

The Ideas of Ambedkar on Social Justice in India

1K.M. Anitha Sheryl
Research Scholar, Department of History,
Holy Cross College (Autonomous),
Tiruchirappalli.

2Rev.Sr.(Dr). Rajakumari P
Head, Department of History,
Holy Cross College (Autonomous),
Tiruchirappalli.

Abstract:

B.R. Ambedkar has taken Social Justice as a primary ingredient in framing the Indian constitution. The duty of the nation is to secure a social order in Legal system to uphold justice based on equality and ensures opportunities for all citizen to secure justice at any circumstances. This Article covers the ideas of B.R. Ambedkar on social justice in India and it reveals the need for his relevance in Today's time to create just society.

Keywords: Just Society, Social Justice, Inequality, Casteism, Constitution, Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

Introduction

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the pioneer of Social Justice in India has given the vision to overcome inequalities and sufferings of the weaker section and to get dignity and emancipation of untouchability. He was portrayed as a leader for deprived class, but he must be portrayed as a leader for humanity because his notion is always to establish an egalitarian society in India hence, he had made Social Justice as the basic feature of our Indian constitution. He always wants to bring a balance of wheel between privileged class and deprived class. This article covers the ideas of Ambedkar, on Social Justice – How helpful to uplift the downtrodden people to lead a dignified life based on Liberty, equality and fraternity.

Notion of Social Justice:

In ancient times, justice was just a performance of duties and not an idea of providing equality and rights. On the initial days there were 2 approaches towards justice, there were 'Dandaniti' & 'Dharma'. 'Dandaniti' was like modern idea of justice which is related to law and punishment whereas 'Dharma' on the other hand has the idea of duty. Like justice defined by Plato, the Hindu tradition linked justice with performance of duties whereas modern approaches links to broader Liberal and Marxist approaches. According to the Liberal argument, the individual's rights and liberty are essential to create a just society but in Marxist Approach depends upon the equality to create a just society. Therefore, to create a just society the inequalities should be removed in the society.

The word social justice means to provide liberty, equality and rights for all human-beings in the society. In a nutshell, social justice should provide all the members of the society to develop and evolve with all their capabilities. In a multi-perspectivity, social justice has been explained differently but the fundamental of social justice is nothing but the balancing wheel between the sophisticated & down-and-outs. It is one of the saviors to secure the unity of the nation, but the justice cannot be defined a universal formula because the idea of justice must be balanced between many factors.

Therefore our main aim is to remove any kind of inequalities in social-political-economical factors and give equal opportunity to human-being who live in the society. Social justice should maintain an equilibrium between social rights and social controls.

Hindu society in Ancient Times:

The Ancient Hindu society is maintained by the Legal system which is completely up-held the concept of Varnas. So, it refused that all the human-beings are equal by birth which created inequalities in the society by which it humiliated and degraded the human by their occupation from birth till death and the most cruel part is that he/ she cannot change his/her occupation and this man made disability will be continued hereditarily. There is no chance to create a new social order to provide equality for all human being in the society. It made the privileged to be more powerful and the depressed to be voiceless. The uncompromising part is that the so-called privileged group is the smaller section of the society who dominated the major section of the society. The Hindu social order not only created an unjust society but also dehumanized the society. Thus the exploitation and inequality must be eradicated from the society.

Ideas of Ambedkar on Social Justice

Ambedkar had devoted his heart and soul to bring social justice in Indian society which will not be attained without removing the last piece of caste system. Therefore he adopted the following 4 methods to remove caste and untouchability.

1) Education

According to Ambedkar, Knowledge is the key force to liberate the depressed and oppressed people. Because the lack of education allowed the marginalized group to accept themselves as a prey to privileged group. In same way he criticized the British for not giving emphasis on the education for lower class. So only by the secular education will make them understand the concept of liberty, equality and individual's rights. Because first the marginalized people should come out of the myth of inherent pollution that which was strongly influenced in the mind of lower caste people and that will create self-respect in their mind. Eradication should get start from the mind of marginalized and make them understand that one person must be treated equally. By the education we can make other privileged people to analyze that caste system is a weapon against the humanity. But the focus of education is more on make the voiceless people to get their own voice against the exploitation.

2) Economic Progress

Ambedkar strongly advocated that education is a tool to get knowledge about social justice but only the economic growth will give them a power to free themselves from the bond of old traditional jobs which has strongly chained them with caste and the way of getting away from the village community will paved a way for them to lead a new life with a new profession. Because the village communities are not educated about the social justice therefore, they are more on communal and ignorant.

3) Political Strength

Ambedkar as an eyeopener he emphasis that the marginalized people must organize themselves as a political party to achieve the education with economical growth. because it is the possible way to attain, protect and make new policies to create a just society without any hinderance.

4) Conversion

Ambedkar realized is not possible to remove casteism from Hinduism Because it formulated on the basics of Varnas. so he adopted Buddhism and asked his followers to do the same. Buddhism based on humanism and the spirit of equality. After the conversion he proclaimed that he got a new birth and he discarded the religion which preach inequalities among the human being and obstruct the society to get a social justice.

Factsheet of Social reforms by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

To spread education & culture among the down-and-outs, Dr. Ambedkar had set up the 'Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha (Association for Welfare of Outcastes)' in 1923.

In 1930, Dr. Ambedkar launched the temple entry movement at Kalaram temple in Nasik which was a turning point in struggle for human rights & social justice.

Dr. Ambedkar participated and shared his views in the interest of the 'untouchable' in all 3 Round Table Conferences (1930-1932) at London.

