Views of Ambedkar on Social Change and Reform

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Abstract:- Ambedkar dedicated his life to the removal of untouchability and the promotion of untouchables in society. From 1924 to the end of his life, he was the leader of the untouchable movement. He was certain that the nation's progress could not be realised unless untouchability was abolished first. According to Ambedkar, untouchability was linked to the abolition of the caste system, which could only be accomplished by removing religious notions from the system's base. As a result, as part of his critique of the caste system, he examined and criticised Hindu religious philosophy. He did it bravely, often in the face of orthodox Hindus' vehement objections. This paper focuses on Ambedkar's thoughts on social reform.

Keywords:- social change, social reform, constitutional morality, caste and untouchability.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ambedkar was named Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly of India in 1947. Hi5's contribution in this function has become legendary. The drafting of the Indian Constitution was supported by Ambedkar's legal expertise and understanding of many countries' constitutional rules. The process was facilitated by his strong dedication to a democratic constitution and his focus on constitutional morality. In this way, he is rightfully regarded as the architect of the Indian Constitution. The Indian Constitution is a vast constitution with many administrative provisions (for example, provisions concerning the Public Service Commission, Attorney General, Comptroller and Auditor General, and so on). Ambedkar, on the other hand, justified the inclusion of such facts. He claimed that in a traditional civilization, we have established a democratic political structure. Unscrupulous rulers in the future may misuse the constitution without officially violating it if all specifics are not included.

As a result, the constitution may continue to function formally, but its true purpose may be defeated. The simplest way to avoid this is to write down all relevant facts and bind future rulers to these specifications. Such precautions are critical in a society with a shaky democratic tradition. This demonstrates Ambedkar's commitment to the rule of law. He believed that a government should be constitutional, and that the constitution should be treated as a sacred document. In constitutional politics, extra-parliamentary activities had no place. He also placed a premium on the evolution of constitutional standards and governmental policies that are in line with the constitution. Fundamental rights, a strong central government, and minority protection are among Dr. Ambedkar's most significant contributions to the Indian Constitution.

Fundamental rights, according to Ambedkar, are the most significant aspect of the constitution. However, simply mentioning these rights is insufficient. The promise of constitutional protection for fundamental rights is what makes them truly fundamental. Ambedkar was proud of Article 32 of the Indian Constitution, which provides judicial protection for basic rights. When rights are preserved in this way, they become genuine and meaningful. India required a strong central government, the constituent parliament unanimously agreed. Bhimrao Ambedkar stated this perspective of view. However, unlike the others, his major purpose for advocating for a strong central authority was different. He described India as a caste-ridden country where the top castes had always treated the lower castes unfairly. He was concerned that casteism would gain strength at the local and provincial levels. At these levels of government, casteist pressures would be easy to come by, and the lower castes would be vulnerable to higher caste persecution.

These pressures would have less of an impact on the national government. Local governments would take a more liberal posture. Lower castes can only be protected by a strong central government based on Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Colonialism, Cast Order, and Tribal Societies. This was Ambedkar's fundamental rationale for creating a strong central government. He was well aware that India's minority communities were the most vulnerable. In India, a communal or caste majority had a tendency to become a political majority as well. As a result, a caste minority will also be a political minority. It will be the target of political and social harassment. In such a case, the democratic rule of "one man, one vote" will not suffice. In India, we require some assurance that minorities will have a say in power.

Minority groups should be allowed to vote for their representatives. These representatives' opinions must be completely respected. Ambedkar tried to add a number of safeguards for minorities, such as particular executive branch participation. Among other things, he was successful in obtaining legislative provisions for political reservations as well as the appointment of a special official for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Commissioner) under Article 338. If not for the unwillingness of the constituent assembly's majority, he would have adopted many more safeguards. What's crucial here is Dr. Ambedkar's notion that democracy is more than just majority rule, and that in order for democracy to be genuine, caste and community minority must be fully protected? In other terms, he was opposed to the 'Majoritarianism Syndrome.' The focus of this paper is on Ambedkar's views on social reform.

II. PERSPECTIVES OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Ambedkar worked tirelessly for the abolition of untouchability and the material advancement of untouchables. He led the untouchable's movement from 1924 to the end of his life. He was certain that the nation's progress could not be realised without first eliminating untouchability. Untouchability, according to Ambedkar, was tied to the abolition of the caste system, which could only be achieved by removing religious conceptions from the caste system's foundation. As a result, he researched and criticised Hindu religious thought as part of his analysis of the caste system. He did it courageously, frequently in the face of severe opposition from orthodox Hindus.

