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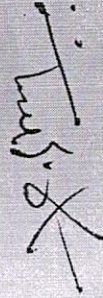
Dr. Kavita S. Biyani

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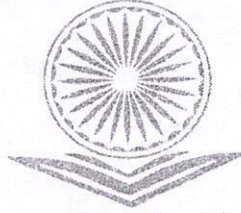
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19. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's thoughts on Education

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Abstract

Educational thoughts of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar revealed through his letters, speeches, writings, journals such as Mook Nayak, Buhishkrit Bharat, Janata, Prabuddha Bharat and various essays.

Dr. Ambedkar, the chief architect of Indian constitution, is well known not only as a constitutionalist and a parliamentarian but also a scholar and active reformer all over the world. As a champion of the downtrodden he waged a relentless struggle against the oppressive features of hindu society. Throughout his life, he strove for the establishment of a new social order based on the principles of liberty, equality, justice and universal brotherhood.

Introduction

The writings of Dr. Ambedkar reflects through numerous letters written by him to his colleagues and dignitaries. He has also delivered many speeches on various occasions. He has also written many articles, reports and books. He has also expressed his views among society through several journals such as Mook Nayak, Bushishkrit Bharat, etc. On the basis of these letters, speeches, journals; the study of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's educational thoughts are possible. The present paper will analyze some facts on education through letters, speeches and writings of Ambedkar.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study various letters which reflects Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's educational thoughts.
2. To study Ambedkar's speeches delivered on various events.
3. To study Ambedkar's writings on education in brief.

Letters

On 4th August, 1913, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar written a letter to Shivanak Gonak Jamadar. He expresses that – "Let your mission be to educate and preach the idea of education to those at least who are near to and in close contact with you.

On 11th December, 1930, Dr. Ambedkar wrote a letter to Amritao Rankhambe, colleague. His words are- "I feel it necessary to write to you that you should study English hard. I am afraid that ignorance to English will be blockade in our social life.

Dr. B.R.Ambedkar wrote to Bhaurao Gaikwad on 7th June, 1930, from London. He says, "It is useless to desire for the leadership unless and until one is cautious about his ability and significance of educational movement.

Speeches

During the period of twelve years from 1927 to 1939, he delivered a number of speeches as he was on various positions in government.

On 12th July, 1927, he spoke on grants for education. It is necessary to spend more money on primary education, fees and commercialization of education, need to cheaper the education, the great disparity in the comparative advancement of the different communities in the matter of education, matter of scholarship etc. He request the honourable Education Minister to spend more money on primary education.

Dr. Ambedkar wanted the untouchables to enter into government services. To do this, they should take higher education. He had planned to open a hostel. In this regard, he spoke on 20-3-1927 at Mahad in the conference held under the auspices of the Kolaba District Bahishkrit Parishad: "They (untouchables) are well progressed in education. Among them 90% are literate. The propogation of education was not only among men but also among women.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar held the views that entrance into government service will bring about progress in their lives. In this regard, he says, "Hence, I suggest you all, we should pay our particular attention to the higher education. It is better to have one graduate than to have a thousand students who have passed their fourth standard.

On 1-10-1927, he spoke on 'The Bombay University Act Amendment Bill-2, in this speech, the following issues seem to have reflected-

1. Control of university over the colleges to regulate teaching.
2. Inspection to the colleges
3. What powers should be given to the university
4. Power to disaffiliate the colleges that the university has.
5. Power to amend the ways of the colleges and to compel obedience
6. Importance of Royal Commission on university education in London.

He further says, 'for the purpose of grant-in-aid from Government Treasury the university alone shall be given to any college except through the university'. The above clause means the university should control the colleges on by enforcing the rules of discipline and to compel obedience.

