



DALIT MOVEMENT IN INDIA: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Dr. Rajendra Prasad N. L.

**Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology,
Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadevaraya university Ballari , Karnataka.**

ABSTRACT

The Dalit movement is considered as one of the significant social movement of this era. This movement started to bring social, economic and political changes among the dalits of this region. It's a dissent against the merciless ill-treatment by the upper class of the society for ages. The dalits were lonely disjointed, fragmented and exploited by the domination of the upper caste people of the society and by their culture.

KEYWORDS: *Dalit movement , social, economic and political changes.*



INTRODUCTION

After independence and after introduction of the constitution in the country the dalit community started to enjoy the liberty and freedom in the sphere of some of the fields of the citizens of this country. Such as , the new social welfare policy of the country, new education , new judicial system and such other democratic philosophical administration of the country facilitated the dalits of the country to enjoy this freedom. Ruman Sutradhar (2014), in his article states that the dalit movement in India emphasizes the rights and civilian liberties to the dalits in India. The prime aim of the Dalit movement in India is to make a society with social justice and equality.

This movement is considered to be as revolution because, after independence, not much could be observed in the social life of the society, than it is came to know that only the implementation of laws with social justice intention is not sufficient to bring social change. The movement is required to bring change in the social structure of the society. The author also mentioned that not only the social equality is enough for bringing social change as this population was deprived of economic issues like owning property and so forth. The inclusion of this class of people in the economic sphere of life is also one of the parts of this social revolution. In total inclusive growth is needed. For all these only law, and or enforcement is not sufficient, the awareness among the individuals who suffered from the ages and the movement is required. As such the Dalit movements started with the help of Dalit organizations and at the same time literature related to the movement and the awareness is created and is circulated among the people. The circulation was in the form of songs and these songs are called as Revolutionary songs (Kranti geetegal). For this purpose the people started forming some organizations of Dalits by different names. These organizations starts hesitating and protesting whenever the dalits faced social problems in the society and whenever the issue of dalit raises in the society and in some of the cases

against the government pressuring the government to protect the said community. These movements are recognized and called as the dalit movements in the society.

Normally the scheduled caste and the scheduled tribes are called as dalits. In the wider sense even some of the most backward castes are also considered and called as dalits. In the recent years in Karnataka the community people are against the use of dalit name and they pressurize to call as scheduled caste and scheduled tribes and not as dalits. But here in the present study the concept dalit is used to recognize the both scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people.

The concept of dalit is used for number of different caste groups who comes under the category of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes. In this present context the concept dalit is used for scheduled caste castes. In the different parts of the country and even in different parts of the state of Karnataka, the dalit castes are named as Holeya, Panchama, Chandala, AadiKarnataka, samagara, chammara and such other different castes more particularly the untouchable castes are named in this category and such caste people are involved in this movement.

Ruman Sutradar in his article writes that, the movement of dalits against Brahmins is not successful. As the Brahmins are deep rooted in the society the protest and the movement of dalits against Brahmins is not successful. The caste system is so institutionalized that its very difficult to break that institution and get success in the movement. The institutional process is so strong that most of the people have accepted the inequity.

Initially the literature on the dalit movement was found in the Maharashtra state and the literature was in the Marathi language and gradually the literature on the dalit movements and the revolutionary songs started in Kannada language also. More particularly the dalit poet Sri Siddalingaiah was one of the famous poets of the era and his revolutionary song accelerated the dalit movement to an successful end of that era.

At this time several social activists, social and religious groups in the society also tried to create awareness among all sections of the society regarding the untouchable problem and other such ill social practices. In this movement number of saints and social reformers, leaders of the political parties from both dalit and non dalit community tried to eradicate the social evils in the society (Kshirsagar 1994). Srinivas (1977) in his study mentioned about the process of sanskritization which according to him makes easy for eradicating such social evils.

G.S.Ghure (1969) in his study mentioned the caste discrimination and the discrimination which is related to the untouchable system. The discrimination is against women not to wear upper cloths and discrimination against men not to wear dhotis as the forward community people wear. In this way the discrimination against dalits is in all walks of life.

Further Andre Betielle (1969,1991) in the study mentioned the significant drawback of the dalit movement in India. The author mentioned that most of the movements are politically backed movement, no proper concern regarding the discrimination against dalits in the society. In his opinion in the recent years the caste discrimination and untouchability is not as it was in the earlier days. Its because of casteless occupations in the modern world. Modern education, modern transport facilities and such other modern day today activities are not supporting the earlier untouchability in society.

