

## Contributions of Dr. B.R.Ambedkar on Women Entrepreneurship Bapugouda M. Patil

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### ABSTRACT:

In the Indian man-dominated society, women faced terrific problems since vedic period due to superstitions and misguided rituals. The women have been victimised through different ways, like-child marriage, sati pratha, parda pratha, restriction to widow remarriage, widow's exploitation, devadasi system etc. So, incidentally taking birth as women had been treated as a curse for the women. That system insipid the women and brought inferiority complex which proved a big hurdle in their social, economic and personal development. During British rule in India and after independence Dr. B.R. Ambedkar fought for the rights of women and made such provisions in constitution of India so that women must be treated equally in the society. The provision of equality to women made for all streams whether it is education, employment, social and economic rights. It is only due to Dr. Ambedkar that today women feel self-confident and self-dependent. The implementation of many articles of constitution and laws brought self-confidence, individuality, self-respect and overall empowerment for women. The empowered women have proved themselves better than men in all fields be it education, entrepreneurship, medical, engineering and defence etc. The old ill trusted traditions disappeared to a large extent gradually from the society only due to the hard efforts put by Dr. Ambedkar. However, due to absence of strong judicial and administrative system and ignorance of laws women become victimized by various social evils such as child bearing, family care roles, deep rooted cultural norms etc. and become target of discrimination, exploitation and domestic violence. Women Empowerment is the vital instrument to expand women's ability to have resources and to make strategic life choices. This present paper attempts to examine the status of women in India and their empowerment through Dr. Ambedkar in India. It tries to highlight the issues and challenges related to women in Indian society and eradication of such impediments through Ambedkarite approach. Through this paper it is tried to verify the relevance of Dr. Ambedkar approach for upliftment of economic, social and political status of women.

### KEYWORDS:

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Women Empowerment, Entrepreneurship, Constitutional Rights, Economic Independence.

## 1. Introduction

Dr. B R Ambedkar, a pioneering figure in Indian history, made significant contributions to women's empowerment, including entrepreneurship. His work on education, economic independence, and legal reforms had a profound impact on Indian society. This paper examines Dr. Ambedkar's contributions to women entrepreneurship and their relevance in contemporary times. Women empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational, gender or economic strength of individuals and communities of women. Women empowerment in India is heavily dependent on many different variables that include geographical location (urban / rural) educational status social status (caste and class) and age. Policies on Women empowerment exist at the national, state and local (Panchayat) levels in many sectors, including health, education, economic opportunities, gender based violence and political participation. However, there are significant gap between policy advancements and actual practice at the community level. Empowerment of women is essentially the process of upliftment of economic, social and political status of women, the traditionally underprivileged ones, in the society. It is the process of guarding them against all forms of violence. Women empowerment involves the building up of a society, a political environment, wherein women can breathe without the fear of oppression, exploitation, apprehension, discrimination and the general feeling of persecution which goes with being a woman in a traditionally male dominated structure. Women constitute almost 50% of the world population but India has shown disproportionate sex ratio whereby female population has been comparatively lower than males. As far as their social status is concerned, they are not treated as equal to men in all the places. In the Western societies, the women have got equal right and status with men in all walks of life. But gender disabilities and discriminations are found in India even today. The paradoxical situation has such that she was sometimes concerned as Goddess and at other times merely as slave. The status of women in India has been subject to many great changes over the past few millennia. been eventful. In modern India, women have held high offices including that of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Leader of the Opposition, Union Ministers, Chief Ministers and Governors. Women rights are secured under the Constitution of India – mainly, equality, dignity, and freedom from discrimination; further, India

has various statutes governing the rights of women. As of 2011, the President of India, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of the parliament) were women. However, women in India continue to face numerous problems, including violent victimisation through rape, acid throwing, dowry killings, and the forced prostitution of young girls. In 2012, India was ranked by the Thomson Reuters Foundation as the worst G20 country in which to be a woman.

## **2. Objectives**

1. To recognize the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar for the upliftment and empowerment of Indian women during British rule.
2. To recognize the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar for the upliftment and empowerment of Indian women after independence.
3. Dr. Ambedkar believed that entrepreneurship was essential for women's economic empowerment. He advocated for women's participation in business and industry, recognizing the importance of economic independence in promoting social change.

## **3. Methodology**

This paper is basically descriptive and analytical in nature. In this paper an attempt has been taken to recognise the contribution of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar towards women empowerment in India. The data used in it is purely from secondary sources according to the need of this study.

