

Dalit Movement: A Struggle Against Injustice, Untouchability

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Abstract:- The Dalit movement is a social as well as political movement of Dalits in India started by B.R. Ambedkar. This movement rejects Hinduism; it challenged the brutal caste system and promulgated the rights of Dalits. There is Four classes of caste system in Hindus; Brahmins, Kshatruyas, Vaisyas, Sudras. Dalits are mostly exploited class of Hindus. The caste reforms of 19th century were influenced by the work of Christian Missionaries in India. The Brahmo Samaj, the Prarthana Samaj, The Ramakrishna Mission and Arya Samaj are the examples of such institutions founded with a view to fight against Social evils practiced by the Caste Hindus. In this paper I will discuss Dalit movement, different social reforms organization, caste harassment, great social reformer personalities etc.

Keywords: Hygiene; Dalit womens, Up-liftment ,exploitation ,procuration, un-touchability, inequality

INTRODUCTION

In every society there is presence of class division which is based on inferior superior status, rich poor, slave master, workers capitalists, Brahmins Dalits, etcetera, one dominant class exploits other subordinate class that we have learn from history. In history of India these subordinate classes usually womens, lower casts, Dalits, adivasis, poor people, etc. These sections are exploited from centuries through politically, morally, economically, socially etcetera. Dalits are the people who are socially, economically, politically suppressed by society mainly by Brahman. These people are not considered as an untouchables, compels to live in outside the villages as well as cities depending on lower wage occupation, sweeping the streets, cleaning the draining, work as labor in cities, they have not giving full status of human being. They have been exploited from centuries from the traditional Hindu based caste system where Brahmins exploit them. Dalits (lowered caste) cannot change their caste this is hierarchical in India, Brahmins always Brahman and Dalits are always Dalit. Dalits are oppressed in each and every sphere of life; they have been lived in the state of humiliating and severe poverty conditions, because of this old age custom. After independence that we attained in 1947, India adopted democracy but still Dalits live in a condition of cruelty, they are not allowed to go in temple where Brahmins go, they are not allowed to learn in class room where Brahmins also sit. With these whole things, that we discuss, a movement is emerged after independence which is popularly known as

Dalit movement. It is against the atrocities of Dalits, long lasting cruelty of Brahmins, humiliation of Dalits, inequality of Dalits, untouchability, etc. This movement is not directly a protest movement in streets, villages, cities, roads, it is a movement through speech, writing articles, dramas, songs, conferences, etc. the central goal of this movement is, Dalits must provide equal status in society, untouchability should be prohibited, equality of opportunity should be created.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sutradar (2014): Dalit Movement , a social revolution aimed for social change, replacing the age old hierarchical Indian society , based on the democratic ideals of liberty ,equality and social justice , has begun much earlier , became intense in the 1970s and began to deem at present. One reason behind this, as pointed out by Uma Chakraborty, is that the academicians are not paying much attention. Books on Dalit Movement are written but these books do not reflect the actual things and are written keeping in view the Brahmin elites. No one wants to confront with those who have power. Besides this, the minds of the people are brahmanised through hegemony. Yet another vital issue is that the movement lack people from all the communities of Dalits. For instance, in Maharashtra, the Mahars dominated the movement. The other Dalit communities like the Mangs, Chamars were not actively involved in the Movement. As Kamble pointed out that the Mangs and Chamars had their traditional duties, whereby, they could somehow manage

their food. But the Mahars did not have any traditional duty which made them to protest. At present there came up many new issues. The Dalits who got power became the dolls in the hands of the Brahmins. Many of them tend to imitate the Brahmins changing their surnames and thus identity. They are ashamed of being called Dalits which make them to discriminate against their own kith and kins. It should be noted that Dalit Movement is against Brahmanism and not Brahmins. The Brahmanism is a mental state which accepts superiority of one man over another man. It gives more respect and profit for the caste which is up in the ladder of caste system, and as it goes down the ladder, resources and respect also decreases. It's contribution for the Dalits which is lowest of all the castes is nothing but exploitation, jeering and slavery. This mental state of Brahmanism not only exists in Brahmins but also in Shudras, who simply shape the ideas of Brahmanical practices without testing them with scientific temperament and reasoning. India got independence but the Dalits are humiliated even now. Untouchability is abolished but injustice practices are not. Today to wear good clothes is not forbidden, but to get good job is. In the name of reforms and social uplift, today's political and social systems are pitting one group against the other, sowing hatred and perpetuating a sense of rejection from the past. Education is the only remedy for such discrimination. This paper exhibits old age traditional caste system in India their cruelty and how this cruelty should control. It also shows no one confronts to Brahmins because they are in power.

