

Lokāyata

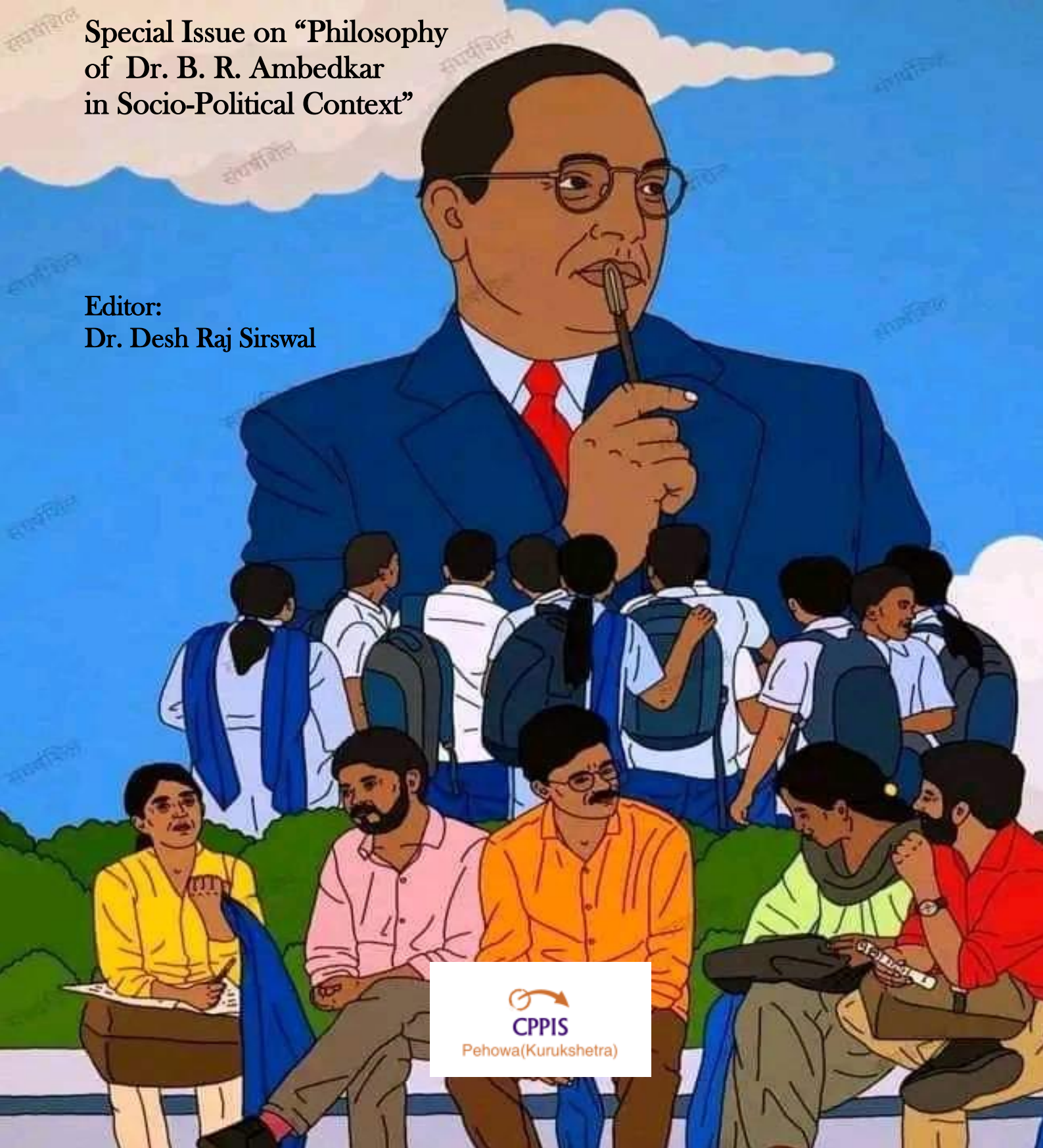
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Special Issue on “Philosophy
of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
in Socio-Political Context”

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Dr. Desh Raj Sirswal



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Lokāyata: Journal of Positive Philosophy is an online bi-annual a refereed and peer reviewed interdisciplinary journal of *the Center for Positive Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Studies (CPPIS)*. The name Lokāyata can be traced to Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, which refers to three *ānvīkṣikīs* (logical philosophies), Yoga, Samkhya and Lokāyata. Lokāyata here still refers to logical debate (*disputatio*, "criticism") in general and not to a materialist doctrine in particular. The objective of the journal is to encourage new thinking on concepts and theoretical frameworks in the disciplines of humanities and social sciences to disseminate such new ideas and research papers (with strong emphasis on modern implications of philosophy) which have broad relevance in society in general and man's life in particular. The Centre publishes two issues of the journal every year. Each regular issue of the journal contains full-length papers, discussions and comments, book reviews, information on new books and other relevant academic information. Each issue contains about 100 pages.

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Ambedkar on New Buddhism: A form of Socially Engaged Buddhism

Avhijit Ghosh

Abstract

The main contention of this paper is to explain the concept of New Buddhism as an engaged Buddhist movement with special reference to Dr B. R. Ambedkar. Engaged Buddhism means that which is socially engaged. Thus, socially engaged Buddhism is to be considered the contemporary movement of Buddhists. In this regard, Thich Nhat Hah says Buddhism has always been socially engaged. It was by nature engaged as it starts from the time of Gautama Buddha. Thus, Dr B. R. Ambedkar, due to his deep socio-political movement, can be characterised as a socially engaged Buddhist. So his new Buddhist movement, called New-Buddhism (Navayana), can be considered an engaged Buddhist movement in India among the Dalits to provide them dignity in society. As an engaged Buddhist movement, Ambedkar fought against the casteism of Hinduism to bring liberty, equality, and fraternity among the Dalits. The main strategy of this paper is to reflect on Ambedkar's view on New Buddhism, which may be conceived as the early philosophy of religion.

Keywords: Navayana, Dalit, Hinduism, engaged, Buddhism, liberty, equality, fraternity.

Introduction:

Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hahn coined the term 'Engaged Buddhism' in 1963. The term engaged Buddhism means socially engaged Buddhism. It is developed then because he intends to form a non-aligned, non-belligerent Buddhist coalition which is also known as *an enemy of neither combatant*. He intends to implement anti-war protests and give importance to international peace talks so peace can be implemented. Now the question is, what is called socially engaged Buddhism? Has Buddhism ever been socially engaged? In reply to the first question, we can say that engaged Buddhism perhaps plays active involvement in society to solve its problem following Buddhist teachings. With this involvement, they try to implement traditional Buddhist wisdom and compassion in today's world. In this regard, Ken Jones writes, "A socially engaged Buddhism needs no other rationale than that of being an implication of traditional Buddhist morality, a social ethic brought forth by the needs and potentialities of present-day society."¹ This is how engaged Buddhism deals with socio-political issues such as post-modernism, the cold war, international terrorism, environmental balance, democracy, social justice, women's right, etc. That is why it said by Kraft that talking about Enlightenment will simply be meaningless as long as people are trapped in delusion. Now come to the second question, i.e., has Buddhism ever been socially engaged? According to Thich Nhat Hahn, Buddhism has always been socially engaged. Actually, it is by nature engaged. So it is clearly incorrect

to see whether Buddhism is engaged or disengaged. According to him, when we use the term engaged Buddhism, we are just reminding ourselves of a significant aspect of Buddhist teachings. Accordingly, speaking about engaged Buddhism means it implies a significant degree of engagement is part of the particular Buddhist practice. We find the active involvement of engaged Buddhism in the past as well as in the present time. The proponent of this view is Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Sivaraksa, H. H. the Dalai Lama, Robert Thurman, and so on. That is why in this regard, S. Singh remarks, “As a specific term engaged Buddhism might have emerged at present but as a concept, undoubtedly, it had already begun with the departure of Gautama Buddha from his householder life to the society, to the humanity. Thus he rejects the interest of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ for the whole of humanity.”² It is also engaged in social services through the different Buddhist communities around Asia and European countries, namely, the Shramadana movement in Sri Lanka, the Buddhist peace fellowship, the international network of engaged Buddhists, the Dalai Lama in the Tibetan community, Thich Nhat Hanh in the Vietnamese community, and so on. They aim to implement Buddhist moralities, medical and educational care, Buddhist laws, principles, mindfulness, etc., for the development of communities that are economically marginalised and low cast communities, including women and children. These are the issues about which engaged Buddhism was concerned not only in the past but also in the present for the better development of the world.

In India, the name Dr B. R. Ambedkar as a socially engaged Buddhist is very well known due to its deep social-political engagement. He started a new Buddhist movement called New-Buddhism (Navayana) can be considered an engaged Buddhist movement in India among the Dalits to provide them dignity in society. The concept of New Buddhism is not completely a new concept; rather is an extension of Buddhism. Through this movement, he rejected Hinduism and turned to Buddhism in 1950. He also challenged the caste system of Hinduism in India. He fought for the rights of the Dalit community. In India, this New Buddhist movement is characterised as the first application of Buddhist teachings at the social level. So, there is no mistake in considering Ambedkar as an engaged Buddhist as a part of engaged Buddhism in India. That is why the movement of Dr B. R. Ambedkar can be characterised as a socially and politically engaged form of Buddhism in India.

Hinduism to New Buddhism:

As we know, Ambedkar is born Hindu, so he inclines to the Hindu religion in his early stage. But very soon, he realises the loopholes of the Hindu religion. That is why we find him to say on 13th October 1935 that he was born Hindu but desired not to die as a Hindu. Thus, he renounces the Hindu religion. Now the question what compels him to leave Hinduism? Ambedkar’s motive is to bring equality for Dalits, which can be achieved “by remaining in the Hindu fold and another by leaving it by conversion.

If equality is to be achieved by remaining in the Hindu fold, the mere removal of the sense of being touchable or untouchable will not serve the purpose. Equality can be achieved only when inter-caste dinners and marriages take place. This means that the *chaturvarnya* must be abolished, and the Brahmanic religion must be uprooted. Is it possible? Of course not, but the path of conversion is far simpler than this.”³ Ambedkar realises that Hinduism is a sort of religion that treats him as an untouchable. So for him, it cannot be a suitable realign for fulfilling the trio concepts of justice, such as liberty, equality, and fraternity. That is why he finds Buddha’s Dhamma to be the best. He says it is the only religion that can bring justice to the Dalits community. That is why we see him say, “I prefer Buddhism because it gives me three principles in combination which no other religion does. All other religions are bothering themselves with ‘God’ and ‘soul’ and ‘life after death’. Buddhism teaches *Prajna* (understanding against superstition and supernaturalism). It teaches *karuna* (love). It teaches *Samata* (equality). This is what man wants for a good and happy life on earth. These three principles of Buddhism make their appeal to me. These three principles should also appeal to the world. Neither God nor soul save society.”⁴

Ambedkar is undoubtedly a religious intoxicated man, so we see him show his deep conviction in religion from his early stage of life. For him, religion is the only means that can give us the meaning of life. His understanding of religion in a very wide sense helps him to realise that the so-called religion in which he takes birth is shattered because of its dogmatic nature. He tries to reform the Hindu religion, but he is treated as untouchable in his own religion. That is why he revolts against the so-called Hinduism, and the book *Annihilation of Caste* is a replica of it. He seeks humanistic religion that ensures liberty, equality and fraternity. Ambedkar says, “The force of the argument, of course, rests on a view of religion which is somewhat different from the ordinary view according to which religion is concerned with man’s relation to God and all that it means. According to this view, religion exists not for saving souls but for preserving society and the welfare of the individual. Only those who accept the former view of religion find it difficult to understand how conversion can solve the problem of Untouchability.”⁵ This is the reason behind the conversion of his millions of untouchables from Hinduism to Buddhism on 14th October 1956. This is the first-ever application of the doctrines of the Buddha at the social level. Thus, it is clear to us that the concept of New Buddhism as the engaged Buddhism in India has deep socio-religious, socio-political involvement in the society. Therefore we can say that their religious desire for Ambedkar is reflected in his New Buddhism, and that is why, after studying all the major religions such as Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism etc., he decided to convert towards Buddhism. He says to his followers that social equality can be achieved through the path of the Buddha. Therefore, instead of attempting to do Hinduism into New Hinduism, he designs Buddhism into a New Buddhism.

However, the concept of the New Buddhism of Ambedkar sometimes does not agree completely with classical Buddhism. But as Buddhism is dynamic and pragmatic in nature, Ambedkar was enabled to modify the same when he developed New Buddhism. Thus, unlike Buddhism, the New Buddhism of Ambedkar is far more socially engaged. This is so because it addresses different social issues such as casteism, human rights, human dignity, the right to education, economic distribution, etc. Having said this, Ambedkar sought engaged Buddhism in Buddhism. As an engaged Buddhist, his understanding of religion is pragmatic. He comprehends religion as life, the right to live, the right to voice, the right to protest, and so forth. Thus his advice to people that religion should not be understood as coercion. He goes against those who say that religion is guided by dogma in the name of God. He says religion is the way of life and the means of comprehending the world. One may ask, in what sense religion is life for Ambedkar? Ambedkar believes that people will perish where there is no religion. Religion is a continuous process that ensures dignity and social justice, such as liberty, equality etc., for its adherents in the true sense of the term. This can be the conviction of all those who need religion as the purpose of their existence. That is why Ambedkar is apprehensive about the evils and becomes frustrated with the evils of casteism within the framework of Hinduism, leading him towards the New-Buddhism. However, as we know, Buddhism is a big school of religion, and after Buddha, there are different schools within it. As a result of these developments of various schools, some overlapping conflicts were equally found among those schools. But the concept of New Buddhism appears as a revised version of Buddhism to implement social justice and human rights within society. When Ambedkar finally decided to embrace Buddhism, it was not merely a change of religion but also a change of heart.

The concept of new Buddhism is a dynamic force which is also known as Ambedkariet Buddhism. It is considered a religious movement based on socio-economic and ethical principles. New Buddhism as engaged Buddhism is the modern interpretation of Buddhism that works for the well-being of the downtrodden. It is not a sect with radically different ideas. Instead, it is a social movement based on the principles of Buddhism. His book *The Buddha and His Dhamma* is considered a holy book in this regard. “The followers of *Navayana* Buddhism are generally known as Buddhist or Ambedkariet Buddhists, or Neo-Buddhists.”⁶ Ambedkar also says to Dalits why Buddhism cannot spread in India. He says in this regard that this is because of the lack of systematic preaching of Dhamma. Accordingly, he advises his followers to take *Deeksha* to fulfil this gap to propagate Dhamma. That is why he says to his followers that you have the right to convert people to your faith and hence, “Go forth to liberate people.”⁷

Concluding Remarks:

From the discussion above, it thus appears that Ambedkar can be considered a great humanist. The concept the humanism has backed up New Buddhism. That means the concept of New Buddhism functions for the well-being of the former outcastes. It seems that Ambedkar plays the role of pragmatist and strategic in the background of New Buddhism. Under the umbrella of New Buddhism, Ambedkar intends to say that one's spiritual bliss and satisfaction are as equally important as each individual's socio-economical changes and overall developments. Therefore it is clear that the conversion takes place for liberation from the evils of Hinduism. That is why Kadam remarks it was down to earth, healthy, robust, rational, enlightened, scientific, cultured and humane approach to overcoming the problems created by Vedicism, Brahminism, and Hinduism down the ages that made life a misery for untouchables in India. Thus, New Buddhism can be considered as the theory of social change, and it works as an antidote to changing the social status of the Mahars. In this regard, we can consider Ambedkar with Moses of the Bible's Old Testament. As we have seen, Moses freed his people from bondage, took them to Mount Sinai, and gave them the Ten Commandments. Ambedkar also took the Mahars out of the caste-dominated society and gave them twenty-two vows to follow. As Tilak says that Swaraj is people's birthright, Ambedkar similarly says it is his birthright to lead people to an honourable life. So he fights for himself and his fellow outcasts for the sake of human honour. Ambedkar's New Buddhism brings equality to the outcast people by using water from the same source. Not only water, but now they can enter the temple, equality in education, etc. Thus, as an engaged Buddhist movement, New Buddhism not only brings worth, dignity and honour to the Mahars but also takes them to the lofty heights of social equality.

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Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Thoughts and Contribution in Women Empowerment

Arshdeep

Abstract

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar was the father and architect of the constitution of the India. He was the great social reformer, leader, philosopher and writer. As an advocate of human rights, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar fought for the dignity of women and the depressed classes. His main motive of the life was to restructure the society, remove the social order and evils by providing the education, awareness and encourage especially to the women for their rights and justice. He consistently worked to promote the empowerment of women. Dr. Ambedkar predominantly campaigned against social discrimination for Dalits, women, scheduled tribes and other backward castes in the Hindu caste system. By codifying the common Civil Code for Hindus and other groups within Indian society, he lay the groundwork for genuine and tangible initiatives. Dr. Ambedkar gave women the same status as men by including numerous provisions in the Indian Constitution to support and advance women's rights. This paper focuses on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's thoughts and perceptions towards woman empowerment and also analyses the contribution of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a thinker and social reformer in the emancipation of social status of women in the society.

Keywords: women empowerment, Dalits, education, equality, justice.

Introduction

Dr. B.R Ambedkar the most outstanding intellectuals, scholar, economist, great nationalist, philosopher, theorist, social reformer of India. He was first Indian who speak up against the barriers and discrimination faced by the women. Some scholar studied the Dr Ambedkar thoughts through their written books, article, conferences and through speeches and stated that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar can be regarded as one of the greatest intellectual and social reformers who struggled throughout his life for liberation of Indian women and depressed class from the lifelong bondage and slavery under the weight of Hindu social law **Barnwal, (2014)**. Another scholar studied that women should be given all round development more importantly social education, their well-being and socio-cultural rights- a vision of Dr. Ambedkar. He laid down the foundation of concrete and sincere efforts by codifying the common Civil Code for Hindus and other sections of the Indian society. **Singariya (2014)** analysed that Dr. Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of Hindu society. He expressed his views on the state of life of all women. He articulates that women must be treated equally and given equal prestige. The teachings and thoughts of Dr Ambedkar are useful not only women but also all the Indian even today. In his last speech in Indian Parliament, we can know his feelings and respect

showed towards women. **Ubale (2016)** studied Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar and said that Dr. Rao was a path-maker of all the women irrespective of religion, caste, creed, gender and brought a new trend for uprising the women through his thoughts and beliefs.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's view on the Education of Women

It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Education is very powerful weapon. It is the only mean by which societies grow out of oppression to democratic participation and involvement. It is a powerful tool that empowerment the individual. According to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar there are two purposes of knowledge: the first is to acquire the education for betterment of others and secondly is to use the education for one's own betterment. According to him women should be given social education and socio-cultural right for their welfare and all-round development. He stressed that *“Each and every section of women should be given their due share and proper steps should be taken to maintain and protect dignity their dignity.”* Dr Ambedkar emphasized on secular education for social emancipation and freedom. The social and ethical philosophy of Ambedkar motive to make the depressed people aware to change their thoughts, ideology, believes and old behaviour-patterns and to move forward in the direction of unity and freedom through the education. It is evident from his speeches that he had great concern for women empowerment. I shall tell you a few things which I think you should bear in mind. Learn to be clean; keep free from all vices. further he said provide education to your children. Instil ambition in them. Inculcate on their minds that they are destined to be great. Remove from them all inferiority complexes.” In this way, Dr Ambedkar stressed on education for the progress of women and our country.

He emphasizes how important it is for both men and women to have a self-help mindset. He wants them to understand how much it is their duty to provide their kids with a proper education. But at the same time, he advised them: send your children to schools. However, he also gave them advice, telling them to enroll their kids in school. He believes that the most crucial element in influencing the lives of all men, women, and children is education. Education is just as important for women as it is for men, according to Ambedkar. You would make much more progress if you could read and write. His goal was to free women from economic enslavement and suffering. Ambedkar sought equal rights to education, property rights, and economic independence for women.

Role Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in Women Empowerment and Women Rights

“I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved”– Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar has had his own view for the women rights and that has been reflected in Indian constitution. His approach to women's right is exclusively different from other social reformers. His goal was to make a society based on social justice and equality that can be achieved through reservation to women and depressed class. To secure this goal, Ambedkar has given equal status to women on par with men by providing many provisions in the Indian constitution. According to him, sexual discrimination should be root out from the society and everybody should get equal opportunity in the society. The Preamble of Indian constitution guarantees social and economic justice to women and that is because of Dr. Ambedkar's contribution. In the preamble it is stated: (i) social, economic and political justice, (ii) freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, (iii) equality of status and opportunity and (iv) fraternity assuring dignity of the individual and national unity to all the citizens of India without any discrimination of caste, creed or sex. He had worked hard for untouchables so called lower classes and also for the betterment and progress of women. Dr. Ambedkar criticized the traditional and conservative values and beliefs. He believed that women should be entitled to equal status with men and they must have right to education.

To eradicate the social evils, he initiated many protests. In January 1928, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar along with Ramabai (his wife), established a women's association in Bombay. Dr. Ambedkar's encouragement to motivate women to speak audaciously was seen when RadhabaiVadale addressed a press conference in 1931 (Bala 2016). According to her, it is better to die than to continue living a life full of shame. Dr. Ambedkar believed in women's courage and their role in the social change process.

To ensure women's status Dr. Ambedkar had also introduced the Hindu code Bill in Parliament which proposed mainly, to abolish different marriage systems prevalent among Hindus and conferment of right to property and adoption on women, restitution of conjugal rights and judicial separation. His concern was not limited to Hindu women only but women of each religion. He observed that even the Muslim women were also not getting their due which was provided to them under the Islamic Shariah as they were influenced by the Indian environment. He also criticized the denial of rights to Muslim women for divorce. Ambedkar even opposed the Indian Muslim purdah system which he believed was contrary to the real purdah system of Islam. He was of the opinion that as a consequence of the purdah system a kind of segregation is brought about in the Muslim women which has deteriorating effect upon the physical constitution of the Muslim women thereby depriving her of a healthy social life. The isolation of males and females is sure to produce bad effects on the morals of men.

Constitutional Rights and Women

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar was the architect of Indian constitution. He put the number of provisions and rights for the women in the constitution after analysing the situation of the women in the society. So that women can enjoy the equal rights and justice. The list of articles is written in the below: -

Article 14 - Equal rights and opportunities in political, economic and social spheres.

Article 15 - Prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex.

Article 15(3) - enables affirmative discrimination in favour of women.

Article 39 - Equal means of livelihood and equal pay for equal work.

Article 42 - Human conditions of work and maternity relief.

Article 51 (A) (C) – Fundamental duties to renounce practices, derogatory to the dignity of women.

Article 46 – The state to promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of weaker section of people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Article 47 – The state to raise the level of nutrition and standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health and so on. Article 243D (3), 243T (3) & 243R (4) provides for allocation of seats in the Panchayati Raj System.

Dr. B.R Ambedkar thoughts on Education and its relevance in Present Context

Education by means of access to knowledge and learning played pivotal role the social reconstruct. Stagnation in process of social reforms and imposing so called divine status of ancient women on today's women there by influencing her development and upliftment. Shattered with the reforms and liberation of women in the era of globalization and modernisation, the Indian mindset has not accepted the equality at par with men and hence forcing women to revert their development. The only reason women are experiencing more instances of violence, harassment, crime, and humiliation is due to political indifference that has failed to uphold social norms.

Education system, employment opportunities, tremendous population, inflation and non-availability of resources to strive are the barriers for development among people. Sheer influence of modern lifestyle and adopting technology doesn't mean improvement of individual and society. The societal frame work meant to make women subordinate or subjugated need to be dismantled. Active participation of women from all the strata could make it possible. Many notable women activists are working on issues like environment, health, poverty etc. Those who indulge in social reforms were not supported, not even by

women. Today women reservation bill is the hottest agenda of the discussion and fact is that a lay woman even doesn't know what it is. The more ridiculous male attitude is that girl's education meant only for her marriage. Today's women are trapped in the circle of insecurity, male domination, lack of awareness about her rights and no decision-making powers. Much is talked about women empowerment today but it is more economic, political and health related. The issue of social empowerment of women needs to be raised higher and given utmost importance then only it could complete phenomena. Women empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives; both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction and social change to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and internationally. Dr. Ambedkar strongly believed that women empowerment can be achieved by welfare of women. The activities of empowering women worldwide should follow the vision of Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted the untouchables to undergo both liberal education and technical education. He was particularly opposed to education under religious auspices. He warned that only secular in education could instill the values of liberty and equality among the student which is also applicable in current scenario.

CONCLUSION

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had a philanthropic view towards empowering and educating the women irrespective of their caste, religion, sex and class. He was frantically in search of a solution to the social evil systems and sought to usher a society based on equality, justice and fraternity. Though the goal of women empowerment is yet to be achieved, Dr B.R. Ambedkar's idea about the rights, empowerment, encouragement and development of women are still valid in the present scenario. Looking into the views of Dr. Ambedkar it clearly shows that equality should be made available to all persons even in socio-economic life through state's intervention. There is great role of state to uplift the society. He had the vision that the people should cultivate the values of freedom, justice and equality among themselves and it was possible only through education. He regarded education as a main key to unlocking the gates of light, vision and wisdom to remove the regions of darkness and ignorance. He used his philosophy of education to make aware of the condition of social degeneration in Hindu society among the lower strata of society and change the social order for the benefit of entire humanity. He was an 'organic intellectual' in real sense. Dr. Ambedkar's contribution towards education and his independent thinking made him an independent intellectual of the world. In order to honour his brilliant academic career his

statue is placed at the entrance London School of Economics and below that “Symbol of Knowledge” is written. It shows that how he was acclaimed as great student and educationist of far excellence.

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Buddha or Karl Marx: A Philosophical Investigation through an Ambedkarian Lens

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Abstract

This research paper explores the ideologies of Gautama Buddha and Karl Marx, uniquely illuminated by the perspective of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The central inquiry revolves around the convergence of these profound philosophical legacies and their potential to address the complex tapestry of social injustice, specifically caste-based discrimination and inequality. Two **core questions** guide this investigation. First, how do Buddhism's ethical means, like Ahimsa (Panchsila), the Noble Eightfold Path, etc., intersect with Marx's means of violence and dictatorship of the proletariat, fit within Ambedkar's vision of social justice? Second, what insights do these juxtaposed philosophies offer in our enduring quest for equitable and just societies, acknowledging the intricate interplay of individual transformation and systemic change? The **primary objectives** of this analysis are twofold. First, unravelling the philosophical commonalities and disparities between Buddha and Marx within Ambedkarian principles and how their confluence enriches our understanding of their relevance to contemporary social justice concerns. Secondly, it offers a nuanced perspective on the multifaceted dimensions of social justice, incorporating the moral and economic realms, thereby contributing to the casteless society as intended by all three thinkers. This paper aims to highlight Ambedkar's attempt to synthesise these two towering figures' philosophies, having a gap of 2000 years, which seems almost contrasting to each other, for the same end of eradicating caste discrimination and promoting social equality and justice.

Keywords: Injustice, caste-based discrimination, ahimsa, violence, dictatorship of the proletariat, equality

1. Introduction

The pursuit of social justice and equality is an enduring theme in the annals of philosophy, transcending temporal and geographical boundaries. This research paper embarks on a philosophical exploration that casts a unique spotlight on the ideologies of Gautama Buddha and Karl Marx, as uniquely illuminated by the discerning perspective of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar's scholarly journey was driven by a profound and compelling quest to address the profoundly ingrained evils of caste discrimination and injustice to Sudras, Ati-sudras (untouchables), women, and Adivasis (tribals) within Indian society. As part of his quest, he embarked on a most unconventional endeavour - a comparative analysis of two historical luminaries separated by over two millennia: Buddha and Marx.

An extensive and meticulous **literature review** has been undertaken to attempt this research, drawing primarily from the vast reservoir of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's writings and speeches—sources such as ‘Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3’ and his iconic work ‘Annihilation of Caste’ have been scrutinised discerningly. These texts serve as invaluable repositories of Dr. Ambedkar's profound insights, offering an intricate understanding of his thoughts and philosophies, particularly in the context of Karl Marx. Moreover, the excerpts of the text 'The Class Struggle' have been reviewed to ensure a precise and accurate interpretation of the concepts and terminology used by Ambedkar about Karl Marx. This supplementary source provides a comprehensive perspective on the dynamics of class struggle, which forms an integral part of the philosophical investigation within this research. This multidimensional literature review significantly enriches the intellectual foundation upon which this philosophical investigation is built, rendering it a more profound and comprehensive analysis of the intersecting ideologies of Buddha, Marx, and Ambedkar.

The **implications** of this research are manifold. By unravelling the philosophical commonalities and disparities between Buddha and Marx within the unique context of Ambedkarian principles, this study enriches our comprehension of their relevance to contemporary social justice concerns. It provides a nuanced perspective on the multifaceted dimensions of social justice, incorporating the moral and economic realms. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to realising a casteless society as these three eminent thinkers envisioned. This paper aims to highlight Dr. Ambedkar's audacious attempt to synthesise the seemingly contrasting philosophies of two towering figures, separated by two millennia, in a collective endeavour to eradicate caste discrimination and promote social equality and justice.

2. Buddhism and Marxism – means to an end

This section explores Ambedkar's understanding of Buddhist and Marxist principles and how these philosophies are helpful in the goal of eradicating social disparities. This section explores the fundamental concepts of both philosophies and how they act as a means to an end, i.e., of social justice and equality.

In his speech before the delegates of the Fourth Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists held in Kathmandu, Nepal, in 1956, Dr Ambedkar commences by providing a concise overview of the comprehensive teachings of the Buddha and Karl Marx. The section explores the Buddha and Marxist teachings one by one.

Buddhist teaching aspires to create a casteless or classless society. Buddhism envisions a harmonious and egalitarian community where individuals live by the principles of the Noble Eightfold Path, eradicating distinctions based on caste or class. The aim is to foster inner peace, ethical conduct, and

mutual respect, transcending suffering and promoting a culture of tolerance and wisdom. The significant means of these aspirations are discussed below in light of Ambedkar's understanding.

Means:

Ahimsa (part of Panchsila): Ahimsa, the principle of non-violence, is at the core of achieving a classless and casteless society by promoting equality and compassion. Though Buddhism has many teachings, but in the context of this paper, the Ahimsa concept of Buddhism is taken primarily. Ahimsa in Buddhism is a profound ethical principle that encompasses non-violence and non-harming. It emphasises that the means to achieve ends must be as pure as the ends themselves. This concept underscores the importance of ethical conduct, highlighting that harmful actions should not tarnish pursuing virtuous goals. In Buddhism, the ultimate end is liberation from suffering and the realisation of enlightenment. Ahimsa teaches that one should not harm others physically or mentally; even the intention to abuse is to be avoided. It encourages compassion, forgiveness, and the cultivation of a peaceful mind, aligning the means with the noble end of inner and outer harmony.

Noble Eightfold Path: The Noble Eightfold Path in Buddhism comprises eight interconnected ethical and mental development principles. 1. Right Understanding 2. Right Intention 3. Right Speech 4. Right Action 5. Right Livelihood 6. Right Effort 7. Right Mindfulness 8. Right Concentration. These guide practitioners towards wisdom, ethical conduct, and mental discipline on the path to enlightenment and liberation from suffering. The knowledge obtained from these practices paves the path for an equal and just society. This is why Buddhism is considered a way of life rather than a religion in the strict sense.

Paramitas or perfections: The Paramitas, or Perfections, in Buddhism, are a set of virtues and practices that help individuals progress toward enlightenment: (1) Generosity (Dana), (2) Moral Conduct (Sila), (3) renunciation (nekhamma), (4) insight (pañña), (5) energetic diligence (viriya), (6) patience (khanti), (7) truthfulness (sacca), (8) resolution (adhiṭṭhāna), (9) loving-kindness (metta), and (10) equanimity (upekkhā). These qualities and others, including wisdom, meditation, and skilful means, are cultivated to transcend suffering and attain spiritual awakening. Once a person is awakened, the world's shackles, like caste, race, etc., get destroyed, and society prospers.

Sangha: Buddhism is significantly associated with the idea of a casteless and classless society. Founded by Siddhartha Gautama, who rejected the caste system of his time, Buddhism teaches the equality of all individuals regardless of their social background. The Buddha's teachings emphasise inner development and enlightenment, transcending worldly distinctions. The concept of 'sangha,' the Buddhist monastic community, exemplifies a classless society where monks and nuns relinquish material possessions and live by the same rules, fostering equality. Throughout history, Buddhism has

played a role in challenging social hierarchies and promoting inclusivity, making it influential in advocating casteless and classless ideals.

End:

Nirvana: Nirvana in Buddhism is the ultimate state of liberation and enlightenment. It represents the cessation of suffering and the extinguishing all desires and attachments. Achieving Nirvana means breaking free from the cycle of birth and death (samsara) and experiencing a profound state of peace, wisdom, and spiritual fulfilment. It's the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice, representing the end of suffering and the realisation of one's true nature. A realised one never talks about or methods caste and class and advocates a classless and casteless society. In other words, a just and equal society is the primary motto of Liberation.

Marxism :

Karl Marx, the 19th-century philosopher, advanced a critical analysis of capitalism, class struggle, and the need for a proletarian revolution to address economic and societal inequalities. Marx's focus on the economic base of social structures and his call for systemic change provided a potent framework for understanding and addressing class-based injustices. Karl Marx's **scientific socialism**, rooted in dialectical materialism, envisions a classless society through class struggle and revolution. The means involve understanding historical and material forces, advocating for the proletariat's empowerment, and, eventually, a proletarian revolution. Philosophically, it's grounded in historical materialism, seeing history progressing through socio-economic stages. The end goal is a communist society with collective ownership and equitable resource distribution. While critics highlight potential violence in the means, Marxists argue that achieving a just and fair society justifies these methods. Ultimately, scientific socialism seeks to transcend capitalism and create a classless, communist society where resources are shared based on need rather than profit. Ambedkar, well-versed in Marx's works, saw Marx's theories as a tool to analyse the economic aspects of caste-based oppression. Dr Ambedkar delves into Karl Marx's creed, which posits the inevitability of "Scientific Socialism" superseding capitalism and Utopian socialist ideals. While acknowledging certain enduring principles in Marx's philosophy, such as those concerning class struggle and public and private property issues, Dr. Ambedkar critically examines the practical and theoretical shortcomings of Marx's ideas. He highlights that Marx's prediction of the "dictatorship of the Proletariat" did not spontaneously materialise but resulted from a meticulously planned revolution characterised by widespread violence and civil strife. Dr Ambedkar concludes that, despite the shortcomings and disproven elements in Marxian philosophy, there remain essential and relevant components, particularly those focusing on the reconstruction of the

world order rather than explanations of its origin. Marxism, as a socio-political and economic ideology, comprises specific means and ends:

Means:

Class Struggle: Marxism emphasises the importance of class struggle to challenge and overthrow capitalist systems. Workers (proletariat) are encouraged to unite against the bourgeoisie (capitalist class) to pursue a more equitable society.

Revolution: A revolutionary transformation of society is often seen as a means to achieve a classless, communist society. Marxists believe that overthrowing the capitalist system may require a violent revolution. The violence in Marxism is the means to attain the equality of the masses on the state resources and political posts; hence, their social status also changes to equality.

The dictatorship of the Proletariat: Marxists propose that the working class (proletariat) establish a temporary dictatorship to facilitate the transition from capitalism to communism. This dictatorship is meant to protect the interests of the proletariat. In summary, Marxism seeks to achieve a classless, communist society through class struggle, revolution, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. The ultimate end is a society where wealth is collectively owned and resources are distributed based on need, thus eliminating social and economic inequality.

End:

Classless Society: The ultimate end of Marxism is creating a classless society where wealth and resources are collectively owned. The absence of private property characterises this society, and resources are distributed based on need rather than profit. This structure promotes equality and well-being in society.

Communism: Marxism envisions a communist society where individuals are free from exploitation and eliminate social and economic inequality. In this society, labour is no longer a source of oppression, and people work for the common good. Communism is a socio-economic ideology that advocates for the collective ownership of resources and the absence of private property. It aims to establish a classless society where wealth and resources are distributed equally, typically through a planned economy, to achieve a stateless and moneyless society. Various interpretations and implementations of communism have occurred throughout history, with notable examples including the Soviet Union and China.

3. Comparative Analysis by Dr. B.R.Ambedkar :

Ambedkar's comparative analysis delves into two seemingly opposing philosophies to achieve social equality and eradicate the caste system. He explores the methods advocated by Buddha and Marx, assessing their feasibility and effectiveness. Buddha's approach involves adhering to Panchasila and the Noble Eight-Fold Path, which stress personal conduct and the elimination of social inequities. The doctrine of Nirvana underscores the hindrances to righteousness, while the principle of Paramitas outlines ten daily-life virtues to prevent sin. It's worth noting that Buddha allows for violence to pursue 'truth and justice,' which poses a potential challenge given historical justifications for war.

Altruistic Self-defence: In Mahayana Buddhism, altruistic self-defence is a complex and nuanced ethical consideration. While the tradition strongly emphasises non-violence and compassion, there are situations where using force in defence of oneself or others may be deemed morally justifiable under specific conditions. The key idea behind 'altruistic self-defence' is that the motivation for self-defence should be rooted in protecting others and preventing harm rather than in self-preservation or aggression. In such cases, Mahayana Buddhists may argue that taking action to prevent more significant damage or injustice, mainly when protecting innocent lives, can be seen as an act of compassion. However, using force in self-defence should always be approached with great caution and as a last resort. Mahayana Buddhists prioritise non-violent means whenever possible, such as conflict resolution, de-escalation, or seeking alternatives to violence. The concept of altruistic self-defence in Mahayana Buddhism underscores the importance of intention and motivation. If one's senses are genuinely rooted in compassion and protecting others, rather than aggression or ego, it may be considered more in alignment with Buddhist principles. Ultimately, the interpretation and application of these principles can vary among individuals and Buddhist communities.

On the other hand, Communism, influenced by Marx, relies on more straightforward means, emphasizing violence and the dictatorship of the proletariat, with less focus on individual growth. However, it's crucial to understand that both systems share the same ultimate goal of societal equality and the end of the caste system, differing primarily in their methods.

Ambedkar advocates the effectiveness of violence, highlighting that Buddha did not entirely exclude violence when necessary for justice. Concerning the concept of dictatorship, Buddha firmly opposed it, as evident in the democratic principles of the Bhikshu Sangh. In contrast, Ambedkar offers a critical perspective on Communist methods, highlighting his concerns regarding the potential consequences, including self-destruction, oppression, and the stifling of dissent.

Buddhism type of Marxism in India:

Ambedkar ultimately leans toward Buddha's approach to India, emphasising the relevance of building a casteless society and prioritising individual enlightenment over Marx's ideas. This analysis underscores the intricate dynamics involved in achieving social equality and eradicating the caste system, with Ambedkar's preference for a more non-violent, democratic, and spiritually grounded path championed by Buddha. The difference carried out forward by Ambedkar is as follows:

Structural vs. Individual Transformation: Buddha's emphasis on individual enlightenment contrasts with Marx's structural analysis of class struggle. While valuing both approaches, Ambedkar leaned towards personal empowerment to challenge structural oppression within the caste system.

