

Quest for Identity to Social Equality in the Writing of Dalit Literature

Pooja Bhardwaj*

UGC NET, JRF (Feb 2022)

Abstract - India is a rapidly developing powerhouse, but its centuries-old caste system has earned it a bad reputation. In this study, we look back at the oppressors, the oppressed, and the beginnings of Dalit literature. Examining the development and reach of Dalit literature is a part of this. All Dalit literary works, it is commonly held, may be traced back to the ideas of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. The study analyses the harsh circumstances of the Dalit community and their admirable efforts to improve their social standing. Dramatic depictions of the social and political experiences of the Dalit population in India's caste system are presented in this literature. It follows the lives of Dalits in India and their relationships with others, both within the Dalit community and outside of it. It delves into the fight for freedom and equality by the Dalit people. Positive attitudes towards equality may be found in the social life of the Dalit community today thanks to powerful Dalit movements, the hammering on upper caste society by authors and intellectuals in Dalit literature, and the implementation of welfare packages by the Government. Caste and gender-based discrimination are both illegal. Through literature, the downtrodden take us on a journey from the search for identity to full inclusion in society.

Keywords - Dalit, Literature, Dramatic, Development, Relationships, Welfare

-----X-----

INTRODUCTION

Throughout India's long and complex history, the terms "Dalit" and "Dalit Literature" are relatively recent inventions. Indian Dalit authors are making a name for themselves and their community in the literary world. The Sanskrit term "Dalit" refers to those who are marginalised, disadvantaged, or persecuted. The term "Dalit" is used in India to refer to members of oppressed communities such as the untouchable (Harijans), mahars, mangs, mallas, chamars, etc. As Sharankumar Limbale sees it, Dalits are not limited to Harijans and neo-Buddhists. Those who are considered "untouchable" include those who live outside the village's walls, such as the Advasis, landless agricultural labourers, the suffering masses, nomadic and criminal tribes, and so on. It is not enough to just mention the untouchable castes when defining the term. Those at the bottom of the economic ladder will also need to be considered. (11) For generations, the Dalits we know today were considered "untouchables." They were renamed the "Depressed classes" by the British government in 1919, which was a huge step in the right direction. Gandhiji rechristened them as Harijans, which literally translates to "People of God." Ambedkar rejected the label as inappropriate. He said that the "Depressed classes" needed to be provided with another option. A word for the "depressed classes" in Hindi and Marathi, Dalit originated in the 1930s. They were classified as "Scheduled castes" by the British government in 1935. Dalit Panther movement adherents in Maharashtra, India, embraced the word "Dalit" in the 1970s. The

Dalit people of many different locations and protest movements now often use this phrase.

According to historical accounts of the Dalit people, they once existed as a nameless, faceless group that had no standing in the established social order. They were considered unworthy of human contact and were so shunned by the general populace. And the religion either directly or indirectly encouraged the persecution and exploitation to which they were subjected. Dalits were subjected to a lifetime of discrimination, torture, and other atrocities. The treatment of Dalits was savage. The affluent neighbourhoods were off-limits to them. In the eyes of the Hindu upper caste, simply being in their shadow is a kind of contamination. The belief held that "lower castes should come out only between 3pm and 9pm, since their bodies produced too long a shadows, and anytime their shadow fell over a Brahmin, it "polluted" him such that he dared not consume food or drink until he rinsed away the "polluting" impact." Referenced here: (Basu xviii). In certain areas, they were forced to wear clay spittoons around their necks as punishment for defiling the upper-class neighbourhood. They had brooms strapped to their bodies so that they could sweep their paths as they walked through the streets of the wealthy. "There was even a caste of 'Unseeables' who cleaned the garments of other „Untouchables by night and concealed their 'polluting' selves by day (Basu xix). The Dalits' job was to keep the higher caste Hindus' society pure and uncontaminated. They were responsible for

sanitising toilets, skinning and disposing of deceased animals. Their upper caste Hindu society would collapse without Dalits to perform the dirty work. "Dalits made pure the upper caste social life and become impure in the process," Limbale claims (3). Dalits were denied access to wealth, status, and privilege for millennia. For upper caste Hindus, the reason God established caste was to ensure that the Dalit wouldn't challenge the established social order. Injustice against Dalits has been tolerated for millennia.