Nath, 2015: The socio-economic milieu of Indian society is inherently hostile towards protection of human rights of Dalits. It is the caste and Varna system of social stratification which promotes the societal violation of Dalit human rights. The rule laid down by the Hindu law giver, Manu, is that there are only four Varna's of Hindus and there is not to be fifth Varna. The four Varna's are Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Gandhiji and others in their campaign against un-touchability contended that untouchables and scheduled Tribes fall under the fourth Varna namely Sudras on the basis of Manu's law of stratification. Dr. Ambedkar has pointed out that this theory is not acceptable because Manu speaks of untouchables as varn-baya which means those outside the Varna system. The four classes of Hindus are called Savarnas while those outside the four classes like the untouchables are called Avarnas. Manu has stated in his smriti that the dwelling's of the Chandals shall be outside the village that they must be made "apapratras" and their wealth shall be dogs and donkeys, their dress shall be the garments of the dead, they shall eat their food in broken dishes and black iron shall be their ornaments, they must

wander from place to place and they shall not sleep in villages and towns at nights. It is well known that in villages the untouchables live in separate localities, while other castes live in the main village. It cannot, thus be denied that untouchables are not part of Hindu society and they must remain separate and segregated. In this paper author discusses different provisions of Indian constitution related to Dalits, views of different social reformers.

Andhari, 2008: Dalits are India's "untouchables", so called because their touch was considered polluting due to the work they did handling dead matter (the hides of animals, tanning, and cutting hair) or faces. The fight against untouchability is of long standing. The efforts of two great modern Indian leaders, however, had the greatest impact in bringing public awareness of the need for eradicating this acute and particular form of oppression: Mahatma Gandhi – who called them "Harijans" or "children of God", and B.R. Ambedkar, a brilliant lawyer, himself from an untouchable caste, who led the drafting of India's constitution. But although the Constitution of independent India outlawed untouchability and its practice in any form, and directed the government to take affirmative action to compensate untouchable castes for these historical wrongs, the stigma against them continues in both subtle and overt forms to this day. Accordingly, struggles by the oppressed castes have also persisted through both militant movements and advocacy. This paper provides us ample knowledge of women role in Dalit movement, different organizations of Dalit movement.

Andharia and Anandi, 2008: Untouchability is one of the major problems of our country. It has its roots in the Indian society that is based on the caste system. The castes are further divided into sub-castes. The people of the lowest caste are treated untouchabilities. They do not belong to the fold of Hinduism. Nobody knows exactly about the origin of untouchability or the caste system itself. Some historians try to trace the origin of the caste system to the Vedas, the ancient religious books of the Hindus. The Purusa Sukta in the Rig Veda describes the creation of four Vernas namely, the Brahmin, the Kshatriya, the Vaishya and the Shudra. The indigenous people were outside the Varna system. They continued to fight against the invading Aryans. But they were subjugated in the long run. In order to preserve the purity of blood, social interaction was prohibited with the members of the vanquished group. Those who did not follow the rule or violated it were forced to live away from the dominating group. Such people became outcastes and later untouchables. An attempt is made in this paper to present Ambedkar's view on untouchability, ambedkar tries to abolish caste system

through their political right.

OVERVIEW

Dalit is a word which may be derived from Sanskrit word, which means “crushed” or Broken into pieces. The renowned Dalit writer Jyotirao phule was the first who used this word in nineteenth century when he faced difficulty of untouchability from upper caste Brahmins. Mahatma Gandhi used the word “Harijan”, instead of Dalit, it means children of God. As in contemporary language we can say it is a group of people who are broken by suppression, but in spite of this they have survived and continue their struggle to finish the great untouchability evil. Dalits were discriminated from centuries they are exploited by barbaric inhuman activities, other than Brahmins other three castes exploit them. They were denied of every social and political right from centuries. The division of labor in different caste of Hindu society results the exploitation of lower caste Dalit group. The caste system degenerated Dalit life into pathogenic condition where occupations changed into castes. They were allowed only to clean drains, latrines, sweeping the roads, excluded from mainstream political and social system. Hindu society is based on four varnas; the first and highest grade is the Brahmins (priestly people), they are in highest position of social status in Hindu society, mostly they are in power, they control whole political system. After that there is another class which is known as Kshatriyas (also called Rajanyas, who were rulers, administrators and warriors) this is second class as per Hindu literature is concerned, Vaishyas is third class status in Hindu society (also called Rajanyas, who were rulers, administrators and warriors), and Shudras (laboring classes) it is fourth class of Hindu caste system. The Varna categorization implicitly had a fifth element, being those people deemed to be entirely outside its scope, such as tribal people and the untouchables.

