



AMBEDKAR: AN EDUCATIONAL PRAGMATIST

VENKATARATNAM GOLLAPALLI

RESAERCH SCHOLAR

DRAVIDIAN UNIVERSITY

gvrbcc@gmail.com

Abstract:

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, who was the real prier, a curious and inquisitive in the educational issues and recognized and believed that only education can lead us to the better life, Even though he endured the twin evils of poverty and ostracism rose to the heights of glory and eminence through his struggle and suffering by getting good education. He agonized in the agony of the Dalits. He made his people raise their heads in the esteem of upper castes by fighting for their social and political rights by laying right path even to this present society. He is the Moses of Indian Dalits through emancipating them from the yoke of centuries of humiliation and oppression by providing educational opportunities.

His philosophy is an antidote for tyranny and mockery of the oppression. He is the modern Manu for the annihilation of caste and a beacon light for the oppressed classes groping in darkness and depression by enlightening all the people though his pragmatic ideas of education. His message is not a sectarian but universal one.

Keywords:

Education, Poverty, Ostracism, Pragmatist, Disparaging, Advocacy, Epistolary, Annihilation, Untouchability.

Introduction

Ambedkar aptly stressed that “work without knowledge is blind and futile”.He was a man of par excellence in practicing what he preached or exhorted to people. And he continued to speak “if the man gets knowledge through education he can face the problems created by others” which means education is the weapon to win the social wars. He inoculated the thoughts into the minds of young aspirants as “Education creates self confidence among us which should be the first stage of our development”. He has given the impressions on the minds with “Education is a weapon of creation of mental development and a weapon of eradicating social slavery”. He fought like a lion to the end of his life and strove hard to abolish untouchability, “Mahatmas have come and gone but slavery existed” till our Baba Saheb arrived on the Indian horizon. He ignited all the minds with the words: “The people don't sustain in the struggles of life, until they get educated”. I hope that he was a key person who recognized that the only education leads for the better life.

HIS IDEAS ON EDUCATION:

He was the role-model for the students and his range is wide and encyclopedic. When he was a student in the USA, his roommate found Ambedkar always was absorbed in reading books and writings; at this time, his roommate worried about Ambedkar's health and used to advise him- Man, are you trying to read yourself to death, all work no play makes one a dull boy. Let's go for sightseeing!



Ambedkar answered "I have come to the USA to study and not to make merry. I have no time or money for anything other than studies". These words show his grit and determination towards the studies. If Ambedkar stirs out of his room, it would be only for hunting hand books at second hand book-shops in the USA. As a student, he determined to utilize his time for his studies and lined laboriously to change the fate of dumb millions of his suppressed people. On the recruitment of Ambedkar as a professor in Sidenheim College of Bombay, Professor Edvin recommended him with the words of "The college and students will find a treasure of knowledge in him". His testimony speaks eloquently about the stupendous knowledge of Ambedkar and his worthiness to be the professor of the college. These are the indications to prove him as a student of hard work and role model for the present era.

Ambedkar, in his assessment of educational system, critically commented his contemporary education system as faulty and it was at the bottom of degradation of Indian civilization. Now these words became foundation stone to build up a new education system in our India and the decisions taken by the government about education have the roots in his thoughts and education philosophy. He expressed his idea that India needed the Act of Education with effective implementation and held the view that the poor should be exempt from payment of fees. His views ultimately paved the way for the present fee reimbursement in our Higher Education and certainly the students owe their gratitude to him.

Ambedkar strongly advocated that – one of the fundamental functions of the universities should be to provide facilities for bringing the highest education to the doors of the needy and the poor but now unfortunately the universities became a hot bed of murky politics and crimes. In recent times we are aware of the tragic suicides of many Dalit students on the university Campus; the silence of our political leaders seems to be enigmatic and those who quote Ambedkar on these occasions are like devil quoting scriptures. Despite all disparaging remarks and nagging treatment, Ambedkar stood like a rock in the face of such adversities. He taught the Dalits to fight like a lion but not surrender like a lamb to be sacrificed before the local deity.

HIS CONCERN FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION:

He was the prophet who foresaw the importance of women's education in our society. So, he wrote a letter to one of his father's friends when he was in America to pursue both male and female education in order to live a life of dignity. He wrote in that letter: "We shall soon see better days and our progress will be greatly accelerated if male education is pursued side by side with female education."

He deliberately expressed his views on 'Education was an important instrument for bringing social change and to help woman to elevate their position. Ambedkar seems to carry forward the legacy of Mahatma Phule on the issue of education for girls and one day Ambedkar addressed a gathering of women during Mahad Satyagraha, he advised them "Send your children to school, education is as necessary for female as it is for male."



All the above facts abundantly illustrate that Ambedkar can be hailed as the Messiah of the depressed class and hope of our Indian youth. He is not to be branded as sectarian, caste minded leader. He fought on all issues where injustice prevailed. Hence he can be called a crusader for social justice and for establishing an egalitarian society.

References:

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