

A STUDY OF DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR'S OPINION ON EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This article is about Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's positive vision of education, which is that education can rebuild society on the principles of equality and justice. While studying the development of education in Indian society, he found that during the Peshwa rule in Maharashtra and even before the British rule, the right to education was limited to the upper castes. He fought for the education of the common people without discrimination on the basis of caste and gender. The education department is not a department that can be given in return, but education should be made available in all possible ways and as cheap as possible. He actively participated in the debates on the Bombay University Act and the Primary Education Amendment Bill, and gave his opinion on education reforms. He repeatedly argued with the government that it was his responsibility to provide equal educational opportunities to all without discrimination, however, boys and girls should receive different education. This article will help you understand Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's view on education with a uniform education system in India.

Key Words: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Opinion of Education

INTRODUCTION

Ambedkar believed that the reconstruction of society is possible only through education and that education enlightens the downtrodden masses to attain social status, economic improvement and political freedom. B.R. Ambedkar, the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India, devoted his intellectual, social and political efforts to expressing his belief in "Sarvena Bhavantu Sukhinah Sarve Santhu Niramayah" meaning the welfare of all and fought throughout his life to ensure that the discriminated, deprived and downtrodden sections of our society get their

rightful place. Ambedkar made several attempts to establish an egalitarian society in India and this has been widely discussed by various scholars, but Dr. B.R. Ambedkar can be defined as a great educationist. Ambedkar also tried to achieve this objective through his educational scheme and these are discussed at length in this article.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to the field of education.
2. To explore the changes in the lifestyle of the marginalized people of the society through his contribution to the field of education.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted from secondary sources of existing literature through historical, analytical methods. The method is to analyze concepts and arguments, synthesize ideas and evidence obtained from different sources, construct consistent and well-supported arguments, discuss the issue in a balanced manner, evaluate the ideas and arguments of others, make judgments and express an informed opinion.

VISION OF EDUCATION BY DR BR AMBEDKAR

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's vision for education was defined by a never-ending pursuit of equality, social justice, and empowerment. He felt that education might revolutionize society and empower marginalized populations, notably Dalits. Ambedkar emphasized equal access to education for all people, regardless of caste, creed, or socioeconomic background.

Ambedkar's educational vision aims to propagate enlightened ideas among the people in order to rebuild society on the values of liberty, equality, fraternity, and justice. In the words of Ambedkar, "Education is a weapon of creation of mental and educational development, a weapon of eradication of social slavery of economic development of political freedom".

The major element of his educational philosophy is to instill the ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity, justice, and moral integrity in peoples of all backgrounds. Ambedkar was not only the man of age and the builder of the structure, but also the founder of a new social order for the benefit of the oppressed.

Ambedkar understands that education is a prerequisite for the reconstruction of society on the ideals of liberty, equality, and brotherhood. He considered education not just as a method of acquiring knowledge, but also as a tool for combating societal inequities and prejudice.

Furthermore, he emphasized the value of higher education in preparing people to be leaders and change agents in their communities. Overall, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's vision for education continues to motivate efforts to provide comprehensive and fair educational opportunities for all people, in keeping with his values of social justice and empowerment.

FIVE KEY PRINCIPLES EMPHASISED BY DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

Be Educated: Ambedkar placed a high value on education. He was convinced that education was the route to freedom from social and economic oppression. Ambedkar himself exemplified education's transformational effect, rising from terrible poverty and discrimination to become one of the most educated people of his time. He argued for universal access to education, particularly for marginalized groups like Dalits, as a way of empowerment and social upliftment.

Be Agitated: Ambedkar understood the importance of agitation or activism in confronting repressive regimes and creating change. He encouraged people, particularly those from marginalized communities, to use nonviolent protest and activity to express their rights and demand justice. Ambedkar led various initiatives and campaigns against caste-based discrimination and inequality, employing agitation to increase awareness and mobilize support for social reforms.

