

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Perspectives on Liberation of Caste and Gender Issues

Dr Yerriswamy E.

*Research Associate, Centre for Women Studies, Kannada University, Hampi, Vidyanarany - 583276
Hospet Taluk, Ballari Dist, Karnataka (ST), India*

ABSTRACT

The disparities of gender and caste came to lime light since the introduction of modern education system during the period of colonial rule in India to till date, even at the age of globalization era. Among the inequalities mainly (1) Sati (burning the widow with her deceased husband), (2) Vidhava Paddati (compulsory widowhood—equal to a milder form of burning); and Balya Vivaha (wedding him to a girl not yet reached marriageable age) were found among the women in Hindu society. Even Ekapathni Vratha (imposing celibacy on the widower) was the norm in olden times among the men folk also. The inequalities were not only limited to gender, but also discrimination was found among the Castes in India. For instance, Ashprusyatha (untouchability) was considered as the main social problem in the country in earlier times. In due course of time these social problems turned into social reform movements by the social thinkers during the freedom struggle of the country. This paper attempts to Gender issues and its relevance in contemporary.

Keywords: Liberation, Caste, Gender, Gender disparity,

INTRODUCTION

The disparities of gender and caste came to lime light since the introduction of modern education system during the period of colonial rule in India to till date, even at the age of globalization era. Among the inequalities mainly (1) *Sati* (burning the widow with her deceased husband), (2) *Vidhava Paddati* (compulsory widowhood—equal to a milder form of burning); and *Balya Vivaha* (wedding him to a girl not yet reached marriageable age) were found among the women in Hindu society. Even *Ekapathni Vratha* (imposing celibacy on the widower) was the norm in olden times among the men folk also. The inequalities were not only limited to gender, but also discrimination was found among the Castes in India. For instance, *Ashprusyatha* (untouchability) was considered as the main social problem in the country in earlier times. In due course of time these social problems turned into social reform movements by the social thinkers during the freedom struggle of the country. Later on these social movements were given main prominence at time of the framing the Constitution of India and welfare measures started. Welfare measures were introduced to eradicate the social evils of the society after India got independence. The social issues which were raised at the time of colonial rule were considered seriously and given a relook in terms of caste and gender issues. In that sphere, modernization played its major role on one side of the coin and the native perspectives added another dimension to it. Ambedkar has given a synonymous perspective for both sides of the above views which were expressed by the scholars on development. According to him gender issues especially the problem of women were looked through the angle of the caste out worldly in general and within the caste as such more specifically. In his perspective the issue of gender and caste play prominent role in the social hierarchy of society which was based on the norms of marital bonds, within the same caste known as endogamy. In Hindu society the main criterion of deciding the marriage relations is based on the rules of *Gotra* (clans) and *Inteperu* (surname) exogamy. In the present article all the norms related to the caste are taken into consideration to justify the role of Ambedkar's perspectives on liberation of caste and gender issues. Keeping all the above aspects of caste such as caste stratification, and the role of norms played while deciding the marital relations with in the caste and outside the caste, the parameters of gender within the caste and out side the caste are relooked and tried to compare with the views of Ambedkar, and focussed how his perspectives are still relevant in the present day context is the main aim of the current study.

LIBERATION OF WOMEN

Historically speaking Dr B R Ambedkar was the first person to raise the against the caste and the liberation of women in India. His way of thinking about the caste and gender problems through the marital relations in a family is a unique idea of observation of the society. During the time of colonial period the issues related to caste and gender were the main tasks of discussion. In those days Ambedkar was in direct contact with the women sufferings of his own community and seen the realities of caste discrimination in day to day life as an insider belonging to the caste of untouchable community. In such background he has tried to understand all the stress and stains of women and caste related problems systematically and meaning fully and observed them among his own caste members. In this context systematically refers to those specific case studies quoted by Ambedkar during his period. In support of his arguments he has started the political movement to raise his voice against the atrocities of his caste members. He maintained the same political thought and given a special attention of social process to overcome the problems of untouchability. He has shown more curiosity on the inequalities of caste discrimination that is why he gave more prominence and searched for the genesis of the caste in India, when compared to the other social scientists of the country.

