

# Dr. B. R Ambedkar's Contributions to Social Transformation and Women Empowerment

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**Abstract:** *Dr. B R Ambedkar was the global personality with the high constitutional knowledge and knowledge of law. His efforts towards eradicating several social evils, and discrimination on the basis Caste, Class, Gender, Race. His commitment of social change and development was constant and he was restless in giving justice. and dignity to the marginalised sections of the society. As a social reformer, Dr. Ambedkar believed in peaceful methods of social change. He was supported to constitutional lines in the evolutionary process of social transformation. He was opposed to the violent methods in social change for it hinders the tranquillity and creates chaos. He fought for the dignity of women and depressed people. Being a pioneer of social justice, he always aimed for the empowerment of women. He started to work for the liberation of dalits and women and their rights. His aim was to make a society based on social justice. He realized the gender inequality among the Indian society and raised his voice to include them in the mainstream of society. Dr. Ambedkar has given equal status to women as men by providing many provisions in the Indian constitution, for strengthening and upliftment the position of women the society.*

**Keywords:** Social Transformation, Women Empowerment, Discrimination, Upliftment, Gender Disparity

## 1. Introduction

According to B. R. Ambedkar Society is always composed of Classes. Their basis may differ. They may be economic or intellectual or social, but an individual in a society is always a member of a class. Therefore society categories people on the basis of their wealth. Marginalized people are also another face of the same coin. Social work education and profession have greater responsibility in the process of empowerment of the marginalised sections. Ambedkar belonged to the Mahar caste. The Mahars were treated as untouchables and were subjected to socio-economic discrimination in society. The downtrodden did not have the courage to come forth, raise their eyes and stand beside to talk to people of the higher castes. The doors of the temples, like the doors of schools, were not opened for them. He thought the factors like law and order are indispensable for social life. It also strives to sustain institutions that will make better 'social order'.

## 2. Literature Survey

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's approach to social transformation and 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. His goal was to make a society based on social justice.

## 3. Methodology

Descriptive, analytical and critical method has been used to understand Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's works. Along with this an attempt has been made to apply critical theories to certain issues and aspects that it required.

## 4. Discussion

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 rooted out from the society and everybody should get equal opportunity in the society. 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 to establish monogamy as the only legal system, conferment of right to property and adoption on women, reconstitution of conjugal rights and judicial separation; attempts to unify the Hindu Code Bill in tune with progressive and modern thought.

### Social Transformation

French revolutionary Rousseau had written, 'Man is born free, but everywhere he is in chains.' His three words equality, liberty and fraternity had revolutionized France in 1789. Ambedkar was very much influenced by Rousseau's words and he decided to fight for justice based on equality. Dr B. R. Ambedkar wanted economic and social equalities before political equality; he tried his best to ensure that the downtrodden got a proper place in society. Hence, he gave more importance to social justice than political justice; on equal opportunity with individual liberty were laid much emphasis to root out the differences created by the caste system of the country.

As a rationalist and humanist, he did not approve of any type of hypocrisy, injustice and exploitation of man by man in the name of religion. He stood for a religion that is based on universal principles of morality and is applicable to all times, to all countries and to all races.

It must be in accordance with reason and must be based on the basic tenets of liberty, equality and fraternity. He considered the caste system as the greatest evil of Hindu religion. The varna system according to him is the root cause of all inequality, caste system, prejudices and untouchability.

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Dr B. R. Ambedkar's thoughts on social justice were progressive. He did not believe in violence; he considered the press to be a powerful tool for social changes for justice and freedom.

Social differences and untouchability have not been removed due to the difficult caste system and the blind faiths that have been continuing for centuries. There were many social reformers before Dr. B R. Ambedkar but, various presidencies fail to adopt and implement to uniform civil and criminal laws for the welfare of the marginalised sections as system was highly controlled by the British's.

Great awareness by the Babasaheb and his restless efforts for the empowerment of marginalised sections resulted positively after the few decades of independent India.

His social concern and concern of national building took great shape after 70th decade of 20th century. Assertive life style of marginalised sections of the contemporary society was the mission of Babasaheb. Therefore marginalised sections proudly says "We Are because He was". Major implications of thoughts Babasaheb with sociological and social work perspectives are as below:

- 1) Practice of Untouchability and Devadasi system abolished.
- 2) Reservation in education and government jobs introduced for marginalised sections.
- 3) Marginalised sections got awareness about their entity and rights.
- 4) Concept of self, self-conscience, and self-dignity, increased for the weaker sections.
- 5) Professionalism adopted by the Institutional and non-institutional services for empowerment of marginalised sections.
- 6) Strict implementations in rules, regulations, policies, programmes related with the welfare of the marginalised sections.
- 7) Social work profession strengthens with the support of laws and policies in community development and in other social work aspects.
- 8) He proposed the patriotic slogan for the unity of all sections of the society that is "I Am the first Indian and I am the last Indian", finally slogan resulted in to social transformation and reduce the impact of social stratification.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar then gives a utilitarian reason for why we need to uphold the principle of equality. He said that, 'Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of its social democracy'. By social democracy he meant a way of life which recognizes, 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity as principle of life'. On 26th January He said that, 'we are going to enter into a life of contradictions: In politics we will have equality, in social and economic life we have inequality

### Women Empowerment

Women's empowerment requires gender equality, and proper gender representation, gender main streaming, networking, leadership, and financial freedom. The Indian Constitution explicitly depicts Dr. Ambedkar's vision for women. Articles 14, 15 and 16 of the constitution firmly

support gender equality. In the Indian Constitution's Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, and Directive Principles, the principle of gender equality is incorporated.

