

DR. BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR'S VIEWS AND ITS EFFECT TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Dr. Babasaheb's mission in his life was to challenge the ideological foundation of graded system of caste hierarchy that denied equality, freedom and human dignity to woman in Hindu Society, but his down documents as the living documents i.e. Indian constitution brings the equality by the rule of law in this nation. The paper gives closer and analytical insights into the thoughts of Dr. Babasaheb so as to appreciate his ideological basis of political, economic and social justice towards empowerment of the women in Indian Society. Ambedkar is one of the greatest personalities of 20th century India. His life was a great saga of suffering, sacrifice and struggle. His birth as an untouchable gave him a bitter taste of caste tyranny, oppression and unbearable agony. He was a fighter for the dignity of man and deprived people. His life was a struggle of a champion of human rights. So obviously he was a great thinker of woman and their rights. Being a pioneer of social justice, he always worked for the woman emancipation. His principle aim was to build up a society based on social justice. To secure and fulfill his dreams he thought everybody should be equal irrespective of caste, creed, gender and religion. For that reason he started work for the upliftment of woman and their rights. In this context, the present paper intends and tries to narrate the rights and upliftment of woman in the view of Ambedkar. The endeavor was also given to highlight the relevance of Ambedkar at present day India.

Key Words: Ambedkar, woman rights, social justice, relevance, India.

Introduction:

Dr. Ambedkar the first Indian reformer who roots out the barriers in the way of advancement of Indian society in general and of women in particular. Above all he was a pioneer of social justice. To secure all these goals he laid down the foundation of social justice by incorporating many factors or issues into Indian constitution through its various articles for the Hindus and other sections of the society; specially for backward communities and for under privileged classes. He started his movement in 1920. He raised his voice against the Hindu social order and social system through his renowned journal Mook Nayak in 1920 and Bahiskrit Bharat in 1927. Almost through its all issues he spoke on the gender equality, women education and exposed the problems related to women and

other depressed class. He was also a strong advocate of family planning measures for women in Bombay Legislative Assembly. Ambedkar was an example of inspiration of many classes of society. He spent his whole life for the betterment of Indian society as well as women and other under privileged sections. He was also involved to root out the evil practices like prostitutions. He worked for the welfare of the people for his whole life. He builds up awareness among poor, illiterate women and inspired them to fight against the unjust and social practices like child marriages and devdasi system. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's approach to women's right is exclusively different from other social reformers like Jyotiba Phule, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Mahatma Gandhi who tried to reform the Hindu society of certain outdated customs and practices without questioning the hierarchical social order. But Ambedkar made his own view for the women rights and that has been reflected in Indian constitution. His goal was to make a society based on social justice. To secure this goal, Ambedkar has given equal status to women on par with men by providing many provisions in the Indian constitution. 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 Ambedkar contribution.

VIEWS REGARDING WOMEN

A formal description of woman, an equal half of man, as some call her, is neither a tale of mere finite issues of life and death nor is it an exposition of some impressions of measurable pathos finally dissolved in perfect gender joy. At ancient times the form of society was matriarchal (mother as ruler and head of the family) and popularly it was said that, "Yater Nari asye Pujante, Ramte Tater Devita", means God reside at places where women are worshiped. The religious ceremony by man is not complete without participation of his wife. Also lord Rama had to get statue of Sita made to carry on with ceremonies for Ashwamegh Yagna. At that time woman have equal rights as men and respect in the family with liberty to choose their husbands in open "Swaimvars" and also considered stronger than man even during menstruation, pregnancy & child birth. In ancient India, the position of women was very high but gradually they loses their value turned into a merely object of pleasure and lust. They lost their individual personality and fundamental human rights.