In the context of caste and gender related aspects of the present study, it is apt to refer and quote the article of Ambedkar on “**CASTES IN INDIA: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development**”, which was read before the Anthropology Seminar of Dr. A. A. Goldenweizer at The Columbia University, New York, U.S.A. on 9th May 1916 (From: Indian Antiquary, May 1917, Vol. XLI), more relevant to be noted here because the present paper is written based his observations on caste and gender problems in Indian situation. The paper was presented before the august gathering of the eminent social scientists like Mr. Nesfield, Mr. Senart and Sir H. Risley and the Indian eminent social thinker Dr. Ketkar. All the scholars have critically examined the paper presented by Ambedkar on the parameters of caste and its characteristic features with special reference to India. Through Anthropological perspectives he has highlighted the new dimensions of gender issues and the societal problems related to the period of colonial rule in India. He has gone beyond one step and tried to trace the origin of caste in India. He has argued and pin pointed that the caste system in India came from outside the nation and entered as a new social element just like a virus in the social system of the country, through the forces such as Aryan invaders to India and imposed by them on the native people. In this context he has quoted so many foreign religious texts and answered all the questions pertained to origin of caste in India.

The historical perspectives of Indian situation support the caste system as noted by Ambedkar in his article. To quote

“*Endogamy is the only characteristic (Feature)¹ that is peculiar to caste, and if we succeed in showing how endogamy is maintained, we shall practically have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste. It may not be quite easy for you to anticipate why I (Ambedkar)² regard endogamy as a key to the mystery of the Caste system. Not to strain your (addressing the audience present at the time of paper presentation in the seminar)³ imagination too much, I will proceed to give you my reasons for it. It may not also be out of place to emphasize at this moment that no civilized society of today presents more survivals of primitive times than does the Indian society. Its religion is essentially primitive and its tribal code, in spite of the advance of time and civilization, operates in all its pristine vigor even today. One of these primitive survivals, to which I wish particularly to draw your attention, is the *Custom of Exogamy*. The prevalence of exogamy in the primitive worlds is a fact too well known to need any explanation. With the growth of history, however, exogamy has lost its efficacy, and excepting the nearest blood-kins, there is usually no social bar restricting the field of marriage. But regarding the peoples of India the law of exogamy is a positive injunction even today. Indian society still savours of the clan (*Gotras*) system, even though there are no clans ; and this can be easily seen from the law of matrimony which centres round the principle of exogamy, for it is not that *Sapindas* (blood-kins) cannot marry, but a marriage even between *Sagotras* (of the same class) is regarded as a sacrilege. Nothing is therefore more important for you to remember than the fact that endogamy is foreign to the people of India. The various *Gotras* of India are and have been exogamous: so are the other groups (tribes or natives of India)⁴ with totemic organization. It is no exaggeration to say that*

with the people of India exogamy is a creed and none dare infringe it, so much so that, in spite of the endogamy of the Castes within them, exogamy is strictly observed and that there are more rigorous penalties for violating exogamy than there are for violating endogamy. You will, therefore, readily see that with exogamy as the rule there could be no Caste, for exogamy means fusion. But we have castes; consequently in the final analysis creation of Castes, so far as India is concerned, means the superposition of endogamy on exogamy. However, in an originally exogamous population an easy working out of endogamy (which is equivalent to the creation of Caste) is a grave problem, and it is in the consideration of the means utilized for the preservation of endogamy against exogamy that we may hope to find the solution of our problem. *Thus the superposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste*”(Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, Page.no. 10).

Like this Ambedkar has proved that the concept of endogamy of caste came from outside the Indian continent through the outside invaders like the Aryans.

The marriage system is mainly based on the rule of patrilineal society in India. He has tried to answer all the questions related to caste and gender bringing together both institutions at one platform. Thus he has explained the caste in terms of marital norms. The marriage practices are still continued the practice of clan exogamy among castes in India. Those who follow the practice of clan gods and goddess as norms of marital relations also practice the same rule of exogamy while selecting the new bridal couple in the society. In such case they go for different clan god and goddess names. Nobody can dare to violate the norms of the caste and it has become a strong belief among the castes in India, even today. All the castes in India are still following the norms of marriage at present. That is the reason though there is endogamy at caste level but exogamous *gotra* norms are followed by them. When compared to the violation of exogamous *gotra* system, the endogamous violation of caste system have serious consequences in the society. Why because following the different *gotra* system itself is forming a single unit. But there are castes in India. This statement was justified with the example of an imaginary group by Ambedkar as follows:

“But this is not an easy affair. Let us take an imaginary group that desires to make itself into a Caste and analyze what means it will have to adopt to make it endogamous. If a group desires to make itself endogamous a formal injunction against intermarriage with outside groups will be of no avail, especially if prior to the introduction of endogamy, exogamy had been the rule in all matrimonial relations. Again, there is a tendency in all groups lying in close contact with one another to assimilate and amalgamate, and thus consolidate into a homogeneous society. If this tendency is to be strongly counteracted in the interest of Caste formation, it is absolutely necessary to circumscribe a circle outside which people should not contract marriages. Nevertheless, this encircling to prevent marriages from without creates problems from within which are not very easy of solution. Roughly speaking, in a normal group the two sexes are more or less evenly distributed, and generally speaking there is an equality between those of the same age. The equality is, however, never quite realized in actual societies. At the same time to the group that is desirous of making itself into a caste the maintenance of equality between the sexes becomes the ultimate goal, for without it. Endogamy can no longer subsist. In other words, if endogamy is to be preserved conjugal rights from within have to be provided for, otherwise members of the group will be driven out of the circle to take care of themselves in any way they can. But in order that the conjugal rights be provided for from within, it is absolutely necessary to maintain a numerical equality between the marriageable units of the two sexes within the group desirous of making itself into a Caste. It is only through the maintenance of such equality that the necessary endogamy of the group can be kept intact, and a very large disparity is sure to break it. *The problem of Caste, then, ultimately resolves itself into one of repairing the disparity between the marriageable units of the two sexes within it*” (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page. No.10).

In case of the inter caste marriage, the traditional practice of different *gotra* system existing within the caste is not followed, and in such instances there is no question of caste problem in it.

Caste System

Another dimension of Ambedkar to understand the caste system was through the concept of purity and pollution. In this concept of purity and pollution, only the religious side of the coin is visible, but it has serious impact on other side of the social life of the people. This will place the Brahmin caste on the top most position of the social hierarchy in Hindu society and mainly function based on the principle of Varna order, following the philosophy of Manu Smirithi. According to the Varna order, the purity concept is considered as prominent in placing the castes in the caste stratification system. While discussing the caste system, the concept of purity was used as a tool only. But it is directly related to the norms of the marriage institution, but imbedded in the caste itself.

In Ambedkar’s perspectives the formation of castes was due to the closed door policy adopted by the priestly caste, Brahmin in the beginning. This was also one of the parameter of formation of castes in India. Later on the principle of purity was followed by other divisions of the society. To quote Ambedkar:

“At the outset that the Hindu society, in common with other societies, was composed of classes and the earliest known are the

1. Brahmins or the priestly class;
2. The Kshatriya, or the military class;
3. The Vaishya, or the merchant class and
4. The Shudra, or the artisan and menial class.

At some time in the history of the Hindus, the priestly class socially detached itself from the rest of the body of people and through a closed-door policy became a caste by itself. The other classes being subject to the law of social division of labour underwent differentiation, some into large, others into very minute groups. The Vaishya and Shudra classes were the original inchoate plasm, which formed the sources of the numerous castes of today. As the military occupation does not very easily lend itself to very minute sub-division, the Kshatriya class could have differentiated into soldiers and administrators. This sub-division of a society is quite natural. But the unnatural thing about these sub-divisions is that they have lost the open-door character of the class system and have become self-enclosed units called castes” (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no. 8).

This critical evaluation of the various characteristic features of Caste leave no doubt that prohibition, or rather the absence of intermarriage, endogamy is the only one that can be called the essence of Caste. But some may deny this on abstract anthropological grounds, there are some endogamous groups exists without giving rise to the problem of Caste. In a general way this may be true, as endogamous societies, culturally different, making their abode in localities more or less removed, and having little to do with each other are a physical reality. The Negroes and the Whites and the various tribal groups that go by name of American Indians in the United States may be cited as more or less appropriate illustrations in support of this view. But Ambedkar’s argument was that

“In India the situation is different. As pointed out in the earlier pages, the peoples of India form a homogeneous whole. The various races (Castes)⁵ of India occupying definite territories have more or less fused into one another and do possess cultural unity, which is the only criterion of a homogeneous population. Given this homogeneity as a basis, Caste becomes a problem altogether new in character and wholly absent in the situation constituted by the mere propinquity of endogamous social or tribal groups. Caste in India means an artificial chopping off of the population into fixed and definite units, each one prevented from fusing into another through the custom of endogamy. Thus in his views *Endogamy is the only characteristic that is peculiar to caste*, and have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste” (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no. 8 and 9).