History of Castes and Classism in India

Some say South Asia has a gift for taking on new ideas and traditions from other places without changing who they are at their core. The Dravidian languages are a shining example of this resilience since they have managed to absorb what is, by any measure, an enormous amount of Indo-Aryan influence while yet maintaining their distinctive Dravidian flavour. The process of indo-aryanizing Dravidian languages likely began earlier than 3,000 B.C. Aryan interaction with the Dravidian-speaking peoples may have occurred several hundred years before the production of the Rig Veda, as shown by the existence of linguistic elements of possible Dravidian provenance in the Rig Veda. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra are the four castes that emerged after the Aryan invasion of India and the implementation of the new law of 'Varna.' A Brahmin is a scholar, a Kshatriya is a soldier, a Vaishya is a businessman, and a Shudra is a labourer. Workers were categorised into distinct "castes" based on their level of expertise in a certain field. However, over thousands of years, this has come to entail that people are automatically assigned to the social class and caste of their fathers, regardless of their actual qualifications for the jobs they hold. It has been suggested that this method was instituted to prevent miscegenation among the indigenous aborigine population. The Shudras were considered untouchables and cast out of society because of their low social status. The invading government ignored the wellbeing of many individuals.

- **Dalit**

The Sanskrit term 'Dalita,' from which we get the word 'Dalit,' meaning 'oppressed,' and this is where the name 'Dalit' originates. According to the caste system of Indian society, they were under the status of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya. Untouchables were classified as "Chandala" or "Avarna" in ancient times. Narasimha Mehta and Mahatma Gandhi used the terms "Untouchable" and "Harijan" to describe people who were socially and economically excluded from Indian society in the 20th century. J.H. Hutton, a well-known historian, gave them the name "External Castes" to describe themselves and their status to the rest of the world. Harijan is an Arabic word that translates to "people of God." This group is formally known as Scheduled Castes. Throughout the last

several decades, Shudras have come to be recognised as Dalits. Dalit is a term that means "base," and it encompasses a wide variety of marginalised communities. This is a made-up name that comes from the Sanskrit and Marathi words meaning crushed and oppressed. It's a way of saying that people are untouchable not because of any inherent filth but rather because of the actions of others. Also, it is used to include all of India's poor and downtrodden people.

- **Dalit Literature Movement**

In 1958, Indian intellectuals like Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, who had been inspired by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, launched a drive to bring attention to the country's suppressed class system. The modern American Black Liberation Movement served as inspiration for this. Literature written by or about Dalits or other oppressed groups is called "Dalit literature," which is a direct translation of the term. The pain felt by the untouchables is reflected in this writing. Caste prejudice, abuse, and discrimination by the upper class are all shown. It's a reflection of a political awareness that elevated the fight for individual and social respect to a central issue. Writing on this topic may focus on topics such as environmental degradation, racial discrimination against African-Americans in the United States, gender inequality, the rights of homosexuals, or the neglect of the elderly. The term "Dalit" covers a wide range of oppression that any group may experience. It may help you overcome old hurts and move on with your life. The historically oppressed men and women of the British Indian Empire benefited from a number of social reforms enacted by the empire. As part of the "Government of India Act 1935," the formerly untouchable population was officially classified as a "Depressed Class," which includes the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of India. The ordinance also included social programmes to help the Dalit community advance. Despite being stigmatised as uneducated and incompetent, Dalits eventually found a voice to assert their worth via public statements and written works. Research articles, poetry, theatre, short tales, novels, and other kinds of mass media depicting exploited social life were created as part of this movement. The effects of the caste system in South Asia were well-known to outside authors, non-Dalits, and Dalits. Madara Chennaiah, a cobbler-saint who lived during the reign of the Western Chalukyas in the eleventh century, is considered by some to be the "Father of Vachana Poetry" and one of the first Dalit authors. Dohara Kakkaiyah, a poet who was born into the Dalit caste, is also mentioned because the six confessional poems he wrote shed light on the difficult conditions he lived through. Saint Chokhamela of Marathi and his wife Soyraibai wrote abhangas (poems) in the 13th century that described the plight of the downtrodden. The inaugural conference of the Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangha (Maharashtra Dalit Literary Society) was held in

Bombay in 1958, when the term "Dalit literature" was first used.

