

Role of Dr. Bhim Roa Ambedkar in Emancipation of Dalits

Abstract

"We must stand on our own feet and fight as best as we can for our rights. So carry on your agitation and organize your forces. Power and prestige will come to you through struggle"- Dr. Bhim Roa Ambedkar. Ambedkar, the great social transformer, who is generally known as the prophet of down-trodden people, a man who worked extensively for the wellbeing and upliftment of dalits. The contributions of Ambedkar in the social transformation of Indian society are very vast and unforgettable. The present paper deals with contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in upliftment of dalits in India.

Keywords: Dr.B.R. Ambedkar, Dalits' Upliftment, Indian Society.

Introduction

Dr. Bhim Roa Ambedkar is visionary thinker, intellectual in India who has not only change the life of millions of people but also played a major role in building a modern India. The word Dalit in Marathi language of western India indicates 'broken up', or 'oppresses' or 'persecuted' popularized by Dalit pioneer Dr.B.R.Ambedkar. The modern term of untouchables is dalits who are socially, economically, culturally and politically underprivileged people of our society. Dalits are forced to lead miserable, discriminative, exploitative and oppressive life due to domination of upper castes in social stratification of India. Scheduled Caste is the term mentioned in Indian Constitution for the purpose of classification of dalits. Dalits do all types of menial works such as land cultivation, shoes mending, toilets cleaning, clothes washing, scavage the dead animals or unknown human bodies but faced the stigmas of untouchability with upper castes. Some eminent intellectuals and social philosophers like Mahatma Phule, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Ambedkar and others tried to address the pitiable conditions of dalits. Dr. Ambedkar, the first Law Minister of independent India and the Chief Architect of Constitution of India incorporated several articles in Indian Constitution for providing guarantees and protection for civic liberties for all and thereby uplifting the dalits in India.

Objectives of the Study

1. To know contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar towards upliftment of Dalits in India
2. To reveal constitutional safeguards for the protection of Dalits' rights in India

Methodology

This paper is purely based on secondary sources of data collections such as books, magazines, journals, articles available at various websites.

Review of Literature

Varshan & Dr. Vezhaventhan,(2018), "A Study on View of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar in Formation of Modern India" reveals about the views of Dr. Ambedkar in creation of modern India. This paper focus on Ambedkar's ideology towards equality in society which enhance the human dignity of weaker section who are suffering from caste discrimination.

Dr.DeepakYadav,(2017), in his paper, "Dr. BhimRao Ambedkar: Messiah of the Masses" reveals about contributions of Ambedkar as a social prophet for the untouchables who fought for self-respect of millions of down-trodden from the slavery of servitude who had been exploited for centuries in the name of caste system. He became the voice of voiceless and taught and gave untouchables an alternate vision to become free forever from the bondage of casteism.

Prof.Anil Kumar Mohapatra & Binoda Kumar Kar,(2017), in their paper, "Ambedkar: A Crusader for Justice" found out the very essence of Ambedkar's vision of social justice was to establish a just, equitable and fair society, where people irrespective of caste, creed, gender etc would



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get their due place in the society through implementation of provisions found in Indian Constitution.

Dr. Alok Kumar Gupta, (2017), "Growing Atrocities on Dalits: Ambedkar's Legacy and its Contemporary Relevance", highlights the relevance of Ambedkar's thoughts as an important symbol of Dalits movement and outstanding tribute to Ambedkar could be not only to continue his efforts of empowering the SCs and helping them overcome the vicious circle of caste and cultural barriers, but also to take the same to its logical conclusion of mitigating caste as a factor in Indian society and polity.

Dr. Gobinda Chandra Sethi, (2016), "Dr.B.R. Ambedkar's Mission to Uplift the Downtrodden through Social Justice: A Critical Analysis with reference to the Constitution of India" reveals about valuable contributions of Ambedkar to the social and political thinking. He created awareness among people about political, economic and social problems of the need of paying social attention to the amelioration of the miserable condition of the untouchables.

Clifford Bob, (2015), "Dalit Rights are Human Rights: Caste Discrimination, International Activism, and the Construction of a New Human Rights Issue" deals with efforts made by Dalits in India with the objective of transforming centuries old caste based discrimination in the track of international human right issue. This article primarily based on two arguments. First, organizational changes among Dalits activists in the formation of a unified Dalit network within nation. Second, historical changes among Dalits with regards to caste based discrimination in terms of work and descent.

Role of Dr. Bhim Roa Ambedkar in Upliftment of Dalits in India

Ambedkar is great champion of Dalit movement in India, rationalist thinker, messiah of the masses, a crusader for justice who works and contributions towards Dalits are unforgettable. The creator of social justice who's name has been written in golden letters in the history of India. As a maker of Indian Constitution and social philosopher he had advocated many reforms for the upliftment of the Dalits in society.

