

Role of congress in the emancipation of untouchables of India: Perspective of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

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Abstract

Dr. Ambedkar's concept of social justice stands for the liberty, equality and fraternity of all human beings. Dr. Ambedkar a rationalist and humanist, did not approve any type of hypocrisy, injustice and exploitation of man by man in the name of religion. He critic on Indian society and come to the conclusion that caste system as the greatest evil of Hindu religion. Indian National congress was established in the year 1885 and she started the political movement throughout in India. Some of the congress leader like Mahadev Govind Ranade believed that without social change in our society there is no use to run the political movement in India. With his efforts social conference was established in the year 1887 for the social movement but some orthodoxy congress leader object to Ranade to run the social activities under the umbrella of Congress. Under the president of Mrs. Annie Besant in the year 1917 resolution was passed regarding the untouchability. It means now congress was thinking that, untouchability should remove from the society. But what exactly constructive work done by congress to remove the untouchability from the society? How much congress was succeeded to remove untouchability from the society that has been criticized by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. Here, I presented the research article which shows how Dr. B. R. Ambedkar criticized the role of Congress for the emancipation of Untouchables of India.

Keywords: Congress: A political party which was establish on 28th December, 1885 in Mumbai. Downtrodden people: People who are lacking the sound economic, political and social status are called as the downtrodden people. Untouchability: The people who's touch to other people is to be supposed as impure is called the untouchability. RTC: Round table conference

Introduction

Indian national Congress was established on 9th August, 1885 for the demanding the political rights for the Indian people. But very soon some of the leaders of Congress realized that only political rights are not sufficient for the overall upliftment of the Indian people. Among all other congress leader one of the prominent leader of Congress Mahadev Govind Ranade reliaze the importance of the social equality in the society. To remove the untouchability from the society congress must work hard to establishment of equality in society and basic rights are must be given to the untouchables then only we have right to ask British government about our political rights. Therefore he had established the Natitional social conference on 1887. But he and his National social conference did not get the support from the congress leader to remove the untouchability from the society. Throught the journey of congress, she had taken different policy regarding the removal of untouchability from the society. But then also question arise that, how much congress was succeeded in the removal of untouchability from the society? Different law were made to remove the untouchability from the society but then also till now we find the problems of untouchability. Before independence of India, congress was the main political party in India and after independence major period congress was the ruling party and we find the untouchability in our society. Therefore it is naturally responsibility goes to congress about, what she did for the removing untouchability from the society? Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was the critically analysed about what congress have done to the removal of untouchability. Here, I want to present research paper about, how Dr. B. R. Ambedkar criticized the role of congress in the removal of untouchability from the society.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's study about the social structure of India: Dr. B. R. Ambedkar investigated the social structure of India and he found that untouchability is the main problem for the establishment of the equality in the society. In front of simon commission he explained that who are untouchables. The persons who are not allowed in the temple to pray god or goddesses, not allowed on Lake and not allowed on Well for the water, all these are supposed to be the untouchables. Without consideration untouchables as a human beings and their basic rights there is no use of independence of India. From the long period congress had taken the leadership of the Indian society. But how she did the work to remove the untouchability of Indian society that had been criticized by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. When Dr. Ambedkar met with Gandhiji on 14th August, 1931 at Mani Bhavan and he explained him that Muslims and Shikhas condition is better than Untouchbles and it was approved by British government in the round table conference. Round table conference approved untouchables rights as the rights of minority. This new identity is the beneficial to untouchables. These untouchables should get the separate political identity. What is our opinion about this? Then Gandhiji replied that he is opposed to the separate political identity of the untouchables. This answer of Gandhiji, has given clear idea to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar about the thoughts of congress and Gandhiji ^[1]. Therefore he decided that to remove the untouchability from the society all the depressed class people must be united.

Annual session of Congress and her resolution about the abolition of Untouchability: In the year 1917 Annual session was held at Calcutta where Mrs. Annie Besant was the President of that session. In that session Congress has passed the resolution regarding the untouchability. In that session,

resolution has been presented for the discussion to get the support of all the members of the congress committee. It was presented by the G. A. Natesan, member of Madras and it was supported by the Mr. Bhulabai Desai member of Bombay. While presenting the resolution he stated that congress should not kept aside herself from the important issue of untouchability. He further stated that Congress decided to remove the all inequalities from the society. Due the custom of the Hindu society, people belonging from the depressed classes are exploited from long period. One big class of the society is being exploited from the other class is the shameful thing for the society. We must take care of religion as well as law and custom of the society and at the same time we must try to remove untouchability from the society. Congress should create the opportunity for the depress class people to get free education, more than that congress should protect their right to get water from all available sources. Further all depress class people must get right to enter in all temples. Without injuring our religious feelings, without giving up all that is best in our religious tradition, Congress must try to offer equal opportunity to the untouchables ^[2]. Here congress has taking care of the Hindu religion and tradition of the Hindu religion. She want change in society, without change in religious tradition. Here we can understand the diplomacy of congress that she did not want to hart the tradition of Hindu and at the same time she want to improve the social condition of India. These two things could not be possible at same time. Therefore Dr. Ambedkar concluded that congress have not done any constructive work for removing the untouchability from the society. Without throwing superiority of upper caste people, untouchability could not be able to remove from the society. Therefore whatever congress had been declared in that session it was just feint against untouchability.