In the Marathi literary world, Baburao Bagul (1930-2008) was a forerunner. With its impassioned picture of a brutal society, his debut collection of tales, *Jevha Mi Jat Chorali* (When I had Hidden My Caste), released in 1963, caused a sensation in Marathi literature and gave fresh impetus to Dalit writing. In time, the Dalit movement was bolstered by the writings of other authors including Namdeo Dhasal (the founder of Dalit Panther), Daya Pawar, and N.R. Shende. It was claimed by Gail Omvedt in her article "Dalit literature in Maharashtra: Literature of Social and Protest and Revolt in Western India" that ".....though Dalit literature as 'movement' began only in the late 1960s and early 1970s, one of the most important Dalit writers and a major forerunner of the movement was Annabhau Sathe (1920-1968)..... The genres he wrote in were wide-ranging. His works continue to be read by many people today, and no other Dalit author has come close to matching his popularity. [1] Although while clannish components may be traced back to the 11th century, the Dalit Movement did not begin until the 1960s in Marathi literature, and only afterwards spread to the literatures of Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil, and Hindi. The dominance of the upper class in society was challenged by the realistic, experience-based writing that Dalit authors began. The Dalit characters' rage, anguish, and unyielding determination and optimism were expressed in a language that was frequently foul. The Dalit authors of various Indian states are all connected by their shared identity and political beliefs.

• Inspiration of Dalit Literature

Words like "oppressed," "untouchable," "resistance," and "protest" are common in the literature of many nations. African-American authors, or "Black writers," are those who live in the United States and are of African heritage. Phillis Wheatley and Olaudah Equiano, who both started writing in the late 18th century, are considered the forerunners of this genre. Slave tales from the 19th century are often seen as an early high point. The literature written by Black Americans in the twentieth century in the United States of America was a powerful voice raised in protest against racism. The literature of India's Dalits similarly records the cultural and political circumstances of that country's downtrodden masses. Because of their colour, Black Americans were denied the opportunities to fully participate in society. It was during the 1920s and 1930s that the Harlem Renaissance took place, making African American literature a legitimate academic field of study and raising awareness among both authors and readers of the time. In each case, the authors' works enlarged the bounds of the tradition, regardless of whether or not they agreed with its underlying beliefs. The Continuum Encyclopedia of American Literature notes that the SLAVE NARRATIVE and African American FOLKLORE were particularly influential on African American literature and politics during the first two centuries of the African

Diaspora's sojourn in the United States, even after slavery had ended. But, this does not imply that the whole of African American literature can be reduced to these two modes of expression. The Harlem Renaissance began as the "New Negro Movement" (N.N.M.). It was a fertile time for the development of jazz and blues, as well as other forms of emerging African-American culture. There was an open display of racial pride that became emblematic of the 'New Negro.' Black advocated for social change and civil rights in the United States via his writings and the arts. Because of illiteracy and the commodity nature of black people in the slave trade, most Black slaves had no idea who their parents were or when they were born. Not even reading or schooling was permitted for them. Blacks, however, documented their disadvantaged history via speeches that were later modified into autobiography and folklore, two "creative forms." Slaves of African descent wrote memoirs detailing their experiences of sexual assault, inhumane conditions, and the trauma of being separated from loved ones. The Abolitionists were aided in their efforts to educate people of all races by the accounts of those who lived through the movement. As a kind of sanctioned social assistance in the United States, the Black Panther Movement was launched to improve the lot of black people. Following in the footsteps of the Black Panther Party, India's Dalit Panther Movement gained intellectual legitimacy during the time of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar (1891-1956). He broke new ground by being the first "untouchable" to study in both the United States and Britain. The notion of democracy spread widely after India gained its independence in 1947, reawakening the people throughout the nation. Dalit literature, written in their own languages, depicted their culture. Black American literature had profound effects on Dalit literature, and the latter's authors saw a "similar phenomena" in the former's developments. It's also worth noting that works by African American authors provide the same kind of evidence and support for the Dalit narrative as works by other authors do. They use their work as a way to break free from their cultures' norms and conventions, which have held them back. In the field of subaltern studies, the concept of "resistance" has been developed at great length. The Latin verb *resistere*, meaning "to take a stand," is the etymological ancestor of our English term. Ghassan Kanafani's research on Palestinian literature is where the word "resistance" first appeared in the context of literature. Literature of this kind is an artistic expression that makes a bold statement against the oppressors.

