

Importance of Education for the Backward Classes According to Dr. B R Ambedkar

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Abstract

“The backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forego material benefits, we may forego material benefits of civilization, but we cannot forego our right and opportunities to reap the benefit of the highest education to the fullest extent. That the importance of this question from the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe,”

-Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

Education has an immense impact on the human society. One can safely assume that a person is not in the proper sense until he is educated. It trains the human mind, behavior, thinking and take the right decision. In other words, man becomes a perfect man when he is educated.

It is through education that knowledge and information received and spread throughout the world. An uneducated person cannot read and write and hence he closed to all the knowledge and wisdom he can get from the books and any other sources. The quality of human resource of a nation is easily judge by the number of literacy. It is to say that education is necessary if a nation aspires to achieve growth and development and more importantly sustain it. Here we can say that there is somewhere high literacy behind every rich and developed nation. In fact these nations has started imparting selective training and education programs to meet the new technical and business demands of the 21st century.

Here I would like to say, through these lines that Babasaheb’s mission , his thoughts, ideology and strategy to strengthen the people of our nation only through proper higher education.

1. Introduction:

The status of communities as like Dalits in the Hindu caste system was the most serious impediment to their education, where everyone has the right to be educated. While stringent social taboos conscribed their behavior, severe strictures were laid down to prevent their access to knowledge. It was treatment for some communities that they were taboo from walking on the road in day light because even their shadow was considered polluting. On the pathetic condition of untouchables, Ambedkar had given lot of facts. He writes that , **‘Under the rule of the Peshwas in the Maratha**

country the untouchables was not allowed to use the public street if a Hindu was coming along lest he should pollute the Hindu by his shadow. The untouchable was required to have a black thread either on his wrist or on his neck as a sign or a mark to prevent the Hindus from getting them polluted by his touch through mistake. In Poona, the capital of the Peshwa, the untouchables was required to carry, strung from his waist, a broom to sweep away from behind the dust he treaded on lest a Hindu walking on the same should be polluted. In Pune, the untouchable was required to carry an earthen pot, hung in his neck wherever he went, for holding his spit falling on earth should pollute a Hindu who might unknowingly happen to tread on it. The children of untouchables were not allowed to study in public school. Untouchables were not allowed to use public wells, to wear apparel or ornaments they like and to eat any food they like.”

Dr. Ambedkar wanted a society through education where there is no exploitation, where humanity may find equality, justice, love, progress, and merit, where work is more respected than caste, where class, caste, creed, colour and religion might not be dividing the humanity, where there is no touchable, no untouchable, no Brahmin, no non-Brahmin, no rich or poor and where there is love among person, justice in the society, spread of knowledge and progress everywhere . Dr. Ambedkar wanted a society with justice, equality and prosperity.

Dr. Ambedkar knew well that without education the downtrodden can't achieve a high standard of living in the society. He saw that learned Indians arranged for the training of cattle and birds but prohibiting the down-trodden from education compelled them to live a worse life than the cattle and the birds.

Dr. Ambedkar was of the opinion that if the moon, sun, wind and water are meant for the use of all the living beings then why should the education be limited only to higher classes.

Dr. Ambedkar realizes that only through proper education the caste system can be abolished.

Dr. Br. Ambedkar's Philosophy on Higher Education:

Education is the spine of the nation or the society. Education is the fountain head for the development, advancement of the nation. An individual is empowered with creative thinking, knowledge, reasoning and compassion for fellow being through education, closing the avenues of education from ones reach is nothing but to push him towards darkness.

He found that such an unkind act was performed over a section of the society called **Dalits** and **Sudras** and thereby subjugated them to permanent disadvantage in all aspects of life and personality growth.

Without proper education man cannot ever be a perfect man, he just remains a doll made of flesh and blood. Without education humans behavior cannot be changed, there is no difference between an uneducated mind and animal mind. Only proper education can bring dignity, discipline, politeness, kindness it is to say that only education can transform a man into man from an animal.

Dr. Ambedkar said- **“Higher education, in my opinion, means that education, which can enable you to occupy the strategically important places in State administration. Brahmins had to face a lot of opposition and obstacles, but they are overcoming these and progressing ahead.”**

According to Dr. Ambedkar, **“Education is that which make men fearless, teach unity, make understand their birth rights and teach men to struggle and fight for the freedom”**. Education is a revolution. If education can’t serve these purposes,⁰ then such education is a dead one and better it should be burnt or set to fire.

Ambedkar has been described as a philosopher, a patriot, scholar or a writer, the constitution maker, a social revolutionary, a humanistic thinker, or the socialist and he had also contributed a great deal to the cause of education. He mainly emphasized that the education as a vital force for individual development and social and economical change.

According to Ambedkar, education was the main key to open the doors of light, vision and wisdom and it is the way to know oneself.

“Education is something which ought to be brought within the reach of every one. The object of primary education is to see that every child that enters the portals of a primary school does leave it only at a stage when it becomes literate continuous to be literate through out the rest of his life.”

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and The meaning of education:

Education has an immense impact on the human society. One can safely assume that a person is not in the proper sense until he or she is educated. It trains the human mind to think and take the right decision. In other words man becomes a rational animal when he is educated. Education is the most auspicious gift of God, which must be distributed to everyone.

It is through education that knowledge and information received and spread throughout the world. An uneducated person cannot read and write and hence he closed to all the knowledge and wisdom he can gain through books and other mediums. In other words he is far away from the outer world. On the other hand an educated man lives in a room but too closer to the outer world.

The quality of human resource of a nation can be easily measured by the number of literate population are living in it. It is to say that to develop a nation by socially, economically there is no option except proper education.

According to Ambedkar that is not education which does not make men capable, doesn’t teach equality and morality, but the true education is that which safeguards the interest of the humanity and provides bread, knowledge and feeling of equality in the society. True education really creates life in the society.

Agitate: The word **agitate** does not indicate to agitate physically but through mental; it is a mental revolution in its place. It never means that to go out and start protesting violently on the streets without getting educated first, which most probably our opponent wants us to do. According to Babasaheb's thought and strategy we should be educate first and then agitate mentally by the power of knowledge. We need an agitation of thoughts in our mind and to occupy knowledge in order to step forward.

Organize: Educated and agitated mind is necessary to organize for a common mission as easily as possible. We must get ourselves educated properly and let our knowledge and thought to be agitate so that we can collectively organize. Educated and agitated mind will help us to unite and struggle for our common goal as one force for a common mission. Only through the proper education this change can be brought. Ambedkar had also given lot of emphasis on getting education. He said that **‘Educate Organize and Agitate’**. Here he had given prime importance to education. He further added that, **‘The backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forego material benefits of civilization but we cannot forego our rights and opportunities to reap the highest education fully. That the importance of this question from the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe’**. He suffered a lot due to this caste system. Still in that system of discrimination, he succeeded to well educate himself.

2. Conclusion:

Dr. Ambedkar realizes the need of education to develop the society. He realized that only education can make the society free from the trap of superstition and narrow thinking of the people of the nation. To make the nation civilized and to bring a new era we have to come in contact of the light of education. A nation can be developed only through gain knowledge. Knowledge is only the power which can change the human being. Only education can end the darkness and can bring the new light for the nation.

References:

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