Dr. Ambedkar detailed how women were punished horribly by methods of sati, forced widowhood, and girl marriages in order to maintain strict endogamy in a caste in his work 'Castes in India'. He drew attention to the societal problems that women face in both Hindu and Muslim societies.

Empowerment encompasses the development and strengthening of individual and community capacities in order to integrate them into mainstream society. Education is the only way for society to progress from oppression to democratic engagement and participation. It is a strong tool for individual empowerment.

Dr. Ambedkar emphasised the need of education for the advancement of women and our country. 'Give education to your children,' Ambedkar encouraged them, full of hope for their liberation.

He emphasises the importance of men and women cultivating their minds and developing an attitude of self-help. He wants them to understand that parents bear a significant amount of responsibility for properly teaching their children. However, he also recommended them to send their children to school. Education is the most significant aspect in shaping the lives of all men, women, and children, according to him.

The rise in female harassment in all forms, violence, crime, and humiliation is only due to political passivity, which has failed to maintain social doctrine. Education, work possibilities, a large population, inflation, and a lack of means to strive are all hurdles to people's progress. The mere influence of modern lifestyles and technological adoption does not imply that individuals and societies are improving.

Traditional and conservative beliefs were attacked by Dr. Ambedkar. He was outspoken in his criticism of Indian society's treatment of women. He felt that women should have the same rights as men and should have access to education. He bemoaned the fact that the Hindu religion denied women the freedom to own property. Dr. Ambedkar also introduced the Hindu Code Bill in Parliament, which proposed, among other things, abolishing various Hindu marriage systems and establishing monogamy as the only legal system, conferring the right to property and adoption on women, restitution of conjugal rights, and judicial separation; and attempting to unify the Hindu code in accordance with progressive and modern thought. His issue didn't just apply to Hindu women but to women of all sections.

Even today, Dr. Ambedkar's three-word formula of "educate, agitate, and organise" is a strong weapon for social transformation. Ambedkar made the oppressed people of the lower classes aware of their rights, which they had been denied for centuries. He believed that educating the oppressed would instill in them a sense of conscience, self-

respect, and dignity. He desired for individuals to foster among themselves the values of liberty and equality, which could only be accomplished via education. This, in turn, would provide the cultural foundation for their steady absorption into the mainstream of a civilised society.

Empowerment can be defined as a technique of creating a social environment in which people can make choices and decisions for social revolution, either individually or collectively. It strengthens inherent talent through acquiring education, authority, and experience. The concept of empowerment was first established during the International Women's Conference in Nairobi in 1985. "This conference attempts to restructure societal power and resource control in women's favour. The various aspects of empowerment are designed to boost women's self-esteem and confidence. Also, by identifying women's contributions to the economy and society, you may create a positive image of them. It had to improve people's ability to think critically and encourage them to make decisions and take action as a group.

Allow them to make unstructured decisions about their health, work, and education. Ensure that everyone participates equally in the growth process. To achieve economic independence, provide information, knowledge, and skills. Increase access to legal knowledge and information about their rights and prerogatives in society in order to increase their engagement in all sectors on an equal footing.

Women's empowerment requires gender equality, financial freedom, gender mainstreaming, leadership, and networking. Dr. Ambedkar did incredible work for the abolition of caste and the upliftment of the oppressed sections of society. This, he claims, could not be accomplished without women's independence.

He addressed women and asked them to join the fight against caste biases. Women marched with men in the Chavadar Lake Satyagraha parade. He urged women to take charge of their own affairs. He encouraged women to be liberal and to eliminate conventionalism, ritualism, and habitual habits, which were harmful to their development, after being impressed by the enormous gathering of women at a women's conference held in Nagpur on July 20, 1942.

## 5. Conclusion

Dr. Ambedkar's vision for a society based on gender equality is still unknown, thus his ideals are crucial for the social construction of a society that promotes women's empowerment. He had a charitable attitude toward all women, regardless of caste, religion, sex, or social background. Sati, widow remarriage, child marriage, and other Hindu religious issues are discussed. The total eradication of the caste system, the abolishment of untouchability, and changes to marriage, adoption, and succession laws are all examples of social reform in the broad sense of reorganising and recreating society.

## 6. Future Scope

Looking at Dr. Ambedkar's viewpoints, it is apparent that equality should be made available to all people, even in socioeconomic life, by government intervention. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar pleaded for two social reforms: the reform of the Hindu family and the re-organisation and rebuilding of Hindu society.

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## Author Profile



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