Likewise caste is argued as one of the culturally separate and distinct group, wherein the criterion of endogamy is strictly followed even today among all castes in the country.

The third dimension followed by the peoples of India is patrilineal society. Taking into consideration of the gender issue within the caste the males have dominance on the females in the family and patriarchy is maintained hereditarily. This is the actual reality of nature of the caste system and the

mechanism in the society. The purity and the chastity concept are applicable only to the women folk. Any violation by them leads to heavy penalty for it. All these rules and restrictions of caste are observed through the system of caste and gender in a community by women only.

“If a group desires to make itself endogamous a formal injunction against intermarriage with outside groups will be of no avail, especially if prior to the introduction of endogamy, exogamy had been the rule in all matrimonial relations. Again, there is a tendency in all groups lying in close contact with one another to assimilate and amalgamate, and thus consolidate into a homogeneous society. If this tendency is to be strongly counteracted in the interest of Caste formation, it is absolutely necessary to circumscribe a circle outside which people should not contract marriages. Nevertheless, this encircling to prevent marriages from without creates problems from within which are not very easy of solution.” (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no.11 and 14).

It is not so easy to solve such problems. The solutions for such kind of measures are seen when the numerical strength of the males and females are equal. In general among the same age group equality is found in the society. But in reality this equality among the same age group is not seen and never realized in actual castes. At the same time to the group that is desirous of making itself into a caste the maintenance of equality between the sexes becomes the ultimate goal. Otherwise they will break the norms of the caste. It is absolutely necessary to maintain a numerical equality between the marriageable units of the two sexes within the group desirous of making itself into a Caste. In such critical conditions to maintain the numerical strength of both the sexes is the prime concern of the caste.

As stated above the problems of caste finally remained as an issue and caste as one of the social institution has to settle the issues aroused between the sexes in a family. If you look the marriage system in the perspectives of men and women separately, we can come across some different kind of issues. In case if the husband dies before his wife’s death, then the widow may be left as alive or the widow has to undergo the practice of *Sati Paddati*. That particular caste has to give scope for the woman to survive. In reverse case also, such as the widower may survive in that particular caste. If you do not allow the widower to survive, in such case he may go out and break the norms of the caste and marry outside his own caste. The society has to give provision for the widower to live in the caste. To maintain the rules of endogamy the caste amicably solve the problems of both the widows as well as the widowers. The problem of Caste, then, ultimately resolves itself into one of repairing the disparity between the marriageable units of the two sexes within it. To quote:

“The much needed parity between the units can be realized only when a couple dies simultaneously. But this is a rare contingency. The husband may die before the wife and create a *surplus woman*, who must be disposed of; else through intermarriage she will violate the endogamy of the group. In like manner the husband may survive his wife and be *surplus man*, whom the group, while it may sympathize with him for the sad bereavement, has to dispose of; else he will marry outside the Caste and will break the endogamy. Thus both the *surplus man* and the *surplus woman* constitute a menace to the Caste if not taken care of, for not finding suitable partners inside their prescribed circle (and left to themselves they cannot find any, for if the matter be not regulated there can only be just enough pairs to go round) very likely they will transgress the boundary, marry outside and import offspring that is foreign to the Caste.

She can be disposed of in two different ways so as to preserve the endogamy of the Caste.

1. First: burn her on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband and get rid of her. This, however, is rather an impracticable way of solving the problem of sex disparity. In some cases it may work, in others it may not. Consequently every surplus woman cannot thus be disposed of, because it is an easy solution but a hard realization. And so the *surplus woman* (widow), if not disposed of, remains in the group: but in her very existence lies a double danger. She may marry outside the Caste and violate endogamy, or she may marry within the Caste and through competition encroach upon the chances of marriage that must be reserved for the potential brides in the Caste. She is therefore a menace in any case, and something must be done to her if she cannot be burned along with her deceased husband. The second remedy is to enforce widowhood on her for the rest of her life. So far as the objective results are concerned, burning is a better solution than enforcing widowhood. Burning the widow

eliminates all the three evils that a *surplus woman* is fraught with. Being dead and gone she creates no problem of remarriage either inside or outside the Caste (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no.12).

