



**Dr. Ambedkar Studies Center,
Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati**



Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Role in Nation Building

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Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's Theory and Practice of Emancipation through Education'

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The most remarkable and the most loved personality among the Dalits is 'Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar' (1891-1956), known popularly among dalits as Babasaheb, meaning 'respected father'. They regard him as their messiah; in fact, he has become the Dalit's greatest icon, symbolizing their identity and aspirations, the only and the greatest hero for them. This is so because Babasaheb, the most remarkable intellectual, achieved so many degrees from renowned western universities, led the Dalit movement and secured a political space and several socio-economic rights for them.¹² Though the Dalit movement was already started before him, it was given a great intellectual impetus by him. Ambedkar was unquestionably the first untouchable leader of India as a whole and none of his followers comes close to him in terms of prestige.¹³ They see him as one who devoted every moment of life for their emancipation.

The caste system is the only social system in the world, where a minority caste has imposed a ban on education of the rest of the people with the help of caste-hierarchy; with this monopoly of knowledge based on caste-hierarchy, this minority caste exercised a complete control over rest of the society. In Europe, where landlords, feudal chiefs or priests exercised a control over others on the basis of control over land or other means of productions; but here in India, Brahmins not controlled the rest of the society only by controlling lands, but it became the greatest of all other castes with the help of monopoly over knowledge due to caste-hierarchy. The Brahmins exercised a complete control over the others for a long period of two thousand years, only because of their monopoly over the knowledge, as a result of caste system. Thus, the knowledge has been used as an important device for physical exploitation in India, for long years by the Brahmins.

There were the hidden interests of the Brahmins in saying that the lower castes should not be educated, but it is also true that the lower castes and dalits did not want to get educated because this kind of slavery psychology was created by the Brahmins in the minds of non-Brahmins. Under this slavery psychology, the non-Brahmins believed that the getting knowledge and education was none of their business. Thus, though the education was made open to all, many of the non-Brahmin castes were not eager to go for it. But as usual the Brahmins were far ahead of others in getting the English Education in the changing situation so as to keep their own interests intact. On the other hand, many of the feudal chiefs and landlords even looked down upon the English Education. This kind of unwillingness of

¹²Tejwanti Anand, (2010), *The Persistence of Caste: The Khairlanji Murders and India's Hidden Apartheid*, Navayana Publishing, New Delhi, p. 23.

¹³Christophe Jaffrelot, (2005), *Dr Ambedkar and Untouchability*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, p. 2.

education among the non-Brahmin castes was deliberately created by the Brahmins to keep caste system intact. Because it was the caste system which had conferred upon them all kinds of privileges, which they wanted to preserve at any cost.

Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had rightly understood that only lack of knowledge is responsible for the worst conditions of the shudras, dalits and women. As Mahatma Phule stated in one of his *akhandas*, (prose), '*Itakeanartha eka avidyenekele*', i.e., lack of knowledge is responsible for all kinds of injustices. So, he considered the knowledge as the device of liberation, and according to him, knowledge brings new outlook in the educated person, it brings confidence and self-respect in a person. He considered that the knowledge makes a person more rational. Mahatma Phule launched a lifelong struggle against the caste system and the Brahmanical concept of knowledge and he wanted shudras, women and dalits to get education to attack these worst concepts and get rid of the worst conditions.

Babasaheb Ambedkar's approach towards education was on the same lines of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. Just like Phule, he spent much of his life time for the cause of educating shudras, women and dalits. At the time of his education his teachers met for three days to discuss over the issue, whether to educate a dalit or not. While studying in America, he had to bear without food for many nights.¹⁴ He had achieved so many degrees with a hard struggle and so he had always given a prime importance to education and appealed his followers to get educated first. For him, 'the education was a milk of tiger, one who drinks it, could not prevent himself from roaring', i.e., he considered education as the most important instrument in the struggle for emancipation of shudras, dalit and women. Gail Omvedt has rightly analyzed his approach towards education,

'With the education in Mumbai, New York and London, he had gained the entry to the world's treasury of social and economic thinking. He had undertaken his study as a Promethean fight to seize the gold of learning, as a resource not simply for personal achievement, but to use in the fight against the oppression of India's untouchables.'¹⁵

It was his grand success, not for personal gain, but for the emancipation of Dalits, who were suppressed for over thousands of years under the Brahmanical curse. Thus, with such a harsh struggle during his study, he started his social work with his personal experiences, which inspired him to devote his life for the cause of emancipation of the Dalits. Babasaheb with his intellect carved out the way for Dalits to come out of the oppressions of the caste system.