- Ways to Empower Women
- Changes in women's mobility and social interaction
- Changes in women's labour patterns
- Changes in women's access to and control over resources and
- Changes in women's control over Decision making providing education
- Self-employment and Self-help group Health, Sanitation, Housing
- Other than this society should change the mentality towards the word women Encouraging women to develop in their fields they are good at and make a career

## **4. Contribution to Women Entrepreneurship**

Dr. Ambedkar's contribution to women entrepreneurship was

significant. He established several institutions, including the People's Education Society, which aimed to promote education and entrepreneurship among marginalized communities, including women. He also advocated for women's participation in business and industry, recognizing the importance of economic independence.

#### **4.1. Economic Empowerment of Women through Entrepreneurship**

Dr. Ambedkar believed that entrepreneurship was essential for women's economic empowerment. He advocated for women's participation in business and industry, recognizing the importance of economic independence in promoting social change.

#### **4.2. Impact of Dr. Ambedkar's Work on Women Entrepreneurship**

Dr. Ambedkar's work on women entrepreneurship had a significant impact on Indian society. His advocacy for education and economic independence helped to increase women's participation in business and industry, improving their socio-economic status.

#### **4.3. Economic Empowerment through Entrepreneurship**

Dr. Ambedkar recognized entrepreneurship as a potent tool for economic empowerment, including for women. In his seminal work "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches" (Volume 16), he emphasized the need for creating opportunities for women to engage in entrepreneurial ventures. He believed that entrepreneurship not only provided financial independence but also empowered women to assert their agency and contribute to the economic growth of the nation.

#### **4.4. Education as the Foundation**

Education was central to Dr. Ambedkar's vision of empowerment, and he stressed its importance for women aspiring to become entrepreneurs. In "The Essential Writings of B.R. Ambedkar," edited by Valerian Rodrigues, he advocated for universal access to education, particularly for girls and women. Dr. Ambedkar believed that education equipped women with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in entrepreneurship and break free from societal constraints.

#### **4.5. Breaking Gender Norms**

Dr. Ambedkar was a staunch advocate for challenging traditional gender roles and norms that restricted women's participation in entrepreneurship. In "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches"

(Volume 20), he critiqued patriarchal structures and discriminatory practices that hindered women's economic opportunities. He called for dismantling these barriers to create an enabling environment where women could thrive as entrepreneurs.

#### **4.6. Access to Resources and Support**

Access to resources and support systems was crucial for women entrepreneurs, according to Dr. Ambedkar. In his writings on economic development and social justice, he highlighted the need for equitable access to credit, training, and mentorship programs for women. By leveling the playing field and providing adequate support, Dr. Ambedkar believed that women could overcome systemic challenges and succeed in entrepreneurship.

#### **4.7. Social and Economic Transformation**

For Dr. Ambedkar, women entrepreneurship was not just about individual success but also about catalyzing broader social and economic transformation. In "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches" (Volume 25), he envisioned a society where women played a central role in driving economic progress and social change through entrepreneurship. He called for concerted efforts to create an inclusive and supportive ecosystem that fostered women's entrepreneurial endeavors. Incorporating Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's insights into policy-making and initiatives aimed at promoting women entrepreneurship can pave the way for a more equitable and prosperous society. By addressing barriers, providing education and resources, and challenging gender norms, we can unlock the full potential of women as entrepreneurs and agents of change.

The Equal Remuneration Act of 1976: This Act does not permit wage discrimination between male and female workers. C. Impact of Dr. Ambedkar's Efforts for the Empowerment of Indian women:

Considering the guidelines, recommendations, suggestions and statutes given by Dr. Ambedkar, the Government of India and other State Governments have implemented large number of schemes for the empowerment of women in India. On Dr. Ambedkar's death, in the condolence message in parliament, then Prime Minister Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru said "Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of Hindu society . His dream of society, based on gender equality is yet to be realized and therefore his thoughts are

important for the social reconstruction that favours women empowerment.

#### **a. Laws for Women Empowerment in India**

Here is the list of some specific laws which were enacted by the Parliament in order to fulfil Constitutional obligation of women empowerment:

1. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.
2. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.
3. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956.
4. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961.
5. The Medical termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971.
6. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987.
7. The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.
8. The Pre-Conception & Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994.

