



## Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar's theological and philosophical views on education and his battle for Dalit rights

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### Abstract

Politicians and academics in any nation eventually have to go to their own past for answers whenever the present or future presents a problem, whether it economic or political. The key components for resolving the country's present problems are the historical events, its people, and their ideas, which have molded the nation and its people's destiny. Not only did Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar write the constitution that established India as the largest democratic country in the world, but he also improved the lives of millions of untouchables. Using the work of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar—a lawyer, political leader, economist, and one of the century's underappreciated social theorists—as a framework, this article explores how to reduce inequality in institutional and organizational settings. Our attention is drawn to Ambedkar's analysis of the caste structure in India, his plan for extensive change, and his suggestion of using representative politics to attain equality. Babasaheb Ambedkar was an accomplished Indian scholar who had extensive training in several fields, including politics, economics, sociology, law, and the media. India has suffered due to a de-urbanization trend and an overpopulation of rural areas. If India wants to end its poverty and unemployment, industrialization is the way to go. Such clandestine theft from the impoverished would not be tolerated by a fair administration.

**Keywords:** Education, Human rights, violations, Social, educator

### Introduction

Among the world's largest social democracies, India stands tall. Additionally, the Constitution places a strong focus on the country's democratic nature and the protection of every individual. The difficulty of social systemic discrimination against depressed castes is the main topic of this essay. Although the protection of India's oppressed castes is spelled out in the country's charter, this same region is experiencing modern-day genocide and exploitation. Human rights violations and atrocities committed against Dalits also call into question the government's stance and concept of social justice. It is an effort to determine why, despite the protections provided by the Constitution and laws passed by Parliament throughout time, violence against Dalits continues. Now that we're well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, people in India have evolved new perspectives. A more homogenous Hindu society based on the universal principles of equality, freedom, justice, and natural brotherhood was once the goal of Dr. Ambedkar's analysis of the caste

system, untouchability, and Hindu social order.

Writing the biography of Babasaheb was no picnic. His charisma was unparalleled. An blend of the world's best abilities, he was adaptable and multi-talented. His humor and literary rigor were reminiscent of Johnson's. His unwavering reformism echoed that of Martin Luther, whose teachings had shaken the very core of papal intolerance. Like Voltaire, who had ripped the foundations of French conservatism to shreds with his writings, speeches, and satires, he was honest and decent. The scholarly rigor of Karl Marx was mirrored by Babasaheb. He had the bravery of Bonaparte, the loyalty of Lincoln, and the valour of Garibaldi. He had Bismarkian competence and Burkean eloquence. Babasaheb had the prophetic vision and loving-kindness and compassion of Lord Buddha beyond all else. Because of his many admirable traits, Babasaheb was a complicated figure that I will not attempt to adequately portray here. In 2001, Dayal wrote on page 38:

Now that we know Ambedkar was a multi-faceted figure,

how can we study his life and ideas? Depending on who you ask, Ambedkar represents something different now. He is referred to as "anti-national" by Hindu nationalists, "a savior of Hindu society" by Hindu extremists, and "an incarnation of Buddha" by neo-Buddhists. And he represents the fight and the hope of millions of Dalits all throughout the nation. For the whole of his life, Ambedkar battled doggedly on behalf of the Dalit people to secure their independence, dignity, equality, and social justice. By standing out for the millions of oppressed people, Ambedkar did what no other high-caste Hindu leader had dared to do: fight for their social and economic freedom and political development.

### **Ambedkar In India**

Ambedkar's personal struggles, the movements he led, his political career, and his eventual Buddhist conversion. As agreed, upon, Ambedkar would serve the Maharaja of Baroda for a minimum of ten years upon his return from the United States. He travelled to Baroda in September 1917 to fulfill this obligation. After providing him an opportunity to gather administrative experience, the Maharaja planned to make him finance minister. To start things off, the Maharaja designated him as his military secretary. Ambedkar encountered a significant obstacle when arriving at Baroda. Ambedkar was met by authorities appointed by the Maharaja at the train station. However, since he was an untouchable, no authority bothered to come welcome him. Looking for a place to stay and board was much more of a challenge. Because of his caste status, he was consistently turned down for housing opportunities. Last but not least, he spent a few days concealing his identity at a Parsi lodge.