Babasaheb was well aware of the fact that both the Brahmanism as well as the British colonial government were against the rights of shudras, women and dalits to get education. So just like Mahatma Phule, he decided to fight for right to education for these suppressed people and to establish the educational institutes for them and he done it simultaneously throughout his lifetime.

¹⁴Chavan Dilip, (2003), *Dr. Ambedkar Ani Bhairavi Shikshamati Jaisangharshi Dr. Ambedkar and Caste Struggle in Indian Education*, Krantisinha Nana Patil Academy, Dhule, p. 40.

¹⁵Omvedt Gail, (2004), *Ambedkar: Towards an Enlightened India*, Penguin Books, Gurgaon, reprint 2008, p. 17.

Babasaheb made the struggle for knowledge as a struggle for material liberation of the age-old suppressed people from the caste atrocities with the view that knowledge is not something unachievable, but it's a material strength. While discussing on the Bombay University Act Amendment Bill in the Bombay Legislature, Babasaheb said, "...the backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forgo material benefits, we may forgo material benefits of civilization, but we cannot forgo our right and opportunity to reap the benefit of the highest education to the fullest extent. That is the importance of this question from the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe."¹⁶

Babasaheb regarded education as the medium of social progress and material transformation and has given a meaningful message to his followers to 'Educate, Organize and Agitate'. He considered the issue of ban on education to women, shudras and dalits in respect of the Brahmanical religion and criticized it thoroughly.

Babasaheb in his book, 'Philosophy of Hinduism', states that in the matter of spreading knowledge, two conditions are prerequisites- formal education and literacy. Without formal education it is not possible to transmit all the resources achievements of the society. Without formal education the youngster will not get new perception and he will remain a slave only. He asks the question that how an illiterate person can achieve the knowledge and argues that formal education and literacy should go hand in hand for spread of knowledge. He then shows that formal education in Hinduism is limited only to the study of the Vedas, as it believed that there was no knowledge outside the Vedas. He shows by citing Manusmriti that only Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishya has right to study the Vedas; Shudras are not to study and even not allowed to listen the Vedas. He further blamed the Brahmanism in such a way that,

"Never has society been guilty of prohibiting the mass of its people from acquiring knowledge. Never has society made any attempt to declare that any attempt made by the common man to acquire knowledge shall be punishable as crime. Manu is the only divine law giver who has denied the common man the right to knowledge."¹⁷

Babasaheb compared the ban imposed by Brahmanism with other religions and shows how it was so cruel. He criticized the Brahmanism and its law giver Manu for not given equal rights to its people and especially in the field of education. Being educated in famous western universities, Babasaheb had consciously articulated his views and struggle for social justice for the suppressed people and so he was insisting on education throughout his life. He was strong believer of democracy and for that he expressed the importance of education, by stating that without education how one can enjoy democratic life. He once said,

"A democracy which enslaves the working class, a class which is devoid of education, which devoid means of life, which is devoid of any power of organization, which is devoid of intelligence is no democracy but a mockery of democracy."¹⁸

Thus, he was very keen on imparting education to the masses to enable them enjoy a democratic life neatly. His concept of knowledge was based on the Buddhist philosophy, where Gautam Buddha had rejected the concept of Vedas being the creature of God, Buddha by rejected this *Apourushyatva* of the Vedas.¹⁹ Thus he had projected the freedom of thinking independently. Buddha had launched a struggle against the caste system and declared that everything is open for discussion, rethinking and created a struggle against the Brahmanical ban on education to the masses. Buddha has given more importance to character than that of knowledge. His concept of knowledge is based on liberation of the masses from the slavery imposed upon them.

