

## Impact of Ambedkarite thoughts on Dalit Literature

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### Abstract

This research paper explores the profound impact of Ambedkarite thoughts on Dalit literature, examining how the philosophy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar shapes the content, style, and purpose of Dalit literary works. Rooted in social justice and equality, Ambedkar's teachings resonate deeply within the Dalit literary movement, serving as a catalyst for advocacy and empowerment. Dalit literature reflects the lived experiences of the marginalized community, addressing themes of caste discrimination, untouchability, and social exclusion. Through various literary forms such as poetry, fiction, and autobiography, Dalit writers articulate their struggles and aspirations, drawing inspiration from Ambedkar's call for self-respect and liberation. The paper analyses select texts and authors within the Dalit literary canon, elucidating the ways in which Ambedkarite ideology informs and enriches the discourse on caste oppression and Dalit identity. Furthermore, it examines the role of Dalit literature in disseminating Ambedkarite principles to wider audiences, fostering consciousness-raising and social change. Through a multidisciplinary approach integrating literary analysis, sociological inquiry, and historical contextualization, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the symbiotic relationship between Ambedkarite thoughts and Dalit literature. Ultimately, it underscores the transformative potential of literature as a tool for social emancipation and the realization of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's vision of an inclusive and just society.

**Keywords:** Dalit, Dalit consciousness, identity, marginalized communities, caste oppression, social justice

The impact of Ambedkarite thoughts on Dalit literature is profound and multifaceted. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's philosophy of social justice, liberty, social justice, fraternity and equality resonates deeply within the Dalit literary movement. Dalit literature serves as a platform for amplifying Ambedkar's teachings and advocating for the rights and dignity of the marginalized. Themes of caste discrimination, untouchability, and social exclusion permeate Dalit literary works, reflecting the lived experiences of the community. Through various literary

forms such as poetry, fiction, and autobiography, Dalit writers articulate their struggles and aspirations. Ambedkarite principles inspire Dalit authors to challenge oppressive social structures and envision a more equitable society. The resilience and defiance displayed in Dalit literature mirror Ambedkar's call for self-respect and empowerment among Dalits. By reclaiming their narratives, Dalit writers reclaim agency and assert their identity in the face of historical marginalization. Dalit literature serves as a vehicle for social

consciousness, fostering dialogue and awareness about caste-based discrimination. Ambedkarite thought provides Dalit literature with a moral and ideological foundation, guiding its pursuit of justice and equality. The influence of Ambedkar's writings and speeches is evident in the language, imagery, and symbolism employed by Dalit authors. Through their literary activism, Dalit writers continue to carry forward Ambedkar's legacy of social reform and liberation. The synergy between Ambedkarite philosophy and Dalit literature underscores the interconnectedness of intellectual discourse and social movements. Dalit literature not only reflects the struggles of the past but also offers hope for a more inclusive and egalitarian future. In essence, the impact of Ambedkarite thoughts on Dalit literature is transformative, shaping both the content and purpose of this vibrant literary tradition.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a prominent Indian jurist, social reformer, and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, had multifaceted perspectives on various aspects of human life, including humanities. His thoughts on humanities were deeply rooted in his quest for social justice, equality, and the empowerment of marginalized communities, particularly Dalits (formerly known as untouchables).

**Dignity of Individuals:** Ambedkar emphasized the inherent dignity and worth of every individual, irrespective of caste, creed, or gender. He believed in the fundamental equality of all human beings and advocated for the recognition and preservation of human dignity in all aspects of life.

**Critical Inquiry and Rationality:** Ambedkar stressed the importance of critical inquiry, rational thinking, and scientific temperament in

understanding human societies and addressing social problems. He encouraged the application of reason and evidence-based analysis in the study of humanities to unravel the complexities of social structures and cultural practices.

**Historical Consciousness:** Ambedkar recognized the significance of history in shaping contemporary social realities. He believed in critically examining historical narratives to uncover the roots of social inequality, oppression, and discrimination, particularly concerning caste-based hierarchies in India.

**Cultural Pluralism:** Ambedkar advocated for cultural pluralism and the recognition of diverse cultural identities within society. He opposed the imposition of hegemonic cultural norms and championed the right of individuals and communities to preserve and celebrate their unique cultural heritage.

