



## Dr. B.R.Ambedkar's Philosophy of Education - A Study

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**Abstract:** *It is quite evident that Mahatma Jotiba Phule was the first one who raised the issue of education for depressed and backward sections of Indian society before Huntur Commission. The next one was none other than Dr B.R.Ambedkar, the chief architect of Indian constitution. His ideas on education are so valuable and relevant for Indian Society forever. His thrust for 'deliverance through education' was considered as chief precept of his philosophy. Unfortunately the current system of education is largely profitable as well as amicable to dominant classes in society. Ambedkar advocated for a sea change in this system of education. In this paper a humble attempt is made to study the philosophical contribution of Ambedkar on the purpose and objectives of education.*

**Key Words:** *Depressed Classes, Deliverance, System of Education, Philosophy.*

### 1. Introduction

Dr. B.R Ambedkar was among the most outstanding intellectuals of India in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Paul Baran, an eminent, Marxist economist, had made a distinction in one of his essays between an Intellect worker and an intellectual. The Former, according to him, is one who uses his intellect for making a living whereas the latter is one who uses it for critical analysis and social transformation. Dr. Ambedkar fits Baran's definition of an intellectual very well. Dr. Ambedkar was also an outstanding example of what Antonio Gramsci called an organic intellectual, that was one who represent and articulate the interests of an entire social classes. The celebrated economist and noble laureate Dr. Amartya Sen adored him with these words in an interview : "Dr. Ambedkar is my father in economics and he was true celebrated champion of the underprivileged". He was a determined fighter and a critical scholar and secured the highest academic

honours from the most prestigious universities in the world. He had made significant efforts to lead the society on the democratic path of liberty, equality and fraternity.

The trio-slogan of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, 'Educate, Agitate and Organise' was not merely the slogan but infact it embodied the ideological basis of Ambedkar's movement itself. His philosophy of education chiefly advocated an educational system which serves all sections of Indian society. He thought that the present education system couldn't yield desirable results because of its diversion from the real social scenario. It is the dream of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar that every educational institute from secondary school to University College should be developed to become an agency of social change.

### 2. HIS PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:

Education has been seen as conducting an emancipating role in each



person's life. The Current education system has drawn inspiration from opinions which are cultured and nurtured from the authoritative powers of the domination classes. Ambedkar was an impeccable leader, who took up the leadership to light the lamp of enlightenment. With his immense reading and clarity of thought and arguments. (Sirswal, 2011). It is unfortunate to realize that Ambedkar's opinions and perceptions on education were largely neglected in the independent India. Since 1920, when he was actively became a part of public platform till his death in 1956, Dr. B.R Ambedkar had constantly been on the forefront of the movement to eradicate the birth based oppression where the basic amenities like education, health and opportunities to grow were out rightly rejected to certain classes in Indian society.

Through his speeches, books and actions Ambedkar had tried to explain the pathetic social situation and raised the consciousness of Dalits and other under privileged sections and awakened them to the possibilities of establishing a society in which they could live like equals(Valeskar,2012). When we look at the term equality, it could be interpreted in various ways – how it has appeared in the constitution; from sections concerning welfare, justice to education are alike. Equality in every aspect was explained so comprehensively in the constitution Taking the example of the National Council for Education and Research (NCERT) and how it's information brochure elaborately explains "equitable space for all". It says like this.

"Across the country, enormous strides towards establishing schools within the reach of every habitation have been

made. Attempts to put larger number of children through schooling have proved to be successful. But pockets of children still remain to be reached – children from the socially weaker sections, those belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes, those belonging to the minority groups, and particularly girls, in each of these groups. The need of the hour is to identify the extraordinary socio-cultural circumstances which restrict these children from accessing schools".

Here we need to understand the purpose of education. When Ambedkar talked about knowledge, he lists two purposes of knowledge: first, to acquire to for betterment of others and secondly to use it for one's own betterment. The latter is pursued by a larger circle of people than the former From this we could conclude that the realization of existence is not the only valid standpoint, but the realization of struggled existence of the "other" is also important. For example, when there is violence from the upper castes on lower castes then the depressed caste groups assert their existence which also shows their existence for the dominant caste. Ambedkar has also argued against professional learning which aims at creating a clerical nature of workers, inculcation a non-questioning attitude as the objective of learning. Ambedkar had explained the importance of education in his written testimony before the University Reform Committee set up by the Municipal Government regarding Mumbai University reforms. He discussed various issues related to education and also the reasons for the failure of the education system in our society.

Dr. Ambedkar challenged the notion of accepting unchallenged notions of



society. He opened, the division of the pre-degree education and the post-degree education and the post-degree education meant the partition of education and research from each other which itself proved that when the research was separated from education then the former is blatantly suffered. Ambedkar thought that one had to identify three components as objectives of education for the policy formulation in India.

- 1) Reshaping the aims and purpose of education.
- 2) Education as an instrument of substantive equality,
- 3) Women`s education as an instrument of national progress.

He had recognized education as the major tool of the discriminated masses to stand up and claim their basic rights. Where the base of education would provide rational, strength and the perseverance which distinguishes between truth and cultured opinions. Education formed the fundamental part of his eloquent speeches and messages, making us perceive his early understanding of it as a fundamental right and also as the major tool of rebellion among the discriminated. Ambedkar`s speeches many a times mentioned the transformative nature of education and its role in the progress of world civilizations. Being from a community which was socially excluded and disregarded throughout so many centuries, his thoughts and ideas were largely misunderstood by fellow leaders with narrow outlook. He thought that "education is something which ought to be brought within the reach of every one....the policy therefore ought to be to make higher education as cheap to the lower classes as it can possibly be made.

If all these communities are to be brought to the level of equality, then the only remedy is to adopt the principle of equality and to give favoured treatment to those who are below level". He also felt that "spread of education should be a proper function of the University. But this can't be achieved unless the University adopts vernacular as the medium of instruction, which in the present circumstances is a far cry.

### 3. Conclusion:

Ambedkar had a deep understanding on the role of modern education and in the contemporary times. His contribution towards education and his vision towards it would be treated timeless. Ambedkar realized that education would be given top priority for the growth of both society and the individuals. He thought that the character of the nation would be uplifted through educated masses. He also saw education as something that can bring radical changes in the oppressed sections of Indian society.

He felt that teachers and the trainers also need to establish a bond with students and they were instrument all in promoting the objectives of self – actualization and a just society, he added. He said that "I am very fond of teaching profession. A great lot of the future of this country must necessarily depends on the students of the country. And he strongly felt the purpose of education is to modernize and socialize the people. To deny certain sections in society the right to education is to create a situation full of injustice. In the regard he was so critical of Hindu society which gave importance to Manu Dharma. Ambedkar was the strong proponent of Democratic values. He was always stressed the need for religion that teaches liberty, equality and



fraternity. He had no second opinion to proclaim that higher education is the panacea of our social troubles.

He declared openly that "if you believe in living a respectable life, you believe in self help which is the best help. It is possible only through education. Like Martin Luther king, he also had a dream that one day we would live in a nation where the citizens 'will not be judged by colour of their skin but by the content of their character'. His philosophy of education always would revolve around this basic perception.

Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol.3. issue.3.

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