In this context, it is not contradictory to see Dalit literature as one of the most cutting-edge kinds of resistance writing in India. The increase in Dalit literature is a response to the need to shed light on the problems of exploitation, discrimination, malnutrition, and an alarmingly high death rate among India's most marginalised groups, including the untouchables, minorities, nomadic tribes, and others living in abject poverty. Coming as a departure from the symbolic epic tales, it presented

a formidable challenge to established literary norms. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a fellow Buddhist, served as an inspiration for much of the writing that would come to be known as Dalit literature. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, one of the primary architects of the Indian Constitution, has become a national hero for the Dalits since the country became a democracy. The culture of the Dalits has been transformed by Dr. Ambedkar's ideas. His call to inform, rally, and defend their rights served as a beacon to the Dalit community. Buddha, Kabir, Fule, Periyar Swami, and many more local Dalit heroes have provided fresh vision to the downtrodden humanity, and Ambedkar's philosophy has played a significant role in this transformation of Dalit culture and existence.

OBJECTIVE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In addition to analysing the path of oppressed or untouchables in India from socio-economic-political exploitations to developments, the research project titled "Indian Dalit Literature: Quest for Identity to Social Equality" aims to provide a more nuanced portrait of the lives of the Dalit community through their literature. In a society where identity and equality are denied to the untouchables, their creative literary energy is a vital resource that scholars and researchers should be familiar with.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kumar, Tila & Journals, Electronic (2022) For decades, those who belong to the "lowest castes," "Untouchables," or "Scheduled Castes" have been discriminated against and treated poorly just because of their "Dalit identity." Their new name and identity, "Dalit," which means "ripped apart," "smashed," and "crushed into bits," bears testament to their social, economic, and political devastation. Offshoots of the ancient caste system that survives on the purity-pollution syndrome, the Dalits' identity of untouchability, segregation, poverty, helplessness, exclusion, and isolation are rooted in racial theories and the orthodoxy of Hindu religion and its false theological teachings. It's become so bad that the individuals who will eventually be labelled "Dalits" are treated as second-class citizens and dehumanised. In Indian culture, to be labelled a "Dalit" carries with it a sense of shame and inferiority. When coupled with their perceived economic inequality and political impotence, this degrading identity just adds insult to injury. It is against this background that the marginalised Dalits are claimed to have awakened with a fresh awareness, which is increasingly seen as the movement's overarching goal. The continuous social, economic, political, and cultural problems and efforts to rebuild and reorganise them are the origins of Dalit awareness.

Afrin, Sadia & Muniruzzaman, Sheikh Md. (2022) In his masterwork *Untouchable*, Indian English writer Mulk Raj Anand portrays the psychological problems of the subaltern via the figure of Bakha (1935). He

uses the Dalit people to demonstrate the psychological precarity of society's outcasts. This article discusses Bakha's ambivalent position as a consequence of societal discrimination and the racial binary as a means of delving into the underlying nature of Dalit psychology. It examines the many ways in which the so-called upper class dominates the lower classes, who have come to accept these deplorable socioeconomic situations as normal. While William is not a character from Dalit literature, he has many of the same identity crisis issues as Bakha does. This essay aims to analyse Bakha's psyche as a depiction of the oppressed and Dalit people through the lens of post-colonialism and psychoanalysis.