Mahatma Gandhi ji protested Ambedkar's demand for separate electorate by fasting & imprisoned for the same, which resulted in Poona Pact, later Gandhi ji ended his fast and Dr. Ambedkar dropped his demand. Instead of separate electorate, certain number of seats were reserved for the 'Depressed Class'.

Independent Labour Party was founded by Dr. Ambedkar in 1936.

During Second World War in 1939, Ambedkar invited Indians to join the Indian Army in huge numbers to defeat Nazism, which was considered as Fascism by himself.

Dr. Ambedkar embraced Buddhism along with his followers and completed his writing on 'Buddha and His Dharma' on 14th Oct, 1956

Dr. Ambedkar was awarded with Bharat Ratna in 1990.

In the memory of Babasaheb, the period 14th Apr 1990-91 was observed as 'Year of Social Justice'.

On 24th March 1992, the Government of India under the support of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment established Dr. Ambedkar Foundation and registered it under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

The foundation was established to implement programs and activities for spreading the ideology & message of Dr. Ambedkar among the masses in India.

The important writings of Dr. Ambedkar:

- Mook Nayak - 1920
- Janta - 1930
- The Annihilation of Caste - 1936
- The Untouchables - 1948
- Buddha Or Karl Marx - 1956 etc.

Relevance of Ambedkar's Concept of Social Justice in the Present Scenario

Dr B.R. Ambedkar was against violence and his thoughts about social justice and equality were progressive. He always considered the Press as a powerful tool to establish Social justice and Freedom. His publications such as Mook Nayak, Janata and Samata magazines were progressive and expressed unconventional thoughts.

It was Ambedkar's efforts which has resulted in addition of prohibitions acts against the social evil of untouchability and women empowerment in the Constitution. He had made the oppressed people of India feel their powerful existence; In the same way, the credit should go to him that he united and brought all the depressed caste people under one name of Schedule Caste. Only because of the facilities provided to Scheduled Caste helped them to overcome the sorrow and sufferings by the ancient social order. Opportunities in the field of Education and Government service for the scheduled caste paved a way for them to be a part of Parliament, Indian Civil Service, Professors & Doctors etc., all these facilities helped them to progress educationally, socially and economically.

If we further provide these additional facilities to them in form of reservation will uplift them to the level of privileged class. It is crystal clear that the present-day legal provisions created the social justice to all the human beings in Indian society. At the same time, we couldn't deny that there was so much confusion about social justice because social justice is not a formula but a process of evolution. We can able to attain social justice only by removing the inequalities in the name of caste, religion and gender. It will be difficult to remove these social inequalities, because it is a blind faith of our society for so many centuries. Thus the reason till now we are noticing the atrocities of caste system in recent incidents such as: October 2004 – Pathardi in Ahmed Nagar district, Maharashtra : 3 members of a Dalit family headed by Sanjay Jadhav were cruelly killed and body parts were scattered around their locality. May 2014 – Katra in Badaun District, Uttar Pradesh : The 2 teenaged Dalit girls were gang raped and murdered but the suspects were released due to lack of evidences and it was fabricated that there no such gang rape. In the last few years, many suicidal incidents have happened in few Government Institution due to the suppression of depressed class on the name of caste.

Decades have passed, Infra structures have been developed, Many new Technologies were upgraded yet the mindset of People on the caste system remains the same. The uneducated privileged class people express their dominance on muscle power whereas the educated people show their power and authority on the deprived class which affects them physiologically. Therefore the marginalized people are still a victim to the caste system unable to move forward towards advancement. We need to go a long way to attain social justice in India and it is possible by implementing the ideas of Ambedkar.

Conclusion:

Constitution laid down by Ambedkar ensures on dignity, equality and individual rights for every human-being in Indian society. The State also plays a vital role to implement social justice through reservation policy to construct a just society. The Legal and constitution facilities are framed to preserve, protect & promote the social harmony but the complete social justice can be attained only by the dignified attitude towards each other.

The ideas of Ambedkar are not against the people of privileged but against the in-humanize social order which supports and spread inequality among human being in Indian society. Promoting Ambedkarism is not to develop caste politics but to create a just society.

References:

Agarwal, R.N. (2014, October 10). Six dalit women gang raped in Bhojpur village, 3 held. *The Times of India*. Retrieved from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/Six-dalit-women-gang-raped-in-Bhojpur-village-3-held/articleshow/44777796.cms>

Bureau, M.T. (2014, December 11). *CBI rules out gang-rape and murder in death of Badaun girls and concludes cousins committed suicide*. New Delhi: Reuters.

Dias, R.M.W. (1985). *Jurisprudence* (5th ed.). London: Butterworths.

Friedmann, W., (2002). *Legal theory* (5th ed.). New Delhi: Universal Law Publication.

Mallik, C. (2011). *Justice and equality in Dr. BR Ambedker's vision of India*. Doctoral dissertation, Jadavpur University, Kolkata.

Menon, M. (2014, November 15). Empowering the perpetrator. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/comment-on-caste-related-crimes/article6595785.ece>

NCERT. (2010). Social justice. In *Political theory*. New Delhi: Publication Division.

Nita, B. A. (2014, May 29). *Teen girls gang-raped and hanged from a tree—police*. New Delhi: Reuters.

Pact, P. (n.d.). *Dr. B. R. Ambedker's Contribution to fundamental rights and federalism enshrined in constitution of India*. Retrieved 12 February 2015, from <http://www.themenplattform-ez.de/>; <http://www.themenplattform-ez.de/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/SSRN-id2313645.pdf>

Pritha, C. (2014, June 4). Post mortem says Badaun girls were hanged when they were still alive. *The Indian Express*. Retrieved from <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/politics/post-mortem-says-badaun-girls-werehanged-when-they-were-still-alive/>