Spiritual vs. Material Solutions: Buddha's focus on inner transformation complements Ambedkar's emphasis on spiritual and moral empowerment as a response to social injustice. Marx's materialist perspective aligns with Ambedkar's critique of the economic aspects of caste-based discrimination.

The interconnectedness of Injustice: Ambedkar's framework sees the interconnectedness of caste-based and class-based inequalities. He believed a holistic approach was necessary to address the multifaceted dimensions of social injustice.

4. Conclusion:

This scholarly exploration offers a thought-provoking perspective in the comparative analysis of seemingly incongruent ideologies. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the influence of Ambedkar's convictions is perceptible, resulting in an apparent bias that tilts the balance in favour of Buddhist teachings while offering limited favourable portrayals of Communist policies. As per Buddha's teachings, Ambedkar's readiness to endorse violence under the banner of 'truth and justice' poses a complex moral dilemma.

Nonetheless, "Buddha or Karl Marx" is a compelling essay that challenges readers with an interest in the theory and practice of equality to engage with Marxist ideology and reevaluate Buddhist philosophy critically. In this philosophical analysis, viewed through the prism of Ambedkar's vision, we gain insight into the convergences and divergences between the philosophies of Gautama Buddha and Karl Marx. While both offer distinctive pathways for addressing societal inequalities, their synergy with Ambedkar's perspective underscores the intricate interplay of spiritual, moral, and economic dimensions in the ongoing pursuit of social justice, equality, caste-free society and equity.

Within this intricate web of ideologies, we uncover a nuanced perspective towards the realisation of a more just and equitable society, ultimately inviting us to question, contemplate, and

evolve our understanding of these profound philosophical traditions and their relevance in shaping a fairer and more compassionate world.

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Dr. B. R. Ambedkar : Views On Caste System in India and Its Annihilation

Jyoti

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was a scholar par excellence, political thinker, philosopher, social reformist, visionary, nationalist and chief architect of Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar is an Indian who has emerged like a star out of the group of Hindu society which has many restrictions. Babasaheb is a kind of modern Indian political thinker and social reformer who is standing tall and apart from their contemporaries and many others come before and after him. He devoted his life for the cause of betterment of depressed classes. His never give up attitude made him messiah of Indian Depressed classes. He sets an example of a courageous personality who overcome the social disabilities by his sheer devotion and carved a respectable place for himself in history. As Dhananjay Keer mentioned in his book, 'a most inspiring example of what a man can achieve by his indomitable perseverance and great self-denial, even under the most depressing and destitute circumstances.'⁽¹⁾ The biography of Babasaheb is inspiring for all those who are longing for equality in the society. Ambedkar's work is as vast and numerous as his knowledge and degrees but in this writing, we only discuss his views about caste and his ideas to abolish caste system.

Life Sketch

Ambedkar was born in an untouchable community of Maharashtra called 'Mahar'. His father was in army and after retirement served as headmaster in a military school. His father was an ardent devotee of Saint Kabir and ensured that Ambedkar gets the necessary education. Bhimrao experienced the suffering of being untouchable since childhood. He tasted bitter discriminatory behaviour of fellow students, teachers and school authorities early in his life. He had to carry his own gunny bag to sit in the school. He cannot touch the water pot and had to wait till someone gave him water to drink. Even he had to sit at a distance from other students and teacher don't check his notebook for fear of pollution. This had profound effect on his young mind.

Ambedkar's family moved to Bombay (now called Mumbai) so that he can have higher and better education. In 1912, Ambedkar passed his B.A. examination from prestigious Elphinstone College

with the help of Scholarship granted by Maharaja of Baroda. He was first person of his community to achieve this. Maharaja of Baroda also sent him for higher studies at the Columbia University of USA on scholarship. There he obtained degrees of M.A. and Ph.D. After break of some years, he resumed his studies and joined London School of Economics. He also qualified as barrister from Gray's Inn of London. Maharaja of Kolhapur helped him financially for his later studies including M.Sc. Economics and D.Sc. (Eco). He also Received honorary LLD degree from Columbia university during the bicentennial special convocation celebrations. Ambedkar was the first from his community to get the opportunity for such an education. His academic excellence has no match. He was so much interested in studies despite of his caste handicap that at Satara school one of his teachers was so much impressed with him that he gave him his name 'Ambedkar'. Bhimrao's last name was Sakpal but known by the name Ambedkar given to him.

Ambedkar had held many positions in his lifetime. Despite of his degrees and intelligence his caste always follows him like a ghost. In 1917, he was appointed the military secretary to his highness Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III of Baroda state. Unfortunately, neither his high post nor his degrees could change the mindset of people of higher castes. Many obstacles left him with only choice to leave that job. He left Baroda and joined Sydenham college of commerce and economics in Bombay as Professor in 1918. Here also People prioritize his caste over his intelligence. In 1926, he was nominated as a member of Bombay Legislative Council. In May 1935, appointed Principal of Govt. Law college in Bombay. In 1942, joined Viceroy's Executive Council as Labour Member. After independence, he was joined as first law minister in Nehru's cabinet but resigned in 1951 due to differences with Nehru over Hindu code bill.

Ambedkar has left great impression on social and political arena of Indian society. His unique achievements include framing of Indian constitution and Hindu Code bill. He was a great educationist, parliamentarian and statesman. He was a Revolutionary in the sense wishing radical changes in the social and religious structure of Hindu society. According to Dr S Radhakrishnan, 'He was not much a reformer as a revolutionary.' (2) He was deeply impressed by Kabir, Budha and Mahatma Phule. He established his position as leader of Depressed classes. He led many movements in his entire life for the civil rights of untouchables and their better representation in the legislature and executive bodies.

In his lifetime he formed three political parties named as Independent Labour Party (1936), Schedule Caste Federation (1942), Republican Party (1956) and started one fortnightly in Marathi 'Mook Nayak' which spoke of anti-caste politics. To spread awareness among the depressed classes he founded the

‘Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha’ in 1920. Sabha’s main aim was to make them realise their importance as human beings and encourage Dalits to pursue education as Ambedkar believed that was the only way to attain respectable place in society for them. He also gave Slogan ‘Educate-Agitate-Organise’ to reconstruct Indian society on the basis of equality by abolishing caste system. He also opened hostel for Dalit students in Solapur (to facilitate them for their studies) and Siddharth college of arts and sciences in Bombay (now called Mumbai) for their educational benefit.

Caste System in Hindu Society

Caste is a fundamental component of the Indian social system. Every Hindu is born into one caste and their caste shapes their life from birth to death. Hindu is not simply a Hindu his place is recognised in the society according to his caste. Caste also determines his profession. In this era, it is amazing to know that some professions and jobs are still assumed to be done by some specific castes. Ambedkar’s views on caste and the origins of untouchability are basic to his political philosophy. (3)

In his essay ‘Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development’ presented at an Anthropological Seminar of Alexander Goldenwieser in New York on May 9, 1916, Ambedkar tries to unravel the mysteries of caste. According to Babasaheb Caste is an institution with serious repercussions. However, caste is perceived as a local issue but has the potential to cause far more harm, as he said, ‘as long as caste in India does exist, Hindus will hardly intermarry or have any social intercourse with outsiders; and if Hindu migrate to other regions on earth, Indian caste would become a world problem.’ (4) Population of India is a mixture of people arrived centuries ago from various parts of world and developed a common culture that supplanted their own cultures. Ambedkar argued that those various stocks have not been thoroughly amalgamated. People are still ethnically different and developed common culture which is sole criterion of homogeneity. And common culture-based homogeneity creates difficulty in understanding caste. It would be easy to understand caste if the Hindu society were just a collection of separate entities. ‘Caste is a parcelling of an already homogeneous unit, and the explanation of the genesis of Caste is the explanation of this process of parcelling.’ (5)

‘Endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste.’ (6) No modern society has more of a legacy of its primitive past than India's. Its old religious beliefs and its tribal system still works in the same way as in ancient times. One such old survived system is the custom of the exogamy. This is evident from the law of marriage based on the exogamy principle and marriage between same gotras is considered a violation of the law. The rules of exogamy are strict and there are severe punishments for breaking them. Castes in India are endogamous, it means formation of Castes in India is an imposition of Endogamy on Exogamy. ‘Some closed the door: Others found it closed against them.’ (7) Ambedkar elaborated that closed-door Endogamy system is created by Brahmin and whole-heartedly imitated by

all the non-Brahmin and became endogamous caste groups. Caste exists in plural number. When Brahmins closed themselves into one caste they created everyone else non-brahmin castes.

Babasaheb observed that Hindu Society follow three customs, namely: (i) Sati or the burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband. (ii) Enforced widowhood by which a widow is not allowed to remarry. (iii) Girl marriage. (8) These customs are general mechanism of caste system. Ambedkar explained the reason to follow these customs with his theory of surplus men and surplus women in any caste and how Important endogamy is to the group. He said that these customs were practised as these were honoured since long and the philosophies that grow around these customs provide them moral support. These customs are basically means however presented as ideals. These customs were primarily intended to maintain the caste's endogamy by solving the issue of surplus men and women.

According to him the question of origin of caste is always a thorny one than preserving the system till now. When he refers to the origin of caste, he was referring to the origin of the mechanism for endogamy. The Brahmins were the ones who created and maintained this system and the prevalence of these customs in other castes is due to imitation. Imitation is related with distance. Castes who were closer to Brahmins followed all of these customs, who are little far followed less and who are at far distance followed only parts of it.

Untouchability

Caste system is based on hierarchy. Who are on the top of this system are the most beneficial and as it comes down in the hierarchy benefits diminishes. The lowest in the order are the least benefitted. Caste brings the most horrified disadvantage, untouchability. Untouchability is the mammoth which handicapped the lives of millions of low caste people for centuries.

The number of untouchables in India is large. The Census of 1911 actually laid down ten tests to mark off the Untouchables. Efforts in the same direction were continued at the Census of 1921 and 1931. As a result of these efforts the Simon Commission which came to India in 1930 was able to state with some degree of surety that total population of Untouchables in British India was 44.5 million. (9)

In his work, 'The Untouchables and Who were they and how they became untouchables?' Babasaheb finds out that untouchables were the broken men of those nomadic tribes which were not settled. And in need of shelter and food they start living outside the villages. There was an agreement between

broken men and settled tribes which was useful for both of them. The broken men were given the work to protect the settled persons or localities from other nomadic tribes and in return they were be given the food and place to live. They were not allowed to live inside because it was the privilege of the kins to live together and no outside of the tribe can live with them. He argued that there was no untouchability at that time but started later. He argued that the theories of different race and occupational difference as root cause of untouchability are not true.

A group of political-minded Hindu social reformers believe that the concept of untouchability is distinct from the caste system and it is possible to eliminate it without directly challenging the caste system. 'Those who propose to deal with untouchability without damaging the caste system, rest their case on verse 4 of Chapter X of the Manu Smriti. In the verse, Manu says that there are only four varnas and that there is no fifth varna. This verse is interpreted to mean that the untouchables are included in the fourth varna, that they are part of the Shudras and as there is no objection to touching the Shudras there could be no objection to touching the Untouchables.' (10) This argument is formulated on the basis of Manu's text is too sophisticated for the average uneducated Hindu, who is familiar with only two things. One of these is the fact that social intercourse is subject to three barriers: (1) a prohibition against inter-dinning; (2) a prohibition against inter-marriage; (3) a prohibition against physically touching certain group of people. First two are related with caste and third is related with untouchability. The caste Hindu is not concerned with the number of these barriers; he is concerned with the observance of the barriers. Caste and untouchability are inseparable and form an integral system, based on the same principle. Therefore, if the caste Hindus are observing untouchability, it is due to their belief in caste.

Slavery and Untouchability

Ambedkar while comparing untouchability with slavery showcase many points which prove that untouchability is worse than slavery. Hindus claim that they've never upheld slavery the way other nations have, and that, in any event, untouchability no worse than slavery. (11) Ambedkar said that it is completely false. Slavery is an old institution of Hindus, acknowledged by the Hindu law giver, Manu and has been developed and systematised by the other writers of the Smriti who followed him. In fact, it was an institution that existed throughout Indian history until British Government abolished it by law in 1843. Despite being abolished by law, still practiced in the modern times.

Slavery and Untouchability, both is bondage. No one can deny that Slave is not a free person. Untouchable is a free person legally, but in reality, they are chained with various constraints. Untouchable does not have any benefits of a free person. Unlike slavery, Untouchability is obligatory. There is no compulsion if someone does not want to own a slave or if any master wants to free his

slave, can do so. But once born as an untouchable means you are an untouchable till your death, untouchable has to suffer from all the handicaps of an untouchability during his entire life. There is no escape. The slavery is direct form of deprivation. The untouchability is indirect form of deprivation and that is why the worst. When someone has no awareness of his situation, cannot think about the effects it has on his life and cannot try to find out the ways to come out of that situation. In a direct form of deprivation of freedom, slave is aware of his enslavement and the first and most important step is the struggle for freedom. Untouchability is the enslavement without making them conscious of their situation.

Slaves were considered the property of the master and that is beneficial for slave as master take care of their daily needs, health and skill development. Slavery is way better than Untouchability when it comes to education, virtue and culture. That is not the case with untouchables. Nobody bothers to care about the wellbeing and livelihood of the untouchable. Nobody like to train an untouchable; no skill development is provided to them and they are only employed for the work which upper caste workers don't want to do like scavenging. They are considered as the pollutant of the society. The death of an Untouchable is regarded as a good riddance and there is a Hindu proverb which says 'The Untouchable is dead and the fear of pollution has vanished'. (12)

Caste Annihilation

In India, social reform is like path to paradise, full of challenges. It has few supporters and plenty of critics. The Indian National Congress was accompanied with the formation of Social Conference because without social reforms no permanent progress is possible. The emancipation of the mind and the soul is a necessary preliminary for the political expansion of the people. (13) But soon the social conference vanished because majority of the educated Hindus were ready for political advancement but not social reform. It is essential to distinguish between social reform in terms of reform of the Hindu Family and reform of the Hindu Society. (14) The former is concerned with issues such as widow remarriage and child marriage, while the latter is concerned with the abolition of the Caste System. The social conference which was populated with mostly of educated high caste Hindus, did not feel the need for reform in the Hindu Society or had not the courage to do so. They simply wanted to get rid of the evils which trouble them like widowhood, child marriage and traditions like this. And had no interest to deal with the issue which do not harm them as caste system. Ambedkar explained the conditions of untouchables in India by giving examples that how under the rule of Marathas in Maharashtra and other parts of the country, untouchables were looked upon as the pollute for upper

caste Hindus. Babasaheb asked that how a country can be fit for self-rule if not ready to treat the fellow citizen with respect and dignity.

Ambedkar in his 'Annihilation of Caste' showed that how regrettable that caste system still has advocates and they give reasons in support of caste system. Along with this, Babasaheb also suggested how to annihilate this inhuman unique system present in Hindu Society since centuries. He took the socialist first. Socialists believe that human beings are economic creatures, that their actions and aspirations are connected with economic reality and the property is the sole source of power. Consequently, they argue that political and social reforms are mere delusions and that economic reform must take precedence over all other forms of reform. But this argument cannot be accepted in Indian context. In India the power of religion is reflected on everything economic, social and political sphere. Here the religious laws have greater influence over the population than the parliamentary laws, and events such as strikes and elections can easily become religious in nature. The Socialists of India do not consider one class ill-treating and suppressing another class in the name of system. If they want to establish society based on equality, system of caste needs to be resolved or reformed first.

Another support for caste system argue that it is nothing but form of division of labour which is the fundamental characteristic of any civilised society so there is nothing inherently wrong with the caste system. Caste is not simply a form of division of labour. It is also a division of labourers. (15) This division is severely and strictly followed in the form of hierarchy and not based upon natural aptitude. The division sadly linked with the social status of the person. It is pernicious as caste system does not allow to change the occupation with rapidly changing economic environment and direct cause of the most of the unemployment of the low caste population. Another defence in favour of caste is purity of race and blood. Ambedkar argues against this and explained that caste system came into existence long after many different races amalgamated with one another and developed a mixed culture in India. It is preserved by those who are benefitted by this system and has authority and power to enforce it forcibly on the people lower in their social status. Caste is not division of labour for improving economic efficiency or not even improves race. Caste only isolates or create anti-social feelings among various castes. 'The literature of the Hindus is full of caste genealogies in which an attempt is made to give a noble origin to one caste and an ignoble origin to other castes. The *Sahyadrikhand* is a notorious instance of this class of literature.' (16)

Ambedkar explained how Hindu religion cannot become missionary religion because of caste system. Entry into one caste is not permissible by converting, it is only possible by taking birth in that caste. In Indian society caste is precious possession and have to be saved at any cost. Regrettable is that Caste

has had a detrimental impact on the morality of Hindus. It has impaired public morality, eradicated the spirit of public philanthropy, and rendered public opinion impossible. For Hindu, the public is their caste. This is not about standing by 'good' or 'bad'. It is about standing by caste or not. Next Babasaheb took the views of Aryasamji's chaturvarna system. Chaturvarna divides society into 4 classes in order to pacify opposition. The proponents of Chaturvarnaya take great pains to emphasize that their system is based on "guna" (worth) rather than "birth". Ambedkar finds chaturvarna system a failure. And varna system and caste system as totally opposing to each other. If varna system is based on worth, caste system is based on birth. How can society be restructured according to worth when people with high status in society having low worth would not vacate their position. If it happens then then chaturvarna be enforced by law and cannot subsist by its own inherent goodness. Varna system is basically hierarchical system of division of high and low. Varna system is just and new name to the old system of caste divide.

Maintenance of varna system then only be relied upon penal system and sanctions to stop transgression. Chaturvarna does not consider about women. Will women be classified into varna according to their worth or joined with their male guardian's weather father or husband.

Castes are preserved by the prohibition of inter-dining and inter-marriage. Ambedkar suggested the abolition of Caste can be started with inter-caste dinners. Inter-dinning cannot infect blood so there is no scientific reason for not doing inter-dining with other castes and between sub-castes. However, he finds out this as an inadequate remedy. The other remedy is inter-marriage. Co-mingling created by inter-marriage can help to vanish the caste system. He opined that fusion of blood can alone create the feeling of kinship which will destroy the separatist feeling created by Caste.

Caste is a notion; it is a state of the mind. (68) So, the destruction of caste means changing the notion and the mindset of the society. One must keep in mind that the Hindus observe caste because of their deep believes in their religion, in their sacred scriptures. Therefore, the real culprit is those scriptures, shastras which teach them the religion of Caste. Holding few inter caste marriages or inter caste dinning cannot change the scenario. The real remedy, according to Ambedkar, is to destroy the feelings of sacredness of shastras. The acts of humans are the results of their beliefs inculcated upon the minds of people by those shastras who teaches the caste system as sacred and to be observed at any cost. To change the acts of people their beliefs must change first. For that sacredness of shastras to be ceased. He gave the example of Budha and Nanak who told the people about what was wrong in their religion.

Ambedkar found this task almost impossible as beneficiary castes will not allow this to be happened. The only hope for change in any society is always their intellectual class but unfortunately in India the intellectual class is the beneficiary class, placed on the top of the caste system hierarchy and well aware of their loss if caste system is vanished. To initiate reforms in Hindu religion, Babasaheb suggested that there should be only one religious book accepted by all. The priesthood of brahmins should be abolished. The priest should be servant of State and their number should be limited. The basis of this new religion should be in ‘consonance with the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.’ (17)

Babasaheb devoted his entire life for the cause of upliftment of his community. He faced many difficulties but never derailed from his path. It is very unfortunate that his work and ideology gained momentum, respect and prestige after so long of his death. He received Bharat Ratan, the highest civilian honor presented to any Indian, in 1990 after 34 years of his death. With the emergence of Dalit movement in the country during 1980s and 1990s, Dr. Ambedkar’s stature grown and emerged as a symbol of that movement.

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Revisiting Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Philosophical Contributions in the Socio-Political Landscape: A Contemporary Analysis.

Rajashree Tripathy

Abstract

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a renowned Indian legal philosopher, social reformer, and principal architect of India's Constitution, has left an indelible imprint on the intricate fabric of India's sociopolitical environment. His philosophical contributions, which are profoundly anchored in the principles of social justice, equality, individual liberty, and the role of the state, have played an important role in defining the nation's modern democratic culture. This study begins with a thorough examination of Dr. Ambedkar's philosophical principles, with the goal of determining their continuing relevance within India's intricate social fabric.

This research dives deeper into Dr. Ambedkar's unwavering commitment to eliminating caste-based discrimination and social inequities, with a strong focus on protecting individual rights and freedoms. It also looks at his goal of encouraging brotherhood and inclusion, as well as the critical role he saw the state playing in constructing an equitable and fair society. Dr. Ambedkar's deep intellectual impact continues to influence public debate, guide policy choices, and inspire a widespread desire for a more equitable, inclusive, and democratic India.

Keywords: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Caste System, Social Justice, Individual Rights, Equality, Fraternity, State's Role, Contemporary Analysis

Introduction

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, an Indian historical figure, stands at the crossroads of philosophy, social upheaval, and constitutional law. Born into a Dalit family in a society split by differences and entrenched hierarchies, Ambedkar's life narrative extends beyond personal triumph to provide evidence to his persistent commitment to redressing deeply ingrained social injustices. His legacy endures as a never-ending struggle for a more equitable and just society, culminating in his pivotal role in creating the Indian Constitution. Dr. Ambedkar's substantial philosophical contributions, based on his experiences, convictions, and intellectual ability, have left an indelible mark on India's social landscape. This dissertation follows a transformative journey through his philosophical beliefs, critically examining their long-term relevance and repercussions in today's sociopolitical situation.

Ambedkar's life unfolded against the backdrop of British colonial rule in India, including the country's journey to independence and the development of the Indian Constitution in the twentieth century. His childhood was shaped by the harsh realities of the caste system, a world of discrimination and untouchability. Nonetheless, his unwavering drive and ravenous need for information propelled him to become a trailblazer, the first person in his village to seek higher education. His academic journey took him to the United States, where he got graduate degrees in law and economics, and then to the United Kingdom, where he received a Ph.D. in economics from the London School of Economics. These life-changing worldwide experiences improved his perspective of democracy, individual rights, and social justice, shaping his deep philosophical contributions.

Dr. Ambedkar rose to prominence upon his return to India, constantly campaigning for society's underprivileged groups. He correctly realized that economic advancement alone could not address the underlying challenges of social hierarchy and caste prejudice. His objective expanded beyond the bounds of personal accomplishment, becoming an unwavering pursuit of social improvement. He became the indefatigable champion of the Dalits and other marginalized groups, fervently demanding social and political parity, justice, and dignity. His dedication to this cause resulted in his assistance in the creation of the Indian Constitution. There, he painstakingly achieved the inclusion of affirmative action and basic rights laws, resulting in a paradigm change aimed at leveling the socio-political environment for all people.

While the socio-political fabric of India has changed over time, some of the critical concerns championed by Ambedkar remain prominent in modern debate. Caste-based discrimination, economic disparities, and the imperative for equitable representation in governance persist as enduring challenges. His vision of liberty continues to resonate, with contemporary debates grappling with issues of free speech, individual rights, and the delicate interplay between rights and social harmony. Additionally, his delineation of the state's role in upholding social justice and ensuring a just society remains an echoing refrain in today's policy deliberations.

This paper embarks on the profound task of revisiting the profound philosophical contributions of Dr. Ambedkar, dissecting their resonance within the modern socio-political tapestry of India. We gain a deeper understanding of his visionary philosophy through a critical examination of his ideas on social justice, equality, liberty, fraternity, and the responsibility of the state—a philosophy that, even today, serves as an enduring source of inspiration and a compass for those ardently committed to crafting a more equitable and democratic India.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Views on Social Justice and Equality

The nucleus of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's philosophical contributions revolves around the concepts of social justice and equality. These ideals formed the bedrock of his lifelong struggle against the oppressive caste system that plagued Indian society.

A. The Caste System and Discrimination

The caste system, deeply entrenched in Indian tradition, constituted a rigid social structure that predetermined individuals' roles, status, and privileges based on their birth. It ruthlessly confined people to designated occupations, restricted their social interactions, and subjected those in the lower strata, particularly the Dalits, to degrading and inhumane treatment. Dr. Ambedkar, himself born into the lowest caste and intimately familiar with the horrors of this system, personally endured discrimination and humiliation at various points in his life.

Ambedkar recognized the intrinsic inequity of the caste system, which not only marginalized particular communities but also deprived them of their basic human dignity and rights. His unwavering dedication to ending the caste system was motivated by its role in social divide and promoting social justice. His unwavering pursuit of social justice and equality was motivated by his ardent opposition to the caste system and the injustices it engendered.

B. Ambedkar's Vision of Social Justice

The elimination of discrimination was just one aspect of Dr. Ambedkar's vision of social justice. He argued that in order to achieve genuine social justice, a proactive approach must be taken that aims to strengthen historically marginalized populations as well as to overthrow the caste system. He called for a society in which people's abilities and moral character were valued more highly than their caste. Promoting equitable access to economic opportunity, political participation, and education were all part of his agenda.

In the development of the Indian Constitution, Ambedkar's social justice concept had a crucial role. His dream came true when the Constitution made a commitment to equality before the law, outlawed untouchability, and reserved positions in government and educational institutions for historically marginalized populations. These provisions were more than simply legal protections; they were proactive measures aimed at correcting past injustices and encouraging the social upliftment of disadvantaged people.

C. Affirmative Action and Contemporary Debates

In contemporary India, the legacy of Ambedkar's ideas on social justice remains deeply ingrained in policy formulation and public discourse. Affirmative action, often referred to as "reservation," remains a contentious and pivotal subject. Rooted in the Constitution, this policy reserves a percentage of government jobs and educational seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, guaranteeing their representation and participation across various sectors.

Contemporary debates orbit around the effectiveness and equity of these policies. Critics argue that while they have been efficacious in providing opportunities to marginalized groups, refinements may be necessary to prevent the perpetuation of divisions and to adapt to evolving socio-economic dynamics. Proponents, conversely, underscore the indispensability of such measures in addressing deeply entrenched inequalities.

The ongoing debates on affirmative action underscore the enduring pertinence of Ambedkar's philosophy and the imperative to continually recalibrate his ideas to align with contemporary circumstances. Dr. Ambedkar's unwavering pursuit of social justice and equality serves as a perennial source of inspiration and guidance, propelling endeavors to construct a more comprehensive and equitable India. His vision poses a perpetual challenge to the nation, stimulating introspection on its dedication to justice and the measures it undertakes to fulfill the promise of an equitable society.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on Liberty and Individual Rights

The notion of liberty and the protection of individual rights occupy a prominent and intricately woven tapestry within the philosophical contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He ardently believed that safeguarding these rights lay at the core of fostering a just and democratic society. Ambedkar's perspectives on liberty and individual rights bore the profound imprints of his personal experiences and his nuanced understanding of the pernicious caste system, a system that relentlessly shackled individual freedom.

A. The Significance of Individual Liberties

Ambedkar emphatically argued that individual liberties served as the very bedrock upon which the edifice of democracy was constructed. In his perspective, genuine democracy demanded more than just political rights; it necessitated the protection of individual freedoms and the obliteration of prevailing social and economic inequities. He astutely discerned that the caste system did not merely strip individuals of their social entitlements but also strangled their personal liberty, often subjecting them to oppression and dehumanization.

For Ambedkar, liberty entailed the freedom to think, articulate, and act without the looming specter of social or political persecution. He firmly contended that these freedoms stood as indispensable prerequisites for the cultivation of individual potential and the sustenance of a thriving democracy. His unwavering allegiance to liberty and individual rights finds vivid expression in his zealous advocacy for the fundamental rights enshrined in the Indian Constitution, rights that guarantee freedom of expression, speech, and equality before the law.

B. Ambedkar's Condemnation of the Caste System

Beyond its social repercussions, Ambedkar's critique of the caste system was extensive. He contended that the caste system violated people's basic rights and freedoms because of its strict hierarchy and the humiliation of untouchability. It restricted access to public venues and resources, inhibited social connections, and even put constraints on one's ability to choose their line of work. In this situation, it systematically restricted the liberty of its victims, limiting their options and prospects.

Ambedkar's harsh critique of the caste system as a mechanism that upheld inequity and infringed upon liberty was a dramatic break from the accepted social standards. He refused to view it solely as a sociological problem but as a direct challenge to the principles of democracy and individual rights. His intellectual acuity and legal prowess empowered him to lay bare the innate injustices of the caste system and ardently champion its absolute annihilation.

C. Contemporary Relevance and Ongoing Debates

Ambedkar's ideas concerning liberty and individual rights remain strikingly germane in contemporary discussions surrounding free speech, individual freedoms, and the tapestry of social harmony. The matter of free speech, in particular, endures as a subject of fervent debate, as it navigates the delicate balance between the imperative to safeguard the expression of a multiplicity of voices and the latent peril of inciting hatred and social division.

Ambedkar's approach to liberty underscores the pivotal significance of harmonizing the rights of individuals with the interests of the broader society. His philosophy advocates for a nuanced and principled approach to the constraints and obligations that accompany the exercise of individual liberties. Ongoing debates on topics such as hate speech, censorship, and the delineation of the boundaries of free expression draw profound inspiration from the principles articulated by Ambedkar.

In a society engaged in the intricate act of reconciling the protection of individual rights with the preservation of social harmony, Ambedkar's ideas proffer a thoughtful and contemplative framework to grapple with these challenges. His vision of liberty, entrenched as a cornerstone of democracy, exhorts

us to traverse the intricate terrain of rights and responsibilities in the backdrop of a diverse and ever-evolving society. In doing so, Ambedkar's philosophy persists as an enduring guide, ensuring that liberty remains an exalted and shielded value within the intricate framework of Indian democracy.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on Fraternity and Inclusivity

Fraternity, an often understated yet paramount facet of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's profound philosophical oeuvre, emerges as a linchpin within his vision of a just and harmonious society. Ambedkar ardently believed that the cultivation of fraternity was paramount in addressing the deep-rooted schisms and inequalities inherent in Indian society, particularly those perpetuated by the iniquitous caste system. This section embarks on a contemplative exploration of the concept of fraternity, its pivotal place within the framework of the Indian Constitution, and its multifaceted role in fostering inclusivity in a diverse and intricate societal landscape.

A. The Concept of Fraternity

Fraternity, in the rich tapestry of Ambedkar's philosophy, transcends the mere absence of discrimination. It encapsulates the profound notion of brotherhood and a collective sense of belonging shared among all citizens. Ambedkar's vision of fraternity beckoned a society where individuals hailing from diverse castes, religions, and backgrounds could coexist in an environment permeated by mutual respect and unwavering solidarity. He keenly discerned that the aspiration for social harmony and authentic equality demanded not only legal and political transformations but also a profound metamorphosis of hearts and minds.

The concept of fraternity, for Ambedkar, was not a lofty abstraction but a requisite condition for social coherence and progress. It underscored the imperativeness of empathy, respect, and a shared dedication to the construction of a just and all-inclusive society. In Ambedkar's discerning gaze, without fraternity, the ideals of liberty and equality would stand as hollow edifices, devoid of their rightful substance.

B. Fraternity in the Indian Constitution

Ambedkar's unwavering allegiance to the cause of fraternity discovers vivid expression in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, which commences with the resonant words: "We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, and Democratic Republic." The preamble accentuates the profound significance of fraternity by underscoring the indispensability of unity amidst India's diverse populace. It articulates the aspiration to secure justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity for all citizens.

Moreover, the Constitution integrates provisions that accentuate fraternity as an integral component of India's democratic ethos. It calls for the advancement of a sense of shared citizenship, respect for diversity, and the obliteration of discrimination. The principles of fraternity equally echo within the fundamental duties delineated in the Constitution, which include the duty to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood.

The inclusion of fraternity within the Constitution was not merely a symbolic gesture; it mirrored Ambedkar's unshakeable belief that the forging of unity and inclusivity lay at the core of erecting a just and harmonious nation. It was the conviction that a society in which all citizens could partake in the dividends of democracy and development hinged upon the establishment of fraternity.

C. Fostering Inclusivity in a Diverse Society

In contemporary India, the task of fostering inclusivity and fraternity remains an acute challenge, given the nation's expansive diversity in terms of languages, religions, castes, and ethnicities. The persistent undercurrents of caste-based discrimination, communal tensions, and regional divisions underscore the imperativeness of fraternity as the bridge to span these chasms.

Ambedkar's philosophy of fraternity bequeaths a roadmap for addressing these challenges. It beckons for determined endeavors to nurture a profound sense of shared citizenship, a realm where individuals honor one another's diversities and labor collectively for the common good. Promoting inclusivity signifies the acknowledgment of the distinctive worth that each individual contributes to society, irrespective of their origins, ensuring that everyone enjoys equal access to opportunities and resources.

Dr. Ambedkar's enduring vision of fraternity constitutes an ever-present reminder of the pivotal significance of social cohesion and inclusivity within the mosaic of a diverse and multicultural nation like India. It challenges us to aspire to a society in which all citizens not only coexist but thrive, thus nurturing a palpable sense of unity and belonging that is indomitable in propelling the nation's progress and well-being.

The Role of the State in fostering social justice and equality

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's intellectual contributions were founded on the role of the state in furthering social justice and equality. His unwavering resolve to redress the historical injustices and structural inequities that had long persisted in Indian society inspired his vision of the state's responsibilities in the quest of justice. This section will look at Ambedkar's vision of the state, its role to defend social justice, as well as the complexities of today's concerns and their political implications.

A. Ambedkar's Vision of the State

Ambedkar considered the state as having an important role in creating a fair and just society. He believed that, rather than being a passive spectator, the state should take an active role in making amends for past wrongs and ensuring social justice. His vision of the state went beyond mere administration and included the abolition of the repressive caste system as well as the empowerment of weaker people.

Ambedkar's state vision contained a number of legislative and constitutional provisions to protect individual rights. Furthermore, it backed affirmative action policies aimed at lifting up historically oppressed populations. His pivotal role in the development of the Indian Constitution ensured the inclusion of anti-discrimination laws, reservation policy in employment and education, and safeguards for the rights of the impoverished.

B. The State's Social Justice Responsibilities

Ambedkar's worldview emphasized the significance of the state's obligation for social justice. He accurately recognized that social reform alone would not be enough to remedy long-standing injustices. In his opinion, addressing these disparities required the state to take a pivotal role. His ideas laid the foundation for India's reservation policy, which seeks to guarantee representation and opportunities for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other marginalized communities in education and employment.

Ambedkar contended that the state must adopt a proactive stance in furnishing resources, education, and support to uplift marginalized groups. This unwavering commitment to social justice was enshrined in the Constitution, mandating the establishment of specialized institutions and provisions to address the distinct needs of historically disadvantaged communities.

C. Contemporary Challenges and Policy Implications

In contemporary India, the state's role in fostering social justice remains a multifaceted, ever-evolving conundrum. While reservations and affirmative action policies have undeniably made strides in enhancing representation, disparities continue to persist. Some advocate that these policies may necessitate recalibration to address the shifting landscape of challenges, such as intra-group inequalities and concerns regarding efficiency and meritocracy.

Moreover, the imperative to strike a delicate equilibrium between upholding social justice and averting discrimination against other segments of society poses a challenge. The realization of Ambedkar's

vision of the state demands meticulous policy design and adaptability to the ever-evolving circumstances.

Ambedkar's philosophy concerning the state's role in social justice perpetuates its influence on contemporary debates and policy determinations. It places contemporary policymakers under the compelling obligation to craft innovative and all-encompassing solutions to grapple with deeply entrenched inequalities, all the while ensuring the tenets of justice, liberty, and equality are ardently upheld.

Hence, Ambedkar's vision of the state as an active catalyst of social justice persists as a perennial source of inspiration and guidance. It compels us to wrestle with the contemporary challenges inherent in the construction of a more equitable society and to continually refine our policies and approaches to align with the evolving needs of a diverse and intricate nation.

Discussion on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Philosophical Contributions in the Socio-Political Landscape

In our quest to revisit the profound philosophical contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and assess their contemporary relevance within India's socio-political landscape, we are confronted with a multifaceted legacy that indelibly imprints the nation's ethos. Dr. Ambedkar's insights into social justice, equality, liberty, fraternity, and the state's role serve as a wellspring of inspiration and a navigational chart for addressing the persistent socio-political challenges. This concluding section encapsulates his philosophical contributions, underscores their relevance in the modern context, and accentuates the enduring legacy of this visionary luminary.

A. Recap of Ambedkar's Philosophical Contributions

Dr. Ambedkar's philosophical insights were not abstract theories but were deeply rooted in his personal experiences as a Dalit and his profound intellectual acuity. He recognized that entrenched social hierarchies and discrimination were fundamentally incompatible with the ideals of a just society. Ambedkar's vision encompassed the obliteration of the oppressive caste system, the active promotion of social justice, the safeguarding of individual liberties, the cultivation of fraternity, and the vital role of the state in molding a just and equitable society. As the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, he shepherded these principles into the bedrock of the nation's foundational document, where they endure as guiding stars for policy and legislation.

B. Relevance in the Contemporary Socio-Political Landscape

The enduring relevance of Dr. Ambedkar's ideas manifests vividly in the ongoing socio-political dialogues and challenges within India. The specter of caste-based discrimination, persistent inequalities, and the need for affirmative action policies looms large. The sanctity of individual liberties, the freedom of expression, and the delicate balance between rights and responsibilities remain subjects of perpetual discourse. In a diverse and multicultural society, the principles of fraternity and inclusivity acquire heightened significance. The state's role in addressing historical injustices and cultivating social justice continues to hold the central stage in the realm of policymaking. Ambedkar's philosophy proffers a comprehensive framework for grappling with these contemporary challenges and adeptly navigating the intricate labyrinth of a democratic, pluralistic society.

C. The Ongoing Legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Dr. Ambedkar's legacy is not a relic of the past but a living, breathing force, resonating not only in his intellectual contributions but also in the palpable impact of his tireless work. His vision for a more just and equitable India has found manifestation in affirmative action policies, anti-discrimination laws, and the assertion of fundamental rights. His ideas are invoked regularly in courtrooms, legislative chambers, and grassroots movements. Dr. Ambedkar's enduring legacy extends to his profound influence on prominent leaders and social justice movements throughout India.

His contributions are commemorated annually on Ambedkar Jayanti, and his statues dot the Indian landscape as enduring testaments to his enduring significance. His legacy transcends the confines of India, inspiring advocates of social justice, equality, and human rights on a global scale.

Thus, the philosophical contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar stand as a guiding luminary for India's perpetual odyssey towards a more just, equal, and inclusive society. His vision challenges the nation to uphold the sacred tenets of democracy and to continue the arduous journey towards a more equitable and democratic India, where no individual is left behind, and every citizen is afforded the opportunity to lead a life of dignity and freedom. The legacy of Dr. Ambedkar reverberates as an enduring source of inspiration and a reminder of the transformative potential of ideas in shaping the socio-political landscape of a nation.

