemocratic Indian society, Arundhati Roy in her 2014 essay highlights the implementation challenges of the democratic Indian constitution. This is because more than half a century and a decade after the Indian constitution came into force on 26th January 1950, Indian

society continued to remain undemocratic. Though he was a legal professional, Ambedkar also realised quite early that enforcing a legal document, such as the Constitution, was not enough. The only way to establish a more democratic society is through education. "Educate" is the first word of his famous slogan "Educate, unite, struggle".

However, what kind of education can establish a democratic society? How successful has been Ambedkar's vision of education for the uplift of the marginalised over the past 75 years? Within a context, such as India, where education was historically available only to the socioeconomic elites, how can education help in "conscientisation" in the Freirean sense? Can education within a postcolonial context operate in ways that would help individuals and communities develop a critical understanding of their social reality through reflection and action? Within the contemporary post-pandemic context of lockdowns and exclusion, is it possible to democratise education for the colonised and minoritized population, as argued by Antonia Darder (2022) in her article? This article attempts to answer these questions by sharing critical reflections from India based on decades of research and fieldwork by the author.

The first section of the article will provide brief background of the context of Indian education and its integral connection with colonial modernity. Thereby, this section will highlight the problematics and complexity of the context of Indian education. The next section of the article will highlight the challenges of schooling and postcolonial national identity formation within the multi-ethnic and multicultural context of India. The third section will discuss the contested terrain of some experiments to decolonise education by organic intellectuals, such as Gandhi, and Tagore. Based on these critical reflections, this paper will highlight the challenges of decolonising the aims and objectives of education within the context of postcolonial

India. This paper critiques the continuing colonial legacy on the curriculum, pedagogy, and modes of assessment within the Indian education system. Finally, this paper argues that the constitutional promise of democracy can be fulfilled in India only when education would be decolonised by aligning the aims and objectives of democratic education.

## 2. INDIAN EDUCATION & COLONIAL MODERNITY

Much like in many other parts of the world, education was the privilege of only male students belonging to the upper class and caste[3] (royalty and nobility) of Indian society taught by the learned scholarly caste of teachers, i.e., Brahmin Gurus. Education would be imparted at the "Gurukul", homes of the Brahmin teachers. With the advent of the European and American missionaries into the Indian subcontinent, formal education in the arts and sciences began spreading across the masses, including women and lower castes (Rao, 2014; Seth, 2007). However, the establishment of public schools and government investment into education happened because of many deliberations between the enlightened native intellectuals, such as Raja Rammohan Roy (well-versed in Sanskrit literature, as well as western knowledge system) and the colonial government. Hence, modern Indian education has been historically connected to colonial modernity.

According to the native intellectuals, the purpose of introducing modern western education was to encourage questioning social evils and to generate critical thinking against social norms, such as "sati" (widow burning) and caste-based discrimination based on prejudice. However, as it was noted by Indian intellectuals and the colonial government, the introduction of modern western education in a foreign language, English, led to many unintended outcomes. On the one hand,

introduction of modern western education led to the rise of Nationalist leaders and freedom fighters. On the other hand, many native Indians became too busy rote-learning western knowledge in English for purely material instrumental gains within the colonial Indian context. The critical social consciousness raising aims and objective of modern western education was lost for these Indians. These Indians continued with their traditional social practices in their private lives. This problem was often identified as a "moral crisis" and it has been discussed at length based on extensive historic evidence by Sanjay Seth (2007). Nobel Laureate Indian national poet, Rabindranath Tagore, also critiqued this phenomenon of rote-learning unfamiliar content in school textbooks in a foreign language as early as in 1892 in his essay শিক্ষার হেরফের (*Shiksar Herfer)* meaning Topsy-turvy Education.

Like all his writings, *Shiksar Herfer* was initially written and delivered as a speech in Bengali by Tagore. In this essay Tagore reflected critically on his own early educational experiences in both formal Bengali and English medium schools in Calcutta compared to English education in England. According to Tagore, while both the language and the content of education in England was integrally connected to English life and society, it was completely disconnected from the life of Bengali children during colonial India. This encouraged rote-memorising rules of grammar and sentence structure more than critical thinking and understanding. Tagore believed learning should be a joyous experience of mental and physical freedom for the child and learning should be connected to the child's social and cultural environment.