Ranga, Prof. (2021) In his well-known work, "Joothan," Omprakash Valmiki, like other autobiographical authors, describes the conflict between the Dalits. He lays forth his whole life, from his upbringing to the present, detailing his upsetting social situations in great detail. As a result, Omprakash Valmiki's *Joothan* is an exploration of Dalit exclusion and social stigma aboard a ship. The Valmiki family is under intense pressure to advance academically and socially. It's a fairy tale, but it's also the story of an Indian Hindu family of Dalits looking for acceptance and recognition. Omprakash Valmiki wrote about his experiences as a Dalit and an untouchable in independent India. The leftovers from a meal are a metaphor for *Joothan* in the story, since they are destined for the garbage or the animals. For generations, the untouchables of India have been relegated to the lowest rung of Indian society, where they have been obliged to recognise and eat scraps in order to exist. Notwithstanding the fact that the practise of untouchability was outlawed in 1949, Dalits continue to endure discrimination, poverty, violence, and ridicule. It was difficult for Dalits to get an education even after independence was won, thus *Joothan* gives this issue a lot of thought. Valmiki describes how, with the help of the great Dalit political manager BR Ambedkar, he bravely resisted a fate of constant bodily and emotional suffering and was transformed into a public speaker. *Joothan* is a proposal for a dramatic transformation of mankind and human awareness as well as a document of the suppressed and denied sufferings of Dalits. Whether confronted with discrimination, economic disadvantage, animosity, or scorn, Dalits have shown remarkable resilience.

Mandavkar, Pavan (2016) India is a rapidly developing powerhouse, but its centuries-old caste system has earned it a bad reputation. In this study, we look back at the oppressors, the oppressed, and the beginnings of Dalit literature. Examining the development and reach of Dalit literature is a part of this. All Dalit literary works, it is commonly held, may be traced back to the ideas of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. The study analyses the harsh circumstances of the Dalit community and their admirable efforts to improve their social standing. Dramatic depictions of the social and political experiences of the Dalit population in India's caste system are presented in

this literature. It follows the lives of Dalits in India and their relationships with others, both within the Dalit community and outside of it. It delves into the fight for freedom and equality by the Dalit people. Positive attitudes towards equality may be found in the social life of the Dalit community today thanks to powerful Dalit movements, the hammering on upper caste society by authors and intellectuals in Dalit literature, and the implementation of welfare packages by the Government. Caste and gender-based discrimination are both illegal. Through literature, the downtrodden take us on a journey from the search for identity to full inclusion in society.

Festino, Cielo (2015) Rather than staying in the gallery, modern artists aspire to "[...] generate modifications in the space of ordinary life, establishing new types of interactions," as Jacques Ranciere puts it. The purpose of this study is to analyse the Indian Dalit author Bama's book *Sangati* (1994) in this context, discussing how literature has the potential to transform experience into life-narratives that may ultimately give birth to a distinct sort of social experience. As the voice of the community exerts itself onto the voice of the individual in Bama's story, she rewrites the genre autobiography as understood in the West in order to make the experiences of Dalit women apparent. In doing so, she alters the standards for what is deemed literary, making room for the voices of the voiceless to be heard via a new aesthetic.

METHODOLOGY

For this article, the researcher relied on primary sources such books, journals, and an internet database in addition to conducting surveys and collecting samples for analysis and comparison.

