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Savitribai Phule: A Harbinger of Indian Society and Education

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ABSTRACT:

Middle of the nineteenth century in Savitribai Phule was an eminent Indian educationist and social reformer, who played a vital role in education and society. She emphasized education for all as well as women education and empowerment. She opposed the traditional education system that means caste, gender and religion. She established the first school for girls in Brahmanical society. She also started another school, mahila seva mandal, rehabilitation centre and Satyashodhak Samaj for untouchable people. Objectives of this research paper were philosophy of education, feminist ideology, as a social reformer and contribution on education in 21st century of Savitribai Phule. The researcher used of documentary study method and collection of data used of two significant way primary and secondary sources. Her philosophy of education is relevant to the present context that is aims of education – universal education, gender equality, development of humanism, liberation of education. She is the mother of feminist in India. She breaks all rules and regulations in the patriarchal society. Her formation of night school, modern education and Mid Day Meal scheme is impact on today and struggles life inspire to us.

KEYWORDS: SAVITRIBAI PHULE; INDIAN SOCIETY; INDIAN EDUCATION; FEMINIST IDEOLOGY.

INTRODUCTION:

In the last three thousand years, the illustrious history of India has transgressed and shifted toward a more conservation civilization. This remarkable transition unquestionably started within the family and has been sustained by a complex interplay of cultural, practical and theological ideas. In those bygone years, every area of life saw a wave of heyday and Doomsday but the education of girls remained mute tyranny in the history of mighty India. Such barbarism has been described by many renowned historians as a significant disadvantage of India's backwardness (Das and Das, 2021). Education for available to everyone but as time went on and rulers came and went, it started to be caste based. The Hindu caste system was based on responsibilities that were passed down from ancestors. In India religion was very important to daily life. Only men received education throughout the ancient era (Dr.Beena Indrani, 2020). But in modern India women are not behind males in any field. Because of their education and wisdom, they were well-known throughout history and held sway over many people's hearts. They have demonstrated their abilities in a variety of fields including politics, sports, sciences, medical, engineering, the public sector and social services among others (Das and Das, 2021). Women because the integral a

part of human kind, their contribution within the nowadays. Women's participation in economic sector is crucial for her economic management and their property (Maity, 2016). Notable among them is Savitribai Phule. She was an eminent Indian educationist, philosopher, social reformer, feminist, teacher and poet. She played an instrument role in women's education and empowerment during the nineteenth century. She is a women's education mother and her philosophy focuses on educating people and releasing women from so called India tradition. She was a strong woman and supported her husband in all of his radical endeavors and stood by him (Biswas and Bhattacharyya). She fought tenaciously and spoke out against society's outdated antiquated and inhumane view about women. Savitribai Phule was a champion of women's rights and she made significant contributions to education that will live on in India history. She served as a messiah for all the women who were subjected to a life of servitude during a time when India was afflicted by women's outraged modesty (Murugeswari, 2019). She made significant efforts to educate and emancipate child widows, advocated for widow remarriage and ran a campaign against child marriage and sati pratha. She is regarded as a key player in Maharashtra's social reform movement and like B.R. Ambedkar and Annabhau Sathe is a symbol of the Dalit Mang caste. She aggressively sought to remove caste and gender based discrimination and advocated against untouchability. She also engaged in a variety of social activities (Das and Das, 2021). However many felt that her contribution by and large was neglected by mainstream society. The British government realized for contribution to education from the very beginning and honored her but in independent India; she has not been honored by the social reformers, educationists, feminists, or the human rights. Savitribai Phule is not known in the history of contemporary Indian with a few exceptions. Her life and struggles ought to be known to all Indians who should be able to appreciate them.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

Our educational system is founded on equity and equality in today's India, where one of the primary responsibilities of the government is to offer education for all. But caste, gender and religious issues deprive women and other people. Savitribai Phule one of India's first contemporary feminists was a social reformer and advocate for women's education and empowerment. She is well known for being India's first female teacher and for her work to develop women and members of the untouchable community in the fields of education and literacy. So, through this paper the contribution of Savitribai Phule on educational as well as social development will be explained.

PURPOSES OF THE STUDY:

1. To illustrate the philosophy of education of Savitribai Phule.
2. To know about the Feminist Ideology of Savitribai Phule.
3. To analyze Savitribai Phule as a social reformer.
4. To know the contribution of Savitribai Phule on education in 21st century.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. According to Savitribai Phule, what is the philosophy of education?
2. What are the thoughts of Savitribai Phule on feminism?
3. What are the contributions of Savitribai Phule as a social reformer?
4. What are the contributions of Savitribai Phule in reforming Indian education of 21st century?
5. Discuss in detail the contribution of Savitribai Phule on women's education and establishing equal opportunities for them in India?
6. What is the purpose of upliftment of women in India in vow of Savitribai Phule?

