



AN ANALYTICAL STUDY ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF DR. B. R AMBEDKAR FOR INDIAN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT:- The name MAHARASHTRA is considered as the land of the MARATHI speaking people, seems to be derivative from the Sanskrit words 'Maha' meaning 'Great' and Rashtra meaning 'Nation', thus interpreting the name Maharashtra plainly meaning great nation. One of the finest personalities from Maharashtra was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. He proved, himself to be a prodigy and was known as a great radical, philosopher, theorist, jurist – par excellence, social activist, creative writer and critic. However his opinions never received satisfactory thoughtfulness in the platitude of Indian society just because he was born as an untouchable. His main motive in life was to recreate society along the contemporary democratic ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. He had made the genuine efforts in laying down the resilient bases for codifying the common Civil Code for Hindus and other sections of the Indian society. He stalwartly believed that women empowerment can be consummate by security and happiness of women. The accomplishments of empowering women globally should follow the idea of Dr. B.R Ambedkar. He battled against unfair and vicious practices like devdasi system, child marriages and strongly promoted family planning. In Bombay Legislative Assembly, he intensely encouraged for family planning measures for women. He left no stones unturned for the development of women that are associated with malicious practices like prostitutions. Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar saw women as the sufferers of the stiff hierarchical social system which was despotic and caste driven. Today's women are imprisoned in the loop of diffidence, masculine ascendancy, lack of awareness about her rights and no decision making powers. He contributed in Hindu personal laws and introduced many women welfare provisions in Indian Constitution. He not only tried to include women's right in the political vocabulary but also in the Indian constitution. He generated consciousness among deprived, uneducated women and encouraged them to combat against discrimination and injustice. Dr Ambedkar extricates women from archaic servitudes and conferred upon them equal rights and freedom through legislations. This paper attempts to focus on Dr. Ambedkar's view on women glitches in pre and post independent India, his role in empowering and emancipating not only Dalit women but other sections of the society through various constitutional safeguards, his slogan "Educate, organize and agitate" helped the women to mobilize in the freedom movement and even after seventy years of independence the society had failed to give the due rights to the women.

Keywords: women empowerment, Indian Constitution

I. INTRODUCTION

"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved." ----- Dr. B.R Ambedkar

The modern India saw the cluster of philosophers, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar stands on a dais quite different from others for diverse reasons. First his eminent persona epitomizes the exceptional saga of an untouchable being competent to fight the gigantic social disabilities by utter arduous courage and never-say-die outlook to life to grow into an eminent constitutionalist, renowned parliamentarian, academician and jurist and above all the messiah of the depressed classes. Secondly, his crusade for the empowerment of the Indian women and the way he reinvented the all-inclusive concept of anti-untouchability and social reform movement. Empowerment denotes to increasing the social, political, spiritual or economic forte of people and societies. Empowerment and self-sufficiency of women in the sphere of their economic, social, political and health status is both an extremely imperative end in itself and compulsory for the accomplishment of sustainable human development¹. It is a multi-dimensional, multi-faceted, and manifold concept.

Jawaharlal Nehru, former Indian Prime Minister said; *"Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar was a symbol of revolt against all oppressive features of the Hindu society"*². He was not only champion against the caste system and a gallant fighter for the cause of the depressed section of the society but also an elder statesman and a mentor. The protagonist Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, as chairperson of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, has left watermark on the social arras of the country after independence, and molded the socio-political fabric of the India today. In his paper on *"Castes in India:*

¹ Gunjal V.R (2012), Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Women Empowerment, Social Work, Vol. XI (1), pp 84-85.