The main division in the caste system is the Varna of the people. Varna means color in the Sanskrit. Basic caste is called Varna, or “color” Subcaste, or jāti, “birth, life, rank”, is a traditional subdivision of Varna. The question which comes into mind is if the Varna division had something to do with the skin color of the ancient Indians. And after Varna, the society is divided into Jati as we tried to introduce above. Varna is the most famous division of the caste system that is divided into four castes, which are the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas and the Shudras. And there is another group that is not included in this division, which is called “the untouchables” or to say the ones who are outcasts. Although they are called outcasts, it can be thought as if

they are little portions of the society that had been excluded from the society. But today there are hundreds of millions of outcasts in the Indian society.

ROOT CAUSE OF DALIT MOVEMENT

In India, there is great inequality present here, mostly women and Dalits are the first victim of inequality, and they are marginalized sections of the society. If we traced back to the historical periods, it will be found that the root cause is the formation of the Caste System which actually led to the oppression of the other categories of oppressed classes of India— the women. Aryans who came to India from Middle East settled here in the fertile land of Ganges after a fight with indigenous people of the civilization. The Dalits who are in majority defeated by the hands of Aryans who are in minority, through different techniques most popularly divide and Rule, as assumed by Braj Rajan Mani, because without these techniques they won't be able to defeat the inhabitants and rule them. Aryans was very intelligent and very well versed people in different techniques as shown in history. Even today Brahmins use these techniques, which they used in past. Later on in the Vedic period, the formation of the Rigveda laid the foundation of the oppression of the people in their land, with the tenth book of Purusha. The untouchables came into existence later in the 5th century. This is the beginning of Dalit exploitation and the emergence of cruel tradition of untouchability by Brahmins. The religious texts of Hindu people emphasize this cruel crime of untouchability, Brahmins should be respected in any way, even if they indulge in crimes. That means these texts provide an unequal society, a society where some groups given status of god, while some groups considered worse than animals. Actually this caste system is not originally belongs to Hindu religion, it is Aryans-Brahmins who devised such institutions of varna, whereby they considered themselves as superior and others as inferior, created the institution of varna, in order to consider themselves as superior, by putting themselves in the superior position. They actually wanted to attain superior status, a life of dignity and other groups should attain as independent status and other groups should remain obedient to them. According to Gail Omvedt in her book, Dalit Visions equated Hinduism with Brahmanism. It is actually Brahmanism with the name of Hinduism is constructed in order to hide the Discriminatory laws of Brahmins which they constructed under the name of Hindu religion in India. It is created by Brahmins not by God, not firmly rooted in the Hindu society. Varnasrama theory is a theory about the structure of caste system in India, it was the basic duty of a person to maintain Dharma, which

was to retain the caste structure of Hindus. Caste ideology is based on twin religious doctrines of Karma and Dharma are the two caste ideologies of Hindu religion. Dharma as famous ideology of Buddhism Jainism and Hinduism and karma is simply means good deeds of a person which he did in past life.

Not only Manu, Kautilya, another Brahmin, also emphasized on retaining the Caste structure as the basic structure of Indian society that cannot and should not be changed. The same was asserted by Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, to change is to create disorder. This means that the Brahmins should stay at the top of the pyramid and the Dalits at the bottom. Even if the Dalits die under the situation, they should not be uplifted. This is Brahmanism -believer of inequality, the roots of which lie in the ancient Vedas. Formulated 3500 thousand years back, the Vedas are ruling Indian society even now, through its instrument -Hinduism. It is controlling the minds of the people, which made the minority groups -the Brahmins to be the policy makers of the country. And in order to retain their position they have devised myths. For instance, they devised the myth of Punarjanma which explains the phenomena of rebirth. It explains that the activities of our past janma, is responsible for our present status, and the activities of present will decide our life after rebirth. This myth has two connotations- Firstly; the Dalits should accept the exploitation done against them as the result of their own deeds of past birth. They should consider that they committed some bad deeds due to which they are facing such kind of oppression. Secondly, even if they are exploited in this birth, they should not protest, which will provide them a good life in the next birth after re-birth. That is with the desire to get happiness in the next birth, they should cry. Because it is believed that, God will help them to come out of distress, and that the Brahmins being Gods are the only solution for their distress. If these texts are observed closely in socio-historical perspective, the aim to write these texts become clear, which is to establish and maintain Brahmanical hegemony, and exploit the non -Brahmins, basically the Dalits.

