

Introduction

Egalitarian is a term which is quite alien to India and caste has been the prime source of inequality in India. If we see in the past of India, we come to know that the lives of the poor, helpless, and Dalit people have been greatly affected by high castes and royal families. In India, Dalit is a modern term for untouchables, who have been exploited and subjected to atrocities owing to the social stratification of Indian society. The term 'Dalit' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Dal' which means burst up, split, broken and down-trodden. It was first used by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule in nineteenth century. He and his wife Savitribai Phule were the pioneers of women education in India. He was the founder of *Satyashodhak Samaj* in 1875. His famous works are *Brahmanache Kasab* (1869), *Gulamgiri* (1873) and *Tritiya Ratna* (1885). The Brahmins considered themselves superior to others and spread the theory that "they themselves were born from the mouth of Brahma, the *Kshatriyas* from his shoulders, the *Vaisyas* from his thigh and the *Shudras* from his feet" (Dangle xx). Dalit means the masses who are exploited and oppressed socially, culturally, economically and religiously. The term has assumed wider significance and now covers all subaltern groups such as tribal, minorities and women. In the manifesto of the Dalit panther movement of Maharashtra, in response to the question "who is Dalit" the manifesto considers "Members of scheduled castes and tribes, neo-Buddhist, the working people, the landless and poor peasants, woman and all those who are being exploited politically, economically and in the name of the religion" (Omvedt 72) as part of wider signification of the term.

The well-known Hindi dictionary '*Bahasa sabad kosh*' defines Dalit as "an undeveloped or backward section of the people such as among the Hindu untouchable or serving castes (*shudras*)" (Messy 1). The term 'Dalit' thus represents collectively

the depressed people who are being oppressed, exploited and given less opportunities and chances to make progress. In the beginning, Dalits, or to be more precise, scheduled castes were considered unique features of only three religions— Hindu, Sikh and Buddhism. But the economic aspect of the issue slowly took predominance over social and religious aspects, and nowadays this term is not limited to any particular caste in any particular religion. Thus depressed classes constitute not only socio-political group but very often an economic class too. Tracing effectively the economic background of the depressed classes in giving them the nomenclature of Dalits, Dr. Tripathi argues that—

Without access to vital economic sources and bargaining power dalits have become the most exploited peripheral groups in Indian society, predominantly rural they have been mainly landless rural agricultural labour, marginal share cropper and farmer commonly indebted beyond redemption (Prasad 26).

The term ‘Dalit’ came into being with the official counting of depressed classes in the first half of the 20th century. The history of the term can be traced in the recognition of depressed classes for the first time in the act of 1919.

Dalits were identified with various titles like ‘depressed classes’, ‘scheduled castes’ and ‘untouchable’ due to some socio-political reasons. Mahatma Gandhi used the term ‘*Harijan*’ for the so-called low born and untouchables of Indian society. One of his intentions behind the use of this religiously coloured term *Harijans* which means ‘the people of God’ was to pacify the demand of dalit community for separate electorate, emphasizing that this community was an inseparable part of Hindu society. By using the term *Harijans* for the depressed classes, he also aimed at raising compassion and support for the depressed classes from the upper castes on humanitarian ground. But dalit community under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar

confronted Gandhiji on the use of term *Harijan* and called it *Gandhian* philosophy. He was not in favor of this term. According to him, this term was based on the sentimental ideology. So he was against it. Ambedkar had more faith in political and constitutional means than the religious means for the emancipation of the depressed people. He was of the view that they do not need any sympathy or emotional support from the so-called high classes; rather they need equal social, political and economic rights. So, after the *Gandhian* era the term *Harijan* became outdated. Now, the term 'Dalit' is popularly used to denote the people of India who are being exploited and oppressed politically, socially, economically or in the name of religion. Thus no other word is as appropriate as the term 'Dalit'. It is no more a descriptive title but it is also expressive of the realization and acceptance of their state of dalitness and this very acceptance, paves the path of struggle to retain their rights as liberated human beings.

Dalit literature is an 'ideological' discourse which provides literary and intellectual support to the depressed classes more popularly known as 'Dalits'. Dalit literature runs parallel to the mainstream aesthetic literature in which the oppressed and exploited masses hardly found any exposure and recognition. It is a literary depiction of the marginalized groups with sympathetic perspectives. Sharankumar Limbale defines Dalit literature as: "precisely that literature which artistically portrays the sorrows, tribulations, slavery, degradation and poverty and poverty endured by Dalits. This literature is but a lofty image of grief" (Limbale 30). Containing essentially a Dalit backdrop, Dalit literature portrays on the one hand the joys and sorrows, the tragic hopes and aspirations, the like values and outlook of Dalit community, on the other hand it also records the growing awareness in all shades. It provides inspiration and a platform for dalits so that they might assert their righteous place in society. In fact, Dalit literature is the literature produced out of dalit vision.