² Government of India: (2001) "The National Policy for the Empowerment Of Women 2001", Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi,

their mechanism, genesis and development”, Dr. Ambedkar portrayed how women were treated maliciously by the way of imposed widowhood, sati and child marriages just to uphold the draconian social norms in a society. The social tribulations regarding Hindu and Muslim women’s in a society were underlined by him. As an academician, Dr. Ambedkar comprehensively reviewed the situation of women in both the Muslim and Hindu religion. They are refuted from their fundamental and human rights. Muslim women’s were denied of their moral and mental nourishment due to various ill practices in the society such as purdah system, lack of dignity and divorce issues. He pursued that Buddhism grants women, equal status to that of men and considered women proficient of achieving spirituality. By embracing Buddhism, Dr. Ambedkar excluded in just for disadvantaged sections including women and accepting the dignified equal status. He repudiated venerating Hindu deities, eventually freed women from coldhearted customs, ceremonies and delusions and made the way for her emancipation.

Looking into the economic rights of women Dr. Ambedkar said *“Many of the women present here do not get even a square meal every day. They have to content themselves with ordinary “Roti” and “Chatni”. They too can get rich and lead the life of infamy and sin if they so desire but they care more for their honour, for dignity and self-respect. This is what we are struggling for honour and self-respect”*³. The prophecy of Dr. Ambedkar about women is unequivocally portrayed in Indian Constitution. The Indian Constitution lays down the foundation of equality of sexes through articles 14, 15 and 16. The principle of gender equality and social justice is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights Directive Principles and Fundamental Duties.

According to him women should be given social education and socio-cultural right for their welfare and all round development. He stressed that *“Each and every section of women should be given their due share and proper steps should be taken to maintain and protect dignity their dignity.”* The present paper is an endeavor to focus on the analysis made by Dr. Ambedkar on the discriminatory treatment of women which were factitious fabricated under Hindu and Muslim strata of the society and the pertinence of his modern democratic ideas which led to the empowerment of Indian women in contemporary era.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The main focus of this paper is to look into the conditions of the women in the new millennia. This article also unfolds women’s multifarious political and educational roles and claims that their actions were vital to redefine their social, economic, political and cultural positions to accomplish Ambedkarite visions of social growth.

SITUATION OF WOMEN IN PRE- INDEPENDENCE INDIA

The Rig Veda and the Upanishads bear the testimony of esteemed exalted womanhood. At that time there was no gender division in hunting, warfare, defense and political activities. The overall concern and respect of the society towards, women and their considerable freedom in the different activities in social and political life is appreciable. The girls were educated like boys. Women were initiated Vedic studies and entitled to offer sacrifices to God during the Vedic period. Lopa Mudra, Vishwa Verma, Navari and Ghosha had contributed to the Vedic hymns. The process of deterioration of the status of women started in the later Vedic period. In India, patriarchy started with the advent of the Vedic Aryan and particularly with the advent of the sutra period (600-300 B.C) which marked a departure from strict observance of the early Vedas. The birth of a daughter became a source of disaster during the later Vedic phase. Education of women which was accepted norm during the early Vedic period solely began to be deserted. The physiological function of reproduction was turned into a social phenomenon and was instrumental to perpetuate the law of inheritance. During the Gupta period one can find concrete civil laws to deal with marriage, dowry, inheritance and widow remarriage within the broad cultural frame of classical patriarchy. Along with the invasion of the country by the Muslims, the position of women declined further. The Bhakti Movement vehemently attacked ritualism and over lordship of the Brahmans, used the vernacular as a language of communication and opened the gates of religion for women. The Muslim period perceived several indicators of low status of women, particularly the Hindu women. The child marriage became a rule to safeguard the chastity and honour of the girls. The birth of a girl child was observed as an evil premonition and that resulted in the practice of female-infanticide. Muslim women also did not enjoy a reputable eminence in the society. Polygamy and purdah system was widely predominant among the Muslims. Women like Razia Sultan rose to become a ruler, Chand Bibi and Tara Bai, left their great marks for their ruling proficiencies. Begums or princesses ruled in Bhopal. Begum Mumtaz, Jahanara and Noor Jahan enjoyed reputable positions in our country. With the emergence of