Babasaheb on the lines of the Buddha has given importance to willingness to change society, so according to him, knowledge must be utilized for liberation of the masses from the atrocities imposed by the caste system. Babasaheb looked at Education as the basis of socio-economic and political struggle. To him education was the way of liberation of Dalits and women from the injustices. In his letter to his father's friend from America, Babasaheb told that 'Education is the only way to get rid of all kinds of worst conditions for dalits and women.'²⁰

In a conversation with Mulk Raj Anand, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar reveals the potential of education when he said, "Education should encourage the new young to ask the teacher, one new question a day...."²¹

The renaissance movement had changed the concept of education in England. Education had come out of impact of the churches and became more and more secular. The study in sciences and social sciences were given equal importance. On the basis of development in sciences and the surplus amount gathered due to imperialism of the England, the Industrial Revolution took place in England. The British brought same developed educational system in India, both in sciences and the social sciences. The new system of English Education was mainly based upon rationalism and enquiry was introduced to Indians. The British intelligentsia was also interested in studying history of India though for their administrative or other purposes.

Babasaheb was very conscious about imparting education to Dalits and women as a path to their emancipation. Once he told his Dalit followers that you must destroy your slavery at your own. It is heinous to live without self-respect or dignity as it was an essential part of one's own life. A person becomes none without the dignity or self-respect. He also

¹⁶P. Jagadeeshan, (2006), *Social Justice and Challenges in Contemporary India*, Indiran Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, Lecture Series Publication-14, p. 6.

¹⁷Ambedkar B. R., (1957), *Bhagwan Buddha Ani Tyancha Dhamma*, Siddharth Prakashan, Mumbai, Tenth Edition, 1995, p. 75.

¹⁸Kalyankar B. H., (1993), *Dr. Ambedkarancha Shaikshik Drashikan*, in Meshram Keshav et. al, *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Goswar*

¹⁹Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari (ed.), (2008), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 2, Second Edition, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 62.

²⁰Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari (ed.), (2008), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 3, Second Edition, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 41-43.

²¹Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari and et. al. (ed.), (2003), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 17, Part II, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and his Egalitarian Revolution), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Source Material Publication Committee, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 378.

told them that they (Dalits) were not slaves, but had a glorious history of bravery.²² He looked at education as an important device to establish social democracy, to which he has given an immense importance to eradicate all kinds of inequalities prevailing in the society. So he once appealed his followers not to live just to feed, but live as a human being for cultural development. He wanted education to bring morality in one's life which he considered crucial prerequisite for a civilized society. Education was regarded by him as a tool for social revolution education is 'Samyakt Parivartan' overall social revolution.²³ He wanted the education which liberates dalits, women and shudras from slavery and create new society based on human values such as knowledge, equality, justice, liberty. He wanted a complete social justice and his concentration was on 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity'

Babasaheb was a social revolutionary and so he was very active in both the ways- by launching an intellectual struggle and at the same time he established institutions for achieving its goals.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had also criticized the educational policy of the British Government and advocated many changes in the interests of downtrodden people. But at the same time, he was the product of same English Education and he had achieved the knowledge from the progressive western universities. So he praised the English Education and said that English educated Indian youth was able to understand the rights of king and subjects, able to understand the concepts of liberty, to understand the personal liberty and duties, the self-respect, desire to progress etc. all because of liberal nature of the English Education.

The educational policy of the British government was designed in such a way that their colonial interests were cared at most of all. So though the British Government formally made education open to all in India, it did not want to educate all Indians as it was not the need of colonialism or as it was just wasting money for the colonial government. In order to extend and making the British power long lasting, the British Government developed its educational policy in such a way to benefit more and more to the elite upper castes of the Indian society.

Babasaheb was active social revolutionary and so not confined only to express his views, but worked hard to achieve his goals. On 9th March, 1924, he took his first step towards initiating the mass movement, by establishing a social organization for the depressed classes, a 'BahishkrutHitkarini Sabha', for providing necessary help to them to get access to education.²⁴ As a Chairman, he declared the aims and objectives of the institution, which includes a) opening hostels for Dalit students to get educated b) to open libraries, centers for social activities, intellectual forums to spread the cultural aspects of desired society, c) to open industrial and agricultural schools for Dalits to bring them out of economical backwardness. In 1925, the 'BahishkrutHitkarini Sabha' started a hostel for high school

²²Sadanshiv D. N., (1993), *Dr. Ambedkarancha Shikshnik Drushtikon*, in Meshram Keshav et. al, *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Gaurav Granth*, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal Mumbai, reprint, 1999, p. 412.

²³Lalekar Pralhad, (2011), *Anant Parilamcha Samajik Yodha-Dalitacharanasathi* Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Cion Publication, Pune, reprint, 2015, p. 89.

