



B.R Ambedkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya on social justice: A comparative study

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Abstract

Social Justice has been the key factor of the state policies of both the developed and developing countries of the 21st century. It has become the norm that the policies of the state should adhere to the principles of social justice. Countries like India have given space to social justice in their constitution under many articles i.e Articles 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 39, 46, etc. The philosophy of social justice, believed by many, consists of distributive and retributive justice collectively. B.R. Ambedkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya, the political ideologue of Indian politics, strived to establish justice in the Indian society via different ways and methods. Ambedkar believed that social justice, for him, is the collective form of equality, liberty, and fraternity. For him, an ideal state should be based on these principles. Equality and fraternity are legal terms that can be established on a legal basis but the fraternity is to be established by society. Ambedkar argued(2016) that the varna system, caste system, and untouchability were the key factors that led to the deprivation of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled tribe, and other backward classes from the mainstream development. These also stopped India from becoming one nation. Deendayal Upadhyaya also believed that it is the responsibility of the state and society together to fulfill the basic needs of the people. Deendayal talked about the primary goods in society and emphasized the role of the state in fulfilling these goals. He tried to compose a theory of justice on humanitarian grounds. He believed that the complete development of an Individual (Development of his Body, mind, Wisdom, and Soul) should be the aim of the state policies. This article provides a historical analysis of social justice in the Indian context concerning Ambedkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya. It begins with the historical basis for social justice in India and the rationale for why it is needed. We then outline the philosophy behind social justice and its legal ramifications. The article then tries to evaluate the success of social justice and outlines the criticisms that have been made of it. We then try to compare both Ambedkar and Deendayal's views on Social justice.

Keywords: social justice, democracy, rights, education, ambedkar, deendayal

Introduction

Social Justice has become the core principle of Democratic States i.e India, the United States of America, England, and so on. Every democratic country has set up some policies with different names to address the issues of marginalized sections of society. In India, we have a reservation policy in Education and Employment. In the United States, there is a policy of Affirmative action in Education and Employment. Similarly, in England, there is a policy of legal aid system (Community Legal Service) in the United Kingdom for reducing poverty and increasing social inclusion, etc. It is a result of debates on the welfare state in liberal democracies. Since we will be addressing the issue of social justice in the Indian context let's not go beyond. Social Justice deals with the principle of fair treatment of an individual in society. It requires that the state, while making policies, should not discriminate against citizens based on caste, class, color, sex, race, gender and, place of birth, etc. It also requires that one individual should not discriminate against another individual based on caste, class, sex, race, and place of birth. Social justice is used in political and social movements. It is used for resisting corruption,

protesting inequality, and resisting authoritarian regimes. It is used for opposing military interventions which are considered as unjust. (Kraynak, 2018: 3). The social justice, we are having in today's context, has not been the same from its beginning. Earlier it was different from its present notion. India did not borrow the principle of social justice from the western world. Its roots can be found in Indian philosophy. Therefore it becomes necessary to look into its historical background in the Indian context.

Historical Background

Social Justice is a subject of contemporary political theory. It is the principle to establish a balance between individuals and society. It is the bond that connects individuals and society into a unit, many called, state. The origin of the term, social justice, can be found in the writings of Luigi Taparelli who used this terminology to denote justice in the 19th Century. Taparelli wrote Theoretical Essay on Natural rights (1840) in which he gave this term, social justice to meet the challenges that emerged due to the French revolution (1789) and the industrial developments. (Kraynak, 2018: 04). Taparelli used social

justice to describe the social nature of human beings in the voluntary associations which emerged and flourished in the decentralized power structure. It had the same meaning as justice. (Kraynak, 2018). Nothing was new to its meaning.

Kraynak (2018) argued that Antonio Rosmini was the first one who used this term, social justice. Rosmini wrote his "Constitution under Social Justice in 1848. Kraynak argued that Rosmini arrived at his idea of social justice by developing Thomistic natural law theory into a novel view of the common good that balances two principles i.e one, equal rights and dignity of persons as ends-in-themselves, a version of "personalism" influenced by Kant and Christianity and second, unequal rewards for those who contribute most to society, a version of Aristotelian proportionalism. Social justice has gone through many developments since the 1840s. Today the notion of social justice is not similar to the notion of justice. It includes today, Equal Access to primary resources, social, political, economic, and cultural inclusion in the mainstream development of the society, rights in a liberal democracy, freedom to express an opinion, living life with dignity, recognition of identity, etc.