Congress leader, Dr. Annie Besant and her views regarding untouchability: Dr. Annei Besant was founder member of Home Rule Leage. She was also the founder of Theosophical society. She was the president of congress session which was held at culcutta in the year 1917 in which resolution was passed regarding to overthrow the untouchability from the society. Now it is very important to see that what were the views Dr. Annie Besant regarding the removal of the untouchability from the society. When we see her article, 'The uplift of Depress Classees, which was published in the journal Indian Review for February, 1909. In that article she says that Children of the untouchable should not be send same school, where touchable students are taking their education. Students from the lower caste should not get the same education in the same institution. To prove her statement she argued that lower caste students having one commen diseases i.e. eye disease, therefore these students should be seated separately from the higher caste people. She further argued that it is very wrong to expect that higher class students should follow the dirty habits of depress class students. She further saying that it is not correct to snached the good habits from the students who belongs from the higher caste and they have all moral values and good quality from their parents ^[3].

If such kinds of thoughts of the leaders of congress than how we could expect from the congress that she will do the efforts for removing the untouchability from the society. Instead of finding the causes and do the efforts to remove that disease of lower caste students, she suggested that all these students

should offer education separately. This is the proof of Annie Basant the prominent leader of congress, that how congress was serious about to remove the untouchability from the society. Because from her article she shown that she was not supporter of the establishment of equality among the society. She was the member of congress and one prominent leader of congress so atomatically we can concluded that congress and her supported had not done any serious efforts to remove untouchability.

Policy of Congress to attract untouchables to Congress

Party: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar analyzed all programs of congress which are carried out for the upliftment of untouchables. According to him, congress is misguided to the untouchables. Congress does not have any sympathy with the untouchables. Through their different program, Congress just want to attract untouchables and use them as a manpower for the political development of Congress. He wrote the article in Janta Newspaper of dated 9th January, 1932, in which he presented his views with following points.

1. Though congress had accepted policy to abandon untouchability from the society but she had not done any constructive work to remove the untouchability from the society. On the other hand some local members of congress were bitter opponents of satyagrah of Chavadar Tank and Nasik Kalaram Temple entry.
2. Roundtable conference which was held in London in year the 1931, in that conference Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was the Leader of untouchable who asked demands for the betterment of untouchables. Congress and Gandhiji was ready to give the separate representation to the Shikhs and Muslims but not ready to give the separate representation to untouchables.
3. In the 10th meeting of RTC (13-11-1931) Gandhiji said that he do not mind if untouchable want to separate from Hindu and wanted to converted in Islam or Christianity.
4. Gandhiji suggested to Minorities like Muslims and Shikhas that they could decide their demands among their self but do not support to the demands of the untouchables. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar proved that how congress was against to the political demands of the untouchables.

In the Round table conference Gandhiji further argued that he is the only leader of Untouchble and no other else. It was the insult not only Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar but it was the insult of million of untouchables who willingly accepted the leadership of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. No one can imposed his leadership on any group of people, it must be accepted and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was accepted leader of millions of untouchle ^[4]. Gandhiji and Congress party was not much interested to remove the untouchability from the society. But all the congress leaders were wants their hold on untouchables. They supposed that congress is the only party who is taking care of depressed class people. But in reality congress just want to use politically to the depressed class people.

Satyagrah against congress: Dr. Babasaheb Ambedker, Founder and leader of scheduled caste federation demanding in press conference that congress should issue a blueprint about what would be her plan to protect the interests of Scheduled Caste in the future constitution. He declared that his satyagra is for the Independence of untouchables and not for personal