BHIMRAO RAMJI AMBEDKAR AND UNTOUCHABILITY

B. R. Ambedkar was the first person who politically fights against the inequality of Dalits. He actually belongs to a Dalit family. He strongly involved in the political activism against socio-economic problems. Dr. Ambedkar founded the independent Labour Party in 1936. As a Dalit his main aim is to abolish this artificial tradition of inequality. He tries to

abolish the exploitative khoti system prevailing in kolan part of Maharashtra, and Vetti or Maharaki system (a wage free hereditary service to the caste Hindus in the local administration). With the rising process of democratization, Dr. Ambedkar demanded sufficient representation for Dalits in the legislatures and in the administration. Government of India Act, 1919, provided for one seat to the depressed classes in the central Legislative Assembly. In 1932, British Government headed by Ramsay MacDonald announced the 'Communal Award'. The award envisaged separate electorate for the Depressed Classes. Mahatma Gandhi went on a historic fast in protest against Communal Award especially in respect of depressed classes. The issue was settled by Poona Pact, September 1932. It provided for reservation of seats for depressed classes out of general electorates sets. He tried to convince the Government to recruit the Mahars in Military. Ultimately he became successful in 1941 when the first Mahar Regiment was formed. The Constitution of India now provides for reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes in proportion to their population in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha under Article 330 and 332.

Dalit Literary Movement at a time, when there was no means of communication to support the Dalits, pen was the only solution. The media, newspapers were all under the control of the powerful class - the Brahmins. Given that the Brahmins would never allow the Dalits voice to be expressed, as it would be a threat for their own survival, the Dalits began their own magazine and began to express their own experiences. Dalit literature, the literature produced by the Dalit consciousness, emerged initially during the Mukti movement. Later, with the formation of the Dalit Panthers, they began to flourish a series of Dalit poetry and stories depicting the miseries of the Dalits the roots of which lies in the rules and laws of Vedas and Smritis. All these literature argued that Dalit Movement fights not only against the Brahmins but all those people whoever practices exploitation, and those can be the Brahmins or even the Dalits themselves. New revolutionary songs, poems, stories, autobiographies were written by Dalit writers. All their feelings were bursting out in the form of writings. Educated Dalit and intellectuals begin to talk about the problems without any hesitation and tried to explain to the other illiterate brothers about the required change in the society. Dalit literature tried to compare the past situation of Dalits to the present and future generation not to create hatred, but to make them aware of their pitiable condition. Power as means to Attain Dignity Power can be cut by only power. Hence, to attain power, the first thing required is knowledge. It was thus, Phule and Ambedkar gave the main emphasis on the education of the

Dalits, which will not only bestow them with reason and judgment capacity, but also political power, and thereby socio—economic status and a life of dignity. They knew that the political strategy of gaining power is either an end in itself or a means to other ends. In other words, if the Dalits have power, then they do not have to go begging to the upper castes. Also they will get greater economic and educational opportunities.

The upper castes enjoy social power, regardless of their individual circumstances with respect to their control over material resources, through their linkages with the other caste fellows in the political system –in the bureaucracy, judiciary and legislature. And so , the Dalits require power to control the economic scenario and thereby the politics of the country Phule thus added that without knowledge, intellect was lost; without intellect, morality was lost; without morality, dynamism was lost; without dynamism, money was lost; without money Shudras were degraded, all this misery and disaster were due to the lack of knowledge. Inspired by Thomas Paine’s — “The rights of Man”, Phule sought the way of education which can only unite the Dalits in their struggle for equality. The movement was carried forward by Ambedkar who contested with Gandhi to give the Dalits, their right to equality. In the words of Ambedkar, Educate, Organize and agitate. Education, the major source of reason, inflicts human mind with extensive knowledge of the world, whereby, they can know the truth of a phenomena that is reality. It therefore, would help to know the truth of Brahmanism in Indian society, and will make them to agitate against caste based inhuman practices. Only when agitations begin, in the real sense, can the Dalit be able to attain power and win the movement against exploitation.

