

Dr. Ambedkar's Intellectual Legacy: A Study on Equality Across Dimensions

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ABSTRACT

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a multifaceted luminary, played a pivotal role in shaping modern India. This research paper explores the diverse facets of his contributions, encompassing his roles as a thinker, scholar, economist, and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. The study delves into Ambedkar's advocacy for equality, social justice, and economic development, emphasizing his pivotal role in formulating policies for water conservation, industrialization, and economic institutions. The analysis includes a critical examination of key works such as "The Problem of Indian Rupee" and "The Problem of Small Holdings." Furthermore, the paper scrutinizes Ambedkar's influence on education, underscoring his efforts to eradicate caste-based discrimination and promote equal educational opportunities. The study also reviews constitutional provisions, focusing on Articles 14 to 17, highlighting Ambedkar's emphasis on equality and the abolition of untouchability. The research addresses the existing gap in literature concerning Dr. Ambedkar's specific perspectives on equity and social justice. Employing an analytical and descriptive approach, the study utilizes secondary data sources, including working papers, theses, and books, to offer a comprehensive examination of Dr. Ambedkar's contributions. The objectives include studying his thoughts, assessing their contemporary relevance, and evaluating his contributions to equality. The research concludes by asserting the enduring importance of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's legacy in shaping a socially just and equitable modern India.

Key Words: *Ambedkar, Equality, Social Justice, Economic Development, Constitution*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Dr. Ambedkar, also known as (Babasaheb) Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, had many facets to his personality. "He was a thinker, philosopher, patriot, social reformer, supporter of the Bahujan movement, scholar, author, person who is the pioneer of Indian Constitution, economist, eminent lawyer, and scholarly feminist. He had the distinction of being the first monetary economist in India to carefully evaluate the issues with the Indian rupee. He was a supporter of industrial modernization and favored it industrialization based on economic model with basic socialist values of economy of great men like Mahatma Phule, Shahumharaj. He targeted the centralized nature of fiscal federalism and adopted a cooperative approach. He drafted the Hindu Code Bill which served as the 'Magna Carta' for the equal status of Hindu women in society. He did not hesitate to resign from the cabinet

in favor of this historic law. Undoubtedly the most significant contribution of the main architect of the Indian Constitution based on the values of democracy, freedom, equality and secularism. Dr. Ambedkar is undoubtedly a magnanimous personality who has contributed immensely to put 'Independent India' on the path of 'Modern India' (Balasubramanian, Murugan, Regina, Pitchaimari, & Manikandan, 2022) He was awarded as Bharat Ratna in 1990 for his contribution as an architect of modern India. Emphasizing economic development and humanity along with equality, this research paper attempts to study the contemporary contribution of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and their role in the formation of modern India.

1. REVIEW OF RESEARCH STUDIES:

The reviewed research literature encompasses a comprehensive exploration of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's multifaceted contributions and visionary ideals. Dr. Murugank et al. (2021) delve into Ambedkar's role as an educationist, highlighting his seminal thoughts that have served as milestones in shaping the contemporary education system. The researchers underscore Ambedkar's foresight in advocating for changes in primary and higher education, asserting that governmental decisions regarding education echo his profound insights. K. Varshaa and Dr. Vezhaventhan. D (2018) focus on the social justice aspect of Ambedkar's vision, emphasizing the constitutional spirit and the imperative role of the state in promoting justice and equal opportunity. Dr. B.R. Maske (2020) explores Ambedkar's ideology of equality and his vision for the creation of modern India. The researcher contends that political human rights are integral to achieving social justice and underscores the relevance of Ambedkar's ideas in addressing contemporary social issues. Sonawane. S.V. (2021) shifts the focus to gender equality, elucidating the role of women's empowerment in India and its significance as a tool for national development. Lastly, Dr. Prabhakararao. B. (2016) acknowledges Ambedkar's pivotal role as the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, emphasizing its provisions for abolishing untouchability and combating various forms of discrimination. The review collectively underscores the enduring relevance of Ambedkar's vision across diverse domains and its impact on shaping the trajectory of India's socio-political landscape.

