

A STUDY CONTRIBUTIONS OF DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR IN INDIAN EDUCATION FIELD

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ABSTRACT:

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a patriot, scholar, critic and the founding father of the Constitution. Babasaheb's contribution to the advancement of education in the country was multifaceted. Education, organization and movement were his burning message. His empowerment refers to the increase in the political, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities. Ambedkar wanted people to develop the values of freedom and equality in themselves; that is possible only through education. He considered education as a means to reach the doors of light and understanding to remove the areas of darkness and ignorance. Ambedkar emphasized on secular education for social liberation. The basic theme of his education was: to inculcate the values of liberty, equality, fraternity, justice and moral character in all boys and girls through education. Through his educational philosophy, by enjoying complete freedom of education without any barriers of caste, creed and race; I have clearly stated in this study that this is the best way to move humans from darkness to light.

Key Words: Contributions of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Education

INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a renowned educationist and a great scholar who pursued his studies abroad. At a time when most Scheduled Castes did not receive any education in the early twentieth century, Ambedkar received excellent education and obtained degrees from prestigious universities abroad. He started his career as a quality teacher and was the Principal of the Government Law College, Bombay for a while. But he gave up a life of prosperity to devote himself entirely to the service of the nation and the welfare of the downtrodden classes.

Had he not stubbornly overcome the oppressive circumstances of his birth, he would have become one of the many untouchables of his time who were condemned to a life of misery and misery. Ambedkar, of course, was a charismatic leader of the untouchables. He understood that the development, progress and growth of the country depended on the acquisition of education and made numerous contributions to education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- i. To assess the contributions of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to the field of education.
- ii. To explore the changes in the lifestyle of the marginalized class through the contribution of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to the field of education.
- iii. To identify the multifaceted personality of Dr. Ambedkar.
- iv. To introduce his life and leadership.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY :

This thesis was conducted through historical, analytical methods, studying the existing literature from secondary sources and the researcher took some books from the library of Gulbarga University and used them to synthesize arguments, ideas and evidence from different sources, construct consistent and well-supported arguments, discuss the issue in a balanced manner, evaluate the ideas and arguments of others, make judgments and express an informed opinion.

BABASAHEB'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION:

Babasaheb's contribution to the advancement of education in the country is multifaceted. Besides being a teacher and principal, he was a great advocate of education and was the founder and builder of

educational institutions of national repute. Above all, he was a great teacher and educator for the masses. Ambedkar, who borders on 'Dalits', lays emphasis on education.

He compares education to tiger's milk and the one who drinks it; does not sit still and says, "If you want to develop a society, you must have education. Education eradicates the prejudices of people, it reduces the exploitation, domination of people who try to take advantage of illiterate people. If people gain knowledge through education, they can face problems.

Education improves opinions, it tries to remove the walls built between people. The greatest contribution that education gives is that it creates self-confidence in us, which is considered the first step of our development.

Ambedkar in one of his speeches said, "Until people are educated, there is no progress and success in the struggle for life, therefore, it is the duty of the existing government to accelerate it by providing education." In Ambedkar's time, the educational condition of the untouchables was very critical. "The Brahmins and other castes were deliberately keeping the untouchables away. Because they were running the education system. They tried to treat the untouchables badly," he opined. This led to effective action being taken against the government.

After the bad experience with the untouchables, he tried to make changes in the education system. According to Ambedkar, "Education is a weapon for the creation of mental and academic development, for the abolition of social slavery and for the economic development of political freedom. While emphasizing the need for education, he put forward the demand for a law on compulsory education. He knew that the problem of primary education was a national problem. At the Mahabaleshwar Conference held on May 31, 1929, he said, "The problem of the spread of primary education is very acute.

These countries, which have the highest number of Dalit illiterates at present, will not survive the battle of life. The spread of primary education is the basis of national development. If the spread of primary education depends on the interests of the common people, it will take a long time. Therefore, a Compulsory Primary Education Act should be implemented."

BABASAHEB'S EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES :

There are two approaches to understanding the role of education in empowering people.

- A radical approach that uses pedagogy as a process of making the oppressed self-conscious.
- A transformational plan that creates opportunities in mainstream education for those who were previously denied access to education.

Ambedkar did not conceive of education as merely a means of developing a child's personality or as a source of livelihood.

Rather, he considered education to be the most powerful nexus for bringing about desired changes in society and a prerequisite for any organized effort to launch any social movement in modern times.

For him, education was a tool that enabled the Dalits to liberate themselves from illiteracy, ignorance and superstition and to fight against all forms of injustice, exploitation and oppression. The ancient oppression of Indian society made Dr. Ambedkar give high priority to education in his struggle for the liberation of the Dalits.

He firmly believed that education was the only way to overcome the various disabilities of Dalits and remove the shackles of their social slavery.