The Vedic texts, Dharmashastras, Ramayana, Manusmriti, Bhagwat Geeta, Mahabharata, and so on also have some roots of social justice. In Ramayana, during the rule of King, Ramayana, there was no sorrow, no one was poor, no one killed another. Everyone has contended. The duty of the king was to maintain law and order, establish peace and punish the lawbreakers. (Bhattacharya, 2017: 02) ^[6]. Mahabharata's Shantiparva says that everyone was happy. This status was disturbed which further resulted in the emergence of necessity to uphold Dharma. (Garg, 2004: 77) ^[3]. It also describes characteristics of a good king whose work is to foster the happiness of people, making policies, fighting wars for the protection of the people. (Garg, 2004: 78) ^[3]. Shanti Parva also talked about the theory of the origin of the State. The protection of property, family, and varna system was the main conditions for being the king. For this people had agreed to give some share of the property to the king. The first king was Manu. (Garg, 2004: 79) ^[3].

Kautilya's Arthashastra also talked about Social Justice. During the Vedic period, the election of the king used to happen by elections in which members of Samiti used to select their king. (Gupta, 2004:119). Many developments, in the later period, took place which led to further developments in the more citizen-oriented policies.

In the later period, developments took place. The different forms of policies were formulated by different rules i.e Mughals than Britishers in India. After the Independence in 1947, India got its constitution of rights. The Indian constitution is the bundle of rights and duties of citizens which has an ample amount of social justice. The Indian Constitution (1950) provided its citizens, the fundamental rights, the Right to life, liberty, equality, and equal opportunity. Its preamble is the document of social justice.

Why do we need social justice in India?

We are still lacking in providing the access to higher education, access to good health infrastructure, and low-income issues. The human development index which is released by United Nations Development Programme uses four

indicators to rank a country worldwide. Generally, the development and the prosperity status of a country is considered high or low through these indicators. These indicators are Life Expectancy rate, literacy rate, GDP per capita, and Inflation rate. The Life expectancy rate of India in 2020 was 69 years. Although it is a very good achievement, still we need to improve and increase it.

Education plays a very significant role in society and individual's lives. Education brings out human beings from animal nature. It differentiates them from animals. Development and the achievements of human beings in the field of the material world, wisdom, and the spiritual world are the results of education. (Tiwari, 1996: 1).

Mahatma Phule (1827-1890) believed that education is a tool to bring out Dalits and Shudras from the evil practice of untouchability and the caste system in India. It is a weapon of marginalized sections of society to fight against evil practices of caste and untouchability. The oppressors, believers of Brahminism in Indian, contexts, will not provide education to the oppressed by themselves. (Begari, 2010: 402) ^[1].

The Literacy rate of India was 74 percent according to the census of India, 2011. Denison (1970) argues that education provides non-economic and cultural benefits to the recipients. (Tilak, 1979: 418). Providing these benefits in the name of education increases the welfare of the people.

Today in 21st Century, India is still dealing with the practice of untouchability and caste practice in a different forms, lower literacy rate, malnutrition, poor hunger index. Social justice guarantees the right to life with dignity which includes the right to food also, the right to live with dignity, right against the practice of untouchability. Article 15 of the Indian constitution abolished the practice of untouchability constitutionally. It says, "Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of untouchability shall be an offense punishable by law". (Basu, 2008: 99). Has the practice of untouchability and caste stopped in India?

We still come across many social exclusion activities by so-called upper caste people in India who use these policies against the marginalized sections of the society i.e Scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, and minorities. Crime against SCs&STs increased by 7% and 26% in the year 2019. Around 45,935 cases were registered in 2019 for committing a crime against SCs. Similarly, around 11, 829 cases were registered in a single state, Uttar Pradesh, for committing a crime against SCs in the same year. Uttar Pradesh topped followed by Rajasthan with 6794 and Bihar with 6544 cases. 554 Rape cases against SCs women were registered in a single state, Rajasthan, in 2019 followed by Uttar Pradesh with 537 and Madhya Pradesh with 510. (Singh, The Hindu News, 2020, also see NCBR report 2019). Many atrocities cases are not registered due to lack of information, knowledge about their rights, etc. The number might have been many. So these atrocities or crimes are enough to establish the argument that why do we need social justice in India which is a voice of marginalized sections of the society. It requires the state to protect its fundamental rights.

Ambedkar's views on Social Justice

The Notion of social justice emerged in the 19th century, is a

new phenomenon of political theory. It deals with the principles of social, political, and economic equality, liberty, and rights. It is the one dimension of justice that emphasizes on social and political rights of an individual. It stands for the organization of any society based on principles of rights, liberty, and equality. (Raghavendra, 2016, 27). The emphasis on social and economic equality, making such a society based on such human social relations which ensures the preferential treatment for socially, educationally, and economically marginalized sections of society who have been deprived of certain values for a long-long period. It ensures to bring these sections on an equal footing concerning other sections of the population. (Raghavendra, 2016: 26-28). B.R. Ambedkar has spent his whole life fighting for the rights of these communities.