While the existing review highlights several noteworthy research studies focused on Dr. Ambedkar's thoughts, it reveals a conspicuous gap in the literature concerning his specific perspectives on equality and social justice. Although numerous studies delve into the broader realms of Babasaheb Ambedkar's thoughts and vision, there exists a noticeable dearth of in-depth exploration into his views on equity and equality. This underscores a critical need for more comprehensive research endeavors dedicated to unraveling Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's nuanced ideas regarding these pivotal aspects. Addressing this gap is of utmost urgency and significance, as it will contribute substantially to a more profound understanding of Ambedkar's intellectual legacy and the enduring relevance of his insights in the context of equity and equality.

1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research paper centers on exploring Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's perspectives on achieving equity, social justice, and contributing to the development of modern India. The study employs an analytical and descriptive approach to comprehensively examine Ambedkar's vision. A predominant reliance on secondary data sources is evident in this research, with a particular emphasis on working papers, theses, and books authored by renowned philosophers. This methodological choice aims to provide a well-informed and nuanced understanding of Dr. Ambedkar's ideologies and their implications for the pursuit of equity and social justice in the context of India's contemporary development.

1. **OBJECTIVES:**

2. To Evaluate the Pertinence of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Equitable Ideologies
3. Examine the Contemporary Relevance of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Intellectual Legacy:

4. **STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM:**

Many great peoples were born on the holy land of India and we all get to see that they have maintained social commitment and national loyalty in our country by working round the clock for our nation. “The legacy of his service is still exemplary, guiding and unparalleled for the countrymen. In this great legend, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's name is at the top. Architect of Indian Constitution Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was born on 14 April 1891. Bhimrao's father Subhedar Ramji was always careful to inculcate good morals in his children, he himself was very fond of reading, so the house had a collection of books. Also they used to bring some good books for children to read. So we can see Babasaheb's love of reading and habit of scholarly thinking till the last moment of his life. It seems that the works of Tukaram Maharaj and Sant Kabir became the important subjects of Babasaheb's studies in his future life”(K & Vezhaventhan, 2018) Dr. Babasaheb was a versatile personality. He had perfect knowledge and understanding of every field. With his excellent eloquence and skilful leadership in various fields such as social, political, economic, educational, religious, journalism, law Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar gave a message of wisdom to the dark life of the downtrodden, the Dalits, the displaced workers, the oppressed. Warning of the sparking of social revolution from the corrupted minds. Dr. Ambedkar awakened the depraved society to its rights.

1. **DR. AMBEDKAR'S INTELLECTUAL LEGACY: A STUDY ON EQUALITY**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, widely revered as the principal architect of the Indian Constitution, stands as an icon of social justice, equality, and the relentless pursuit of a more inclusive society. His visionary thoughts, deeply rooted in the socio-political fabric of India, extend far beyond conventional boundaries. At the core of Ambedkar's intellectual legacy lies a profound commitment to holistic equality a concept that transcends mere legal provisions to encompass comprehensive social, economic, and educational dimensions. Through his multifaceted roles as a scholar, jurist, social reformer, and statesman, Ambedkar articulated a vision that sought to dismantle entrenched hierarchies, challenge discrimination, and foster a nation where every individual, regardless of caste, creed, or gender, could thrive on the principles of democracy, liberty, and fraternity. This exploration delves into the nuanced facets of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's thoughts on holistic equality, unraveling the layers of his ideas that continue to shape the narrative of social justice in contemporary India and beyond.

1. **Babasaheb's View on equity in Education**

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar knew that education is a necessary prerequisite for restructuring society on the principles of equality and social justice. “While studying the development of education in Indian society, he found that even during the Peshwa rule in Maharashtra and the earlier period of British rule, the right to education was limited to the upper castes. He fought for the education of the people without caste and gender discrimination” While participating in the discussion on the budget, Babasaheb had said that, “Education is something that should be made available to everyone. Education sector is not a sector which can be treated on quid pro quo basis. Education should be made cheap by all possible means and to the greatest extent possible” (Ambedkar, 40-41) “He took an active part in the debates on the Bombay University Act and the Primary Education Reform Bill and voiced his views for educational reform. He founded the People's Education Society

and started colleges in Bombay and Aurangabad. He repeatedly stated that it is” (Maske, 2020) the responsibility of the government to provide equal educational opportunities to all without discrimination.