Conclusion

In bringing this paper to a conclusion, it becomes strikingly evident that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's philosophical contributions serve as a perennial source of wisdom and guidance in the intricate socio-political tapestry of India. His unwavering dedication to the tenets of social justice, equality, liberty,

fraternity, and the catalytic role of the state has etched an indomitable imprint on the nation's collective consciousness. What is equally apparent is that Ambedkar's ideas maintain their resonance in the contemporary discourse, perpetuating their abiding relevance.

As we contemplate his legacy, it is paramount to acknowledge that Dr. Ambedkar's vision transcends temporal and geographical confines. His ideas possess a universal allure, bestowing inspiration not solely upon India but also upon the global community in its shared quest for a fairer and more just world.

The life and oeuvre of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar provide a profound lesson on the transcendental potency of ideas. They underscore the notion that ideas, fortified by unwavering determination, possess the capability to transcend the confines of personal circumstances and to profoundly mold the course of a nation. His relentless endeavors to dismantle the oppressive caste system, to empower the marginalized, and to buttress the edifice of democracy serve as a resounding testament to the potential for constructive change that individuals can instigate.

Within his enduring legacy, we discern an impassioned summons to action. Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy extends to us an open invitation to persistently adapt and evolve, confronting contemporary challenges while remaining resolute in our commitment to the timeless values of justice, equality, liberty, fraternity, and the dutiful role of the state. It beckons us to pursue the voyage he embarked upon—the journey towards a society that is more inclusive, egalitarian, and democratic, where every citizen, irrespective of their background, can partake in a life characterized by dignity and freedom.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's legacy refuses to be static; it is inherently dynamic and eternally inspirational. As we grapple with the intricacies of our ever-evolving world, we find solace and sagacity in his timeless words and ideas. In essence, the perpetual legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar extends a cordial invitation to engage with his philosophy not as a vestige of the past but as a living, breathing compass for the pursuit of a more equitable and just future.

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Ambedkar's Contributions to Advancing Indian Academia

Rajwinder Kaur

Abstract

"The progress of any society depends on the progress of education in that society"- Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

According to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the statement underscores the belief that education is the cornerstone of social and economic progress. It represents Ambedkar's commitment to using education as a powerful tool for empowering marginalized communities, to overcome historical disadvantages and achieve social justice. His perspective aligns with the idea that education is not merely a means of personal enrichment but a transformative force that uplifts individuals and, by extension, the entire society, ultimately leading to a more equitable and progressive nation.

Keywords: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Social Justice, Indian Education, Inclusivity, Education Reforms

Introduction

Bharat Ratna awardee Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, was born in a Marathi lower class family (treated as untouchable at that time) on 14th April 1891 in the British-founded town and military cantonment of Mhow, Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh). He was an eminent Indian jurist, economist, politician, social reformer, educationist and the architect of the Constitution of India. He was the 14th and last child of Ramji Maloji Sakpal and Bhimabai Murbadkar. Ambedkar's father insisted on his sons receiving an education, which led to his enrollment in school.

However, despite attending school, Ambedkar faced discrimination and received minimal support from his teachers. He was segregated, forced to sit outside the classroom, and had to rely on someone from a higher caste to pour water for him since he was not allowed to touch the water or its container. Additionally, he had to bring his own gunnysack to sit on. These experiences subjected Ambedkar to the harsh realities of caste-based discrimination, leaving a profound impact on him. He was the pioneering individual within his community to achieve a High School qualification and subsequently pursued a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Politics at Bombay University. During his time at Bombay University, he crossed paths with Sayaji Rao III, the Maharajah of the princely state of Baroda, who actively championed social reforms, particularly the eradication of untouchability. Under the Maharajah's sponsorship, Ambedkar furthered his education overseas. He embarked on his academic journey at Columbia University in New York, where he not only completed a Master's degree (M.A) but also earned a Doctorate (PhD). Subsequently, he pursued advanced studies at the London

School of Economics (LSE). Ambedkar was profoundly influenced by the ideas of John Dewey, particularly his work on democracy. Remarkably, Dr. Ambedkar held three doctoral degrees. His linguistic prowess was equally remarkable, as he was proficient in nine languages, including Hindi, Pali, Sanskrit, English, French, German, Marathi, Persian, and Gujarati.

Objectives

1. To Examine Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Vision for Indian Education
2. To Analyze the Impact of Ambedkar's Advocacy for Inclusivity
3. To Explore the Reforms in Indian Education Propounded by Ambedkar

Methodology

The research was carried out using secondary sources from existing literature, employing historical and analytical methodologies. The approach involved analyzing concepts and arguments, amalgamating ideas and evidence from various sources, constructing coherent and well-substantiated arguments, engaging in a balanced discussion of issues, assessing the ideas and arguments put forth by others, forming informed judgments, and articulating educated viewpoints.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Vision for Indian Education

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar asserted that education is the primary key to unlock enlightenment, vision, and wisdom. His fundamental message to society and the nation was to 'embrace education, unite, and persevere.' He contended that education holds a unique power to propel society forward, establishing an intrinsic connection between education and societal advancement.
- A central objective in Ambedkar's life was the reformation of Hindu society, and he accorded paramount significance to education throughout his journey. His approach was characterized by a commitment to constructive and structural changes aimed at societal betterment. For Ambedkar, education served as the cornerstone for ushering in political, social, and economic transformation.
- He aspired to cultivate a fresh realm of thought and awareness within every individual, advocating for education's accessibility to all segments of society rather than being monopolized by a select few from the upper castes. Dr. Ambedkar harbored deep dissatisfaction with the prevailing educational system of his time.
- He staunchly advocated for mass education, primarily because the lower classes and women were unjustly excluded from the educational landscape. This system lacked equality and the freedom to pursue education. The absence of educational opportunities left the Dalits mentally

subjugated, morally undermined, culturally disadvantaged, economically marginalized, and socially disenfranchised, devoid of social status and dignity.

- It was Dr. Ambedkar who first championed the idea of free and compulsory education, recognizing that many underprivileged citizens, particularly Dalits, lacked the financial means to access education. In the Indian Constitution, he enshrined numerous articles pertaining to education, including Article 28, 29, 30, 45, 46, and 350."

Impact of Ambedkar's Advocacy for Inclusivity

- Education for all

Ambedkar was profoundly shaped by the ideas of his mentor, John Dewey, who advocated for the 'Democratization of Education.' The prevailing social disparities in India led to high levels of illiteracy, particularly among women and those from lower castes. Ambedkar firmly asserted that 'education is the inherent entitlement of every individual, and no one can be deprived of this right.'

- Educational advancement among marginalized communities

Ambedkar sought to promote educational equality and combat the caste system through organized efforts. He established the "Narayana" Buddhist school, outlined in his book "The Buddha and his Dhamma," to achieve social equality in education and unite the untouchables. To support these goals, he founded the "Bahishkrit Hitakarni Sabha" on July 20, 1924, with the motto "Educate, Agitate, Organize," focusing on improving the economic, cultural, and educational well-being of the marginalized. His initiatives included providing free hostels for disadvantaged school children and personally engaging with remote villages to bolster the self-esteem of the oppressed.

- Women education

Ambedkar measured societal development by the extent of educational opportunities available to women, making their education a vital factor in social progress. As India's first Law Minister, he introduced the Hindu Code Bill in 1951, reflecting his commitment to gender equality. Dr. Ambedkar was deeply concerned about the hardships faced by women, eloquently described in his book "The Rise and Fall of Hindu Women." He recognized that women lacked self-sufficiency, making female education a primary tenet of his call to action: "Educate, Agitate, and Organize." His strong advocacy for compulsory education for women, though in favor of equality, also emphasized specialized education in home sciences.

- Educational quota stipulated by the Constitution

Article 15(4) allows the state to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally disadvantaged citizens, particularly for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled

Tribes (ST). This includes preferential admissions into educational institutions based on their population, aimed at improving their occupational opportunities and economic well-being. Additionally, the state provides financial support for SC students through scholarships and offers infrastructure like hostels, equipment, and books either free of charge or at subsidized rates.

Reforms in Indian Education Propounded by Ambedkar

- Language in Education

Language plays a crucial role in teaching school subjects and facilitating education. Research has indicated that the effectiveness of education is enhanced when instruction is delivered in the students' native language. Dr. Ambedkar supported the idea of providing education in the learners' mother tongue and underscored the importance of learning a foreign language alongside it. He believed this would enable students to comprehend global developments. Additionally, Ambedkar proposed Sanskrit as India's national language.

- Technical Education

With the well-being of underprivileged laborers in mind, he established a political party that advocated technical education for laborers. He also served on the Labor Executive Council and played a pivotal role in amending industrial legislation.

- Medium of Instructions

Ambedkar advocated for the use of English as the language of instruction, which he believed would provide access to a wealth of global information and philosophical ideas. He emphasized that knowledge is fundamental to human existence and cautioned that education that does not benefit the welfare of the less fortunate makes the educated individual a burden on society.

- Character Development

He emphasized “Character is more important than education.” To bring about societal transformations, individuals with education must possess moral integrity. An educated person lacking character and humility is more perilous than a wild animal.

- Curriculum

Dr. Ambedkar supported a uniform curriculum devoid of discrimination. The curriculum should prioritize practicality and utility. He also advocated for physical activities to ensure holistic development. Moral education and activities fostering values in citizens were given considerable importance by him. Dr. Ambedkar stressed the significance of science and technology alongside subjects like language, history, and geography.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the legacy of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar in the field of education is a testament to his unwavering commitment to promoting social justice, inclusivity, and progress in Indian society. He firmly believed that education was not merely a means of personal enrichment but a transformative force that could uplift individuals and, in turn, the entire society. Ambedkar's vision for education was rooted in the idea that it should be a birthright for every citizen, regardless of their caste, creed, gender, or any other basis.

His contributions to advancing Indian academia are multifaceted. Dr. Ambedkar's tireless efforts to make education accessible to marginalized communities, particularly Dalits and women, marked a significant turning point in the nation's educational landscape. His emphasis on mass education, coupled with advocacy for special provisions, paved the way for social change and empowerment of the oppressed.

Ambedkar's views on language, technical education, curriculum, character development, and the medium of instruction all reflect a deep commitment to holistic, equitable, and forward-looking education. He understood that true progress in a society could only be achieved when education was combined with moral integrity and character development.

As we reflect on his contributions, it becomes clear that Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's vision for education was not confined to the classroom but extended to the very foundations of Indian society. His enduring message emphasizes that education is the key to breaking the shackles of inequality and discrimination. It is the foundation upon which a more equitable and progressive nation can be built. In the words of Dr. Ambedkar, "The progress of any society depends on the progress of education in that society." It is a vision that continues to inspire and guide us towards a brighter and more inclusive future for all in India.

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Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Unsung Hero of India's Freedom Struggle

Sheetal Devi

Abstract

The untiring efforts of thousands of the nationalist fighters for decades brought the long awaited freedom which was beyond essential for the nation to assert her identity and for the people to live with dignity. India's freedom was not a goal in itself but a means to create more just, fair-minded, and flourishing society where the aspirations of individuals and their rights are held in high esteem. Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, a jurist, economist, politician, social reformer, popularly known as Babasaheb, occupies a remarkable and enduring place in the chronology of Indian freedom struggle, whose contributions remain underemphasized giving more weight age to his role as a pleader for the rights of depressed classes of India. This research paper endeavours to bring into limelight the life, vision, and multifaceted contributions of Dr. Ambedkar, forwarding a compelling argument for his status as an unapplauded hero of struggle for India's independence. The paper delves into Ambedkar's vital role in the social reform movements of contemporary times, including the Mahad Satyagraha, the Temple Entry Movement, and the Kalaram Temple Movement which laid the groundwork for broader social change. Furthermore, the research paper illumines his work for ensuring that the Constitution will be a rampart of social justice, affirmative action, and safeguards for Dalits and other minority groups. The study also explores Ambedkar's vision for post-independence India, a vision expanding beyond mere political freedom to the creation of an equal and just society which continues to shape the socio-political landscape.

Keywords: Dignity, identity, fair-minded, flourishing societies, enduring place, chronology of Indian freedom struggle, underemphasized, compelling argument, multifaceted contributions, unapplauded hero, Mahad Satyagraha, Temple Entry Movement, Kalaram Temple Movement, Dalits, post-independence India, and socio political landscape.

Introduction: A synonym for unwavering courage and unyielding determination, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, is an inspiring testament to the power of one individual to effect transformative change at large scale. In him we encounter a tireless social reformer, a towering intellectual, a visionary leader, and the chief architect of the Constitution of India. His life is an attestation to the strength and determination of human spirit to overcome the adversity to bring out the nectar for the upcoming generations. In spite of a wide range of recognition as social reformer and framer of Indian Constitution, B. R. Ambedkar's contributions to the broader canvas of the Indian freedom struggle are

sometimes underestimated. All counting will be worthless to measure the efforts of Dr. Ambedkar as his will power was immense and his dedication fathomless.

Literature Review: Jarnail Singh, in his work “Socio-Political Ideas of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Their Relevance in Modern Times” 2018 has made an effort to discuss the relevance of socio-political ideas of Dr. Ambedkar in the modern times. The researcher emphasises that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar stood for enlightenment and emancipation of the poverty stricken and exploited people living not only in any part of India but also in the world. He was a man with extraordinary qualities of head and heart and his interests encompassed every field of human activity due to which he attracted respect from every quarter of downtrodden and poor people.

Kumkum Kumari, in her study “Dr. B. R. Ambedkar A Spokesman of the Suppressed People in India” 1995 lays emphasis that Gautam Buddha’s teachings influenced Dr. Ambedkar the most. In politics Ambedkar believed that the ideal political solution was the parliamentary democracy. He believed that if there is tyranny of the majority over the minority, there can be no perfect democracy as democracy is not only a form of government but a way of life through which social justice can be delivered.

Chandrabati Mohapatra, “Contribution of Dr B R Ambedkar in the political and Social Resurgence of India, 2015 says that freedom and development of society for B. R. Ambedkar meant the guaranteeing of better conditions for all strata of society in general and positive action for the depressed classes in particular. She also discusses the points given by Ambedkar on which India could be reconstructed.

Results and Discussion: The plight of Dalits in late nineteenth century in India was pathetic, marked by uttermost social, political and economic discrimination because of deep rooted caste-based hierarchies and exploitative practices that had been prevailing for centuries. Their being landless made them totally dependent on the mercy of landed gentry which provided them work as labourers mostly at the verge of exploitation. Their limited access to education exposed them lack of resources, skills, jobs, other economic opportunities and basic human rights. It was a period when leaders like Jyotirao Phule and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar started social and political movements challenging the oppressive conditions faced by Dalits. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar claimed, “Caste system is not merely division of labour. It is also a division of labourers. It is a hierarchy in which the divisions of labourers are graded one above the other. Caste has killed the public spirit. Caste has destroyed the sense of public charity. Caste has made public opinion impossible. Virtue has become caste ridden and morality has become caste bound. There is no sympathy to the deserving. There is no appreciation of the meritorious. There cannot be a more degrading system of social organisation than the Chaturvarna. It is the system which deadens, paralyses and cripples the people from helpful activity.”

Early Life and Formation of Ideas: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had to grapple with harsh conditions of injustice and inequalities as a child because he was born in a Mahar family which was considered a low caste. He was able to secure a seat for himself in school because of his father's position in British Army but it was not enough to protect against the discrimination such as no permission to sit inside the classroom, not allowed to touch the water source, and not allowed even to stand near the wall of a house of upper caste Hindu to save his books from getting wet. Many functions were held in his honour by his community people to celebrate his admission in the University of Bombay as he was the first Dalit to achieve this great feat. It was at such function that he was gifted biography of Buddha by his teacher Krishnaji Arjun Keluskar. Ambedkar's personal experiences of caste-based discrimination profoundly influenced his commitment to addressing the inequalities prevalent in Indian system. His education equipped him with the weapons to scuffle with the socio-political issues and promote the rights of marginalised people.

Struggle for Social Reforms: Liang Qichao, a Chinese scholar, while reflecting over the matter how China could be made a strong nation said that India was a country and it was destroyed by a non-country that is the East India Company, it was because Indians were cruel to their own people and subservient to the British. The greatest contribution of Ambedkar for the independence of India is that he became instrumental in challenging the oppressive social norms as he himself had felt the scourge and humiliations of discrimination at the hands of upper caste Hindus. Dr. Ambedkar vehemently struggled for the rights of Dalits, wanting their access to land, education, and economic opportunities. His intellectual critique, political advocacy, and promotion of rationalism all contributed to threaten and eventually dismantling the oppressive system prevalent in the society.

Service to the Motherland through Constitutional advocacies: Dr. Ambedkar contributed to the reduction of working hours to 48 hours per week, introduction of the provisions of overtime, lifting the ban on the employment of women for underground work in coal mines, paid leave and minimum wage. His advocacy for universal adult franchise ensured that all women could get right to vote in the first elections of independent India. It was because of the far sightedness of Dr. Ambedkar which helped in the establishment of the Central Water Commission and integrated water resources management. The Inter-State water Disputes Act, 1956 ensued from his vision. As a member of Bombay Assembly he opposed the Industrial Disputes Bill, 1937, as it eliminated the workers right to strike. He also helped to establish the rule of maternity benefits and "equal pay for equal work" irrespective of gender. The Reserve Bank of India was a conceptualisation of Hilton Yong Commission's recommendation, which considered the guidelines laid out by Dr. Ambedkar in, "The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution."

Literary Contributions for bringing equality: The social concept of freedom is broader extending the scope of redistribution to all forms of disadvantage. This demands a high degree of equality; it also defines the boundaries of the pursuit of equality, which is justifiable in so far as it increases freedom. Dr. Ambedkar's influential essay, "Annihilation of Caste," was a blistering critique of the caste system. His literary works contributed greatly to challenging and advocating for the removal of inequalities and caste system. His works were often used as tools for creating awareness and mobilisation. His writings were instrumental in building public opinion against caste discrimination, for the rights of oppressed communities and creating a groundswell of support for political and social reforms. Dr. Ambedkar's writings and advocacy reached an international audience, contributing to a global discourse on social justice and human rights. None could remain untouched by his works whether activists, scholars or policymakers around the world and the awareness was raised about the issues of inequalities and caste discriminations in India.

Participation in the Round Table Conferences: Round Table Conferences hold an important place in the process of drafting the government of India Act 1935, which is an important phase in the constitution for India as this act enjoys the title of mini constitution of India. Dr. Ambedkar represented the depressed classes in these conferences and was successful in his efforts of safeguarding the interests of the minorities in India which eventually helped improve their social and political standing in Indian society. His leadership and advocacy laid the foundation for the rights and opportunities that Scheduled Castes continue to enjoy in Independent India making India worthy of being called really Independent.

Architect of the Indian Constitution: Being the chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar contributed hugely to the framing of the Constitution of India. He has the distinction of being the first legislator in India to introduce a Bill to end the age old serfdom of tenants on agricultural land. Even though before independence he wanted separate electorates for the marginalised groups but after independence he abhorred the idea of separate electorates to see India a unified and strong nation. He vehemently spoke in favour of making centre stronger than the states because a strong centre can coordinate the policies for the welfare of people in a better way. His leadership and expertise played a vital role in assuring social justice, provisions to protect the rights and interests of marginalized and oppressed classes, reservations in legislatures, government jobs and educational institutions for them and abolition of untouchability.

His vision for post independence India: Dr. Ambedkar's vision for the post-independence India was deeply enthroned in the principles of equality, justice, and social reforms. His contributions continue to shape India's policies and legal framework, especially in the areas of social justice, reservations, and the protection of rights and interests of the depressed classes. His legacy as social reformer and key

architect of the constitution of India remains a beacon for the ongoing journey towards a more equitable and inclusive society.

Legacy and Contemporary Relevance: Dr. Ambedkar's legacy remains a powerful force for positive change in India as well as in the global context where similar challenges of inequality, discrimination and injustice still exist. While Dalits have acquired a political identity but they lack behind in equal status like that of the upper caste people. Ambedkar's ideas are still relevant in removing the caste boundaries from the minds of the people. His ideas are relevant not only for providing equal opportunities to the marginalised groups but also a guiding force to the humanity to give contributions for the upliftment of the downtrodden. Dr. Ambedkar's essay titled, "Small Holdings in India and their Remedies" (1918) proposed industrialisation as the answer to agricultural problem of India and it has not lost its relevance in the contemporary debates. Dr. Ambedkar's thinking and legacy are still reflected in the pro-poor, pro-people welfare policies of the Government of India. Mudra Scheme for availing loans, Stand-up India for encouraging entrepreneurship in the SC and ST community, Deen Dayal Upadhyay gram Jyoti Yojna, the simplification of the labour laws and Ayushman Bharat scheme are among the various measures that display the government's unflinching adherence to fulfil the vision of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Not only has this but government also taken steps towards ensuring an appropriate legacy for the great nationalist reformer – Dr. Ambedkar. The development of Panchteerth – Janam Bhumi (Mhow), Chaitya Bhumi (Mumbai), Shiksha Bhumi (Landon), Mahaparinirvan Bhumi (Delhi), and Diksha Bhumi (Nagpur) are a few examples among many.

Conclusion: To conclude we can remember this quote by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, "My ideal society would be a society based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contact with other modes of association. In other words there should be social endosmosis." Surely reservation of seats in jobs, institutions, and legislative bodies has helped in the emancipation of depressed classes to some extent. But to bring the dream of social justice of Babasaheb I would like to invoke another Babasaheb among the people of India to raise voice for those Dalits living in rural areas who are never able to utilise the benefits of reservation because of the creamy layer among themselves. I would like to invoke the creamy layer to shun the benefits of reservation themselves for their love and respect for Babasaheb's dream of equality because of which their children have already been enabled to get education in the best of the institutes and can compete openly on the basis of talent.

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Ambedkar's Philosophy on the Origin of the Bhartiya Caste System

Suresh Kumar & Rajkumar

Introduction

Is the origin of Caste system the result of dialectical materialism prevalent in the Bhartiya (Indian) society? Is the Caste system origination a consequence of spiritual materialism in Bharat (India)? It is understood that Heagal and Marx materialism ultimately emerged during the industrial revolution in Europe. The materialism of Heagal and Marx of course came much later than the origin and establishment of caste based social order in Bharat. The Vedic science explains the four yugas (time period) of human existence on earth refers to *Satya yuga*, *Treta yuga*, *Dvapara yuga* and *Kali yuga*. 'The Satya yuga refers to 1.728 million years in which inhabitants of Akhand Bharat endowed with meditative insight and mystical capabilities by practicing yoga. The *Treta yuga* of 864,000 years perceived theft, exploitation of masses in the kingdoms, warfare and greed for land and wealth in the society. Human beings are still conversant in the Vedas but the worship of Deity became more prevalent. The *Dvapara yuga* lasts 1.296 million years and Akhand Bharatiya's lost their focus in spiritual pursuits. Maharishi Vedavyasa, the writer of *Mahabharata* epic, reintroduces the Vedas and the institution of *varnashrama*. The material benefits of donation of agricultural land, gold, silver & other expensive items to the people engaged in the religious affairs and defence became the reason for the loss of spiritual materialism. The three Yugas explains the genetic evolution in the Varnashrama and mutated gradually in the Caste system in *Kali yuga* in Bharat today. The *Kali yuga* includes the today's present time period refers to 432,000 years' (**Vedic Four Yugas, 12th October, 2023: emphasis mine**) witnesses' widespread conflict, violence, hatred, racial discrimination, religious intolerance, caste and race-based untouchability that leads to hypocrisy and deceit in the society. Kali Yuga began 5124 years ago and has 426,876 years left as of 2023 CE' (**Godwin Joscelyn, 2011:300-301**). The identity of caste system has been observed in the *Kali yuga* in Bhartiya society but the origin of caste system does not observe through the *Vedas* or *Upanishads*.

The theory and practice of *Chaturvarnya* (four castes) does not inform about the real nature of Bhartiya society rather explain the graded inequality practiced subject to punishment in case of any disrespect. Dr Ambedkar has analyzed *Chaturvarnya* with the study of ninetieth Hymn of the Tenth Mandala of the Rig Veda connecting to *Purusha Sukta* and compared with the 'Greek social structure advocated by Plato, two classes of Romans and three classes of Egyptians and did not find any evidence of discrimination on the basis of division in these societies. But the scheme of *Purusha Sukta* is unique and is based on the principle of inequality in which the Shudra comes in the end. *Purusha Sukta* as part of the social classes has also been compared with the old Jewish society but no theology has explained the social discrimination at any front in the society. The sociological scrutiny of *Purusha Sukta* interlinked it with the terms Savarnas, Avarnas,

Dvijas, Non-Dvijas and Traivarnikas but did not find the *de jure* justification of the untouchability of the Shudras' (B R Ambedkar, 1947. Volume 7. 37: emphasis mine).

Moreover, the Ashrama system and the Varna methodology has been maliciously mixed with the idea of caste system and has no sanctity in the society during the Vedic and post Vedic period of the Bhartiya history. The origin of caste traces through the Varna system as a part of *Santana Dharma* that deluded the sanctity of Asrama system (*Vedic* education) in the society. *Sanatana Dharma* believes in the soul (Jivatma) in all the Bhartiya's and a soul has to perform all these four stages right from the *Brahmacharya*, *Grhastha*, *Vanaprastha* and *Sannyasa* built in the framework of the society and is known as social policy in the *Satya yuga*, *Treta yuga* and *Dvapara yuga*. The example of all Pandava brothers went to exile in the *Sannyasa* period of their life leaving the Akhand Bharat kingdom to Abhimanyu's eldest son Parikshit at the end of *Dvapara yuga* explains the sanctity of four stages.

Sanatan Texts and Conflict for Social Domination

The Vedas consists of *Rigveda*, *Sukta*, *Yajur Veda*, *Atharva Veda*, creation of *Vishvakarman* that is the Universe of Purusha, creation of Brahman, Kshatriya and Vaishya. The Taittiriya Brahman mentioned that the Brahmana caste is sprung from the gods and the Shudras from the Asuras. This Shudra has spring from non-existence. But Dr Ambedkar critically examined and said that 'the degradation of the Shudras is the result of a violent conflict between the Shudras and the Brahmins and there is abundant of evidence of it. Sudas, descendant of *Ikshvaku Vansh* (Lineage), removed Vasishtha, Brahmin priest from office and appointed Vishvamitra, Kshatriyas Brahmin as his priest. Sudas appointed Vasishtha as family priest, who helped him to win the battle against the ten kings. Sudas threw into fire Shakti the son of Vasishtha and burned him alive. It averted a deadly enmity growing up between Suda and Vasishtha. The conflict stories between King Vena and Brahmins, King Pururavas and Brahmins, King Nahusha's grandson of Pururavas and Brahmins and King Nimi and Brahmins. Unfortunately, the bearing of these cases has not been realized that this conflict was a conflict between Brahmins and Shudras. Even Manu had no idea of this. Sudas was a Shudra and this conflict was between Brahmins and Kshatriya and Shudra were also a branch of the Kshatriyas' (B R Ambedkar, 1947. Volume 7. 150-155: emphasis mine). Brahmins employed the technique and brought down the degradation of Shudras. Brahmins refused to perform the *Upanayana* (wearing sacred thread) of the Shudras. By this way, Brahmins wreaked their vengeance upon the Shudras and degraded them in the society. Right to property and right to knowledge are the two most important incidents of *Upanayana*. 'When *Upanayana* was open to everyone, Aryan or non-Aryan, it was not a matter of social significance. It was a common right to all. The denial of *Upanayana* to the Shudras introduced a new factor in the Indo-Aryan society. It made the Shudras up to the higher classes as their superiors and enabled the three higher classes to look down upon the Shudras as their inferiors. This is one way in which the loss of *Upanayana* brought about the degradation of the Shudras and the rules laid down

in the Purva Mimamsa (**B R Ambedkar, 1947. Volume 7. 171**). The right to property and education is grasped with the refusal of *Upanayana* and it further degraded the social status and personal rights. The stoppage of *Upanayana* made this community doomed. Dr Ambedkar writes, “Without *Upanayana*, it was a most deadly weapon discovered by the Brahmin to avenge themselves against the Shudras and had the effect of an atomic bomb. This act of Brahmins sounding of death knell to the Shudras” (**B R Ambedkar, 1947. Volume 7. 172: emphasis mine**). The *Upanayana* philosophy is so strong that even the Shivaji Maharaj was not *Rajyabhishek* (coronated) in the initial stages because he had no *Upanayana* samskara and belonged to Shudra. The origin of Shivaji Maharaj caste has explained the evil effects of stoppage of *Upanayana*. Dr. Ambedkar further analyzed this debate and stated, “It is the Brahmins who brought about the fall of the Shudras from the second to the fourth Varna in the post Vedic society. That the technique adopted by the Brahmins to degrade the Shudras was to deny them the benefit of the *Upanayana*. That this act of degradation was born out of the spirit of revenge on the part of the Brahmins who were groaning under the tyrannies and oppressions and indignities to which they were subjected by the Shudra kings (**B R Ambedkar, 1947. Volume 7. 186**). Dr. Ambedkar has explained the reason of social conflict between the Kshatriyas and Brahmins.

The Kshatriyas were the leaders among the Vedic hymn makers. The Gayatri mantra has mentioned the Vishvamitra who was Kshatriya Brahmin. Both of them has high calibers and Kshatriyas took up this challenge of the Brahmins. The reconciliation between the Brahmins and Shudras are scattered throughout the *Mahabharata* and *Puranas*. On the basis of different evidences such as description of *Paijavana* as Shudra and the identification of *Paijavana* with Sudas of the Rig Veda, admission in the *Satapatha* and *Taittiriya* Brahmanas that there were only three Varnas and the Shudras did not form a separate Varna, Shudras were the kings and ministers of State and Shudras were at one time entitled to *Upanayana*, Dr Ambedkar has analyzed the nature of social conflict and highlighted the following such as:

1. “The *Shudras* were one of the Aryan communities of the Solar race.
2. “The *Shudras* ranked as the Kshatriya Varna in the Indo-Aryan society.
3. “There was a time when the Aryan society recognized only three Varnas, namely, *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas* and *Vaishyas*. The *Shudras* were not a separate Varna but a part of the *Kshatriya Varna*.
4. “There was a continuous feud between the *Shudra* kings and the *Brahmins*, in which the Brahmins were subjected to many tyrannies and indignities.
5. “As a result of hatred towards the Shudras due to their tyrannies and oppressions, the *Brahmins* refused to invest the Shudras with the sacred thread (*Upanayana*), and
6. “Owing to the loss of the *Upanayana Sanskaar* (sacred thread) the *Shudras* became socially degraded, fell below the rank of the *Vaishyas* and came to form the fourth *Varna*” (**B R Ambedkar, 1947. Volume 7: 204**).

On the basis of it, it can be explored that the origin of Untouchables, their status in the Aryan society, their continuous dispute with the *Brahmins* and their refusal of sacred thread ties to *Shudras* led to further division in the society and led to the *Shudra* as Untouchables.

Upanayana Impact and Beginning of Untouchability

This refusal of *Upanayana* rituals and *Bhartiya* without *Janeu* (sacred thread) were not respected in the society and gradually it led to their prohibition from all the religious ceremonies, schools, no sharing of food, water and other common resources of the society, ultimately taboos as Untouchables and nomenclature as *Shudras*. The prohibition of all social customs including entry into the *Shudra* houses forced them to live outside the village, cities and urban areas in Bharat. The post Manusmriti period adopted a caste-based theory of Karma, which was not the original ideas of *Sanatan Dharma* of Bharat. The configuration of the society after the Brahman or Priest, the king as a warrior, Vaisya as a merchant made closer contact to each other and leave the Sudra as an unprivileged one. ‘The status of the *Shudras* was deplorable and was prohibited from hearing the recitation of the Vedas’ (Pandurang, 2006. Vol. II: 388). Dr. B R Ambedkar has rightly pointed out, “Slavery is a very ancient institution of the Hindus. It is recognised by Manu, the Hindu lawgiver and has been elaborated and systematized by the other Smriti writers who followed Manu. Slavery among the Hindus was never merely ancient institution which functioned only in some hoary past. It was an institution which continued throughout *Bhartiya* history down to the year 1843 and if it had not been abolished by the British Government by law in that year, it might have continued even today” (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol. 5: 09). The historical abuse of the Untouchability is essential to understand and its use in the rural, block level and district level societies of Bharat.

The *Bhartiya* traditional living of happy life was fixed into watertight compartments and is seen compartmentalized during the *Kali yuga* of Islamic rulers and British Bharat. ‘After evaluating the theories of various authorities on Caste, Dr. Ambedkar observes that the superimposition of endogamy over exogamy is the main cause of formation of caste groups. Regarding endogamy, he states that the customs of ‘Sati’, enforced widow-hood for life and child-marriage are the outcome of endogamy. To Dr. Ambedkar, sub-division of a society is a natural phenomenon and these groups become castes through ex-communication and imitation’ (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol. 1: xiv). These are the behaviour traits of the upper three *Varna*’s characterizing the closed group society on the name of purity, social morals and customs. This critical evaluation of the various characteristics of Caste leaves no doubt that prohibition, or rather the absence of intermarriage—endogamy, to be concise—is the only one that can be called the essence of Caste when rightly understood. Ambedkar has rightly pointed out that ‘the people of Bharat form a homogeneous whole. The various races of Bharat occupying definite territories have more or less

fused into one another and do possess cultural unity, which is the only criterion of a homogeneous population. Given this homogeneity as a basis, Caste becomes a problem altogether new in character and wholly absent in the situation constituted by the mere propinquity of endogamous social or tribal groups. Caste in Bharat means an artificial chopping off the population into fixed and definite units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. Thus, the conclusion is inevitable that Endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste, and if we succeed in showing how endogamy is maintained, we shall practically have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste' (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol.1:08-09).

Caste during Islamic & British Rule

There is no doubt that the upper three *Varna* has enjoyed the social status irrespective of their economic conditions. The social hierarchy has the privilege to the women of having ceremonial bathing, taboos on their bodies and other rituals, which the *Shudra* never can think about it. Even the upper three *Varna* had established their matrimonial alliances with the Islamic community (royal marriage during Mughal period) in Bharat. Dr B R Ambedkar has rightly pointed out, "One of these primitive survivals, to which I wish particularly to draw your attention, is the Custom of Exogamy. The various *Gotras* of Bharat are and have been exogamous. But Caste is a parceling of an already homogeneous unit, and the explanation of the genesis of Caste is the explanation of this process of parceling" (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol.1:06-09).

Similarly, the Caste system was defended on the name of survival to the fittest and explained accordingly in the procurement of this Caste structure and its prevalence in the *Kali yuga* society. It is further explained, "Caste has become a source of social bitterness, instead of a framework maintaining all in happy order. At least this much every boy can do towards bringing about a happier state of things: he can diligently practise the virtues characteristic of his caste, and avoid pride, vanity, and grasping at privileges. Let the *Shudra* be remarkable for his industry, fidelity and serviceableness; let the *Vaishya* be remarkable for his diligence, discretion and charity; let the *Kshatriya* be remarkable for his courage, generosity and vigour; let the *Brahmana* be remarkable for his patience, purity, learning, truthfulness and self-sacrifice. And it may be that, if the castes thus practise their several Dharmas, caste-confusion may gradually pass away" (Board of Trustees, 1916:119-120).

The Caste structure was further strengthened and justified on the name of the religion in *Kali yuga* but never been the part of the *Sanatana Dharama*. The contrary argument is also given in defense of the karma theory in which the profession is the supreme identity of recognition in the society. But it was rejected with the logic of conduct of a human being and not with the caste. Vishnu Bhagavata has mentioned, "Conduct alone is verily the cause thereof. Truth, charity, forgiveness, good conduct,

gentleness, austerity, and mercy, where these are seen, king of serpents, he is called a Brahmana. If these marks exist in a Shudra, he is not a Shudra, but a Brhahmana” (R H Barrow, 2007: 122).

As far as the discrimination in the society is concerned, the British government had passed the act to remove it. The Caste Disabilities Removal Act, 1850, (India Act XXI, 11th April 1850) stated that “So many of any law or usage as inflicts on any person forfeiture of rights or property, or may be held in any way to impar or affect any right of inheritance, by reason of his or her renouncing, or having been excluded from the communion of, any religion, or being deprived of caste, shall cease to be enforced as law” (The Caste Disabilities Removal Act, 1850). Later on, Dr Ambedkar has worked on these issues related to Caste Discrimination and equality before law.

Ambedkar and Khandit Bharatiya Swaraj

The *Khandit (Partition)* Bharat achieved its *Swaraj* (Self Rule) on 15th August 1947 and the constitutional committee declared Dr B R Ambedkar as a Chairperson of the Drafting Committee of the constitution. Ambedkar explained that ‘In Bharat there are castes. The castes are anti-national. In the first place because they bring about separation in social life. They are anti-national also because they generate jealousy and antipathy between caste and caste’ (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol. 13: 1208-1217). Social philosophy of developing harmony in the society is not a simple task at the time when the human beings are themselves clutches in the heavy chains of caste and practiced it directly or indirectly in their lives. Dr Ambedkar drafted the Hindu Code Bill in which caste untouchability had no place. Dr Ambedkar writes, “A person who is Hindu by religion in any of its forms or developments, including *Virashaivas* or *Lingayatas* and members of the Brahmo, the Prathana or the Arya Samaj; to any person who is Buddhist, Jain or Sikh by religion; to any child, legitimate or illegitimate both of whose parents are Hindus within the meaning of this section: provided that such child is brought up as a member of the community, group or family to which such parent belongs or belonged; and to a convert to the Hindu, Buddhist, Jain or Sikh religion, this code also applies to any other person, who is not a Muslim, Christian, Parsi or Jew by religion” (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol. 14: 50). Social democracy was necessary to ensure social justice for the Untouchables in India. The idea of separate settlements for the Untouchables on the line of Muslim for Pakistan was completely ruled out. Ambedkar shared his discussion with Mr. Vir Savarkar and Mr. Savarkar says, “A Hindu regard and owns this Bharat Bhumi, this land from the Indus to the Seas, as his Fatherland as well as his Holy Land; -i.e., the land of the origin of his religion, the cradle of his faith. Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, etc. qualifies as Hindu as their sanctity of the Vedas. Although there are two nations in India, India shall dwell in one country and shall live under the mantle of one single constitution; One man one vote is the rule of the game. Muslim Minority is to be no justification for privilege and majority is to be no ground for penalty” (Vasant Moon, 2014. Vol. 8: 141). Ambedkar was not in favour of partition and worked for the constitutional means for the Untouchables social justice. The

right to equality and practicing untouchability is criminal offence and protection and promotion of educational and economic interests of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Other Weaker Section came as a part of Fundamental Rights in the constitution of Bhartiya's *Swaraj*.

Conclusion

People in Bharat has given the parameter of development to the world society since ancient period. They fought against all kinds of colonialism and got the Self Rule. It is important to note down here that all the people meant Touchable and Untouchables were actively contributed their share in the anti-colonial struggle and achieved the desired fruits collectively. No one can claim that the fight for the independence is achieved only with the first three varna in Bharat. The social philosophy of togetherness was seen clearly in which all four *Varna* fought against the British colonizers and achieved the independence.

