

QUINTESSENTIAL AMBEDKAR'S CONTRIBUTION TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a great leader and an epoch maker of modern India. He was born in a poor family from the Mahar community, where people faced untouchability and discrimination. From his childhood, he saw pain, humiliation, and unfair treatment. This made him strong and determined to fight for justice. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar believed in dignity, equal opportunities, and respect for everyone. He worked hard to empower women and the poor people of society. He said that the progress of a society is measured by the progress of women. He understood that books like Manusmriti had unfair rules that kept women weak and dependent, which led to gender discrimination. So, he protested against such ideas. He also tried to bring new laws like the Hindu Code Bill to give women equal rights in family, property, and marriage. Even though people opposed him, he never gave up. He believed women and men are equal and should live with mutual respect and dignity.

KEYWORDS: *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Women Empowerment, Caste and Gender Discrimination, Equality.*

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Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a great humanist, constitutionalist and epoch maker is solely responsible for the empowerment of women in India. Lot of things are being said and told about Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He is a pioneering social reformer who appeared on the social scene of India, hailing from the lowest marginalized section of the society who belonged to the untouchable Mahar community. Later he championed the cause of humanity, dignity, equal opportunities for everyone. He strived hard to empower womenfolk along with the untouchables of lowest strata in the society. Whenever the issue of women empowerment is discussed at the time Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's name permanently gets etched in all our memory. His contribution is engraved on the hearts of every human being in general and Dalits and Women in particular.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar seems to have been born out of the furnace of humiliation, exploitation and was a victim of caste discrimination. Probably he was the first Indian to break the barriers which were the root cause of all the hurdles in the path of women empowerment. He was a true symbol of revolt against all the oppressive factors embedded in Hindu society. He had realized that Manusmriti which was designed by conservative sick mind based on the oppressive patriarchal mental framework. Hence it strongly perpetuated the factor of constant discrimination on women. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a voracious reader, who had gulped the ocean of knowledge, who went deep to understand the embedded patriarchal oppressive network of socio-structural code which aimed to oppress women perennially.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had realised the evil intentions of Manusmriti which aimed at oppressing women in such a way that they would never rise up. He was the first Indian who decided to burn the Manusmriti for this reason. He did not care for anyone for the strong reason that, it contained faulty regulations imposed on women. He was sure that, such a document with prejudiced rules for women would hamper their empowerment and serves as hurdle not guaranteeing any provision for their human dignity and respect. He was of the opinion that, the progress of the society is measured on the basis of the progress achieved by women in that society.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a rationalist, radicalist who

propagated equal rights for women in the society on par with men he advocated the principle that women too are integral part of the society. Both men and women have their equal share in the structure of family as well in the society. They can play their role well if they are provided with equal opportunities based on egalitarian parameters. There should not be any difference between men and women about their superiority and inferiority. Both are like two faces of a single coin. There should be mutual respect, dignity and reciprocal understanding among them.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, greatest Indian of all time, today, his principles are being accepted by everybody without any criticism. He is accepted as an unquestionable radicalist, constitutionalist for his enlightening ideas bestowed upon humanity. With his eclectic mind, sharp provocative intellectual ideas he is considered as an heir for millenniums discrimination. When he became the first law minister in the independent India, he decided to bring a sea change. He lived a monumental life who rose above the caste discrimination decided to triumph over the issue of women empowerment. While reviewing Ambedkar's colossal achievement as emancipator, fundamental critic of Hindu society, his ideas continue to resonate his strong radical vision. He not only contested the issue of caste discrimination, and self-respect and dignity in the vortex of humanity. His vision aimed at dismantling patriarchal structures through his envisioned social reforms laid emphasis on women's education providing equal opportunities and granting them equal rights.

Whatever he proposed for the progress of women through his ideas and introduction of Hindu code bill is truly a remarkable tool which aimed at empowering all the women in the society belonging to every caste. Initially, though he could not succeed in getting his proposed Hindu Code Bill Passed because of the conservative sick minded group of people then he decided to render his resignation and came out of the cabinet for the noble cause of correcting the irregularities prescribed by the Manusmriti. So he decided to burn the copies of the Manusmriti along with his followers. This is an historical remarkable event which will go in the annals of history, if there is any person who lost his position on the basis of adhering to his principles, it is none other than Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. In fact he went to empower women and he lost his power but he did not

compromise. His efforts through the Hindu Code Bill were aimed at giving women equal rights in marriage, property, and inheritance. When these progressive ideas were not accepted, he did not step back from his beliefs. Instead, he chose the path of integrity and sacrifice. This act of courage makes him not only a great radical social reformer but also a true symbol of humanism. His life teaches us that real leadership is not about holding power, but about standing by truth and justice, even at great personal loss.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was a great leader who worked for equality, justice, and human dignity. He was born in a poor and marginalized community and faced humiliation and caste discrimination from a young age. These painful experiences made him strong and determined to fight against all kinds of injustice in society. He not only worked for the upliftment of Dalits but also strongly believed in the empowerment of women irrespective of their caste. Dr. Ambedkar clearly understood that society cannot progress if women are left behind. He said that education is essential panacea for the progress of women and society. He believed that women and men are equal and should have the same rights, opportunities, and mutual respect thereby they can contribute for the progress of the family as well as progress of the society. He strongly opposed unfair traditions and beliefs that treated women as inferior. He criticized texts like Manusmriti because they supported patriarchal ideas and restricted women's freedom. He even took bold steps to protest against such systems, showing his courage and commitment to justice.

As the first Law Minister of independent India, Dr. Ambedkar tried to bring important legal reforms for women through the Hindu Code Bill. This bill aimed to give women equal rights in marriage, property, health and inheritance. It was a revolutionary step toward gender equality. However, due to strong opposition from conservative groups, the bill was not passed at that time. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar describes it as Hindu Code Bill was unwept and unsung. Deeply disappointed, Dr. Ambedkar chose to resign from his position. This act clearly shows that he valued his principles and commitment to women's rights more than power and position.

Dr. Ambedkar's vision was not limited to laws alone. He also emphasized the importance of education for women, as he

believed that education is the key to freedom and empowerment. He encouraged women to be confident, independent, and aware of their rights. His ideas helped in breaking many barriers that stood in the way of women's progress. Even today, his thoughts and contributions remain highly relevant. His life teaches us the importance of standing against injustice, supporting equality, and respecting every individual. Dr. Ambedkar's work continues to inspire people to build a society where women and men live with equal dignity, mutual respect, and equal opportunities.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar as a messiah figure for the underprivileged depressed class and also for the women of India. He is remembered by every human being for upholding the human dignity and exhibiting enormous human concern. He can definitely be considered as a rare humanist ensuring egalitarian rights and enlightenment of thought for the empowerment of women.

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