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Abstract: *Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was not only an Indian economist, Jurist, Social reformer, political leader. He was a great thinker and he had progressive and transformative view on education, which played a central role in his vision for a Just and equitable society. He served as law and justice Minister in the first cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru.*

Key words: Social Justice, Indian Economist, Jurist, Social Reformer, Political Leader, Progressive

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar one of India's most influential social reformer, was born on April 14, 1891, in Mhow a town in present-day Madhya Pradesh, India. He came from a low-caste Mahar family, which was considered untouchable in the caste system of India. His family was an essential pillar in his Journey. Despite the difficult circumstances, they remained strong supporters of his work, which ultimately led to monumental changes in Indian Society. Dr. Ambedkar's Father, Ramji Maloji Sakpal was a Military officer in the British Indian Army. Ramji believed in the importance of education and played a crucial role in Ambedkar's pursuit of knowledge, offering support despite the challenges they faced as a low-caste family.

His mother Bhima Bai was a deeply religious and caring figure in his life, Shaping his early years with love and support(2), she passed away when Ambedkar was still a child, and this loss deeply affected him. Ambedkar had several siblings, Dr. Ambedkar married Ramabai in 1906, who was from a Mahar family as well. She supported him throughout his studies and the challenges he faced due to his caste. After the death of Ramabai, Ambedkar married Savita Ambedkar in 1948. Who was instrumental in supporting his work for social reform. Dr. Ambedkar had two sons and two Daughters with his first wife, Ramabai. His childhood was marked by a strong bond with his family.

But the social discrimination they faced often forced them to live in difficult conditions. He faced severe discrimination during his school years due to his caste, which deeply influenced his understanding of social injustice and fueled his later activism. He was made to sit separately from the other students because of his caste. When he needed to Drink water, then someone from higher caste had to pour that water from a height as they were not allowed to touch either the water or the vessel that contained it. The task was usually performed by the peon for the young Ambedkar and other untouchable children. He described the situation of untouchable children in his writings "No peon No water". He was also given menial tasks like cleaning the school premises, which were deemed appropriate work for some one of his caste his classmates and even teachers mocked him and treated him as inferior, which was a common experience for Dalit Children at the time. His original surname was Sakpal but his father registered his name Ambedkar in school, meaning he comes from his native village "Ambadwe" in Ratnagiri district. One view was also to protect him from casteism therefore, his fight against casteism was not just theoretical, it was a practical and life long struggle to ensure justice, equality, and dignity for the Dalit Community. His views on education were shaped by his own painful experiences with caste based exclusion and the social injustices he faced throughout his life. He saw education as a means of both personal and societal liberation. He wanted the complete development of mankind through the education. He argued that education could break shackles of caste discrimination and pave the way for a more just and equitable society. His emphasis on education helped shaped not only India's policies for the upliftment of Dalits and other Backward communities but also for women. He believed that the liberation of women was integral to the overall progress of society and encourages equal education and opportunities for them. Although he was saddened but inspired too by the tragedy that happened to him, even after this, he thought not only about the Innocent but about the whole society. His influence in the Drafting of Article 45, which calls for free and compulsory education for children and Article 46, which promotes the educational and economic interest of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other weaker sections was crucial in shaping the educational framework of Independent India, "Educate,



Agitate, Organize” this slogan encapsulates Ambedkar’s call for education as the first step in bringing about social changes and organizing against the Injustices of caste – based society. We can understand the teaching and thoughts of Ambedkar by reading some of his books like :

Annihilation Of Caste – In this book, Dr Ambedkar critiques the caste system, particularly the rigid social structure that regulates certain groups to an inferior status. He explores how caste discrimination has been institutionalized in Indian society. He strongly Argues that the caste system can only be destroyed through social reform, particularly by adapting a new vision of social equality based on principles of Justice.

The Buddha And His Dhamma – Ambedkar’s most significant published work. In this book, he provides a comprehensive account of the life of Gautam Buddha and his teachings, also known as Dhamma. The work was published after Ambedkar’s death and became a corner stone for the Dalit Buddhist movement that he led his approach was to reinterpret Buddhism, in a way that could empower the marginalized sections of society. Specially the Dalits. This book outlines the essential tenets of Buddha’s philosophy, focusing on the four noble truths and the Eight fold path. Ambedkar emphasizes the rational and scientific nature of Buddha’s teaching which he believed to be practical and applicable for the upliftment of the downtrodden and Marginalized. He interprets Buddha’s teachings as a direct challenge to the caste system that was prevalent in ancient Indian society. This aspects of the book became crucial for the Dalit-Buddhist movement, which Ambedkar led after he converted to Buddhism in 1956.