To conclude, the man-made institution of Caste cannot be justified by saying it God's creation in the *Sanatan Dharma* religious texts with the title a sinner person. Ambedkar has thoroughly read and analyzed the religious texts and did not find any sign of justification of Untouchability on the name of God's creation children. When Ambedkar titled as leader of Untouchables only refer to narrow mindedness of the biased political representatives and non-believers of equality to all human beings. Ensuring no victim of social injustice and human caused brutalities is done in the future, Ambedkar establishes provisions of penalties to the oppressor and it come under the criminal law. Ambedkar has consensus in eradicating this social contradiction from the society as soon as possible and provide equality in social, political and economic spheres. The practice of social democracy only ensures social justice for the Untouchables in Bharat. Social change requires not only the efforts of the State functionaries but also the wholehearted support of the people. It needs a change in the mental set up and attitude of those who enjoyed high social status and economic resources to treat others as equal human beings.

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Dr. B.R. Ambedkar : Indian Constitution

Amandeep Singh

Abstract

After the freedom of India and partition, the founding fathers and political leaders strongly felt a need for a strong centre because of prevailing social, economic and political situations of that time. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar asserted that the Indian constitution should be federal and unitary both as per according to the needs and requirements of that time. The draft constitution was prepared under the Ambedkar. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar is known as father of Indian constitution. His contribution to the constitution is undoubtedly of the highest order. He deserves to be called the father of the chief architect of the constitution of India. For the drafting constitution on June 5, 1952 Columbia University conferred him a degree of LL.D. The University hailed him as one of the leading citizen, radiant upholder of Human Rights and Social Transformer. He built the structure of the society while inserting his philosophy, thinking. After partition of India, it became very necessary to draft constitution. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar the chairman of drafting committee had drafted the Indian constitution, which came into force on 26th January 1950.

Key words: Indian constitution, Human rights, Federalism, inequalities.

Introduction:

A constitution is the legal document in which various governing principles are established, functions and procedures of the government are specified in detail under which different organs of the government work. Constitution is called supreme law of that land. Basically Indian constitution is adopted in the Government of India Act 1935 and it was reinserted in the draft constitution by the constitution assembly.

Dr. B.R Ambedkar was a freedom fighter of the truest kind. He did not merely dreaming of setting India free from British rule but also transformed the country. He dedicated his whole life for the sake of mankind. He did many social reforms to create public opinion to fight with gross inequalities in the society. It is universally accepted that Ambedkar has made an immense use of his philosophy in our Constitution and jurisprudence. He was the sole guiding force of our constitution. He was a man with a great personality, full of struggles, sacrifice, selflessness, dedication, devotion and commitments. It is also universally accepted that he had a strong vision for India. He safeguarded the interests of scheduled castes, but he did not demand a separate state for them. He realised that the best protection for them is the safeguards in constitution. He was keenly interested in preserving the unity of

India and its states. He strongly advocated the cause of linguistic states. But on the other hand he did not want to endanger the unity of India on the grounds of linguism.

Dr. B.R.Ambedkar was famous as Baba Saheb. He was emancipator of Dalits. He was a great political leader, a great educationist, a great religious guide. He was born in Mahar family on 14th April 1891. He was the 14th child of his parents. He was from an untouchable family, so his childhood was full of humiliation and poverty even in classroom and ground or any public gathering. He had great interest in education. Considering this interest the Maharaja of Baroda, Satyajit Rao Gaekwad granted him a monthly scholarship of Rs. 25 during his graduate studies and also invited him to serve the state after completing his education. Though he joined the service but he was not satisfied there. The Maharajathen agreed to send him Columbia University as a Gaekwad scholar on the condition that Bhimrao on return would serve the country. At Columbia University, Ambedkar was free from caste chains and stigma. He moved with a status of equality. Environment was very good there. So it helped him out to achieve his horizon. He also came in the contact with great nationalist Lala Lajpat Rai who was at that time living in Exile in America. Both discussed about freedom and struggles of India. A new thought was made inside him of nationalist. He qualified himself highly and got many academic degrees of M.A, Ph.D., D.Sc. and Barrister of Law. He was a brilliant student. He was appointed as the first Law Minister of India after independence. On 29th August 1947, he was appointed as the chairman of the Drafting Committee along with 6 other members to draft the constitution. After 141 days constitution was presented to the President of the Constituent Assembly on the 21st February, 1948. A debate of discussion was followed on different provisions of the constitution. Many editings were made. Numerous interests of areas were discussed. Dr. Ambedkar came out victorious and constitution was adopted on the 26th November, 1949 by the whole nation.

Indian constitution gave guarantee to the fundamental rights and duties to its citizens. Article 15(2), 17, 23 and 24 are important rights relating to Prohibition of discrimination on basis of religion, race, caste, sex and birth. Article 32 is the soul of the constitution. It authorizes the Supreme Court to not only issue direction, orders or writs in the nature of habeas corpus, mandamus, certiorari, etc or any other appropriate remedy as the case may be for the enforcement of fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution. Ambedkar was strong advocate of Parliamentary government. He believed that the Parliamentary system of government can be egalitarian society on the principles of the social democracy. The parliamentary form of the government was considered as more democratic and responsible. He also described the roles of President who is the head of the state but not the executive. He also describes the nation but does not rule the nation. He is just a symbol of nation. The President of the Indian union is bounded by the advice of the ministers. He can not do anything without their advice.

Ambedkar supported federal form of government and its unique nature. He said “Federal constitution in as much as it establishes what may be called dual polity”. There may be union at the centre and the states. Indian constitution is framed to work as a federal system but in times of emergency and war it will work as though it was a unitary system.

Dr. Ambedkar also played an important role in drafting the Directive Principles of the State Policy, which was a unique feature of Indian constitution. These principles described that the state shall promote the welfare of the people by protecting social order. These principles made India a welfare state by introducing socialism in economic sphere to provide social security and better standards. These also emphasized on duties towards women, children, backward and tribal classes. When fundamental rights are negative in character, then these directive principles set forth a positive programme for the state. These principles are to serve as a sign post and guide the state in all its work.

Dr. Ambedkar’s real contribution reflected in the Protective discrimination and reservation policy of the government under some provisions. This policy deals with ameliorate the condition of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and the backward classes. Like Article 17 prohibiting untouchability. Article 30 dealing with the protection of minorities. Article 15[4] and 16[4] dealing with the upliftment of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s contribution to the Indian Constitution is no doubt the highest at the order. He deserves to be called the Father of the Indian constitution. He was the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. He has done much with his great efforts and achievements. He was awarded Bharat Ratna after his death as a token of respect and love. He was conscious, kind and marvelous man. He was aware from the existence of others as well. He was full of nationalism spirit. According to him, Democracy means no slavery, no caste and no coercion. He wanted free thought, free choice and capacity to live and let live. He belonged to poor family, so he realised that poverty, illiteracy and caste are great evils in human society. His philosophy depended upon removal of all these evils. His concept of socialism did not stand for equality of identity but also equalise the opportunities. Dr. Ambedkar was born in depressed class but did not die in the same class. He did much for the upliftment of the society. He up-rooted the plant of casteism and planted the tree of fraternity by safeguarding the interests through the supreme law of the land.

Conclusion:

Dr. Ambedkar gave a great contribution in Indian Constitution. He was full of great zeal and devotion. He worked hard despite of his health. He was the only who justified his selection and he added lustre to the work which he did. He had a great vision and he dedicated his entire life for the welfare and upliftment of the weaker and poor sections of the society. He worked tirelessly for equality and social

justice. He worked for downtrodden and unprivileged sections of the society. Throughout his life, he preached the lesson of fraternity. He was succeeded in drafting pious constitution. He was a true humanist. His ideas were pure. He was confident and bold. Undoubtedly he occupies a prominent place in the modern nation builders. We remember him for many years, many things, many works and many activities.

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Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Vision for Educational Equity of Sedgs: A Critical Perspective in the Context of the NEP 2020

Deeksha Sharma & Satvinderpal Kaur

Abstract

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a visionary leader and architect of the Indian Constitution, played a pivotal role in shaping the future of marginalized and oppressed communities in India. Central to his vision was the pursuit of educational equity as a means to empower socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs). This paper provides a critical perspective on Dr. Ambedkar's educational vision in light of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 which advocates striving for social justice and equality. Dr. Ambedkar recognized education as the cornerstone for social transformation and the upliftment of SEDGs, particularly the Dalits and other oppressed communities. His vision encompassed the creation of a just and inclusive society by providing equal educational opportunities, ensuring access and eradicating discrimination. Ambedkar firmly believed that education could break the shackles of discrimination and untouchability, thereby facilitating social mobility and economic independence. NEP 2020 places an emphasis on inclusive and equitable education, early childhood care and the promotion of holistic learning. However, a critical perspective reveals challenges in the translation of these intentions into action. Implementation gaps, resource allocation and societal biases pose formidable hurdles in realizing the principles enshrined in the NEP. This paper underscores the need for a nuanced examination of the NEP 2020, analyzing its alignment with Dr. Ambedkar's vision of educational equity for SEDGs. It critically evaluates the policy's potential to address historical inequalities in access to quality education and to eliminate caste-based discrimination within educational institutions. The paper also discusses the relevance of Dr. Ambedkar's principles in the contemporary context, emphasizing the importance of not only expanding access to education but also ensuring the quality and inclusivity of educational opportunities. It highlights the role of both government institutions and civil society in bridging the gap between policy intent and actual outcomes. The critical perspective serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for educational equity in India, particularly for SEDGs. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's vision for inclusive and equitable education remains a touchstone for advocates, scholars, and policy makers striving to create a more just and inclusive society. It calls for a continuous examination and refinement of educational policies, like the NEP 2020, to ensure that the aspirations of marginalized communities are met and Dr. Ambedkar's vision is realized in practice.

Keywords: Educational Equity, socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), NEP 2020, Inclusive Education, Social Justice

Introduction

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, one of the foremost visionary leaders of India and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, left an indelible mark on the nation's history. His legacy is particularly profound in his commitment to fostering educational equity for socially and economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs). Dr. Ambedkar recognized education as the key to social transformation, economic empowerment, and the eradication of discrimination, particularly against the Dalits and other marginalized communities. In this context, this critical analysis explores Dr. Ambedkar's educational vision and evaluates its alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020.

The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 has set a transformative course for education in India, placing a strong emphasis on achieving "Equitable and Inclusive Education". With its ambitious goals of restructuring India's education system, it aspires to embody principles of inclusivity and equality. The NEP has carefully considered the needs and challenges faced by Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs), which encompass various segments such as women, transgender individuals, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes (OBCs), minorities, tribals and other marginalized categories (Ministry of Education, Government of India, 2020). There have been global efforts, such as the long-debated "Education for All" program initiated by UNESCO following various United Nations declarations and conventions. In India, the inception of formal education policies began in 1986 with the formulation of the first National Education Policy. Subsequently, the nation introduced targeted initiatives like "Beti Padhao Beti Bachao", "Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya" and "Dhanlakshmi Yojana", with a specific focus on promoting girls' education (Mishra & Pettala, 2023). In 2015, India further committed itself to the cause of education by formally adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Within this global commitment, Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was articulated, focusing on the imperative to ensure inclusive and equitable access to high-quality education while fostering lifelong learning opportunities for all individuals by the target year of 2030 within the Indian context (UNESCO, 2015). Now, India has launched the National Education Policy in 2020 which is built upon five core principles: Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability, and Accountability. Its primary objective is to ensure education for all, with a specific emphasis on addressing the needs of socio-economically disadvantaged groups (SEDGs), beginning right from the foundational stage of early childhood care and education till higher education.

However, the gap between policy intentions and effective implementation, along with societal biases, presents formidable challenges. This paper delves into the complexities of achieving educational equity for SEDGs, emphasizing the need for a closer examination of the NEP 2020's potential to address

historical disparities and caste-based discrimination within India's educational institutions. Furthermore, it underscores the ongoing relevance of Dr. Ambedkar's principles in shaping the nation's educational landscape and the crucial role of both government institutions and civil society in bridging the gap between policy ideals and real-world outcomes. As we delve into this critical perspective, it becomes evident that Dr. Ambedkar's educational vision remains a touchstone for advocates and policymakers striving to create a just and inclusive society in India.

Research Objectives:

1. To assess the alignment of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 with the educational vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar regarding social and educational equity for marginalized and disadvantaged groups in India.
2. To explore the role of government institutions and civil society in bridging the gap between policy ideals and actual outcomes in the context of educational equity for SEDGs.
3. To provide recommendations and insights for policymakers, educators, and advocates on how to better align educational policies with the vision of Dr. Ambedkar and address the persisting challenges in ensuring educational equity for marginalized communities in India.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent does the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 align with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's educational vision for promoting social and educational equity among marginalized and disadvantaged groups in India?
2. What are the key roles played by government institutions and civil society organizations in closing the gap between the ideals set forth in educational policies and the actual outcomes experienced by socially and economically disadvantaged groups in India?
3. What specific recommendations and insights can be offered to policymakers, educators, and advocates to improve the alignment of educational policies with Dr. Ambedkar's vision and address the persistent challenges in ensuring educational equity for marginalized communities in India?

Methodology

The methodology of the paper involved conducting an extensive review of secondary sources such as academic journals, Government reports, non-Government/ agency reports, scholarly articles, books, online database and other relevant publications to provide multifaceted analysis of the issue.

Findings

The paper presents the following findings:

1. **Alignment of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 with the educational vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar regarding social and educational equity for marginalized and disadvantaged groups in India**

The NEP 2020 places a strong emphasis on **inclusivity and equitable access** to education, reflecting Dr. Ambedkar's vision of breaking down barriers for marginalized communities. It highlights the need to provide **education to all**, irrespective of socio-economic background, which resonates with Dr. Ambedkar's ideals of promoting social justice through education (NEP, 2020). Dr. Ambedkar stressed not only access to education but also the importance of quality education. However, findings indicate that the NEP 2020's recommendations face challenges in ensuring that the quality of education provided to socially and economically disadvantaged groups meets the desired standards (Jain, 2021). This is corroborated with the U-DISE 2020-21 data which states that there is a significant increase in dropout rates during the transition from upper primary to secondary school, with dropout rates rising from 3% to 12.6%, respectively. The gross enrolment ratio for Scheduled Caste (SC) students shows a decline from 84.8% at the secondary level to 56.1% at the higher secondary level. Furthermore, the data indicates that only 44.9% of students from the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category have access to education from primary to higher secondary. It is observed that 45.1% complete their primary education (Class 1 to 5), but this rate drops to 44.8% when it comes to completing upper primary education (Class 6 to 8), revealing a noticeable dropout trend, which remains a significant factor to consider in educational planning and policy. The situation is even more troubling for the Muslim community, where only 14.3% of students have access to education from primary to higher secondary. The dropout rates within this community are also alarming, with only 15.2% of students completing their education, decreasing to just 12.6% at the secondary level and a mere 10.8% at the higher secondary level (USIDE+, 2022). While Dr. Ambedkar's focus was primarily on caste-based discrimination, the NEP 2020 recognizes the **intersectionality of identities, including gender**. It acknowledges the need to address disparities faced by women and other marginalized groups, aligning with Dr. Ambedkar's broader vision of social justice (NEP, 2020).

Findings suggest that while the NEP 2020 incorporates several elements that align with Dr. Ambedkar's educational vision for promoting equity among marginalized and disadvantaged groups in India, there are also notable implementation challenges and areas where further attention is needed. Achieving a comprehensive alignment between the policy and the vision of Dr. Ambedkar requires ongoing efforts,

resources, and a nuanced understanding of the historical and contemporary challenges faced by these communities.

2. Key roles played by government institutions and civil society organizations in closing the gap between the ideals set forth in educational policies and the actual outcomes experienced by socially and economically disadvantaged groups in India

Government institutions play a pivotal role in translating educational policies into practice. Our findings indicate that effective implementation hinges on strong monitoring mechanisms to ensure that policies aimed at benefiting marginalized communities are consistently enforced (MHRD, 2020). Certain geographic regions encompass significantly higher proportions of Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs). Additionally, there are areas designated as Aspirational Districts by the government, which require specialized interventions to promote educational development. The NEP-2020 proposes that regions in the country with substantial populations of educationally-disadvantaged SEDGs should be designated as **Special Education Zones (SEZs)**. Within these SEZs, all schemes and policies should be implemented with heightened and concerted efforts to bring about substantial improvements in their educational landscape. To enhance educational levels among SEDGs, with a particular focus on gender equality, the policy emphasizes providing quality education to girls. Consequently, it recommends that policies and schemes tailored for the inclusion of students from SEDGs should specifically target girls within these groups. This targeted approach aims to eliminate any remaining disparities in access to education, including vocational education, not only for the current generation but also for future generations among all gender and socio-economically disadvantaged groups. Adequate resource allocation is crucial for addressing disparities. However, research suggests that resource allocation often falls short of the requirements, hindering the ability of government institutions to bridge the educational equity gap (Rout, 2021). Government institutions are responsible for implementing affirmative action policies such as reservations for marginalized communities. Findings highlight the importance of rigorous enforcement of these policies to ensure that opportunities are extended to those who have historically been marginalized (Government of India, 2021). Civil society organizations have a vital role in raising awareness about the educational challenges faced by socially and economically disadvantaged groups. They also act as advocates, pressuring government institutions to prioritize equity and inclusivity in the education system (Kumar, 2019). Research underscores the significance of civil society organizations in empowering marginalized communities to demand their rights to quality education. They often facilitate community engagement and mobilization, ensuring that the voices of these communities are heard (Narayana, 2019). Both government institutions and civil society organizations are increasingly using research and data to identify specific challenges and track progress. Access to accurate data is vital in developing

evidence-based policies and strategies to close the educational equity gap (Government of India, 2021). Government institutions and civil society organizations engage in capacity building, training teachers and education professionals to understand and address the unique needs of socially and economically disadvantaged groups. This is essential for ensuring quality education (Narayana, 2019). Thus, the collaboration between government institutions and civil society organizations is crucial for bridging the gap between policy ideals and the actual outcomes experienced by socially and economically disadvantaged groups in India. Effective policy implementation, resource allocation, affirmative action, awareness raising, community empowerment, data-driven decision-making, and capacity building collectively contribute to achieving the goal of educational equity for these marginalized communities.

3. Recommendations and insights for policymakers, educators, and advocates on how to better align educational policies with the vision of Dr. Ambedkar and address the persisting challenges in ensuring educational equity for marginalized communities in India.

Several key findings that offer recommendations and insights for policymakers, educators, and advocates seeking to better align educational policies with the vision of Dr. Ambedkar and address the persistent challenges in ensuring educational equity for marginalized communities in India:

1. **Inclusive Curriculum:** Dr. Ambedkar's vision emphasized the importance of curriculum diversification that reflects the diversity within marginalized communities. Our findings suggest that policymakers should work towards developing curricula that not only acknowledge this diversity but also incorporate the history, contributions, and experiences of marginalized communities (NEP, 2020).
2. **Reservations and Affirmative Action:** In line with Dr. Ambedkar's principles, it is essential for policymakers to maintain and strengthen reservations and affirmative action policies. Our research underscores the need for stringent enforcement of these policies to ensure that they are effective in providing opportunities for marginalized groups (Government of India, 2021).
3. **Quality of Education:** Our findings highlight the significance of focusing on the quality of education provided to marginalized communities. Policymakers and educators should prioritize resources and strategies that enhance the quality of education, ensuring that it is on par with the best standards (Jain, 2021).
4. **Teacher Training and Sensitization:** Training for teachers and education professionals should include components on understanding and addressing the specific needs of marginalized students. Sensitization programs are essential to promote a more inclusive and empathetic teaching environment (Kumar, 2019).

5. **Community Engagement:** Advocates and policymakers should encourage community engagement in education. Our research suggests that involving local communities in decision-making and management of schools can lead to more relevant and effective educational interventions (Narayana, 2019).

6. **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Policymakers and educators should harness the power of data to identify specific challenges and track progress in addressing educational disparities. Evidence-based decision-making is critical in crafting effective policies (Government of India, 2021).

7. **Awareness and Advocacy:** Advocates play a vital role in raising awareness about educational challenges faced by marginalized communities. Our findings emphasize the importance of sustained advocacy efforts to keep equity issues on the policy agenda (Kumar, 2019).

8. **Gender and Intersectionality:** Policymakers should ensure that policies address the intersectionality of identities, including gender. Recognizing and rectifying disparities faced by women and other marginalized groups is consistent with Dr. Ambedkar's vision of social justice (NEP, 2020).

In conclusion, aligning educational policies with Dr. Ambedkar's vision and addressing the challenges in ensuring educational equity for marginalized communities in India requires a multifaceted approach. Policymakers, educators, and advocates should work collaboratively to implement inclusive curricula, strengthen affirmative action, enhance the quality of education, provide teacher training and sensitization, engage communities, use data for decision-making, raise awareness, and ensure that policies consider the diverse needs of marginalized communities.

Conclusion:

In the pursuit of educational equity for socially and economically disadvantaged groups in India, this research has illuminated critical insights that provide a roadmap for policymakers, educators, and advocates seeking to align educational policies with the visionary ideals of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar's enduring vision, rooted in social justice and inclusion, serves as a guiding beacon in the quest for a more equitable education system. The findings reveal the multidimensional nature of this challenge. Achieving educational equity requires a comprehensive strategy that encompasses not only access but also the quality of education. Reservations and affirmative action policies must be not only maintained but effectively enforced, ensuring that opportunities are truly extended to those historically marginalized. Recognizing the diversity within marginalized communities, curriculum diversification is a pivotal step toward fostering an inclusive educational environment. Quality education demands a focus on teacher training and sensitization, enabling educators to meet the unique needs of marginalized students. Community engagement, driven by local involvement and decision-making,

proves to be an effective means of crafting educational interventions that are contextually relevant and impactful. The power of data should not be underestimated; it serves as a critical tool for evidence-based decision-making and monitoring progress.

Advocacy and awareness efforts are paramount, keeping educational equity issues on the policy agenda and prompting action. The intersectionality of identities, particularly gender, must be integrated into policies to address disparities faced by women and other marginalized groups comprehensively. In light of these findings, it is evident that the alignment of educational policies with Dr. Ambedkar's vision is a multifaceted endeavor. The synergy between government institutions and civil society organizations is instrumental in effecting change. Their collaboration is vital for bridging the gap between policy ideals and actual outcomes. The persisting challenges in ensuring educational equity for marginalized communities are formidable, but not insurmountable. By adopting the recommendations and insights outlined in this research, stakeholders can move closer to realizing Dr. Ambedkar's vision of a just and inclusive society, where education serves as the cornerstone of empowerment and social transformation. Education, as envisaged by Dr. Ambedkar, remains a powerful vehicle for the eradication of discrimination and the realization of social justice in India.

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Women in Indian Society: A Comparative Study of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Perspectives on Women Status and Identity

Deepalee Rout

Abstract

This study compares and contrasts the perspectives of Gandhi and Ambedkar on women's position and identity. Gandhi's vision was a blend of traditional values and revolutionary ideals, supporting women's participation in the fight for independence and education. Ambedkar's perspective was shaped by his pursuit of social justice and the destruction of repressive institutions. He understood the connection between caste and gender, joining the fight against discrimination and women's rights. According to the article, Gandhi's strategy frequently came out as equivocal because of his dual status as a conservative and reformer. Ambedkar's ideas on women's liberation, which were founded in constitutional empowerment, reflected a more forceful posture. The argument is made that Ambedkar's viewpoint, despite its lack of widespread recognition, offers a more comprehensive and transformational framework for resolving the difficulties of women's position and identity in a severely stratified society.

This article intends to add to the continuing discussion on gender equality and social justice by evaluating the points of agreement and disagreement between these two influential people. It contends that each of their distinctive ideas represents a range of viewpoints within the larger battle for women's emancipation, provoking a reassessment of their contributions to the advancement of modern discourses on gender rights and the intersectionality of oppression.

Keywords: *Gender, Women, Caste, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Equality*

Introduction:

In modern India, the status and identity of women have undergone significant transformations, reflecting both progress and persistent challenges. Women have made remarkable strides in various fields, with increasing representation in politics, academia, business, and the arts. Legal reforms have improved women's rights, addressing issues like domestic violence, dowry harassment, and workplace discrimination. Yet, reassessing the women status and identity in modern India is essential amidst significant progress for gender disparities still persist in some regions. Indian Society is a representation of intersectionality of class, caste and gender which is unique to it. Any discrepancies within the society must take up this feature into consideration. The study takes up two seminal figures, Gandhi and Ambedkar, to understand the multi-faceted dynamics of the problem. Though not the only

significant figures, they are two of the most prominent and influential leaders in the country's history to offer importance to study the gender differences. Additionally, Gandhi and Ambedkar represent distinct ideological and strategic approaches to addressing these issues.

Gandhi's vision was a blend of traditional values and revolutionary ideals, supporting women's participation in the fight for independence and education. Ambedkar's perspective was shaped by his pursuit of social justice and the destruction of repressive institutions. He understood the connection between caste and gender, joining the fight against discrimination and women's rights. According to the article, Gandhi's strategy frequently came out as equivocal because of his dual status as a conservative and reformer. Ambedkar's ideas on women's liberation, which were founded in constitutional empowerment, reflected a more forceful posture. Examining Gandhi and Ambedkar's perspectives on women's status and identity is a historical journey that illustrates the interplay of tradition and reform, the intersectionality of oppression, and their importance in achieving gender equality and social justice. The argument is made that Ambedkar's viewpoint, despite its lack of widespread recognition, offers a more comprehensive and transformational framework for resolving the difficulties of women's position and identity in a severely stratified society. With adequate realisation of his ideals and proper implementation of Constitutional laws, the discrepancies would be solved to a greater extent.

Firstly, we would discuss Gandhi's stance on women, their roles and also analyse the equivocality that arose along with his views for his adherence to traditional norms. Secondly, we would reflect onto Ambedkar's pursuit of intersectional empowerment and also note how this has been incorporated into our Constitution; and finally, outline the agreement and differences between them, the relevance of their perspectives in the ongoing debate, and come to an opinion on how Ambedkar's approach offers a more transforming framework for addressing women's status and identity.

I

Gandhi's picture of women is a complex combination of tradition with modernity. His views on gender roles and women's status show a blend of strongly entrenched traditional values anchored in Indian culture and radical aspirations for societal development. Gandhi realised the critical role that women played in the struggle for independence. With the Indian National Movements, his discourse on women's status increased significantly. He believed that women had the ability to be strong and effective change agents. He urged people to participate in civil disobedience activities, marches, and protests, believing that their presence would lend moral weight to the action. He contended that women's active engagement was a crucial precondition for achieving independence and societal improvements. To quote him,

‘It would be vain to hope for swaraj so long as women do not make their full contribution to the effort. Men are not as conscientious as women in such matters. If the women do not know or do not accept their duty of preserving the nation’s freedom, or of winning it back when it is lost, it will be impossible to defend it.’¹

Gandhi identified women as the reason for the oppression they were facing. Women had accustomed themselves with the treatment they were given by their family and also by society. They had considered it as their destiny with no spirit or courage left to fight back. In order to revive that spirit, Gandhi encouraged women to empower themselves, to be self-reliant by becoming financially stable. He says, “When woman, whom we call *abala* becomes *sabala*, all those who are helpless will become powerful.”²

Gandhi’s emphasis on women empowerment were congruent with his ideals of 3S- *Swaraj*, *Swadeshi* and *Sarvodaya*. His concept of *Swaraj* was never confined to political freedom only. It also implied the freedom of individuals and their spirits. The transformed individual would initiate social reformation which would result later in having political *Swaraj*. A *Swarajya* cannot be thought of without the presence, independence and involvement of a specific group, the women. To emphasize on this, he used metaphors like - ‘just as man, with one half of his body inactive, could not do anything properly, so the Indian body would not be able to do its work properly if one half of it, namely, the women, remained inactive.’³ *Sarvodaya* or upliftment of all, being central to his philosophy, empowering women was necessary. Gandhi suggested women to indulge in indigenous business (*Swadeshi*) and make themselves self-sufficient. This recognition of women as an undeniable organ of society signified a crucial place for them in the political and social realm. He realised the need of women being educated for the advancement of society. He campaigned for their access to higher education and vocational education, which he considered as crucial in moulding their personalities and preparing women to be better mothers and citizens as well as self-reliant.

Gandhi often incorporated mythical characters from Hindu epics, such as Ramayana and Mahabharata, into his discourse, thus carrying tradition into modernity. By relying on these epics, Gandhi aimed to make his thoughts more comprehensible to his audience. Gandhi propagated his moral considerations, social regeneration and importance of women to the masses by making reference to the

1 ‘Women’s Role’ in M. K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 18, New Delhi, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1965, p. 319

2 ‘Message to the All India Women’s Conference, sent before December 23, 1936’, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 64, Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1982, p. 165

3 Speech at Ladies Protest Meeting, Bombay, April 6, 1919’ in M. K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 15, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi, 1965, p. 189.

classic characters like Sita, Draupadi, Damayanti and others as the personification of ideal womanhood. He frequently refigured elements of the Hindu mythos into allegories representing his nationalist and reformist objectives.⁴ However, this marriage of traditionalism with reformation was also a reason which initiated a tension between formation of women identity and their role in Indian national movement. The patriarchal society not only had its effect on women but also had a great impact on Gandhi's views regarding women's chastity and purity. To retain this chastity and purity, women must avoid any work where these precious qualities of hers are comprised. Even he limited some of their involvement to some activities like spinning, picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloths as a participation in Non-Cooperation movement and Civil Disobedience Movement.⁵ Women by their nature are caring, nurturing, patient for which their role in family is more than anyone else. They are primarily for the role of wives and mothers, thus encouraging women in a private life than in a public sphere. Although he acknowledged women's potential as agents of change, he believed that their primary sphere of influence should be the domestic realm, thus, preserving the traditional gender roles.

II

Ambedkar's view on women was characterized by his unwavering commitment to justice and equality. His approach transcended personal ideologies, and he recognized women as one among the oppressed and depressed sections of the society, which was a part of his ideal of promoting Social Justice. For him, dismantling the oppressive systems required addressing the unique challenges faced by women, i.e., how intersectionality of class, caste and gender have impact on the people; and suffering amongst this section was an interplay of these three, especially for a Dalit woman.

According to Ambedkar, the base of the triple division of society is Hindu social order. Later on, the Muslim invasion worsened the situation. A Hindu society is based on *graded inequality*, division of labour and labourers. To quote him,

‘That the principle of graded inequality is a fundamental principle beyond controversy. The four classes are not on horizontal plane, different but equal. They are on a vertical plane, not only different but unequal in status, one standing above the other. In the scheme of Manu, the Brahmin is placed at the first in rank. Below him is the Kshatriya.

4 Parekh, B., *Colonialism, Tradition, and Reform: An Analysis of Gandhi's Political Discourse*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 15-30.

5 Patel, Sujata, *Construction and Reconstruction of Women in Gandhi*, Economic and Political Weekly, Feb 20, 1988, Vol. 23, No.8, p. 378

Below the Kshatriya is the Vaishya. Below Vaishya is the Shudra and below Shudra is the Atishudra or the untouchable.’⁶

Hence, in order to uplift oppressed sections as a whole, the prevailing social order needs to be eradicated. He was not against the religion, but he was against the activities that was carried out in the society in the name of religion. Oppression also happened due to patriarchal system which confined women to traditional gender roles and denied any access to mainstream. He believed that true transformation could only occur if women were treated as equal partners in all spheres of life challenging deeply ingrained notions of male dominance.

Status, gender, and caste have been characterised by Ambedkar as the main forms of exploitation, which then give rise to secondary forms of exploitation including economic and political backwardness. He thought that in addition to a shift in people's mindset, the problem needed certain legislative changes to be quickly resolved. Ambedkar had a great belief in the ability of education for women to improve lives. He underlined the value of education in releasing women from the bonds of oppression and empowering them to stand up for their rights. He fought for women's access to equal educational opportunities, particularly for Dalit women who endured several forms of discrimination. His stance on women's rights was frequently incorporated into constitutional and legislative reforms. He fought for the inclusion of provisions in the Indian Constitution that safe guarded women's rights and ensured their political representation. He understood that legal reforms were essential for addressing systemic inequalities. He was critical of prevailing personal laws that discriminated against women particularly those from marginalised communities. He sought to reform and modernise marriage and inheritance laws to provide women with greater rights and agencies with the family structure. Amongst his legal reforms, Maternity Benefit Bill (1942), The Hindu Marriage Act (1955), The Hindu Succession Act (1956), The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act (1956), and The Adoption and Maintenance Act (1956) were prominent in respect to empowering women in a holistic manner. All constitutional remedies were allotted to every citizen of India irrespective of caste, class, gender, colour, creed. Affirmative action such as reservations for women and citizens who were kept backward in various sectors were executed in order to bring them equal to the mainstream. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity is what a society should be based upon.

Ambedkar promoted the involvement of women in social and political organisations. His attempts to elevate Dalit women included their presence in governmental bodies and social organisations. He thought that women should have a role in decision-making and leadership positions. He acknowledged the financial vulnerability that women, especially Dalit women, experience as a

⁶ Ambedkar, B.R., *The Hindu Social Order: Its Essential Principles in Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 3, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1987, p 107

result of their marginalisation. He promoted economic empowerment through programmes that gave people access to resources, work opportunities, and the chance to improve their skills. For him, women were crucial agents of social change he believed that women's participation was essential to breaking down the barriers of caste-based discrimination and gender inequality he acknowledged their potential to lead transformative movements.

III

Comparing Gandhi and Ambedkar, we find that they had similar views on many issues, including the importance of education in empowering women, the resistance to untouchability, the promotion of social justice, care for the underprivileged and marginalized, and religious plurality. They used quite different approaches to achieving shared ideals, though. Although their goals were similar, the beliefs driving them were completely different, which is why their approaches to the same problem differed. Ambedkar was a strong critic of Hinduism and saw the same as the basis for the suffering of women and other people who were of lower class or caste as defined in the Hindu religion, whereas Gandhi was a steadfast adherent and sincerely believed in its ideals. Ambedkar in his book *What Congress and Gandhi have Done to the Untouchables*, quite vividly discusses how Congress and especially Gandhi in particular, were no less than a racist. In the chapter *Gandhism: The Doom of the Untouchables* of the book, he explicitly states and criticizes Gandhi's exposition regarding importance and necessity of class and caste system in Indian (Hindu) society, which is enough to show how Gandhi and his views were more of a conservative than being revolutionary. However, in order to remove inequality, we need to eradicate the very base of it, which Ambedkar has excellently taken up in his analysis of social order.

International forums have discussed the position and identity of women. The convergence of caste- and class-based discrimination within the Indian debate makes it unique, making it extremely important to adopt such philosophies that would handle such complications existing uniquely in Indian culture. Although reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Gandhi fought for the freedom of women, their methods assumed that the caste and class systems were a natural part of society and did not consider the challenges they posed. However, Ambedkar's writings tackle the subject of intersectionality quite effectively and apart from the formers, making him even relevant to be debated today. Proper guided implementation of constitutional remedies would help to address remaining disparities prevailing over certain regions.

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Unlocking Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Vision: Bridging Marginalization through Inclusion in Prestigious Schools of Chandigarh

Madhu Dutt & Satvinderpal Kaur

Abstract

In a society characterized by entrenched feudal and patriarchal norms, disparities rooted in gender, class, and caste play a pivotal role in determining access to critical life opportunities, such as education, nutrition, and healthcare (Vaid, 2019). The notion of reservation, although often sparking controversy, acts as a catalyst for the integration of marginalized groups into mainstream society. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar championed the concept of providing support to disadvantaged individuals through reservations and quotas for a defined period. Within the dynamic urban landscape of Chandigarh, a city synonymous with modernity and progress, a profound transformation guided by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's visionary ideas has emerged. This transformation is exemplified by the incorporation of a 25% Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) reservation policy in Chandigarh's constitution, reflecting the enduring influence of this prominent Indian social reformer. This research paper explores Chandigarh's remarkable journey in embracing Dr. Ambedkar's vision of inclusivity and tackling the persistent challenge of marginalization. The study delves into the perceptions and attitudes of EWS parents regarding their children's enrollment in privileged schools in Chandigarh, drawing from both quantitative and qualitative data collected from 130 parents, revealing significant insights. The findings underscore the favorable and positive stance of EWS parents toward their children's education, seeing it as the realization of a long-held dream, echoing Dr. Ambedkar's aspirations. To these parents, the reservation policy serves as a lifeline, a beacon of hope, and an assurance that their children's futures are not constrained by economic circumstances. The study also highlights the considerable aspirations of these parents for their children to break the cycle of poverty and achieve social mobility. Yet, they face constraints and a lack of resources that obstruct their ambitions, emphasizing the importance of addressing these concerns through administrative policies. While this quota is rooted in Dr. Ambedkar's philosophy, its contemporary relevance warrants examination to adapt to changing times and needs.

Keywords: Reservations, Social mobility, inclusivity, 25% EWS quota

Introduction

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's central focus was on marginalised communities, who too often faced discrimination and exploitation. His ultimate vision encompassed the creation of an egalitarian society where all members could lead dignified lives, free from any form of discrimination and exclusion. This vision prompted discussions on the profound implications of exclusion in education. Exclusion in

education, as Ramachandran and Jandhyala (2019) stated, is a multifaceted process driven by unequal power dynamics across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions. It operates at various levels, from the individual to the global stage, resulting in a continuum of inclusion or exclusion that manifests as unequal access to resources, capabilities, and rights, ultimately leading to pervasive inequalities (Batra, 2017). UNESCO (2007) report highlights how urbanisation has transformed the nature of social exclusion, with cities being hubs of economic growth and social mobility. Yet, urbanisation also introduces new dimensions of exclusion, making the interplay of exclusion and education a critical concern. Historically, discussions on exclusion and education date back to the late 1980s. Initially, the focus was on how individuals were deprived of education due to social exclusion. Later, the conversation shifted towards addressing how people became socially excluded due to educational deprivation (Bashir, 2010). Social inclusion, in various forms such as gender, class, and caste, plays a crucial role in shaping the exclusion experienced by many individuals. In the early 20th century, Mahatma Gandhi emphasised education for all, regardless of caste, through his scheme of basic education in 1937. He believed that education would empower rural and marginalised sections of society, helping them become self-reliant. B.R. Ambedkar, another key figure of this era, dedicated a significant part of his life to improving the social status and quality of life for Dalits in India. He established the People's Education Society in 1945, with the belief that increased access to education for Dalits would empower them to aspire to higher positions, thereby challenging the prevailing caste system (Nambisan, 1996). Ambedkar's advocacy for education was rooted in his belief that it could break down the barriers imposed by the caste system. He saw education as the means to end the oppression faced by marginalised communities. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's personal experience of untouchability and discrimination further fuelled his dedication to empowering the marginalised through education. Ambedkar recognised the enduring relevance of education for social change. He identified the caste system as a barrier to the free flow of ideas and knowledge, using the metaphor of "social endosmosis" to describe the hindrance it presented. Endosmosis refers to the movement of fluid through a membrane, an analogy that underscored how the caste system obstructed the exchange of ideas and knowledge (Nambisan, 1996). Moreover, the influence of John Dewey's educational philosophy, which emphasised communication as essential to democracy, played a significant role in shaping Ambedkar's perspective on education. Like Dewey, Ambedkar believed in the transformative power of education to nourish democracy.

