

A STUDY OF CONTRIBUTION OF RAMABAI BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR IN INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM

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Abstract

Ramabai Ambedkar, the wife of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar play a very crucial role in elevating the education and social reforms in India, particularly upliftment of backward communities such as Dalit and women. She also played a provital role in strengthening Indian Knowledge system through her activism, support for social justice and women empowerment. While Ramabai's contributions may not as broadly recognized as those of Dr.B.R. Ambedkar, she made valuable contribution in the area of education and social reform. She played a remarkable role in preserving and promoting ancient Indian Knowledge System. Ramabai Ambedkar's role in Indian Knowledge system is multifaceted. Through her support for education, women's right, social reform, she contributed to the enhancement and democratization of knowledge of Indian society. In this research paper, Ramabai Ambedkar's contribution in Indian Knowledge system would be explored through her efforts in social reforms and education.

Keywords : Social reform, Indian Knowledge system

1. INTRODUCTION

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is recognized as important figure in Indian History, especially for his work in social reform and the ennoblement of marginalized communities. Dr.Ambedkar played a crucial role in drafting the constitution of India. His vision is reflected in its provisions, including fundamental rights, abolition of untouchability and favorable action for marginalized communities. He advocated for the rights of marginalized communities, especially Dalit. He emphasized the importance of education as a tool for empowerment. His action result into incorporation of provisions in the Indian constitution for the upliftment of the oppressed groups. However, Ramabai Ambedkar stood firmly behind Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. It was highly impossible for Dr.B.R. Ambedkar to fight for marginalized community without the support of his wife Ramabai Ambedkar. She played a very decisive role in supporting Dr. Ambedkar's intellectual pursuits. She provided him with tireless support, both emotionally and intellectually, enabling him to focus on his scholarly endeavors. Ramabai Ambedkar was an Indian social reformer and she fought for women's right, especially of those who belongs to marginalized society. She worked tirelessly to promote education and empowerment for women in India. She was born in Dalit family and faced inequity and exclusion from conventional society throught her life.

2. EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION OF RAMABAI AMBEDKAR

Ramabai was born on February 7, 1898, in small village called Vanand, which is located in the district of Ratnagairi. Her father worked as a porter. He used to carry basket of fish from dabhol port to the market to earn livelihood. Her family belongs to the Mahar community, an exploited caste in India. She did not receive any formal education due to her poor background but this did not obstruct her from understanding sorry condition of her community in the society. In 1906 Ramabai Married to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, one of the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. Their marriage was not just a personal union but also a partnership in their shared vision for social reform and empowerment of marginalized communities. Her experience as Dalit women deeply influenced her commitment to social reform and education, shaping her later contribution to Indian Knowledge systems.

3. SOCIAL REFORMS AND ACTIVISM

Ramabai Ambedkar's involvement in social reform movements, especially concerning women's rights and education, was significant in challenging the deeply ingrained caste and gender-based discrimination prevalent in Indian society during her time. She recognized the importance of education in empowering the backward communities, particularly women. Her role was significant in establishing the educational institution which

aims at providing education to Dalit girls and women's. Ramabai's efforts focus on shattering the barriers to education and enable girl and women to gain knowledge and skills to uplift socio-economically. Ramabai's advocacy encloses various issues, including access to education, equal opportunities, and freedom from social and economic exploitation. She actively participated in various campaigns and social movements aimed at promoting gender equality and empowering women to assert their rights. Ramabai's leadership help to raise awareness about the injustices faced by marginalized groups and mobilizing support for social reform initiatives aimed at knock down oppressive structures and creating a more equitable society.

4. SUPPORT TO DR.B.R.AMBEDKAR

Ramabai Ambedkar played a very important role in Ambedkar's endeavors for social justice and equality. She provided emotional support to Dr. Ambedkar throughout his life, especially during challenging times when he faced strong opposition and discrimination due to his caste and revolutionary ideas. She was actively involved in advocating for the rights of marginalized communities, including Dalits and women. She accompanied Dr. Ambedkar to public meetings, rallies, and conferences, loudening his message of social justice and equality. Ramabai made personal sacrifices to support Dr. Ambedkar's work. She has managed household responsibilities and raising their children while he devoted himself to his public duties and activism. Her willingness to prioritize Dr. Ambedkar's mission over personal comfort and convenience epitomized her dedication to the cause of social justice.

5. EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Ramabai and Dr. Ambedkar recognized the life changing power of education in breaking the cycle of poverty and injustice among Dalit's and other marginalized communities. Her contribution to education and social reform were notable. She played crucial role in the establishment off first school for untouchable girls in pune, the Anandibai Ambekar Girls School named after B.R.Ambedkar's mother. The main aim of this institution is to provide quality education and empowerment to girls belongs to marginalized society. Dr. Ambedkar founded People's Education society, Bombay on 8th July 1945. Under the people's education society, he established Siddhartha college of Arts and Science, Bombay in 1946, especially for those students who belong to marginalized communities. The purpose of this institution is to provide quality education to the students. The idea behind starting such institution was come from Dr. Ambedkar's wife Ramabai. She was more passionate about promoting girls education and empowerment. She played key role in breaking the barriers to education and challenging the traditional gender norms that restrict women opportunity. Her determination to provide access to quality education has left a lasting legacy, inspired many generations to pursue knowledge and attempt for a more just and equitable society.

6. LEGACY AND IMPACT

Ramabai's life and achievements help as a source of inspiration for women in India and beyond. Her legacy focuses attention on the resilience and agency of women in the face of adversity, empowering them to challenge traditional gender roles and claim their rights. Her contributions to education and social reform have enhanced Indian knowledge systems by expanding diverse voices and perspectives. Her understanding into the lived experiences of marginalized communities have strengthened our understanding of India's social structure and informed efforts to create more inclusive knowledge systems.

7. CONCLUSION

Ramabai Ambedkar made significant contributions to Indian knowledge systems through her advocacy for education, social reform, and empowerment of marginalized communities. As the wife of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, she provided crucial support for his scholarly pursuits, while also advocating for women's rights and education. Furthermore, her efforts in preserving and promoting indigenous Indian knowledge systems serve as evidence to her long lasting legacy as a champion of social reform and intellectual advancement. She died on 27th May, 1935 at Rajgruha in hindu colony, Dadar, Bombay, after the prolong illness. Dr. Ambedkar in his book 'Thought on Pakistan' published in 1941 stated that it is a token of appreciation to Ramabai's "goodness of heart, her nobility of mind and her purity of character and also for the cool fortitude and readiness to suffer" along with Ambedkar in the unfortunate times they faced and the worries that befell upon them. And in the preface Dr. Ambedkar credit her for his transformation. Through this paper research would like to give tribute to her crucial contributions and aims to encourage further research and appreciation of her role in shaping Indian history and culture.

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