It was oppressive in his workplace. To avoid touching an untouchable, the office peons and clerks hurled papers at him despite his high rank and education. In the workplace, he was not given any water to drink. The carpets at his workplace were removed so they wouldn't become dirty from his touch. He could not handle that at all. In an effort to get the Maharaja to pay notice to his pain, he sent a letter. To the Dewan it was referred by the Maharaja. However, the Dewan acknowledged his powerlessness to address the issue. When the Parsis learned of his untouchability, they banded together to assault him and force him to leave the area, making an already bad situation much worse. Leaving was Ambedkar's only choice. Sitting beneath a park tree, he sobbed uncontrollably as he strolled about on an empty stomach, exhausted. He went back to Mumbai in November 1917, distraught and furious. He had to leave Baroda due to certain circumstances, which he told the Maharaja via his tutor Keluskar.

Friend of Keluskar's from Baroda, Professor Joshi, wrote to Ambedkar to offer him lodging at his home for a fee. In response to this invitation, Ambedkar made his way to Baroda. Professor Joshi informed him at the train station that his wife was opposed to having an untouchable in the home. After getting off at the Baroda station, Ambedkar wasted no time getting on the next train home. After then, he didn't return to Baroda.

### **Ambedkar's struggles in life**

Tragically, Ambedkar's step-mother died away not long after he returned from Baroda in 1917. At around the same period, two Depressed Classes conferences were organized

in Mumbai by a small group of Hindus from the upper caste. At one of the gatherings, delegates urged the government to safeguard the interests of the untouchables by letting the oppressed castes choose lawmakers according to their numbers. Neither of the gatherings included Ambedkar. In order to support his expanding family, he needed financial stability. Therefore, he took advantage of two private tutoring sessions that a Parsi gentleman had set up for him in order to get by financially.

To further assist stock market share brokers, he also established a consulting organization. Nothing good came out of his consulting practice, however, since word got around that he was managed by an untouchable. After that, Ambedkar was an auditor for a wealthy Parsi guy. During this time, Ambedkar published an article in the Indian Economic Society magazine that was a critical analysis of Bertrand Russell's book, Principles of Social Reconstruction. "Caste in India" was one of his essays that was reprinted.

### **Ambedkar's social movements**

Ambedkar's schooling in the United States, England, and Germany expanded his mind and fortified his determination to use modern and reasonable methods to liberate his people from the shackles of suffering. He advocated for parity in all areas of society, including religion, economics, and politics.

### **Political career**

In 1935, the Government of India Act indicated that the people of British India would be granted regional autonomy and that elections for the provincial assembly would be conducted in 1937. In August 1936, Ambedkar mobilized his associates and lieutenants to establish a political organization known as the Independent Labour organization. The party ran for 13 reserved seats and 4 ordinary seats in the 1937 Bombay election for the Central Legislative Assembly, winning 11 and 3, respectively. Ambedkar ran for office from Bombay and defeated his opponent by a wide majority.

### **Literature review**

N. Nagaraju Chowdappa, Munichowdappa (2023) Babasaheb, whose real name was Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and who lived from 1891 to 1955, was an outspoken opponent of caste inequality. He spoke for the oppressed parts of Indian society, who had been on the periphery for a long time because of deep-seated political and economic biases. Both the importance and fame of Ambedkar's contributions to social and political changes in India are well-known. Among his many accomplishments in contemporary India, he stands out as a prominent political thinker, philosopher, educator, and social reformer. No matter how you slice it, Ambedkar's public life experiences and the social climate of his day informed his views and thinking. As part of a larger political-ideological struggle against mechanisms that the higher caste groups used for their own self-interest, Ambedkar's political and social views developed. He aspired to construct a contemporary, compassionate, and equitable India, and his thoughts reveal a profound contemplation and lucid comprehension of human connections. The political empowerment of women, religious minorities, and dalits is central to his political

philosophy, which aims to build a robust, inclusive, and democratic political participation and representation in India.

