

## Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as a Socio-Economist

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**Abstract:** *The role of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is multi-faceted. His contribution to the society, especially to Indian society is innumerable. Hence, he can be studied as the main pillar in the successful making of Indian constitution. He is also figured as the back bone for dalits to occupy the centre of society. As a social thinker he contributed much to the society. Along with these he is well known as an economist. Here, the present paper is going to focus on the ideas of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a socio-economist. There is a famous quote of him on society that “my ideal would be a society based on Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. An ideal society should be mobile, should be full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other” As this saying says, he struggled for bringing welfare in various societal fields like struggling for eradication of rigid caste system, removal of religious blind beliefs, inequality of women, untouchability, and etc. As an economist he encouraged for agricultural and industrial growth. He advocated economic and social development. Besides these he has also established ‘Finance Commission of India’, to give more emphasis for economic development.*

**Key words:** *Ambedkar as a socialist, Dalit’s Upliftment, Emancipation for Women, Ambedkar as an Economist*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is one of the Indian eminent personalities of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He has struggled a lot to lead the Indian society in the ways of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. His contribution to Indian society is innumerable. In fact, he is a man of multifaceted. His views on women and their problems, caste system and untouchability, uplifting of dalits, and also as an economist his ideas are very relevant to the present context of Indian economy. Therefore, this paper is focusing on the uplifting ideas of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar from the views of socio-economy. Through his ‘Ambedkarism’ he tried to weave a society on the basis of social justice.

Being considered as ‘Chief Architect of Indian Constitution’, he also knew as the leader of backward classes. His views on Indian caste system, Hindu social order, uplifting of dalits and other backward classes, and quest for fulfilment of women in India are all important elements from the social point of view. Along with these his views on Indian economy make him as a ‘nation builder’ or a ‘global icon’ in this globalized era. The present paper explores the views of Dr B.R. Ambedkar as a socio- economist in the perspectives of uplifting of dalits and other backward classes, fulfilment of women equality, and as an economist.

### 2. OBJECTIVES:

- To focus on Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a modern Indian reformer and his innumerable contribution to the society
- To study Dr B R Ambedkar’s views on emancipation of women and the status of their self fulfilment.
- To analyse the role of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as the father of modern India

Dr B R Ambedkar’s life was for social, economic and political justice of the downtrodden. It deals with great pain of sufferings, sacrifice and struggles. As a social thinker, political leader, economist, and as a leader of modern India, he has made his remark in every spheres of society. He advocated three important traits and is educate, organise and agitate. All these traits are co-related in such a way that ‘to educate’ stands for rational thinking, ‘to organise’ stands for mental and physical strength and ‘to agitate’ stands for fighting to gain human rights.

### 3. METHOD:

This paper is descriptive only. For this paper, data has been collected from secondary sources. This paper analyses about Ambedkar’s contributions with respect to aforementioned objectives.

- **Dr B R Ambedkar as a socialist:**

In response to the highly discriminatory caste-ridden social system that utterly devalued human dignity of Sudras and untouchables, Ambedkar stood determined to eradicate social, educational, and cultural disparities of the

lower castes. He was of the view that as long as there was a caste system, there would be outcastes too. He mobilized them with the motto: “educate, agitate and unite.” He inculcated in their minds the values of self-respect, dignity, and an urge to fight for their rights. Ambedkar’s quest for equality with dignity remained till his death but the most important part of his mission was fraternity as he felt equality without fraternity was not acceptable to him.

Ambedkar was a staunch democrat and believer in freedom of individuals. Being a man of great humanitarian Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had pure faith in peaceful social change. He even thought that the various violent methods are unscientific as well as immoral to a peaceful society. He is a man to bring Renaissance in modern India by reviving and revitalizing Hinduism. From the point of social reforms he urged the Hindu society to give space for depressed people of various sections. According to Dr B R Ambedkar through democracy social change and social justice can be achieved. To attain this status, certainly the role of political institution plays an important role in bringing the reformation in social institutions.

#### • **Dr B R Ambedkar’s Quest for Dalit’s Upliftment:**

Caste is the synecdoche of the Indian society. For millennia, it has obfuscated the human conditions of millions. It thrived on its dogmatic adherence to the *Brahminical* notions of purity and pollution. In the course of time, a number of dynamic leaders emerged, who fought to eradicate the caste system. EV Ram Swami Naiker, Jyotibha Phule, Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj and Ambedkar are some of the luminous names who struggled against intolerable subjugation in the name of *Chaturvarna dharma*. With these reformers and their movements, the very conceptual pillars that constituted the deep-rooted Hindu culture were shaken.

Dalit is a term for untouchables in modern India within the scenario of caste hierarchy. These are the unprivileged people in various fields of society like social, political, cultural, and etc. Such downtrodden people were addressed by many political and social reformers as mentioned above. Among these philosophers the role of Dr B R Ambedkar is dominant in the upliftment of Dalits. The word dalit, perhaps was used by Jyotibha Phule and made known to people by B R Ambedkar through his writings and speeches. In his ‘Bahishkrit Bharat’ he defines dalithood as a kind of condition which categorizes the exploitation, suppression and marginalization of Dalits by the social, economic, cultural and political from upper caste people.

On 31 January 1920, he started a fortnightly newspaper, the Mooknayak (Leader of the Dumb), with the help of Shahu Maharaj of Kolhapur, a sympathizer of the cause for the upliftment of the depressed classes. In July 1924, Ambedkar founded the ‘Bahishkrut Hitkaraini Sabha, to fight the evil of untouchability. In March 1927, attendees at a conference of the depressed classes held at Mahad, decided to implement the resolution passed four years ago to open public places to all regardless of religion, caste or creed by drinking from the ‘Chavdar Taley’ (Drinking- water Tank).