Babasaheb Ambedkar deliberately included Article 45 in the Guiding Principles of State Policy, stating, "Within ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, the State shall endeavor to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of fourteen years."(Sonawane, 2021) the Government of India has passed the Right to Education Act 2008 Bill and has paid tribute to Babasaheb Ambedkar for his contribution to mass education. The government's policy of universalization of primary education with particular focus on marginalized groups, underprivileged groups and girls, increasing enrollment in secondary education as well as commitment to expand educational facilities will empower and equip the youth with hope and confidence to face the future.

1. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s thoughts on equality and social justice

Like law, the concept of social justice also changes. It gradually develops itself into new patterns and expands its boundaries and assumes new dimensions. “Social justice is important in the context of an Indian society divided into castes and communities and creating walls and barriers of exclusivity based on superiority and inferiority, such inequalities pose a serious threat to Indian democracy. The concept of social justice aims to eliminate inequality and provide equal opportunities to all citizens in social, economic and political matters” (Habib, 2018) Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar used agitation as the main real agenda in the quest for human equality in India. “In response to the highly discriminatory casteist social system that completely devalued the human dignity of Shudras and Untouchables, Ambedkar was determined to eradicate social, educational and cultural disparities among the lower castes. He was of the opinion that as long as there is a caste system, the outcasts will remain. He united them with the motto “Learn, Organize and Struggle” (Singariya, 2014) He inculcated in them the values of self respect, dignity and courage to fight for their rights. Hinduism, the dominant religion in India, has never taught the virtues of liberty, equality and fraternity and as a result, it has never been able to unite the entire Hindu society.

In order to restore the human dignity of the untouchables in society, he sought for them a religion that could liberate the depressed classes from the shackles of caste hierarchy. While trying to uncover individual human potential, he had to look for a religion that taught the value of liberation. For him, true religion was that which enabled the upliftment of the individual irrespective of caste, creed, gender etc.

Dr.Ambedkar believed in the saying “Tell a slave that he is a slave and he will revolt against his slavery” and often quoted it to awaken consciousness among the untouchables for the protection of human rights. He established the Bhishkrit hitakarini Sabha to spread education among the depressed classes by opening hostels; and by opening social centres, study circles and libraries. The Sabha also tried to improve the economic conditions of the depressed classes” (Annaji, 2022) by opening agricultural and industrial schools; Also to provide a platform for airing their grievances.

1. Dr. Ambedkar’s contribution on equity in economic development

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's view of economic development as development that brought with it equality and coined the term "equal development". As the founder of India's water policy, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for his immense contribution while formulating policies regarding construction of dams to conserve water for irrigation and create multi-purpose utilities for generating thermal power, etc. “Dr. ambedkar As the first person to obtain

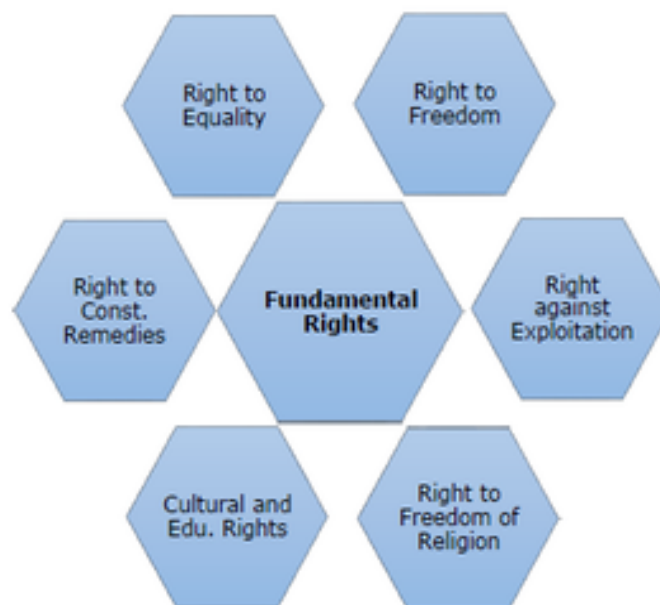
Ph.D in economics in the aspect of establishment of economic institutions. Ambedkar's intervention was instrumental in establishing a central bank named as Reserve Bank of India. He was presented as an economist who conceptualized the uncertainty of surplus labour in the traditional” (Dhal, 2017) sector and explained the draining of surplus labour through industrialization.

