

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Approach towards the Family Planning

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Abstract:-

First and foremost, what is needed is an acute awareness of the population problem and its adverse consequences to the nation's progress in just about every sphere. Due to want of mass communication, it is estimated that less than fifty percent of the one hundred million odd married couples are aware of the magnitude of the population problem either at their own personal family level or the national level.¹The government of India is now taking care to control the growth of population by different measures. But these measures are taking into consideration very late. In the census report of 2011, we reach up to 125 crores. In the year 1938, Dr. Ambedkar presented the birth-control Bill in the Bombay Assembly but unfortunately, it was not supported by the majority. If that bill was supported by the majority than today whatever problems we are facing due to the Population growth these could be minimized.

Keywords:-Birth Control, Poverty, Bombay Assembly

Introduction:- Dr. Bhimrao R. Ambedkar was not only the Dalit leader whereas he was in the true sense the National leader of India. To eliminate the poorness of the country, efforts had been taken on administration level as like GaribiHataav and others. But all these are not succeeded. What is the basic cause of poorness? How can root out the poorness of India? Answer of all these questions is only, the birth control and that answer had given by Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar in his speech of 1938 which was presented by Shri.P.J. Roham on behalf of him in the Bombay Assembly. In the year of 1938, Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar had given the solid solution for the elimination of the poorness of India and that was nothing but the Birth control. To improve the social and economic condition of India the important bill about the birth control on behalf of Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar, his party leader Shri. P. J. Roham had been presented in the Bombay assembly in the year of 1938. In the Bombay State Legislative Assembly Debates on 2nd March 1938, speech delivered by Shri P.J. Roham. He has

expressly stated that the speech was based in all respects on the points drawn by Dr. Ambedkar for his own speech and that Dr. Ambedkar is the father of this speech. Shri Roham further states that he was complimented by Dr. Ambedkar for almost reproducing the speech which, he had contemplated delivering in the Assembly, but he could not do so owing to inability to attend the Assembly on that day, i.e. on 10th November 1938.² The following speech delivered by Shri P.J. Roham on behalf of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

The necessity of Birth Control:- The educated class has, by this time, fully realized the necessity of birth-control and fortunately the leaders in our country also are unanimous on this point. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sir Rabindranath Tagore and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, know very well the importance and the urgency of the movement for birth-control and are in favor of contraceptives. Babu Subhash Chandra Bose, the President of the Indian National Congress, said in his presidential speech: "if the population goes up by leaps and bounds, as it has done in the recent past, our plans are likely to fall through."

Even Mahatma Gandhi has written long ago as follows:

"I must not conceal from the reader the sorrow I feel when I hear of births in this land."

Very few have an adequate idea of the of the immense loss sustained by children born of persons who are handicapped either physically, mentally or financially. The parents, as well as the society, also suffer very much. The prevention of the births of such children would considerably reduce the death-rate among mothers who succumb to childbirth and its concomitant diseases, lower infantile mortality, improve public health by removing the many persons, check the offences perpetrated by persons suffering from intense poverty and would bring about an all-round uplift of society by affording full scope to its spiritual advancement.

The present keen struggle of renders timely marriage impossible for many and thus expose them to various diseases and habits. Many women become invalid for life and some even lose their lives by the birth of children in their diseased condition or in too great numbers or in too rapid succession. Whenever a woman is disinclined to bear a child for any reason whatsoever, she must be in a position to prevent conception and bringing forth progeny which should be entirely dependent on unwanted progeny. Only those children who are welcomed by their parents can be of social benefit and hence every woman must be enabled to resort to the prevention of conception quite easily.

Poverty is the root-cause of immorality. The following passage from the essay read by Prof.

Dr. Tondler before the Congress at Vienna in 1933 would show the evil consequences of insufficiency of living accommodation. The professor said, "On the average, every family gets one room in Germany, two and a half room in France, and three rooms in England. Seventy-five thousand families had no tenements of their own in Berlin in 1925. The result is that children sleep with the adults not only in the same room but also in the same bed. Many children lose their lives by the overcrowding in unsanitary dwellings. Whole families are stricken with venereal diseases. Girls have to succumb to sexual intercourse even before they are mature. Sexual connections often take place between parents and their children and brothers and sisters. The boys learn to commit thefts and the girls become prostitutes. The same condition prevails at Vienna. In 1919, out of the tenements let out, 10 per cent., had only one small room; 37 percent, had one big room and 23 percent, had one small room and one big room. Out of the children between the ages of fourteen and eighteen who maintained themselves, twenty percent had no separate beds of their own. Towns and villages fare even worse." In our country, the same condition prevails in cities like Bombay. A few exceptions apart, it is observed that virtue is palsied where poverty prevails. Further on it will be shown how it is well-nigh impossible to uproot poverty without the aid of birth-control.