³ S Mohammad Azaad (2013) ... Dr.Ambedkar and Gender Equality. Proceedings of Third International Symposium (SEUSL) pp 117-121

British rule, some radical changes took place. Many new western principles of liberty and equality were introduced. During the freedom struggle, women participated in larger number. Madam Bhikaji Cama, Smt. Kasturba Gandhi, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sarla Devi, Durga Bai Deshmukh, Sucheta Kriplani, Randhabai Subbarayan, Kamala Nehru, Madame Cama and Janaki Davar of INA, Jahanara Shahnawaz, etc., are to name the few. All over India, there were women movements demanding for the suffrage rights. A few social legislations like abolition of Sati Act in 1827, the Widow Remarriage Act 1856; Civil Marriage Act 1872 was seen to be an anachronism.

SITUATION OF WOMEN IN POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIA

Most individuals are knowledgeable but not educated. Devastated with the restructurings and emancipation of women in the era of liberalization and globalization, the Indian mindset has not recognized the equality at par with men and hence compelling women to regress their development. Growing occurrences in women harassment in all way, violence, delinquency and mortification insisted on her is only because of governmental indifference, which failed to keep social dogma. Employment prospects, education and legal system, colossal population, inflation and non-availability of resources to strive are the blockades for development among people. Sheer influence of contemporary lifestyle and embracing technology doesn't mean the progress of individual and society⁴. The need of an hour is that the stereotyped societal frame work needs to be dismantled that make women subordinate or subjugated. Women's active participation in all the walks of life could make it possible. Many distinguished women activist are working on subjects like poverty, health, education, etc. At present women reservation bill is the fieriest agenda of the discussion and fact is that most of the woman even doesn't know what it is. Today's women are imprisoned in the sphere of diffidence, male dominance, lack of cognizance about her rights and lack of decision making powers. Much is talked about women empowerment today but it is more economic, political and health related. Women's empowerment has five components: "women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to decide choices; their right to have access to chances and resources; their right to have the power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their aptitude to influence the direction of social conversion to create a more just social and economic order, nationally and universally"⁵. Dr. Ambedkar stalwartly believed that women empowerment can be attained by welfare of women. The accomplishments of empowering women internationally should follow the apparition of Dr. Ambedkar.

CONCEPT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

"Empowerment can be viewed as means of generating a social atmosphere in which one can make choices and make decisions either independently or collectively for social revolution. It reinforces the intrinsic ability by way of procuring education, power and experience. Empowerment as a concept was introduced at the International Women's Conference in 1985 at Nairobi".⁶ This conference aims at restructuring of social power and control of resources in favour of women. The different considerations of empowerment are –

- Enrich self-esteem and self confidence in women. ☒
- Construct an affirmative image of women by identifying their contributions to the economy and society. ☒
- Enhance the capability to think critically. ☒
- Foster decision making and action through collective process ☒
- Empower them to make informal choices in areas like health, employment and education. ☒
- Ensure equal involvement in the development process.☒
- Provide information, knowledge and skill for economic independence. ☒
- Augment access to legal knowledge and information related to their rights and prerogatives in the society with a view to escalate their participation on an equal footing in all areas.

Hence empowerment means a psychosomatic sense of private control or influence and a concern with real social impact, legal rights and political power. It is a multi-level paradigm denoting to people, organizations and community. It is an international, continuing process focused in the indigenous community, encompassing mutual veneration, critical reflection, compassionate and collective

⁴ Sanjeev Kumar (2015) ... Women Empowerment in India and Dr.B R Ambedkar. International Journal in Commerce, IT and Social Sciences. (IJCISS). Vol 2, issue 05 pp71-77 .