INDIAN DALIT LITERATURE: QUEST FOR IDENTITY TO SOCIAL EQUALITY

Works written by and about Dalits, a disadvantaged group in India's rigid caste system. The Dalit caste has a long history of oppression at the hands of India's elite. Therefore, they've been an oppressed, disadvantaged, and subaltern population for generations. This group, however, has risen and has been making progress day-by-day thanks to the work of various social reformers including Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Dr. Ambedkar, and Mahatma Gandhi. There are still numerous issues that have arisen as a result of their being around. Dalit literature was first published by a specific ethnic community in the 1960s, coinciding with the first Dalit Conferences. It is clear that the works of authors like Munshi Premchand, Amrita Nagar, Mannu Bhandari, Mulk Raj Anand, Arundhati Roy, Salman Rushdie, Malkhan Singh, Jai Prakash Kardam, Suraj Pal Chauhan, Omprakash Valmiki, Vasant Moon, and others are more than just for pleasure. There was a large group of people following them: Mahaswetha Devi, Basudev Sunani, Bama, Sivakami, Poomani, Marku, Paul Chirakkarode, and Arundhati Roy. It is not 'recreational' or 'leisure' literature since it promotes the rights of the Dalit

community and encourages people to stand up against injustice, but rather, it should be read in the context of its time. The Dalit literary movement began in Marathi and has now blossomed into a multilingual phenomenon throughout India. Among the many Dalit Marathi writers who have made significant contributions to the genre are names like Bandhu Madhav, Annabhau Sathe, Daya Pawar, P.I. Sonkamble, Shantabai Kamble, Raja Dhale, Namdev Dhasal, Laxman Mane, Laxman Gayakwad, Hari Narake, Sharankumar Limbale, Arun Kamble, Waman Nibalkar, Bhimsen Dethle One of the seminal essays on Dalit literature was written by Sharankumar Limbale, and it's titled *Dalit Literature: Form and Purpose*. In it, he explains why the literary landscape of India has shifted to include more works by and about Dalits, as well as suggesting characteristics that help readers identify works by and about Dalits. He explains that the suffering of Dalits is the "womb" from which rejection and rebellion in Dalit literature emerge. An cruel system that was forced on them is the target of these expressions of anger. It's important to note that the rejection and rebellion are also social and collective, just as the agony conveyed in Dalit literature is of the nature of a collective social voice. In Dalit writing, a revolutionary mindset associated with struggle constitutes the Dalit consciousness. The belief is one of defiance against the caste system, with an emphasis on the individual. An essential germ of Dalit literature is the unique and distinct Dalit awareness, which cannot be found in the works of other authors. This awareness marks the distinctiveness of Dalit writing.

The oppression of marginalised groups, such as those from the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and religious minorities, is central to Dalit literature. In the states of Maharashtra and Southern India, dalit literature and dalit activism exploded. Dalit writing, particularly memoirs, has a unique voice and perspective that sets it apart from other literary genres. As a kind of "intellectual propaganda" meant to raise social, economic, and political consciousness, they show Dalits in a negative light. Autobiographies and other forms of self-referential writing have long been effective strategies to document the existence of marginalised groups, such as dalits. The plight of the Dalits is a major focus for Dalit authors. They encourage other Dalits to be vigilant and fight for their rights, which are often disregarded by the so-called higher castes. Autobiographies written by Dalits provide insight into their everyday lives and the social climate of modern India. These authors vividly depict life for the poor and provide gripping narratives of hardship and survival. Although receiving certain benefits under the Reservation Policy, they are prohibited from participating in other assistance programmes. Such egregious societal and legal wrongs are key topics in this canon. Writers from the Dalit community place a strong emphasis on documenting everyday life 'as it occurred,' without bias. The writers depict life as it is, without sugarcoating or ignoring the "ugly or terrible." The realism position holds that the writer's primary

responsibility is to provide a faithful account of sensory experience. This criticism focuses on the higher caste Indians who have been responsible for the disastrous effects on the lives of the Dalits and Tribes in the country. It's always a hot topic of debate whether or not writers should try to record every detail of their stories. Literature among the Dalits is now seen as a tool for social and political change.