In his own experimental school in Shantiniketan, he sought to establish an alternative system of early education in mother tongue, alongside developing a multilingual curriculum and well-trained teachers to stimulate critical thinking and

creative imagination. Another native intellectual of colonial Calcutta, Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, was seeking to do similar things by modernising curricular content in the spoken language, Bengali, and devising pedagogic approaches to stimulate critical thinking and questioning through the mode of native storytelling, as it has been also argued by Spivak (2002). This is very similar to the arguments Darder (2022) makes in her article about culturally democratic pedagogy:

> A culturally democratic pedagogy also creates the conditions for subaltern students to develop the courage to question the structures of domination that control their lives. In this way, they awaken their subaltern voice as they participate in moments of reflection, critique, and action together with other students who are also experiencing the same process of discovery. Hence, students are not only provided with curricular content that is considered culturally relevant or language instruction in their native tongues. Rather, they are actively involved in critically examining curricular content, texts, and classroom experiences to determine the emancipatory as well as oppressive and contradictory values that inform their thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors. Through this critical pedagogical process, subaltern students develop their abilities to understand their lives as cultural and political beings, as well as how to understand themselves as subjects of history and cultural citizens of the world (Darder, 2022).

However, the colonial logic and influence was so powerful that the pedagogic experiments of "organic intellectuals", such as Tagore or Vidyasagar remained in the periphery. Since English slowly became the language of trade and commerce, and coveted colonial government jobs, most students and their parents longed for modern western education imparted in English. This trend continues even today in

the postcolonial era and has intensified in the recent years following neoliberal globalisation.

As Ashish Nandy (1983) has argued, the dilemma of the post-colonial condition is that

> colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps generalize the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in structures and in minds (Nandy, 1983, p. xi).

Similarly, I argue here that in the age of globalisation the "East is now everywhere, within the East and outside, in structure and minds".

Hence, caste-based discrimination has now become a global social problem, as it persists even among the highly educated Indian diaspora abroad living in places, such as the Silicon Valley in the United States. This has justified Ambedkar's (1916) prophecy (published in 1917), as he once wrote in a paper while he was a student at Columbia University:

> The caste problem is a vast one, both theoretically and practically. Practically, it is as institution that portends tremendous consequences. It is a local problem, but one capable of much wider mischief, for "as long as caste in India does exist, Hindus will hardly intermarry or have any social intercourse with outsiders; and if Hindus migrate to other regions on earth, Indian caste would become a world problem" (Ambedkar, 1917, paragraph 4).

Indeed, caste has become a world problem in the twenty-first century. Caste has become integrally linked with postcolonial national identity formation (Singh, 2015).

In the following section of this article, I will analyse the role that schooling played in the postcolonial National Identity formation.

## 3. SCHOOLING & POSTCOLONIAL NATIONAL IDENTITY

Schooling plays a major role in social reproduction around the world. In postcolonial India, schooling played a major role in Indian national identity formation. Over the past 75 years through the standardised National Curriculum Frameworks (NCF) and various ritual practices, such as National flag hoisting during Independence Day, and Republic Day, and singing of National anthem daily, Indian schools have sought to forge a strong National identity amongst the citizens. This has been done by mostly disregarding the exploitative and oppressive structures that are still prevalent among the idealised postcolonial Indian society (Kamat, 2004). As India became independent from oppressive colonial rule, the power shifted from the colonisers to the local ruling elites. Mukherjee and Singh (2021) write:

> after the colonial masters left, the power dynamics were hijacked by caste and class divides within the indigenous Indian society. This is against the vision of the founding fathers of postcolonial Indian national imaginary, like Tagore and Gandhi, who viewed education as vehicles of transformative social change and nation-building through inclusive education. The ethos of Tagore's *Shantiniketan*, Gandhi's *Nai Taleem*, and the ideas of Nehru, Ambedkar, and Maulana Azad were centred around the concept that education would help alleviate the status of the people who were relegated to the fringes of the society due to cast and class divides (Batra, 2005). There is an urgent need for the future NCF to remove these systematic barriers for the

educators and democratise their participation (Mukherjee and Singh, 2021, p. 23).

However, the future looks less optimistic analysing the history and the way in which ideologies of powerful authorities (colonial or local) get embedded into the aims and objectives of education and reflected in the curriculum (Apple, 1979). Even within the postcolonial Indian context, the ideologies of the major political parties have successfully influenced the ways in which the National Curriculum Frameworks have been designed. Kamat (2004), Jain (2005), Batra (2010) and Mukherjee and Singh (2021) discuss at length the problematics of postcolonial national identity and civic formation through schooling under political regimes that seek to promote the ideology of Hindutva through the curriculum and seek to establish postcolonial India as a Hindu state. Decolonisation of education within the postcolonial Indian context has often taken the form of "saffronising the curriculum"[4] by one of the two major political parties and the projection of the upper-caste Hindu male as the ideal citizen (Gohain, 2002).

