

DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR'S VISION ON THE EDUCATION AND ITS RELEVANCE

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Abstract

Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar was a well-known teacher himself. He established People's Education Society in Bombay and Aurangabad to educate the students of Dalit community. His educational philosophy is reflected in his lectures, his published articles in various magazines and his work in the educational institutions. He said that every educational institute should be an agency of change society. Dr. Ambedkar strongly held that education should be a priority for the society and utilised for growth of individuals with character. The present paper is concerned with his educational thoughts of Dr. Ambedkar. Dr. Ambedkar wanted a type of education that not only inculcates awareness and fulfilment of human rights among citizen but also teaches human dignity and justice in India. According to him Education could open the eyes and encourage the oppressed ones to fight and remove injustice and exploitation they are suffering from ages. He recognized that, lack of education was the main cause for the backwardness of poor people. He preferred humanistic education which enables a man to rediscover himself and ensure freedom rather than being a student of the church, school or the state. He put all his efforts to ensure the educational opportunities to all the citizens of independent India without any discrimination, for which he framed some rights in Indian Constitution.

Introduction

Education is most important among all of us. Education plays a very important role in our life. For living a luxurious life or for living a better life, you should be educated. Education is that which transforms a person to live a better life and even in a social well-being. Education is the one that doing something constructive in our near future. Education plays a vital role in success in the personal growth. The more you have knowledge the more you grow. Being educated and earning a professional degree prepares you to be a part in reputed organizations, companies or institutions. A person who gets good education will become good citizen. Education is the process by which man has made the great positive changes in the society and the lifestyle. The importance of education cannot be stated enough. It is a self-enlightening process. It is crucial to the overall development of an individual and the society at large. Education for all means has been the most important debate in all stages of society, progress and development. According to Waghmare, "A person who is awakened knows what's best for him/her, knows the difference between right and wrong and that's when he is known as educated."

Dr. B.R Ambedkar was not only the father of Indian Constitution but was a great freedom fighter, political leader, philosopher, thinker, writer, economist, editor, and a revivalist for Buddhism in India. His Educational philosophy stresses on development of persons and their environment. Dr. Ambedkar strongly believed that education should be provided without any discrimination to all the citizens of independent India. “Education is something which ought to be brought within the reach of every one.” was the fundamental educational thought of Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. Ambedkar believed in liberal education and based on religious inspiration of non–theistic nature. Education according to Dr. Ambedkar was a blend of pragmatism of Dewey and ‘dhamma’ of Buddha. He thought that education would enlighten his people and bridge the gap between the higher classes and untouchables.

The Purpose of Education according to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

According to Dr. Ambedkar, “The object of primary education is to see that every child that enters the portals of a primary school does leave it only at a stage when it becomes literate and continues to be literate throughout the rest of his life.”

Dr. Ambedkar identified two purposes of knowledge: first, to acquire it for betterment of others and secondly to use it for one's own betterment. He has also argued against professional learning (The British Educational System) which aims at creating a clerical nature of workers. He emphasized on secular education for social emancipation and freedom.

Education has the sole purpose to enlighten the depressed classes so as to enhance their cause of social, economic and political upliftment. The social and ethical philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar aimed at making the depressed people aware to change their thoughts and old behaviour-patterns and to move forward in the direction of unity and freedom through education. The basic theme of his philosophy of education was to inculcate the values of liberty, equality, fraternity, justice and moral character among the boys and girls of all religion, region, class and caste.

Dr. Ambedkar listed these three components as objectives for policy makers:

- 1) Recasting the aims and purposes of education,
- 2) Education as an instrument of substantive equality,
- 3) Women's education.

Educational Vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

School and Educational Institution : According to Dr. Ambedker, “School is a holy institution where the minds of the students are cultured”. The regular working in the schools should be organized in a disciplined manner. School is the factory of making good citizens. The skilled foreman of this institution converts the raw material into a good quality product. He started the model educational institution by establishing People’s Education Society. The preference should be given to higher educational qualifications irrespective

of caste and creed while appointing the teachers in the educational institutions. He given importance to the admissions of students belonging to dalit community in his institution but, the teacher of the school should be higher qualified belonging to any caste or category. He supported the co-education by saying that women should be given equal opportunity along with men to educate themselves.

Education and Students : Dr. Ambedker had served in various educational institutions as professor till years. So, he had deep understanding of the minds of the students. He said that the self-confidence of the students should be raised through education and the students should not lose their self confidence at the time of examination or using the learned skill. He stressed the value education and said that students should self reliant the knowledge, intellect, politeness and strict discipline into their behaviour and character. Politeness is required along with the knowledge and knowledge without politeness is useless. He also said that social emotions should also be incorporated in the students through educational process. According to Dr. Ambedker, “To score good marks in the examinations and to get the degree is a separate issue, but, to be cultured, knowledgeable and educationist is totally different. The teacher should understand the basic problems and loopholes in the education of the students. The ability to create something new, to find the answer of questions in a logical way, to express oneself with confidence, to put the inner ideas properly in front of audience and the basic knowledge of the concepts are absent in the students.” The students should be shaped as per the need and requirement of the society and nation. The curriculum and teaching material should be framed by taking into consideration the culture, customs, duties, economy, historical perspectives, knowledge about the various societies and logical thinking in the students.