Dalit writers believe that their literature is about social values rejecting traditional aesthetic. For them, literature is life-affirming and realistic. In other words, Dalit writers have demanded different parameters for the literary assessment of their work. They view the phrase *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* as a fabrication used to divide and exploit ordinary people. According to them the aesthetic concept of *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* is the selfish mechanism of upper caste Hindu society. They are not in favor of traditional aesthetic. According to them humans are *Satyam* because human beings are the first and foremost. Liberation of human beings is *Shivam* and humanity among the human beings is *Sundaram*. For them, Dalit literature is a movement. They see their literature as a medium for the expression of pain, sorrow, questions and problems and not as a pleasure-giving literature. Dalit literature cannot be based on the principles of classical aesthetics that privileges pleasure derived from beauty. In this literature, three values of life—equality, freedom and solidarity play a great role. Dalit writers have rejected traditional artistic standards and aesthetics, and have attempted to develop a separate aesthetics of their own. According to Oscar Wilde, literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it; rather it moulds it to its purpose. Literature which is without purpose, no matter how entertaining or decorative, soon vanishes and is forgotten. Dalit literature, though comparatively a new phenomenon, had set its goals and objectives from its very beginning. It is the purpose of awakening that makes it a literature of protest and assertion of dalits. This literature provides inspiration and is instrumental in attainments of the very rights they have been deprived of. Dalit literature exposes the foibles, and prejudices of castes society towards dalits and instills in them a new democratic consciousness and in a way leads them to vital revolution. Sharankumar Limbale's statement explains the manner in which the Dalit literature is instrumental in identity formation and assertion of dalits:

Dalit literature seeks to transform *savarana* society to bring about change in the heart and mind of the high castes individual. Dalit literature has two dimensions one will be to familiarize dalits with their past, to explain to them that they are enslaved, to show them that they are human beings and it is their duty and right to fight for the rights of the human beings. The other dimension of Dalit literature involve working on the heart of *savarna* society to persuade them about the rights and entitlements of dalits to make them see that they are too human beings and have been convince them they must change (Prasad 185).

Thus, Dalit literature is a dialogue with society including both the dalits and non-dalits. It questions from different perspectives the validity of existing caste-based social order and at the same time gives vent to the anger and anguish of dalits over the inhumanities and injustices meted out to them for centuries. It addresses both the dalits and the other implicit listeners i.e. the non-dalits. Literature mirrors the society and at the same time is itself influenced by socio-political environment of the society and various contemporary trends and ideologies prevalent in society. Dalit literature too is no exception. It raises banner for those who are denied the basic fundamental rights by the hegemony of the stratified caste system of Hindu society. It makes these people aware of the rights they have been deprived of. So, it is natural that this literature accepts influences mainly from ideologies and movements devoted for the cause of dalits, their welfare and emancipation. Dalit literature is influenced by Buddhism of 6th century, *Bhakti* movement of 16th century, Marxism and *Ambedkarism* and Dalit panther movement of 20th century. The first movement with certain social overtones that comes to the mind which influenced and was influenced by Dalit consciousness was Buddhism. It was a religious-cum-reformist movement

one of whose central teachings was the equality of all human beings which is one of the basic conceptions of Dalit literature. But its initial impulses can be traced in *Bhakti* movement of 16th century. *Bhakti* movement protested against untouchability and caste based social disparity. Many of the well-known poets, singers and saints in the *Bhakti* cult were from the lower castes. For example, Namdev belonged to *Shimpi* caste from Maharashtra, Kabir (a weaver), Ravidas (a cobbler) and Sena (a barber) were from Uttar Pradesh, and Tukaram was a *Kunbi* from Maharashtra. The saint poets tried to mitigate various social evils by articulating the message of equality, brotherhood and religious tolerance through their poems written in folk languages. Saint Ramanand had his disciples from every caste including the lower castes. One of his disciples was Kabir who was a Muslim by faith but a member of the weaver caste. He boldly declared the spiritual equality of all human beings on the basis of their common origin. He asserts:

God in the beginning created light,

All human beings belong to him.

Since from one light is the whole world created

Here who is noble and who is inferior? (Messy 31)

But the real beginning of Dalit consciousness can be seen in the writings of the saint poets of low castes. Chokhamala, the great *mahar* saint poet of Maharashtra through his devotional songs highlighted the miserable conditions of the untouchables and gave expression to the humiliation they faced due to the social discrimination. The saint poets propagated the message of equality and fraternity and some time even they are said to have a “quasi-revolutionary bent” (Deliege 148). It is clear that theirs

was a purely humanitarian and even philosophical approach to the social evil. They never challenged the caste system instead they preferred to transcend it.