Quest for Identity

Dalit poets and poetesses have contributed significantly to the literary canon. The era of silent suffering for Dalit women has ended. It is becoming common practise to speak out against wrongdoing. They can't take it anymore, but they're making their voices heard loud and clear. Notwithstanding recent gains, Indian society's long-standing and widespread contempt for Dalits persists. Writers from the Dalit community have spoken out against untouchability and tried to convince members of more traditional castes that if we have to live together, we may as well do it with compassion and camaraderie. Kardam's short story, *The Housing Society* (2010), reveals this to be true. It's the story of a teenage outcast. There has never been a time when India was not a multilingual, multicultural, or multireligious society. In the past, the wisdom of saints from both the upper and lower classes was crucial in helping people rise above any circumstance. As a consequence of the severe and vicious caste-based persecution they faced in Hindu communities, many Dalit men and women have abandoned Hinduism for Christianity or Buddhism. People who have converted face the same kind of prejudice in their new faith as they did in their old one. Many Dalits, despite their oppression, have been given the chance to further their education and find gainful jobs. For instance, several Dalit women served as nurses in Christian missionary institutions. Dalits, who have been the target of substantial research due to their high profile status as political actors in the battle against caste-based discrimination, have been the subject of a lot of study. In the recent several decades, Dalit groups have increasingly participated in and been recognised by formal political institutions, with members creating parties, running for office, and holding elected politicians responsible. The Dalit conflict extends well beyond formal interest mediation mechanisms, despite the growing influence of Dalit groups in Indian politics.

The Dalit movement has organised outside of formal channels to challenge caste in its many forms. The erection of Ambedkar memorials and the construction of massive structures in a "Dalit architectural style" are only two instances of how Dalits have had to find new and sophisticated methods to disrupt the social order. Culturally-oriented campaigns also exist in tandem with these central concerns. At now, Dalit literature is flourishing, and translations of regional literatures are expanding access to it. There has been a shift in outlook towards social equality in India as a result of all of these efforts.

FINDINGS

To sum up, marginalisation is a complicated issue that affects individuals everywhere and is a big cause for concern for civilizations on a global scale. Its pervasiveness stems from a confluence of factors related to social and economic progress that are gaining prominence in today's linked world. Worldwide, classism persists as a significant social force. The works of Black American authors have similarities to the works of Indian Dalit authors. A hidden class conflict was started by the inspiration of well-known Dalit leaders. Essentially, it resuscitated Dalit writing. Dalit literature is a product of the oppression and marginalisation felt by the Dalit community. The book focuses on the people that the Indian caste system has marginalised. It's a remarkable and unique feature of Indian writing. Dalit writing aims on realism of experience rather than aesthetic excellence. The primary characteristic of Dalit literature is that it represents the realities of the Dalit community. It's a worldview that prioritises individuals above social classes. The ideas of Ambedkarite philosophy inform this state of mind. Sometimes, Dalit writing is criticised for being too propagandistic. There is a perception that the literature in question lacks aesthetic polish. It has also been said that their writing lacks objectivity and impartiality since it represents the passion of a movement. Currently, works concerning oppressed people in India are included in what is called Dalit literature, but so are works about oppressed people in other parts of the globe.

Dalits have the highest rates of feminism of any group. Both a woman and a Dalit, Dalit women face double discrimination. She experiences low spirits and despair at times, but may also surprise you with her strength and bravery. Women of the Dalit community have no choice but to vigorously reject this double injustice and to remove any and all obstacles that stand in the way of their freedom. In the twenty-first century, Dalit identity and pride are defined by the empowerment gained through education. As culture is a social phenomenon, it naturally evolves throughout time. In the past, Dalits took their abuse in silence. After getting an education and settling down, they speak out against injustice to solidify their humanity. Their struggle is not an attempt to incite violence or anarchy, but rather a bid for recognition as equal citizens in a democratic India. The focus of most autobiographical and later autofictional writing by Dalits has been on the community's place in society at large. Legislation in India has been changed as a direct consequence of Dalit activism and writing. The constitution of India was amended to guarantee the safety and social equality of the Dalit minority as a result of active Dalit activism and literary work.