#### **b. Government Schemes for Women Empowerment**

The Government programmes for women development began as early as 1954 in India but the actual participation began only in 1974. At present, the Government of India has over 34 schemes for women operated by different department and ministries. Considering various article in the constitution, many schemes for the empowerment have been launched by the part and current government. Like-Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, One Stop Centre Scheme, Women Helpline Scheme, UJJAWALA : A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Reuse, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation, Working Women Hostel, Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme For the Children of Working Mothers, Ministry approves new projects under Ujjawala Scheme and continues existing projects, SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances), Revision under IGMSY in Accordance with National Food Security Act, 2013 in XIIth Plan, Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP), NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR, Awardees of Stree Shakti Puruskar, 2014 & Awardees of Nari Shakti Puruskar, Awardees of Rajya Mahila Samman & Zila Mahila Samman, Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) – A Conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme, Mahila police Volunteers etc. The efforts of government

and its different agencies are ably supplemented by nongovernmental organizations that are playing an equally important role in facilitating women empowerment. Despite concerted efforts of governments and NGOs there are certain gaps. Of course we have come a long way in empowering women yet the future journey is difficult and demanding.

### **5. Constitutional Provisions**

The Constitution of India contains various provisions, which provide for equal rights and opportunities for both men and women. The salient features are: 1. Article 14 guarantees that the State shall not deny equality before the law and equal protection of the laws; 2. Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the ground of sex; 3. Article 15 (3) empowers the State to make positive discrimination in favour of women and children; 4. Article 16 provides for Equality of Opportunity in matters of public employment; 6. Article 39 (a) and (d) enjoins the State to provide equal means of livelihood and equal pay for equal work; 7. Article 42 enjoins upon the State to make provisions for securing just and humane conditions of work, and for maternity relief; 8. Article 51A (e) imposes a Fundamental Duty on every citizen to renounce the practices derogatory to the dignity of women; 9. Article 243D (3) provides that not less than 1/3rd of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat to be reserved for women, and such seats to be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat; 10. Article 243T(3) provides that not less than 1/3rd of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality; 11. Article 243T (4) provides reservation of offices of Chairperson in Municipalities for Sc, ST, Women in such manner as the legislature of a State, may by law provide; In pursuance of the above Constitutional provisions, various legislative enactments have been framed to protect, safeguard and promote the interests of women. Many of these legislative enactments have been in the sphere of labour laws to ameliorate the working conditions of women labour.

### **6. Conclusion**

Dr. B R Ambedkar's contributions to women entrepreneurship were significant. His work on education, economic independence, and entrepreneurship had a profound impact on Indian society. His legacy

continues to inspire women entrepreneurs and inform policies aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment. It is not easy to eradicate deep-seated cultural value, or alter tradition that perpetuates discrimination. Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar sacrificed his whole life for the betterment, rights and justice to underprivileged sections of society. He made such provisions and included such articles in the constitution of India which helped a common man to fight against injustice. Woman is treated as source of enjoyment and exploited by man in Hindu culture prevalence during and after vedic period because the society move according to manusmriti at that time. Due to Ambedkarite reforms and Ambedkarism, women got independence and learnt to live with honour and pride. With self-confidence, women started getting education, employment and become a part of whole system like man. It is only due to the efforts and contribution of Babasaheb that women are self-dependent today and government has initiated many schemes and implemented many laws for the empowerment of (on Dr. Ambedkar's death) in parliament, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru said Babasaheb Dr. Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of Hindu society . His dream of society, based on gender equality is yet to be realized and therefore his thoughts are important for the social reconstruction that favors women empowerment. Dr. Babasaheb expressed his views on the state of life of all women. He stated that women must be treated equally and given equal prestige. He insisted on Hindu Code bill suggesting the basic improvements and amendments in assembly. He also insisted and evoked all the parliamentary members to help to pass the bill in parliament. Eventually, he resigned for the same. The teachings and thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar are useful not only women but also all the Indian even today. His deep concern and feelings for all round development of women is expressed in maximum of his speeches. In his last speech in Indian Parliament we can know his feelings and respect showed towards women. He quoted the famous thoughts of an Irish Patriot Daniel O'Connell as, No man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, no woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity. And no nation can be grateful at the cost of his liberty. Towards all the women, irrespective of their religion, casts and class, Babasaheb had a particular humanitarianism view. He frequently raised his voice against all sorts of injustice towards women. In order to convert the dreams of Babasaheb into reality it is necessary to improve the Support

System for working women.

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