Bahiskrit Bharat – Its purpose was to provide platform for the untouchables and other marginalized sections of society. It aimed to bring awareness to the oppression faced by these communities and mobilize them for their rights. This newspaper had a strong voice against caste system and untouchability, aligning with Ambedkar’s vision of creating a just and equal society “this newspaper was later succeeded by the other Journals, but its legacy continues to be linked with Dr. Ambedkar’s struggle for justice, equality, and the abolition of the caste system. Being the chief Architect of the constitution he described it as a democratic and socialist text. Be it Samvidhan or the hindu code bill or any other reform by him, we see the feeling of public welfare in all his works. He wanted reform in every place where the weak were being harassed by the powerful because he had experienced the pain of being an untouchable, pain of being injured. He knew that only with more education and awareness one could live in society, otherwise this social imbalance will always remain. If he had not given rights to Dalit, had not brought in rules for removal, had not made laws for women, then what would have been the situation today ? even imagining it makes one feel scared. He used to say that if he had not became the first law minister, would his words have gained so much importance today ? Therefore, Real education is the most important.

In Addition to his significant contributions to education, he made several other great work in various fields that had a profound Impact on Indian society. Here are some of his major works :-

The Constituion Of India : Dr Ambedkar played a pivotal role in Drafting, structuring and articulating the vision of a democratic and inclusive India he was appointed as the chairman of the Drafting committee of the constitution Assembly on August 29, 1947. He believed that the constitution should be flexible and adaptable to changing times. He emphasized that it should evolved with society to meet the needs of the people. His thought was “However good a constitution may be, it is sure to turn out bad because those who are called to work it happen to be a bad lot. He stressed that the constitution must promote social injustice and Liberty.

Ensure Liberty and Fraternity – Three values he considered essential for a healthy democracy. Ambedkar saw the constitution as means to uphold the rule of law and ensure democratic governance. He wanted a government that was both accountable and responsible to the people. He strongly Advocated for safeguards, for minorities, scheduled castes and other marginalized communities. He viewed the constitution as a test for uplifting the oppressed and ending caste discrimination. While the constitution provided political equality. Ambedkar believed economic and social Democracy were just a crucial. He criticized capitalism and called for state intervention to remove inequality. Dr. Ambedkar said in his historic speech on 25th November 1949 during the concluding session of the constituent assembly that Don’t substitute the



constitution with Dictatorship, observe constitutional methods and Guard Against social inequality. Ambedkar's vision was to create a democratic and inclusive society, and the constitution continues to guide Indian Today.

Dalit Rights And Social Reforms – He was a fierce advocate for the rights of Dalit, His efforts to fight against caste- based discrimination and untouchability led to significant reforms including :-

i. The Poona Pact (1932): The British prime minister Ramsay mac Donald announced the communal award, granting separate electorates to various communities including Depressed classes. Separate electorate meant Dalits would have their own voter list and elect their own representative a demand supported by Dr. Ambedkar for true representation. While Mahatma Gandhi opposed this idea, fearing it would divide Hindu society permanently, As a protest Gandhiji started a hunger strike in Yawada Jail (Pune) in September 1932, but Ambedkar strongly supported separate electorates because, it would give independent political voice to dalits. But Gandhi's fast created massive public pressure on Ambedkar, putting him in a difficult position. An Agreement was finally reached between him and Gandhi's representatives. The main points were no separate electorates for Dalits, 147 reserved seats which were increased from 71 in the communal award for depressed classes in provincial legislatures, Joint electorates with other Hindus, but dalit candidates would be chosen by Dalit voters through a primary elections, fair representative in Public Services, education and Grants for the upliftment of Dalits. The pact led to increased representation for Dalits in legislature, laying the foundation for reservation in politics. This poona pact highlighted Ambedkar's role as a pragmatic leader who prioritized safe the safety and future of his people over ideological rigidity.

ii. Mahad Satyagraha (1927) : A non-violent movement lead by BR Ambedkar in 1927. It was a major step in the fight against caste based discrimination in India, particularly targeting the practice of untouchability. He led thousands of Dalits in a peaceful march chavdar lake to assert their right to drink water from the public source, this act was non-violent but revolutionary, as it challenged the social norms enforced by the caste system the upper-caste opposition reacted strongly, and they there were even rituals to "purify" the lake afterward, this satyagraha was one of the first public civil rights movements for Dalits in India. It marked Dr. Ambekdar's emergence as a mass leader and a symbol of the anti-caste movement.