2. Second: But compulsory widowhood is superior to burning because it is more practicable. Besides being comparatively humane it also guards against the evils of remarriage as does burning; but it fails to guard the morals of the group. No doubt under compulsory widowhood the woman remains, and just because she is deprived of her natural right of being a legitimate wife in future, the incentive to immoral conduct is increased. But this is by no means an insuperable difficulty. She can be degraded to a condition in which she is no longer a source of allurements. She will be tonsured, and kept her away with the marriage symbols of marriage badge, toe rings and bangles (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no.13, 14).
3. “Important as he (widower) is to the group, endogamy is still more important, and the solution must assure both these ends. Under these circumstances Ambedkar viewed him may be forced or induced, after the manner of the widow, to remain a widower for the rest of his life. This solution is not altogether difficult, for without any compulsion some are so disposed as to enjoy self imposed celibacy, or even to take a further step of their own accord and renounce the world and its joys. But, given human nature as it is, this solution can hardly be expected to be realized. On the other hand, as is very likely to be the case, if the *surplus man* (widower) remains in the group as an active participator in group activities, he is a danger to the morals of the group. Looked at from different point of view celibacy, though easy in cases where it succeeds, is not so advantageous even then to the material prospects of the Caste. If he observes genuine celibacy and renounces the world, he would not be a menace to the preservation of Caste endogamy or Caste morals as he undoubtedly would be if he remained a secular person. But as an ascetic celibate he is as good as burned, so far as the material well-being of his Caste is concerned. A Caste, in order that it may be large enough to afford a vigorous communal life, must be maintained at a certain numerical strength. But to hope for this and to proclaim celibacy is the same as trying to cure atrophy by bleeding” (Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no.16).
4. In this circumstance it is very difficult to burn him because he is a male and it is not possible to burn him along with his deceased wife. Secondly, the community will lose one of the important individual, why he is referred as important, which means in Ambedkar’s view he was an asset to the caste” (ibid, 1916, page.no.13, 14).
5. Imposing celibacy on the *surplus man* in the group, therefore, fails both theoretically and practically. It is in the interest of the Caste to keep him as a *Grahastha* (one who raises a family), to use a Sanskrit technical term. But the problem is to provide him with a wife from within the Caste. At the outset this is not possible, for the ruling ratio in a caste has to be one man to one woman and none can have two chances of marriage, for in a Caste thoroughly self-enclosed there are always just enough marriageable women to go round for the marriageable men. Under these circumstances the *surplus man* can be provided with a wife only by recruiting a bride from the ranks of those not yet marriageable in order to tie him down to the group. This is certainly the best of the possible solutions in the case of the *surplus man*. By this, he is kept within the Caste. By this means numerical depletion through constant outflow is guarded against, and by this endogamy morals are preserved (ibid, 1916, page.no.14).

Means of Numerical Gender Disparity

“It will now be seen that the four means by which numerical disparity between the two sexes is conveniently maintained are:

1. Burning the widow with her deceased husband;
2. Compulsory widowhood—a milder form of burning;
3. Imposing celibacy on the widower and
4. Wedding him to a girl not yet marriageable.

Though, as I said above, burning the widow and imposing celibacy on the widower are of doubtful service to the group in its endeavour to preserve its endogamy, all of them operate as *means*. But means, as forces, when liberated or set in motion create an end. What then is the end that these means create? They create and perpetuate endogamy, while caste and Complex though it be in its general working the Hindu Society, even to a superficial observer, presents three singular uxorial customs, namely :

- I. *Sati* or the burning of the widow on the funeral pyre of her deceased husband.
- II. Enforced widowhood by which a widow is not allowed to remarry.
- III. Girl marriage.

In addition, one also notes a great hankering after *Sannyasa* (renunciation) on the part of the widower, but this may in some cases be due purely to psychic disposition” (Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar: Writings and Speeches, 1916, page.no.16, 21).