Gandhi’s politics was unambiguously centering around the defence of caste with the preservation of social order in Brahmanical pattern. He was fighting for the rights of Dalits but was not ready for inter-caste marriage. Post-Independent Dalit Movements B.R. Ambedkar and Buddhist Dalit Movement Babasaheb Ambedkar has undoubtedly been the central figure in the epistemology of the Dalit universe. It is not difficult to see the reason behind the obeisance and reverence that Dalits have for Ambedkar. They see him as one who devoted every moment of his life thinking about and struggling for their emancipation; who sacrificed all the comforts and conveniences of life that were quite within his reach to be on their side; who conclusively disproved the theory of caste based superiority by rising to be the tallest amongst the tall despite enormous odds, and finally as one who held forth the torch to illuminate the path of their future.

Upon India’s Transfer of Power by British Government on 15 August 1947, the new Congress-led government invited Ambedkar to serve as the nation’s first Law Minister, which he accepted. On 29 August, he was appointed Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee, charged by the Assembly to write India’s new Constitution. The text prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections for a wide range of civil liberties for individual citizens, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability and the outlawing of all forms of discrimination. Ambedkar argued for extensive economic and social rights for women, and also won the Assembly’s support for introducing a system of reservations of jobs in the civil services, schools and colleges for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, a system akin to affirmative action. India’s lawmakers hoped to eradicate the socio-economic inequalities and lack of opportunities for India’s depressed classes through these measures. Ambedkar resigned from the cabinet in 1951 following the stalling in parliament of his draft of the Hindu Code Bill, which sought to expound gender equality in the laws of inheritance and marriage.

Ambedkar independently contested an election in 1952 to the lower house of parliament, the Lok Sabha, but was defeated in the Bombay constituency by a little-known Narayan Sadoba Kajrolkar. He was appointed to the upper house, of parliament. He studied Buddhism in his life, and around 1950, he turned his attention fully to Buddhism and travelled to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) to attend a meeting of the World Fellowship of Buddhists while dedicating a new Buddhist vihara near Pune. Ambedkar announced that he was writing a book on Buddhism and that as soon as it was finished, he planned to make a formal conversion to Buddhism. Ambedkar twice visited Burma in 1954; the second time in order to attend the third conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists in Rangoon. In 1955, he founded the Bharatiya Bauddha Mahasabha. He completed his final work, *The Buddha and his Dhamma*, in 1956. It was published posthumously. After meetings with the Sri Lankan Buddhist monk Saddhatissa, Ambedkar organized a formal public ceremony for himself and his supporters in Nagpur on 14 October 1956. Ambedkar completed his own conversion, along with his wife. He then proceeded to convert some 500,000 of his supporters who were gathered around him. He then travelled to Kathmandu in Nepal to attend the Fourth World Buddhist Conference. His work on *The Buddha or Karl Marx* and “Revolution and counter-revolution in ancient India” remained incomplete. His allegation of Hinduism foundation of caste system, made him controversial and

unpopular among the Hindu community. His conversion to Buddhism sparked a revival in interest in Buddhist philosophy in India and abroad. Ambedkar's political philosophy has given rise to a large number of political parties, publications and workers' unions that remain active across India, especially in Maharashtra. The Buddhist movement was somewhat hindered by Dr. Ambedkar's death so shortly after his conversion. It did not receive the immediate mass support from the Untouchable population that Ambedkar had hoped for. Division and lack of direction among the leaders of the Ambedkarite movement have been an additional impediment. According to the 2001 census, there are currently 7.95 million Buddhists in India, at least 5.83 million of whom are Buddhists in Maharashtra. This makes Buddhism the fifth-largest religion in India and 6% of the population of Maharashtra, but less than 1% of the overall population of India. The Buddhist revival remains concentrated in two states: Ambedkar's native Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh — the land of Acharya Medharthi and their associates. Acharya Medharthi retired from his Buddhapuri School in 1960, and shifted to an ashram in Haridwar. He turned to the Arya Samaj and conducted Vedic yajnas all over India. His follower, Bhoj Dev Mudit, converted to Buddhism in 1968 and set up a school of his own. Rajendranath Aherwar appeared as an important Dalit leader in Kanpur. He joined the Republican Party of India and converted to Buddhism along with his whole family in 1961. In 1967, he founded the Kanpur branch of "Bharatiya Buddh Mahasabha". The Dalit Buddhist movement in Kanpur gained impetus with the arrival of Dipankar, a Chamar bhikkhu, in 1980. Dipankar had come to Kanpur on a Buddhist mission and his first public appearance was scheduled at a mass conversion drive in 1981. The event was organised by Rahulan Ambedkar, an RPI Dalit leader. In April 1981, Ambedkar founded the Dalit Panthers (U.P. Branch) inspired by the Maharashtrian Dalit Panthers