iii. His leadership in the KALARAM TEMPLE ENRY SATYAGRAHA [1930] : It was a major civil rights movement led by Dr. Ambedkar in 1930. It was aimed at asserting the Dalits to enter Hindu temples and worship like other caste Hindus. This temple located in Nashik, Maharastra, is dedicated to Lord Rama. Dalits were denied entry into the temple despite it being a public religious place. Dr. Ambedkar believed that denial of temple entry was a symbol of the largest social discrimination faced By dalits. The protest was peaceful and involved marches, public, speeches, and attempts to enter the temple protesters faced strong resistance from upper-caste Hindus including physical attacks and social boycotts. Despite repeated efforts they were not allowed to enter the temple at that temple.

Economic Philosphy And Adovacy For Social Injustice – He was deeply concerned with the economic exploitation of the marginalized sections of society. He advocated for land reforms, labour rights and Industrilization. He was a profound economic thinker and an unwavering advocate against social injustice. His philosophy combined economic equality. Social justice, and political democracy, which he believed were essential for a just and inclusive society. He believed in state socialism or democratic socialism, where the state would play a central role in economic planning. He advocated for nationalization of key industries, especially agriculture, land and public utilities. In the 1943 essay "states and minorities" of him, he proposed a detailed plan for a planned economy in which the state would own and manage major sectors to reduce in equality. He understood that land ownership was a major factor in the economic oppression of Dalits. He proposed redistribution of agricultural and protection of tenant, farmer's rights. He supported Industrialization as a way to move Dalits from caste-board manual labour to wage base labour, offering Dignity and economic mobility. For him, political Democracy without economic and social democracy was meaningless. He emphasized that liberty, equality and fraternity must be established not just



in the political realm but also in the economic and the social spheres. He believed social justice was the corner stone of any true democracy. He founded several organizations like the Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha, to work for Dalit welfare.

Religious Conversion And The Spread Of Buddhism – Despite his efforts to reform Hinduism and bring social justice through legal and political means, caste based oppression persisted. He realized that social equality was not possible within Hinduism, and therefore decided to leave the religion. In 1935, at the yeola conference or Ambedkar made a historic statement :- I was born a Hindu but I will not die a Hindu. For there his search for a religion that upheld human dignity, equality and rationality started. He studied multiple religions before deciding on Buddhism and Later on October 14, 1956 at Nagpur he officially embraced Buddhism. The reasons behind this was it is free from caste discrimination, focuses on morality, compassion and reason. Buddha opposed the caste system. Buddhism originated in India and aligned with Indian culture and values, Dr. Ambedkar took the three Refugees BUDDHA, DHAMMA (Teachings), Sangha (Community). He then administered the 22 vows to his followers, which Affirmed commitment to equality, non-violence and Buddhist principles. About 5 lakh Dalits converted a long with him in a historic mass conversion. He gave a new interpretation of Buddhism called Navayana.

Some of significant legal works like -

- (i) **The Hindu Code Bill** : Proposed by Dr. Ambedkar, aimed to grant women greater rights in marriage, Divorce, Inheritance and property. Although the bill was not passed in his lifetime, it laid the foundation for future reforms in Hindu personal law.
- (ii) His contribution to the IPC and labour laws, which sought to protect workers and ensure fair treatment of women and marginalized communities. His slogans were powerful calls to action that aimed to dismantle the caste system, ensure equal rights for dalits, these slogans continue to inspire social reformers and activists, particularly in the fight for social equality and Justice. Dr. Ambedkar had the support of various individuals, organizations, communities throughout his life, even though he faced significant opposition due to his advocacy for social justice and the rights of Dalits.

Ambedkar efforts in the field of social injustice and human rights especially his advocacy for the rights of Dalits, have been acknowledged by Various international institutions including the united nations. He is recognized as a key figure who contributed to the Universal human rights movements. Dr. BR Ambedkar believed that Malice is the result of mental disorder of a person and can be removed only by mental development. He had observed that those who are well educated oppose casteism and untouchability and understand the pain of untouchables. Dr Ambedkar passed away on December 6, 1956, just a few weeks after converting to Buddhism. His death marked the end of a long and hard- fought battle for social justice. His death symbolized the end of an era but also the beginning of a movement that would continue for generations. Modern efforts to promote inclusive education, ensure equal access and combat caste discrimination in educational institutions owe much to Ambedkar's vision his contribution to education remains a lasting legacy in India, especially in the context of ensuring equality for all. His emphasis on education as means of social liberation, empowerment and nation building continues to inspire movements for educational reform in India and beyond..

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