Hence, decolonising of education itself has been a contested terrain within the postcolonial Indian context. Should postcolonial India emerge as a Nation truly embodying "unity in diversity" by providing recognition to the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religious population, and their respective traditions? Or, should postcolonial India emerge as a Nation united linguistically, culturally, and religiously, despite the existing historic diversity? Should postcolonial India continue to deny the internal oppression of the oppressed classes and castes as a reaction against the colonial subjugation and western superiority? These questions are important to consider when we think about decolonising education within the postcolonial Indian context. This is because the call for decolonisation through education to inculcate a positive national cultural identity was a product of the freedom movement within the

colonial Indian context, which often denied internal oppression based on caste, class, gender, and religion. Often Nationalist leaders, such as Gandhi, were responsible in promoting an ideal image of India's past and history to combat the colonial oppression of being treated as "savage barbarians". This led to the denial of internal discrimination and subjugation within the Indian society. In the following section of this article, I will elaborate further on this issue.

## 4. DECOLONISING EDUCATION: CONTESTED TERRAIN

The critique of Western education and call for an indigenously developed model in which there was a return to radical indigenous and anti-colonial perspective was put forward by nationalist leaders and intellectuals such as Mahatma Gandhi. He emphasised developing a positive cultural identity for the colonised subject as an integral aspect of the struggle towards decolonisation. For anticolonialists, the persistence of "colonialism of the mind" could only be overcome by challenging the hierarchies of knowledge and values of Western superiority. However, this led to the creation of a narrative of the idealised pre-colonial past. It was invented to "animate the nativism and orientalist utopia of present-day Hindu nationalists" [Kamat, 2004, p. 274] (Mukherjee and Singh, 2021, p. 18).

The above quote highlights very well the challenges of decolonising education within the postcolonial Indian context, as there is a thin line between "decolonisation" and "saffronisation" as promoted by Hindu nationalists. Hence, to think about decolonisation of education within the complex postcolonial contexts, such as India, we need to consider carefully the aims and objectives of education. If colonisation led to the subjugation of the indigenous societies, cultures, languages, and

traditions, then we need to question what decolonisation would entail. Rather than looking at indigenous societies through orientalist lens, we need to take a critical perspective of these societies and need to consider the critiques of the oppressed classes and social evils. As Darder (2022) rightly emphasised by quoting from Gramsci at the beginning of her article: "But democracy, by definition, cannot mean merely that an unskilled worker can become skilled. It must mean that every "citizen" can "govern", and that society places him [or her] in a general condition to achieve this" (Antonio Gramsci, 1971).

For the citizens to learn to "govern" themselves and establish a democratic system of governance "of the people, by the people and for the people" democratic education in schools and democratising educational institutions should be of utmost importance. Hence, I argue in this article that decolonising education in the postcolonial Indian context needs to take the form of democratic education in schools.

The aims and objectives of education should be geared towards the establishment of a democratic society by mentoring citizens for democratic governance. Once educational aims and objectives will be geared towards democracy, then curriculum, pedagogy and modes of assessment will also change to become more democratic in their orientation. Rather than upholding any identity or ideology as superior, curricular content will become more inclusive of diversity. Pedagogy will become more reflexive and critical. Modes of assessment will be designed to evaluate learning outcomes, rather than being designed for elimination of some students, who fail to perform well in exams. In the following section of this paper, I will discuss at length one such exemplary decolonial model of schooling and education established by the first Asian Nobel Laureate and postcolonial India's National poet, Rabindranath Tagore.

## 5. DECOLONISING EDUCATION AND DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION

There have been a few good examples to decolonise education within the colonial Indian context by "organic intellectuals", such as Gandhi, Tagore, Krishnamurti and Aurobindo. However, I have discussed the contested terrain of decolonising education within the Indian context, whereby seeking to decolonise by imagining an idealised past can fall into the trap of "nativism" and "orientalism". Decolonisation of education, particularly following the Gandhian mode of idealising the past could fall into the slippery ground of "saffronisation of education" promoted by Hindu nationalists. This has been critiqued by scholars, such as Kamat (2004) and Rao (2009, 2014, 2019). The chief architect of the democratic Indian Constitution, Ambedkar, also went against Gandhi progressively because of this issue (Puri, 2022).