Dr. Sonu Kumar *et al.* (2023) <sup>[2]</sup> It has been appropriately noted and really realized by great inspirational dignitaries like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar that education is a crucial instrument for transforming global civilization via its luminous, illuminating splendor, and impact. He devoted his life's work to helping the Dalits and other oppressed, disadvantaged, humiliated, exploited, and devalued individuals and communities in India's superstitious and orthodox, archaic societies. He was also a prominent volunteer social reformer and educational activist. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar has tirelessly worked to dismantle the dominance of caste-based discrimination in Indian society, which has collapsed and had a devastating impact on the countrymen and women. This prejudice has spread like an epidemic, devastating many communities. Such unjustifiable and barbaric behaviors were considered by his traditionalist community, and he too was a victim of them. After improving his own social standing via education, he set out to improve the plight of his fellow humans and the whole human race. With the knowledge he received from his studies, he was able to alter the global landscape in relation to discrimination based on gender, class, caste, and other pressing concerns in Indian society. In light of this, he has placed education firmly on the pedestal and has worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the value of education across the globe and its profound impact on society and mankind. Dr. Ambedkar has personally immersed himself in the works of both Indian and Western philosophers, drawing from both canons to inform his own life's work. The social structure of his corresponding group left him destitute, so he became a Buddhist. He found that the teachings and philosophy of both John Dewey and Buddha were applicable to his own life. As a consequence, his pedagogical stance is an ideal synthesis of Indian and Western philosophical tenets, which will continue to shape the world's educational landscape for decades to come.

Balu *et al.* (2020) <sup>[3]</sup> Education as a philosophical framework is the focus of this article. The educational ideas of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar mirror his educational philosophy. A solid foundation of education is the first step toward a better life. It produces more accountable national leadership and raises people's knowledge and social consciousness. Reading, speaking, listening, and writing are obviously all parts of schooling. But education encompasses and impacts people's habits, everyday actions, and relationships with one another. Hereby, we are perpetually both taught and taught. Even if it isn't constant growth, this method nonetheless promotes our development and advancement.

Dr. Suman Kumar *et al.* (2020) <sup>[2]</sup> He was a famous educator in his own right, Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar. In order to educate the pupils from the Dalit group, he founded the People's Education Society in Bombay and Aurangabad. All of his work in education, from lectures to magazine articles to school administration, reflects his pedagogical worldview. According to him, schools should be an instrument for social transformation. Dr. Ambedkar was of the firm belief that education should be a societal priority, with the goal of cultivating morally upright persons. His

views on Dr. Ambedkar's schooling are the focus of this study. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar aspired for India to have a system of education that promotes justice, dignity, and the realization of human rights. He believed that education had the power to empower the underprivileged to stand up against the injustice and exploitation they had endured for so long. He realized that the primary reason impoverished people were behind the times was because they lacked knowledge. As opposed to being a student of religion, science, or the state, he favored humanistic education, which allows a man to reawaken his sense of self and liberation. He drafted some rights into the Indian Constitution in an attempt to provide equal access to education for all inhabitants of independent India.