²⁴Jadhav Narentra, (2014), *Ambedkar Awakening India's Social Conscience*, Komark Publishers, New Delhi, p. 63

students of the Dalits to provide them cloths, meals, notebooks, books etc. The Solapur municipality granted Rs. 40 to that hostel.²⁵

Babasaheb had strongly criticized this unity of the colonial government and the elite upper caste against the educational interests of the shudras, dalits and women. He presented a Statement to the Statutory Commission on behalf of 'BahishkrutHitkarini Sabha', on 29th May, 1928 in Mumbai. In this statement he criticized educational policy of the British Government with his great intellectual. He told the commission that tough the Dalits had helped British to conquer the country and tough the new government was based on democratic principles; it articulated the educational policy in such a way to benefit elite upper castes and neglecting the depressed classes. In his words,

"The Depressed classes who were labouring under such disabilities naturally breathed a sigh of relief at the downfall of this hated theocracy. Great hopes were raised among the depressed classes by the advent of the British Rule. Firstly because it was a democracy which they thought believed in the principle of one man one value, be that man high or low. If it remained true to its tenets, such a democracy was a complete contrast to the theocracy of the Peshwa. Secondly the Depressed classes had helped the British to conquer the country and naturally believed that the British would in their turn help them, if not a special degree, at least equally with the rest.... But what a disappointment to the depressed classes there was when systematic efforts to place the education of natives upon a firm and organized footing came to be made! For the *British Government deliberately ruled that education was to be a preserve for the higher classes.*"²⁶

Babasaheb further states that the amount of Rupees one lakh, which was to be spent on education of the natives by the Charter Act of 1813, was not spent at all till 1823. He then gave the evidences from the Report of the Board of Education of the Bombay Presidency for the year 1850-51 for showing how the British Government had adopted a policy in favor of the higher classes. He cited how the Madras High Court directed the Madras Government to spend the limited amount upon the education of higher classes and it was not possible to spend on the education of the common people. In his words,

"The Hon. Court write to Madras in 1830 as follows: 'The improvements in education, however, which most effectively contribute to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of a people, are those which concern the education of higher classes- of the person possessing leisure and natural influence over the minds of their countrymen'..."²⁷

Babasaheb further quotes Elphinstone over the issue of educating lower castes and dalits in paragraph 23rd of his presentation as follows:

"It is observed that the missionaries find the lowest castes the best pupils; but we must be careful how we offer any special encouragement to men of that description; they are not only the most despised but among the least numerous of the great divisions of society and it

²⁵Sadanshiv D. N., (1993), *Dr. Ambedkarancha Shikshnik Drushtikon*, in Meshram Keshav et. al, *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Gaurav Granth*, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal Mumbai, reprint, 1999, p. 412.

²⁶Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari (ed.). (2005), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 2, Second Edition, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 409.

²⁷Ibid, p. 410.

is to be feared that if our system of education first took root among them, Such a state of things would be desirable, if we are contented to rest our power on our army or on attachment of a part of the population but is inconsistent with every attempt to found it on a more extended basis.²⁸

Babasaheb thus shows the approach of the highest official of the British Government in Bombay Presidency and also showed how the government was deliberately kept away from the dalits from getting educational facility. He further says,

"It is, therefore, obvious that if no school were opened for depressed classes before 1855 in the Bombay Presidency it was because the deliberate policy of the British Government was to restrict the benefits of education to the poor higher castes, chiefly the Brahmins. Whether this policy was right or wrong is another matter. The fact, however, is that during this period the Depressed classes were not allowed by Government to share in the blessings of education."²⁹

Further Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar presented the Report of Court of Directors, 1854, which was neglected by the government, as it clearly states that the Government should accept the responsibility to spread education among the masses, which could not get it on their own. He further asked the government that why there was not a single student from the depressed classes entered into the high school till the year 1881-82. He blames the Government for deliberately denying the education to the depressed classes in the fear that the upper caste Brahmins would get disappointed. He pointed out that such kind of fear of disappointment of the Brahmins on educating the depressed classes was evident from the letter of Lord Ellenborough, President of the Board of Control to the Court of Directors, dated 28th April, 1858.

Babasaheb has thus pointed out that how the British Government deliberately articulated its educational policy to favor upper caste Brahmins and at the same time how it denied right to education to the Dalits. It shows that the Brahmanism was ruling the educational and cultural fields rather than the British Government during the colonial period.