III. SOCIAL REFORM AS A PRIORITY

Dr. Ambedkar's first objective was always social improvement. Economic and political problems, he argued, should be handled only after the goal of social justice had been attained. If political liberation is prioritised, power will be transferred from foreign rulers to Hindus of upper castes, who are also far from the lower castes. According to Ambedkar, the belief that economic prosperity will address all social issues was likewise unfounded. Castepsrn is the Hindus' expression of mental slavery. They become insensitive as a result of it. As a result, no true reform could occur unless the evil of casteism was eradicated. In our society, social reform was a prerequisite for revolutionary transformation.

Reform of the family structure and religion reform were two aspects of social reform. Abolition of traditions such as child marriage, for example, was part of the family reform. Because it involved women's empowerment, this was crucial. Reforms to marriage and divorce laws, for example, would help women who were subjected to the same oppression as the untouchables. In Indian society, Ambedkar was a prominent opponent of women's oppression. He believed that women had a right to education and that they deserved to be treated similarly to men. He regretted the fact that women were denied the right to possess property under Hinduism. In the Hindu Code Bill that he authored, he made sure that women were given a share of the property. While organising the untouchables, he continually urged women from the untouchable community to come forward and participate in social and political campaigns.

IV. THE CASTE ASSAULT

The caste system was Ambedkar's major opponent. Hindu society had become stagnant due of caste. Hindu civilization is unwilling to tolerate foreigners due to the caste structure. This flaw creates long-term integration issues. Even within itself, Hindu society fails to meet the criteria for being homogeneous. It's just a mash-up of several castes. Caste is a barrier to the development of national pride. Most notably, the caste system discriminates against the lower castes. It prevents the lower castes from progressing. Lower castes are treated with contempt. As a result, the lower castes' morale has deteriorated and they have become demoralised. Untouchables, in particular, are a constant target of injustice; they are denied education, respectable work, and human dignity. They have been utterly dehumanised by the caste system. The thought that a single human being's touch might taint another exemplifies the caste system's extreme inequality and violence. As a result, the fight to end untouchability becomes a fight for human rights and justice.

V. UNTOUCHABILITY AND CASTE ORIGINS

In religious scriptures, the caste system and the practise of untouchability are justified. People belonging to the untouchable society were frequently regarded by Hindus to be of non-Aryan ancestry, to be of humble descent, to be unable, and so on. Ambedkar intended to dispel these myths and instill self-respect in the untouchables. He studied Hindu scriptures and old Hindu civilization extensively for this aim. He debunked several myths concerning untouchability in his books 'Who Were the Shudras?' and 'The Untouchables.' He attempted to prove the origins of untouchability through intellectual inquiry and interpretation. He claimed that there were just three Varnas in the beginning: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas. The Shudras were a powerful tribe who belonged to the Kshatriya Varna. Due to a struggle between the Shudras and the Brahmins, who denied them the rights of Upnayana, sacrifice, and monarchy, the Shudras were relegated from Kshatriya status. As a result, the Shudras were demoted to Varna 4, behind the other three. He demonstrates how the Shudras' death was brought about by the Brahmins' religious and ritual supremacy.

This reveals the overwhelming supremacy of the Brahmin Varna in ancient society. Untouchability was also a result of Brahmin supremacy. Untouchability was the result of the battle between Brahminism and Buddhism. According to Ambedkar, the untouchables were not originally non-Aryans. Indeed, he asserts that Indian society is a mash-up of several nationalities. As a result, he offers a sociological rebuttal to the idea that the untouchables were members of a lower or vanquished race. Originally, there were several unresolved tribes. They got into a fight with other nomadic tribes. The members of these roaming tribes were scattered after they were conquered. These dispersed individuals eventually formed bonds with numerous stable tribes. Their standing, however, remained subservient to that of the established tribes. As a result, the wanderers became outsiders.

The problem of religion, and then beef eating, sparked the next phase of confrontation between these foreigners and the settled tribes. To meet the challenge of Buddhism, Brahminism adopted perfect nonviolence, complete abstinence of meat-eating, and deification of the cow, according to Ambedkar. Outsider Buddhists used to eat the meat of deceased animals, especially cows. They were excommunicated by settled tribes ruled by Brahmins because they refused to give up meat.. Later on, religious scriptures were used to justify the excommunication. As a result, untouchability became a hallowed component of religion.

VI. FINAL THOUGHTS

Although some of Ambedkar's views have been questioned, no one can deny that untouchability existed before becoming a component of religion. Furthermore, Ambedkar's study has achieved the most important purpose of restoring dignity to the lower castes and untouchables. He persuaded them that their past was not a source of shame, that their heritage was not deplorable or shameful. He persuaded them that their low status was the result of a societal process influenced by Brahminism, rather than any impairment on their side. Above all, his interpretations persuaded everyone that a closer examination of Hinduism's religious roots was required.

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