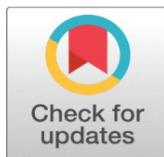


DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR'S VISION ON EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar established People's Education Society in Bombay and Aurangabad to educate the students belonging to Depressed classes and backward classes. His educational philosophy is reflected in his lectures, published articles in various magazines and works. He was of the opinion that every educational establishment should be a source to change social structure. He firmly detained that education should be, of main concern for the society and to promote for growth of individuals. In this paper an attempt is made to explore educational thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar, who aimed for a type of education that not only inculcates consciousness and attainment of human rights among citizen but also should teach human dignity and justice. To him Education is the means to oppressed ones to fight against injustice and exploitation they have been suffering from ages. He considers, lack of education as the main cause for the backwardness of women and common men. In this article an attempt is made to assess the contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to the field educational and to explore the changes in life style of marginalised section through Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's personal influence and contribution to the field of Education. The study was conducted based on works of Dr Ambedkar. Method adopted is historical and analytical, It is based on analysis of concepts and synthesizing of ideas and evidence drawn from various sources

Keywords: Dr. Ambedkar, Depressed Classes, Social Progress, Dalit, Education

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a key of social progress. It helps an individual to outgrow the crippling influences of ignorance and superstition and enables him/her to develop his/her potentialities to the maximum extent possible. It makes an individual conscious of his/her rights as well as obligations towards his fellow beings. Therefore, education is the best possible means to bring about an egalitarian society and very important instrument of social change. Dr. Ambedkar was not satisfied with the traditional system of education system prevalent those days, in which only Diwujayas (upper three varnas) were allowed to get education and rest of the Bahujans and women were denied the same. Thus he was in favour of mass education so that the lower classes (shudras/dalits) and women were benefited by the education system. There was no equality and freedom to have education. Due to lack of education, Shudras and Dalits' became mentally slave, morally degraded, culturally handicapped, economically dependent and socially backward and there was no social status and dignity. The valiant efforts of Dr. Ambedkar's guru, Mahatma Jotirao Phule, bore fruit and for the first time the schools for the education of women and the untouchables were established in India. It was Dr Ambedkar, who advocated the idea of free and compulsory education first time so that the Shudras (poor citizens), the dalits and women get education as they did not had money to pay for it. In Constitution he incorporated several articles to promote education for viz., Article 28, 29, 30, 45, 46, 350.

2. ABOUT SCHOOL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

According to Dr B.R. Ambedkar, "If you want to develop the society then you need to spread up the education. Education eliminates inferiority and eradicates the bias of people which results on to minimize the exploitation, domination, of those people who try to take the benefit of the so called illiterate people. If the people get awakened through education then they can face the problems created by the oppressive elements. Education reforms opinions, it tries to remove the walls built among the people and there will be a true public opinion rather than caste presuited opinion. Further he biggest gift that is given by the education is that it creates self confidence among us which is considered as the first stage of our development", ¹According to Dr. Ambedker, "School is a holy institution where the minds of the students are cultured". The regular working in the schools should be organized in a disciplined manner. School is the factory of making good citizens. The skilled foreman of this institution converts the raw material into a good quality product. He started the model educational institution by establishing People"s Education Society. The preference should be given to higher educational qualifications irrespective of caste and creed while appointing the teachers in the educational institutions. He given importance to the admissions of students belonging to dalit community in his institution but, the teacher of the school should be higher qualified belonging to any caste or category. He supported the co-education by saying that women should be given equal opportunity along with men to educate themselves". ²

Dr. Ambedkar's views on role of a Teacher:

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar himself was innovative and creative teacher. According to him education is a continuous process and the teacher provides the real base to it. Therefore, education and ability depends entirely upon authentic knowledge, self reliance, learning attitude and delivering skill of the teacher. A teacher should be multifaceted. He should be sharp minded and choosey character. He is the national builder because education is in the hands of teacher and the development of a nation depends upon educated manpower. So, every educational institution should have intellectual, positivist and kind hearted teachers to teach the poor and baseline students.

Dr. Ambedkar's views on the Syllabus

Syllabus is a condensed outline or statement of the main points of a course of study or of books or other documents. (Good, C. V.; 1959:544) Dr. Ambedkar opposed the hard and fast syllabus as it brings restrictions on the teaching. He said it is, therefore, necessary that the university should give broad guidelines of the subjects concerned and teachers must be given a freedom to teach what he thinks proper in the light of those guidelines. For this purpose Dr. Ambedkar pointed out "the teachers of the university ought, under proper safeguards, to have entire control of the education and examination of their students".³

Dr. Ambedkar's views on Primary Education

Primary education occupies a significant place in the educational reconstruction of a developing country. Ever since educational consciousness developed in India, a great deal of thinking has gone into developing adequate programmes of primary education. When the constitution of free India was in the making. The expert framers of this sacred document did not ignore the great national endeavour to provide for primary education to suit the needs and aspirations of the people of free India. Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State policy held out a great promise for the young child. It is the primary education which is the first stage of the entire superstructure of educational setup in India. According to Indian Constitution (Art. 45) Primary education refers to "free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years".⁴