Bankim Chandra Mandal (2023) <sup>[5]</sup> Through his writings, lectures, debates, interviews, literary works, and literary movements, Dr. Ambedkar conveyed his ideas on education. Many people's lives, particularly those of the Dalits, were impacted by his ideas while he was alive. Mahatma Phule, Gautama Buddha, and other prominent educationists and social revolutionaries had a profound impact on Babasaheb's educational philosophy. Both Savitribai and Mahatma Phule Inspired by Phule's passion for education, he sought to teach both Dalits and non-Dalits. In the field of education, Ambedkar drew inspiration from John Dewey's pragmatism, democracy, and the scientific technique of experimentation. To address the issue of educational progress for the general public and the Dalits in particular, he took a very pragmatic stance. With food, clothes, a roof over one's head, and health, he considered education to be a fundamental requirement. That is why he had made a sincere effort to ensure that all residents of independent India had equal access to education. A society founded on liberty, equality, fraternity, and social justice was his goal, and he saw education as a vital instrument in achieving this goal.

#### **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar the architect of modern India-a study**

There are three paths to greatness: being born brilliant, being thrown into brilliance, and achieving brilliance. It is to the final group that Dr. B. R. Ambedkar belongs. The late Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was an influential progressive thinker, philosopher, political reformer, and social reformer. In his political, social, and cultural activism, he championed causes that contributed to the betterment of human life. For India's constitution, he was the spirit. He fought relentlessly for the rights of the downtrodden and oppressed. In the midst of this battle, he displayed an uncommonly crusading zeal, establishing himself as one of the foremost builders of modern India.

The study also drew on a variety of secondary sources, including Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's writings, such as What Congress and Gandhi have done to untouchables (1945), Federation versus Freedom (1939), The problem of Rupee: Its origin and its solution (1925), Annihilation of Caste (1936), Castes in India: Their Genesis, Mechanism and Development (1918), Who were the Shudras (1946), and The Untouchables: Who they were and why they became Untouchables (1948).

The social reformer Dr. Ambedkar Dr. Ambedkar advocated nonviolent means of societal transformation. As society

changed over time, he was guided to constitutional boundaries. Things like law and order, which are fundamental to society, were on his mind. The upkeep of institutions that will improve "social order" is another goal. For him, the use of violence to bring about social change was inherently counterproductive since it shatters peace and order. Approaches based on anarchy did not inspire him. No amount of fear, coercion, or brutality can support the establishment of a universal welfare state. He thinks it's unethical, uneducated, and wrong to use aggressive means in an otherwise peaceful society. A master in many fields, he exemplified the ideal of the Renaissance man. Historians have come to appreciate Dr. Ambedkar for his pivotal role in acknowledging Hindu society, despite the fact that orthodox Hindus despised him and called him a destroyer of Hinduism. He was far from a traitor; on the contrary, he was instrumental in rejuvenating Hinduism by exposing its inherent injustices. His actions caused many Hindus to reevaluate their faith's fundamental principles, which ultimately led to a revival of Hinduism. He put his trust in social reformers to rally the people against society's egregious inequality. He begged them to form groups to handle severe instances of prejudice.

In order to provide opportunities for the oppressed and downtrodden classes to operate in many fields, organizations should interact with the powerful segment of society. In order to help those in need, Hindu society should hire people from disadvantaged backgrounds in fields that are a good fit for their skills. If a democracy is serious about achieving its goal of equality, Dr. Ambedkar argues that social justice and social reform are essential. As a social democrat, Dr. Ambedkar advocated for a nation-wide effort to eliminate caste prejudice via inclusive development, cultural integration, and a more comprehensive vision of stable national reconstruction. The protections for a more egalitarian society for millions of downtrodden and depressed sections were laid forth by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the principal architect of the Indian constitution. While doing so, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar establishes himself as a hero to the Indian democratic republic and, more specifically, as a rare intellectual mass leader who roused Modern India's social consciousness. To him, it was the duty of political institutions to modify preexisting social structures by the use of legislative power. In order for political institutions to endure, they must actively contribute to societal transformation.