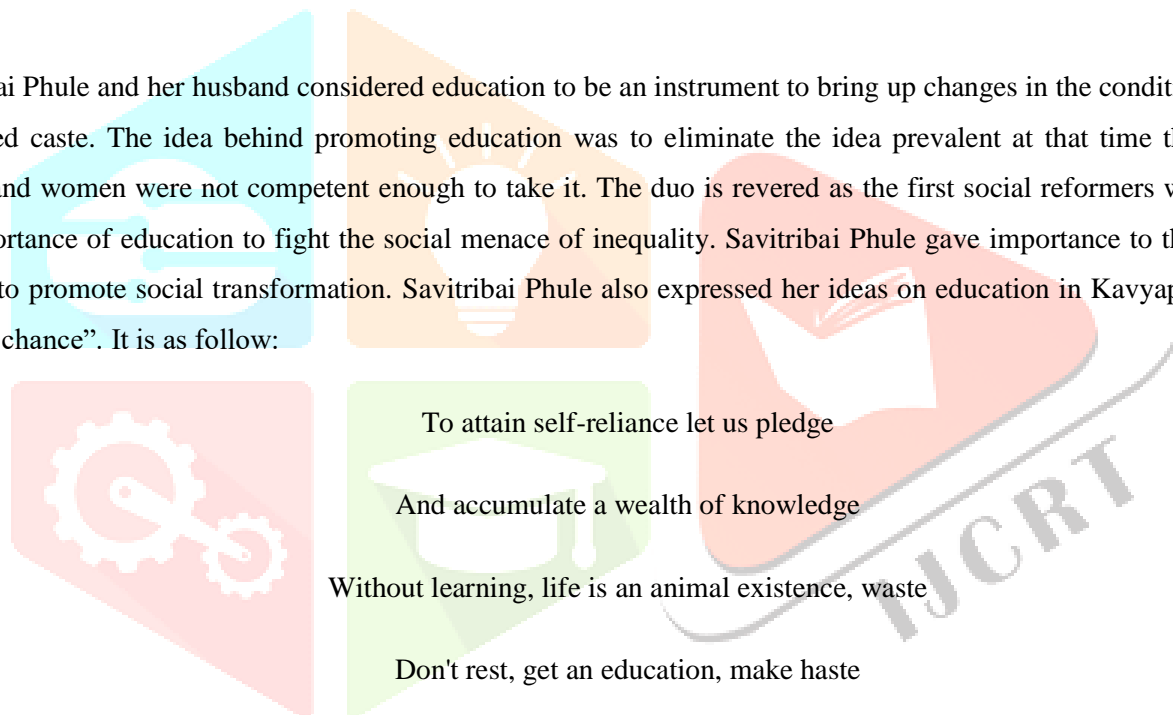
METHODOLOGY:

It is a purely qualitative approach associated with the documentary study method. It is used for the collection of data from primary and secondary sources by the researcher. The primary sources were government reports and her own written books and the secondary sources were thesis, published journals, articles, magazines and newspaper on Savitribai Phule.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE OBJECTIVES:**1 no. Objective - the philosophy of education of Savitribai Phule**

Till the middle of the nineteenth century, education was considered to be a privilege only meant for the upper castes but Savitribai Phule emphasized on secular education as well as universal education. She believed that proper education of learners was possible when fulfilling the requirements of food, water and shelter. So, they started a stipend or scholarship for the students in the field of education. She preached the importance of getting and education for both boys and girls are equal.

Savitribai Phule and her husband considered education to be an instrument to bring up changes in the conditions of socially oppressed caste. The idea behind promoting education was to eliminate the idea prevalent at that time that lower-caste people and women were not competent enough to take it. The duo is revered as the first social reformers who recognized the importance of education to fight the social menace of inequality. Savitribai Phule gave importance to the education of women to promote social transformation. Savitribai Phule also expressed her ideas on education in Kavyaphule named as "golden chance". It is as follow:



To attain self-reliance let us pledge
And accumulate a wealth of knowledge
Without learning, life is an animal existence, waste
Don't rest, get an education, make haste

She put up the question "should they be called animals?"