JYOTIRAO GOVINDRAO PHULE

He was the first leader of Dalits who occupies the central position in the reform movement of India. He was the 19th century Dalit scholar of Maharashtra, facing many challenges of untouchability in life. It is his social injustice who compels him to spend whole energy against caste system of Hindus. He founded a movement known as Satya Sodhak Samaj (society of seekers of truth) with himself as its President and treasurer. The main objective of the organization was to work for liberation of Sudras and to prevent their exploitation by the Brahmins. All the members of the samaj were supposed to treat all human beings as

children of God and worship the creator without the help of any mediator. In his book *sarvajanic satya Dharma Pustak*, published in 1881, his views on religious and social issues are given the shape of dialogue. In his opinion both men and women enjoy equal rights and it was sinful to discriminate between human beings on the basis of sex. In his another book called "Satsara" (the essence of truth) published in June 1885, he criticized the Brahma Samaj and Prathana Samaj. Addressing their leaders he declared "we don't need the help of your organizations. Don't worry about us". His emphasis on the education of Dalits Education is the system which eliminates this brutal system. It is education who changes this system and provides us equality in society.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Gandhi as a father of nation was very well aware about this discriminatory structure of India. It was not in India where he experienced this brutal discrimination; he was already experienced it in South Africa, where he was himself engaged against the apartheid discrimination. Government of South Africa was very discriminatory against the blacks, these blacks are not the native people of South Africa, and they are the migrants of India. They are treated as inferior; they did not provide basic rights and liberties. In India there is also the same problem of untouchability. The utmost need of a nation is to construct the nation in which everyone should be equated with the basic rights. This could be achieved by alleviating the social status of the untouchables. He always constructed untouchability as a cruel and inhuman institution. During his discussions with Harijans at Ahmedabad, he observed, "this is a movement for the purification of Hinduism....." According to Gandhi, "If we are the children of the same God how can be any rank among us." Through his speeches in public and writings in *Young India* and *Harijan*, he stressed the problem of untouchability and its removal from its roots. The Mahatma had the feeling that in Hinduism there was no sanction for treating any single human being as untouchable. The *Bhagavad-Gita* has never taught that a chandala was in any way inferior to Brahman. To boost up the work for the upliftment of Harijans, Gandhiji laid the foundation of the *Harija Sevak Sang* in 1932 when he was in jail.

DALIT WOMENS

Dalit woman faced many problems in our society; they treat like cattle in Hindu society. They do not provide education, exploited through caste system as well as Gender discrimination in society. They are worst affected classes of society their oppression is mainly due to; Caste, Class and

Gender. Today the education and literacy of Dalit women are extremely low; it is because of dependence of wage labor, discrimination in employments and wages, heavy concentration in unskilled, low-paid and hazardous manual jobs, violence sexual exploitation, being the victims of various forms of superstitions. The very condition of the Dalit women has its root in the Vedic period. They have to work either as maids or bonded laborers, where they have to face sexual harassment from the upper caste male, or they will be turned as prostitutes by society. Bhimrao Shirwale, in the story *Livelihood* has explored the real face of Brahmanism which exists even today. The story depicts how a poor Dalit girl in order to fill her stomach was compelled to sell her body. Her beauty became the greatest hurdle of her life which made the men to look at her with lusty eyes. This is not the only instance; such things are common to all the Dalit girls. Woman is the root of any society and if women are controlled, the entire community can be controlled.

