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Abstract

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, an accomplished jurist and the principal architect of India's Constitution, who tirelessly campaigned for the rights of India's oppressed people. As a social reformer, he passionately opposed the prevalent caste structure in Indian society and questioned the legitimacy of the orthodox hindu social order, which perpetuated untouchability and injustice in India in one form or another. In light of the foregoing, the current paper aims to demonstrate B.R. Ambedkar's importance in society. Furthermore, the research will examine the contemporary relevance of B.R. Ambedkar's vision on social reforms and social justice, as well as the interlink age between social justice and social reforms. His efforts to create a just society are best exemplified in the Indian Constitution's Preamble, which includes provisions for the weakest parts of society. Ambedkar's fair society is founded on the principles of social, economic, and political justice, as well as liberty, equality, and fraternity, in which each individual not only has access to riches, assets, and advantages of life, but also has the right to live in dignity within society. He also emphasized the importance of social and economic democracy in the establishment of true political democracy. In addition, the following aims will be discussed in this paper:

- To demonstrate B.R. Ambedkar's importance in society and his contribution to it.
- To acknowledge the interconnectedness of social justice and social reform.
- Examine the relevance of B.R. Ambedkar's vision for social reforms and social justice in today's world.

Introduction

The concept of comprehensive development, which emphasizes not only economic development but also social, political, and cultural development of an individual in society, is strongly based in Ambedkar's vision of a Just Society. According to him, a society must be devoid of all sorts of inequity, and individuals should be prioritized over society rather than the other way around. India has made significant efforts in this regard to attain integrated growth along the lines of Ambedkar's Just Society. As a result, in light of the preceding statement, it is necessary to discuss Ambedkar's contribution to society in the Indian context, as well as to assess the current relevance of B.R. Ambedkar's vision on social reforms and social justice. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a remarkable teacher, educationist, lawyer, economist, anthropologist, sociologist, author, orator, politician, trade union leader, preacher, and above all, a social revolutionary, as well as the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. Many social reformers have emerged in India to fight injustice in favour

of dalit groups, but only a few leaders have successfully communicated their own views to societies in order to improve the welfare of the poor. Ambedkar advocated for Dalit rights, women's rights, backward castes, minorities, and working-class people in particular, and fought for the minimum dignity of all human beings, regardless of caste or class, throughout his life. According to a growing body of research, Ambedkar pushed for the ideals of social justice for the oppressed and opposed all social evils that perpetuated poverty, injustice, and discord in society. He also emphasized that social democracy cannot exist without economic and political democracy.

Contribution of Bhimrao Ambedkar to Society

Bharatha Ratna Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, reverently and affectionately known as 'Baba saheb Ambedkar,' stands out among India's galaxy of social reformers and intellectuals. As a social reformer, he passionately opposed the prevalent caste structure in Indian society and questioned the legitimacy of the orthodox hindu

social order, which perpetuated untouchability and injustice in India in one form or another. To address societal inequality, Ambedkar utilized his pen, putting philosophical concepts in the preamble and numerous other clauses of the Indian Constitution. For example, Art. 38 was added to end economic inequality, Art. 45 was added to end the curse of illiteracy and ignorance, Art. 38 and 39 were added to end man's exploitation of man, Art. 31 (A) was added to end feudal overlordship, and Art. 17 was added to end untouchability, which was a curse in Indian society. Prasad and Shafi (2015) argue that he stood for human oneness, freedom, simplicity, integrity, liberty, equality, and social and economic fairness. His vision for the Indian constitution was founded on the concept of *lex rex*, which means law is king rather than *rex rex*, which means king is law. In light of the preceding statement, Ambedkar argued that where there is Rule of Law, the weakest parts of society can be uplifted in every respect. Without mentioning his pivotal role in the drafting of the Indian constitution, his contribution to the change and reconstruction of Indian society would be inadequate. Ambedkar established many measures in the form of Fundamental Rights in order to protect the rights of all people and to develop a just society. His far-sighted ideology aimed at achieving social and economic equality in society. Dr. Ambedkar recommended including certain provisions on fundamental rights, notably a clause to the effect that the state shall offer protection against economic exploitation, in the process of creating the Constitution of the Republic of India to address the problem of economic exploitation. This clause proposed, among other things:

- The state shall own and operate key industries.
- The state shall own and operate basic but non-key industries, either directly or through corporations established by it.
- Agriculture shall be a state industry, organized by the state taking over all land and renting it out to residents of villages in suitable standard sizes for

cultivation as collective farms by groups of families.

