



Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Prespective Of Women Empowerment Relevance To Labour Code

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Abstract

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, popularly known as architect of the Indian Constitution, was one of the most popular intellectuals of the 20th century in India. He was a versatile personality who has acted as economist, social reformer, revolutionary, profound personality and emancipator of depressed women. He was a beacon for the crores of oppressed, down-trodden people and was recognized as Masiha of depressed, untouchable. His exposure to foreign education has influenced his views on women rights. He worked firmly for elevating the women status. Other than launching various social movements, Ambedkar initiated Hindu Code Bill in the parliament. He played important role in creating awareness of Indian women and inspired women to fight against unfair social practices in the society. In this article, as part of Ambedkar Prespective presentation is made to the root cause of miserable plight of women in Indian Society and reformative initiatives taken by Ambedkar during Pre Independence perioed and relevance of his contribution in contemporary time related to Labour Code of Contemporary for the benefit of the dalit and poor women labour.

Key Words: Women Empowerment, Untouchability, Social Justice, Gender equality, Feminism, Hindu Code Bill

1. Relevance of Ambedkar's Contribution

Ambedkar wanted to build the Hindu society on the basis of equality and liberty. He is the supporter of women's values and rights. Labour Code legislation Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 supports the employment of women. This legislation about from the pregnancy women till the delivery will be given 172 days of paid leaves. This Maternity Benefit Act applies to women working in mines, factories, industry, plantation and shops and establishments employing ten or more persons

Ambedkar's view regarding the women is emphasizing their right to property, right to education, equal treatment with men. Considering the Equal Remuneration Act, 1974 in Labour Code, men and women given equal status including the equal remuneration.

Ambedkar thinking helped him feminist development in different cultures and countries around the world. At Nagpur on July 20th, 1940 he emphasized that there could not be any progress without women.

Ambedkar role as a scholar and social reformer for long way in empowering women and ensuring them respectable position in society. He faced bottlenecks for the realisation of women prosperity. He laid down the ground for social justice by with laws in the constitution of India.

Having himself faced the brunt of untouchability, he worked hardly for elevating the status of backward communities, depressed classes and women. Under present scenario Article 15 of Constitution any Women faces Infringement of Untouchability can get justice through the Courts.

Ambedkar as the main architect of constitution he played a decisive role in incorporating certain measures aimed at the welfare of women. He framed certain laws for the women this includes Voting for Women, Women Labour Welfare, Right over Paternal Property, Women Labour Protection Act, Adoption Law, Marriage after 18 years of age, Maintenance Allowances after legal separation, Maternity Benefit for Women Labour Bill for granting rights to Indian women.

For raising the status of women at par with men. It took decades of time to rectify the imbalances for discriminatory and inequality attitude of the upper classes. Still now about max percent of the women are illiterate in India. Ambedkar dream of empowerment not achieved even after 74 years completion of our constitution.

Independent India has a woman Prime Minister and women CM's in different states. In Supreme Court of India instance of Women Judge and Women in different state High Courts. Women also head's in various departments in MNC's and women also joining as Army Officers.

2. Central Govt. has initiated the following actions to empower women:

2.1 National Commission for Women

NCW (National commission of Women) Established in January 1992 by an Act of Parliament. The NCW was given the responsibility to investigate and oversee all issues related legal and constitutional protections afforded to women. NCW to look the current legislations, and recommend rectifications as required to save the women's rights and privileges. The National Commission of Women provides financial support to Organisations and NGO's to run programs to educate women.

2.2 The Education of Females

The effective way for growth of women's status in society is through education. A person's status improved and inequality handled through education. Establishing Schools, colleges, and universities for women in the nation to support women's education at all levels. This will help to minimize the gender prejudice in education for women.

To encourage more girls from BPL homes to enrol in schools. Govt. is offering benefits to girls, including uniforms, boarding and lodging, clothing for hostilities, scholarships, free bicycles, free books, midday meals and more. Universities includes Mother Teresa Women University formed for further women's studies, to support women's higher education, and promote their social mobility.