When we see the problems of Dalit women their exploitation and injustice, our eyes fill with water, how cruel this caste system is, by which a woman sells their body with the sake of their stomach. Hindu religious institutions were used as an instrument to exploit the Dalit women, and thereby, making them silent. The famous Hindu ritual of Devadasi was formed to exploit the Dalit women, who are not Brahmin. What is Devadasi? Devadasi is a Sanskrit word *देवदासी* literally it means female servant of dev (the divine) or *jogini* was a term used for a young woman who dedicated her life to the worship and service of a Hindu deity or a temple. Devadasis could be as young as 7 years old when they were initiated into this way of life, a practice which is mostly done in southern and Eastern India. It was thus, the famous ritual of Devadasi was formed, whereby the non-Brahmin women, in the name of serving god were made to serve the Brahmin priests. This service was actually physical service. In other words, the women were sexually harassed and raped by the hands of priest. The only difference is that the women accepted such sexual harassment as a means to serve god. If it really exists by nature then it is considered to be equal for all. It is said that Draupadi, who was going to be raped by Duryodhana, was dressed with a saree of infinite length by Lord Krishna. If it had been so, how come god himself create rules (as was said by the Brahmins, the Vedas and Smritis being the creation of god) to undress the Dalit girls in the system of Devadasi. And this system prevails only for the lower castes. The service from the Brahmin girls was not sought by god. How discriminatory the rules were created? Actually, the rules were made in such a way that

only one section of society benefit, and so was the tradition made. If the Brahmins considered the tradition so important, why did they not just send out their women to be Devadasis (Chakraborty). Dalit women have to protect their body in each and every aspect of life. Beauty itself is a curse for them. Husbands would question her modesty and other men would try to fulfill their desires— thereby turning them as prostitutes. Everyone would use them and throw out as old clothes. If a Brahmin man has sexual relations with the Dalit women, he is well respected, contrary to the Dalit woman who is excommunicated. The Dalit women face atrocities by the men of all the four varna, the basic kind of exploitation is sexual in nature. If the women are single and without family, then she is very effective victim of sexual harassment, because in search of work they would go to the upper caste only, If she is appointed as home maid, she will have to work not only for the home but fulfill the sexual desires of the appointer also. If she rejects, she will be thrown out. Finally, finding no way to live they would begin to sell their body, and become the prostitutes of all the sections of society. This is how, the Dalit women are made the prostitutes of society.

Upliftment of Dalits under the Indian constitution:

Due to the efforts made by the social reformers. Various provisions were laid down in the constitution of India and various other legislations for the upliftment of Dalits so they can live with dignity and security of their persons. In the life of 71 year of Indian constitution the government of India and Judiciary has done lot for the upliftment of Dalit. Various provisions of the constitutions which are specifically related to Dalits are as follows-

Part III- Fundamental Rights

Article 15- Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

Article 15 (4)- (Added by the constitution first amendment Act, 1951) provides for making special provisions for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

Article 15 (5) - (Added by the constitution 93rd amendment Act, 2005), provides for making any specific provisions for advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in so far as such special provisions related to their admission to educational institutions, whether added or unaided by the state, other than minority educational

institutions referred to in Article 30 (1).

Article 16 (4-A)- Authorizes government for making any special provisions for reservation in favour of SC's/ST's. This article was added by the constitution 77th amendment Act, 1995.

Article 16 (4-B) - Authorises the state to fill up backlog Vacancies. This Article was added by the constitution 81st amendment Act, 2000.

Article 17- Abolition of untouchability.

Article 19 (5)- Authorises state to impose reasonable restrictions on sub clause (d & e) of article 19 to protect the interest of scheduled tribes.

Article 29 (2)- Provide that no citizen shall be deprived admission into any educational institutions only on the grounds of race, religion, caste, language or any of them.

Part IV- Directive Principles of State Policy.

Article 46- State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the people and in particular SC/ST and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Part V- The State Proviso to article 164 (1) provide that the state of Chhattisgarh, Jarkhand, Madya Pradesh and Orissa, there shall be a minister in charge of tribal welfare who may in addition be in charge of the welfare of scheduled castes and backward classes or any other work.

Article 243-D- provides for reservation of seats for SC's/ST's in Panchayat.

Article 330- provides for reservation of seats for SC's and ST's in the House of People.

Article 332- provides for reservation of seats in state assemblies for SC's and ST's.

Article 335- provides for making any provision in favour of SC/ST for relaxation in qualifying marks in any examination or lowering the standards of evaluation, for reservation in matters of promotion to any class or classes of services or posts in connection with the affairs of Union or State. This is added by constitution 82nd amendment Act, 2000 to Article 335.

Article 338-A- provides for appointment of National Commission for Scheduled Castes. This article was added by the constitution 89th amendment Act, 2003.