Dr. Ambedkar insisted women's education also. Regarding this he spoke at Mahad on 27-12-1927, "The things, knowledge and learning are not for men only. They are necessary to women also. Our ancestor knew this, else, those who were in military services, would not yet given education to their daughters. If you desire to improve your next generation, bear in your mind the proverb, like father like son, an educate your daughters. I hope that you will not cast adrift my advice. Don't delay to execute it.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar delivered his first presidential address in All India Depressed Classes Conference held at Nagpur on 8th and 9th August, 1930. In this, he suggested some general principles of life. It must be-

1. Its social status
2. Its economic strength
3. Its educational position

Dr. Ambedkar delivered a speech in the Mahar Conference held at Bombay on 31st May, 1936. This speech is known as 'What Path Salvation?'. He says with regard to education- 'Some youngsters are running after education. After completion of education, your virtues are not valued, your caliber has no scope for appreciation, due to your untouchability. What will you do ?

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar spoke at Daund on 7.11.1937 that "to pay attention to education and give training to them properly".

On 11-9-1936, Dr. Ambedkar delivered a presidential speech at Pune on the Eleventh Untouchable Students conference. He advised to work hard for gaining knowledge. Only degrees can't serve, one must have knowledge and character, otherwise it will harm the society. He cited one English quotation-

"No nation can be grateful at the cost of its liberty."

Writings

Dr. Ambedkar's writings are multifarious. He has published various books and articles in journals. Though these books and journals, he has expressed his views for education.

In March 1918, Dr. Ambedkar published an article titled- 'Principles of Social Reconstruction' in the journal of the Indian Economic Society. He reviews Bertrand Russel's (1872-1970) thoughts. From educational point of view, this book is valuable. He wrote education means to embody creative impulses. For, "The power of education in forming character and opinion is very great and generally recognized. Education should not aim at passive awareness of dead facts but an activity directed towards the world that our efforts are to create. It should be inspired as a shining vision of the society.

In May 29th 1928, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar sent a printed memorandum concerning the state of education of the Depressed Classes in the Bombay Presidency, to the Indian Statutory Commission. This was sent on behalf of the Bahishkrit Hitkarni Sabha. The topic discussed in it are related to education, employment and political problems of the Depressed Classes. The manuscript discussed with regard to the education of untouchables in fullest details:

1. What did the British Government do about the education of the untouchables?
2. What are the policies of the British Government in the matter of the education of the Depressed Classes before 1855?
3. How Peshwas precluded untouchables as to not to take education.
4. Why British were silent on the question of promoting education among the native population?
5. Discrimination in giving education to Depressed Classes and higher classes.
6. Down filtration theory.
7. Great disparity in the comparative advancement of different communities in the matter of education.
8. Unequal treatment adopted by the British Government.
9. Criticism on Hunter Commission (1882-1883).

On 15-5-1936, a speech was prepared by Dr. Ambedkar for the annual conference of The Jat Pat Todak Mandal of Lahore but not delivered it owing to the cancellation of the conference by the Reception Committee on the ground that the views expressed in the speech would be unbearable to the conference. But, the researcher has included it in his writing.

"Any human being stands in need of requirement for his preservation. Education, of course, is one of them. Education every one must have. Education is a permanent requirement.

But this was not applied by the followers of Chaturvarnya to the lowest castes. If we respect equality, then there can be never discrimination either in any field that offers development.

On 1st August, 1942, Dr. Ambedkar submitted a paper under the title 'Mr. Gandhi and Emancipation of Untouchables' to the Pacific Relations Conference at Mont Trembant Quebec in Canada. In this, he had stated 'ESSENTIAL PROVISIONS IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION'. In the constitution, he included principle of equality. There should not be any discrimination among people with regard to caste, education etc. He has also included some provisions on higher education. At last, he writes that advanced education among the backward classes is of greater value. Because it is going to them well equipped in future life.

Conclusion

Dr. Ambedkar, the chief architect of Indian constitution, is well known not only as a constitutionalist and a parliamentarian but also a scholar and active reformer all over the world. As a champion of the downtrodden he waged a relentless struggle against the oppressive features of hindu society. Throughout his life, he strove for the establishment of a new social order based on the principles of liberty, equality, justice and universal brotherhood.

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