### **Education philosophy and religious ideas of Dr. Bhimrao Dr. Ambedkar and Indian education**

The Indian philosophical elite during India's British colonial era falsely claimed that the ruling class had absorbed western ideas and neglected traditional wisdom, demonstrating their lack of familiarity with the work of the Nastika philosophers, who were harsh critics of the Brahminical Brahmanas. Compared to philosophers from Greece, Britain, Italy, Germany, and France, those from India have more compelling arguments about where philosophy came from and what it has meant for modern thought. The Indian philosophical traditions include the Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit languages. They expressed their views on the Conservation of Energy Law, which was formulated by the Greek philosopher Thales of Miletus

many centuries after Buddha, via their critical engagement with western philosophy that had its roots in old Indian philosophies like Buddhism (Mukherji, 2002) <sup>[2]</sup>.

Educator and activist B. R. Ambedkar spearheaded efforts to improve the lot of society's lower-class citizens. Existing fundamentalist ideologies, upheld by those who cherish tradition (such as Gandhian ideology), have harshly criticized him. But Ambedkar had argued that education was the key to lifting the downtrodden out of poverty.

Not only is Ambedkar's influence restricted to a small group inside society, but his ideas have also been grossly disregarded. The whole wording of the Indian Constitution was meant for everyone, and Ambedkar was a leader who fought for the nation's secularism. This is all happening while this is happening. Many books and diaries were written by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. When seeking and expressing truth, his talks and writings are helpful resources. The possibility of creating a society where Dalits might live as equals were brought to the attention of the Dalits by Ambedkar, who used his words, deeds, and ideas to bring attention to the misery and unfairness of their social status (Valeskar, 2012) <sup>[10]</sup>.

Thus, it is evident that education is essential for continuous and meaningful learning, and that education must be maintained by incorporating it into one's life. Ambedkar outlined the following three points for policymakers to consider.

1. Education for women;
2. Education as a tool for real equality;
3. Rethinking education's goals and objectives

He saw education as the main weapon that oppressed people might use to fight back and get what was rightfully theirs; a solid education would give them the reason, courage, and tenacity to see through cultural biases and into reality. His powerful lectures and messages revolved on education, which we might interpret as both a basic human right and a powerful instrument of resistance for oppressed people, given his early recognition of its importance.

### **Role of women in social emancipation through education**

Dr. Ambedkar believed that educated women might have a significant impact on society. As the child's primary caregiver and educator, a mother is naturally at the center of her family's activities. Parents have the power to instill good character traits and values in their children. Consequently, he inspired the ladies to further their education. "I will share some information with you that I believe you should keep in mind," he said. Get a handle on personal hygiene and abstain from all vices. Make sure your kids get an education.

### **Emphasis on moral education and character building**

Education, in Dr. Ambedkar's view, is meaningless if it does not impart moral principles. He thought that a well-educated individual would be useless to society if moral principles and character development were not adequately addressed in the educational process. "An educated man without character and humility is more dangerous than a beast," he said on February 12, 1938, while speaking at the Bombay region Depressed Classes Youth Conference.

### Religion and culture in education

A large body of academic literature holds that Dr. Ambedkar did more than just dismiss cultural and religious influences; it is also widely believed that he agreed with Karl Marx's famous quote about "Religion as the People's Opium." Religion and culture, however, were, in his view, fundamental to schooling. But there's no denying that he opposed religious dogma and social injustice.

### The struggle Dr. Ambedkar spearheaded for Dalit education

When we bring up the topic of freedom, they often fail to consider the freedoms enjoyed by Dalits. A celebration of our freedom from Britain will be held shortly. Let us have a conversation about Dalit independence now. In two separate instances, Ambedkar freed the Dalits from slavery. A Round Table Conference was organized in London on November 12th, 1930, as a result of the tremors caused by Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience Movement. A young lawyer's refusal to acknowledge Gandhiji as the nation's leader startled everyone at the meeting. B.R. Ambedkar was his pseudonym. He said that the vast majority of Congress politicians would refuse to include Dalits in constitutional procedures and would instead advocate caste-based oppression. Then he went on to declare that there had to be distinct electorates where only Dalits could run for office and cast ballots.