Education provides them with the strength and opportunity to fight against poverty and untouchability. Keeping in mind the crucial role of education in the social emancipation of Dalits, Dr. Ambedkar gave the following message to his brothers:

- "Educate, organize and agitate".
- This is clear from his speech on the Bombay University Amendment Bill in the Bombay Legislative Council on October 5, 1927: "We may renounce the material benefits of civilization, but we cannot renounce our right and opportunity to enjoy the full benefits of

higher education, the backward classes have realized that their existence is not secure without education”.

- **Education:** Education has a huge impact on human society. A person cannot understand the peculiarities of life properly until he is educated. It trains the human mind to think and make the right decisions. In other words, when a person is educated, he becomes a rational being. Through education, the knowledge, understanding, application, skills, interests, attitudes, and information received are fully useful throughout life. An illiterate person cannot read, write, and he is very close to all knowledge and wisdom like a window. On the contrary, an educated person lives in a room where all the windows are open to the outside world. Getting an education does not mean getting knowledge and getting an academic position. Education should go through an open mind and open thinking.
- **Movement:** The word 'movement' does not mean physical movement; it is a mental revolution in its place. It does not mean going out and starting violent protests on the streets without getting an education. After getting an education, a person can start moving mentally by understanding the thoughts and strategy of Babasaheb.

As Dr. Ambedkar had predicted, the agitated mind compels educated people to form organizations and they work to solve problems. Many people who claim to be Ambedkar, limit their slogan to these three points explained above.

- **Organize:** Educated and restless minds easily organize for a common cause. We should make ourselves literate and our thoughts will motivate us to organize together.

Minds excited about a common cause will help them unite and fight for their common goal as a single force. Only education can bring about this change. Ambedkar laid great emphasis on getting education. He gave prime importance to education. And “The backward classes have realized that education is the greatest material benefit. We can forego the material benefits of civilization but we cannot forego our rights and opportunities to fully avail the benefits of higher education. That is the importance of education. From this perspective, he advised the backward classes to realize that their existence is not secure without education.”

Ambedkar's idea of providing education and equal opportunity to the people aimed at removing the barriers in the Indian Hindu religious caste system and the development of the backward castes and all marginalized communities.

In the field of social work, his idea of education agitation and organizing is very relevant in the present context because in Indian society people are illiterate and they are not aware about education and their basic rights in life, still people are facing caste discrimination in the society and lack of support and motivation.

Education, agitation and organizing must be carried out to see effective results of the movement for the upliftment of our people. For the upliftment of the depressed classes, he developed the education programme as a part of the general manifesto of the Indian Labour Party before the general elections of 1937 as follows.

- To eliminate illiteracy
- He stressed the need for full and compulsory and liberal education.
- He stressed that many students from the depressed classes did not have money.
- To overcome the financial problem that worked against their studies, he stressed the need for scholarships in educational institutions.
- Ambedkar considered education essential for all men and women, irrespective of their social and economic status.
- All men and women should receive a minimum education to learn to read and write.
- Primary education meets the minimum need of educating the masses.
- According to Ambedkar: “The aim of primary education is to ensure that every child who enters the gates of primary school becomes literate throughout his life.

But if we take statistics, out of every hundred children who enter primary school, only eighteen reach the fourth grade, while the rest, that is, eighty-two children out of every hundred, fall into a state of illiteracy. He said that the government should spend a lot of money "so that every child who enters primary school reaches the fourth grade".

SOME THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION :

- "Educate, Mobilize and Organize"
- "Education is something that should be accessible to all. If all these communities are to be brought to the same level, the only solution is to adopt the principle of equality and to give preferential treatment to the underprivileged."
- "I love the teaching profession very much. I love students too. I have dealt with them. I have lectured with them in my life. I enjoy talking to students very much. Much of the future of this country depends on the students of this country. Students are the intelligent part of the community and they can shape public opinion."
- Denying them the right to education is creating a situation full of injustice. Making people illiterate and then making their literacy the basis of their voting is like adding insult to injury. But the situation really involves more than this. To retain the illiterate and then deny them the right to vote involves an aggravation of the injury, which is the only way they can effectively provide for the removal of illiteracy, namely to perpetuate illiteracy and to postpone their voting days indefinitely.

"This accustoms him to the critical study of important authorities, perhaps, occasionally referring to direct sources of information, and it instills in his mind a standard of rigor and gives him a sense and value of the difficulty of arriving at truth."

He must be accustomed to isolate problems and to consider individual questions without seeing each on its own merits and their bearings on some cherished theory. He must learn to state the position fairly and sympathetically of those whose practical conclusions he most strongly opposes. He must be able to test a suggested idea and see what comes of it before accepting or rejecting it.

Without necessarily being a student of the original, he must gain insight into the conditions under which original research is carried out. He is able to weigh the evidence, follow and criticize the argument, and put his own value on the authorities."