Hence, when we think about decolonising education within the postcolonial Indian context, we need to be careful not to fall into the slippery ground of "nativism" that ignores the indigenous hierarchies and oppression, and "saffronisation of education" promoting the ideology of a particular group. Indian society is a diverse society of people belonging to different ethnicities, religions, and castes. If the process of "decolonisation of education" privileges the beliefs and interests of any particular group while supressing the others, it will perpetuate similar kind of "ruling relations" (Smith, 2005) and oppression, as it was during colonisation.

The reason colonisation could sustain for so long is because the colonisers collaborated with local capitalist class, i.e., the Zamindars (landlords) of the indigenous Indian society. Once the colonisers left, the power was again transferred to the indigenous "ruling class". Therefore, any kind of effort for "decolonising education" should also consider the indigenous class/caste/religious/gendered

hierarchies. Decolonising education within the Indian context, therefore, should take the form of democratic education.

> A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder (Dewey, *The Democratic Concept of Education*, Ch. 8).

The above quote from John Dewey's classic book *Democracy and Education* is very relevant for thinking about decolonising education within the postcolonial Indian context. Social change is the need of the hour for true freedom of the people of the Indian subcontinent. The postcolonial Indian Constitution drafted by a constituent assembly as diverse as the Indian population and led by Dalit scholar and intellectual, Dr. Ambedkar was no doubt a harbinger for social change. However, as it has been noted earlier in this article, Ambedkar realised that the constitutional promise can be fulfilled only through education and, by education Ambedkar envisioned the democratic concept of education that John Dewey discussed in his book. He was very much influenced by Deweyan concept of democratic education, as he was Dewey's student at the Columbia University (Mukherjee, 2009; Stroud, 2017).

Though Ambedkar did not seek to establish an alternative decolonial model of democratic education, as it has been mentioned earlier, there have been a few indigenous experiments of decolonising education by establishing a democratic model of schooling. Foremost among these experiments was Rabindranath Tagore's school and university in Bolepur, Shantiniketan. Mukherjee (2021) states that, before

he conceptualised and established an alternative decolonial model of school in Shantiniketan in 1901, Tagore offered a sharp critique of the colonial model of education – its language and content, structure of schools and pedagogy in several essays written since 1892. Tagore's alternative decolonial model was very much rooted in his democratic vision and conceptualisation of the purpose of education as enhancement of human freedoms.

Tagore sought to decolonise the system by establishing an alternative model of education whose primary objective would be to enhance human freedoms, including empowerment of the people to earn their livelihoods with dignity. "We must make the purpose of our education nothing short of the highest purpose of man, the fullest growth and freedom of soul", Tagore further writes in "My School" (Dasgupta, 2009, pp. 97-98). This purpose called for an integrated approach to education that combined the head, the heart, and the hand (Mukherjee, 2021, p. 8).

Tagore sought to establish a democratic and decolonial model of education through inclusivity and ecological awareness. Much like Dewey and Ambedkar, Tagore strongly believed that social reform can be engineered through education. Hence, he worked to establish his school in Shantiniketan as an inclusive space for all students from diverse backgrounds of ethnicity, religion, caste, class and even gender. In the early 1900s co-educational spaces were very rare in the Indian subcontinent, as well as in Europe. Hence, Tagore's alternative model of school was truly progressive and democratic in every sense.

The traditional teacher-directed large classroom settings with unequal power relationships were dismantled by Tagore. He established the system of small cohorts of students led by a teacher-mentor to engage in dialogue and discussion, sitting in circles often beneath the shades of trees.

Image 1. Open air classes at Shantiniketan. Source: https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/inner-vision/cid/1847871



Unlike in the traditional classrooms, children were allowed to climb the trees and run around in between classes. They were allowed to observe nature, play, and learn amidst natural surroundings to create a sense of bonding with the elements of nature. Students were also encouraged to ask questions to their teachers about various aspects of the natural surroundings based on their observations. This kind of scientific enquiry-based pedagogy was encouraged in his decolonial model of school, rather than rote-learning from textbooks in a foreign language. Inclusivity and ecological awareness were most important aspects of Tagore's decolonial model of school.

According to Tagore, one of the core components of holistic child development is inclusivity and ecological awareness. The design of Tagore's school to nurture the whole child was a conscious effort by Tagore to engineer social reform through education. "Tagore ardently believed and hoped he could rouse consciousness through awareness campaigns about societal evils, exploitative politics and religious conservatism […] throughout his life he remained an advocate of creative freedom, one that would lead to an inclusive spirit of universalism, rather than orthodoxy" [Dasgupta *et al*., 2013, pp. xii-xiii] (Mukherjee, 2021, p. 11).

