Dalit women Identity in Search of “Inclusivity”

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Abstract: The term social exclusion and its idea is basically embedded in the kind of alienation towards man and woman unequal position existing in the identity of Dalit women with the idea of the marginalisation and exclusion of food, gender, labour market with the idea of ‘relational poverty’(Amartya Sen, 2000). The Identity of poverty which is not only marginalised at the level of thought but also marginalised in relation to the core ideas of personality, men in general and women in particular. It is not a new dimention to know the idea of people who are marginalised in this society because of lack of common facilities or benefits. But this complicated meaning of exclusion basically incorporates the idea of marginalisation within itself in terms of class, caste and gender.

Keywords: Marginalization, gender, labour, Exclusion, Dalit women

Introduction

The idea of marginalization where, women are more marginalised in this society in order to gain their own basic facilities like education, food, and health. At the same time, this idea of marginalisation and vulnerabilities directly linked with economical, social, and political deprivation automatically became the tool to supress the identity of Dalit women; and this idea of hierarchical exclusion which is deeply rooted in the phenomena of “Brahmanical patriarchy.” So, the concept of “missing women” expresses most effectively the term social exclusion in the name of giving an idea that how the condition of Dalit women apparently not subsumed in this society but it has been a kind of ploying mainly towards them to put them into the downtrodden situation and this is the actual and day to day reality with those women. And it has been becoming the part and partial of this patriarchal society where Dalit women are excluded because of their untouchability and the idea of “social impurity”. The idea of “inclusivity” in itself is a problematic word to cope with the politics of Dalit women inclusion. So, here I would like to pose a question that how this exclusivity basically isolated a large section of the Dalit women in terms of triple marginality. Being a woman, Dalit woman, and as an upper caste domination. Here the question is that;

On what extent is it possible to include Dalit women identity into the mainstream perspective?

The term Dalit has exhaustively been used in this hierarchical society where the women come at the last position. The persecution of Dalit women has been legitimised by the “Holy Hindu Scriptures” and they basically ensured this savagery not only through caste but gender as well. The women of this community are suffering in terms of works like manual scavenging, cleaning, and so forth. The idea of cleaning mainly marginalised their extra activities of political participation in order to get basic amenities; so both the term caste and class broke their idea of power structure in this society implicitly and explicitly. Even now we can see that women in general face the atrocities in Indian context but in depth of the plight of Dalit women is more in terms of both gender and caste. The practice of untouchability and exclusion penetrated their identical authority of the minds of the people and worsen their condition as Dalit women. And that is why the idea of echelons they never fulfilled because if they lack control over resources and economy how they can come into the contact with power relation. The political empowerment is a kind of tool among Dalit women through which they can emancipate themselves from the oppression and inequality; so the political participation and representation of Dalit women in governance at the local, regional and national level is an embodiment and emancipation. An effective political participation of Dalit women requires a kind of transformation within institutions of governance and in the social milieu. But this is the problematic task to do for Dalit women because they comprise a separate category in this society among Dalits and among women in general, and sometimes among Dalit women in particular. But their position in every movement like “Dalit panther”, “National movement”, “Mahar movement”, both the mainstream women’s position “Outside” the mainstream Indian movement and patriarchal Dalit movements exhibit the position of “double
jeopardy” because their position in these movements and again their position in the household work both these situation juxtapose the ideas of two poles where they know themselves as marginalised power. Although their participation in right to vote is in large number but participation as a candidate and key position holder is low. If we see the statistics of this Indian society then find accout of four states nearly half of the country's Dalit population. Uttar pardesh stands first with 20.5% of the total schedule caste followed by West bengal with 10.7%, Bihar with 8.2%and Tamil nadu with 7.2% come third and fourth. But the participation of Dalit women is apparently low in the scenario of political and public representation. Caste hierarchy and class hierarchy still exist in decentralised governance system in India. So, the exclusion of Dalit women in the decision making structures and government's insouciance to Dalit women needs to make the policy equal and their presentation is quintessential for an inclusive democracy.

Methodology

The area of this research mainly consists with scientific method of research pattern like “qualitative” and “quantitative” in terms of literature review. This idea of research method does not only elaborate the term with multiple layers of feminist ideology but also exposes the idea of intersectionality through which the large section of Dalit women have been marginalised since long time and it became the part and partial of their life. The whole idea of oral narratives and oral history of this community enriching their identical perception shows their public participation into this hierarchical structure. At the same time, inductive method became an effective tool to consist the idea of the marginalised community from personal to universal. “Dalit feminism standpoint” which elaborated the term of hypothesis which automatically fits into the research field by the researcher in order to know about layers of research. It highlights the major loopholes of this society in order to giving this society an another kind of research space where they explain their ideas about their marginalisation and authenticity of political participation and representation of their own communities' personal experiences. Because standpoint stands for an epistemological kind of values which is elaborated by the experiences of Dalit women of this community in the name of their personal experiences and oral narratives\autobiographical narratives.

Conclusion

And those ideas of action in the form of inclusive policy clearly came into the existence with “affirmative action”. This term mainly benefited those people who were marginalised in this society and by this action they entered into this system with dignity and inclusivity but in reality it provided benefit to those section who were already privileged in this society and a large section of women were even then lagging behind because of 'Fractured identity' (V.Vijayalakshmi,2004).

Thus, we can see that how government policies are filled with structural and ideological loopholes ; so the participation and representation of Dalit women in electoral and non-electoral politics points out that the principle of equality cannot be assumed. The construction of differences rooted in structure and in their marginalisation and discrimination which is everyday reality. And that is why Ambedkar points out that Hindu Fundamentalist directly linked their ideology with women sexual identity “Honor” and it is nothing but resisting the actual identity of women's position. So the construction of power structure in the society mainly legitimises the submissive idea of women identity. if we see the validity of “Dalit Feminism Standpoint” then find it has been representing the women voices since 1990s but loopholes are also there in this representation because it represents only the idea of Dalit urban women and it is not known for their writings and they have no idea of those rural Dalit women life. Another criticism is that brahmin women became the part of the women's movement and they act as a spokperson of Dalit women how it could be possible to without knowing anyone problems someone would fight for them. A kind of division within the Dalit community itself , the mahar community women are more educated and aware than that of other Dalit community women. It became possible because of “literary Movement” and “Self Awareness Movement” in this community by Dr. B.R Ambedkar who himself comes from this community. So the idea of this research basically to find out those loopholes which is overtly resisting the mobility of Dalit women in order to the fulfilment of their ideas into the mainstream perspective. And it comes out with the idea of gender inequality in every terms which is somewherefollowing the order of exclusionary politics and exclude the identity of Dalit women in the name of “inclusivity”.

References:

1.Anupama Rao(edt.),Gender and Caste, Kali for
women, New Delhi, 2003, pp. 1-47


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i  “Fractured identity” the idea of identity which is divided into many compartments or ideologies which is somewhere suppressing the real identity of women in order to exclude them from principle of equality.