⁵ Dr. Mini Amit Arrawatia, Mr. Pankaj Meel "Information and Communication Technologies & Woman Empowerment in India", International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer Engineering & Technology (IJARCET) Volume 1, Issue 8, October 2012

⁶ The Third World Conference on Women to Review and Appraise the Achievement of UN Decade for Women and NGO Forum, Nairobi, Kenya, July 15-26, 1985

participation, through which individuals lacking an equivalent share of esteemed resources gather greater access to the control over these resources.

WOMEN RIGHTS

“Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar believed that society should be based on reason and not on dreadful tradition of caste system. His aim was to challenge the sociopolitical foundations of hierarchal caste system that denied liberty, equality, and human poise to women in Hindu Society. He suggested in “The Annihilation of Caste System”, that Hindu mind should be expunged from the thralldom of the shastras”⁷. Dr. B.R.Ambedkar in his writings and speeches “Women and Counter revolution” Vol III had clearly mentioned the subjugation of the women that had taken place in the ancient India. He tried to demonstrate as to how the gender relationships and variances are fabricated by Hindu Brahminical order, which conditions women to imitate a stereotype feminine behavior, wanting them to be submissive and docile, suitable only to a life of domestic and household accountabilities.

As the chairman of the drafting committee he realizes the wretched condition of women, so on March 19 & 20, 1927 he addressed a enormous assembly of underprivileged classes, including women, and appealed for freedom and self-esteem of women with advise that education is essential for development of mind and the essence of self-help because he believed that a *“family is educated only when the men along with women in the family are educated”*.

Dr. Ambedkar treatise “Women and Counter Revolution” and “The Riddle of Women” describes the way in which Manu treated women. He explicitly pointed out that the laws of Manu He explicitly pointed out that the laws of Manu on the position of women are very vital in molding the Hindu outlook and perception towards women, propagated and upheld through Hindu personal laws based on caste, endogamy and shastras. Dr. Ambedkar condemned Manusmriti on the grounds that it legitimizes the renunciation of right to property and education, liberty and self-esteem to women by attaching a very condescending ideal to them. He also organised the Mahad Satyagraha which was for temple entry, more than 50 women were there and it was decided to burn the Manusmriti which demeaned women and shudras. Delivering a sermon in a meeting of about three thousand women, Dr. Babasaheb said, *“I measure the progress of community by the degree of progress which women had achieved. Let every girl who marries stand by her husband, claim to be her husband's friend and equal and refuse to be his slave. I am sure if you follow this advice you will bring honor and glory to yourselves.”*⁸ Dr. Babasaheb wanted to bring equality in the Hindu society. He wanted to initiate the reforms for the lower sections of the society.

“Gender equality, financial freedom, gender main streaming, leaderships, networking, are the essential aspects of women empowerment”.⁹ Dr Ambedkar had carried out the tremendous work for annihilation of caste and the upliftment of the downtrodden section of the society. According to him, this could not be achieved without the emancipation of women. He encouraged women and addressed them to participate in struggle against caste prejudices. “During the Chavdar Tale Satyagraha women marched in the procession along with men. He encouraged women to organize themselves. Impressed by the large gathering of women at women’s conference held at Nagpur on July 20, 1942, he told women to be liberal and eradicate conventionalism, ritualism and accustomed habits, which were injurious to their development”¹⁰. Empowerment encases developing and building capabilities of persons, communities to make them part of the main stream society. Education is the only tool through which societies grow out of coercion to egalitarian participation and involvement. It is a powerful tool for empowerment of individual. Dr. Ambedkar put all his efforts to guarantee the educational prospects without any discernment to all the Indian citizens irrespective of caste, color, creed and race.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS IN INDIA:-

Ambedkar was a protagonist of the idea of social justice as an incontrovertible part of the constitutional democratic framework in India. The Indian Constitution, in its expedition for a democratic and uniform social order bereft of a caste system, not only accomplishes to restructure the hitherto prevalent caste-

⁷ Vaisali Dhanvijay, (2012) “Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar’s efforts for women empowerment and present status of women in society”, Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal (EIJRJ), {Bi-Monthly}, Volume-I, Issue II.