Ambedkar was born in Mahar Community in Mahu District of Madhya Pradesh, India. The Mahar Community was traditionally considered as an untouchable community, Dalit in present India. The social structure of Indian society was based on graded inequality, divided into a hierarchy of Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaishyas, and Shudra, and others respectively. The practice of untouchability still existed during his time. The practice of Caste discrimination was prevalent. (Tiwari, 2009: 434). Socially, Dalits and Shudra were not acceptable in education and employment. Ambedkar during his childhood himself faced untouchability and caste discrimination. Ambedkar's Father, Ramji Maloji Sakpal, being retired from British Indian Army as Subedar, knew about the importance of education.

Britishers used to educate children of all the soldiers, working in their army irrespective of class or caste. So this was the reason Ambedkar got an English education. Ambedkar went to the London School of economics and political science, and California for getting higher education with help of Shahu ji Maharaj and others. The western ideas of liberty, equality, and rights and the existing evil practices in India influenced him most.

When he came back to India, he faced the same practice of untouchability and caste practices which he left behind before going abroad. He decided to eradicate these social evils. For this, he fought for the rights of Dalit, women, and tribal communities, etc. This social and political fight led him to be called a symbol of social justice in India. (Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, Madhusudan, 2015). Ambedkar said that my ideal society should be based on equality, liberty, and fraternity. This type of society is an ideal society for him which is another name of social justice. (Ambedkar, 2016). For establishing a society based on equality Ambedkar fought for the rights of marginalized sections of the society.

In 1927, he fought for the rights of untouchables. Chavdar Lake Satyagrah is remembered as the first landmark event of Ambedkar's fight for social justice. (Same1,1999: 722). The Chavdar Talab tank movement is still remembered as the most important one which led the untouchables to have their right to access public resources, the most fundamental aspect of social justice. Ambedkar led a fight for equality. Ambedkar wanted to establish the courage in Dalits to fight for their rights. He, therefore, decided to fight for the right to access the temple of Dalits. He started Kalaram Temple entry agitation in Nasik, Maharashtra. During that period, Dalits were prohibited from

entering temples. When Dalits were not allowed to enter the temple by temple trustees, 15000 Dalits decided to agitate and warned trustees. When they found the gates of the temple closed for them, they started meetings. This agitation ran for almost 5 years which later brought the fruits of success. The Dalits got the right to temple entry. (S. Yeranar, 2011: 230-31). Ambedkar was the leader who filled these marginalized sections of society with the courage to fight for their rights. The Dalits social justice movement started by many social reformers led to the formation of the constitution which provided fundamental rights to all these sections.

Ambedkar, the great social reformer and human rights activist, was made the chairman of the drafting committee who drafted the Indian constitution, and being a lawyer by profession, he provided these fundamental rights including reservation policies for SCs and STs.

Deendayal Upadhyaya's views on Social Justice

Although Deendayal Upadhyaya nowhere used the term social justice for the fights of least advantaged sections of the society he was concerned about the primary needs of all the marginalized sections of the society. For this, he advocated the development of the last person of the society and the responsibility of a state to provide and fulfill basic requirements of all irrespective of caste, class. Social justice emphasizes social, political, and economic rights. (Raghavendra, 2016:27). Therefore we may call it the bundle of social, political, and economic rights. Deendayal Upadhyaya was concerned with social, political rights in general and economic rights in particular.

He believed that it is the responsibility of the state and society together to fulfill the basic needs of the people. Deendayal talked about the primary goods in society and emphasized the role of the state in fulfilling these goals. He said, "even if a person is not able to produce, to earn, even then, his primary needs should be fulfilled. The society based on these principles will be the real economic democracy. (Kulkarni, 2014: 16) ^[13]. He tried to compose a theory of justice on humanitarian grounds. He believed that the complete development of an Individual (Development of his Body, mind, Wisdom, and Soul) should be the aim of the state policies. (V. Nene, 2015: 7). The philosophy of justice, similar to Indian philosophy, is the main way of Upadhyaya. He believed that Democracy is not limited to political rights only. He said, "As in Democracy, the right to vote is a fundamental right, the right to participation should be the aim of economic democracy. He advocated the rights of employees as fundamental rights. The aim of democracy should be the inclusion of everyone in decision-making. (Singh, 2016: 201)". Through this view, he wanted that democracy should be participatory. Upadhyaya believed that if you want to serve society, you, then, should serve the least advantaged (Daridranarayan-Poorest). He further said, "Daridranarayan, the poorest person, is my God. Unless the service of poorest is incomplete, the society cannot progress". (Baghel, 2021: 5) ^[12]. Deendayal proposed that the progress of any society should be measured by the progress of the least advantaged sections of society. We know that in the words of Ambedkar, Dalits are the least advantaged sections of society. (Ambedkar, 2016). We may say that although Upadhyaya did not refer to Dalits specifically when he talked

about Daridranarayan, we may take the inference that he was also referring to Dalits in Indian society.