Dr. Ambedkar's views on Higher Education

Babasaheb stressed upon the minds of his people, the importance of self respect and self-elevation. He encouraged them to take higher education for their progress. He thought that the progress of a community always depended upon how its members advanced in education. That is why he laid more stress on higher education than on primary education. In the realm of higher education. Dr. Ambedkar was in favor of giving teachers necessary freedom to frame their own syllabi and assess the performance of their students. He was opposed to prescribing and following a rigidly structured syllabus. His People's Education Society (P.E.S) (1945), which started a college on June 20,1946. The institution was founded by him with a view to promoting higher education among the lower middle classes and especially among the scheduled castes. Later on the P.E.S started high-schools, night high schools, hostels, colleges and other institutions. Though he

started the People's Education Society, still he held the view that the greater responsibility for providing educational opportunities should be that of the Government.⁵

Dr. Ambedkar's views on University Education

Dr. Ambedkar worked as a professor and after-wards as a Principal of a college. He studied the state of University Education in our country as well as abroad. He was of the opinion that Colleges should not be separated from the University. Colleges should be partners on terms of equality and participate in promoting together the cultural progress of both undergraduate and postgraduate studies. He wanted that the undergraduate faculty and the postgraduate faculty should work in an integrated fashion. If both the faculties run together in a University, the students at the undergraduate level may get the opportunity to attend the lectures of the senior and distinguished professors. The senior teachers may also get the opportunity to select the best students and train them properly from the very beginning.⁶ Dr. Ambedkar said that the aim and function of the University education should be

1. to ensure that the teaching done there is suited to adults;
2. that it is scientific, detached and impartial in character;
3. that it aims not so much at filling the mind of the student with facts or theories as at calling forth his own individuality and stimulating him to mental effort;
4. that it enables him to critically study the leading authorities with perhaps occasional reference to first-hand sources of information;
5. that it implants in his mind a standard of thoroughness and inculcates in him a sense of value for reaching at the truth,⁷

Dr. Ambedkar's views on Women education:

Delivering a lecture on 20th July 1942 at Nagpur, he said, “I measure the progress of community by the degree of progress which women have achieved. I shall tell you a few things which I think you should bear in mind. Learning to be clean; keep free from all vices. Give education to your children. Instil ambition in them. Inculcate on their minds that they are destined to be great. Remove from them all inferiority complexes.”⁸ He was clear that if half of the country's population remains uneducated, then India, no country in the world can progress. Being a true patriot and social reformer, Dr. Ambedkar was a strong supporter of women's education. He was well aware that for the progress of the society and the development of the country, it is very important for women to be educated. He observed that ‘Education is as necessary for females as it is for males. If you know how to read and write, there would be much progress’.

Education as a tool to ensure Social Justice

Over all he mainly believed in John Dewie's advocacy of Education, who opined that, the purpose of education is to transform the society. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted an educational system which would serve all. His educational model was a socialist one based on Buddhist ideology. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the society must be based on reason, and not on traditions of caste system. “The backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forgo material benefits, we may forgo material benefits of civilization, but we cannot forgo our right and opportunities to reap the benefit of the highest education to the fullest extent. That is the importance of this question from the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe.”⁹ Dr. Ambedkar's ideas for the untouchables was to raise their educational standards so that they may know their own condition, have aspirations and rise to the level of higher class and be in the position to use political power as a means. Educate, agitate and organize are three final words of Dr. Ambedkar to Dalit – Bahujans to raise themselves in the society. He believed that liberation of entire Bahujans is based on education as an educated person can assert their rights and be motivated for development. It not only trains the human mind to think but also to take the right decision to ensure social justice. He asked that, “It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses and women to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom

3. CONCLUSION

It can be said that educational philosophy of Dr Ambedkar is the blend of ancient and modern education. The contribution of Dr. Ambedkar is significant as he highlighted the requirement of educational development of a large section of Indian society that has long been deprived of education. Dr. Ambedkar played a major role in formulating many laws of

education and social emancipation of downtrodden people at the time of freedom movement and constitution-making. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was not only the father of Indian Constitution but was a great freedom fighter, political leader, philosopher, thinker, humanists, economist and a revivalist for Buddhism in India. His Educational philosophy stresses on development of persons and their environment. Dr. Ambedkar strongly believed that education should be provided without any discrimination to all the citizens of independent India. He says, "If you want to develop the society then you need to spread up the education. Education reforms opinions, it tries to remove sagrigatory walls built among the people. The biggest gift that is given by the education is that it creates self confidence among us which is considered as the first stage of our development." ¹⁰

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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None

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