2.3 Women Legislations in Constitution of India

The following Women Legislations included in Constituion by Ambedkar.

2.3.1 Laws related to Dowry, Marriage and Divorce

Caste Disabilities Act 1850; Converts Marriage Act 1872; Hindu Marriage Act 1955, The Hindu Widows: Remarriage Act 1856; Dowry Prohibition Act 1961

2.3.2 Laws related to Right to Property

The Hindu Inheritance - Removal of Disabilities – Act 1928; The Hindu Gains of Learning Act 1930; The Hindu Women's Right to property Act 1937; Hindu Succession Act 1956

2.3.3 Laws related to Rights of working Women in Labour Code

Minimum Wages Act, 1948; The Maternity Benefits Act, 1961; Factories Act, 1948; Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

These new laws created by Ambedkar for getting social justice to the Indian women at par with men. Congress leaders Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Sardar Patel etc opposed such reform legislations. But the efforts of Ambedkar never ignored by Indian Nation. For example Equal Remuneration Act, 1974 of Labour Code given equal status to women same as to male.

2.3.4 Ambedkar's identity in contemporary Time can be recognized through Constitutional provisions as mentioned in the below table

Fundamental Rights to every Indian Women written in Constitution by Ambedkar	
In case of Infringement Fundamental Rights are Enforceable in Court of Law	
Article 14	Equality before the law and equal protection of the laws
Article 15	Prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex
Article 15 (3)	Positive discrimination in favour of women and children
Article 16	Equality of Opportunity in public employment
Article 23, 24	Prohibits trafficking in human beings and in forced/child labour
Directive Principles and Provisions related to Indian Women Written in Constitution by Ambedkar.	
DPSP's are Not Enforceable in Court of Law, and, for Welfare of Citizens	
Article 39 (a) and (d)	State to provide equal means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work
Article 42	State to make laws for securing just and humane conditions of work, and for maternity relief
Article 51A(e)	Fundamental Duty of every citizen to promote the dignity of women
Article 243D (3)	Not less than 1/3rd of the total number of seats to be filled in every Panchayat to be reserved for women
Article 243T(3)	Not less than 1/3rd of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality for women
Article 243T(4)	Reservation of offices of Chairperson in Municipalities for SC, ST, Women as the legislature of a State, may by law provide

From the above provisions to promote the interests of women. These laws are part of labour laws for the working norms of women labour.

The various Labour Laws beneficial to women includes Factories Act 1948, The Maternity Benefits Act 1961, Minimum Wages Act 1923, Equal Remuneration Act 1976.

- In Factory Act 1948 women have equal status with men in the current contemporary world. Women working in a Factory will be given social security benefits equal to men. This signifies the Ambedkar's women empowerment ideology during independence era.
- In Minimum Wages Act 1948 women availing the benefits of minimum wages such as floor wage under Labour Code. This how the women at par with men in availing the wage benefits. This Labour Code benefits available to Un-Organized labour till the Labour Code Implementation

Women are mainly marginalized and socially excluded. Ambedkar prespective of women oppression and rights are more useful to explore, as he himself faced the issues of oppression and discrimination.

3. Ambedkar ideology of Women Rights

In whole of his life Ambedkar's worked benefit of women and looked at bad plight of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities. As a chairman of Drafting Committee he worked the problems of women in Bombay Legislative Council. As well worked at problems of women in Parliament as first Law Minister in independent India.

Ambedkar on Maternity Benefit Bill signifies about the dignity of women. Ambedkar told there is no progress without women. in the conference at Nagpur on July 20th, 1940. This conference about India Depressed Classes. In the Round Table conference he made speeches on depressed classes.

Ambedkar involved in number of subcommittees and worked for safeguards of the protection of depressed sections. Ambedkar involved in introduction of adult franchise. After participation in the round table conference larger number of women were present for the meetings.