**Social Justice and Equity:** Central to Ambedkar's thoughts on humanities was the pursuit of social justice and equity. He called for the eradication of caste-based discrimination, economic exploitation, and other forms of social oppression to create a more just and egalitarian society.

**Empowerment through Education:** Ambedkar believed in the transformative power of education as a means of individual and collective empowerment. He emphasized the importance of education in liberating oppressed communities from ignorance and socio-economic marginalization.

**Ethics and Morality:** Ambedkar underscored the significance of ethical conduct and moral integrity in human interactions. He believed that ethical principles should guide human behaviour and societal institutions to ensure fairness, compassion, and respect for human rights.

**Democracy and Citizenship:** Ambedkar was a staunch advocate of democracy and constitutional

governance. He emphasized the importance of civic participation, political rights, and the rule of law in ensuring the protection of individual liberties and the advancement of social justice. Overall, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's thoughts on humanities were imbued with a profound commitment to human dignity, social justice, and the pursuit of knowledge for the betterment of society. His ideas continue to inspire scholars, activists, and policymakers in their efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable world.

In the novel "Annihilation of Caste" by B.R. Ambedkar, the author passionately critiques the caste system and advocates for its annihilation. Dalit Literature: Similarly, Dalit authors like Bama in "Karukku" depict the harsh realities of caste oppression and the resilience of Dalit communities in resisting systemic discrimination. Bama writes, "The struggle is to reject the caste system and to eradicate the humiliation imposed upon us. "Ambedkar's emphasis on human dignity is echoed in his famous quote, "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved." Authors like Baby Kamble in "The Prisons We Broke" highlight the struggle for dignity and agency among Dalit women. Kamble writes, "We were Dalit women, even lower than the Dalits. That was the lowest of the low. We had no rights. "Ambedkar believed in the transformative power of education, stating, "Cultivation of mind should be the ultimate aim of human existence. "Autobiographies like "Joothan" by Omprakash Valmiki depict the journey of Dalits seeking education as a means of empowerment and liberation. Valmiki writes, "I had to earn an education to make my existence count."

Ambedkar critiqued Brahmanical dominance in society, stating, "The real remedy for breaking caste is inter-marriage." In works like "Untouchable" by Mulk Raj Anand, Dalit authors critique Brahmanical hegemony and expose the dehumanizing effects of caste-based discrimination. Anand writes, "The tyranny of caste is as bad as the tyranny of race and the caste system must be abolished. "Ambedkar was a proponent of political activism and social reform, stating, "I like the religion that teaches liberty, equality, and fraternity. "Writers like Daya Pawar in "Baluta" depict the journey towards political consciousness and the struggle for social justice among Dalits. Pawar writes, "The struggle for our rights and dignity is a fight against centuries of oppression."

These examples illustrate how Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's thoughts on caste, dignity, education, activism, and social justice are reflected in Dalit literature through the narratives, themes, and perspectives of various authors.

Dalit literature is characterized by its exploration of various themes that reflect the lived experiences, struggles, and aspirations of Dalit communities. Some key themes in Dalit literature include: Caste Oppression and Discrimination, Dalit literature often delves into the pervasive nature of caste-based discrimination and the dehumanizing effects it has on individuals and communities. Authors vividly depict the violence, social exclusion, and systemic inequalities faced by Dalits due to their lower caste status. Identity and Self-Assertion, Identity formation and self-assertion are central themes in Dalit literature. Authors grapple with questions of Dalit identity, reclaiming narratives, and asserting dignity and agency in the face of

historical marginalization. Dalit literature celebrates the unique cultural heritage and resilience of Dalit communities.