pleasure. He further stated that main cause of over satyagrah is that to find out a proper place of untouchables in free India on the base of democracy. Seven crore untouchables do not find rights in the future constitution. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar further explained that there is no use to take demands of untouchables in front of British because they have wrote their Testament. He asked the question to Congress that Britishers have approved the rights of Muslims and Hindu congress, then what about our basic righis of untouchables ^[5]. His main objective of the Satyagrah was to get the proper place to untouchables in the legislative, administrative, political field. As well untouchables should get the social rights as upper class peoples were enjoyed. His demand was. Congress should issue their plan regarding the establishment of equality in independent India. Muslims, Shikhs having a separate constituency and their separate constituency is no harmful for the Nationality of India, then how there would be harmful for Nationality of India by the approval of separate constituency to the downtrodden people. The purpose of satyagrah launched by the scheduled caste federation in Poona, he explained, was to get an answer from the Congress about the question of untouchables and ask congress to make an open declaration of their plan to protect the interests of the scheduled Caste in the future Constitution of India. He further stated that he and his scheduled caste federation had no quarrel with Muslims for they were prepared to make a declaration of their intentions towards the protection of rights of Scheduled Caste and there would be no Satyagrah in such provinces where the Muslims were in power. The Congress, however, so far had been mute over this question which raised by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar regarding the protection of Scheduled caste people ^[6]. This proved that how congress is serious about the problems of untouchables. This also proved that congress is not the real emancipator of untouchables but Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was the real emancipator of the untouchables.

Gandhiji had categorically stated that removal of untouchability did not mean interdining or intermarriage between the caste Hindus and the untouchables. His anti-untouchability, according to Ambedkar, was that the untouchables would be classed as Shudras instead of ati-Shudras. All Shudras and Ati-Shudras are to follow their hereditary professions ^[7].

Such kinds of thoughts of the Gandhiji could not supported to the removal of untouchability from the society. On the other hand such types of thoughts are the sing of the work against the untouchability.

Why Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar become the part of congress: We do not have any written proof about Dr. B. R. Ambedkar demanded anything for himself from Congress. There was need of Congress about the help of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in the constitution Assembly. Barister Jaykar had given the resignation from the member of constitutional assembly, therefore Congress want to elect unopposed to Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar from Mumbai on behalf of Congress party. At any cost Congress was needed his co-operation for making the constitution of India. It is proved by the letters which wrote by Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Sardar Vallabhbhai patel to Balasaheb Kher, about at any cost Dr. B. R. Ambedkar must be elected from Mumbai province as a member of constitutional Assembly.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar contest the election for constitutional assembly through his political party scheduled caste federation from the Bengal and won that election but unfortunetley after partition of India that province was merge in Pakistan. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar has been chosen by the Bombay legislature congress party to fill the vacancy in the constitutional Assmbly caused by the resignation of Hon. M. R. Jayakar. July 22, 1947, has been fixed for the by election to the constituent Assembly ^[8]. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel wrote letter to Chief Minister of Mumbai to try to elect Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. On the behalf of Congress party Dr. Babasaheb elected as member of constitutional Assembly from Mumbai on 3 August, 1947. He become the part of the first ministry of Pandit Jawaharlal Neharu. He become the first law Minister of India. Neharu asked his help for the Nation, that is why for the need of nation he entered in Congress. Pandit Neharu had given his sincere thanks to Ambedker for his acceptance of invitation in congress for making the constitution of India.⁹ For the nation building Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was entered in Congress. When he became the Chairman of drafting committee then he devoted himself for the work of constitution.

Prime minister Jawarlal Neharu offers D. B. R. Ambedkar a place in his cabinet. Dr. Ambedkar, it seems told him that the Law Ministry work itself not to be sufficient for him (i. e. he wanted more crucial responsibilities and roles to play.) Neharu assure him more work. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar thereupon gives his consent. On 3rd August 1947 his name was included the Nehru Cabinet as the Law Minister.¹⁰ When Congress asked him to work on constitution of India the he accepted that offer only for the Nation and betterment of untouchables. He supposed that it is great opportunity to do the better things for the untouchables through the constitution. So not for himself but for the need of Congress and need of nation he entered in Congress and made the finest constitution for India. Here he had taken care of untouchables about their basic rights. To remove the untouchability from the society he entered in congress and removed the untouchabililty by the law.

Conclusion: Congress is involve in freedom movement without the programme of emancipation of untouchables. Congress have not done any constructive work to remove untouchales from the society. Congress was saying that she was only the party who was working for the care of untouchables. But it was not true. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was the only emancipator of untouchability. Congress was not having daring to fight against the orthodoxy of hindu religion in which untouchables were living in very piteous condition. Dr. Ambedkar fought against the untouchability. British as well as Congress have not done any constructive and long life work which help to change the position of untouchables. Casteists hindu people did not supported the demands of untouchables. Congress did not shown the courage to opposed the orthodoxy Hindus who refused to remove the untouchables from the society. Gandhiji opposed separate electorates to the untouchables which was their fundamental rights and which would have been helpful to untouchables to increase the political strength of untouchables. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar suggesting to congress as well as British government that for the safeguard of untouchbles political power is very essential. But Congress just wanted to use the untouchables for their vote

bank and therefore she refused separate electorates to the untouchables

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