"Social justice is not cant but conscience," says Justice Krishna Iyer, a former judge of India's Supreme Court. "Social justice is not verbal borrowing from like documents but the social force of the supreme law." Legal justice is canalized, controlled, and given by law; social justice is people-oriented. Social justice is a response to social injustice, and it aims to eliminate social and economic inequities by ensuring equality of status and opportunity. Today's social justice becomes tomorrow's legal justice. Dr. Ambedkar's ideology of social and economic justice is based on the ideals of social democracy and state socialism, both of which were intended to eliminate social and economic disparity in India.

His Vision on Social Justice and Social Reforms

According to DIAS, justice is a process, a complex and fluid balance between various aspects that cannot be captured in a formula once and for all. Justice's tasks include "justly allocating advantages and disadvantages, preventing abuse of authority, preventing abuse of liberty, justly deciding disputes, and adapting to change," which are guaranteed by numerous rules in the form of articles and acts. (Rawl's, 2002). According to utilitarian theory, social justice is one of the elements of justice that stands for fraternity, with the goal of creating human social conditions that ensure the free and equal development of all people (Khan, 2001). In addition to the above-mentioned conceptions of justice, Ambedkar promoted social justice ideals based on equality, liberty, and fraternity. Ambedkar denounced the current caste-based system and the atrocities perpetrated against the dalit minority. As a result, he began working for the protection of Dalit rights and the advancement of Dalit status. He began practicing law in Bombay in 1924 and formed the Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha (Depressed Class Institute) to help Dalits. He began his movement and championed the Dalit cause from that point forward. He awoke the dalit conscience to

struggle for the abolition of dalit discrimination; to demand equal treatment, status, and opportunity; and to equally enjoy all civil, political, social, and economic rights, as well as respect for human dignity. He was regarded as a campaigner for Dalit human rights in India (Makwana, 1992). Apart from that, Ambedkar was a strong advocate for women's rights. He condemned the verna system for subjugating not only Dalits but even women. He questioned the Manu Smriti (Laws of Manu), a Brahminic Hinduism law book (Dharam-Shastra) attributed to Manu, the legendary first man and lawgiver. He urged Dalits to join Buddhism in order to free themselves from Hindu oppression. As a result, he fought for the right to choose one's religion.

Social Justice and Social Reform are Intertwined

To understand the relationship between Social Justice and Social Reforms, it is necessary to describe the numerous Social Reforms and Social Movements that emphasized the construction and transformation of a society free of all types of inequities. Ambedkar was India's most prominent human rights fighter in the twentieth century, not only condemning the existing caste system but also proposing (Vasant Moon) several methods and rules that built the groundwork for social, economic, and political fairness in the country. To protect the rights of dalits, he used a variety of methods. Ambedkar began a fight against dalit prejudice by influencing public opinion through his works in many publications, including Mook Nayak, Bahishkrit Bharat, and Equality Janta, which he founded to promote dalit rights (Joseph, 2009). He also started other activities; one of the most well-known Dalit fights was the Vaikom Satyagraha in Travancore, Maharashtra, which proclaimed the Dalits' right to freely worship in Hindu temples. The Dalit rally was organized by Ambedkar to assert their legal entitlement to draw water from the Chowdar tank. Workers' and peasant's rights were championed by Ambedkar. In the late 1920s and especially in the 1930s, when he founded his Independent Labour Party, he championed the cause of tenants in Maharashtra's Konkan region

(both dalit Mahars and caste Hindu Kunbis) (Joseph, 2009). In light of the foregoing, it is clear that Ambedkar was a strong fighter for the cause of dalits, fighting tirelessly for their rights and highlighting the economic exploitation they experienced. He believed that, in order to uplift dalits and socially integrate them into mainstream society, all sorts of social evils that exist in Indian society must be eradicated, and Ambedkar advised social reforms as a sequence of positive activities to attain equality, liberty, and fraternity in India.

In the Modern Era, Vision of Dr. Ambedkar

Within the context of contemporary social, political, and economic issues, Ambedkar's perspective and far-sighted ideas on Just Society are extremely relevant, in the sense that every government scheme and initiative emphasizes benefits for all, ensuring equal distribution of wealth and resources to all sections of society. For example, the Right to Education Act of 2009, the National Food Security Act of 2013, and the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) of 2014, to name a few. Apart from that, international organizations such as the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations, non-governmental organisations around the world, and UNICEF have taken steps to enable people to live in dignity by eradicating poverty and hunger, as well as improving health, education, and sanitation. Furthermore, Fundamental Rights (for example, Articles 14–18 of the Indian Constitution) are still relevant today because many Supreme Court decisions have been based on these Fundamental Rights and have been interpreted by the Supreme Court from time to time. It should be emphasized that there are some flaws in the plans put in place for the welfare of society, particularly for the downtrodden and women, who are regarded the second sex and the most vulnerable members of society. However, these schemes have played an outstanding role in benefiting the marginalized sections of society to a greater extent, as well as making them aware of their rights, and will continue to benefit future generations.

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