Even though students learnt lessons in various disciplines in their mother tongue Bengali, Tagore encouraged learning English and other foreign languages. In fact, far Eastern languages, such as Chinese and Tibetan were also taught in the school and at the university established by Tagore in Shantiniketan, along with European languages. Tagore was thinking about inclusivity and democratic education, not just from within the Indian perspective but from a global perspective. Hence, international intercultural understanding was also a key component of his decolonial design of school in the middle of rising competition among nation-states during the World Wars and racial hatred born out of the colonial exploitation. During a talk to teachers, Tagore once stated that "in the East there is great deal of bitterness against other races, and in our own homes we are often brought up with feelings of hatred […] We are building our institution upon the ideal of the spiritual unity of all races" (Dasgupta, 2009, p. 111).

## 6. CONCLUSION

Despite the violence involved in the process, colonialism has shaped the subjectivities of the people in the vast regions of the global South. These subjectivities have been also shaped by the colonial "factory-model" of schools. As Tagore (1906) wrote,

> what we now call a school in this country is really a factory, and the teachers are part of it […]. Later this learning is tested at examinations and labelled. One advantage of a factory is that it can make goods exactly to order. Moreover, the goods are easy to label, because there is not much difference between what the different machines turn out. But there is a good deal of difference between one man and another, and even between what the same man is on different days (as cited in Dasgupta, 2009, pp. 112-113).

Hence, the process of decolonising education has not been easy. There is no doubt that Tagore's decolonising pedagogic project had a major impact on generations of learners. However, over the years Tagore's decolonial pedagogic experiments have been questioned, especially after his demise. All social institutions are subject to change impacted by internal and external socioeconomic and political changes. Tagore's experimental school and university is not an exception (Dasgupta, 2020; Mukherjee, 2020; Nussbaum, 2012).

However, there needs to be concerted effort to mainstream Tagore's decolonial democratic model of schooling, particularly in the age of sustainable development. Rather than the mainstream industrial model of educational institutions taking over the progressive peripheral experiments, such as Tagore's school and the Visva Bharati University, we need to find ways to mainstream Tagore's experimental model of schooling and pedagogy to decolonise education

for the sustainability of planet Earth. This is our only hope for survival as humanity.

Else, we will soon become extinct like the dinosaurs in this age of Anthropocene.

## 7. NOTES

[1] "Dalits" (oppressed) are the "outcastes" and historically marginalised communities within India. The caste system within the Indian subcontinent is a centuries old practice of sociological distinction by birth based on familial occupation. Those who fall outside the caste system are referred to as "outcastes". Since the British introduced the system of collected caste-based demographic data, they are referred to as scheduled castes / scheduled tribes (SC/ST) and other backward castes (OBC) in official documents.

[2] Los 'dalits' (oprimidos) son las comunidades excluidas de las castas e históricamente marginadas en la India. El sistema de castas del subcontinente indio es una práctica, de cientos de años de antigüedad, de distinción sociológica por nacimiento basada en la ocupación familiar. Los que quedan fuera del sistema de castas son denominados "excluidos de las castas". Desde que los británicos introdujeron el sistema de recopilación de datos demográficos basándose en castas, se alude a los excluidos de las castas como castas marginadas / tribus marginadas y otras castas postergadas en documentos oficiales.

[3] Caste is an Indian marker of social distinction based on profession. There were 4 main castes into which ancient Indian Hindu society was divided – Brahmins (priests or scholars), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaysvas (businessmen & traders), and Shudras (workers in service). Anybody outside of these 4 main castes were referred to as "outcastes". The "outcastes" would do menial works as manual scavenging, garbage removal and cleaning etc. They have been historically marginalized, oppressed and discriminated against since ancient times. Hence, they are popularly referred to as "dalits" (oppressed). Even though there has been much fluidity in modern times, still caste-based discrimination is rampant even among modern Indian society. This also includes those belonging to other South Asian religions and the diasporic population. Please see: https://theconversation.com/caste-doesnt-just-exist-in-india-or-in-hinduism-it-is-pervasive-across-many-religions-in-south-asia-and-the-diaspora-180470.

[4] "Saffronising the curriculum" or "saffronisation of education" within the postcolonial Indian context is connected to the rise of Hindu Nationalism or "Hindutva", a right-wing political ideology that seeks to establish a Hindu nation. See: https://theologyandsociety.com/where-does-hindutva-really-come-from/?

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