No knowledge, no learning

No affinity for either

A brain that lies fallow

Should they be called humans

AIMS OF EDUCATION:

According to Savitribai Phule the following should be the aims of education-

Universal education - Savitribai Phule believed in universal education. She wanted to education to spread among all the children. Education is not just for upper castes but it is for all irrespectively religion, caste, race, creed, color etc.

Gender equality - According to Savitribai Phule, men and women are equal in our society. She accorded highly importance to women. The development of the nation is possible when women are given due to proper respect. Men as well as women play an important role in national development. Breaking culture of centuries the Indian female nowadays has not solely embraced existence in the corporate world but has additionally begun to make her moves past a corporate career, into entrepreneurship and leadership. The participation of women in economic activities is compulsory to increase the reputation of women and utilize half of the human resource. The Indian constitution ensures equal popularity to male and female except gender discrimination enabling female to join any profession or occupation start agency similar to man counterparts (Shetty M & Hans, 2019).

Development of humanism - Savitribai Phule has fought all her life against upper castes for the Dalits, lower castes, women and widows. She was the first woman in India to talk about Bahujan. She was not only involved in the reform on her community but also in Muslim community. She offered Fatima Sheikh, a Muslim woman, a job as a teacher and made her completely secular by joining the movement. She took steps to change the attitude of the community as well as other communities. The Phule couple embraced people of every caste and tried to eliminate caste discrimination. This shows that she was a believer in human religion. According to her, the aim of education should be the development of humanism.

Liberation education - In the Brahmanical education system only upper caste males were allowed to get education, was forbidden for lower caste, such education system was rejected by Savitribai Phule. She saw education as a means of liberation. She wanted an education system in India where oppressed Shudras, Atishudras and women could participate in education and develop the society.

CURRICULUM - Curriculum is one of the four main components of education. Curriculum plays an important role in getting education done smoothly. Because the success of any education system largely depends on the curriculum. So, the subjects that Savitribai Phule has emphasized on are Law, Mathematics, History, Geography, Science, Social Science, Medical Science, English, Arts education - those are to help to develop social reform in the society.

METHODS OF TEACHING - Savitribai Phule reflected the influence of pragmatic philosophy on life and applied it to education. She and her husband set up the first girl's school in India and she was the first female teacher in that school as well as in our country. She taught in the classroom according to the needs of the students through recitation method, lecture method, experience method, practical method, question-answer method etc.

DISCIPLINE - Savitribai Phule emphasized on free discipline. She felt that the discipline established by punishment was incompatible with the nature of the students' minds. That is, attempts to discipline students by force can never be successful.

TEACHER - Teacher is the backbone of society. He is the symbol of an independent and open thinking section. He plays an important role in the development of society. He will be a knowledgeable person and will be involved in the work of education without personal bias and the teacher as efficient in their subject area, the teacher as mentor of their students, the teacher as a motivator and inspiration, the as upholder of ethical standards (Sheikh & Jahan, 2013).

2no. Objectives - Feminist Ideology of Savitribai Phule.

The word 'feminism' has its derived from the Latin word 'femina' its means 'woman' and thereby refers to woman's rights, status and power. Feminist ideology try to do became an equality of sex and gender (Rai & Sujata, 2013). Savitribai Phule first introduced feminist ideology in India at that time therefore, she is the mother of feminism in India. In fact, many called her the first feminist in modern India. Savitribai Phule started several initiatives for social transformation much before the early nationalists took up social

reform as a campaign strategy. She is best known for her contributions to women's education in India. But her life was not easy. She, herself was a victim of child marriage. She was nine years old when got married. She was not educated at that time. She belonged to a Shudra family at that time women's education was a crime in the eyes of Brahmanical society. After the marriage, her husband taught her to read and write. She later completed her training at the American missionary in Ahmedabad and normal school in Pune.

First girl's school

After completing her studies, she started the first school for girls in Pune at Bhide Wada in 1848. Initially, nine girls enrolled as students from different castes in the society. The school provides of equal opportunity of girls for the study come to all sections in the society from different religious, castes and socio-economic background. She also started at least 18 schools.

Passionate teacher

Savitribai Phule was a first youngest female teacher in India. She fought for the education of children of all religions as well as for the empowerment of women against that time of Brahmanical society. She was harassed every day walking to school, throwing stones, mud and dung at her (Pandey, 2015). She used to go to school with two saris and when one became dirty she would change it wear another sari. As a result of her struggle for women's education, she was often persecuted by orthodox men. She responded to those who insulted her "God bless you, I am doing my duty."