Babasaheb in that statement again pointed out the picture about the education of the Backward Classes with the analysis of the Report of the Director of Public Instruction, Bombay Presidency for the year 1923-24. He shows how the disparity in the level of education existed and how the condition of the education of the backward classes was vulnerable. He shows that there were only 18 students per 1000 of the population of the Backward classes in the Primary Education, while they were only 14 per 1000 of their population in the Secondary Education, and there was not a single or nearly one if at all student from the backward classes in the College Education per 1000 population of them.³⁰

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar further criticized the Government policy for deliberately denying education to the Dalits. He further made conclusions on the above report, "That the state of education of the Backward Classes in this Presidency is deplorable. In the matter of

²⁸Ibid, p. 415.²⁹Ibid, p. 415.³⁰Ibid, p. 421.

population, they occupy place as high as second. But in the matter of education, they occupy a place, which is not only last but which also is the least."³¹

In this way he was criticizing the British Government, by using his tremendous efforts, on its educational policy, which purposely neglected the education of the Dalits. But he was not caring for only Dalits, he insisted upon the British Government that it was the responsibility of the Government to educate all the persons and it was the right of each and every person to get access to education.

Babasaheb favored the Act of making the education compulsory for them who were not willing to get it. He considered the issue of Primary Education as national issue and states that the responsibility and control of the education should not be rested upon the municipalities and the local boards; it should be taken by the provincial government. In his speech at Mahabaleshwar in a conference on 31st May 1929, he said that 'the issue of spreading primary education was the issue of national importance; in the new world the countries having their *Bahujan Samaj* (masses) illiterate could not have the future. Spread of the primary education is the basis of nation's overall progress, the developed countries having the high literacy ratios as they had eradicated illiteracy by enacting a special law.'³²

Babasaheb was a man of action and not only expressed his views on various issues like education, but actively established many institutions for educating the Dalits and others. In 1928, he established another institute, 'Depressed Classes Education Society', for those who were unable to bear expenditure on education of the high schools. It was meant to provide educational facilities including financial. He appealed the Bombay Government to contribute some funds to it for the sake of the education of the Dalit students. It had a governing body of nineteen members including Babasaheb, Shankar Sayanna Parsha, Dr. Purushottam Solanki, Shivarkar etc. The Government of Bombay had sanctioned sum of Rs. 9000/- annually to the Depressed Classes Education Society for running five new Hostels. But that fund was not enough to bear the expenditure and so Babasaheb had personally to appeal for aid to the public. At that time high caste Hindus were not willing to donate to an institute made for educational purposes of the Dalits. Even after the clear directions of Government many High schools rejected the admissions of the Dalit students, in such cases Babasaheb had to intervene and struggle for the educational equality.³³

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Educational Institutes:

Babasaheb also established the 'People's Education Society' for making provisions of the higher education of the Dalits, shudras and women in 1945 in Mumbai.³⁴ He established Siddharth College at Mumbai in 1946 and Milind College at Aurangabad in 1950.³⁵ Both the colleges became the centres for the Dalit Movement and many dalits get educated from there and achieved different posts in the administration of both the central and state governments.

³¹Ibid, p. 421.³²Lalickar Pralhad, (2011), *Anant Punitoncha Samajik Yoddha: Dalitawarunsihi Dr. Babasaheb*

Ambedkar, con Publication, Pune, reprint, 2015, p. 91.

³³Sadanisiv D. N., (1993), *Dr. Ambedkarancha Shaikshik Dristikon*, in Meshram Keshav et al, *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Gaurav**Granth*, Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Ani Sanskriti Mandal Mumbai, reprint, 1999, p. 415-16.³⁴Ingole U. P., (2002), *Phule, Shahu, Ambedkar Shaikshik Kranti*, Ashish Prakashan, Yavatmal, p. 263.³⁵Ibid, p. 264.

At the time of opening of the Milind College, Babasaheb also declared that the college was established for all students irrespective of caste, creed, gender etc. It later proved an important source for many dalit students from Marathwada and Vidarbha. The Siddhartha College in Mumbai also provided educational facilities to the dalits from Konkan and Western Maharashtra.