Gail Omvet (1999) in her study mentioned the stages of the dalit movement mobilization. Further she mentioned that the dalit movements should be studied from multidimensional angle. As the issue cannot be understood from the single perspective and the issue includes multiple issues also. Further she describes that the dalits in India require Dr. B R Ambedkar than the Gandhi.

M S A Rao in his book entitled Social Movements in India (1979) tries to equate the dalit movements in India with the social movements of blacks in America.

These are the some of the initial and important writings on the dalit movements in India. In the recent years vast studies are conducted and a vast literature on the dalit movements are to be found in India.

POST INDEPENDENT DALIT MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Dr. B.R.Ambedkars contribution to the dalit movement is pioneering one. Without his contribution to the constitution of India and his conversion to Buddhist religion has made the path to the dalit movement in India. As Ambedkar became the nation's first law minister the life of not only dalit but also all the downtrodden people of the country changed. His contributions through formation of constitution of India have boosted the life of the dalits in India. He introduced the reservation for education, job and reservation in the assemblies and the parliaments. These contributions made efforts to eradicate the social, economic, and political discrimination in the country. This is the root for the dalit movement in India. He was very much convinced of the Hindu religion and tried to eradicate the caste system by joining himself and his great followers to the Buddhist religion. Now the percentage of the Buddhist religion following population is increasing.

Dalit Panthers.

Namdev Dhasal and J V Pawar are the founder of this movement,. This is a neo social movement, which was started in Maharashtra. This movement is started with the Ambedkar's Philosophy as their principle policy. This is a social organization founded to fight against the caste discrimination.

The followers of this movement have strengthened the use of the term Dalit movement to this movement. Kumar (2016) in his work has mentioned that this movement was a radical departure from earlier dalit movement in the county. This movement has given the radical identity to the dalit movement in the country.

Kanshiram and Dalit Movement,

Kanshiramji formed a political party by name Bahujana Samaja Parth (BSP) through this political party Kanshiramji made an effort to get the political powers to the dalits. The name of the political party of Sri Kanshiramji indicates it as the party of the Scheduled caste, Scheduled tribes and the Other Backward Class and also of the religious minorities. The followers of the Bahujana Samaja Party all are inspired by the philosophy of Buddha and Dr.Ambedkar, Sri Narayanaguru, Jyotiba Phule, Periyar and such other philosophers. The focus of the Sri Kanshiramaji and the BSP party is to uplift the dalits, backward class and minority people with the principal to make the social transformation. This party has made tremendous changes in the northern part of the country.

Dalit Sangharsha Samiti

Dalita Sangharsha Samiti was took into shape in Karnataka in the year 1974. Since then it played and playing significant role in the Karnataka's political, social and cultural sphere of life. Back to history in brief it was started in the VISL Bhadravati Shivamogga. The issue was of pouring tea to the scheduled caste labours of the VISL. The issue was untouchability. Prof Krishnappa was then working as professor in Bhdravarti. Because of his inspiration and the organization the organization took a shape of movement in Karnataka.

During this period Karnataka state social life was suffering with many of the social problems. Under this organization and many organizations many protests taken up in Karnataka. DSS played significant role in shaping the dalit movement in Karnataka during that period. This organization registered in the year 1974 under the aegis of Prof. Krishnappa.

During this period Karnataka experienced many battles, protests against the problem of untouchability and such other problems of suppressed class of people.

DSS not only made protests and battles against the problems and issues, at the same time DSS organized seminars, workshops to the depressed class to create awareness.

Many protests were organized on the state level, local level and national level issues. The concern of the DSS was not only to make protests against untouchability but also on the issues of dalits, backward caste and minority people.

At the same time huge literature created and spread all over the state. Literature on experiences of untouchability, experiences on caste discrimination and such other issues were raised by the predominant dalit writers and were spread to the population in the form of Kranrti Geetegalu.

In this article sincere efforts have been made to brief the dalit movement in India and particularly in the state of Karnataka. The topic is so vast that one cannot fix it into a small article like this. As such sincere efforts have been made here to portray the brief profile of the dalit movement in India. Academic efforts have been made to portray the movement.

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