When we have thus realized that birth-control is the sine qua-non for every progress, we must consider the means to attain that end. To be satisfied with only that much of sexual enjoyment that is necessary for getting the desired number of children and to banish sexual thoughts from one's mind when progeny is not required is one of the ways. The use of modern contraceptives is the other way. As for the first way, it must be remembered that while continence in the unmarried state may be possible, it is nothing but displaying ignorance about human nature to expect that young and healthy married couples, living together and fond of each other, can observe continence for years together. The cases of strong-willed persons, whose kinds are not affected in the presence of objects of enjoyment, apart, there is no doubt that ordinary human beings are bound to fall a prey to is as clear as daylight, is denied by some.

Useless Advise of Self-Control:- Self-control has been proved to be absolutely useless for birth-control from the experience of several countries and ages. Even the advocates of continence cannot claim that ordinary

persons will be able to eschew sexual intercourse altogether throughout their lives. The laying aside of continence even for a single day every year may lead to an annual conception. Even, if we assume that self-control enables certain persons to bring about birth-control, we cannot draw the conclusion that others will be able to follow them. It is necessary to remember that just as appetite for food differs in the case of different persons, so sexual appetite also varies from person to person.³

As a doctor has wisely remarked, if the man had to bear the pangs which women have to undergo during child-birth none of them would ever consent to bear more than a single child in his life. It is wrong to hold that because the idea of large families is before society up to this time nobody wishes to limit his family. Human beings, who earnestly desire to be saddled with large families, are rare. Ordinary persons do want to limit their families and do not even flinch to have recourse to diabolical methods such as abortion, infanticide, etc. Such attempts are witnessed everywhere. From an account published by “The People's Tribune” in 1934, it is found that in 1933 over 24,000 dead bodies of little infants were picked up in the street of Shanghai alone and the same state prevails throughout most of China. It is bitter and terrible poverty that makes the parents expose their infants. In the light of such instances, it is futile to hope that ordinary persons will be able to avoid progeny merely through self-control. It is, therefore, established that there is no go without recourse to modern contraceptives. To deny the necessity of those remedies is to show one's preference for abortions, infanticides, etc.⁴

Need of Family Planning:-At one time in China there was ban to give the childbirth for five years. Five years also very important for the development of any country. Standard of living people is decreasing due to the increase in population. Unemployment, corruption and crime increases due to the rapid growth in population. We are not able to provide even the basic needs of the people. Government and even N.G.O. could not able to solve these problems. If we want to solve the problem of the growing population then the scientific approach and family planning education should be inculcated among the Indian people. Such kind of thoughts was given by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for the birth control and family planning.⁵

Even Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar also experienced the unrealistic growth of population. On 17 December 1939 in front of untouchable students, he clearly mentions that he had five children and out of these

four died. For this, he was not sorrowful but he was happy. If these children alive then it would be the very burden for him to give all of the education, food, and shelter and it would be very difficult for him. He told that he had only one child and he had the responsibility of only one child. He further advised that all of you must take care of the family planning. He was said that taking the proper care of our child is also nothing but one kind of social work because you are preparing the good citizen of the society.⁶

Samajswastay Journal:-Contemporary social reformer of Dr. BabashebAmbedkar was R. K. Karve was also started the work for the birth control in Maharashtra. For that, he started the journal samajswasthay to educate the people about the importance of birth control. He was writing in that journal on the subject of birth control and family planning and freedom of sex. People of the society of that time supposed that the work which was started by R.D.Karve is the distractive work of the society, therefore, the case was registered against him and he was fined Rs. 100. When the case was registered against him at that time Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar was in Europe. He advised R.D.Karve that he should be fighting for birth-control and he should not stop his work. He had given the support of his work. This incident tells us that how he was thinking for the social movement and his thoughts was also connected with all aspects of the social developments.⁷