⁸ Satyajit Das (2015) ...Ambedkar and Women rights: An Analysis. International Journal of Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Studies.(IRJIMS) Vol I, Issue Ipp191-195.

⁹ More, Vijay G (2011)...Dr. B. R. Ambedkar’s Contribution for Women’s Rights”, Variorum, Multi- Disciplinary e-Research Journal Vol.-02, Issue-I, pp 1-8

¹⁰ Godbole Mahendra Tukaram (2015) ...An Overview of Bharatratna Dr. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar’s Writings and Revolutionary Social Change in Modern India... International Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research. Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp: 586-590.

ridden stratified social order but also the right to equality and self-esteem to the ill-fated sufferers of the caste system.

He laid down the groundwork of tangible and earnest efforts by collating the common Civil Code for Hindus and other sections of the Indian social order. He indicated that women should be given all round development more notably social education, their well-being and socio-cultural rights. He highlighted that Indian women of every section of the society should be given their due share and it is a duty to preserve and protect self-respect and reticence of women. He provided strong constitutional safeguards to women. Our constitution states the following articles which give enough scope for the protection of women against any sort of discrimination they are: - Article 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39, 42, 51 A (e). Free Legal aid (Article 39A of the Constitution) was inculcated in the year 1976 for providing assistance to the people who are incapable to afford legal representation and access to the court system. Dr. Ambedkar tried an ample inclusion of women's rights in the political lexis and Constitution of India.

Our Constitution envisions that all are equivalent before law irrespective of their religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. The fundamental rights contained in Articles 14- 16 of the Indian Constitution warranty that women in India should not be treated as mediocre to their colleagues in any respect. Article 15(3) empowers the State to facilitate equality of women and children. Article 16 (1) and (2) of the Constitution of India emphasis equal opportunities for all in the matter of employment and prohibited discrimination in employment. Equal pay for equal work is given under Article 39. Article 42:- Humanoid environments of work and maternity aid. The fundamental duties to abandon practices, depreciatory to the self-esteem of women are stated under Art 51 (a). Article 46:- This article deals with the economic and educational welfare of the poorer section of the society. It also tends to defend them from any social injustice and all forms of discrimination and maltreatment. The Directive Principles of State Policy also instructs the State to offer equal right to men and women to adequate means of livelihood. One of the most important recognized human rights was right to dignity.

STATUTORY LAWS

The Constitution of India has been the source of guidance and direction for the numerous revolutionary laws that gives the equal status to women with that of men. Various laws have been ordained in order to eradicate all incongruences and dissimilarities against women like the Legal Practitioners (Women) Act, 1923, The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956, The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, The Family Courts Act, 1984, The Sati Prevention Act 1987, and Nation Commission for Women Act, 1990. The Protection of Human Right Act, 1993, The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act 1994, etc. were passed. The newly enacted the Protection of women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 offers operational relief to women fronting with violence and prevents them from dispossession from their share in household¹¹. There were fifteen women in the Constituent Assembly who framed and drafted the Indian constitution. Guided by Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar they deliberated, contested and put forth their views in shaping the Indian Constitution of Independent India. One of the youngest and only Dalit women was Dakshayani Velayudhan, who facilitated outline the Constitution of India. These all are consequence of the Dr. Ambedkar's determination in the context of woman.

Ambedka's defence for women as the law minister of independent India appeared in the form of Hindu Code Bill in parliament on April 11, 1947. In order to streamlined and reinstated the self-esteem to women Dr. Ambedkar had codified Hindu Law in respect of marriage, divorce and succession. "Prior to the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 and Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, the Hindu Law was uncodified in a large measure, though Hindu Women's Right to Property Act, 1937 was the subject of legislative intervention. The Sharda Act is also worth stating which has established the stamp of authority upon that piece of social reforms, which the heads of convention were, daunting and impending. In Hindu Code Bill, the dogmas of codification covered: (i) Right to property, (ii) Order of succession to property, (iii) Maintenance, marriage, divorce, minority, adoption and guardianship. The Bill was a part of societal engineering as it establishes the equality between men and women in all the legal matters"¹². It was really a first step in the direction of the acknowledgment and empowerment of women in India. Under these revolutionary measures, a woman will have property in her own right and be able to dispose of her property. Dr. Ambedkar fought for the women's rights throughout his life. He not only provided them the equal rights but also introduced the four Acts which strengthened the position of women in the society.