With the above information one can understand the nature of caste and gender problems. These Ambedkar’s perspectives are noted as criticism of the castes in India during the time of colonial rule. He has expressed his views in relation to the caste and gender disparities in India. Though there is diversity in the country but we have unity at the national level. The tribes of India are away from this kind of caste and gender inequalities among them. These disparities are imposed in the Indian continent by the Aryan society and their societal norms. With that the main differentness are seen between men-men, women-women, men-women, women-men, groups in the society. Among these groups the disparities are found based on the distinctions of authority and status in the caste.

Even the women problems itself is the root cause of the differences among the caste people. In India most of the gender issues starts from the caste itself. The social thinkers including Ambedkar have stressed on the social evils of the caste and the society such as *Sati Paddati*, Child marriage, widow remmarriage and untouchability. All these were critically examined and gave different perspectives for solving the caste issues.

They are of the opinion that for all the social evils of the society and the practices of polygamous marriages, widowhood, etc., are the outcome of the norms of endogamy, which is the crucial factor and played a major role in it. The maintenance of caste and its survival is possible only when the numerical strength is equal among both the sexes. But this is not possible. This disparity is seen in terms of birth or death of the issues. To control the strength of the female population the social evils of *Sati* practice and widowhood taken its birth in the society. These were the ways to control or reduce the strength of the female population, whereas the same kind of treatment was not applied on the widower. Brahmacharya, intercaste marriage, and Varna order are some of the additional provisions and reservations available for the men folk in the caste. To facilitate the men folk, the customs and practices such as *Sati*, widowhood and child marriage, etc were adopted in the caste in earlier times. The distinctions of superiority or inferiority complex of the gender issues have cropped up due to the system of endogamous rule of marriage practice. Not only were those they singular in nature. Within this even the untouchability also immersed in the caste system. The gender issue was considered as one of the issue of patriarchal Brahmin society in the beginning. But gradually in due course of time adopted by other divisions of the society.

To save the caste system in the Hindu society, the women folk belong to the upper caste Brahmin community practiced *Sati paddati* voluntarily on their own, without having any force from outside the community. Likewise the men folk belong to the Upper caste community maintained his purity and status in their community. Thus he has exhibited his authority on the whole community. Here the principle of Psychology of Charde is applied and observed that in due course of time, the down trodden community people also psychologically followed the higher castes in this respect. Thus it has become a model to the lower caste women. They should obey their husbands and also should give respect to their counter parts in their caste just like the higher caste women. Not only that the lower caste women should be obedient to the men folk of the higher caste and always submissive to them in the daily life. The lower caste women have to behave in two ways that is first, they are the wives to their husbands and secondly, work as *Devadasi* or temple dancers which mean they are in a position to fulfill the desires of sex to the higher caste men simultaneously. Thirdly the lower caste women have to work as servants to the higher caste women in the daily chores of the family life. Even in the modern day context it is observed that some of them they are serving as maid servants in the houses of

the upper caste families. To eradicate the caste system the only measure available in hand is the inter caste marriage system and even the government is encouraging it by way of some financial help to those intercaste new couples. It is believed that the caste system will be completely removed if everybody follow the system of inter caste marriage in the society. It is also observed that to solve the issues of women first of all we have to come forward to accept the inter caste marriages and be bold to break the boundaries of caste endogamy. This will ultimately leads to the solution of women problems in the caste also.

CONCLUSION

In the beginning the social thinkers of the Indian society, including Ambedkar understood the women problems through the caste. He has not only observed the practice of untouchability but also focused the issues of women in the family which were mainly based on the principle of patriarchal society. First he has observed the women issues of the upper caste and compared them to the lower castes. In his views there was no dominance of the patriarchy among the down trodden communities. It was imitated by them in due course of time with the higher caste. He also opined that through the help of practice of inter caste marriages we can able to solve the problems of women. These issues were pin pointed by him even during the time of colonial rule in India. He has made attempts to erase the stratification among the castes and also supported the gender bias in the caste. He has fight for the rights of the women folk in the community. Like this in the society the women became the unit of a separate caste. Women do not support this view, but have to accept the truth. This has become a issue in the women community. In most of the communities it is not possible to emerge the women as a separate community. Thus the though emerge as a separate community, but could not liberate from the clutches of the dominant men folk.