Babasaheb had a love for knowledge of Law and so established Siddhartha Law College in Mumbai through the People's Education Society, which also established Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar College in Mahad in Ratnagiri District, Commerce College, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Law College, and College for B. P. Ed. and M. P. Ed. and also Engineering College at Aurangabad.³⁶

Babasaheb even told to a press reporter on 3rd May, 1950, that he was planning to establish a College at Ahmednagar on the lines of Siddhartha College. The College which would give instructions in both Arts and Science subject would be started before July 1951. But unfortunately, due to his complexity of work, the college was not opened in Ahmednagar.³⁷

Babasaheb had used every opportunity to demand equal rights for the Dalits before the British Government with presenting his intellectually prepared documents. The first time he presented his views and that was the Southborough Committee in 1919, where he presented the real conditions of the untouchables (Dalits) and how they were treated with disparities in many fields including education. On that occasion, he demanded that the education should not remain the monopoly of any single caste but it should be imparted among the whole society without any discrimination. In his written statement, he wrote, "The growth of education, if it is confined to one class, will not necessarily lead to liberalism. It may lead to the justification and conversion of class interests; and instead of creating the liberators of the down-trodden, it may create champions of the past and the supporters of the status quo and isn't this the effect of education so far?"³⁸

Babasaheb was deeply concerned with the education of the down-trodden people and so objected the Government's policy to favor one caste and maintain its monopoly over the education. His objection was on the valid ground that the Brahmanism had imposed ban on education to the backward classes and also imposed the backwardness by using their scriptures, which were deliberately written to exercise a full control over the rest of the society. He rightly pointed out towards the liberal nature of the British people and so objected to their controversial educational policy to favor Brahmins. So to understand his educational thoughts one has to understand his social thoughts which are part of his cosmic vision.³⁹ He used his intellectual not only to safeguard the interest of the dalit, but he was a national leader and all his thoughts, acts and writings are finally in the larger interests of the nation. He had

³⁶Ibid, p. 265.

³⁷Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari and et. al. (ed.), (2005), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 17, Part I (Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and his Egalitarian Revolution), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, Source Material Publication Committee, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 383.

³⁸Ambedkar B. R. in Moon Vasant (ed.), (1979), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 1, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 268.

³⁹Waghmare Jankarham, (2015), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Yanche Krantikarav Shukshmat Vichar Anikarya*, Sugava Prakashan, Part. 1, 12.

written very voraciously on varied topics, but always in the interest of the nation. He was a prolific writer. Perhaps no other mass leader in India has produced anywhere even close to the voluminous writings that Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar did.⁴⁰

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had criticized the British Government's policy of appeasement of the Brahmins in respect of the expenditure on education. Before the World War II, the British Government in England was spending Rs. 33.20 per head on education, while in India this was only Rs. 0.89 per head.⁴¹ The special tax had levied here in India for the purpose of education on the whole people of India, but the government was favoring the education of the upper castes, this was the policy of appeasement adopted by the government in India. While discussing on the Grants for Education Bill in the Bombay Legislature, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had rightly pointed out that the amount of money recovered from the excise revenue was Rs. 2.17 and the expenditure on education was only 14 annas (87.5 paisa) per head only. And he demanded the Government to spend on education of the people as much as collected from them through excise revenue.⁴² He also criticized the government on favoring education to the Brahmins with the help of the figures available as per census of India. He pointed out that how the upper castes were having less percentage in population and the highest percentage in the educational development, while the non-Brahmins and the Dalits comprised of maximum share in the population and deprived of the educational facilities.

The British Government was well known of the fact that the education of shudras, Dalits and women would have been resulted in the rebel against the upper caste Brahmins and it would have been finally resulted in losing support of these upper castes and Feudal chiefs, which were the backbone of the British power and administration in India. The British Government did not want to destroy the caste based feudal structure in India as the upper elite castes and the feudal chiefs were playing the vital role in a crucial role in the working of the British colonial Government. Therefore, though the right to education to the Dalits was formally granted by the Government, Mahajan, the editor of the periodical '*Prabhakar*', was severely criticizing the educational attempts of the non-Brahmins and the British Government could not punished him.⁴³

It was expected that the administrative and political decisions should be guided by the secular law under the British Government. But the reality was that in India, the socio-political life of the Indian people was guided and run by the age-old, the Brahmin dominated rules of *Manusmriti*. The British had already adopted the policy of appeasement of the Brahmins, and so decided not to interfere in the religious matters of the natives, this was a shrewd move of the British not to disappoint the Brahmins.