¹¹ Godbole Mahendra Tukaram (2015) ...The Study of Nature of Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution and its contribution for Justice, Freedom, Empowerment of Women's and Depressed Strata. International Journal of Medical Science and Clinical Inventions. Volume 2 Issue 6 pp 1097-1104

¹² Gunjal V.R. 2012. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Women Empowerment, Social Work, Vol. XI (1), PP 84-85.

These were amalgamated in the Hindu Code Bill¹³.

These are:

- i) The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955.
- ii) The Hindu Succession Act, 1956.
- iii) The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956.
- iv) The Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956.

Looking into the provisions of these Acts, one can effortlessly make out that Dr. Ambedkar was a phenomenal thinker of women rights and emancipation. Provisions that have been cherished in the Acts are as follows:

The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955:- made monogamy as universal, had raised the marriageable age for girls to 18 and boys to 21 years. It had also permitted divorce on certain specified grounds. Equal rights were provided to both men and women in respect to marriage and divorce.

The Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956: This Act permitted any female Hindu who is of sound mind and is neither a minor nor maimed or if maimed whose marriage has been dissolved or whose husband is dead or has absolutely abandoned the world or has ceased to be Hindu or has been declared by a court of competent jurisdiction to be of unsound mind, to take a son or daughter in adoption. The consent of mother and father is essential for giving the child in adoption unless otherwise.

The Hindu Succession Act, 1956:- Under this act previously, the widow doesn't have the right to adopt a son or a daughter but with this act she was given this right. She was also been given the opportunity to be independent and dispose her property by will as she desires (Sec. 14). Moreover a uniform scheme of succession to the property of a Hindu female, who dies, intestate after initiation of this Act as stated under Section 15.

The Hindus of Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956: This act provides that the mother is authorized to change the guardian, appointed by the father and may appoint a new guardian by will. The father's right to employ a guardian for the minor by will during the life time of the minor's mother is prohibited under this Act.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's framed many laws for Women in India as follows¹⁴:-

1) Women Labour Welfare Fund:- Labour welfare is understood to mean, "such services, facilities and amenities, which may be established in, or in the vicinity of, undertakings to enable persons employed therein to perform their work in healthy, congenial surroundings and to provide them with amenities conducive to good health and good morale."¹⁵ Whereas another definition states "welfare is fundamentally an attitude of mind on the part of management influencing the method by which management activities are undertaken."¹⁶ On January 31, 1944 Dr, Ambedkar pass an order which clearly states that the money for the fund was to be collected by levying excise duty on coal and coke.

2) Women Labour Protection Act

3) Maternity Benefit for Women Labour Bill: - Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar's major role for the Maternity Benefits bill in the Bombay legislature in July, 1928 itself for the factory women workers. In fact it was the **first Maternity Benefits Act passed in India in 1929 by the Bombay legislature**. On this regard he said, "*I believe that it is in the interests of the nation that the mother ought to get a certain amount of rest during the pre-natal period and also subsequently. I am prepared to admit this fact because the conservation of the people's welfare is primarily the concern of the Government. And in every country, therefore, where the maternity benefit has been introduced, you will find that the Government has been subjected to a certain amount of charge with regard to maternity benefit. I think, therefore, the benefits contemplated by this bill ought to be given by this Legislature to the poor women who toil in our factories in this Presidency.*"¹⁷ Consequently the Madras Maternity Benefit Act was passed by the Madras Legislature Council in 1934 and subsequently in other provinces of India. Later all the acts of Maternity Benefit of numerous states were revoked and a common Maternity Benefit Act-1961 was adopted by the Central Government for all states in India.