B.R. Ambedkar's own experiences as part of a lower-caste family provided him with a deep understanding of the oppressive caste system. He recognised that education was essential to breaking this vicious cycle of discrimination and exploitation. His advocacy led to a policy of positive

discrimination through reservations and quotas in education and employment. This policy aimed to compensate for the marginalisation experienced by the oppressed classes.

Ambedkar proposed a time-bound reservation policy that could be extended if necessary. Despite the passage of many years since India's independence, the practice of reservations persists. The implementation of the EWS Quota under the RTE Act of 2009 has reaffirmed this commitment. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the contemporary relevance of the EWS Quota in the current educational system. Before delving into the examination of the EWS Quota under the RTE Act of 2009, it is essential to acknowledge the deeply rooted graded inequalities that persist in India.

Empowering the Marginalised: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Vision Unveiled

The empowerment of marginalised communities, guided by the visionary ideals of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, stands as the cornerstone of social progress and justice in India. Dr. Ambedkar's vision for uplifting the oppressed and disadvantaged transcends time and remains a beacon of hope. This research paper explores the multifaceted aspects of his vision for empowerment, encompassing education, social equality, and political representation. It dives into the enduring relevance of his principles in addressing the persistent challenges of marginalisation and social exclusion in contemporary India. Ambedkar made significant efforts to provide education to the masses, enabling them to understand their conditions, nurture aspirations, and elevate themselves to a level playing field. This is epitomised in Ambedkar's famous slogan: "educate, agitate, and organize." According to him, education empowers individuals with creative thinking, knowledge, reasoning, and empathy. If avenues for education are closed or restricted for certain societal groups, it effectively handicaps those groups. The caste system's deep-rooted inequality in India has been perpetuated through unequal access to education. Ambedkar believed that the chasm between the Brahman and non-Brahman communities could only be bridged through higher education. The government and its institutions bear the responsibility of ensuring education for all without discrimination, allowing individuals from backward castes to assume significant roles in governance and administration. The Right to Education Act of 2009 is aligned with this vision, featuring the implementation of an Economically Weaker Section (EWS) Quota to ensure access to quality education in private schools for economically disadvantaged and socially marginalized students. These private schools do not charge fees from EWS Quota students, with the government reimbursing their fees based on either the per-child expenditure in government schools or the actual fees of the private schools, whichever is lower (Jha & Parvati, 2010; Jain & Dholakia, 2009). The EWS Quota's core principle is social inclusion and equality, as highlighted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in 2010. When children from various societal backgrounds come together to learn, they have the opportunity to absorb the values of equality and fraternity. This interaction allows them to

recognise the diversities present in real life, fostering a better understanding. The government's intention is to leverage the quality education provided by private schools and share the responsibility of education provision. The EWS Quota under the RTE Act 2009 aims to provide equal opportunities for quality education within neighbourhoods.

However, it's evident that mere provisions of quotas and reservations are insufficient. Achieving the inclusion of marginalised communities in mainstream society necessitates a transformation in the social psychology of the people, as advocated by Ambedkar. Thus, this study seeks to uncover the ground realities of the reservation system by capturing the unheard voices of EWS Quota students who have enrolled in prestigious schools, aspiring to achieve what their socio-economic backgrounds would otherwise restrict.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the socioeconomic background of EWS quota parents.
2. To examine and compare the attitude of EWS parents towards schooling and education of their children.

The primary objective of this study is to examine the experiences of parents who willingly endure personal hardships and make sacrifices to ensure a brighter future for their children. These parents are fully aware that the financial responsibilities associated with raising and educating their children will significantly amplify the demands on their own efforts. By exploring the perspectives of these parents, the research aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of their aspirations, challenges and emotional journeys. The study intends to shed light on the intricate dynamics and decision making processes involved in these parents role in fostering their children's success and social mobility.

Methodology of the study

The study employed a mixed method research design , to collect comprehensive and detailed perspectives from EWS parents through quantitative and qualitative techniques. A purposive sampling technique was employed to those EWS parents whose children are availing 25 percent freeship scheme in schools of Chandigarh. The data was collected through a self constructed tool in which further through Semi structured interviews were also conducted with 55 EWS parents. Furthermore, a focused group discussion also conducted on EWS Parents. The interviews were guided by a set of predetermined questions. The collected interview data were transcribed verbatim and subjected to thematic Analysis. Throughout the study, strict adherence to ethical considerations was maintained. The protection of respondent identity and the preservation of complete anonymity for all participants were ensured. These measures were put in place to prioritise the confidentiality and privacy of the individuals involved in the research process.

Analysis and interpretation

1. Socio- economic background of EWS parents

This section represented the analysis of the educational level, occupational background characteristics of the respondents. The presentations of the demographic data were to make a clear picture and background of the respondents in this study.

Table 1.1

Educational qualifications of the Parents of EWS quota children (N-130)

Sr. No.	Educational status of parents	Frequency	Percentage		
1	Literate	101	77.7		
2	Illiterate	29	22.3		
Out of illiterate parents (gender-wise) (N-29)					
Sr. No.	Respondent	Frequency	Percentage		
1	Mothers	27	93.1		
2	Father	2	6.9		
Levels of Education out of literate parents(N =101)					
Sr. No.	Level of Education	Literate Parents			
		Father (73)		Mother(28)	
		Frequency	percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1	Below Primary(5 th)	17	23.29	16	57.14
2	Below Elementary(8 th)	33	45.21	9	32.14
3	Below secondary(10 th)	17	23.29	3	10.72
4	Below Higher secondary(12 th)	6	8.21	-	-
5	Graduation	0	0	-	-

Source: Field survey

Table1.2**Occupational levels of the parents**

Sr.No	Occupation	Father (80)		Mother (50)	
		No. Of respondent	%age	No.of respondent	%age
1	Government job	-	-	-	-
2	Private job	22	27.5	5	10
3	Small business/ small shops	43	53.8	11	22
4	Domestic worker (maid/Gardner)	15	18.7	34	68
5	HouseMaker (stayed at home only)	-	-	-	-

Source: Field survey

Table 1.3**Background characteristics of the school going EWS children (N-130)**

Sr. No	Item	Response	Frequency	Percentage
•	Category	a) General	0	0
		b) Scheduled caste	110	84.6
		c) OBC	20	15.3

Source: Field survey

The demographic data sheds light on the dire socioeconomic situations faced by a significant number of EWS parents in this research. A large proportion of them were employed in low-skilled, often unskilled, labor and related activities. Informal conversations with these parents underscored the critical role played by educational attainment, socio-cultural standing, and financial stability as the foremost factors influencing access to schooling. Table 1.1 provides insights into the educational qualifications of the parents of EWS quota children. The data reveals that out of 130 parents, 77.7 percent are literate, while 22.3 percent are illiterate. A closer examination shows that 93.1 percent of the illiterate parents are mothers, whereas only 6.9 percent are fathers. This indicates a significant

disparity in the educational status of mothers compared to fathers among the sampled EWS quota children. When focusing on literate parents, it's apparent that 57.14 percent of mothers have education below the primary level, while none of the mothers or fathers have studied beyond the school level. The data emphasizes that the parents' educational status correlates with their social status and significantly influences their children's educational aspirations. This finding aligns with Dubow's study in 2009, which demonstrated that parental educational levels positively impact their children's educational outcomes and future achievements. Hence, the educational status of parents has a direct bearing on their children's educational achievements and presents a challenge for EWS quota students in their educational journey. Additionally, the occupational status of parents has a direct bearing on their children's education and family income. Table 1.2 illustrates that the majority of parents, 27.5 percent of fathers, engage in private jobs. A substantial 53.8 percent are involved in small businesses or shops, while 68 percent of mothers work as domestic help or maids. Notably, none of the mothers are homemakers, as the high living costs in a city like Chandigarh necessitate additional income sources. Importantly, none of the parents in EWS families hold government jobs, indicating a lack of stable income. These findings align with a study by Blanden & Gregg in 2004, which highlighted the significant impact of family income on children's educational levels. Families with higher income tend to provide better educational resources, while parents working multiple jobs have limited time to create an educational environment for their children. The lower income levels of parents pose another significant challenge for EWS children's education. The data presented here underscores the role of both parental education and income in determining the educational opportunities available to EWS quota children. This highlights the complexities faced by EWS families in providing a conducive educational environment for their children's academic progress. Shifting the focus, the data in Table 2.1 uncovers key demographic insights about EWS quota children in the sample. Among the selected children, 57.7 percent are boys, and 42.3 percent are girls, indicating a gender disparity in EWS enrollment, with more boys represented than girls. Furthermore, 84.6 percent of the selected children belong to the scheduled caste (SC) category, while 15.3 percent belong to other backward classes (OBC), with none in the General category. This underlines the overrepresentation of scheduled caste children among EWS quota students and raises concerns about equal educational opportunities among diverse social backgrounds. The significant overrepresentation of scheduled caste children within the EWS quota calls for a closer examination of the RTE Act's implementation, specifically regarding its reach across various social backgrounds. This brings into question the program's effectiveness in addressing educational disparities among EWS children from different social categories. Policymakers and curriculum developers can use this information to identify gaps in educational access and formulate strategies to ensure equitable education for all EWS quota children, regardless of their gender or social background. It is a call to create an inclusive and equitable educational environment for all EWS

children, irrespective of their gender or social category.

Analysis of Attitude of EWS parents towards schooling and Education of their children

Question wise analysis , Based on the participant's responses

- **What hopes and aspirations do you have for your child's future?**

The parent's responses regarding their child's aspirations and dreams exuded profound emotions and an overwhelming sense of dignity. They acknowledged the significance of their Children in an affluent school. The majority of the parents share their hopes and dreams, emphasising their children to excel the educational platform presented to them. Although most of the parents revealed that they have very limited resources to earn but they have strong aspirations for their children to embrace the boundless possibilities ahead and strive for a future that would bring about positive transformations. They envisioned a tomorrow that split up from their own experiences, where their children could devastate barriers and overcome limitations. These parents strongly believe that education can provide their children with better social mobility to break the fence of poverty and achieve a prestigious life. Brown and James (2020) argued that by improving school performance and widening access to higher education, it is claimed that poverty can be alleviated by increasing rates of social mobility from disadvantaged families. Further the parent's responses showcased their deep comprehension of the transformative power of education. In essence, the parent's responses regarding their children's aspirations and dreams were a manifestation of pride, expectancy and unwavering faith in their child's capabilities. They aimed to empower their children to excel academically and embrace their chosen career path m and create a future that would bring about transformative change for their family and community.

- **How do you contribute to supporting your children in their schoolwork and studies?**

It was evident that the majority of parents had limited literacy skills and were unable to provide direct assistance to their children in their academic studies. However, despite their own educational limitations , these parents demonstrated a deep concern for the well-being and future prospects of their children. Đurišić and Bunijevac (2017) argued that parents effort to support is directly making a positive impact to a successful educational system.They recognised the importance of education and the role it plays in shaping their children's lives. Some of the parents revealed that to compensate for their own limitations , these parents might have preferred to send their children in more prestigious educational institutions due to their financial constraints. Nonetheless, they remained committed to providing their children with additional support through the available tutoring options in their neighbourhoods. One significant challenge expressed by these parents was their limited knowledge of

the English language. This language barrier further hindered their ability to assist their children with studies at home. Overall, it is clear that the majority of parents despite their own educational limitations and financial constraints but demonstrated a strong commitment to their children's education. They relied on the teachers to bridge the gap between their limitations and their children's academic needs.

- **Does your child openly communicate and share all school activities with you?**

According to the majority of parent's responses their children generally display dedication and enthusiasm towards their school. Parents observed that their children express excitement about attending school, actively participate in discussions about their experiences, and engage in various activities with enthusiasm. These behaviours indicate a genuine interest in and enjoyment of the school's learning environment. However, some parents also shared that their children occasionally experience feelings of sadness and disappointment. These emotions arise when they compare themselves to non-EWS quota children who may possess more extravagant school items or arrive in larger vehicles. Kim et al., (2013) also stated that childhood poverty has been linked to emotion dysregulation circulation, which is further associated with negative physical and sociological health in adulthood. Such comparisons can momentarily impact their child's emotions. Nevertheless, most parents still take pride in their children's overall enthusiasm for their school, acknowledging their authentic interest beyond their sadness for the educational opportunities provided. However, creating an inclusive environment where all children from diverse socio-economic background, feel valued and supported is crucial. Therefore, parents, educators and society as a whole must work together to foster inclusivity and address any feelings of inadequacy or comparison. This will contribute to a positive and inclusive school experience for all students nurturing their enthusiasm and ensuring equal opportunities for success.

- **How do you view the contribution of the school from your standpoint?**

The majority of parents have overwhelmingly expressed their deep appreciation for the valuable contribution made by the school. They feel an immense sense of gratitude that their children have been granted admission to highly regarded schools. The reputation and prestige associated with these schools bring a great sense of pride to both the parents and the children themselves. Parents hold a strong belief that the education provided in private schools is of exceptional quality. They trust that these schools offer an excellent academic curriculum and foster an environment conducive to learning and growth. The commitment to educational excellence demonstrated by the school is highly regarded by parents, and they recognise the positive impact it has on their children's development. The positive environment within the school is highly valued by parents. Furthermore, majority of the parents feel fortunate and

consider themselves blessed that their children have the opportunity to receive an education in such affluent school. They believe that this privilege will contribute significantly to their children's future prospects and success. Overall, the majority of parents express deep gratitude and satisfaction for the contributions made by the school. They recognize the exceptional educational opportunities provided and the positive environment created for their children's academic and personal growth. This appreciation stems from the belief that attending such esteemed schools opens doors to a bright future and instills a sense of pride in both parents and students alike.

- **What is your perspective on the role of teachers in supporting your children's education?**

The majority of parents from economically weaker sections (EWS) have shared the thoughts on the role of teachers in their children's education. Some parents have expressed their hesitation in interacting with teachers during parent-teacher meetings due to a language barrier. As they are not fluent in English, their children often insist on speaking only in English, which can make the parents feel embarrassed and uncomfortable in front of teachers. These parents also mentioned that they feel disconnected from the classroom, particularly during the covid-19 when classes shifted online. Their children often feel isolated as teachers have limited interaction during online classes and rarely ask them questions as compared to the other students in the class. As a result, parents heavily rely on their children's accounts of their experiences in the classroom since they have no other source of information. Although teachers regularly check notebooks, several parents have revealed that their children struggle to complete homework on time due to a lack of additional assistance. However, some parents have noted that certain teachers make efforts to provide their children with extra remedial help for their studies, which they appreciate. Overall, the responses highlight the challenges faced by EWS parents in engaging with teacher's language barriers affecting communication and the need for additional support for their children's academic progress. While there may be areas of concern, the efforts made by some teachers to offer remedial help are acknowledge by these parents.

- **Do you engage with parents who are not from economically weaker sections (non-EWS parents).**

The majority of parents have revealed that they seldom engage in conversations with non-EWS parents. Some expressed a sense of sadness, stating that they believe non-EWS parents are of higher social status and would not want to interact with them. They feel unable to relate to them or their lifestyles. Occasionally, they may come across non-EWS parents during parent teacher meetings ,but they rarely initiate conversations. There is a prevailing belief among these parents that non-EWS parents might ridicule their poverty. They fear being laughed at or judged. Although non-EWS parents may not make any attempt to engage in conversations with them or their children, the parents feel hesitant to approach

them as well. Even within parent's association WhatsApp group is created, majority of EWS parents do not actively participate in chats. Their lack of English language proficiency further adds to their insecurities, as they fear being labelled as illiterate or uneducated if they make grammatical errors. These sentiments reflect the barriers and perceptions that some EWS parents face in their interactions with non-EWS parents. It highlights the existing social and economic divide that impacts their ability to engage and connect with parents from different backgrounds.

The responses from the majority of parents from disadvantaged backgrounds indicate that they face significant challenges in meeting their children's needs and covering the costs associated with their education. Many of these parents work as daily wage earners, which means their income is often unstable and limited. However, most of the parents admitted that they have not pay the school fee but they find it difficult to afford other essential expenses such as stationary, uniforms, books as well as additional activities that are part of their children's school requirements. A noteworthy concern mentioned by some parents is their children's demands for fancy items or money for school trips. The majority of parents revealed that they do not have a computer or laptop at home. Teachers assign homework, projects and assignments through apps which require their children to visits cafes regularly to access them, incurring additional costs per month. When these parents are unable to fulfil such requests due to financial constraints, it results in frustration and disappointment for both the parents and the children. In some cases, the children may express their dissatisfaction speaking harshly to their parents. This added emotional burden on the parents intensifies their distress, as they genuinely desire to fulfil their children's wishes and provide them with a fulfilling school experience. Overall the majority of parents from disadvantaged backgrounds demonstrate a genuine desire to meet their children's educational needs and participate in their school activities, However, due to their financial limitations, they often find themselves facing difficult choices and hardships in fulfilling all of their children's expectations.

Conclusion

The attitudes of EWS parents towards schooling and education reflect a profound commitment to their children's future. These parents hold high hopes and aspirations for their children, understanding the transformative power of education. Despite their limitations and language barriers, EWS parents remain dedicated to their children's education, relying on schools and teachers for support. Creating an inclusive school environment and addressing financial challenges are essential. In addition, facilitating effective communication and offering additional support can bridge the gap between EWS parents and the educational system. Eliminating stereotypes and providing equal opportunities for EWS children are critical for fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment as envisioned by Dr.

B.R. Ambedkar. Therefore, to effectiveness of implementing the EWS Quota in private schools to promote social inclusion for the economically disadvantaged is questionable. If positive discrimination policies were truly effective, they should have already succeeded in the past many years of implementation, making them unnecessary now. To improve the well-being of the poor and disadvantaged, the administration must develop alternative strategies beyond relying solely on quotas and reservations.

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Dr. B R Ambedkar's Educational Legacy: A Beacon of Empowerment

Preksha & Kanwalpreet Kaur

Abstract

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a visionary leader and the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, has profoundly influenced the nation's educational landscape. His enduring educational legacy serves as a guiding light, motivating successive generations to pursue knowledge, equality, and social justice. Ambedkar staunchly believed in the transformative power of education, particularly for marginalized communities. He viewed education not merely as an avenue for acquiring knowledge, but as a means to dismantle the chains of social discrimination and uplift the downtrodden. His educational philosophy emphasized the imperative of providing high-quality education to everyone, regardless of their caste, religion, or gender. Ambedkar's educational vision was comprehensive, emphasizing the development of critical thinking, ethical values, and social awareness among students. He advocated for a curriculum that encouraged questioning, analytical reasoning, and empathy, enabling individuals to make meaningful contributions to society. His emphasis on eradicating social disparities through education led to increased accessibility and affordability, making education a fundamental right for all. Moreover, Ambedkar championed the cause of women's education, recognizing their pivotal role in nation-building. He sought to empower women through education, enabling their active participation in social and economic spheres. His initiatives paved the way for enhanced educational opportunities for women, fostering a more inclusive and egalitarian society. Ambedkar's educational legacy continues to shape contemporary educational policies and practices in India. His principles of social justice, equality, and inclusivity serve as guiding principles for educational institutions and policymakers. By embracing his vision, modern educational systems can create a nurturing environment where every individual, regardless of their background, can excel academically and personally. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy stands as a testament to his unwavering dedication to empowering the masses through knowledge. His ideas inspire ongoing educational reforms, fostering a society where education becomes a potent instrument for social transformation and advancement, aligning with his vision of a just and egalitarian nation.

Keywords: Marginalized Communities, Inclusivity, Empowering Women, Educational Reform, Equality in Education

1. Introduction

In the annals of history, there are rare individuals whose influence transcends their lifetime, leaving an indelible mark on society. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a visionary leader, social reformer, and the chief

architect of the Indian Constitution, undoubtedly stands among these remarkable figures. Beyond his significant contributions to the political and social fabric of India, Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy is a beacon of empowerment and social justice that continues to inspire generations. Born into an oppressed caste in colonial India, Dr. Ambedkar experienced firsthand the brutal realities of social discrimination and inequality. However, rather than succumb to these circumstances, he recognized the transformative power of education. Driven by an unyielding determination to challenge the status quo, he embarked on a lifelong mission to dismantle the barriers of caste-based discrimination through education.

Dr. Ambedkar's early life was marked by adversity, yet it was this adversity that fueled his passion for education and social reform. Denied basic human rights and dignity due to his caste, he resolved to break the chains of oppression through education. Despite numerous challenges, he pursued higher education abroad, earning multiple degrees, including a doctorate in law from the prestigious Columbia University in the United States. His own journey from social outcast to esteemed scholar epitomized the transformative potential of education and served as a guiding light for his future endeavors. At the heart of Dr. Ambedkar's educational philosophy was the belief that education was not just a means to acquire knowledge but a powerful tool for social transformation. He envisioned education as the cornerstone of a just and egalitarian society, capable of eradicating deeply entrenched prejudices and providing equal opportunities to all. Dr. Ambedkar emphasized the cultivation of critical thinking, moral values, and social consciousness in students. He advocated for an education system that encouraged questioning, analytical reasoning, and empathy, nurturing individuals who could challenge injustice and contribute meaningfully to society. One of the defining aspects of Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy was his unwavering commitment to empowering marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits (formerly known as untouchables). He believed that education was the most potent weapon to uplift these communities from the depths of social ostracization. Dr. Ambedkar worked tirelessly to make education accessible and affordable for Dalits, advocating for reservations and affirmative action policies to ensure their representation in educational institutions. His efforts laid the foundation for a more inclusive educational system, enabling countless individuals from marginalized backgrounds to pursue education and break free from the shackles of discrimination.

Dr. Ambedkar was also a staunch advocate for women's rights and recognized the pivotal role of education in their empowerment. He championed the cause of women's education, striving to eliminate gender disparities in access to knowledge. His progressive views on women's rights and education were revolutionary for his time, laying the groundwork for increased educational opportunities for women in India. Dr. Ambedkar's initiatives paved the way for a more enlightened society where women could actively participate in social and economic spheres, shaping a more egalitarian future. Dr. B. R.

Ambedkar's educational legacy resonates deeply in India and beyond. His principles of social justice, equality, and empowerment through education continue to guide educational policies and practices. The impact of his vision is visible in the increased enrollment of marginalized communities in educational institutions, the proliferation of affirmative action policies, and the ongoing efforts to bridge educational disparities.

In this exploration of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy, we delve into the multifaceted dimensions of his vision. From his early struggles to his pioneering efforts in empowering marginalized communities and advocating for women's education, Dr. Ambedkar's legacy serves as an enduring testament to the transformative power of education. Through this comprehensive study, we aim to unravel the intricacies of his educational philosophy, examining its contemporary relevance and the strides made toward a more just and inclusive educational landscape inspired by his vision.

Review of Related Literature: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Educational Legacy

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy is a subject of extensive scholarly exploration, reflecting his profound influence on the educational landscape of India. Researchers and academics have delved into various aspects of his life, philosophy, and contributions to education, shedding light on the transformative power of his ideas.

Ambedkar's Educational Philosophy: Scholars have extensively analyzed Dr. Ambedkar's educational philosophy, emphasizing his belief in education as a catalyst for social change. His emphasis on critical thinking, moral values, and social consciousness has been widely discussed (Thorat, 2005). Researchers have explored how his educational ideals have influenced contemporary pedagogical practices and policies, shaping inclusive education initiatives in India (Jadhav, 2010).

Empowerment of Marginalized Communities: The empowerment of marginalized communities, particularly Dalits, through education has been a central focus of scholarly inquiry. Studies have examined the impact of Dr. Ambedkar's efforts to make education accessible to Dalits, emphasizing the role of reservations and affirmative action policies in increasing their representation in educational institutions (Moon, 2012). Research also explores the challenges faced by Dalit students and the effectiveness of interventions inspired by Dr. Ambedkar's vision (Kamble, 2017).

Women's Education and Empowerment: Dr. Ambedkar's advocacy for women's education and their empowerment has been a topic of considerable research. Scholars have investigated his progressive views on women's rights and the initiatives he undertook to promote female education. Studies have assessed the impact of his efforts on gender equality in education and the socio-economic status of women in Indian society (Thaware, 2018).

Dr. Ambedkar's Legacy in Modern Education: Researchers have explored the enduring influence of Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy on modern education systems. Studies have analyzed the implementation of his ideas in educational policies, institutions, and curricula. Scholars have examined the challenges and successes in translating his vision into practical reforms, providing insights into the contemporary relevance of his educational philosophy (Shinde, 2019).

Comparative Perspectives: Comparative analyses of Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy in the context of other social reformers and educational thinkers have provided valuable insights. Researchers have compared his ideas with those of other prominent figures, examining similarities, differences, and the collective impact of their philosophies on educational practices and societal transformations (Pawar, 2016).

International Perspectives on Dr. Ambedkar's Educational Legacy: Beyond the boundaries of India, scholars have explored the global influence of Dr. Ambedkar's educational philosophy. Comparative studies have been conducted to analyze the applicability of his ideas in different cultural and socio-economic contexts. Researchers have investigated how his principles of social justice and equality resonate with international movements for inclusive education and equal opportunities, making his legacy a subject of interest in global educational discourse (Smith, 2015).

Literary and Cultural Representations: Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy has also found its way into literature, cinema, and other forms of artistic expression. Literary works and films have portrayed his life and educational struggles, depicting the transformative power of education in overcoming social barriers (Deshpande, 2014). Cultural representations have contributed to the popularization of his ideas, shaping public perceptions and awareness about his educational vision.

Impact on Social and Economic Mobility: Researchers have investigated the long-term impact of education inspired by Dr. Ambedkar's vision on social and economic mobility. Studies have examined how education has played a pivotal role in empowering individuals from marginalized communities, enabling them to access better employment opportunities and contribute significantly to economic development (Singh, 2016). Such research highlights the tangible outcomes of his educational initiatives in improving the quality of life for individuals and communities.

Challenges and Future Directions: While Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy has made significant strides, scholars have also addressed the challenges and limitations faced in its implementation. Research has explored barriers such as institutional discrimination, lack of resources, and socio-cultural constraints that hinder the realization of his vision in certain regions and communities (Gupta, 2020). Understanding these challenges is crucial for formulating targeted interventions and policies to address existing gaps in educational access and quality.

Digital Initiatives and Knowledge Dissemination: In the digital age, online platforms and digital initiatives have emerged as tools for disseminating knowledge about Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy. Researchers have explored the role of technology in preserving his writings, speeches, and educational philosophy, making them accessible to a wider audience. Digital repositories and educational websites dedicated to his work have become valuable resources for students, scholars, and activists interested in studying and promoting his ideas (Sharma, 2021).

The expanding body of literature on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy encompasses diverse perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches. From international comparisons to cultural representations and the impact on social and economic mobility, scholars continue to explore the multifaceted dimensions of his educational vision. Addressing challenges and leveraging digital initiatives are essential steps toward ensuring the continued dissemination and application of his ideas in the global educational landscape. This comprehensive understanding of Dr. Ambedkar's educational legacy provides a rich foundation for future research, policymaking, and social initiatives aimed at advancing education and social justice.

2. Significance of the Study

The significance of studying Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy lies in its potential to inspire transformative changes in the field of education and social justice. Understanding and appreciating Ambedkar's philosophy and contributions is crucial in addressing the persistent challenges of inequality, discrimination, and lack of access to education faced by marginalized communities, particularly in countries like India. By getting into the multifaceted aspects of Ambedkar's educational vision, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and social reformers. It offers a framework for designing inclusive educational policies, implementing effective affirmative action measures, and fostering environments where marginalized individuals, including Dalits and women, can access quality education. Exploring Ambedkar's legacy in a global context facilitates cross-cultural learning, enabling societies worldwide to adapt and implement principles of social justice and equality in their educational systems. This study's significance also extends to preserving cultural heritage and promoting awareness about the pivotal role of education in social upliftment. By acknowledging and analyzing the depth of Ambedkar's educational ideals, this research contributes not only to academia but also to the broader mission of creating a more equitable and just world through education.

3. Methodology of the Study

In this review paper, a comprehensive analysis of existing literature on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy was conducted. The research involved an extensive review of scholarly articles, books, and other academic publications related to Ambedkar's educational philosophy and its impact on

marginalized communities. A systematic literature review approach was employed to identify relevant studies published up to the date of the review. The search strategy involved electronic databases, academic journals, and reputable online repositories. Keywords such as "Ambedkar," "educational philosophy," "social justice," and "empowerment" were used to narrow down the search results. The selected literature was critically analyzed to identify key themes, trends, and gaps in the existing research. Special attention was given to studies exploring Ambedkar's influence on inclusive education, marginalized communities, and gender equality within the educational context. The findings were synthesized to provide a comprehensive overview of the scholarly discourse surrounding Ambedkar's educational contributions, offering valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers in the field of education.

4. Objectives of the Study

- Analyze core principles of Ambedkar's educational philosophy.
- Investigate the impact on marginalized communities.
- Explore contemporary relevance of Ambedkar's ideas in education.
- Examine the influence of Ambedkar's vision on gender equality in education.
- Investigate successful implementations and adaptations of his ideas.
- Explore the role of technology in preserving and disseminating his legacy.
- Assess the global impact of Ambedkar's educational philosophy.

5. Findings of The Study

Exploring into Ambedkar's educational philosophy, our research unveiled a wealth of insights. By analyzing his core principles, we identified education as a potent instrument for social change, rooted in critical thinking and social consciousness. Investigating the impact on marginalized communities revealed tangible advancements, empowering Dalits and women through access to education. Exploring contemporary relevance showcased the adaptability of Ambedkar's ideas in shaping inclusive policies and promoting gender equality. Successful implementations, notably in digital initiatives, illuminated innovative pathways for preserving and disseminating his legacy. The global impact of his philosophy emphasized the universality of his teachings, influencing international movements for social justice. These findings underscore the enduring relevance of Ambedkar's educational vision, urging us to embrace his ideals as catalysts for a more equitable world.

a. Core principles of Ambedkar's educational philosophy.

- **Analyzing Core Principles of Ambedkar's Educational Philosophy:** The analysis of Ambedkar's educational philosophy revealed a strong emphasis on social justice, equality, and empowerment through education. His principles underscored the importance of critical thinking, moral values, and social consciousness, shaping a vision of education as a catalyst for transformative change (Thorat, 2005; Jadhav, 2010).
- **Impact on Marginalized Communities:** The study found that Ambedkar's educational initiatives significantly improved access to education for marginalized communities, particularly Dalits and women. Reservations and affirmative action policies played a vital role in increasing their representation in educational institutions, fostering empowerment and social mobility (Moon, 2012; Thaware, 2018).
- **Contemporary Relevance and Adaptations:** Ambedkar's educational ideals were observed to remain relevant in contemporary education systems. Successful implementations and adaptations were identified, showcasing innovative approaches in inclusive education policies and curriculum enhancements (Shinde, 2019).
- **Challenges and Solutions:** Challenges in implementing Ambedkar's vision included institutional discrimination and resource constraints. The study proposed solutions such as targeted interventions, increased funding, and awareness programs to address these challenges (Kamble, 2017; Gupta, 2020).
- **Global Impact and Technological Preservation:** The research highlighted the global impact of Ambedkar's educational philosophy, resonating with international movements for inclusive education. Additionally, digital initiatives, including online repositories and educational websites, were found to be effective in preserving and disseminating his legacy to a wider audience (Smith, 2015; Sharma, 2021).

b. Impact on marginalized communities.

- **Educational Empowerment:** The study found that Ambedkar's initiatives significantly enhanced educational empowerment within marginalized communities, particularly among Dalits and women. Access to education led to improved social standing, increased awareness of rights, and enhanced confidence among individuals (Moon, 2012; Kamble, 2017).
- **Socio-Economic Mobility:** Ambedkar's educational policies were observed to be instrumental in fostering socio-economic mobility. Through education, individuals from marginalized backgrounds secured better employment opportunities, contributing positively to economic development within their communities (Singh, 2016).

- **Breaking Gender Barriers:** Ambedkar's emphasis on education played a crucial role in breaking gender barriers. Women, inspired by his vision, gained access to education, empowering them to challenge traditional roles and participate actively in social and economic spheres (Thaware, 2018).
- **Community Upliftment:** Education emerged as a catalyst for community upliftment. By providing educational opportunities, Ambedkar's vision contributed to the overall development of marginalized communities, fostering a sense of unity, pride, and self-reliance (Shinde, 2019).

c. **Contemporary relevance of Ambedkar's ideas in education.**

- **Inclusive Education Policies:** The study revealed that Ambedkar's ideas remain highly relevant in contemporary education. His focus on inclusive education policies has influenced modern educational reforms, ensuring access and equal opportunities for marginalized communities, promoting social inclusion and diversity (Shinde, 2019; Gupta, 2020).
- **Promotion of Critical Thinking:** Ambedkar's emphasis on critical thinking and social consciousness has found resonance in modern pedagogical approaches. Educators incorporate these principles to nurture analytical skills and social awareness among students, preparing them for active civic engagement (Jadhav, 2010; Shinde, 2019).
- **Advancements in Gender Equality:** Ambedkar's advocacy for women's education continues to drive advancements in gender equality within the education sector. Contemporary initiatives inspired by his vision aim to bridge the gender gap, empowering women through education and promoting their participation in various fields (Thaware, 2018).
- **Global Adoption:** Internationally, Ambedkar's ideas have been adopted as a framework for promoting social justice in education. Several countries have integrated his principles into their educational policies, fostering inclusivity and equity on a global scale (Smith, 2015).

d. **Influence of Ambedkar's vision on gender equality in education.**

- **Promotion of Women's Education:** Ambedkar's vision significantly promoted women's education, emphasizing its pivotal role in societal progress. His initiatives facilitated increased enrollment and participation of girls in schools, fostering a more educated and empowered female population (Thaware, 2018).
- **Empowering Women:** Ambedkar's advocacy for women's education empowered females to challenge traditional norms. Educated women emerged as agents of change, contributing to

social reforms, advocating for their rights, and breaking gender barriers in various fields (Thaware, 2018).

- **Impact on Gender Equality Policies:** Ambedkar's ideas continue to influence policies promoting gender equality in education. His emphasis on equal opportunities for both genders has shaped contemporary educational policies, ensuring equitable access to education and diminishing gender disparities (Thaware, 2018).

e. **Implementations and adaptations of his ideas.**

- **Inclusive Education Programs:** Successful implementations of Ambedkar's ideas were observed in inclusive education programs. These initiatives ensured marginalized communities, including Dalits and women, had access to quality education. Reservations and affirmative action policies were effectively implemented, increasing representation in educational institutions (Moon, 2012; Kamble, 2017).
- **Community Engagement:** Community-driven educational initiatives based on Ambedkar's principles demonstrated positive outcomes. Active engagement with local communities, involving them in the decision-making process and tailoring educational programs to their needs, resulted in higher participation rates and improved educational outcomes (Shinde, 2019; Gupta, 2020).
- **Digital Outreach:** Successful adaptations were noted in digital platforms dedicated to Ambedkar's educational legacy. Online repositories and educational websites effectively disseminated his ideas, making them accessible to a wider audience. These platforms facilitated knowledge dissemination, preserving his teachings for future generations (Sharma, 2021).

f. **The role of technology in preserving and disseminating his legacy.**

- **Digital Repositories:** The study revealed the crucial role of digital repositories in preserving Ambedkar's legacy. Online platforms and archives have efficiently cataloged his writings, speeches, and educational philosophies. These repositories serve as valuable resources, ensuring the preservation of his ideas for future generations (Sharma, 2021).
- **Educational Websites:** Dedicated educational websites have played a significant role in disseminating Ambedkar's teachings. These platforms have made his works accessible to a global audience, promoting awareness about his educational philosophy. Interactive multimedia elements on these websites enhance engagement and understanding among users (Sharma, 2021).

- **Social Media Platforms:** Social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools for disseminating Ambedkar's legacy. Blogs, podcasts, and social networking sites have facilitated discussions, allowing individuals worldwide to share insights and interpretations of his educational vision, fostering a vibrant online community (Sharma, 2021).

g. Global impact of Ambedkar's educational philosophy.

- **International Recognition:** Ambedkar's educational philosophy has gained international recognition, especially in the context of social justice and equality. Several countries have adopted aspects of his ideas in their educational policies, aiming to create inclusive environments that address discrimination and provide equal opportunities for all (Smith, 2015).
- **Global Advocacy for Social Justice:** Ambedkar's emphasis on social justice resonates globally. His principles have been integrated into international movements advocating for equal access to education, inspiring scholars, activists, and policymakers worldwide to work towards more equitable educational systems (Smith, 2015).
- **Diverse Cultural Adaptations:** Different cultures have adapted Ambedkar's educational philosophy to suit their unique contexts. Comparative studies reveal the diverse ways in which his ideas have been embraced and tailored, showcasing the flexibility and universality of his principles in addressing global educational disparities (Smith, 2015).

6. Conclusion

The comprehensive exploration of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational legacy illuminates not merely a historical narrative, but a timeless beacon of enlightenment. Through the lens of his visionary philosophy, education transforms from a mere pursuit of knowledge into a powerful catalyst for social metamorphosis. Ambedkar's emphasis on social justice, equality, and empowerment resonates across time and borders, transcending cultural barriers to inspire global educational paradigms. Our inquiry has unveiled the enduring impact of Ambedkar's ideals, evident in the tangible advancements made in inclusive education, gender equality, and socio-economic mobility. The successful implementations and adaptations of his principles, coupled with the innovative use of technology, underscore the versatility of his legacy in the digital age. Moreover, the global advocacy for his educational philosophy illustrates its universality and relevance in the pursuit of a more just and equitable world. As we navigate the complexities of modern education, Ambedkar's teachings serve as a guiding star, reminding us of the transformative power of education to dismantle barriers, uplift communities, and foster a future where every individual, regardless of their background, can flourish. In embracing his

vision, we embrace the promise of a truly inclusive and enlightened society, where education becomes not just a right but a profound instrument of positive change.

7. Educational Implications

a. Promote Inclusivity:

- Implement affirmative action policies to ensure equal access for marginalized communities.
- Provide scholarships and mentorship programs to bridge socio-economic gaps in education.
- Create a supportive environment for students from diverse backgrounds.

b. Integrate Critical Thinking and Social Consciousness:

- Design curricula that encourage questioning of societal norms and values.
- Cultivate empathy and understanding of social issues among students.
- Foster a sense of social responsibility through education.

c. Address Gender Disparities:

- Develop initiatives that provide safe and supportive environments for female students.
- Encourage active participation of women in all fields of study.
- Promote gender equality in educational opportunities and outcomes.

d. Leverage Technology for Education:

- Preserve cultural legacies through digital platforms, making educational resources accessible globally.
- Implement online learning initiatives to reach remote and marginalized communities.
- Utilize technology to democratize education, ensuring broader access to quality learning materials.

e. Encourage Diversity and Cultural Understanding:

- Integrate diverse perspectives into the curriculum to promote cultural understanding.
- Foster an inclusive environment where students learn from each other's backgrounds and experiences.
- Promote respect for diversity as a core value within educational institutions.

f. Advocate for Universal Education:

- Work towards making education a universal right, accessible to all, regardless of social or economic status.
- Collaborate with policymakers and stakeholders to create inclusive educational policies that prioritize marginalized communities.
- Raise awareness about the transformative potential of education in shaping a more equitable and just society.