CONCLUSION

In today's society, marginalisation is a multifaceted phenomenon that has been a major focus of national and international societies alike. In this age of globalisation, its prevalence is a result of a confluence of various variables in social and economic growth. Classism is a global phenomenon. There are parallels between African-American literature and Dalit literature from India. Dalit community leaders inspired a class-based uprising that was ultimately stifled. It gave the Dalit literary movement fresh life. Literature by and about Dalits often deals with themes of rejection and rebellion. Those who are lower on the Hindu caste system are the focus of this book. It is a vital and distinguishable aspect of Indian literature. The Aryan or Hindu texts are the best sources for the history of early Indian culture. Varnashrama Dharma, the early Indian social framework, predicated castes on labour and hence introduced racial biases. The highest caste were the Brahmins, while the Shudras were destined to serve the next three castes down: the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Brahmins. For the time being, they are still the 'untouchables'. According to the Indian constitution, they now belong to the category of Scheduled Castes. Their social standing has improved because to the work of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. They also promoted Dalit literacy, which led to a new script. In Indian culture, these individuals are known as Dalits, and they have historically suffered at the hands of the upper castes. Therefore, they've been an oppressed, disadvantaged, and subaltern population for generations. Every day, new authors emerge who add to the depth of Dalit writing and Indian literature more generally. A number of reviewers and critics, both domestic and foreign, have taken an interest in these works. Recent literature on the life of Dalits has been enriched by the work of several authors, including John C.B. Webster, Josiane Racine, Jean-Luc Racine, Dr. Gail Omvedt, Eleanor Zelliott, Christophe Jaffrelot, and many Indian scholars. Dalit literature highlights the importance of Dalit identity within the context of a caste-hegemonic society. In addition, the religious and academic writings of Rabinthranath Tagore, Jyotibqa Fule, M.K. Gandhi, Dr. Ambedkar, Premchand, Mulk Raj Anand, and Vijay Tendulkar have helped Dalits come to terms with their heritage. Ambedkar was revered as the "God of the Dalits" and was actively supported by Dalit men and women.

REFERENCES

1. Kumar, Tila & Journals, Electronic. (2022). 53 From Stigmatized Dalit Identity to an Egalitarian, Autonomous and Emancipatory Identity: Issues and Concerns Introduction and Background.
2. Afrin, Sadia & Muniruzzaman, Sheikh Md. (2022). Bakha's Identity Dilemma in Mulk Raj Anand's Untouchable: An Exploration of Dalit Psychology. Asiatic. 16. 150-164.
3. Ranga, Prof. (2021). Quest for Revolt in Joothan by Omprakash Valmiki. The Creative Launcher. 6. 22-26. 10.53032/tcl.2021.6.4.04.
4. Mandavkar, Pavan. (2016). Indian Dalit Literature Quest for Identity to Social Equality. Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews. 3. 42-48. 10.18510/hssr.2015.321.
5. Festino, Cielo. (2015). Dalit women life-narratives and literature as experience. Acta Scientiarum. Language and Culture. 37. 25. 10.4025/actascilangcult.v37i1.23930.
6. Bheemaiah, J. (2011). Dialectics of caste culture: A social crisis in Indian Nation, Proceedings of 2011. International Conference on Social Science and Humanity, 2, 454-458.
7. Christophe, J. (2005). Dr. Ambedkar and Untouchability: Analysing and Fighting Caste. New Delhi: Permanent Black. p4.
8. Indra, C.T. (2003). Introduction. In: Parthasarathy, I., (Ed.). The Legend of Nandan. New Delhi: OUP. pxvi.
9. Janhavi, A. (2008). Liberation narrative, rev. of the prisons we broke by baby Kamble. The Hindu, 2 March 2008. Available from: http://www.hindu.com/lr/2008/03/02/stories/200803025020_0500.html. Accessed 24.10.2014.
10. Mukherjee, A.P. (2003). Introduction. In: Valmiki, O., (Eds.). Joothan: An Untouchables Life. New York: Columbia UP. px.

Corresponding Author

Pooja Bhardwaj*

UGC NET, JRF (Feb 2022)