ROLE OF AMBEDKAR IN WOMAN EMPOWERMENT

With the rise of Polar Star from tatters in Maharashtra, named Dr B.R Ambedkar, women got their real emancipator in 20th century. Dr. Ambedkar's heart read for women welfare, said "Unity is meaningless without the accompaniment of women". He had of the firm opinion that, the Hindu Dharma-shastras are not blown up, therefore on 25th December 1927, he blew bugle of fight against discrimination and exploitation on the basis of one's caste, creed, sex or place of birth. His principle of life was to speak, work & fight for the just cause of oppressed, depressed, exploited, illiterates, ill fed & ill-treated men & women irrespective of their caste or social status, place of birth affiliations

and without caring for his personnel life discomforts. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the society must be based on objective, and not on vicious traditions of caste system. He found education, inter-caste marriage as methods, which may abolish caste and patriarchy, maintained through endogamy. Dr. Ambedkar had view on the basis of Manusmriti and Hindu religion, that the socio-cultural forces artificially construct gender relations, so she could not do anything independently even in her own house because her destiny depends upon the wrong notions and perceptions chalked out by the proprietors of orthodoxy. His western education and deep understanding of the philosophies helped him to evolve as a visionary which was developed with clear ideas for the liberation of the depressed people and women in India. He also transform many of his ideas and dreams into specific policies and institutions during his time as the designer of Indian constitution and as the law minister of India. His acquaintance to the west has influenced his view on feminist issues. It was a time when feminism had been coming to an end with the attainment of franchise rights for women in Britain in 1918, and America in 1920 and Ambedkar's opinion for the women question, emphasizing their right to education, equal treatment with men, right to property and contribution in the political process resembled the universal feminist demands. It is very well known that Ambedkar used to work for more than 18 hours a day without any trouble. His reading practice helped him to know the progress in feminism in different cultures and countries around the world.

PRESENT SCENARIO

Education to women is the most influential instrument of changing their position in the society. Education also brings about decline in inequalities and also acts as a means to enhance their status in the family and society. In order to boost education of women at all levels and to dilute gender bias in the provision and acquaintance of education, schools, colleges and even universities were established exclusively for women in the country. To bring more girl children, especially from marginalized BPL families, into the mainstream of education, Government has been providing free supply of books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for hostilities, midday meals, scholarships, free bicycles and so on.²⁵ Many universities such as Mother Teresa Women University have been established for the development of Women Studies and to encourage higher education among women and their social mobility. It is the no. of priceless efforts of Dr. Ambedkar, which enables women to have rights like, custody of child, Provision of alimony (maintenance allowance from husband on getting legally separation) under Indian Divorce Act 1869, adoption of a child by a widow, rights over parental property, mother can change guardianship of minor by will, prohibition of child marriage generally which was strictly followed by Indian families, a uniform scheme for succession to the property of a Hindu female who dies intestate. Also women are holding high positions of authority in all fields including, Engineering, Medical, Higher Education, Defence Academy, Police Administration, Politics, Foreign Services, Industry & Trade. India feels proud Kalpana Chawla who went into space, Bachendri pal who is the first Indian woman to climb mount

Everest, constable Bimladevi who is the first woman to receive Sena medal, Mrs Indira Gandhi who is the first woman Prime Minister of India, Madam Pratibha Devi Singh Patil who is the first woman President of India. M.C Marykom, Saina Nehwal, Saniyamirza are the famous sports personality of India.

CONCLUSION

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and his beliefs on society based on equality are yet to be recognized for reforming the Indian society and making the life of women better. Throughout his whole life he fought against all kinds of discrimination against women. But still in the Indian society it is overlooked. So it is our duty to maintain the pace of revolution which was started by the Dr. Ambedkar for the betterment of the women. Social justice will not be executed properly if the people will not change their attitudes towards women. In order to create a women empowerment in the society, effective decision should be taken by the Government, because women are still suffering on two fronts of castes and sex. The female worker who worked in the factory, her interest, rights should be protected such like that the interest of woman at the time of pregnancy and after pregnancy under Maternity benefit Act, 1961 and Mines Act, 1952. Dr. Ambedkar was not against religion. He was against illegal, inhuman acts done in the name of religion by the orthodox clergies. Religiously dominated India did not permit Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the only child of Pt Nehru, to lit the funeral pyre of her father at that time, as such acts are solely reserved for men only but Madam Savitribai Phuley (1830-1897) dared to lit the funeral pyre of her husband against all resistance from orthodox society. The Government of India should have to promote women empowerment in the society so that people would realize the woman's right and its importance in real sense. Also the mentality of the each and every person should have to change regarding women. She is not a commodity for the men. She is also a human being like a man and she have the right to live with human dignity in the family or society.

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