Social Justice and Empowerment, Dalit literature advocates for social justice and the empowerment of marginalized communities. Authors critique oppressive social structures and call for systemic reforms to address caste-based inequalities. Education, political consciousness, and collective action are often depicted as means of empowerment. Resistance and Rebellion, Resistance against caste oppression and rebellion against unjust social norms are recurring themes in Dalit literature. Authors depict acts of defiance, protest, and resilience as Dalit communities assert their rights and challenge oppressive hierarchies. Intersections of Gender and Caste: Dalit literature explores the intersectionality of caste and gender, highlighting the unique struggles faced by Dalit women and individuals. Authors examine issues such as caste-based patriarchy, sexual violence, and the double marginalization experienced by Dalit women. Education and Empowerment, Education is portrayed as a pathway to empowerment and social mobility in Dalit literature. Authors emphasize the transformative power of education in challenging caste-based inequalities and fostering individual and collective empowerment among Dalit communities.

Narratives of Liberation and Annihilation of Caste, Dalit literature often engages with the vision of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for the annihilation of caste and the creation of a more just and equitable society. Authors explore themes of liberation, equality, and social transformation, envisioning a future free from caste-based discrimination. Memory, Trauma, and Healing, Dalit literature

grapples with the collective memory of historical injustices, trauma, and intergenerational wounds inflicted by caste oppression. Authors explore themes of memory, resilience, and healing as Dalit communities confront the legacies of caste-based violence and discrimination.

These themes collectively illustrate the richness, diversity, and socio-political significance of Dalit literature as a medium for expressing the experiences, aspirations, and struggles of Dalit communities in India and beyond.

Dalit literature boasts a rich array of authors whose works have significantly contributed to the exploration and representation of Dalit experiences. Here are some major authors and their notable works in Dalit literature:

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: wrote following important books and inspired many social reformers, and writers: "Annihilation of Caste," "The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchables," "The Problem of the Rupee: Its Origin and Its Solution"

The other works include: Mulk Raj Anand's "Untouchable," "Coolie," "Two Leaves and a Bud," Omprakash Valmiki's "Joothan: A Dalit's Life," "Ambedkar: Vyakti Nahin Sankalp," "Safar Mein Dhoop Toh Hogi" Bama's (Faustina Mary Fatima Rani): "Karukku," "Sangati," "Vanmam: Vendetta" Daya Pawar's "Baluta," Baby Kamble's "Jina Amucha", Sharankumar Limbale's "The Outcaste: Akkarmashi," "Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature: History, Controversies, and Considerations," Laxman Mane's "Upara," "The Revised Kamasutra," "The Cry of Dalit Literature" Urmila Pawar's: "The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoirs," "Motherwit" Yashwant Manohar's "An Untouchable in IAS,"

"One Step towards Brahman," "A Drop in the Ocean of Dalit Literature" Sujatha Gidla's "Ants among Elephants: An Untouchable Family and the Making of Modern India" Chandrabhan Prasad's "Dalit Diary: 1999-2003," "I Am Not a Broom"

These authors, among many others, have played pivotal roles in shaping and expanding the discourse of Dalit literature, offering profound insights into the lived experiences, struggles, and aspirations of Dalit communities in India. Their works continue to inspire and provoke discussions on caste-based discrimination, social justice, and human dignity.

Dalit literature has significantly impacted society by raising awareness about caste-based discrimination and oppression, shedding light on the pervasive nature of casteism. Through narratives of resistance and rebellion, Dalit authors challenge ingrained social norms and expose the dehumanizing effects of Brahmanical hegemony, encouraging society to confront biases and prejudices. By sharing their stories, Dalit literature fosters empathy and solidarity across diverse social groups, bridging the gap

between privileged and marginalized communities. Moreover, Dalit literature advocates for social justice and equality, calling for systemic reforms to address caste-based inequalities and contribute to broader social movements for justice and human rights. Empowerment and affirmation are central to Dalit literature, as it encourages Dalit communities to reclaim their narratives, assert their identity, and strive for social and political empowerment. Through their works, Dalit authors inspire activism and advocacy for the rights of marginalized communities, inspiring readers to take action against discrimination and participate in grassroots movements. Additionally, Dalit literature catalyzes social change by sparking dialogue, challenging power structures, and advocating for progressive reforms, contributing to the gradual dismantling of caste-based discrimination. Overall, Dalit literature serves as a powerful tool for social transformation, fostering awareness, empathy, and solidarity while advocating for justice, empowerment, and the realization of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's vision of an egalitarian society.

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