Be Agitated: Ambedkar recognized the role of agitation or activism in challenging oppressive governments and effecting change. He encouraged individuals, particularly those from marginalized areas, to utilize nonviolent protest and action to assert their rights and demand justice. Ambedkar spearheaded several projects and campaigns against caste-based injustice and unfairness, using agitation to raise awareness and generate support for social changes.

Be Confident: Confidence was another factor that Ambedkar emphasized as critical to individual and societal development. He inspired marginalized communities to believe in their own strengths and worth, despite the widespread persecution they

experienced. Ambedkar held that self-confidence was essential for opposing oppression and establishing one's rights in society.

Never Give Up: Ambedkar respected persistence and resilience. Despite countless hurdles and setbacks throughout his life, he remained committed to social justice and equality. Ambedkar's dedication and perseverance in the face of adversity have inspired innumerable people who are fighting injustice and oppression. This principle emphasizes the value of endurance in the pursuit of social change and liberty.

EDUCATIONAL VISION BY DR B.R AMBEDKAR

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's concept of education was founded on the goal of social justice, equality, and empowerment.

As a strong supporter of the rights of marginalized populations, notably Dalits, Ambedkar saw education as a potent tool for liberation from the repressive caste system. His worldview emphasized universal access to education, regardless of caste, gender, or socioeconomic background, and he advocated for the elimination of barriers that prevented marginalized people from pursuing knowledge.

Ambedkar felt that education had the potential to transform societal structures by opposing discriminatory practices and promoting a more inclusive and egalitarian society. He advocated for a curriculum that encouraged critical thinking, rationalism, and ethical leadership while instilling students with a sense of social duty.

Furthermore, Ambedkar supported affirmative action policies such as reservations in educational institutions, seeing them as necessary steps towards addressing historical injustices and promoting social inclusion. Overall, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's vision of education continues to motivate attempts to create inclusive and equitable educational institutions that maintain the concepts of justice, dignity, and empowerment for all people.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational initiatives and advocacy

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's educational initiatives and advocacy were central to his mission of empowering marginalized communities, particularly Dalits, through education. Recognizing education as a powerful vehicle for social reform, Ambedkar fought diligently to extend educational possibilities and confront the caste-based inequality that pervades Indian society.

Ambedkar also pushed for affirmative action programs, such as reservations in educational institutions and government jobs, to correct historical injustices and promote social inclusion. His efforts were intended not just at providing access to education for people from marginalized backgrounds, but also at empowering them to resist repressive social institutions and claim their rights. Ambedkar's legacy in educational projects and activism continues to inspire movements for educational reform and social justice, acting as a light of hope for oppressed people seeking equal opportunities and dignity.

Educational Institutions founded by DR Ambedkar

One of his most prominent institutions is the People's Education Society (PES), which he created in 1945 in Bombay (now Mumbai). The PES sought to provide educational opportunities for pupils from impoverished homes, regardless of caste or creed. Under Ambedkar's leadership, the PES created schools, colleges, and hostels to provide academic and vocational courses to students who had previously been denied educational opportunities owing to societal discrimination.

Another major institution built by Ambedkar is the Siddharth College of Arts and Science in Bombay, established in 1946. Ambedkar also formed the People's Improvement Trust in 1945, which constructed the Siddharth Law College in Bombay to provide legal education to aspiring lawyers from marginalized areas. On June 14, 1928, he established the Depressed Classes Education Society in Bombay, also known as Dalit Education Society in Marathi. He established hostels in Panvel, Thane, Nasik, Pune, and Dharwad for Dalit high school students, promoting education among untouchables. A number of educational establishments were soon established under the support of PES, including the Milind Mahavidyalaya in Aurangabad in 1950, the Siddharth Night School in 1947, the Siddharth College of Commerce and Economics in 1953, the Milind Multipurpose High School in 1955, and the Siddharth College of Law in 1956.

Ambedkar established the "Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha" on July 20, 1924. These educational institutions, founded by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, continue to serve as symbols of his commitment to social justice and empowerment through education, allowing generations of students from marginalized backgrounds to reach their full potential and contribute to the country's progress.