The Rationale and Scope

Many countries in Asia, Africa, became independent after the Second World War. These countries were the main proponents and receivers of social justice. These Asian, African countries not only suffered from external interventions but also many internal social, political, and economic imbalances. This happened due to the collaboration of one section of the society with these colonial powers. This is how one section became more powerful at the hands of weaker sections. This further led to demands of social justice from the state. The existing social evils in India i.e. untouchability, caste system, etc made these demands more powerful. (Tiwari, 2009: 430). Both Deendayal Upadhyaya and Ambedkar showed concern against these issues. The approaches and methods by them were different but the objective was the same to make this country free from all these evils. They also wanted to make India more powerful, prosperous, and developed. Therefore we may compare both these ideologies on certain issues like Democracy, Rights, Labor issues, etc.

Comparing Ambedkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya

Comparing Ambedkar and Deendayal is equal to comparing two schools of thought. Ambedkar belonged to a liberal school of thought with special emphasis on the welfare state. Although Deendayal also advocated welfare state policies, it was limited to certain rights. Still, we may try to compare these two on the grounds of their views on Democracy, Rights, and views on marginalized sections of the society, etc.

Democracy

Ambedkar believed that a democratic country should be based on the principles of Equality, Liberty and, fraternity. He said that for a successful working of democracy, Equality with the absence of Suppressed class and oppressed class in society, Strong Opposition, constitutional morality, and absence of tyranny are essential. (S. Wagh, 2015: 8-19).

Ambedkar and Deendayal were both proponents of democracy. Ambedkar was more concerned with social democracy and Upadhyaya was more concerned with economic democracy. Deendayal said that economic democracy is very essential for the development of a country. He believed that a democratic government must be rooted in Dharma Rajya. It should be the government for the good of the people. The Dharma Rajya encompasses liberty and Dharma. (Pandit, 2002: 39-41) [7].

Rights

Ambedkar believed that social justice is a bundle of rights that ensure equality and equal access to resources of the society. He believed that it is the state's responsibility to protect the rights of Dalits. Similarly, Deendayal Upadhyaya believed that the primary needs should be fulfilled by the state itself. Upadhyaya advocated the right to economic liberty by saying that, "we should maintain the right to liberty one by maintaining the same and equal liberty of others. (Kulkarni, 2014: 16) [13].

Least Advantaged and Dalits

Ambedkar and Deendayal both belonged to a different school

of thought. Although they belonged to two different schools of thought, their ultimate goal was the same. They wanted to uplift the marginalized sections of society. The earlier used the term, Depressed classes, later known as Dalit. The later used the term, Least Advantaged or Daridranarayan, for denoting the marginalized sections. Deendayal, in his philosophy of Antyodaya, claimed that he consider Daridranarayan as his god. By serving Daridranarayan (least advantaged), he believed, he served God. (Baghel, 2021: 5) [12]. He emphasized the role of the state in providing basic needs like food, clothes, house, medicine, and education. (Baghel, 2021: 5-7) [12]. He considered these basic needs as the components of fundamental rights. The unit of Ambedkar's social justice was Dalits including women and minorities.

Actions are taken for ensuring social justice policies

Since Indian got independence, many social, economic, and political policies have been implemented for the enforcement of social justice in Indian society. Indian constitution provided reservation to SCs and STs under the fundamental rights clause i.e. Article 15(4) and 16(4). (Basu, 2008: 94). Article 46 of the Indian constitution makes the duty of the state to promote the educational and economic interests of weaker sections of the society. The Government of India introduced the land redistribution act to implement the principles of distributive justice. The pending Hindu code in the direction of social reforms was implemented in parts by the Nehru government between 1954 to 1956. The labor act 1976 was also enacted to protect and safeguard the rights of labor classes of India. The present government has also introduced some social welfare policies to provide justice to weaker sections. Mudra Yojna, Gram Jyoti Yojana, etc can be named here. The big achievement of the present government is being successful in making 21 June as International Yoga day which fulfills the objective of Integral humanism, the philosophy propounded by Deendayal Upadhyaya by assisting in the physical development of the human body, the basic unit of Integral Humanism.

Conclusion

Ambedkar and Deendayal Upadhyaya are political thinkers of Indian origin. The social structure brings them into two different sections of society. Ambedkar belonged to the depressed classes of India. Upadhyaya was a caste Hindu. Their personal experiences brought them to the same platform. The loss of family members was somewhere similar. Ambedkar received western education, liberal thought, and thinking. Upadhyaya was taught in Indian education only. But these differences do not separate them. They both showed concern for the upliftment of the least advantaged sections of society. They both believed in democratic rights and liberties. We may expect further studies which may deal with more comparisons between these two ideologues of India.

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