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Pathways to a Better India: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's and Mahatma Gandhi's Philosophical Ideals

Amir Khan Ahmed

Abstract

The paper extensively explores the philosophical ideals of two prominent figures in India's history, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi, with a focus on their relevance in shaping a better India. Ambedkar's dedication to social justice and marginalized communities and Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence during India's struggle for independence are central themes. The study aims to examine Ambedkar's emphasis on social justice and his battle against caste-based discrimination, alongside Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and its broader implications for social reform and peaceful coexistence. The paper identifies both points of convergence and divergence within their philosophical frameworks, shedding light on how their ideologies may have influenced India's socio-political development. It assesses the contemporary relevance of their philosophies in addressing modern challenges, offering insights into how these legacies can contribute to a more equitable and just India in the 21st century. The paper comprehensively analyzes the enduring significance of Ambedkar and Gandhi's philosophical ideals in the quest for a better India. It underscores the crucial role their ideas can play in shaping the nation's future, promoting social harmony, and advancing the causes of justice and equality.

Keywords: Social justice, non-violence, Caste-Based Discrimination, Equality, contemporary relevance.

Introduction

In the realm of philosophy, the intertwined legacies of Ambedkar and Gandhi stand as formidable pillars, each offering distinctive pathways toward the realization of a better India. Their philosophies, while divergent in (Dutta, S. 1993) certain respects, converge on fundamental themes of justice, ethics, and societal transformation. Dr. Ambedkar's philosophical ideals find their roots in the profound struggle (Gehlot, N. S. 1993) against caste-based discrimination. His philosophy centers on the principles of social justice and the empowerment of marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits. Ambedkar envisioned a society where the rigid boundaries of caste would disintegrate, replaced by a more (Guru, G. 2017) equitable and inclusive social order. His ideas, enshrined in the Indian Constitution, remain instrumental in rectifying historical injustices and advancing the cause of equality.

In contrast, Gandhi's philosophy is encapsulated by the concept of non-violence (*Ahimsa*). Gandhi's deep conviction in the (Sampath Kumar, M. 2015) moral and ethical significance of non-violent resistance underpins his approach to achieving political and social change. His philosophy,

intertwined with the pursuit of truth (*Satyagraha*), propelled India towards freedom from British colonial rule and advocated for an unwavering commitment to ethical conduct in all aspects of life. While Ambedkar and Gandhi adopted distinct philosophical methodologies, their shared objective was the transformation of India into a more just and humane (H. Jayaraj. 1991) society. The dialectic between their philosophies provides a rich source of philosophical inquiry. How can the pursuit of social justice be reconciled with non-violent resistance? Can ethics and morality be employed as powerful tools for societal transformation?

In the contemporary landscape, their philosophical ideals continue to hold relevance. Ambedkar's emphasis on social justice resonates in (Naik, C. D. 2003) ongoing efforts to dismantle discrimination and promote inclusivity. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence offers insights into peaceful conflict resolution in a world marred by violence and strife. The philosophical ideals of Ambedkar and Gandhi offer profound pathways to a better India. Through their divergent yet complementary philosophies, they beckon us to engage in the ongoing philosophical discourse (Kumar, A. 2015) surrounding justice, ethics, and societal transformation, and to chart a course toward a more equitable and harmonious nation.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are to explore Ambedkar's principles of social justice and the abolition of caste-based discrimination, analyze Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence in the context of India's independence struggle, identify areas of convergence and divergence in their philosophies, and assess the contemporary relevance of their ideas in addressing current socio-political challenges for a more equitable and just India.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant as it explores Ambedkar and Gandhi's philosophical ideals, offering insights into addressing contemporary socio-political challenges in India. By contrasting Ambedkar's focus on social justice and equality with Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, it provides valuable guidance for policymakers and scholars. The study informs decisions and actions aimed at creating a more equitable and just India, rooted in principles of inclusivity and social reform.

Methodology

The study employed a documentary and analytical methodology, adopting a qualitative approach with thematic analysis to identify trends and patterns. Secondary data from various sources, including articles, books, national and international documents, websites, and newspapers, were extensively utilized for research and analysis purposes.

Discussion

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Philosophy: Social justice, equality, & abolition of caste-based discrimination

Ambedkar's philosophy is rooted in a deep commitment to social justice, equality, and the eradication of caste-based discrimination (Kumar 2015). His foundational principles continue to be influential in shaping India's socio-political landscape. At the core of Ambedkar's philosophy is a fervent dedication to social justice. He recognized that India's social structure was inherently unjust, with the caste system perpetuating discrimination and inequality. Ambedkar believed that the state had a crucial role to play in rectifying historical injustices. He advocated for affirmative action policies, such as reservations in education and employment, to uplift marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits (formerly known as untouchables). Ambedkar's vision of social justice was not limited to legal reforms but also encompassed economic and political empowerment.

Ambedkar championed the principle of equality as a fundamental pillar of his philosophy (Teltumbde 2023). He asserted that all individuals, regardless of their caste, creed, or gender, should have equal rights and opportunities. His efforts led to the inclusion of provisions for equality in the Indian Constitution, ensuring that discrimination based on caste or religion would be outlawed. Ambedkar's vision of equality extended beyond legal provisions; he envisioned a society where social hierarchies based on birth would be replaced by a meritocratic system where one's capabilities determined their place in society.

The most significant aspect of Ambedkar's philosophy was his relentless pursuit of the abolition of caste-based discrimination (Yadav, Dasgupta, and B. Kumar 2023). He saw the caste system as a deeply entrenched social evil that perpetuated inequality and untold suffering. Ambedkar's writings and speeches, such as "Annihilation of Caste," called for the complete annihilation of the caste system and the establishment of a casteless society. He believed that this could only be achieved through education, social reform, and legal measures that protected the rights of Dalits and other marginalized groups.

Ambedkar recognized the transformative power of education in breaking the shackles of caste-based discrimination (Singh 2023). He stressed the importance of education as a means of empowerment and upliftment for the marginalized. Ambedkar himself was a highly educated individual and believed that education could help individuals assert their rights and demand equality. He founded educational institutions like the People's Education Society to provide quality education to Dalits and other oppressed communities. Ambedkar's philosophy is characterized by an unwavering commitment to social justice, equality, and the abolition of caste-based discrimination. His principles continue to shape (Garai 2023; Puri 2022; Madhusudan 2023) India's policies and social movements,

ensuring that his vision of a more just and equitable society remains a foundational cornerstone of the nation's identity.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (ahimsa) and its practical applications

Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence, or "*ahimsa*" in Sanskrit, is a cornerstone of his ideology and played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence as well as in the context of social reform (Garai 2023; Puri 2022; Madhusudan 2023):

Ahimsa as a Guiding Principle: Gandhi's philosophy of *ahimsa* is based on the fundamental belief in the sanctity of all life. It advocates non-violence in thought, word, and deed. *Ahimsa* is not merely the absence of physical violence; it encompasses the avoidance of harm or injury in any form, be it physical, emotional, or psychological. Gandhi's commitment to *ahimsa* was deeply rooted in his spiritual and (Garai 2023; Puri 2022; Madhusudan 2023) ethical beliefs, drawing inspiration from Hinduism, Jainism, and the teachings of figures like Leo Tolstoy and Henry David Thoreau.

Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience: Gandhi's practical application of *ahimsa* was evident in his methods of non-cooperation and civil disobedience during India's struggle for independence. He believed that non-violent resistance was a potent tool for confronting oppression and injustice. Gandhi's call for non-cooperation with British colonial authorities, boycott of British goods, and peaceful protests aimed to weaken the oppressive system without resorting to violence. His famous salt march, in which he led a non-violent march to the Arabian Sea to protest the salt tax, showcased the power of *ahimsa* in mass movements.

Conflict Resolution: Gandhi's philosophy of *ahimsa* extended to conflict resolution not only on a national scale but also at the interpersonal level. He advocated for peaceful dialogue and negotiation to resolve disputes. Gandhi believed that through open and non-violent communication, conflicts could be resolved more effectively and harmoniously. This approach was evident in his efforts to bridge communal divides and promote unity among India's diverse religious and ethnic communities (Singh 2023).

Social Reform and Untouchability: Gandhi's commitment to social reform was intricately linked to his *ahimsa* philosophy. He worked tirelessly to eradicate social evils such as untouchability. Gandhi believed that the practice of untouchability was a form of violence and a grave injustice. His efforts included campaigns to promote the upliftment and integration of Dalits into mainstream society through initiatives like the *Harijan* Movement (Garai 2023).

Gandhi's philosophy of *ahimsa* served as a powerful and transformative force during India's struggle for independence and in the broader context of social reform. It emphasized non-violence as both a moral principle and a pragmatic strategy for achieving social and political change. Gandhi's dedication to *ahimsa* has left an enduring legacy, influencing not only India's history but also serving as

a source of inspiration for movements advocating non-violence and justice worldwide (Puri 2022; Sonowal 2023; Vickers 2023).

Convergence and divergence in the philosophical ideals of Ambedkar and Gandhi

Ambedkar and Gandhi were prominent leaders in the Indian independence movement, but they held distinct philosophical ideals and approaches to social and political issues. Both leaders were dedicated to the cause of liberating India from British colonial rule, actively participating in various (Rao, J., and G. Veeraj. 2023) movements and campaigns for independence. They recognized the importance of social justice, albeit with differing approaches. Ambedkar's focus was on addressing caste-based discrimination and advocating for the rights of Dalits, while Gandhi's vision of social justice encompassed the upliftment of all, regardless of caste. One significant point of convergence was their shared commitment to eradicating untouchability, a deeply entrenched (Yadav, V. K., S. Dasgupta, and B. Kumar. 2023) practice that marginalized a significant section of the Indian population. They worked tirelessly to raise awareness about this issue and promote social reforms to end untouchability (Puri 2022; Madhusudan 2023). However, notable divergences existed between them, particularly regarding their views on caste and untouchability. Ambedkar staunchly advocated for the annihilation of the caste system and believed that political power was essential for the empowerment of Dalits. In contrast, Gandhi believed in reforming the caste system from within and sought change through non-violence and persuasion.

Another area of difference was their methods of protest. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) and civil disobedience was a cornerstone of his activism, while Ambedkar, while not advocating violence, was more inclined to (Chansoria 2023) use legal and political means, including affirmative action policies, to secure the rights of Dalits.

Religious beliefs also set them apart. Gandhi's philosophy was deeply rooted in his spiritual and religious beliefs, which often intertwined (Sonowal 2023) with his political activism. Ambedkar, in contrast, was critical of organized religion and later converted to Buddhism, viewing it as a path to liberation for Dalits.

These differences had significant implications for India's social and political development. Ambedkar's influence is evident in the Indian Constitution, which he played a pivotal role in drafting, with provisions for reservations in educational institutions and government jobs for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The divergence in their approaches to the caste system also contributed to the persistence (Srivastava 2023; Panda 2022) of caste-based politics in India's electoral landscape. Ambedkar and Gandhi shared common goals of independence and social justice; however, their differing views on caste, untouchability, protest methods, and religious beliefs shaped India's (Yadav, V. K., S. Dasgupta, and B. Kumar. 2023) social and political landscape in distinct ways. Their legacies

continue to influence the nation's trajectory and ongoing discourse on issues related to caste, equality, and justice in contemporary India.

Contemporary relevance of their philosophies in Modern India

The contemporary relevance of the philosophies of Ambedkar and Gandhi in addressing current socio-political challenges and contributing to a more equitable and just India remains a subject of ongoing debate and reflection. Both leaders made significant contributions to India's struggle for independence and the pursuit of social justice, and their ideas continue to influence the nation's trajectory. Ambedkar's emphasis on affirmative action and reservations for marginalized communities in education and government jobs remains highly relevant. These policies have contributed to the socio-economic upliftment (Yadav, Dasgupta, and Kumar 2023) of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, there are ongoing debates about the need for periodic review and the extension of such policies to other marginalized groups

Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) and civil disobedience continues to be relevant in addressing contemporary challenges. Non-violent protests and movements remain effective means of advocating for social and political change. His principles of simplicity and environmental sustainability resonate with modern (Singh 2023) concerns about climate change and ecological conservation. Ambedkar's relentless fight against caste-based discrimination and his call for the annihilation of the caste system are still pertinent. Discrimination based on caste persists in many parts of India, and movements for social justice and Dalit empowerment draw inspiration from his philosophy.

Gandhi's emphasis on community engagement, self-reliance, and local governance (*Swaraj*) has relevance in promoting decentralized and participatory governance structures, empowering communities to address their own issues. His commitment to religious harmony and interfaith dialogue is crucial for maintaining social cohesion in India's diverse and multi-religious society. In the contemporary Indian context, both Ambedkar and Gandhi offer valuable insights and principles to address socio-political challenges and strive for a more equitable and just society. Combining elements of both their philosophies can provide a comprehensive framework for addressing India's complex and evolving socio-political landscape. Ultimately, the relevance of their philosophies depends on their (Garai 2023) effective implementation, adaptation to current realities, and the commitment of Indian society and its leaders to uphold principles of equity, justice, and non-violence in the pursuit of a more equitable and just India.

Major Findings

1. Ambedkar and Gandhi had differing approaches to addressing the caste system in India, with Ambedkar advocating its annihilation, while Gandhi sought reform from within.

2. Both leaders were committed to social justice, but Ambedkar focused on political empowerment and reservations, while Gandhi had a broader vision encompassing all sections of society.
3. Ambedkar's influence is seen in India's reservation policies, which aim to uplift marginalized communities through educational and employment opportunities.
4. Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) and civil disobedience contrasted with Ambedkar's willingness to use legal and political means for marginalized communities' rights.
5. Ambedkar's skepticism of organized religion led to his conversion to Buddhism, while Gandhi emphasized interfaith harmony.
6. Gandhi's principles of simplicity and environmental sustainability remain relevant for addressing modern environmental challenges.
7. Gandhi's focus on community engagement and self-governance has implications for promoting decentralized governance structures.
8. The enduring relevance of Ambedkar and Gandhi's ideals continues to inspire movements, policies, and discussions aimed at promoting equality, justice, and peace in contemporary India.

Implications of Study

The implications of studying the philosophies of Ambedkar and Gandhi are profound. It offers insights into India's historical struggle for independence and the ongoing quest for social justice. Understanding their divergent approaches to issues like caste, discrimination, and governance can inform contemporary policy decisions and societal changes. Their legacies provide a foundation for addressing current socio-political challenges and striving for a more equitable and just India, emphasizing the importance of inclusivity, non-violence, and community engagement in shaping the nation's future.

Conclusion

The philosophical ideals of Ambedkar and Gandhi provide valuable insights and guidance for shaping a more equitable and just India. These two remarkable leaders, while differing in their approaches, shared a common commitment to the betterment of Indian society. Ambedkar's advocacy for social justice and empowerment of marginalized communities, coupled with Gandhi's principles of non-violence, community engagement, and environmental sustainability, offer a comprehensive framework for addressing the socio-political challenges of contemporary India. Their legacies continue to influence the nation's trajectory, serving as a source of inspiration for movements, policies, and discussions aimed at promoting equality, justice, and peace. As India navigates its path forward, it is imperative to draw upon the enduring wisdom of Ambedkar and Gandhi to build a society that values inclusivity, harmony, and the well-being of all its citizens.

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Discourse on Caste: From Social Exclusion to Urban Slums

Krishan Kumar

Abstract

Caste has been an issue of debate and discourse for Indians vis-à-vis foreigner scholars. Because caste is not just an identity, even it has been in the center pillar of Indian society. The term 'caste' used to describe a system of social relations, it made Indian society differ from the western (Jodhka, 2018, p.1). But recently it has been analyzing that caste has become a most important and complex component for the discrimination, meanwhile, it had recognized by United States America (USA), as the California state has banned caste based discrimination, California the first US state to add caste as a protected category in its anti-discrimination laws, even earlier *Seattle* became the first USA's city, where also accepted that caste is also factor for discrimination, then its local council passed a resolution (Times of India, 14 May 2023,p.12).As earlier, as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar spoke that 'if Hindu migrate to other regions on earth, caste would become a world problem'. Firstly, the so-called untouchables were excluded from the main course of society on the ground of caste-based prejudices. They have been living in trauma, due to humiliation, as per National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB), every week thirteen Dalits are murdered; five Dalits' homes are burnt; six Dalit people are kidnapped or abducted; twenty-one Dalit women are raped (Yengde, 2019, p.92). Besides, caste is a matter for the urban India as every sixth urban Indian lives in slums unfit for human habitation. Slums, in fact, are so common that they are found in 65 per cent of the Indian towns. Yet slum dwellers are the most overlooked section of society. Six out of 10 slum dwellers live close to unsanitary drains and almost four of every 10 do not get treated water. Might be various factors could be responsible for the growth of slums in India's big cities such as unemployment, lack of educational facilities in rural area, lack of electricity facilities and hope to be millionaire, hence, Chinmay Tumbe described in his book *India Moving: A history of migration*, that caste has been also responsible for migration. Even Amnesty International estimates that caste discrimination is widespread across Asia and Africa, affecting over 260 million people. Hindu community is arranged in hierarchical order by caste. Hindu society is like a tower each floor of which is allotted to one caste. The point worth remembering is that this tower has no staircase and therefore is no way of climbing up or down from one floor to another. The floor on which one is born is also the floor on which one dies. No matter how meritorious a person from a lower might be, there is no avenue for him climbs up to the upper floor. In this research paper I will try to explore the various dimensions of caste and its impact on Indian society. How caste does social exclusion of Dalits? How Caste is anti -social and anti-nation? How caste is responsible for migration

of Dalits? How caste is responsible for the urban slums? How it has been responsible for educational exclusion of Dalits?

Keywords: caste, discrimination, thought, social, slums, dalits

Introduction

Caste has been an issue of debate and discourse for Indians vis-à-vis foreign scholars. Because caste is not just an identity; it has been at the centre of Indian society. In the context of India, caste has been an identity of human beings that tells about the socio-economic- cultural relations among communities. Caste is not a just a matter for Indians, instead it has been a prime identity of Individuals. Castes reflects Indian society in the shape of pyramid, every caste finds castes above and below its caste. Hindu community is arranged in hierarchical order by caste. Hindu society is like a tower each floor of which is allotted to one caste. The point worth remembering is that this tower has no staircase and therefore is no way of climbing up or down from one floor to another. The floor on which is born is also the floor on which one dies. No matter how meritorious a person from a lower might be, there is no avenue for him climbs up to the upper floor. Likewise, there is no means by which a person entirely devoid of merit can be relegated to a floor beneath the one of which he has been assigned. The inter-relationship between castes is not founded upon the logic of worth. However unworthy an upper-caste person might be, his status will ever remain high. Similarly, a worthy lower-caste person will never be allowed to transcend his lowness. Because of the strict taboos against inter-dinning and inter-marriage between members of lower and upper castes, the respective caste bodies are destined to remain always already segregated from each other. Even if bonds of intimacy are kept outside the consideration within the realm of caste relations, there is close surveillance of possibilities of contact which might transgress caste laws. While some castes are permitted limited mobility within the caste structure some other castes-branded 'impure'- are denied such movement altogether. The latter are the 'untouchable' castes whose 'impure' nature poses a threat of contamination to all caste Hindu people. (Basu, 2020, p.7). Dr.B.R.Ambedkar wrote in (*Mooknayak*) if a European is asked who he is the answer provided by him would indicate his nationality- English or German or French or Italian- as it may be and will be enough to resolve the matter. The same cannot, however, be said about Hindus. The statement "I am a Hindu" satisfies nobody. It is necessary for a Hindu to declare his caste in order to spell out his specific identity. (Ambedkar, 2017, p.12) Hierarchy of caste is not accepted in a constitutional state, which is based on the idea of inclusiveness. Hence inclusiveness depends upon the matrixes of equality, liberty and fraternity in a society and state.

If anybody will try to mitigating on the status of equality in the India, s/he could find that equality is missing, because [Indian] society has been divided in a grading system, i.e., Brahmin (priests, teachers,

intellectuals), *Kshatriya* (warriors, kings, administrators), *Vaishya* (agriculturalists, traders, farmers), *Shudras* (as the helpers of *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas* and *Vaishyas*) and Untouchables (out of all four grading categories). Brahmins were considered on the top floor, while former untouchables [Dalits] were in the basement.

According to the popular textbooks' view, caste is an ancient Indian institution derived from the dominant religious ideology of the Hindus. The religious system of the Hindus underlined the significance of *varna*, *karma*, and *dharma*, pronounced in *Manusmriti*. These ideas produced a hierarchical social order structured around the notions of purity and pollution (Jodhka, 2018, p.2).

This rigid categorization has been responsible for the plight condition of Dalits: 1) People of the higher castes do not accept water or food from their hands. 2) They are not served by barbers and tailors who serve the so-called upper castes. 3) They were not allowed to use gold ornaments. 4) They were deprived of worshipping of the gods in the Hindu temples. 5) They were not allowed to move freely in public places and if they (Dalits) do so they are expected to maintain a respectable distance. 6) They were not allowed to use public wells and were not permitted to stay in hotels meant for the high caste of the society. 7) They could not take bath at a public *ghat*. 8) They were refused admission in schools, even when they were allowed admission those days they were looked down upon by classmates and even they could not change their occupations.

Dalits were not only downgraded socially but their economic conditions were also very worst due to casteism: 1) Bonded Labour was a system, even it existed today, and in this system Dalits have been working as slaves for the so-called upper castes. 2) Most of Dalits in rural area were /are landless labourers and they don't get adequate returns for the labour they put in. Moreover, the nature of job is not permanent. The consequences are heavy indebtedness. 3) Under the constitution everyone is free to follow a profession of one's choice. Dalits are also free, but most of them were forced to pursue their hereditary occupations. 4) Dalits were excluded from educational institutions by the so-called upper castes. (Pasricha, 2006, p.219)

Even sometimes, Dalits' professions had become a danger for their life, as in the state of Gujarat four Dalit young men caught skinning a cow were stripped, tied and beaten with iron rods by cow vigilantes who accused them of the killing the animal (they had not). In Madhya Pradesh two Dalit women were assaulted for supposedly carrying illegal cow meat (it was legal buffalo meat). In Haryana two Dalits were beaten and forced to eat cow dung for the same crime. (Tharoor, 2018, p.115)

Manual scavengers still have been dying in sewerages lack of basic facilities. Manual scavengers are united by the fact that those employed are disproportionately Dalits, "untouchables" outside the Hindu

caste system. Overall, according to a 2021 survey of 43,797 manual scavengers have been registered by the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry.(Wankhede and Kahle, 2023,p.115)That is why, still millions of people of the India [Dalits] have been excluded from the main stream. There have been various components for exclusion of the people from the society. But the core concept behind this stupid exclusion scenario is the acceptance of Inequality, although inequality had been accepted by various scholars with arguments, like that Plato, Aristotle, Adam Smith, Hobbes, Lock, Hegel then utilitarian's theorists-Jermy Bentham, J.S.Mill; elite theorists- Pareto, Mosca, Robert Michels; hard core liberal theorists like that Nozik, F.A.Hayek. Because they believe that all human beings should not be accepted equally by birth, every individual is the unique creation of nature and everyone is born with some kind of strengths and some kind of weaknesses.

As, Plato explained his arguments to differing individual capacities with the help of the theory of three classes and three souls, an idea borrowed from Pythagoras. He pointed out that every human soul had three qualities: rational, spirit and appetite, with justice as the fourth virtue, architectonic in nature, balancing and harmonizing the other three qualities. He took psychological disharmony among the constituent parts into consideration. In each soul, one of these qualities would be the predominant faculty. Individuals who have the rational faculty was predominant would constitute the ruling class, and the virtue of such a soul was wisdom. But his categorization of humans was logically and little bit accepted on the grounds that it was an open system. (Mukherjee, 2013, pp.76-78.) Aristotle also accepted the concept of inequality on the ground of skill and gender; tremendously he did not grant the right of citizenship towards women and slaves. Hence, Caste is not a matter of choice for an individual, when s/he is born, but later on it becomes one of the most important components to determining his or her ability. The great scholar Emmunal Kant never accepted the political philosophy of forward and backward caste, he never accepted the philosophy of inferiority or superiority, he accepted that all individuals are complete themselves; nobody should be used as a means to fulfill anybody's ends. Kant was influenced by Rousseau, who didn't accept any type of restrictions upon human beings. In the context of India, caste is most dominated factor, which has been responsible for exclusion and discrimination for centuries.

Struggle for Water: Caste Matters

Water has been the basis of human life, but in the Indian society access of water is affected with the identity of caste. When another whole world has been searching water on the moon while Dalits are fighting for the water of the earth, because of the dogma of caste. Dutta (2020) aptly argues that in 2015, Dr. Shashi Tharoor, an author and politician, argued at an Oxford university debate that Britain owes India; he demanded compensation for 200 years of colonial rule from Britain, while in his

country's citizens, Dalits have been humiliated for thousands of years just because of caste (Dutta,2020,p. 88). In India, more than 20% Dalits don't have the access to safe drinking water. 48.4% of Dalits villagers are denied access of water source; even the majority of Dalits depend on the will of dominant castes for access of water. This phenomenon has been surviving due to castes' rigidity, prejudices and caste capital; Dalits are not allowed to use taps and wells located in non-Dalit area. (Hannah, p. 2023) Struggle for water is simultaneously a struggle for power; water access has been a component for grab the title dominance caste, as M.N. Srinivas a well-known sociologist, elaborated the concept of dominant caste, he wrote that a caste may be said to be 'dominant' when it holds the sources of economic and political power. Later on, he added human resources are to be a component for power like that in villages; all castes' associations have been motivating their youth to enter in government jobs especially high ranks posts. (Jodhka, 2012, p.38) Therefore Dalits are faced some kind of discrimination on the ground of water such as in some places Dalits are not allowed to fetch water but non-Dalits draw the water for Dalits; Dalits are not allowed to touch the pots of non-dalits; Dalits and non-Dalits have separate sources of water access-wells, tabs, ponds, tanks etc. (Hannah, 2023) even sometimes access of water has become cause of deaths of Dalits such as in August 2022, Indra Meghwal, a Dalit student from *Surana* village of Rajasthan's Jalore district, was beaten to death by his teacher reportedly for merely touching a drinking water pot. A similar death of a Dalit man occurred in Rajasthan's Jodhpur district in November 2022 — Kishanlal Bheel was thrashed for drawing water from a tube well (water tab) (Waghre, 2023).

The empirical evidence is available, and the incidents are frequent even in the media. The question then arises: how are government schemes like the *Jal Jeevan Mission* addressing the likelihood and the reality of such incidents in their policies? Research has demonstrated that caste segregation remains a significant barrier to public goods, including access to water. Water-related hazards also affect the Dalit community. The New Humanitarian found that during droughts and flood-related relief work, caste discrimination persisted when it came to rehabilitation and support of those affected, more recently in Odisha and Kerala. (ibid. 2023) As Ernest Renan observed about the nation, if any nation's citizens could not cry or rejoice together (Tharoor, 2020, p.396), there should be a need to mitigate social issues, which have become barriers to their togetherness and belongingness. In the context of India, Dalits and non-Dalits have been separated each other in times of joy and sorrow and even in the issue of access water.

Educational Exclusion of Dalits: Trauma of Caste identity

Bhimraj a Dalit scholar, who has been selected for the *Ratanshaw Bomanji Zaiwalla* scholarship to pursue an M.Phil in Law at Oxford University, He described his plight at South Asian University (SAU) in Delhi. How he was excluded from doctoral study by the university, which is a very reputed

University in the capital. In 2020, he joined SAU's doctoral programme after securing the first rank in the entrance exam on his second attempt. He said he faced an inordinate delay in getting the JRF scholarship fund of Rs 31,000 due to the varsity. The semester fee was Rs 45,000; his family borrowed money, sold gold, and took loans to pay for it. Varsity's administration took eight months to upload his details on the UGC to provide his JRF scholarship fund. Due to a lack of money, his mental health was affected; he had been stressed and traumatized for a long time (Kuntamalla, 2023).

Moreover, Casteism is not just responsible for the educational exclusion of Dalits; moreover, sometimes it kills Dalits, as Dr. Pamposh (26-Year-old)—a woman doctor working as an intern at the *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee* (SGPC)-run *Sri Guru Ram Dass* Institute of Medical Science and Research—died by casteist in Punjab in 2023. Her family members alleged that she was being subjected to caste-based slurs by several doctors.

Even caste prejudices not a matter for small cities or rural India while it has been existing in metro cities of India. like that, an internal surveys conducted by IIT Bombay openly reveal the same social structure of caste-based discrimination that leads to isolation, demarcation, and severe mental health issues faced by students belonging to Dalits' communities. A statement that was issued based on the results of the survey mentions the convenience of power hierarchy, which is directly evident in India's social and cultural discourse. The integration of the caste system in the Indian social hierarchy is a deeply rooted part of sectarian society. Most of the caste hierarchy also brings layers of complexity to the idea of secularism, which talks about equality and equity in the largest democracy. Caste-based discrimination contributes to a major fragment of the buildup in Indian society. A detailed **survey** was conducted by the cell of IIT Bombay, in which 388 Dalits students participated, out of which 77 described their lived experiences of facing discrimination on campus. According to the results published in the report by the cell of IIT Bombay, students belonging to Dalits took the survey in February 2022. A total of 388 students, or approximately 20% of the students on campus, took the survey. Many of them have described the details and experiences in which they have faced a lot of discrimination.

Earlier, 70% of the SC/ST students mentioned being asked about their ranks and surnames to know about their caste. Contrary to the statement, in another survey, it was found that general category students don't feel knowing about caste is problematic; it is a simple way to understand where the student comes from, or mostly out of a behavioral approach to befriending another fellow student. (Dutta, 2023)

We don't have to forget the case of a young scholar at the University of Hyderabad, Rohit Vemula, who committed suicide. On January 17, 2016, he was a PhD candidate, had been suspended along with four others after a complaint by the local unit of the *Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad* (ABVP). Later on, his fellowship of Rs 25,000 was suspended for raising "issues under the banner of the Ambedkar Students Association (ASA). He was unable to manage his expenses and after he and the four other students were removed from their hostel rooms, they set up a tent on the campus and began a relay hunger strike. But these all consequences affected his mental health and he committed suicide. He left behind a searing note talking of unfinished dreams and how he felt his "birth was his fatal accident". His words in his suicide note "Let my funeral be silent and smooth". Behave like I (Rohit Vemula) just appeared and gone. Do not shed tears for me. Know that I am happy dead than being alive.

Before these incidents, a number of Dalit Intellectuals describe their plight conditions, when they had been doing their study. Tulsi Ram narrates memories of his school as child, all Dalit students' bunch was separated from others, and even their teacher abused and humiliated them. Omprakash Valmiki narrates more painful stories of his school days. He narrated his experience:

Although the doors of government schools had begun to open for untouchables, the mentality of the ordinary people had not changed much. I had to sit away from the others in the class, that too on the floor. The mat ran out before reaching the spot I sat on...The boys would beat me in any case, but the teachers also punished me. All sorts of stratagems were tried so that I would run away from school and take up the kind of work for which I was born. (Kumar 2023, p.126)

These kinds of stories have been endless for centuries from *Ekalavya to Rohit Vemula*.

Dalit Migration: Caste matters and migrates

Every year millions of Dalits migrate from rural areas to cities in search of dignified life with hopes and dreams of a better future. (Chauhan, 2023) If anyone will look at the Henley Private Migration Report of 2023, which shows that in 2022, 7500 ultra-rich Indians were out flowed, while in 2023, approximately 6500 ultra-rich Indians would be out flowed, the technical term for these ultra-rich is "high net worth individuals" (HNWIs), which is considered to be those with an investable wealth of one million dollars or more. In rupee terms, that threshold means Rs. 8.2 crore or more. Investable wealth refers to an individual's net investable assets (property, cash, and equities) and any other liabilities. (Mishra, 2023, p.6)

Andrew Amoils (the Head of Research at New World Wealth, the organization that provides the data for the report) said:

The top five destinations for net inflows of high-net-worth individuals in 2023 are projected to be Australia, the UAE, Singapore, the USA, and Switzerland. On the flip side, the largest net outflows of millionaires are expected to come from China, India, the UK, Russia, and Brazil.

The important questions, which came to see the migration of super-rich Indians and the other countries, Steffen (CEO of Henely) says that political stability, low taxation, and personal freedom have been key components for millionaires, when they come to deciding where to live?

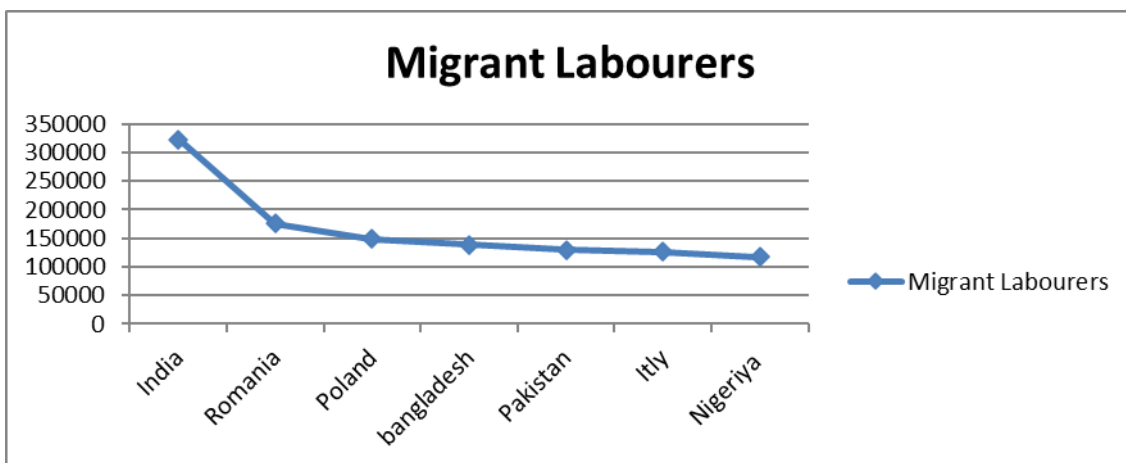
However, migration of Dalits present a different picture, their migration was/is not depend upon them, while they Have/had been migrating, due to some consequences; Dalits have been fighting for basic needs such as food, clothes and shelter at their native place. But the most important thing is dignity and security, because social discrimination has been cause of poverty and miserable conditions of Dalits.

The historical evidence on migration as a means to escape caste oppression is also overwhelming, as witnessed in the earlier account of the Great Indian Migration Wave and Ambedkar's numerous exhortations. In his work on land and caste in south India, economic historian Dharma Kumar noted the possibilities opened up by emigration in the 19th century for social mobility including 'greater knowledge of agricultural techniques and less willingness to abide by caste restrictions'. Similarly, the Census of 1931 observed that emigration from southern India was 'a great teacher of self-respect' and had 'contributed most to the growth of consciousness among the depressed classes'. Several personal memoirs such as Narendra Jadhav's *Untouchables* or Daya Pawar's *Baluta* or Sujatha Gidla's *Ants among Elephants*, have recounted how the act of internal or international migration was inevitably linked with the beginning of social emancipation.(Tumbe, 2022,p. 208) While Gandhi's love for villages but on the issue of caste and migration, he stated:

If Harijans are physically ill-treated in a place and if they cannot get redress in any other way, they should leave that village and we should encourage them to do so... what is the harm if the Harijans, all or some of them, leave the place after serving notice on the caste Hindus? (ibid)

Therefore, in the context of India, caste has been a most important component from millionaires to poors, from urbans to rurals, from males to females, from unemployed to employed.

The Young Foundation and Focus on Labour Exploitation published a research report on the problems of migrant workers in June 2023, which is based on 47 migrant laborers' interviews. It shows that racism, casteism, discrimination, sexual assaults, physical torture, and mental harassment have been the general problems for migrant's labour in London. As per the census of 2021, the biggest number of migrant labourers came from India to London, which is 3, 23,000. (Rights and Risks: Migrant labour exploitation in London Research report, June 2023) Means the poison of caste has been spreading everywhere by the casteist minds.



(Source : Rights and Risks: Migrant labour exploitation in London Research report, June 2023)

Simultaneously, in India, internal migration is not also safe for Dalits, in 2023, *Maharashtra Navnirman Sena* (MNS) president Raj Thackeray wrote a letter to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on the migrants' issues, stating how skill development sectors and industries have kept local residents in the dark about job recruitment drives. He said that all private placement agencies have been undertaking job recruitment drives without proper communication. They are recruiting migrants and denying local youths the right to work in their home state. Private recruiting agencies have been ignoring all rules, like the mandatory domicile certificate, to promote outsiders. He has also urged the state government to ensure the passage and strict implementation of the Private Placement Agency Registration and Regulation Act for the employment security of locals.

He claimed that migrants have been responsible for bad drains and rivers in Mumbai. He accepted that there is a need to make laws regarding the limit on how many migrants should come to a city. After all, the influx of migrants leads to overburdened infrastructure. These migrants built illegal colonies along the drains and river banks. These lead to poor drainage and river management. Before the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), Assembly, and Lok Sabha polls, this will have been going to on in April–May 2024. He showed his agenda for elections and his approach to migrants (Indian Express, 26 June 2023). Due to such kind of policies, sometimes Dalits become the enemy of

Dalits. Even due to internal migration, Dalits couldn't avail and access properly welfare policies of the government, as P. Chidambaram (2023) argued in his article in Indian Express that poor access of food under One Nation One Card (ONORC), there are an estimated 450 million internal migrants in the country of which about 54 million inter-state migrants. Under ONORC, an *Aadhar* linked ration card is supposed to enable the card holder to draw rations at any ration distributor shop of center of the country, but government data shows that between 2019 to 2023, only 1.4 million inter-state transactions. (Chidambaram, 2023, p.10) Nobody is worrying about the 52.6 million migrates, who have not been accessing food security policies of the government and maximum of them belong to Dalits.

Internal migration isn't an issue of only for political-economic rather than social, as Chinmay Tumbe described in his book *India Moving: A history of migration* about the consequences of migration in India, he analyzed that there have been various variables responsible for human migration throughout the world but 'Caste' is the worst variable of the all variables. He mentioned that several personal memoirs such as Narendra Jadhav's *Untouchables* or Daya Pawar's *Baluta* of Sujatha Gidla's *Ants among Elephants* have recounted how the act of internal and international migration was inevitably linked with the beginning of dignified life. (Tumbe 2022, 208) The migration of Dalits from rural to urban has been able to change the thinking of Dalits, such as urban Mahars, who have thrown out pictures and images of Hindu deities from their homes, while rural Mahars have not discarded them but have only added those of the Buddha and Ambedkar. Another change has come to northern India, where Chamars have added pictures of the Indian Constitution and Sahab Kanshi Ram, along with other Hindu deities, in both rural and urban. Simultaneously, the *Valmiki* of UP and Punjab have been aware of the philosophy of Ambedkar, and they have added his pictures into their temples, darmsshalas (rest houses), and homes along with those of Maharishi *Valmiki* and other Hindu deities (Srinivas 1996,p. XXI).