Women's empowerment

Empowerment may be a multi-faced, multi-dimensional and multi-layered construct. As such, it's not this or that, however is that the activity and interaction of assorted factors-physical, socioeconomic, political, mental, psychological and attitudinal and then on. Women's empowerment can be delineated as a method during which girls gain larger share of management over resources-material, human and intellectual like information, info, ideas and monetary resources like cash and management over deciding within the house, community, society and nation and to realize power. The word women's empowerment has return to be related to women's struggle for social justice and equality (Islam, 2018). It is true that in the nineteenth century women in India were the object of men's enjoyment in patriarchal society. Their standard of living was low, not considered human. In such a situation, Savitribai and Jyotiba Phule along with their two friends, two siblings, Usman Sheikh and Fatima Sheikh and other companions ignited the flame of light in the Renaissance from the marginal dark world of the Shudratishudra society in Maharashtra. At that time Savitribai flourished against the Brahmanical society and her struggle was one of beacons in the society revolution of India. She is a pioneer in crossing the patriarchal line in many respects for women rights and equal opportunity of girls in each and every field.

Women's education

Girls are less likely to reach their educational potential due to a variety of factors, such as being tasked with home duties, being raised to accept a domestic role, having mothers who lack literacy and the ability to educate their children, depending economically on men, and sometimes facing child marriage (Thakur, 2012). Savitribai Phule encountered boycotts and criticism primarily from men for her efforts to spread awareness of women's education during the time. Her husband Jyotirao Phule was one of her biggest supporters as she worked to spreading awareness of the importance of women's education and uplifting the position of women in India. Phule married Jyotirao Phule when she was nine years old and illiterate. Savitribai Phule had established three schools in 1851 and was a teacher to 150s students. She would later found 18 schools across the country most of which were for upper caste women but she also established schools for Dalit and lower caste women. She encouraged women to join in school by providing them with stipend.

3no. Objectives - Savitribai Phule as a social reformer.

The length earlier than independence changed into the time of the status quo of the British Empire. It began out within side the 18th century. India remained beneath neath British rule for nearly centuries the role of women all through the Mughal period persevered even all through British rule. After the Mughal period, British rule changed into hooked up over India. Even at this time, the evils infant marriage, polygamy, widow marriage prohibition, the dowry gadget and the sati pratha had been increasingly widespread in society (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2022). Savitribai Phule was a victim in this system of child marriage. She was not only feminist but also as a social reformer like Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Her social activities are evergreen in the pages of history.

Mahila seva mandal

Savitribai was a revolutionary on par with her husband, spearheading many progressive movements in her individual capacity. She started the Mahila Seva Mandal in 1852 to raise awareness about women's rights and to campaign vigorously against the humiliation of widows and for the remarriage of widows. She also spoke out against infanticide and opened a rehabilitation center for illegitimate children. She also went on strike with Mumbai and Pune barbers to protest against the inhumane practice of shaving widows' heads. She also never shied from bringing her reformations to her own home. Jyotiba was not only her husband but also her teacher and friend. Savitribai got a new life for her husband. Jyotiba also helped his wife to stand armed and on her own feet by educating her. Her husband fully cooperated in all social activities. Although the main goal of the Phule couple was to expand education.

Balhatya pratibandhak griha

A young Brahmin widow working as a cook in the house of Jyotiba's friend was raped by a neighborhood sastri. The widow Kashibai became pregnant and the sastri refused to take responsibility. Kashibai tried several times to have an abortion but failed and gave birth to a son. It is disgraceful to conceive without marriage, so she killed the child for fear of society. Kashibai filed a case against him at the police station and was later sentenced to life imprisonment in the Andaman Islands. In 1863, the Phule couple set up an infanticide prohibition home for the welfare of unmarried mothers and their children. They saved the lives of many Brahman pregnant widows.

Equality of society

At the time the upper caste people considered the shadow of the untouchables as unclean and did not give water to the thirsty untouchables. In 1868, Savitribai and Jyotiba Phule also opened a well in the house for the use of the untouchables. Sorvadaya seeks to build a social order that is free from all forms of dominance. Its ultimate goal is to create society without rulers, where “governors and governed will be unified in the individual” (Mishra, 2012).