Education and Teachers : Dr. B.R. Ambedkar himself was innovative and creative teacher. According to him education is a continuous process and the teacher provides the real base to it. Therefore, education and ability depends entirely upon authentic knowledge, self reliance, learning attitude and delivering skill of the teacher. He adopted the triangular formula of ‘वचन-मनन, चिंतन और अध्ययन’ in his teachings. Due to this formula he himself became a good teacher and in broader sense a social teacher. A teacher should be multifaceted. He should be sharp minded and choosy character. He is the national builder because education is in the hands of teacher and the development of a nation depends upon educated manpower. So, every educational institution should have intellectual, positivist and kind hearted teachers to teach the poor and baseline students.

Education and Knowledge : The view of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar about the knowledge is quite broader and ideal. Knowledge means light. This light should become the base of social, economic and moral development of man. The context of knowledge should be social and education is the weapon by which man can be free from exploitation raise the revolution against slavery. He says that intellect is like a sword and every society and group recognizes the man bearing it. The cleverness and intellectuality need good character and politeness. If the people become educative without these then the nation and society will be destroyed. The education is that which builds man and unique combination of knowledge and intellect is equal to education. The achievement of self-reliance through the knowledge is the main purpose of education.

Education is Equivalent to Food : Dr. B.R. Ambedkar says by stressing on progress of literacy and development that to admit a child in a school is not surety of his being literate. The development of the ability to make him literate and educate till whole of the life is the purpose of the school or educational institution. The child should not drop out of the system till the achievement of the basic goal. Education is equivalent to food which is needed daily till whole of our life.

Education and Society : Social change is a continuous process. The way of social change is processed through education. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar says in this context that it is important to have the strong attitude of accepting the changes in the society for giving speed to the process of change. 'पढ़ो और पढ़ाओ' is reflected in the social educational philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar. No society will be awakened without the process of education. He stressed that the social and behavioural inequalities in the society can be removed through the medium of education. He says that the socialization and moralization of man is the purpose of education because education lays the foundation of culture and civilization.

Education as a tool to ensure Social Justice

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wanted an educational system which would serve all. His educational model was a socialist one based on Buddhist ideology. According to Dr. Ambedkar, the society must be based on reason, and not on traditions of caste system.

“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 opportunities 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.” Dr. Ambedkar’s ideas for the untouchables was to raise their educational standards so that they may know their own condition, have aspirations and rise to the level of higher class and be in the position to use political power as a means. Educate, agitate and organize are three final words of Dr. Ambedkar to Untouchables to raise themselves in the society.

He believed that liberation of depressed classes is based on education as an educated person can assert their rights and be motivated for development. It not only trains the human mind to think but also to take the right decision to ensure social justice. He asked that, “It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom.” He also awakened the Dalits regarding the injustice – social, economic and political and make them aware of the possibilities of establishing a society in which they could be given equal rights, respect and opportunities and regarded as equals.

Educational Rights given to Depressed Class and Women

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, tried an adequate inclusion of women’s and depressed classes rights in the constitution of India. He looked upon law as the instrument of

creating a just social order. He incorporated the values of liberty, equality and fraternity in the Indian Constitution.

To ensure equal rights of education to depressed class, special provisions are given which includes - Article 30(1) which gives the linguistic or religious minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. Article 30(2) bars the state, while granting aid to educational institutions, from discriminating against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a linguistic or a religious minority. Article 29 (2) of the Constitution of India defines the protection of interest of minorities and ensures that no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them. Article 46 directs the state to promote with special care, the educational and economic interests of the weaker section of the people and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Relevance of Dr. Ambedkar's Philosophy of Education

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar had constantly fought to eradicate birth-based oppression where the basic amenities like education, employment, housing, equal opportunities are restricted for the benefit and development of the few upper classes. Equality in every aspect is reflected in the constitution and proves to be an important element is its composition.

The NCERT says, "Across the country, enormous strides towards establishing schools within the reach of every habitation have been made. Attempts to put larger number of children through schooling have proved to be successful. But pockets of children still remain to be reached- children from the socially weaker sections, those belonging to the scheduled castes and tribes, those belonging to the minority groups, and particularly girls, in each of these groups. The need of the hour is to identify the extraordinary socio-cultural circumstances which restrict these children from accessing schools." Hence despite of making constitutional legal rights, the children and youth of depressed classes are not able to enjoy the equal and quality education. In the Indian society, people are illiterate and they are not aware about education as well as their basic rights of the life, still people are facing caste discrimination in society.

The education system projects itself as a tool for empowerment, upliftment and equality for depressed sections. But social perspective has not changed its image. Dalit students in today's knowledge and technological laden era are still facing the rejection from their teachers who give priority to so called upper caste students. The lower castes are still sidelined from the learning process and are harshly treated. Although for economic upliftment of these students government but maximum students are giving scholarships under various schemes are devoid of awareness about these scholarships.

Conclusion

For Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, education was the main key to open the doors of light, vision and wisdom. Take education, be united and do the struggle' is the main message of his to the society and nation. He says that education and society have a bounded relationship because the progress and development of society is possible only through education. The power of making the man free from exploitation and slavery comes from education. He believed that education can act as a change agent to bring equality in the society. He had done plentiful to awake the depressed class, to make them aware of their situation, to raise their voice and showed them education as a path for their political, economical and social upliftment. He motivated the Dalits to merge with the upper caste in social, economic and political aspects through the slogan of educate, agitate and organise. Also he ensured educational rights of all sections of Indian society by providing certain rights under the Article 30 and 29 in Indian constitution.

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