Now have a look at two major works of Dr. Ambedkar, 1) Problem of Indian Rupee, 2) The problem of small holdings. In his first work on the rupee problem, he advocated a pure gold standard, which would prevent inflation that would favor the poor. Explaining the thinking of the Indian rupee issue with his analysis was aimed at the welfare of the working class. On the second work on small holdings, where Dr. Ambedkar proposed for collectivization of agriculture. According to him, industrialization along with state socialism was the solution to disguised unemployment and low productivity.

1. Important Constitutional Provisions for Justice, Equality and Fraternity:

“Fundamental rights in the Constitution of India are protected and guaranteed by the Constitution, which is the fundamental law of India. Article 14 to Article 35 of the Constitution of India covers fundamental rights. All the fundamental rights in the Constitution of India are derived from or inspired by the Constitution of the USA. Part 3 is also described as the Magna Carta” (Prabhakararao, 2016) of India. It contains a very comprehensive and long list of 'fair' fundamental rights. Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Rights are complementary to each other. Both fundamental rights and fundamental duties must coexist for a successful democracy.

Figure 5.4: The Constitution of India guarantees six fundamental rights to citizens as follows:-



- Fundamental rights are the rights guaranteed to citizens by the constitution and which manifest in society as generally accepted fundamental values. Our fundamental rights include the so-called freedom rights. Our fundamental rights include economic, social and cultural rights. Article 32 of the Constitution of India contains a provision whereby individuals can seek remedies for violation of their fundamental rights, this

observation is true as long as the constitutional weapon known as 'writ' is used to enforce such rights of public duty.

- “Our constitution provides equal rights and opportunities to every citizen of the country and provides special protection for certain sections of the society like women, SC, ST, OBC, minorities etc. Who have been exploited in the name of caste/religion for thousands of years. These are the people who are deprived of basic facilities like food, shelter, clothing due to dirty/narrow mind attitude of some contractors of religion. Democracy is based on the concept of federalism, which is equal distribution of power among different groups. Therefore, to maintain the balance of equality in the country, the government has to provide” (Salagare, 2018) special security arrangements for some sections of the society.
- Equality of Opportunity of all rights, Dr. Ambedkar considered "equality of opportunity" paramount. Regarding constitutional remedies, that Article 32 is the soul and heart of the Constitution. According to him, the fundamental right is to establish equality and freedom to improve our social system which is full of inequality and discrimination. and others that conflict with our fundamental rights.

1. **CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR'S INTELLECTUAL LEGACY:**

- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's intellectual legacy stands as a timeless beacon, resonating with contemporary relevance across various dimensions. His unwavering commitment to equity in education, evident in his efforts to eradicate caste and gender discrimination, continues to shape policies like the Right to Education Act, emphasizing inclusive learning opportunities. Ambedkar's profound thoughts on social justice, framed in response to a deeply divided Indian society, inspire ongoing movements against inequality and exclusivity. His call for agitation and the values of self-respect fuel contemporary struggles for human rights. Additionally, Ambedkar's economic perspectives, advocating for equal development and evidenced in his contributions to policies on water conservation and industrialization, remain pertinent to today's discourse on inclusive growth. The constitutional provisions championed by him, particularly the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles, serve as a foundation for justice, equality, and fraternity, navigating modern debates on citizens' rights. Furthermore, his influence extends beyond borders, impacting international discussions on human rights and social inclusion. In essence, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's intellectual legacy continues to guide efforts toward building a more inclusive, just, and equitable world.

2. **CONCLUDING REMARKS:**

In conclusion, this comprehensive exploration into Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's intellectual legacy illuminates a transformative vision that extends far beyond his role in shaping the Indian Constitution. His commitment to holistic equality, manifested in the dismantling of societal hierarchies and the pursuit of a harmonious coexistence, stands as a guiding light for contemporary society. The major conclusions drawn from his ideologies emphasize the pivotal role of constitutional safeguards, educational equality, economic development with equity, social reformation, and the global impact of his visionary principles. As we navigate through these conclusions, it becomes evident that implementing Ambedkar's thoughts requires practical policy suggestions. These suggestions serve as a roadmap to translate his ideals into actionable measures, aiming to address the multifaceted dimensions of equality. From education reforms to economic policies, social inclusion programs, legal reforms, and international collaboration, each suggestion is a strategic step towards realizing Dr. Ambedkar's vision of a society founded on the principles of comprehensive equality. This exploration underscores the enduring relevance and transformative potential embedded in Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's teachings, offering a blueprint for a more just and equitable future.

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