Roots in Social Justice

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, a prominent figure in India's struggle for social justice, was deeply influenced by his experiences as a member of the Dalit community. He became the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, a testament to his commitment to eradicating caste-based discrimination and advocating for the rights and upliftment of the oppressed. Ambedkar's educational philosophy was deeply rooted in his experiences with caste-based discrimination and systemic injustices in Indian society. He believed that education could liberate marginalized sections of society from caste oppression by allowing them to critically engage with their sociopolitical reality and fight for their rights and dignity. Ambedkar's advocacy for educational reforms aimed at dismantling caste-based discrimination within educational institutions and promoting social inclusion remains a cornerstone of his legacy. His writings, speeches, and activism challenged the entrenched caste hierarchy, envisioning an educational system that nurtured equality, social justice, and human dignity for all.

International Perspectives

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's commitment to learning from diverse sources and applying these insights to India's struggle for social justice and equality is evident in his engagement with international educational movements and thinkers. Despite being deeply rooted in the Indian socio-political landscape, Ambedkar's international perspective was pragmatic, seeking inspiration from oppressed communities worldwide. He exposed himself to various ideologies and methodologies, including John Dewey's progressive educational theories and Paulo Freire's liberation pedagogy. These encounters broadened his understanding of education as a tool for emancipation and societal transformation. Ambedkar actively sought to internationalize the discourse on caste oppression and social justice, collaborating with scholars and activists worldwide to highlight the universality of the struggle against discrimination. His ideas on democratization of education, affirmative action, and the recognition of social identities as integral to educational equity resonated with movements for civil rights and social justice worldwide. Ambedkar's legacy continues to inspire scholars and activists worldwide, demonstrating the enduring relevance of his internationalist vision in the pursuit of a more just and inclusive society.

Legacy and Contemporary relevance

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's legacy in education is profound and multifaceted. His advocacy for equal access to education, particularly for marginalized communities, has significantly influenced educational policies in India and beyond. His ideas have led to the inclusion of affirmative action measures, such as reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, in educational institutions and government employment. His emphasis on critical thinking, rationality, and individual agency has shaped educational practices, inspiring educators to prioritize holistic development and empowerment over rote learning.

Ambedkar's educational philosophy continues to resonate in contemporary debates on education and social equity, providing a framework for addressing persistent inequities in access, quality, and outcomes. His vision of education as a means of liberation and empowerment remains relevant in the face of ongoing challenges such as caste-based discrimination, unequal distribution of educational resources, and commodification of education.

Access to education

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was a prominent advocate for equal access to education, recognizing it as a key to social emancipation and empowerment. He worked tirelessly to break down barriers faced by marginalized communities, particularly Dalits and women, in accessing quality education. Ambedkar established schools tailored to Dalit children, providing a nurturing environment free from caste-based discrimination. He also initiated scholarship programs to enable economically disadvantaged students from marginalized backgrounds to pursue higher education. His advocacy extended beyond formal schooling, promoting literacy and awareness through social and cultural initiatives. His vision was to create a conducive environment for intellectual growth and empowerment. Dr. Ambedkar's tireless efforts aimed to dismantle systemic barriers that perpetuated inequality and exclusion in education, laying the foundation for a more inclusive and equitable society.

CONCLUSION

Ambedkar deliberately included Article 45 in the Directive Principles of State Policy, stating that "the State shall endeavor to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to the completion of the age of fourteen years within a period of ten

years from the commencement of this Constitution". The Government of India has passed the Right to Education Act, 2008 and has paid a great tribute to Ambedkar's contributions to mass education. The Government's policy of universalization of primary education, with a special focus on marginalized groups, poor sections and the girl child, increasing enrolment in secondary education and the commitment to expanding educational facilities will empower and equip the youth to face the future with hope and confidence. There are several challenges to fulfilling Ambedkar's vision of universal education. There is a need to formulate such policies from the primary to higher levels that will help realize Ambedkar's vision.

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