As part of his political activity, Ambedkar set up the Independent Labour Party in August 1936 to contest elections in the Bombay province. The British government held elections at the provincial level in 1937. On 17 February 1937, Ambedkar and many of his candidates won with a thumping majority, notwithstanding serious opposition from potential rivals belonging to Congress and other parties. Ambedkar envisaged establishment of equality, social, economic and political, not just as a slogan but also as a concrete policy. He made equality of opportunity a fundamental right.

As the chief Architect of Indian Constitution, he was successful to abolish various discriminations and inequalities based on caste, gender, status, etc. He enjoyed various supreme positions and through which he brought reformation. As the first Law minister of India he defined women especially of weaker section of population and gave provisions for basic rights to women in Hindu Code Bill during 1950-51. He had envisioned towards the uplifting of Dalits and made provisions in the form of articles in Indian Constitution by being the Chairman of drafting committee of it. Article 17 of the Constitution declares that ‘Untouchability is abolished and its practice prohibited’. Article 23, the Right against Exploitation, Reservation acts for SC and ST, and other acts. As a result, people around the world treat him as ‘God Father’. He always encouraged rejecting Brahminical Social Order (BSO).

#### • **Dr B R Ambedkar’s Emancipation for Women:**

Dr B R Ambedkar began his movement in 1920 and meanwhile started journals called MookNayak and Bahishkrut Bharat in order to make women as rationalists. The main of his movement is to emancipate or raise voice for gaining equality especially of oppressed classes. Apart from the chief architect of Indian constitution he struggled for marginalized women and their fulfilment. Dr Ambedkar had believed in the strength of women and their role in the process of social reform. In the historic Mahad Satyagraha around 300 women had taken part. He introduced Maternity Benefit Bill in 1942 when he was Labour Minister of Executive Counsel of Governor General. From the point of protection and Civil Rights for women he introduced Hindu Code Bill. Besides these he highlighted the issues of women like Pardah (veil) system, legal rights, and religious conversions for Muslim women. By having influenced from Ambedkar many women involved in writing and expressed their ideas on various topics.

The newspaper called Chokhamela started by women called Tulasibai Bansode. For such a significant role of women certainly the credit goes to Dr B R Ambedkar, whose words can be remembered as “I strongly believe in the movements led by women. If they are truly taken into confidence they may change the present picture of Society which is very miserable.” As a writer he emancipated his writings even on women too. The ‘Rise and fall of Hindu Women’, ‘The Women and cultural Revolution’, the riddle of women and castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development”, etc. Dr B R Ambedkar found out the main cause for the inferior status of women in his article entitled “The Rise and Fall of Hindu Women” wherein he analysed the inferior status of women since pre- Manu period.

#### • **Dr B R Ambedkar as an Economist:**

According to the theorist Anthonio Gramsci’s concept of ‘Organic Intellectual’ Ambedkar can be treated as an organic intellectual. It is because the concept explains that one who represents and articulates the interest of an entire social class. He had gone abroad for studying and there he was a pupil of an eminent economist Edwin Cannanan. In the future thereby he became a famous economist. His contributions to India as an Economist are summarised as follows

#### *Agriculture:*

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s contributions in this sector had played vital role for upliftment of downtrodden classes from shackles of upper classes. In this regard, Ambedkar strived a lot for providing social justice to his masses. In other words, he emphasised a lot on land reforms by which providing land to landless farmers by preventing further fragmentation of land holdings to increase productivity of this sector (state socialism, optimum use of labourers and capital irrespective of land size). In respect of it, Ambedkar had written a paper on ‘small holdings in India and their remedies ‘in a journal of Indian economic society in 1918.

Consequently, Ambedkar articulated that abolition of Zamindari system, Mahar vatan and Khoti system in agriculture; tried emancipating untouchables and bringing these oppressed classes into mainstream. In addition, Ambedkar expressed his views on taxation in agriculture, by stating that, it was not affordable to poorer section paying tax to the government. Hence, he suggested that tax should be less on poor and more on rich based on capacity not on income; in this way, he opined that it was purely on discrimination.

#### *Public Finance:*

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar immensely contributed to Indian public finance. As a political economist, he brought few books on public finance among them. a) The problem of rupee: origin and its solution-1923, b) the evolution of provincial finance in British India –1917, etc. Under his doctoral thesis, Ambedkar largely worked on gold standard in which, he articulated that developing countries like India cannot afford it’s gold exchange standards and mentioning that it would lead to inflation risk and weak purchasing power . Finally, this thesis led to establishment of RBI in the country. In addition, under Ambedkar’s another thesis, provincial finance through which, he analysed the evolution of centre-state financial relations during British India; it eventually led for setting up of financial commissions in India.

#### *Economic Development:*

Ambedkar as an economist, he fundamentally thought of countries development by eradicating of property elimination of inequalities and ending exploitation of masses. Because, exploitation was multi- dimensional to untouchables. In the context of Indian economic development, he expressed that development should be associated with women empowerment.

According to Ambedkar women should be given equal rights and status, and then only they could participate into developmental process for economic empowerment. Obviously, population is hurdle for development; Ambedkar’s view in terms of it was to implement family planning for reducing population for economic development. Consequently, Govt. of India adopted it as a national planning. Besides, Ambedkar vision of economic development was to make industries nationalised one for creating large employment and leading to mass consumption, self dependence and overall development of the country.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s contributions are immense towards upliftment of dalits, women empowerment, reformation of agriculture and economic development. Besides, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as multifaceted personality, his key contributions are huge and much relevant in India.

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