⁴⁰Jadhav Narendra, (2014), *Ambedkar Awakening India's Social Conscience*, Komark Publishers, New Delhi, p. 6.

⁴¹Chavan Dilip, (2003), *Dr. Ambedkar Ani Bhatriya Shikshanani Jansangharshi (Dr. Ambedkar and Caste Struggle in Indian Education)*, Krantisinha Nana Paul Academy, Dhule, p. 48.

⁴²Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Hari (ed.), (2005), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 2, Second Edition, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 40.

⁴³Chavan Dilip, (2003), *Dr. Ambedkar Ani Bhatriya Shikshanani Jansangharshi (Dr. Ambedkar and Caste Struggle in Indian Education)*, Krantisinha Nana Paul Academy, Dhule, p. 49.

The British people had overthrown the dominance of the Church and its priests during the renaissance and reformism movements in their homeland; but the British capitalists and administrators did not want to disturb the Brahmanical domination, did not even touch the disgusting law of *Manusmriti*. This policy of appeasement of the Brahmins was deliberately developed by the British to further their colonial interests. In the process of exploiting India under colonial rule, the Brahmin and other upper caste elites and feudal chiefs were the supporters of the British rule by acting as mediators between the ruled and the rulers. Thus, due to the union of the indigenous Brahmanism and the British colonial Government, the educational development of the *Bahujan*, non-Brahmins, women and dalits was restricted.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had always criticized the Indian National Congress for safeguarding the interests of the higher classes only. He had showed that it was only for showing the inclusiveness, that Congress party has only touched the various questions, but in reality, Congress was dominated by higher class leaders, which were never wanted to educate rest of the society in order to exercise all kinds of privileges conferred upon them by the caste system. Congress leader Tilak wanted to establish the golden days for the Brahmins as were during the Rule of the Peshwas.⁴⁴ He even refused to sign a resolution of eradicating untouchability in 1917 in Mumbai.⁴⁵

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar strongly criticized the nature of the Examinations conducted in the Bombay University, while debating on the Bombay University Act (Amendment). He pointed out: "One of the greatest defects from which this (Bombay) University has suffered ever since it was established was that it was primarily constituted as an examining body."⁴⁶ He had shown that how the examination system was utilized to keep the Dalit students away from the education. He then also condemned the anti-Dalit behavior of the Indian intelligentsia. In his words,

"But there is not the slightest doubt about the fact that the opposition benches which looked upon Government as their enemy, sided with it now with the sole object of defeating us on this vital question. There is no other excuse for their conduct except that they wanted to defeat the claims of the backward communities for representation through nomination. It is for that reason, that they have joined the Government whom they opposed in season and out of season. Sir, can we have any trust in an intelligentsia so narrow, so illiberal in its views."⁴⁷ Thus, Babasaheb again explained that the upper caste elite Indian intelligentsia was always took the position against the interests of the Dalits, women and the shudras. The Indian intelligentsia had united with the colonial British Government and thus both of them were causing hindrances to the educational progress of the backward classes. So, he criticized both the elite upper caste intellectuals and the British Government for deliberately developing an educational policy against the interests of the backward communities.

⁴⁴Chavan Dilip, (2003), *Dr. Ambedkar Ani Bhartiya Shikshanatil Jaisangharsh*(Dr. Ambedkar and Caste Struggle in Indian Education), Krantisinha Nana Patil Academy, Dhule, p. 50.

⁴⁵Phadake Y. D., (1989), *Vishaya Shaukand Maharashtra*, Vol. 2, Second Edition, 2005, K'Sagar Publications, Pune, p. 237.

⁴⁶Jadhav Narendra, (2014), *Ambedkar Awakened India's Social Conscience*, Konark Publishers, New Delhi, p. 74.

⁴⁷Ambedkar B. R. in Narake Han (ed.) (2005), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 2, Second Edition, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 62.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a revolutionary social reformer and not mere cared for the fate of the Dalits, but his approach was very humanist, the aim of his life was to create a just society based on 'Liberty, Equality and fraternity'; which he had expressed many times and devoted his life for the cause restlessly. He was the greatest critique of all kinds of injustices; naturally he had raised the question of Indian women and worked hard for the emancipation of them along with other oppressed people. He studied the history of India very deeply so as to understand the real cause of oppressions of the Dalits and women. He had pointed out that the reason behind all such kinds of atrocities was the nature of Brahmanical religion; which was based on caste-hierarchy and patriarchy. He showed that the Hindu women had suffered both from caste system as well as from patriarchal society. Again, there was an answer to the question of women and was nothing but to educate them. He advocated the education for the emancipation of both the women and dalits only because it is the education that has the potential to make the person rational, just, and it can create the feeling of self-respect among the person, which is very essential for generating the feeling of rebel in the minds of the downtrodden.