- The role of education is important. Education is a sharp word; it is dangerous to use it. An educated person without character and humility is more dangerous than a beast.
- ❖ Dr. Ambedkar identified two purposes of knowledge: first, to acquire it for the good of others and secondly to use it for one's own good.
- ❖ He also argued against vocational learning (the British educational system) which aimed to create a priestly nature in the workers. He emphasized on secular education for social emancipation and freedom.
- ❖ The sole purpose of education is to enlighten the depressed classes to further the cause of social, economic and political upliftment.
- ❖ Dr. Ambedkar's social and moral philosophy aims to make the depressed people aware to change their thoughts and old behavior-patterns and move forward in the direction of unity and freedom through education.
- ❖ The basic theme of his philosophy of education is to inculcate the values of freedom, equality, brotherhood, justice and moral qualities in boys and girls of all religions, regions, classes and castes.

Dr. Ambedkar listed these three points as the objectives of policy makers:

- 1) Reshaping the aims and objectives of education,
- 2) Education as a means of achieving fundamental equality,
- 3) Women's education.

EDUCATIONAL VISION OF DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR :

School and Educational Institution: According to Dr. Ambedkar, “School is a holy institution where the minds of the students are cultured”. The regular working in the schools should be organized in a disciplined manner. School is the factory of making good citizens. The skilled foreman of this institution converts the raw material into a good quality product. He started the model educational institution by establishing People’s Education Society. The preference should be given to higher educational qualifications irrespective of caste and creed while appointing the teachers in the educational institutions. He given importance to the admissions of students belonging to Dalit community in his institution but, the teacher of the school should be higher qualified belonging to any caste or category. He supported the co-education by saying that women should be given equal opportunity along with men to educate themselves.

Education and Students: Dr. Ambedkar had served in various educational institutions as professor till years. So, he had deep understood of the minds of the students. He said that the self-confidence of the students should be raised through education and the students should not lose their self-confidence at the time of examination or using the learned skill.

He stressed the value education and said that students should self-reliant the knowledge, intellect, politeness and strict discipline into their behavior and character. Politeness is required along with the knowledge and knowledge without politeness is useless. He also said that social emotions should also be incorporated in the students through educational process. According to Dr. Ambedkar, “To score good marks in the examinations and to get the degree is a separate issue, but to be cultured, knowledgeable and educationist is totally different. The teacher should understand the basic problems and loopholes in the education of the students.

The ability to create something new, to find the answer of questions in a logical way, to express oneself with confidence, to put the inner ideas properly in front of audience and the basic knowledge of the concepts are absent in the students.” The students should be shaped as per the need and requirement of the society and nation. The curriculum and teaching material should be framed by taking into consideration the culture, customs, duties, economy, historical perspectives, knowledge about the various societies and logical thinking in the students.

Education and Teachers: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar himself was innovative and creative teacher. According to him education is a continuous process and the teacher provides the real base to it. Therefore, education and ability depend entirely upon authentic knowledge, self-reliance, learning attitude and delivering skill of the teacher. He adopted the triangular formula of in his teachings.

Due to this formula he himself became a good teacher and in broader sense a social teacher. A teacher should be multifaceted. He should be sharp minded and choosy character. He is the national builder because education is in the hands of teacher and the development of a nation depends upon educated manpower. So, every educational institution should have intellectual, positivist and kind hearted teachers to teach the poor and baseline students.

Education and Knowledge: The view of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar about the knowledge is quite broader and ideal. Knowledge means light. This light should become the base of social, economic and moral development of man. The context of knowledge should be social and education is the weapon by which man can be free from exploitation raise the revolution against slavery. He says that intellect is like a sword and every society and group recognizes the man bearing it. The cleverness and intellectuality need good character and politeness. If the people become educative without these then the nation and society will be destroyed. The education is that which builds man and unique combination of knowledge and intellect is equal to education. The achievement of self-reliance through the knowledge is the main purpose of education.

IMPLICATIONS :

Dr. Ambedkar fought throughout his life to ensure that the discriminated, deprived and downtrodden classes of our society get their due place. Ambedkar made several attempts to establish an egalitarian

society in India and this has been widely discussed by various scholars, but there are few studies available to portray him as a great educationist. Ambedkar also tried to achieve this objective through his educational scheme and this is discussed at length in this essay.

CONCLUSION :

Ambedkar deliberately included Article 45 in the Directive Principles of State Policy, stating that “the State shall endeavor to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the completion of the age of fourteen years within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution”. The Government of India has passed the Right to Education Act, 2008 and has paid a great tribute to Ambedkar’s contributions to mass education. The Government’s policy of universalization of primary education, with a special focus on marginalized groups, poor sections and the girl child, increasing enrolment in secondary education and commitment to expanding educational facilities will empower and equip the youth to face the future with hope and confidence. There are several challenges to fulfilling Ambedkar’s vision of universal education. There is a need to formulate such policies from the primary to higher levels that will help realise Ambedkar’s vision.

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