Dalits' Participation in Public Policy Making: Caste is a Barrier

Justice is a very important and sensitive issue because if you want to maintain peace in society then we should promote the administration of justice. But Indian society is divided on the basis of religion, caste, culture etc. but the most influential factor is caste. As per the division of society a single institution cannot survive without the representation of caste's representatives. That is why our constitution makers adopted the affirmative action to handle this divertive society they adopted the policy of reservation in the Legislature, Executive and judiciary with the help of reservation-these all institutions are working properly and represent all the sections of Indian society not only a single class or caste. According to Harold Lasswell this policy is like 'who gets what, when and how'.

(Chakrabarti and Sanyal 2019, p.19) So that is why it should be clear about the objectives of public policy. Mahatma Gandhi's famous talisman recalling the face of poorest person during policy making would be the best way to represent all people interest. Other instructions are also very important for the public with regard to the policy making process in India which is provided by Indian constitution- the preamble of the constitution is providing to all citizens: Justice, social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity; and to promote the fraternity among them. (ibid.)

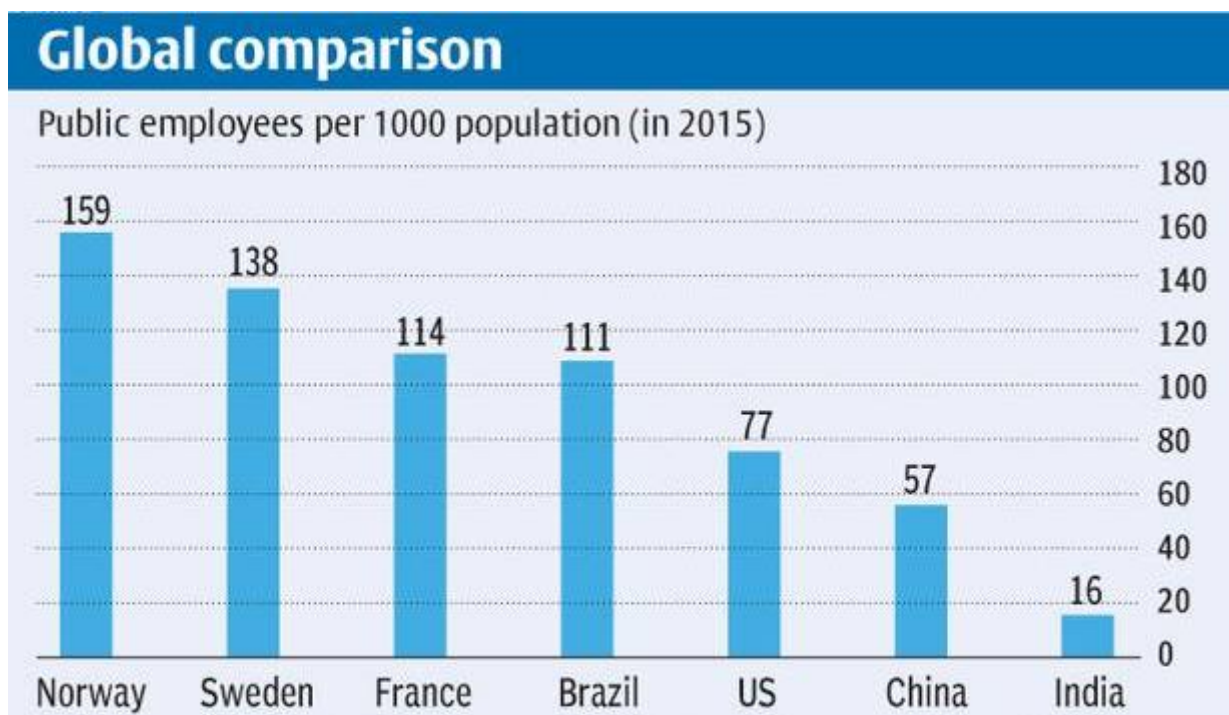
However, Dalits' participation in public policy making is very little, which has become a big challenge for them. In the participation of politics once again the reservations for MPs and MLAs had been granted by the 126th Amendment Bill which was passed in parliament. Reservation for members of SCs and STs, given for the past 70 years in *Lok Sabha* and State Assemblies which was ending on January 25, 2020. While the reservation for Anglo-Indians in the form of "nomination" is set to expire on January 25, 2020 as the 126th Amendment does not extend the facility of reservation for the community.

With the help of this reservation policy there are 84 members from the SC and 47 from the ST communities in *Loksabha*. In state assemblies across India there are 614 SC members and 554 ST members. But these members have a lot of problems such as they will be representative of Dalits but they are living under the umbrella of political parties. The researcher put here the example of **Hathras Case** where the 19-year-old Dalit woman was attacked on September 14, 2020 in the village of Hathras in the state of Uttar Pradesh and suffered multiple fractures, strangulation, paralysis and gashes in her tongue. She died two weeks later as a result of her injuries. In her statement she told the local police that she was dragged by her *dupatta* (a long scarf-like accessory) into the fields from where she had been cutting grass with her mother and brother and was raped and assaulted by four upper caste men. She was later found naked and bleeding in the fields by her family. The victim belonged to the Dalit sub-caste of *Valmiki*s, otherwise known as *Bhangis*; a traditionally untouchable caste associated with cleaning toilets, sweeping and scavenging. The four accused men were from the upper caste group of *Thakurs*, who form the majority in that village, followed by another upper caste group of *Brahmins*. At the time of the assault there were only four Dalit households in the village, all belonging to *Valmiki*'s caste and living within a half kilometer radius. These Dalit families own some small lands, cattle and depend on India's National Rural Guarantee Act, selling their cattle and underpaid cleaning jobs for their livelihood. The *Thakurs* possess political influence in the state and the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath also belongs to the same caste. According to the NCRB of (2019) Uttar Pradesh had the highest number of crimes against Dalits around 25.8% of the total cases in India with over 95% pendency rates for these crimes. The state also has the second highest number of rapes

of Dalit women. (Mondal, 2021, p.1) But not a single *Valmiki's* MP/MLA gave any type of statement regarding this case, who (MPs and MLAs) are /were be the part of Government.

In *Gulamgiri* Phule described the hegemony of Brahmanical philosophy upon the society as he observed that the Brahmans who seemed often liberal and reformers grouped in organizations such as the *Prathana Samaj*, *Brahma Samaj*, *Sarvajanik Sabha* and congress. But in reality, according to him, that all these were working to establish so- called upper caste hegemony (Gail 1995, p.18) *Gulamgiri* which mainly focuses on caste. But the conditions have not changed till today. At present also Dalits are exploited with the help of various mechanisms: philosophically, theoretically and practically. An example of reservation policy is; firstly it was paralyzed philosophically by the narrative that it makes a person weak; it has been demising theoretically as a narrative created by some scholars that it has become a means exploitation of Dalits by Dalits, and practically it has been shirking in the name of merit and performance. Even in the name of Privatization, Globalization, E-revolution reservation implications have been ignoring by hook and crook.

Public Employees



Sources: European countries: www.europeandatajournalism.eu; Brazil and China: calculated from World Bank data on public employment and UN population projections; United States and India: Report of Seventh Pay Commission of India, 2016

Simultaneously, Government sector in India has been shrinking, which is also against the reservation policy, as per international standards. Relative to population, public employment in India is only one-tenth of that in Norway; only 15 per cent of that in Brazil and much less than a third of that in China (Figure 4.3) (Chandrasekhar, 2019)

But public sector is declining continuously or without reservation Dalits could not enter high rank posts such as Vice-Chancellor. In November 2017 Smt. Matadeen Anuragi of Sonapat (Haryana) demanded the information regarding the VCs' categories of Indian universities from UGC under the RTI act of 2005. The reply of UGC came in 5 January 2018 in which the UGC mentioned that as per information available on AISHE portal for the year 2015-16 there are 496 Vice- Chancellors in total and out of which six are SC, six are ST and thirty-six are OBC. This is not an acceptable representation of Dalits, because remaining 448 Vice-Chancellors came from the so-called upper castes. Yogendra Yadav tweeted on this RTI's information that SC+ST+OBC =70% population of India but less than 10% of them are among the Vice-Chancellors (48 out of 496). He raised a question mark on the recruitment system of VCs- how social justice will be come in society?

Even in the era of privatization at present there are 1014 universities in India out of which 439 are State Universities, 126 are Deemed to be Universities, 54 are Central Universities and 395 are Private Universities. Even 375 Universities are registered under 12(B) sections out of which 259 are State Universities, 47 Deemed to be Universities, 54 Central Universities and 15 Private Universities. But in these private and Deemed Universities recruitment don't follow the reservation policy of Indian constitution.

In 2021, total of 35 Supreme Court judges has been appointed since May 2014. 8 of these judges have superannuated. 27 are currently serving. Former CJI **NV Ramana** will be the only serving judge after April 23, 2021 who has not been appointed during the tenure of the current ruling establishment. Out of these 35 judges, there are three women judges, the highest so far, one Muslim, one Christian, one Parsi and one SC judge have been appointed.

Now compare this to at least 9 appointees who belong to the Brahmin caste out of this 35. This constitutes around 26% of the appointees. 7 judges belong to Baniya/Vaishya caste from the Hindu religion constituting 20% of judges. 3 are Kayasthas constituting 8.5% judges. A simple calculation makes it abundantly clear that over 50% of the judges are belonged to so-called upper caste Hindus.(Saxena, 2021) So still Dalits have no a proper representation in the Indian Judiciary.

The case of Justice C.S. Karnan of Madras High Court belonging to SC community has come to notice showing that even person of his stature is suffering victimization at the hands of his fellow judges belonging to higher castes. In the second case 17 district judges of Chattisgarh, all belonging to SC/ST were removed from service allegedly without valid reasons while they had 5 to 10 years of service to go and were maturing for elevation as High Court judges.(National Commission For Scheduled Castes A Report On Reservation In Judiciary).Due to not a proper representation of Dalits in Judiciary, Dalits are/ were living without justice in India, some major cases which show that how so-called upper caste

culprits were released by the courts- on 11 July 1996, the Ranveer Sena, a privileged-caste, feudal militia, murdered twenty-one landless labourers in *Bathani Tola* village in the state of Bihar. In 2012, the Patna High Court acquitted all the accused. On 1 December 1997, the Ranveer Sena massacred fifty- eight Dalits in Laxmanpur Bathe village, also in Bihar. In April 2010, the trial court convicted all the twenty-six accused. It sentenced ten of them to life imprisonment and sixteen to death. In October 2013, the Patna High Court suspended the conviction of all twenty-six accused, saying the prosecution had not produced any evidence to guarantee any punishment at all. (Roy, 2017, p. 125)

Reservation: Caste is matter

In June 2022, the United States Supreme Court barred universities like Harvard from using affirmative action policies in college admissions. The case, *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc v President and Fellows of Harvard College*, struck down more than 50 years of affirmative action policies in American higher education. The US Supreme Court first upheld affirmative action in 1978 in *Regents of the University of California v Bakke*, justifying these policies in the name of “diversity”. Bakke found that a university’s only justification for affirmative action was that viewpoints from students of diverse racial backgrounds would enhance university life. Diversity has since spread from classrooms to boardrooms. “Diversity, equity and inclusion” offices are ubiquitous in American corporations.

The diversity justification makes affirmative action under American law starkly different from reservation under the Indian Constitution, which locates reservation firmly within a rights framework. Bakke rejected the argument that affirmative action is reparation for historical discrimination. It also prohibited universities from fixing quotas for different races. By contrast, while the Indian Constitution prohibits discrimination on grounds of race, caste, religion and sex, it also allows the state to pass laws benefitting women, children, socially and educationally backward classes, and SC and ST. It specifically permits reservation, including quotas. (Katju, 2023, p.8)

On the issue of affirmative action, Manipur lost its peace in May 2023; the violence seems to have been a High Court directive on the demand for *Meiteis* to be granted ST status. The hill population, predominantly *Naga* and *Kuki* tribes, object to this demand. Later on, the issue was converted into an ethnic conflict between two communities: *Meiteis* and *Kukis*. More than 150 people have been killed, bodies mutilated, women raped, scores of villages razed to the ground, and more than 50,000 people have fled their homes to seek refuge in relief camps. The horrific incident happened in July 2023, when a video of two women from the *Kukis* community of Manipur being disrobed, paraded naked, groped, and gang raped by a mob went viral. It was a traumatized video, which did a daunt on India’s image. Manipur is a matter of study, but the cause of this ethnic conflict was politics of affirmative action. (Aribam, 2023, p.9)

The issue of reservation has become a topic of debate among pro- and anti – reservation groups. The Indian society continues to be a caste-ridden society. Such a society is premised on inequality and discrimination. For centuries those at the top of the caste hierarchy did not permit those at the lowest rungs the SCs, STs and other marginalized groups to own property enter institutions of learning or even are present in the public space. The situation has not changed much even today. The framers of the constitution promised that all citizens will be treated equally. The system of reservation was set up to provide justice and equality to those who never enjoyed them. (Pinto2008:76) Dalits were/ are facing a number of problems due to casteism. Reservation seems to be the one important solution of their problems.

Currently, India has been implicating affirmative action on the basis of caste; as per the central government policy, there is a 15 percent reservation for SCs, 7.5 percent for STs, 27 percent for other backward castes, and 10 percent for touchable as per the 103 amendments of the Indian constitution, it was accepted for economically weaker sections reservation. While this reservation is not just on the ground of economics because SCs, STs, and OBCs have been excluded from it, only those touchable would be counted as EWS, whose yearly income is less than six lakhs, with the limited property.

Indirect Attacks on Reservation: Casteist minds

The Centre in October 2021 recommended 31 candidates from private sector and public sector undertakings for appointment at senior and mid-level positions in various Union Ministries under the “lateral entry” programme on “contract basis”. The highest number of such appointments is six and they are sent to the Ministry of Finance.

Reservation or caste-based quotas do not apply to these recruitments. As per norms the post of Joint Secretary, Director, and Deputy Secretary are drawn from officers belonging to the All-India Service ‘Group A’ service which includes the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Revenue Service (IRS) among others. A Joint Secretary is the third highest ranking officer in the government.

A press statement issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoP&T) said that it had requested the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) “to select suitable persons to join the Government at the level of Joint Secretary/ Director/ Deputy Secretary in various Ministries/ Departments of the Government of India on contract/deputation basis.” The request was made on December 12, 2020 and February 12, 2021.

The UPSC launched online recruitment applications in February and March. “In response, a total of 295 applications for Joint Secretary, 1,247 applications for Director, and 489 applications for Deputy

Secretary Posts were received,” DOPT said. The UPSC shortlisted 231 candidates for the interview after sorting out the application forms that were received through online sources. The interviews were conducted from September 27-October 8, 2021, and 31 candidates were recommended. Even during this recruitment, the order of Government of India, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions’ Department of Personnel and Training’s (DOPT) office of memorandum was ignored by the Government which was passed on 15 May 2018. As per this it has been brought to the notice of this Department by the Honorable National Commission for Scheduled Tribes that the Office Memorandum dated 24.09.1968 is old and the instructions laid down in the OM must be reiterated. It is, therefore, reiterated that in respect of appointments to Central Government posts and services there shall be reservation for SC, ST and OBC candidates in temporary appointments which are to last for 45 days or more (Office of Memorandum 15 May 2018). This type of policies have been responsible for the vulnerable conditions of Dalits and slums have been spreading in the smart cities of India.

Conclusion

Once Dr. B. R. Ambedkar said that Dalits don’t have any especial demand from the Indian society, they have only one demand that they must be accepted as human being like others. But caste has been an obstacle for Dalits to recognize as human beings, that is why there is need to talking about de-casteing with the de-colonizing. (Paswan, 2023,8)The Brahmanical caste system isn’t accepting the concept of equality, as a child is beaten to death because he doesn’t know his caste identity. Scholars have been suicidal because their mental health has been disturbed by caste-based narratives. Millions of Dalits have been living in urban slums because of the compulsion of casteing minds. Dalits have been facing caste-based humiliation in everyday life. While the SCST [Prevention of Atrocities] Act, 1989, which has been the most effective safeguard for Dalits, was amended in 2015, which punished the casteist slurs and denied anticipatory bail to the accused, as per the amendment of 2015, some new acts were included in the act of atrocity, like the tonsuring of the head, the moustache, and similar acts.(Soren, 2021, pp.10-12) But all constitutional safeguards will be effective when we accept that casteism is the reality of Indian society. Caste is against the concepts of equality, liberty, and fraternity, which have been necessary for a strong foundation for a strong nation. To Dr. Ambedkar, social democracy meant a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality, and fraternity as the principles of life, which he called a trinity and said they could not be separated from each other. He felt, in economic and social life we continue to deny “the principle of one man one value” He asked “How long shall we continue to live this life of contradictions? How long shall we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life?” “...If we continue to deny it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy in peril.”

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Disorganized Reforms: A Social Perspective on Contemporary Casteism in India

Sumedha Seth

Abstract

Despite the Shakespearean novelty of "What's in the name?", an Indian societal validity is evidently described via the name only, as if their individual dependence is based through this particular point of order. The deep-rooted casteism of India has a specific peculiarity, with variegated flavors of different permutations and combinations present in 3000 types of castes and almost 25000 sub-castes⁷ within the subcontinent. But the buck doesn't stop here! Because of these varieties, there are numerous hurdles within other aspects of humanitarian and societal norms, under the Aegises of health care and general lifespan of an individual within the community, employment opportunities, housing facilities causing slavery, lack of equal status due to discriminatory practices, and above all, subordination of a human being because of the factors that are beyond their own control. The repression and suppression of the lower castes from the hands of the higher castes is a long ill-fated praxis which occupies the above-stated nomenclature till date. The research paper analyzes the basis of the caste politics within the Indian social fabric, perceivably omnipresent despite numerous government policies cogently devised for the betterment of all the citizens alike. The premise would majorly include access and benefit of education, basic Healthcare facilities, presence of the quoted system within urban and rural dwellings along with its repercussions upon the people within, employment settings and sanitation facilities available for the double marginalized communities using quantitative data and particular case studies. Based upon the same, the paper will try to provide the solutions to absolve the problems related to the same.

Keywords: Social Mobility, Constitution, Social diversity, Double marginalization, Labor market, Casteism, Democracy, Social Exclusion.

Introduction

India is, essentially, a constitution-based governance system, following a democratic outlook not only towards governance model, but towards general life *per se*. Following the Westminster model⁸, India had many countries as its mentor during the process of Constitution making between 1946 to 1949,

⁷ The belief behind the caste system is that it divides Hindus into four main categories - Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the Shudras. Many also believe that the groups originated from Brahma, the Hindu God of creation. But the most interesting fact is that these four varnas or categories have further disintegrated into various other jatis and prajatis, further deepening the roots of stringent casteism in India.

⁸ The Westminster system is the basis of government in India, at the state, territory and federal level. It is based on the British model of responsible government.

when the Constitution was adopted on 29th of November, 1949. It is indeed a peculiar case of recurring idiosyncrasies, not just in terms of its length and volumes trying to cater to each of the country's varied diversity, but also in terms of its members. Congress (termed as Indian National Congress, INC, at the moment) was vastly considered as the "Brahmin-Baniya party"⁹, largely predominated by the Hindi-speaking majority in its hierarchy had a Mahar (An Untouchable or Shudra as per the Manusmriti) devising a tool for the newly independent government to control all the sections and sectors of population, which is quite a humongous task for the picturesque landscape of varied castes, religions, languages and socio-economic groups amongst the others. This creator was none other than Dr. Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar.

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar is one of the prominent figures in India's struggle for social justice and equality. He played a pivotal role in reshaping the socio-political landscape of the country. His ideology and actions aimed at improving the social status of backward castes have left an indelible mark on Indian history. Dr. Ambedkar's socio-political ideology has a special emphasis on the impact of the social status of backward castes, and assesses the enduring impact of his work in contemporary India. Being an erudite scholar, jurist, and social reformer, he dedicated his life to fighting against the oppressive caste system in India. His socio-political ideology revolved around the empowerment and social upliftment of the backward castes (also known as Scheduled Castes or Dalits).

The phenomenon of casteism and its existence of a deeply rooted caste-system, which was initially created for the division of labor, but later turned India into a socially immobile society. A forward take on the existence of an Indian experience of racism has an intake constitutional construct of democracy, created by the Father of the constitution, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, in governance to a simple classroom system, analyzing the contemporary social mobility ranking and the effect it has on the masses in general.

Democracy and Caste Structure

Etymologically, Democracy is derived from the Greek *dēmokratía* "the power to the people" which was coined from *dêmos* "people" and *krátos* "power". But modern democracy is different from the Greek form of Democracy because, even though there are multi-dimensional eminent aspects of democracy, these 2 basic principles can be classified as the most important ones i.e., Equality and Freedom. These principles are reflected, fundamentally, by all citizens being equal before the law, and having equal access to power, and freedom is secured by legitimized rights and liberties, which are

⁹ A basis of E.V. Ramasami's or Periyar's exit from the Indian National Congress is based on the dominance of North-Indian, Hindi speaking and high-caste Hindu association in the hierarchy of party lines. This contributed further towards the Dravidian movement, further leading to the formation of DMK.

generally protected by the constitution. These democratic principles have also been considered important for implementation and theorization in education. One of the pioneering believers and propagators of the same is John Dewey, an American educationist and philosopher who is also believed to be one of the theorists and mentor who influenced Dr. Ambedkar into the life of civic responsibilities:

“Democracy is not just a form of governance, but a way of life”.

A deeper introspection of this viewpoint must focus on the freedom to act as the only means of self-realization available to an individual. Thus, Dewey talks about variety of the strands of people in the society which vary the social hierarchical structure, values that a society expects from its citizenry and the education.

Similarly, Ambedkar also implies his principle of democracy on the premises that, “democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellowmen.” Democracy is a powerful tool for the citizens, especially the ones in making, reasonably arguing for its constructive paradigm marching towards a better lifestyle and not just a usage for a fashionable fad of acceptance. Thus, internalization of democracy must be done in a rightful manner, especially not just for realization of the rights, but also for sharing the palanquins of responsibilities as equals and equitables.

Paradox of Democratic Existence

The understanding of democracy, as implied by Ambedkar, doesn't seem to be applicable within either the societal framework at large or within the superficial setup of the political standards. Here, it can be further implicated that the political setup diminishes the effect of various measures like, for instance, the affirmative actions taken in the name of reforms. Like, for instance, the most debated 1979 Mandal Commission was made to define the core structure for application of reservation to the Other Backward Classes, under Article 340 of the Constitution of India, which did not exist in a formal way in the then time-space continuum. Before this nomenclature was introduced, there existed only the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, identified by the Constitution from and within the colloquial language, sometimes modified and Indianized by Mahatma Gandhi in the name of “*Harijans*”¹⁰, but it was more of a superficial and abstract modification done to the old, decaying and pest-infested architecture of the casteism. Further, the action, which was taken in the right direction, was an arrow taken out of the “power politics quiver”, and thus, actually did not reach out to the well-deserving masses but was

¹⁰ In order to unite the Indian forces, Mahatma Gandhi gave different terminologies to “humanize” the existence of both the caste system as well as the deprived sections of the society. This was one of the ideological and experiential rifts that drifted Dr. Ambedkar and Gandhiji apart.

successful in dividing the masses within the range of fear of loss of jobs and other amenities. A well explained example of the same can be demonstrated by self-immolation of college students in order to express their fretfulness over the “reforms”. Also, in other words, it provided a new way to define “the vote bank politics”, for both the deprived parties, “the Suvarnas” and the “Harijans”.

Here are a few more areas of deprivation wherein reforms were constituted, but in vain, and leading to further delirium of the situations:

➤ EMPLOYMENT

This can be proven by a recent survey conducted by Thorat, Madheswaran and Vani (2023) delving within the economic theories surrounding caste-based discrimination, emerging with shocking inter-caste employment, wages and accessibility of choices data. Analyzing a few instances from the sources, it emerges that the wage earning of the SC regular salaried workers is lower than the higher castes workers. This affects the consumption expenditure of the SC regular salaried workers. The consumption expenditure of the SC is ₹1,674 which is lower than Rs. 1,952 for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Rs. 2,712 for the higher castes, while the all-India average is Rs. 2,017. The consumption expenditure of the SC is 61% of the higher castes and 85% of the OBC.

There are around 10 schemes/loans that are provided by the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) which enable the people belonging to the OBC section of the society. But the need of the hour, for the government, is to use the resources and intellect to narrow down the gap within the social format.

➤ THE URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE

Another example is starkly visible as part of the urban-rural divide, wherein the Scheduled Castes and Tribes are often overrepresented in rural areas, where socio-economic and infrastructural disparities are more pronounced. For example, Land Rights and means to Livelihood in forest areas. Land rights and access to natural resources are critical for Scheduled Tribe communities. The Forest Rights Act of 2006 aimed at addressing historical injustices and securing land and resource rights for tribal communities. This has a deep historical background reaching within the roots of colonialism as well, wherein they required to keep the local tribes in the outer circuits of the forests to improve their own profit, on the expense of the tribes’ losses. Similarly, modernity has been reflected often in the concept of adoption of Westernization in an agriculture-based economy and after the adoption of LPG policy, the government has taken a back-seat, paving way for the *laissez faire* economy, exploiting the tribes and forest-based communities as per their own whims and fancies.

Even when there is a huge problem of alienation and tardiness in agro-based economy majorly due to casteism, the ST Welfare Grant accounts for around 83% fund cut from 2022-23 budget to 2023-24 budget. Skill development training like Nai Manzil, USTAD got a Budget of mere ₹10 lakh, the same was ₹235 crore and ₹7 crore last year. The Budget for research schemes for minorities too has been slashed to ₹20 crore from ₹41 crore last year. So, based on this analysis, can we compare the modern day, democratically elected government to the colonial powers, impersonating a racism in the form of casteism?

➤ HEALTHCARE

Access to healthcare has been a concern for marginalized communities in India. From 1947 to 2020, efforts have been made to improve healthcare access, including the establishment of primary health centers and the National Health Mission. However, disparities in healthcare outcomes, infant mortality rates, and life expectancy persist between SC, ST, and general population groups. These disparities are attributed to factors like lower socio-economic status and limited access to healthcare facilities in tribal and rural areas. The infant mortality rate (IMR) has decreased significantly in India over the years due to improvements in healthcare and sanitation. SCs and STs, however, continue to experience higher IMRs compared to the general population. This disparity is due to a combination of factors, including poverty, limited access to quality healthcare, and malnutrition. If we examine the data regionally within the country, more tribal women are risking their lives during menses as well as childbirth, as more than 60% of the women are anaemic as they eat the last and the least, despite innumerate health care schemes launched for the women and the young ones both by the central as well as the state governments. Anganwadi were launched for this premises only, only to experience a huge failure.

With India falling in the Global Hunger Index from 55th position in 2014 to 111th in 2023, shamefully out of 125 countries. India is one of the nations having, currently, the youngest population in the world. The above said data indicates a huge gap in the nourishment and growth ideals that are comparable all across the world. The double marginalized for the poor Dalit Scheduled Castes and Tribes mark the identity for the government as yet another milestone of promises for their next election narratives and propaganda to be fulfilled later.

➤ EDUCATION

In another comparative aspect, Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule, prominent social reformists, fairly believed that education was the sole means to empower marginalized communities. Dr. Ambedkar, advocating “Educate-Organize-Agitate”¹¹, emphasized education for the emancipation of women,

¹¹ As part of “representational politics”, Ambedkar theorized a way in which lower castes could mobilize, organize, and demand an equal seat at the table of citizenship. In fact, he called to the oppressed to “educate, agitate, and organize”, and

minorities and Dalits. Thus, it can be comfortably said that educational attainment has improved for SCs and STs, with various affirmative action policies aimed at increasing access to education. However, disparities still exist, particularly in terms of access to quality education. The Right to Education Act (RTE, 2005) has been instrumental in expanding access to elementary education for marginalized communities, including SCs and STs. Article 21(A), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan and other programs have ensured admission and access to the educational institutions, both at the primary as well as higher education level but, as proposed earlier, the destination is still not tractable. Dalit lives are constantly lost or retracted from the spectacle of public domain, in the retrospect of humiliation, refusal of acceptance, ridicule, difficulty in reaching the same standard line of competence, because after all, meritocracy is also based on the utopian fallacy of equality, which does not exist.

Inference

Analyzing the numbers of SC (Scheduled Caste) and ST (Scheduled Tribe) populations in various fields and their socio-economic indicators from 1947 to 2020 in India is a complex task that requires access to extensive data sources. In analyzing these trends and issues, it's important to recognize that progress has been made in improving the socio-economic conditions of SC and ST communities, but disparities persist. Government policies, affirmative action measures, and civil society initiatives have played a significant role in addressing these disparities. To get precise data and conduct an in-depth analysis for a specific period, consulting government reports, academic research, and relevant databases is essential.

Addressing the disorganized nature of government reforms to amend casteism in India requires a more coordinated and comprehensive approach. This would involve streamlining policies, improving implementation, and promoting social cohesion and equitable opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of their caste or background. It thus, calls for a dire need to change the socio-political fabric and start with the basic standards of substitution. It has to start with the basic life format.

With the evolution of time, the modern idea of formal education has also evolved, from gurukul system to modern day school with the shift in the perspectives and ways of defining it. Aims of education have also gone a paradigmatic change. From the sectarian gurukul systems, where education was imparted according to the caste of the students rather than the capacities they have, we have moved to a system of education which is based on the constitutional values of equality, liberty and justice. The modern Indian education has been conceptualized as one benefiting the socio-cultural, political, economic

thereby wage a battle for freedom and reclamation of human personality. It can be inferred from this approach, especially, that Ambedkarite approach is comparable to that of the Marxist approach, wherein Marx also calls to the Proletariats to wage an attack to overturn the Bourgeoisie and follow their own lead of a new dawn, a new spring of a new age of Proletariats.

make-up of the country. India being a democracy, it is emphasized that the process of education gives an opportunity to all to participate and learn for lives. Thus, it is a high time to include some basic pragmatic changes within our day-to-day lives and a basic humanitarian curriculum can be implemented to generate equity, instead of equality. It can pertain to basic equitable assignment of resources, encountering poverty as the basis of need rather than any other factor. This will help dignify the person, rationalize the allocation of resources and create a unified debacle for everyone.

Now, this reciprocal relationship between democracy and education, aims and objectives of democratic education, the dynamics of inter-personal relations and the principle underlying the practices and programs of a school in a democracy have been captured in this research.

1. Respect for the Dignity of Individuals
2. Freedom and Discipline
3. Equality and Equity
4. Sharing and Responsibility,

And thus, they have been discussed as the 4 pillars of the structure of democratic education and its strength.

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Ambedkar: A Forgotten Feminist

Vishnu Shankar Tiwari

Abstract

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar is identified as a pioneer who gave shape to the foundation of modern India. He continues to be the voice of unheard masses. Not only in India but all over the world his ideas and work get recognition. Over the years scholars and academicians analysed Ambedkar's work and life from many perspectives varied from economics, politics, social and philosophy. This paper attempts to understand Ambedkar's ideology and through feminist perspective and his contribution towards the rise of Dalit feminism and holistic feminist movement. In the contemporary times India is confronting with diverse women's related issues like abortion rights, inheritance rights, Political participation, menstruation leave policy, marital rape and social and legal security to sex workers. So it becomes more crucial to look towards the father of Indian constitution and his ideas and work regarding this important questions.

Introduction

During 19th and 20th century India witnessed the rise of many political and social thinkers but Dr Ambedkar was distinct personality among all because he consistently argued that political had to start with social reform. His conviction regarding the primacy of social reform in all political transformative indicates why he was an enormous leader and intuitive feminist.

When women's issues were being marginalized as a secondary to the national freedom struggle. It was a popular notion that independence to all Indians as a whole would eventually put an end to all women's problems. On the other hand, Ambedkar positioned women at the forefront of change within the Indian society, underscoring that women's liberation will liberate all Indians. To that effect, he wrote extensively on women's oppression and set up newspapers like "Mook Nayak" and "Bahishkrit Bharat" with sections that exclusively covered women centric issues.

Thus, while rightly venerated as the great icon of Dalit liberation, he was also strongly and intuitively feminist in his thinking. But, his profound feminism has received surprisingly little attention. It deserves to be widely recognized as central to his humane and enlightened perspective because his feminism is both radical and inspiring.

Areas of work

Ambedkar in his almost 40 years of career as social reformer, statesperson, Indian lawmaker worked extensively for the women's cause. In this years he analysed various women's related issues from enforced widowhood, forced girl marriage, prostitution, maternity leave for women working in factories, vote to right for women property right and right to divorce.

Caste hierarchies and women's subjection

Dr. B.R Ambedkar emerged as an unwavering critic of the caste system within hindu society. However, it is evident during his formative years, he recognized the imperative linkage between the eradication of the caste system and multifaceted issue of sexuality.

Ambedkar discerned the gendered dynamics of caste system and how sexual regulations reproduced caste relations. Dr. Ambedkar points out that shashtras, caste and endogamy are the important pillars of patriarchy in hindu society.

Scriptures of disempowerment: Hindu texts and the erosion of women's status

In his seminal 1951 article titled 'The Rise and Fall of the Hindu Women: Who Was Responsible for It?' He outlines the ideological, institutional and juridicial foundations of caste. Dr. Ambedkar conducted a comprehensive analysis of the declining status of women within hindu society over the course of centuries. His focused critique honed in on the hindu scriptures, particularly the Manusmriti, which he identified as a key source for the degradation of women's social status.

According to Dr. Ambedkar the women in pre-manu days enjoyed respectable status along with men in matters of education, divorce, remmariage and economic independence. The deterioration in status of women in the society began with the imposition of severe restrictions on them under the influence of Manusmriti.

Manu held a very low opinion about women. According to Manusmriti, women are not to be trusted for it is in their nature to seduce men. A wife could be subjected to corporal punishment by her husband reducing her status to that of a slave. Like shudras, a women was forbidden by manu to study Vedas. In 'The Triumph of Brahminism' Ambedkar maintained that in Manusmriti "A wife was reduced to the level of a slave in the matter of property.....In other matters woman was reduced by Manu to the same position as the shudra"

Roots of oppression: Caste system and that patriarchy connection

Dr. Ambedkar observed that structural reproduction of caste occurs in a systematic alliance of unfair gender norms and sexual violence operates through a complete control over the being body of the woman, reducing her to a sub-human category. One can outline the caste- gender system as a birth related graded hierarchical structure of purity pollution and division of labour manifested in distinct ritual status and style of life. Intercaste marriage: A Dual path to Women's Liberation and Caste Annihilation "Where society is already well knit by other ties, marriage is an ordinary incident of life. But where society is cut asunder, marriage as a binding force becomes a matter of urgent necessity. The real remedy for breaking caste is inter-marriage. Nothing else will serve as the solvent of caste." (B.R Ambedkar, The Annihilation of caste, in BAWS, vol. 1, 67) Caste ideologies never allow intermarriage. Such unions are considered to be against "nature". The issue of inter-caste marriage raises the possibility that men and women of different castes might desire each other. Inter-caste marriages are to take place as acts of choice.

Ambedkar envisioned that by breaking the association of women with reproduction of caste community, intercaste marriage would annihilate caste distinctions. We can appreciate Dr. Ambedkar for the strategic significance of keeping intercaste marriage as Hindu marriage when we recognize that intercaste marriage asserted the sanctity of marriage as a social form, but recalibrated the relationship between caste and gender from within the institution of marriage. Intercaste marriage would annihilate caste by rewriting the sexual contract.

Championing Women's labour Rights: Dr. Ambedkar's Advocacy and Impact

Ambedkar also worked to ensure that women were protected under labour laws. He was instrumental in reducing the number of working hours and improving working conditions. In 1928, as a member of the Legislative council of Bombay, he supported a Bill granting paid maternity leave for women working in factories. He believed that if the employer was benefiting off of women's labour, they should also, in part, be supporting women when they are on their maternity leave. The other half, he believed, should be paid by the government as it was in the interest of the nation.

He also drafted the Mines Maternity Benefit Act which asked for equal representation for equal wages and equal representation of women on the welfare fund for the coal mine workers, and emphasized equal citizenship and Women's rights to economic development as crucial for Women's rights in India. Between 1942 and 1946 he passed progressive legislation for women that dealt with equal wages for equal work, casual and privilege leave, compensation in cases of injury and pension.

Dr. Ambedkar's perspective on commercial sex work

On 16 June, 1936, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar visited Kamathipura, widely recognized as Bombay's red light district and a focal point for women engaged in commercial sex work, a significant proportion of whom belonged to Dalit community. During this visit Ambedkar gave a famous speech in Kamathipra to women who engaged in commercial and ritualised female sex work: Vaghyas, Devadasis, jogtinis and Aradhis. Here, we need to first briefly investigate what instigates the involvement of Dalit Women in "Ritualised" sex work. Extremely poor and vulnerable Dalit castes have been "Traditionally" required to provide their young women and even their very young daughters for the sexual gratification of their higher caste landlord- employers. These Dalit castes are often bonded agricultural labourers.

But return to What Ambedkar did say in his speech? According to the Times of India of 17 June 1936 Ambedkar said: "But I insist that if you want to be with the rest of us, you must give up your disgraceful life. The Mahar women of kamathipura are a shame to the community....There are only two ways open to you: either you remain where you are and continue to be despised and shunned, or you give up your disgraceful profession and come with us. You will ask me how to make your living. I am not going to tell you that. There are hundreds of ways of doing it. But I insist that you give up this degraded life. You marry and settle down to normal domestic life as women of other classes do and do not live under conditions which inevitably drag you into prostitution."

The speech holds significance when analyzed from two crucial perspectives:

1. Ambedkar addressed the patriarchal elements within the Dalit community. Once we recognise the collusion of Dalit men in the sexual trafficking of their female kin as the unspoken backdrop to Ambedkar's speech, we see how Ambedkar challenges these Dalit women to stand up for their own interests, rather than the interests of their male kin.

2. He asks women to be independent on their own and quit prostitution altogether. His challenge is uncompromising- he tells the women very plainly, almost harshly, that he will not help them to find other source of income. They must do this themselves and give up their "disgraceful" sex work in Kamathipura for their own sake.

A Landmark Struggle: The Hindu Code Bill and Dr. Ambedkar's final battle for Women's rights

Dr. B.R Ambedkar, India's inaugural Law minister, embarked on strategic mission to employ legislation as a formidable instrument for instigating social reform within the Caste based society. Central to his vision was the Hindu code Bill, a pivotal measure, Ambedkar meticulously selected the Hindu code Bill to launch an assault on the deep seated patriarchal structures within society. He foresaw that the Hindu code Bill pave the way of Women's emancipation in India.