It is presumed that by way of forming the women community in to a full-fledged unit, we may replace the already existing dominant patriarchal society. It may be the prime motive of the present day context to solve the issues of gender in the society. Efforts are going on to bring the women community under single roof and to form a full- fledged women community in the society to overcome the gender issues. It is believed that by way of bringing all the women under one banner and to fight for their equal rights through the political movement is the only possible way in the modern era of globalization. Thus if all the women community collectively come together as single force and it may be sure we can solve the problems of gender as well of caste discrimination in the society.

In totality the issues of gender and caste related aspects focused different perspectives during colonial time. Colonial rulers considered the caste problems as women issues and presented them earlier. They looked them as the issues of the social thinkers but not as the issues of the patriarchal society.

At local level the problems of women are taken into consideration as the issues of caste. The issues of women and caste are treated as separate. The practice of *Sati paddathi* observed by the women folk of the upper caste were highlighted as the problems of their caste only. In the next step the issues related to the women and caste are taken different step simultaneously. In the women issues the caste played a major role. For example, the breaking of the widowhood was considered as impurity of women of that particular caste and they were treated as untouchables in their caste. Likewise untouchability reflects the status of impurity and impurity in turn gave the demerit of untouchability. All the time, all these aspects are related to the women and the caste only and accordingly placed them in the social hierarchy of the society. Gandhiji never jointly raised the problems of women and caste, but he has focused them as the national movement of women. All these problems have become one single unit. All these women issues can be solved if we eradicate the question of caste in India. In Ambedkar’s perspectives the patriarchal dominant society of upper caste should be kept aside and look at the issues of women and the liberation of untouchability from the caste.

In the present state of globalization era, it is possible to bring together all the women folk in to one and form a women community. This is the need of the hour in India. Though they are able to identify themselves as a single unit, but in real sense they could not be able to compete with the men folk, because of the male dominance in the society. The women community is not a living body. It is a social unit and political group. It is formed based on the pressure of some of the forces and some principles. This cannot be able to liberate all the women in the society from the clutches of evils of the caste. Hindu system is immersed with full of traditions and beliefs of the caste system. In such rigid caste system all women do not have the same kind of liberty in all cases. The women in all cases are

submerged at different levels. Thus considering the women community as such has become the ‘myth’ in the society. Keeping the view of the women community in mind, in 1980 the Constitution of India had taken the initiative of gender and caste concept to solve the problems of women in the country. Encouragement was also given to raise the women empowerment by way of supporting the inter caste marriages in the society and wanted to eradicate caste system in India. Right to Information Act was another weapon to women to solve their problems.

Foot Notes

- 1) Interpretation mentioned in (Parenthesis) is the opinion of the present author.**
- 2) Interpretation mentioned in (Parenthesis) is the view of the present author.**
- 3) Interpretation mentioned in (Parenthesis) is the opinion of the present author.**
- 4) Interpretation mentioned in (Parenthesis) is the view of the present author.**
- 5) Interpretation mentioned in (Parenthesis) is the opinion of the present author.**

REFERENCE

- [1] Ahir D.C: 1969, Gandhi and Ambedkar, Ajay prakashan, New Delhi.
- [2] Ambedkar B.R: 1916. “CASTES IN INDIA: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development”, paper read before the Anthropology Seminar of Dr. A. A. Goldenweizer at The Columbia University, New York, U.S.A. on 9th May 1916 (From: Indian Antiquary, May 1917, Vol. XLI).
- [3] Bharti Tharker: 2006, Women in Gandhi mass movement, Deepa Publications, New Delhi.
- [4] Dumont louis: 1968, Marriage Alliance, Macmillan and Pre press, New York,.
- [5] Delphy. Christine: 1976, Continuities and Discontinuities in Marriage and Divorce, Tavi stock, London.
- [6] Gorden, Linda: 1976, Women’s body. Women’s Right: A social history of birth control, Oxford University Press.
- [7] Sanjarikumkum : 1990, Recasting women: An introduction, Rutgers University press.
- [8] Sharmila Rege (ed): 2003, Sociology of Gender, Sage publication, New Delhi.
- [9] Sharmila Rege: 1969, Caste and Gender: the violence against women in India, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS), EUI (European University Institute), Florence
- [10] Yerriswamy E, 2010, Ph D thesis Women and Caste Hierarchy: Ambedkar’s Perspective (Dissertation published in Kannada), Geethanjali Pusthaka Prakashana, Shivamogga