Speech of P.G. Roham:- In Mumbai Assembly, a member of Mumbai Assembly, On 10th November, 1938 he gave speech that whenever the subject of birth-control was broached, the burden to our opponents song was that continence (Brahmacharya) is the sovereign specific for our country and that it is better to leave westerners to be blessed by their own artificial remedies. He very humbly wanted to ask those honorable Persons to state the grounds upon which they hold that view. It was stated that our people were spiritualistic, while Westerners were materialistic. In what way were our people spiritualistic? Had our people renounced the world and become ascetics? Does not every one of our villages possess Shylocks ready to demand their pound of flesh from poor and innocent debtors? Have we not scoundrels who are debased enough to leave stranded helpless widows whom they themselves have misled? Can we claim that our society is without men who have discarded their chaste and devoted wives and taken to prostitutes? I am completely at a loss to understand how a society can be called spiritualistic, in which many are ruined by matrimonial transactions that amount to virtual sales of brides and bridegrooms, in which a person refusing to give an absenquial feast to his caste-people is out-casted, in

which men are planning their second marriages while their first wives are burning on funeral pyres, in which even old fogies of sixty years can marry girls of twelve on the strength of monetary bribes and in which the treatment offered to widows is worse than that given even to the beasts. Western materialism cannot be held responsible for the rotten state of our society described above. On the contrary, it is those who have come into contact with western materialism who are trying their best to remedy these evils, though their efforts are proving nothing but a cry in the wilderness.”⁸

Very few persons have the courage and the inclination necessary for leaving one's own presence of relatives and friends and made agreeable by a suitable climate and other factors and to repair to a distant land in which there is the danger of the climate being found to be an unsuitable one and in which the inhabitants are different from oneself in language, customs, and manners. Generally, people willing to emigrate are those who are fit to be good citizens and who are able and energetic. It is really a loss to the motherland that such people should emigrate. These persons can easily maintain themselves in their own country but ambition impels them to try to better their lot by going to distant lands. Emigration is practically useless in the case of persons who are handicapped either physically or mentally or financially and it is really these people that stand in need of help. Considered from the point of the necessary capital alone, this remedy cannot afford relief to many persons.⁹

Suggestions of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar for Birth Control:- Dr. Ambedkar was excessively worried about the overgrowth of the population in India and he wanted certain measures should be brought out for the birth control. Looking at the contemporary situation he commented. The present great struggle of life renders timely marriage impossible for many and so exposes them to assorted diseases and uses. Many women become invalid for life and some even lose their spirits by the birth of children in their pathological condition or in too rapid succession. Birth control is the only sovereign specific remedy that can do away with all these catastrophes. Wherever, a woman is disinclined to carry a child for any reason whatsoever, she must be in a situation to prevent conception and bringing forth progeny, which should be totally dependent on the choice of women. Society would in no way profit from the summation of unwanted offspring.¹⁰

Dr. Ambedkar advised that everybody should get married after he or she becomes financially able. According to him, marriage was a liability. Keeping in mind the problem of the population also, he

advised that to have too many children was a crime. The parents must be responsible to give each child a better start than they themselves had. The women should be on friendly terms with their husbands. And, he did not agree that there should be a master-slave relation between the husband and the wife.¹¹In the world, we can witness many societies that are small in numbers but distinguished in respect of wealth, culture etc. in our country, the Parsee community is an illustration on this point.

Conclusions:-The thoughts of Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar was nothing only the thoughts but it was the future planning. Member of the assembly had not supported his bill of birth-control when it was presented, but now everybody understood the importance of that bill. Those mentalities who were opposing to the family planning and birth-control now all of them giving the support for this and this was implemented not only in India but also all over the world follow the family planning and birth-control. Whichever movement regarding birth control was going on that time all that movement was supported by Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar. When the birth control work was started by V.D. Karve that was supported by Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar. He was the first political leader who mentions the problem of population growth and given the solution in his independent labor party's manifesto. Now our Indian government is taking lot's of steps for the birth-control and trying to educate the people by different type of method. If our leader would have been given the support to the bill of birth-control which was presented by the Dr. BabasahebAmbedkar then whatever problems we are facing today these could be reduced in very large. The government of India should create and popular the idea that is, ' One Family One Child.'

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