Satyashodhak samaj

The Varna, caste and class system has hounded Indian society for hundred and hundred of years. Republic of India is that the solely country within the world wherever such a system came into being and yet exists. The caste and class system are that the one among the main issues for the event of Indian society (Siva & Rani, 2015). So, among the various social activities of the Phule couple, the establishment of Satyashodhak Samaj in 1874 was at its peak. The main purpose of setting it up was to make the backward sections of the society aware of their rights and help them to liberate themselves from Brahmanical rule. It was a bold step against those who had presided over religious ceremonies throughout the ages.

Inter caste marriage

Theirson Yashwant too married a woman of a different caste at the age of sixteen with the permission of Savitribai. This was the first recorded inter-caste marriage in British India (Dr.B. Murugeswari 2019). At the time of the famine of Maharashtra in 1875, the Phule couple and the Satyashodhak volunteers extended a helping hand to the victims. When Jyotiba died in 1890, Savitribai became the first woman to perform death in India.

4 no. objectives - Contribution of Savitribai Phule on education in 21st century

Everyone needs to be aware of the name Savitribai Phule in order to comprehend their today thoughts. Despite the British era, her thoughts are still applicable and helpful now. In this paper, an effort has been made to explain why she is regarded as the "mother of contemporary girls' education" and how her ideas might contribute to women's emancipation. How does her formation of night school, educational evolution and organisation of RTE and Mid Day Meal schemes? Finally, it is relevant how her activities continue to have an impact on the 21st century educational system.

Modern Education

In today's India we see women in each and every field. They talk freely, walk freely, learn freely and participate in all the activities because primarily Savitribai Phule warfare condemned a lot in the past. She not only fought for secular education but also for right education for girls. She realized the importance of women's education even though she felt the importance of the English language and her methods of teaching, discipline are effectively relevant to the modern education system.

As a role of educational evolution

In that time when women were limited to their kitchen and children, girls did not acquire the knowledge or education. But today in India, get an opportunity to learn male as well as female in same classroom. They compete with male in any field. Gradually women's education is increasing and more women's education will increase in future. Education makes them self-reliant and self-confident.

Formation of Night School

Savitribai Phule and her husband jointly started a night school for agriculturists and labourer in 1855. Many poor and oppressed individuals had no option to attend conventional schools but could only be available at night, thus the Phule couple established the night school to meet their requirements.

Organization of RTE and Mid Day Meal schemes

Central government has started the Mid-Day-Meal scheme in 1995 for students' class I up to class VIII (6 to 14). The survey of Pratichi Trust (2013) found that Mid-Day-Meal scheme has reduced the dropout rate (Majhi, 2022). The Right to Education Act in mid day meals is a wonderful scheme in modern day for retention of school students but Savitribai Phule and her husband already started it almost 170 years ago. By providing health care for every student at their school, the Phule couple started programmes to reduce student malnutrition. In 1850, they started the RTE and Mid Day Meal schemes.

FINDINGS:

1. Savitribai Phule is a great personality. She emphasized on secular education as well as universal education. She considered education to be an instrument to bring up changes in the conditions of socially disadvantaged castes. Her philosophy of education is relevant to the present context that is the aims of education (universalization of education, gender equality, development of humanism, and liberation of education) curriculum, methods of teaching, discipline, and teacher.
2. Savitribai Phule is the mother of feminist in India. She plays an important role for women. Her struggle and fight against patriarchal society is a memorable chapter. She breaks all rules and regulations in the patriarchal society. She tries to stop of girls' child marriage. She encourages women empowerment and provides stipend or scholarship for women education. She started the first school for girls.
3. Savitribai Phule as a social reformer work is widow remarriage, established Mahila Seva Mandal. She also spoke out against infanticide and opened a rehabilitation centre for illegitimate children. Phule set up an infanticide prohibition home for the welfare of unmarried mother and their children and saved many Brahman pregnant widows. Her best social activities are Satyashodhak Samaj and started inter caste marriage.
4. Contribution of Savitribai Phule is great in the present context. She struggles and fights for the opportunity of women in any field. Her formation of night school, and relevance to RTE in mid-day-meal scheme are positively impacting the present scenario.

CONCLUSION:

Savitribai Phule is a name that everyone needs to know and understand their thoughts today. Her ideas are relevant and useful even today, despite the British era. She broke down all the traditional stereotypes and prejudices of the 19th century to boost up a new age of thinking in British colonization of India. She emphasized on secular education for social emancipation. She considered education to be an instrument to change the situations of socially backward classes. The concept beyond promoting education was to remove the idea dominant at that time Dalit, untouchables, lower-caste people and women were not eligible to take it. Other people respect her for the reason she was the first women social reformer and fought for women and empowerment. She tried to make an inequality society.

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