Dr. Ambedkar is also credited in framing various laws for welfare of women labour such as ; Restoration of Ban on Women Working Underground in Mines; Leave Benefit to Piece Workers; Revision of Scale of Pay for Employees; Maintenance allowance from husband on attaining legitimately separation and last

¹³ Bharati, T(1992)... Ambedkar and Uplift of Women", published in an edited book "Ambedkar and Social Justice-Volume II", pp 264 (1992)

¹⁴ Singariya M.R(2014) ... Dr B R Ambedkar and Women Empowerment in India", Quest Journals Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science, Volume 2~ Issue 1, pp 1-4

¹⁵ LL.O. (Asian Regional) Conference, held at New Delhi in 1947. Report II, 1947, p. 3.

¹⁶ R.R. Hopkin, A handbook of industrial welfare, 1955, p.l.

¹⁷ Moon Vasant (1991)... Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar's Writings and Speeches", Govt of Maharashtra, Vol 16, Bombay Dept of Education .p 47

but not the least equal pay for equal work irrespective of the sex. The Indian Factory Act was also framed under his guidance and supervision.

IMPORTANT LANDMARKS

Post-Independence period saw a much anticipated legislation in the light of the day. Kotturuswami v. Verravva¹⁸ case gave the crucial effect to the woman in terms of Stridhan over which she has complete interest. The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956, Githa Hariharan v. Reserve Bank of India¹⁹, deemed that “father and mother both are the natural guardian”. In milieu of Muslim women, Hirabae v. Sonabae²⁰ states that Quranic Law of Inheritance guarantees to, “a wife, daughter, mother, grandmother to have their share in the heritable property”. In Vasantha R. V. Union of India²¹, in this case the women were employed in some factories for two days shifts and there was repudiation of employment during night shifts completely on the basis of gender discrimination.

II. CONCLUSION

Dr. Ambedkar’s ambition for the society that is based on gender equality is yet to be comprehended and therefore his beliefs are important for social fabrication of the society that favours women empowerment. He had a philanthropic view towards all the women, irrespective of their caste, religion, sex and class. Looking into the views of Dr. Ambedkar it clearly shows that equality should be made available to all persons even in socio-economic life through state’s intervention. It can be achieved through the means of reservation of seats in educational institutions and public employment, as provided under the ambit of Indian Constitution. In contemporary setup the Indian women have achieved a lot in various spheres of their life though they are still in the vicious grips of various social tribulations like prostitution, rape, eve teasing, domestic violence, and victims of acid attack etc. Despite all these evils women are holding high positions of authority in all the walks of life including, Police Administration, Defence Academy, Medical, Engineering, Higher Education, Politics, Sports, Foreign Services, Industry & Trade. India feels honored Kalpana Chawla who went into space, Bachendri Pal the first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest, Mrs Indira Gandhi became the first woman Prime Minister of India, Shri Pratibha Devi Singh Patil is the first woman President of India. M.C Mary Kom, Saina Nehwal, Sania Mirza and Geeta Phogat are the famous sports personality of India²². It would be worth mentioning the quote by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s “Unity is meaningless without the accompaniment of women. Education is fruit-less without educated women, and agitation is incomplete without the strength of women”²³.

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¹⁸ AIR 1959 SC 577.

¹⁹ (1999)2 SCC 228

²⁰ (1847) Orissa cal. 110. 117-123. Morl. Dig. 11, 143

²¹ (2001)2 LLN 534

²² Ambedkar, B.R (1987) ...“Women and Counter Revolution” Riddles of Hindu Women” in Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

²³ Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, Vol. 3, Department of Education, Govt. of Maharashtra.