Ambedkar & Removal of Caste System

Ambedkar said, "The caste differences have destroyed the Hindu Vansha. It drew out the society into deep darkness, and it has made the society powerless and weak one".

Ambedkar deconstruct the Hindu society as he realised that caste system is the major cause for inequality in India. This caste based inequality breeds exploitation of the shudras. He opine that caste system is totally unscientific. He found the root of caste system in varna system, Hindu scriptures namely Manusmriti, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagwadagita. He wanted complete eradication of caste system and untouchability because this lead for unequal treatment of men in the Indian society. For the purpose of eradication of caste system, he recommended following solutions:

1. The untouchables should refuse to perform the traditional untouchable jobs in order to possess equal status in the society.
2. To restore self-respect, untouchables must be educated and adopt the modern civilization.
3. The untouchables should actively participate in governmental activities as representatives.
4. It is the duty of the government to promote the welfare of the untouchables through the provision of special rights.
5. Supervision of State functions by trained persons which enables the eradication of all forms of caste system

Ambedkar & Abolition of Untouchability

To quote Ambedkar, "There have been many Mahatmas in India whose sole object was to remove untouchability, and to evaluate and absorb the depressed classes but everyone has failed in their mission. Mahatmas have come, Mahatmas have gone, but the untouchables have remained as untouchables". Ambedkar in his book "Untouchables" published in 1948, made an extensive study to find the answer by utilizing the anthropometrics and ethnographic evidence which is intended to understand the struggle between Buddhism and Brahmanism, the untouchables emerged. He demanded the total eradication of untouchability as there is no racial differences between the Hindus and the untouchables.

Ambedkar & Dalit Movement

1. As a social worker, political writer and educationalist, Ambedkar started Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha (association for the welfare of the depressed classes) in the year 1924 in Bombay. The objective of this is to provide moral and material support for the progress of Dalits.
2. In 1920, he founded a Marathi fortnightly called 'Mookanayaka' with the intention of making Dalits aware of their conditions.
3. He started a Marathi fortnightly Bahishkrit Bharat in 1927.
4. He also started the Janata Weekly in 1930.
5. Ambedkar led a satyagraha in order to establish the civic rights of Dalits such as draw water from the public tank chavdar at Mahar, Kolaba district in the year 1927.
6. In the year 1930, he led one more important satyagraha to provide right to enter the famous temple Kalaram at Nasik as a civic right of Dalits.
7. In order to raise consciousness among the Dalits, he wrote several books namely; Who are Shudras, Annihilation of Caste, Gandhiji & Emancipation of the Untouchables.

Ambedkar & Indian Constitution

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar said, "I felt the Constitution is workable, it is flexible and it is strong enough to hold the country together both in peace time and in war time." As the architect of Indian Constitution, Ambedkar played a great role in uplifting the Dalits in Indian society. The following provisions related to Dalits in Constitution of India.

1. Article 15(4) includes all provisions regarding compensatory discrimination for SCs/STs.

2. Article 15(5) allows the state to make special provisions for SCs/STs related to admission in private, aided or unaided educational institutions.
3. Article 16(4) allows the state to reserve vacancies in public services.
4. Article 16(4B) allows the state to consider unfilled vacancies reserved for backward classes as a separate class of vacancies not subject to a limit of 50% reservation.
5. Article 17 abolished untouchability in any form.
6. Article 19(5) allows the state to impose restriction on freedom of movement or of residence in the benefit of SCs/STs.
7. Article 40 provides reservation for SCs/STs in 1/3 seats in panchayat.
8. Article 46 allows the states to promote educational and economic interests of the the SCs/STs.
9. Article 330 & 332 allows reservation of seats for SC/St in the parliament and state legislatures.
10. Article 335 allows provision of relaxation in qualifying marks for admission in educational institutions for SCs/STs.
11. Article 338, 338 A & 339 establishes a National Commission for SCs and STs.
12. Article 339 allows the central government to direct states to implement and executes plans for the betterment of Scs/STs.
13. Article 340 allows the President of India to appoint a commission to investigate the condition of socially and economically classes and table the report in the parliament.

Conclusion

Dr. Bhim Roa Ambedkar, the popular philosopher, selfless fighter, social scientist had made valuable contribution to the emancipation of Dalits. He strongly condemned the outrageous mind-set of the Brahnamical Hinduism against the Dalits and

extensively worked for the liberation of the Dalits from the exploitation of the upper caste Hindus. He made awareness among the people through his writings and speeches regarding their social, economic and political conditions and inspired the need of paying social interest to the refinement of the miserable situations of the Dalits in India. Regarding the Indian Constitution, Ambedkar said that, "However good a Constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad, because those who are called to work it, happen to be bad. However bad a Constitution may be, it may turn out good if those who are called to work it, happens to be a good lot".

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