Babasaheb blamed Manu for damaging the image of women as characterless, disloyal, cruel, and also for making her dependent on her male counterparts throughout the 'life time'.⁴⁸ Instead of looking at the issue of women like the Brahmin intelligentsia, he looked at the issue of women rationally and believed in their potential to create a just society. Ambedkar produced an idea of the modern, combining the new western ideas and emancipatory materialist traditions like Buddhism from Indian history. At the same time, he focused the historical character of caste-based exploitation, rejected the Varna system and advocated the annihilation of the caste system as the only path to egalitarian society. In seeking a rational re-examination of the core values of the Hindu metaphysics, he heralded an Indian Enlightenment.⁴⁹ He was looking to bring the emancipation of Hindu women by pointing out the fact that they were equally treated in Buddhism. He insisted on the Buddhist thoughts and declared that he had borrowed the notion of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity" from Siddharth Gautam Buddha and not from modern French Revolution.

Babasaheb advocated the co-education of men with women as it would lead to create a moral society and men and women would realize the co-existence for the better society. He thus laid importance on the gender equality and liberty to women by advocating co-education of the boys and girls.⁵⁰ He struggled for the equal rights of women and for bringing a feeling of self-respect among them. He had a great respect for women and it is seen from the evident when at the time of his last speech in the Constituent Assembly, he quoted to Daniel O'Connell, a famous Irish nationalist, as follows:

⁴⁸Ambedkar B. R., *The Women and the Counter Revolution*, in Narake Han (ed.), (2008), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches*, Vol. 3, Second Edition, Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, Mumbai, p. 429-30.

⁴⁹Guru Gopal, *Dalits in Pursuit of Modernity*, in Thapar Romila, (Ed.), (2000) *India: Another Millennium*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, p. 123-37.

⁵⁰Lulekar Prathal, (2011), *Anant Pailanant Samajik Yodha: Dalitvaironsathi Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar*, Scion Publication, Pune, reprint, 2015, p. 82.

"No man can be grateful at the cost of his honour, No Woman can be grateful at the cost of her chastity and no nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty."⁵¹ He always advised women to get educated and at the time of *Mahad Satyagraha*, in his speech he appealed dalit women to go to school, because the education and knowledge was not meant for only men, women had the equal right to get educated. He then also told about their forefathers those were in military services, used to educate their daughters.⁵²

At the All India Depressed Classes Women's Conference at Nagpur on 20th July, 1942, with other resolution, Babasaheb also stressed on the education of women and the resolution requested to all the provincial governments in India to open and run a hostel for 50 girls at their capital cities. This shows that he was equally keen on the education of the women along with that of men.⁵³

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a real humanist and was the true heir of legacy of Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. Both of them were the emancipators of the downtrodden like the dalit, women and the shudras. In fact Babasaheb had great due respect at Mahatma Jyotirao Phule, whom he regarded as his third *Guru*, a teacher or Master, after Siddharth Goutam Buddha and Saint Kabir, a medieval radical and rational preacher of the Bhakti movement.

Just like Mahatma Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar had devoted for the entire social revolution and education was its main path and device to achieve it. So, he also worked hard for the education of the women and then the liberation, through many ways. One of them includes his famous Hindu Code Bill, a bill for total liberation of Hindu women and which was not passed in the Assembly and so Babasaheb Ambedkar resigned from the Cabinet. Unfortunately, even women had the great impact of the caste biases and under this impact do not respect him as their emancipator even today.

⁵¹ Surwade Dilip, (2009), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Ani Stri Sudharma*, LokshahityaPrakashan, Aurangabad, second edition, 2016, p. 9.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵³ Kosare H. L. *Vidarbhatil Dalit Chahvalachi Itihas*, p. 420, cited in Surwade Dilip, (2009), *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Ani Stri Sudharma*, Lokshahitya Prakashan, Aurangabad, second edition, 2016, p. 9.