Article 339(1)- provides for the appointment of a commission to report on the administration of scheduled areas and the welfare of scheduled tribes in the states.

Article 341 and 342- provides for identification of SC's and ST's so that parliament may by law include or exclude from the list of SC's and ST's.

Suggestive Measures

1. To create separate small courts in those areas where these Dalits are living which hear only the problems of

Dalits.

2. Create awareness among people about this Cast system, it is nothing only a man made institution which was made by some people on their own benefit.

3. To encourage NGO's which are working for the upliftment of sc's/st's.

4. Inter-caste marriages should be promoted etc.

5. Particular concentration should be given on Dalits education.

CONCLUSION

Dalit movement is a socio-political movement of Dalits against the atrocities of Dalits by the hands of Brahman. Four classes are present in Hindus; Brahmins, Kshatruyas, Vaisyas, Sudras. The most exploitative class is Dalit class which is out of these classes. They are mostly exploited class by the hands of Brahmins.

Class division is almost present in every society. Some societies have severe class division where as some societies have little class division of society. Every society has inferior and superior sections; these inferior sections are exploited by superior sections, as commented by Karl Mark, the great German philosopher. In India particularly in Hindus women and Dalit section are inferior sections, which are exploited by upper caste Brahman in name of traditional castism. After independence in 1947, still now they have faced untouchability, if some eminent persons struggle against it provides the reservation for schedule castes women and other marginalized sections of people but still it is not enough, it is practiced today in Hindu society.

Dalits were discriminated from centuries they are exploited through barbaric inhuman activities, other than Brahmins other three castes also exploits them. They were denied of every social and political right from centuries. The division of labor in different caste of Hindu society results the exploitation of lower caste Dalit group. The caste system degenerated Dalit life into pathogenic condition. They were allowed only to clean drains, latrines, sweeping the roads, excluded from mainstream political and social system.

Brahmins are not the original habitants of India they came from central Asia. Aryans who came to India from Middle East settled here in the fertile land of Ganges after a fight with indigenous people of the civilization. The Dalits who are in majority defeated by the hands of Aryans who are in minority, through different techniques most popularly divide and Rule. Aryans was very intelligent and very well versed people in different techniques as shown in history. Even today Brahmins use these techniques, which they used in past.

The religious texts of Hindu people emphasize this cruel crime of untouchability. Brahmins should be respected in any way, even if they indulge in crimes. That means these texts provide an unequal society, a society where some groups are given status of god, while some groups are considered worse than animals. Actually this caste system is not originally from Hindu religion, it is Aryans-Brahmins who devised such institutions of varna, whereby they considered themselves as superior and others as inferior, created the institution of varna, in order to consider themselves as superior, by putting themselves in the superior position.

Ambedkar was one of the eminent persons who had the capacity to eliminate this institution to some extent. He was a political activist who wanted to solve the socio-political problems. He demanded sufficient representation for Dalits in the legislatures and in the administration. He provided special reservation for SCs, STs and women. He converted to Buddhism, when he felt Hinduism is not just religion for us and urges other people to convert to Buddhism.

Jyotirao Govindrao Phule was one of the first social activists against this caste discrimination. He was very much against the discrimination of Dalits, emphasis on the education of Dalits. He claims both men and women enjoy equal rights and it was sinful to discriminate between human beings on the basis of sex.

Mahatma Gandhi was also against the caste discrimination of Dalits. He used the word Harijans against the Dalits. He was against the caste discrimination. But he does not support the inter-caste marriage of Dalits and other people. He was also fighting against the rights of Blacks in South Africa.

Dalit women are the most exploitative part in Hindu society. They do not have basic facilities; sexual harassment, discrimination, untouchability, illiteracy etc are the main problems of Dalit women. Hindu religious institutions were used as an instrument to exploit the Dalit women, and thereby making them silent. The famous Hindu ritual of Devdasi was formed to exploit the Dalit women, who are not Brahmins.

After all those who are humans they are equals, some are rich some are poor, but everyone is human. We should respect each and every person and not be against or exploitative to their rights. Caste is nothing only a means by which we recognize each other, where he/she belongs, which community you belong. In Holy Quran under Chapter 49 Surah Hujurat verse 13; O mankind, we created you from one man and one woman, and then divided you into nations and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most honorable among you in the Sight of Allah is he who is the most pious of you. Surely Allah is all-knowing, all-wise.

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