Social empowerment of women abolishes discrimination under Article 15 of Constitution on basis of ethnicity, race, disability, religion or gender. Women Empowerment considered for the opportunities of marginalised people. Women empowerment is the development of the skill focus and eliminating the future purpose of charity and welfare of individuals

Women Empowerment in economic, political, social or spiritual covers disciplines, definitions from psychology to philosophy and women self help industry. Women Empowerment for the methodology associated with feminism.

4. Ambedkar on Equality of Men and Women:

Ambedkar as father of Constitution included liberty, equality and fraternity in the Constitution. In his speech in the Constituent Assembly dated Nov, 25th 1949, "Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy." Social democracy meant for liberty, equality and fraternity. Ambedkar told On Jan, 26th 1950, we are entering into contradictions.

Ambedkar told, in social and economic life continue to reject the principal of one man one value. We have to object this contradiction, else those facing inequality attack the structure of political democracy. In political spectrum women have equality, social and economic life. Political system recognizes one man, one vote, one value.

Ambedkar follows the efficacy of law and legislation. He struggled dream to evolve a constitutional mechanism. Where equality, liberty and fraternity exists. In Ambedkar's vision, all citizens are equal before law; citizens have equal civic rights, and pleaded for special privileges and safeguards for the Scheduled Caste's. This how he demanded equality.

English education studied by many Indians to contain the eradication of the evil practices in India. They started to purify Hindu society from its old age tradition. According to Swami Vivekananda, "Women played better role than men". Raja Rammohan Roy played his role for the abolition of sati system. Jyotiba Phule sacrificed for education of girls. Many social workers sacrificed their lives for the women rights.

India Constitution Articles 15(3), 51(A) meant for equal status of men and women. Ambedkar's work on Constitution made new chapter in Human Rights subject. In the social order, Ambedkar looked at development of women with growth of society.

The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001, For gender inequality social and economic structure of the society responsible. Even though certain progress achieved, But sections of women are experiencing social evils such as domestic violence, kidnapping, eve teasing, acid attacks, dowry, rape, crime, honour killing etc.

5. Women Status Update as of Today

Most of women are literate still lack formal education. Education as a way of knowledge acts as social reforms. Stagnation in the social reform will have profound impact on women's advancement and growth in India. Women's mentality not accepted equality with males. Women experiencing violent crimes, harassment, and criminality to regress in their progress.

The bottleneck to women progress are education, work and larger population. With up to date technology and better living does not relate to betterment of individuals or society. The social structures designed to deteriorate women must be eliminated. Number of eminent female activists worked for poverty, health, and the environment. The women reservation bill most discussed but the truth is most women not knowing about it. Today's women not aware decision making, in secure and ignorance of their rights.

Women's empowerment about economic, political, health issues. The problem of women's social empowerment be resolved and to give due attention. Five pillars of women's empowerment includes self-worth, freedom to choose, access to opportunities and resources, control over their lives, and capacity to shape social change.

Ambedkar says, "In women movements, they can change the society, which is very miserable. In past also women has larger role in improving the condition of weaker section. Ambedkar believed women for their work. While speaking in conferences to women, he condemned bad traditions, ways of life which made life miserable. The illiterate women followed Ambedkar from the bottom of their heart.

Constitution Amendments of 73rd and 74th refers to participation of women in the politics and equal status of men and women. Women's Reservation Bill with 33% reservation to women signifies women's role in Lok Sabha, State Legislatures.

Ambedkar was adamant that improving women's emancipation and uplifting women ought to be guided by his vision.

6. Conclusion

During Ambedkar life he stood with oppressed women and worked against oppressed social customs of Hindu society. He shown dissatisfaction over the plight of women. He worked hard to keep the dignity and status of women and drafted laws of adoption, divorce, marriage, succession etc. In Labour Code Equal Emuneration Act, 1974 in place but Ambedkar in Pre Independence not realized the equality of both men and women. Socio economic status of the society can be maintained giving women their share in every sphere of life. Ambedkar always thinking about building of nation with modern and technologically developed. According to Ambedkar direction to society measured the progress of the society by the degree of progress which women have achieved.

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