One may remember that he considered his work on the Hindu Code Bill to be as important his participation in the formulation of the Indian constitution.

The Hindu Code Bill codified laws around seven different matters all of which had a direct relation with Women's autonomy, independence, and rights. It codified the laws relating to the rights of property of deceased Hindu who died without making a will irrespective of gender. It altered the form of order of succession to the property of the deceased dying intestate. And further. it dealt with the laws of marriage, divorce, maintenance, adoption, guardianship and minority. The Hindu code Bill recognized the idea of "Civil marriages too along with the pre-existing "sacramental marriages. It also dispensed the condition of mentioning the identity of castes and sub castes. Hence, the intercaste marriages were re-iterated to be legally valid. Caste as a determining principle was abolished in matters of marriage and adoption.

With regards to the question of inheritance the bill gave the same rank to the widow, daughter, widow of pre deceased son as it was given to the son. Along with this, the daughter was also given a share in the father's property.

Backlash against the Hindu Code Bill

The Bill threatened the brahmanical status quo which derived its strength from the caste system – a brutal, hierarchical and rigid social code of conduct. Various sections including the Hindu Mahasabha, religious leaders and political parties such as Congress members opposed the bill. The president threatened to stall the bill, the Hindus sadhus laid siege to parliament, and business houses and landowners warned a withdrawal of support in elections.

Ambedkar's Resignation: A Rebellion Act For Women's Rights

Dr. Ambedkar engaged in strenuous efforts to enact the Hindu Code Bill, yet ultimately found himself compelled to tender his resignation as the Law Minister. The resignation of Ambedkar was a rebellious protest for the rights of women. This can be revisited by looking at what Ambedkar said as he resigned when the Bill was not passed by caste supremacists. He wrote, "To leave inequality between class and class, between sex and sex which is the soul of Hindu society untouched and to go on passing legislation relating to economic problems is to make a farce of our constitution and to build a palace on dung heap. This is the significance I attached to the Hindu Code."

Ambedkar's Influence on The Emergence Of Dalit Feminist Movement

The 1930s saw the organization of independent meetings and conferences by dalit women in the Ambedkarite movement. This was an obvious consequence of Ambedkar's practice of organizing a women's conference along with every general meeting and sabha that he called. In these 'parishads' of 1930s, dalit women delegates passed resolutions against child marriage, enforced widowhood and dowry; critiquing these practices as brahmanical. Women's participation in the Mahad Satyagraha. Women's participation in the Ambedkarite movement must be read in the context of the fact that in Ambedkar's theory of caste there is also a theory of origins of Subordination of women and that he saw the two issues as intrinsically linked.

Ambedkar's concept of mobilizing Women's engagement became a source of inspiration for subsequent generations of Dalit feminists. The emergence of Dalit feminist voices from mid-1980s drew attention to caste identities, which had hitherto been assumed as transcendable for the larger sisterhood among women. Young dalit feminists in Mumbai formed the Mahila sansad, and by the mid 1990s, Samavadini – Dalit stree manch, a forum of the Dalit Feminist literary movement had emerged.

The assertion of autonomous Dalit women's organizations at both the regional and National levels threw up several crucial theoretical and political challenges, questioning both the Brahminism of the women's movement and the patriarchal practices of dalit politics.

The Dalit bahunjan feminist politics and writings, which were made visible in the 'new' discourses on caste and gender in the political contexts of the 1980s and 1990s. Ambedkar's work, opening up to multiple readings- including those of Dalit feminists -exceeds his authorial intentions. Feminists like Sharmila Rege, Anupama Rao, Gail Omvedt and Kalpana Kannabiran – working on the arguments of Dalit feminist movement (since the 1990s) have given Ambedkar's articulations a different spin. They have

reclaimed Ambedkar to read Caste-gender interfaces.

Concluding Remarks

"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved."(Ambedkar)

Upon revisiting the life and work of Dr. Ambedkar from his early years as a student to the end of his life, it becomes evident that his unwavering commitment to addressing women's issues was profoundly significant. Dr. Ambedkar has analyzed the manner in which gender relations are artificially constructed under Hindu social order which not only moulds attitude of Hindus towards their women but also conditions women to conform to a stereotype feminine behavior.

In the contemporary context, approximately 75 years since India gained independence, it remains evident that Indian women continue to grapple with significant challenges in their pursuit of fundamental political, economic, and social rights. Ambedkar had envisioned a society free from the shackles of caste distinctions, marked by egalitarianism, and characterized by equal rights for women, akin to those enjoyed by men. However, the realization of this vision, which could be termed as the "Ambedkarian dream of India" necessitates a substantial and protracted journey, one that India has yet to traverse entirely. Dr. Ambedkar's legacy serves as a source of inspiration and guidance in this prolonged struggle for the liberation of Indian women from the chains of patriarchy.

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Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar on Castes in India

Shilpa

Abstract

Dr BR Ambedkar is one of the leading progressive, liberal thinkers of India whose contribution to making of Indian constitution and was a powerful critic of the Hindu caste system. Ambedkar is among the foremost leader of the Dalits in India who played a critical role on raising Dalit consciousness. Babasahab was of the opinion that Hindu society based on casteism leads to exploitation and stagnation of inequality. He organised the castes considered untouchable among Hindus and fought for their representation in governance and politics and promoted their education according to Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, "National spirit cannot develop without social reform".

Keywords: Indian constitution, caste system, exploitation, representation, social reforms

Introduction:

Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar was a modern political thinker. who is remembered as the messiah of Dalits and the main architect of the Indian constitution. According to B.R Ambedkar, caste system of graded inequality is still prevailing in Indian society. He views on caste system in the context of India and his efforts to eradicate caste system. Ambedkar saw the caste system as an unequal mode of organisation of social relations, with the pure and impure at either extreme. Ambedkar became a stand anti-oppression advocate for Dalits through his politics and writing. Ambedkar played a pivotal role in the movement for Indian Independence. After the fact, he headed the committee that drafted the Indian constitution and served as India's first minister of law and justice.

Origin of the Word Castes:

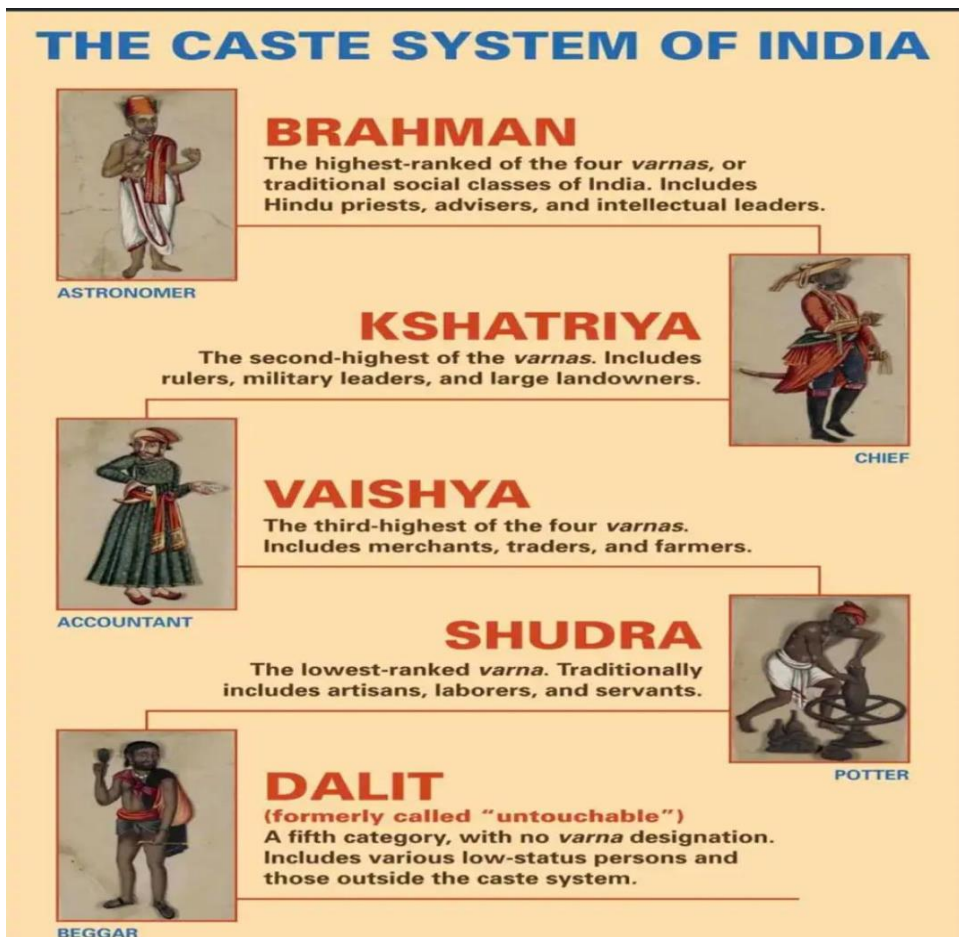
The origin of the word caste is believed to be from the Sanskrit word 'Jan', which can be derived from species birth or distinction. The word caste comes from the Portuguese word castes, meaning 'pure'. This Portuguese word expresses one of the most central values of Indian society, the idea of ritual purity.

Definition of Caste:

- According to Majumder and Madan, "caste is closed class".
- According to Kule, "when class is completely based on heredity then we call it a caste".

Dr. Ambedkar's Views on Castes:

In India cast system consist of two different concept that is Verna and jati, the real concept of Verna has almost disappeared in the present context and has changed into jati. Ambedkar noted that the ancient Hindu society was composed of classes- The Brahmans , The kshatriya, the vaishyas and the shudras that became self – closed unites called caste through the practice of endogamy.



Special attention has to be paid to the fact that initially it was essential with the class division that a person could change his Varna on the basis of efficiency and hence the variability of work of individuals was acceptable to the varnas. Dr. Ambedkar made great efforts to free the lower castes from in human life and to provide them human dignity.

The main points of which are as follows:-

1) A harsh attack on the cast system and traditional laws of Hindu society:-

Buddhism, Sikhism, Kabirpanthi, Brahmasamaj, Aryasamaj, Swami Vivekanand and Mahatma Gandhi all of them in their own ways promoted the abolition of the caste system. But known of them

made as harsh an attack on the caste system and the traditional structure of Hindu society as Dr Ambedkar has done most of the people before Dr. Ambedkar wanted to maintain the Varna system or caste system, they wanted to maintain only the upper caste system. The opposition to the caste system and the feeling of inferiority among different castes is also only a soft opposition. Dr. Ambedkar said that the Hindu plan of social structure based on four varnas has not given birth to the caste system, which is an inhuman and extreme form of inequality, hence the problems of caste cannot be solved by any small solution. So there is a need for a revolutionary social condition and that revolutionary social condition can only be the complete acceptance of the caste system.

2) Emphasis on improvement in life and attitude of axioms:-

Dr. Ambedkar knew that the untouchables class itself was responsible for the present condition of the untouchable. Therefore, he emphasized that the wicked should give up their bad habits and sense of integrity and led a life integral to self-respect. He emphasized in his writings and speeches that one should give up the spirit of freedom to move towards a better life and desire a life with freedom, harmony and romantic life and his recommendations for this were –

1. Untouchables should get organized,
2. Get educated,
3. Fight against atrocities.

3) Pursuit of social justice:-

Social justice is the principle that demands the elimination of injustice inherent in the social system. Its scope of consideration is much wider than legal justice. The question of legal justice arises where one party causes harm to another. For such a situation, some rules or principles are prevalent in the society, and using these rules, it is the job of the courts to do justice according to the prescribed procedure. But social justice is a complex problem. The principle of social justice demands that the dignity of every human being should be accepted in social life; whether a person is considered big or small or high or low on the basis of man or woman, white or black, or on the basis of caste, religion, region etc. Opportunities for education and progress should be equally accessible to all; and everyone should be able to use and consume literature, art, culture and technical means together as human beings. Dr. Ambedkar worked to fulfill the goal of social justice by deeply analyzing the caste system prevalent in India and by showing the way to liberate the classes suffering from it. The basic mantra of this goal is the principle of equality, which he has expressed very effectively. Initially, Dr. Ambedkar tried to express his social philosophy in the form of three principles which are as follows – 1) Liberty, 2)

Equality, 3) Fraternity ;Later, in their place, he considered three principles related to Buddhism important.1) Understanding, 2) Compassion, 3) Equality.

4) Principal of Equality:

Dr. Ambedkar believed that the principle of equality cannot be fully realized by merely establishing political equality and equality before law among human beings. Unless socio-economic equality is established among them, their common life will remain incomplete. Presented the draft of the Indian Constitution. While doing so, he had said in the Constituent Assembly that by adopting this Constitution, we are going to enter into a world of contradictions. Due to this, we will get equality in political life but inequality will remain in social and economic life. In the field of politics, we will recognize the principle of 'one person, one vote, one value' but our social and economic structure will not change in such a way that the principle of 'one person, one value' can be made meaningful.

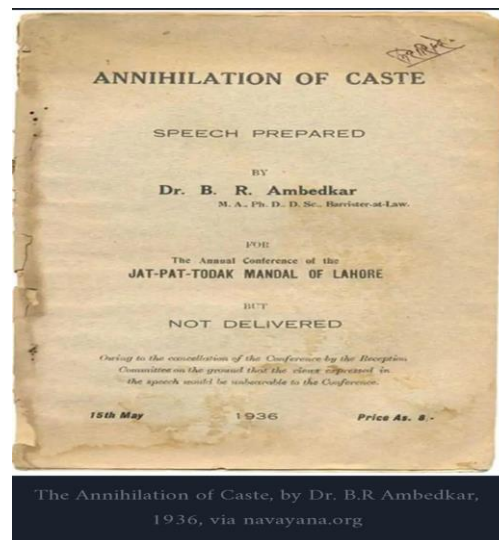
5) Emancipation of the untouchables:

Dr. Ambedkar realized that some saints, Mahatmas and social reformers of the upper castes were sympathetic towards the Dalit classes and accepted their equality but they were not able to make any concrete contribution in this direction for their upliftment. Dr. Ambedkar put forward the idea that only the untouchables can provide leadership to the untouchables. In other words, Dr. Ambedkar believed in the self-improvement of the Dalit class. He inspired people to rise above their inferiority complex. He believed that there was no lack of ability among them. These people could get general and technical education and go to specialized cities and take up new professions which would help them in achieving their traditional status. Prejudice will slow down automatically. In order to bring about a change in the Hindu social system, Dr. Ambedkar presented a plan for the complete abolition of the caste system, because the Hindu caste system was imprinted with religion. Therefore he laid emphasis on the reform of religion. He suggested to establish true religion in place of formal religion; Proposed to recognize religion based on principles instead of religion based on rules. Dr. Ambedkar was of the opinion that after the caste system, a new social system will have to be created to complete the work of the old castes. According to Bhimrao Ambedkar, unless we change our social system, any progress will be futile.

6) Dr. Ambedkar's Annihilation of Caste:

Dr. Ambedkar's speeches are documents of the history and development of Indian social thought. The article read on 'Caste System in India: Structure, Origin and Development' in the seminar organized in New York at Columbia University on 9 May 1916 and the speech titled Eradication of Caste System prepared by him for the annual conference of Lahore Jaat Pat Todak Mandal 1936,

historical importance. In the article 'Caste System Structure, Origin and Development in India', Ambedkar says that the problem of caste is a huge problem in theory and in practice. He holds India's law maker Manu responsible for the origin of the caste system. In his words, "Manu did not create the law of caste, nor could he have done so. The caste system existed before Manu. He was its nurturer, so he gave it the form of a philosophy... He gave the form of a code to the prevalent caste system and propagated the caste religion."



7) Anti-caste system:

Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar strongly opposed traditional religion. He himself lit the Holi of Manusmriti competition on 29 September 1927 and encouraged others to do the same. Due to this action, Gandhiji was also forced to say that 'Ambedkar is a challenge to Hindu religion.' Babasaheb was not against Hindu religion, the center of his anger was the person who gave such a wrong interpretation of the religion which caused the Hindus to One class gets the monopoly to insult the other class. At the last stage of his life, he took initiation into Buddhism, which nurtures general humanism, compassion and kindness. In his two works 'Annihilation of Casteism' and 'What did Gandhi and Congress do for the untouchables', caste based countries have been exposed and urged to eliminate them. In his book What Did Gandhi and Congress Do for Untouchables, he has thrown light on many countries in detail.

1. Casteism led to the destruction of Hindus which is the reason for their degradation.
2. Organization of Hindu caste on the basis of four varnas is possible, because it promotes exploitation.
3. Such an organization of Hindu society is harmful because it hurts their morale by depriving them of the basis of education and armed training.

4. The principles of freedom, equality and motherhood have no place in a society based on casteism.

8) Dr. Ambedkar criticism of Chaturvanya:

Indian social system is organized on the basis of four varnas. These four varnas were - Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. Ambedkar is a strong critic of the Chaturvaranya system. There is no provision to protect the interests of Shudras in this division. Even attainment of knowledge was not provided for Shudras. Education and self-defense are indispensable for every person, Shudras made his life's goal to protect and serve. Dr. Ambedkar says that the Varna of a person should be determined on the basis of the work and not on the basis of his birth. Because it blocks the path of Varna change and works to make every person narrow, as a result of which he takes the form of castes.

Conclusion:

Considering various aspects of Dr. Ambedkar's life, we come to the conclusion that Dr. Ambedkar was one of the great men of the land of India who played an important role in building the destiny of independent India. He is considered to be full of qualities like the messiah of the Dalit class, spokesperson for human rights, political acumen, and effective personality. He has done major work for the welfare of his people by freeing the country from foreign clutches through his policies and programs. Dr. Ambedkar did many things for every Indian in his life, like he strongly attacked the caste system and the traditional structure of Hindu society. He himself gave emphasis to the life of the untouchables and their improvement so that every person can use the public places in a proper manner. So that he could, he took measures of legal reform for every individual so that it could be implemented equally in the society and state of the people. He worked to provide the right of equality in the eyes of law to the citizens of India. Economic progress will give rise to social justice, this is a manifestation of mental slavery of Hindus in the form of casteism. The caste system has made Hindu society stagnant which hinders integration with outsiders. The caste system hinders the prosperity of the lower castes which leads to moral degradation. Thus the fight to end untouchability becomes a fight for human rights and justice. Historian R.C. Guha, "Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is a unique example of success even in the most adverse circumstances. Today India is facing many socio-economic challenges like casteism, communalism, separatism, gender inequality etc. We need to find the spirit of Ambedkar within us, so that we can pull ourselves out of these challenges.

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डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर के मानवीय दृष्टिकोण एवं सामाजिक न्याय

देवदास साकेत

मनुष्य स्वभाव से एक सामाजिक प्राणी है, मनुष्य का जीवन अनेक विविधताओं से परिपूर्ण है। उसे सम्पूर्ण आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति हेतु दूसरों से सहायता के लिए निर्भर रहता है। मानवीय इतिहास के अध्ययन से पता चलता है कि असंतोष, झगड़े, कलह, षडयन्त्र, बगावत, विरोध, हिंसा, संघर्ष, गृहयुद्ध, बलप्रयोग और चोरी आदि सभी समाज में देखने में आता है। इन्हें भिन्न-भिन्न अवसरों पर इनका उपयोग करने वाले सामाजिक-आर्थिक, नैतिक व्यवस्था, अखण्डता, राष्ट्रीय एकता और राजनैतिक व्यवस्था की यथास्थिति को बनाए रखने में है। जैसे पुरातन कबीलाई समाज में परम्पराबद्ध, हठधर्मिता, संकीर्ण मानसिकता, ऊँच-नीच का भेद, निरंकुश समाज व्यवस्थाओं से लेकर समकालीन, आधुनिक, लोकतांत्रिक सहिष्णुता से सामाजिक परिवर्तन के द्वारा नैतिक नियम और व्यवस्था को स्थापित किया गया। इसके लिए किसी व्यक्ति के जान-माल का खतरा न हो ऐसी स्थिति में प्रशासन व्यवस्था के साथ न्याय व्यवस्था की स्थापना की गई जिससे मानव को आन्तरिक सुरक्षा मिल सकें।

मुख्य शब्द : सहिष्णुता, निरंकुश, हठधर्मिता, समानता, स्वतंत्रता, बन्धुत्व, सम्भव्यता, मानवता एवं ईमानदारी आदि।

दार्शनिक पक्ष :

डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर दर्शन के सम्बन्ध में बहुत ही गम्भीर और दूरगामी चिन्तन करते हैं। उनका मानना था कि – मैंने मेरा जीवन विषयक दर्शन निश्चित कर लिया है और इस सम्बन्ध में वे भारतीय दर्शन को दो वर्गों में विभाजित किया है। पहला है नास्तिक, दूसरा आस्तिक है। नास्तिक पक्ष में सांख्य दर्शन के त्रिगुणों सतोगुण, रजोगुण और तमोगुण और श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में उल्लेखित मोक्ष सिद्धान्त के सामाजिक दर्शन को डॉ. अम्बेडकर ने अस्वीकार किया है। यह दर्शन वास्तव में कपिल के दर्शन की तरह अत्यंत विकृत स्वरूप में है। जिस प्रकार से जाति व्यवस्था है। उसी क्रमवार विषमताओं का जाल घृणा है जो सामाजिक जीवन का मूलाधार बना हुआ है। किन्तु मेरा आस्तिक पक्ष जीवन विषयक दर्शन के तीन शब्द है जो इस प्रकार है—समानता, स्वतंत्रता और बन्धुत्व की भावना ही उनके जीवन दर्शन के तीन अंग हैं।¹ मेरे दर्शन का मूल आधार राजनीति में नहीं है, बल्कि धर्म में निहित है और इसी दर्शन को मैंने नव-बौद्ध दर्शन के नाम से स्वीकार किया है। अपने जीवन के दर्शन का मूलाधार राजनीति में नहीं बल्कि दर्शन में खोजते हैं। यह तथ्य उनके दर्शन विषयक गंभीर चिन्तन का ही परिणाम है, क्योंकि दर्शन जीवन को सत्य और मूल्य प्रदान करता है। “डॉ. अम्बेडकर ने दर्शन को एक विशिष्ट रूप से ग्रहण किया है। उन्होंने दर्शन को तात्विक उलझनों से मुक्ति एक सामाजिक एवं नैतिक संहिता के रूप में लिया है। उनके अनुसार दर्शन का सामाजिक एवं नैतिक अर्थ है। वह उसे समाज में परिवर्तन की एक विधि बनाना चाहते थे। चूँकि वह उपेक्षित मानवता एवं यथार्थता के पक्षधर थे। इसलिए उनकी रुचि सामान्य मानव के दर्शन में थी।²

इससे यह सिद्ध होता है कि आदर्शों, मूल्यों, नियमों, सिद्धान्तों के अभाव में समाज की कल्पना नहीं की जा सकती है। यदि किसी समाज में प्रचलित नैतिक नियमों और व्यवस्थाओं के लिए किसी प्रकार का संकट न उत्पन्न हो। इसलिए सामाजिक व्यवस्था में अशान्ति उत्पन्न होने पर मानव के मन में अवांछित तनाव होंगे। जो उसके घर, परिवार, बच्चों के जीवन के प्रति चिन्ता करना स्वाभाविक है। समुचित नैतिक व्यवस्था को बनाये रखने के लिए अनुशासन आवश्यक है। इस कारगर कदम के लिए डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर का महत्वपूर्ण योगदान रहा है। डॉ. अम्बेडकर कहते हैं कि "यदि राज्य को साध्य मान लिया जाता है तो इससे उसे सम्पूर्ण मानव जीवन को नियंत्रित करने का अधिकार प्राप्त है।"³ यदि संवैधानिक आधार पर समाजवाद की व्यवस्था की जाय तो नैतिक नियम ऐसे हैं, जिसकी अवहेलना करना व्यक्ति के लिए बहुत ही घातक साबित हो जाती है। यदि कोई भी व्यक्ति सामाजिक व्यवस्था में अनुशासनहीनता उत्पन्न करता है। तो ऐसी दशा में विघटन की स्थिति उत्पन्न हो जाती है जिसके समाधान में उसको दण्डित किया जाना। यहाँ तक जुर्मने के रूप में आर्थिक दण्ड, अमानुषिक नरसंहार, अपराधियों को दिये जाने वाला मृत्युदण्ड, कठोर से कठोर कारावास की यातना आदि को उचित ठहराया जा सकता है। किसी भी कानून व्यवस्था की अवज्ञा को अनुचित ठहराया जा सकता है। क्योंकि सामाजिक व्यवस्था के इन दोनों विरोधी दृष्टिकोणों के आधार पर समाज में प्रथम के अनुसार किसी भी व्यक्ति को समाज में प्रचलित कानून की अवहेलना करने का कोई अधिकार नहीं है। क्योंकि इसमें सामाजिक जीवन में असुरक्षा और तनाव की भावना उत्पन्न होती है। दूसरी ओर यदि हम देखें तो समाज में कोई भी नागरिक नैतिक नियमों के अनुकूल आचरण करने के लिए स्वतंत्र है। क्योंकि राजनैतिक सत्ता किसी भी प्रकार के बल प्रयोग और हिंसा पर आश्रित अस्तित्व के लिए कभी भी किसी प्रकार का औचित्यपूर्ण दावा नहीं कर सकती है। इसका निष्कर्ष यह है कि जल्दी दिखाने की अपेक्षा अधिक उचित होगा कि सामाजिक परिवर्तन में सत्ता, अधिकार, दायित्व, हिंसा, क्रान्ति, विरोध, लालच, घूस, चोरी, जातिवाद, ऊँच-नीच, मजदूर-अफसर, भाई-भतीजावाद इत्यादि प्रश्नों पर थोड़ा और अधिक ध्यान दिये जाने की आवश्यकता है। इन प्रयासों से सामाजिक परिवर्तन के अन्तिम समाधान तो नहीं निकाला जा सकता, किन्तु कुछ निश्चित उत्तर की ओर पहुँचा जा सकता है। जो समाज की भलाई हेतु करगर कदम होगा।⁴

समाज में फैली कुरीतियों, कुप्रथाओं और रूढ़ियों के कारण समाज में पैदा होने वाली विविध समस्याएँ, जिनके कारण समाज में सामाजिक न्याय एवं परिवर्तन की आवश्यकता हुई। चाहे वर्गभेद के उत्पन्न होने की परिस्थितियाँ रही हो, या वास्तविक व्यवहार में होने वाले अन्याय की व्यवस्था रहीं हो। किन्तु वर्तमान में इस व्यवस्था का कोई सारांश नहीं निकलता है। डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर को इस बात का श्रेय दिया जाना अधिक आवश्यक है कि उन्होंने अधिकारों से वंचित वर्ग का ध्यान उन सामाजिक विसंगतियों की ओर आकर्षित किया जो भारतीय समाज के लिए ही नहीं वरन् राष्ट्र की सम्पूर्ण व्यवस्था के लिए भी घातक थी।

आधुनिक भारत के दार्शनिक चिंतन में डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर जी को निश्चित रूप से उच्चस्थ स्थान प्राप्त है, क्योंकि उन्होंने अपने जीवन में नैतिक नियम और शिक्षा को अत्यधिक महत्व दिया है। जिसमें उनके विद्वतापूर्ण लेखन, नेतृत्व और रचनात्मक कार्य प्रणाली से भारत के विशाल समाज को मुख्यधारा से जोड़ने का कार्य किया। जिन्हें सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, न्याय मिल सकें। वे अपनी समस्याओं के प्रति जागरूक हो सकें। यह कार्य वास्तव में समस्त समाज और इस देश के प्रति उनकी एक महती भूमिका है। जो वर्तमान परिस्थितियों में शोषित और वंचित वर्ग सदा छोटी-छोटी जरूरतों के लिए परेशान था। उसके लिए उन सभी मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं को प्रदान करने में डॉ. बाबा साहब भीमराव अम्बेडकर ने रात-दिन एक कर दिया।

मानवीय दृष्टिकोण एवं सामाजिक न्याय से समाज में रहने वाले प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को बिना भेदभाव के धर्म व जातियों को ध्यान में रखे, जीवन की अनिवार्य और मूलभूत आवश्यकताएँ जैसे—भोजन, कपड़ा और मकान की पूर्ति किया जा सके। प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को सामाजिक और आर्थिक विकास के उचित अवसर मिलने चाहिए। इससे किसी व्यक्ति के द्वारा किसी व्यक्ति का शोषण न हो। इसके साथ-साथ आर्थिक विकास का विकेन्द्रीकरण हो। राजनीतिक शक्ति में सम्पूर्ण जन समुदाय की उचित भागीदारी मिल सके। समाज में परिवर्तन और आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़ेपन को खत्म कर उन्हें भी समानता के उच्च स्तर पर लाने का प्रयास किया जाना चाहिए। यह व्यवस्था डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर के सफल प्रयासों से कारगर हुई है। जहाँ लोगों में जनजागरूकता तो बढ़ी है। इससे दसता की बेड़ियाँ ढीली पड़ी है। किन्तु विशेष ध्यान देने की बात यह है कि विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में उचित अवसर पैदा करने और हर प्रकार की असमानता को खत्म करने में है।⁵

डॉ भीमराव अम्बेडकर के अथक प्रयासों से भारत में सामाजिक न्याय की लहर उत्पन्न हुई जो पहले अत्यन्त कठोर थी, क्योंकि भारतीय समाज चार वर्णों में विभक्त है। जो आज भी वर्णव्यवस्था समाज के जीवन का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा बनी, जिससे सामाजिक मूल्यों के निर्धारण में अमूर्त शून्य दिखाई देती है। जो मूल्यों के चयन में दुविधा भरी हुई है। इस सामाजिक सन्दर्भ और ऐतिहासिकता की परिस्थितियों में ही तब उत्पन्न होती है। जब हम वैकल्पिक कर्मों के ध्येयों के उद्देश्यों से सामाजिक न्याय के परिणामों पर विचार किया जाये। जब दैनिक जीवन में नैतिक निर्धारण की स्थितियों में परस्पर विरोधी और वैकल्पिक कर्मों के चयन और मूल्यांकन के सन्दर्भ में आबाज उठाई जाती है क्योंकि नैतिकता और अनुशासन के समर्थक होने के उपरान्त ही पारस्परिक व्यवहार का अन्धानुकरण किया जाता रहा है। इसके विपरीत भी कुछ लोग सामाजिक न्याय, आदर्शों के पारस्परिक सामंजस्य पर विचार करने को तैयार नहीं है। इसके उपरान्त सामाजिक स्थितियों में आने वाले परिवर्तन के परिणाम स्वरूप जीवन के नवीन आवश्यकताओं के प्रति सजग रहने की आवश्यकता है। किन्तु समाज में ईमानदारी, सत्यवादिता, सहानुभूति आदि के आदर्शों को मानने की परम्परा प्राचीन काल से रही है। इस सामान्य अधिकारों से वंचित वर्ग हमेशा से ही ईमानदार और न्याय प्रिय पौरुषयुक्त रहा है किन्तु हत्या करने वाले, चोरी करने वाले, झूठ बोलने वाले, कायर,

बेईमान आदि की भरमार सदियों से रही है। इस प्रकार की सार्वकालिक, सार्वभौमिक स्वीकृति और अस्वीकृति के आधार पर संभव्यता आदर्शों की शाश्वतता और स्थिति-निरपेक्षता के सिद्धान्तों को मान्यता मिली है।⁶

सामाजिक न्याय के विविध परिवर्तनों की दिशा में लोकतांत्रिक आदर्शों के प्रति निष्ठा, उदासीनता और तिरस्कार का कोई कम महत्व नहीं है। क्योंकि लोकतांत्रिक समाजवाद में चेतना का उद्भव और विकास तो नवजागरण के उपरान्त ही हुआ है। सामाजिक न्याय की परम्परागत रूप से उदारवादी विचारधारा के विद्वानों ने सामाजिक न्याय और राजनैतिक समता के सिद्धान्तों को लोकतान्त्रिक व्यवस्था का निर्देशन करने वाले सिद्धान्त की घोषणा करते रहे। इससे सभी नागरिकों के लिए समान मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं के मानवीय अधिकारों, नियमानुसार और नियत-आश्रित शासन, निर्वाचित प्रतिनिधि सरकार और संवैधानिक प्रणाली के अन्तर्गत सत्ताधारी दल की नीतियों ने असहमति या विरोधी अभिव्यक्त प्रकट की। जो लोकतांत्रिक समाजवाद को अभिन्न अंग मानते थे। इसके विपरीत सामाजिक न्याय के रूढ़िवादी समर्थकों के अनुसार विषय आर्थिक स्थितियों में राजनैतिक समता असंभव होने के कारण लोकतांत्रिक समाजवाद के निर्माण में अर्थिक व्यवस्था की पुनर्रचना की अनिवार्यता को प्राथमिकता दिया जाना उचित होगा।⁷

मानवीय दृष्टिकोण इस बात का द्वैतक है कि ईमानदार व्यक्ति पर चाहे जिनती भी पाबन्दियाँ क्यों न लगा दी जाये, अंधकार क्यों न आ जाये, रास्ता अनेक कठिनाईयों से भरा हो, फिर भी यदि व्यक्ति हार न मानें तो वह निश्चित ही अपने गन्त्वय तक पहुँच ही जाता है। इसी प्रतिमान के प्रतिमूर्ति डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर अछूतों का स्तर मानवता के स्तर तक लाने में अनेक कठिनाईयों को पार कर अन्ततः ले आये। उसके लिए उन्होंने कठिन परिस्थितियों में अध्यावसायी, देश से लेकर विदेश तक अध्ययन में समय बिताया है। यह उनके जीवन की अद्भुत प्रतिभा, निष्ठा और न्यायशीलता का परिणाम है जो सामाजिक न्याय को प्राप्त करने में अपने सम्पूर्ण जीवन को अर्पित कर दिया। डॉ. अम्बेडकर अपने जीवन की सभी सामाजिक यातनाओं को जीवन में सहते-सहते और आगे बढ़ते रहे। यह उन्होंने निश्चय किया कि अस्पृश्य वर्ग के लिए अमानवीय जीवन की इस स्थिति को समाप्त कर।⁸ उन्हें समुचित साधन मुहैया कराना उनका संकल्प था। आबादी का बहुसंख्यक वर्ग सदियों की गुलामी और लाचारी का जीवन व्यतीत करता रहा। अन्ततः उसके सामने अनेक विकट समस्याएँ उत्पन्न हुईं। उनके विकास के साधन में आर्थिक समस्याएँ भी पैदा होती रही। समाज की प्रगति के निर्धारण में प्रत्येक समाज की तत्कालीन परिस्थितियों और सांस्कृतिक परिवर्तनों के अनुसार समाज में समय-समय पर परिवर्तन हुआ है। जाति-पाँति, ऊँच-नीच, छुआछूत आदि विभिन्न सामाजिक कुरीतियों के दौर में एक ऐसे असाधारण व्यक्तित्व के धनी मानव ने सभी को न्याय प्रदान कर मानवता के मूल्यों को सजीव बना दिया। जिनके दार्शनिक चिन्तन ने समाज में एक नई क्रांति फैला दी। उन्होंने बुद्धि के बल पर सामाजिक चेतना का सूत्रपात किया है।

निष्कर्ष :

सामाजिक न्याय के सम्बन्ध में दार्शनिकों, मनोवैज्ञानिकों और विद्वानों ने कई सिद्धान्त दिये हैं। ये सभी सिद्धान्त मानवीय दृष्टिकोण से किये गये हैं, जिसमें व्यक्ति को संरचनात्मक और अभिव्यक्तात्मक दोनों दृष्टियों से देखा गया है। फिर भी सामाजिक न्याय का एक ऐसा आन्तरिक पहलू है। जो व्यक्ति के आचारण का केन्द्र बिन्दु है। उसे प्रायः उपेक्षित करके नहीं देखा जा सकता है। इस आन्तरिक तत्त्व को अन्तः प्रज्ञा, अन्तः आत्मा, बोधिसत्त्व, विवेक आदि से प्रायः देखा जा सकता है। इन्हीं तथ्यों को आधार बनाकर सामाजिक न्याय में डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर मानवीय दृष्टिकोण के चिन्तन का अध्ययन या तो किया ही नहीं गया है। या तो किया गया है तो उसे केन्द्र में रखकर नहीं। सामाजिक न्याय के पहलू को ध्यान में रखकर समझने का प्रयास है। भारत में सामाजिक न्याय की वास्तविकता को ध्यान में रखकर डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर ने जाति भेद को नष्ट किया है। इसके उपरान्त भारतीय समाज को संगठित करके अंग्रेजों की गुलामी से मुक्त किया है। जिससे वह हमेशा ही स्वतंत्र रह सके। इस प्रकार डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर का कार्य सामाजिक न्याय प्रदान कर भारतीय समाज को संगठित और समर्थ करने कुशल प्रयास है। डॉ. भीमराव अम्बेडकर के सामाजिक न्याय का मुख्य स्वर था कि मानव को समुचित अधिकार के साथ-साथ प्रतिष्ठा और सम्मानजनक स्थान प्राप्त हो। न्याय की संकल्पना थी कि भारत के परम्परागत सामाजिक दर्शन के सर्वश्रेष्ठ तत्वों का समाहार करना। इससे समाजवादी और साम्यवादी चिन्तन के सर्वश्रेष्ठ तत्व भी सामने आ जायेंगे। सामाजिक न्याय का मुख्य कार्य कि समाज में रहने वाले प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को बिना भेदभाव के जीवन निर्वहन हेतु मूलभूत अनिवार्य आवश्यकताएँ जैसे —भोजन, कपड़ा और मकान की पूर्ति हो सके और इसके साथ-साथ प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को आर्थिक एवं सामाजिक विकास का समुचित अवसर प्राप्त हो सकें। सामाजिक न्याय का निष्कर्ष है कि सामाजिक और आर्थिक रूप से पिछड़े वर्ग को समाज की मुख्य धारा से जोड़ना। उन्हें विशेष अवसर और सुविधा प्रदान कर अन्य वर्गों के बराबर लाना और सामाजिक व्यवस्था को अधिक मानवीय और न्यायसंगत बनाने हेतु संवैधानिक आधार प्रदान करना है।

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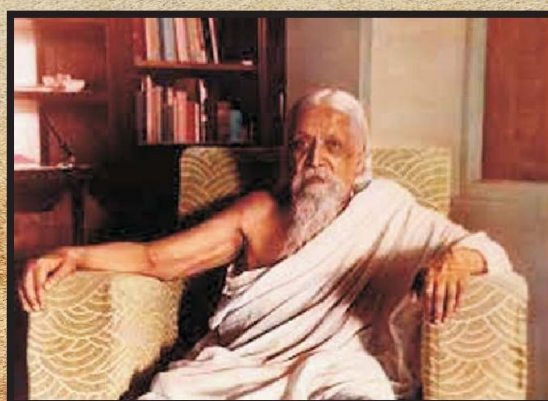


Philosophical and Educational Thoughts of Sri Aurobindo Edt. Dr. Desh Raj Sirswal

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“My objective is to achieve an intellectual detachment from all philosophical systems, and not to solve specific philosophical problems, but to become sensitively aware of what it is when we philosophise.”

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