British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald announced the Communal Award on August 6, 1932, providing a separate electorate for the Dalits and Recognizing them as different from the Hindus. During this period, Gandhiji was incarcerated in the Poona prison. He believed that the intention behind this revelation was to create a wedge between Hindus and Dalits. On September 20, 1932, in defiance of the Communal Award, which infuriated the nation, Gandhiji began a fast-unto-death. Keeping Gandhiji alive was Dr. Ambedkar's responsibility. The pressure on Ambedkar was so great that he finally caved; however, he did so with the caveat that the Dalits get reservations at every level. On September 26th, Gandhiji broke his fast after receiving approval.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, social reformers began to publish harsh criticisms of Brahmanical Practices in their works. Gulam Giri, written by Jotirao Phule, was one of them. Southern activists Periyar and Narayan Guru blew the trumpet to denounce the Varna caste system. A few decades later, when India gained its independence, Ambedkar was honored for his scholarship and intelligence by being assigned the responsibility of writing the constitution. He became the first minister of law in the country. In the period since, Ambedkar's views have become more relevant. Prior to independence, he was already known to be a rare-intellectual jurist. In his speech to the Bombay Legislative Council on March 12, 1927, he raised several pressing concerns about the state of education in India. The flaws of India's educational system deeply concerned him.

Presenting a new point of view, Dr. Ambedkar said, "Right now, the money we spend on primary education is largely really wasted" at the same discussion. It is the fundamental purpose of primary education to make sure that no child enrolls in a primary school before they are literate and stays

that way throughout their lives. On the other hand, data shows that only 18% of elementary school enrollees make it through fourth grade; a further 82% revert to pre-literacy levels.

The issue of students not completing high school remains unresolved. This problem has been clear to Dr. Ambedkar for some time. Getting a kid enrolled in a school wasn't enough, he realized. Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that children remain enrolled in school until they finish primary school. Planting a single seedling will not provide the desired results. In addition, it requires regular watering and fertilization to avoid wilting. Ambedkar emphasized the need of the minister of education allocating more funds to basic education, stating that this would ensure that their investments would eventually bear fruit.

### Conclusion

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was a prominent figure in Indian history, known for his advocacy for social justice and human dignity. He believed that a society should be based on equal rights, economic justice, gender equality, and fair distribution of opportunity. Ambedkar's vision of a casteless society was not fully implemented, and institutions must use civil society to spread his ideas. The Indian Constitution, based on Ambedkar's principles, ensures that everyone has equal rights. However, Ambedkar's vision of social justice was never properly implemented, and institutions must use civil society to spread his message. He abolished caste discrimination in India, aiming to help the most marginalized members of society advance.

Dr. Ambedkar's educational philosophy is a blend of traditional and contemporary teaching methods. He brought attention to the need to educate a significant segment of Indian society that had been educated for too long. Ambedkar played a crucial role in drafting legislations pertaining to social liberation and education for oppressed people. To build social peace, it is essential to bridge the social difference. Education is crucial for the growth of individuals and humanity as a whole, and Ambedkar's innovative ideas and groundbreaking work have influenced the Right to Education Act, which was enacted in 2009. Students should emulate Ambedkar's spirit to acquire knowledge and update their skills, and parents should share their struggles with their children to create a better life for their children. Teachers, like Ambedkar's, have a significant impact on students' motivation to achieve their dreams.

Dr. Ambedkar's religious philosophy focuses on teaching man how to behave towards others so that all may be happy. He supports the non-theistic view of Buddhism, which emphasizes mental calm, serenity, strength, social justice, and alleviation of human suffering. Ambedkar found solace in the teachings of the Buddha and his Dhamma, which he embraced in the spirit of perfect knowledge, compassion, and understanding for everyone. In conclusion, Dr. Ambedkar's work has had a profound impact on Indian society, particularly in the areas of education and religion. His ideas and teachings continue to inspire and guide today's students in their pursuit of social justice and egoism.

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