The other eminent ideologist who influenced Dalit literature was Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Dr. Ambedkar. Jyotiba Phule, in fact, is considered to be the initiator of anti-caste movement in Maharashtra. He was the first to attack the entire caste-based Hindu social order. He led a struggle against the monopoly of the priestly classes and argued for the equality of all human beings. Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar called him one of his 'gurus'. His life and ideology is a source of inspiration to all Dalit writers. The prominent painter Dr. Dhanraj Keer has said with reference to the inspiration and influence provided to Dalit literature by Dr. Ambedkar: "New academies of knowledge, a new inspiration for literature, a new place pilgrimage and a new opportunity for literature have sprung up" (Prasad 192).

In the *Mahar* conference of 1936 held in Bombay, Ambedkar, for the first time, publicly declared his intention to convert to another religion. His plea for conversion, as Zelliott notes, reads like a litany:

Religion is for man; man is not for religion,

If you want to gain self-respect, change your religion,

If you want to create a co-operating society, change your religion

If you want power, change your religion,

If you want equality, change your religion,

If you want independence, change your religion,

If you want to make the world in which you live happy, change your religion

(Ganguly 142).

Dr. Ambedkar's ideology influenced Dalit literature immensely while he himself was greatly influenced by Buddhism. Buddhism offered the justification that it is thought and action that should be the criteria for judging a person and not birth. Dr. Ambedkar found Buddhist philosophy appropriate for his ideology. That is why he converted to Buddhism. Even today the Jatavas of Agra regard him as a real hero, "the Martin Luther of Buddhism" (Deliege 190). He found that Hinduism, in final analysis is a religion of caste. Dr Ambedkar was deadly against the Varna-based caste system. In a famous phrase he called the caste system "the pollution of society" (Lal 37). The stigma of caste continues to inflict the human society. Omvedt rightly remarks that "This is only another way of saying that, turn in any direction you like, caste is the monster that crosses your path. You cannot have political reform; you cannot have economic reform unless you kill the monster" (Omvedt 51).

Ambedkar had firm faith in political and economic measure for the upliftment and emancipation of dalits. He exhorted them to be united and to struggle for their rights. In political fields, his greatest contribution is the "positive discrimination" and the reservation for the depressed classes. In fact, the challenge which he fiercely presented against the validity of caste hierarchy and the consequent exploitation of the depressed classes has now become the very basis of Dalit literature.

The life and philosophy of Dr. Ambedkar provided inspiration for number of emancipation movement for dalits. Taking advantage of Dr. Ambedkar's ideology, Dalits started asserting their dignity in various movements more or less coloured by political overtones. The most memorable and indisputable movement was the Dalit Panther movement launched in 1972. The very name of the movement is typical of the growing aggressiveness of dalits who no longer take refuge in the euphemisms like '*Harijans*', 'scheduled castes' etc. Dalit literature was enforced by this movement

because all the leading persons of this movement were creative writers. One of the chief traits of this movement was the expression of the aggressiveness of dalits. These writers displayed the anger, anguish and confidence of Dalits who remained overlooked till then. For instance the bitterness as well as the growing confidence of dalits is obvious in a poem of Namdev Dhasal, one of the founders of Dalit panther movement. He writes:

This world's socialism

This world's communalism

And all those things of theirs

We have put them to test

And the implication is that

Only our shadows can cover over feet (Prasad 72).

The anti-conventional and anti-caste activities of Dalit activist-writers led to a confrontation between the forward classes and the lower classes. But out of this very conflict emerges the future of the country. Dalit literature influenced by Dalit Panther movement proved to be a spark that started a wave of organized efforts throughout the country. Thus, Dalit literature is influenced by various ideologies and movements. Dalit writers hope that this exploited group of people will bring about a revolution in this country and emerged into the forefront and as a prominent voice after 1960. Starting with Marathi language, Dalit literature appeared in other languages such as Hindi, Telugu, Kannada, Punjabi and Tamil through narratives such as poems, short stories and most importantly through autobiographies. Arjun Dangle tells about Dalit literature in his famous book *Poisoned Bread*. "The era of Dalit literature lasting from the end of the 1960s to about the middle 1980s might be called the "Golden Age" of

modern Marathi Dalit literature” (Dangle xiii). Famous poet and writer Om Prakash Valmiki says about Dalit and Dalit literature:

The word ‘Dalit’ does not denote caste but has wider connotations. It covers and encompasses those tribes forced to live in forests and inaccessible hills after being branded as criminals, bonded labourers, tillers not being paid full wages and those considered untouchable due to Hindu Varna system. When this term combines with literature, it indicates that literary stream which is the realistic articulation of humane sensitivities and concerns. So Dalit literature demands that human beings should be free from the shackles of being dead loyalists and blind followers of stereotyped traditions and beliefs. The dignity of individuals can only be established by inculcating among them the feeling of fraternity and equality (Randhawa vi).

Babu Rao Bagul was a pioneer of modern Dalit literature in Marathi. Babu Rao Bagul (1930-2008) was a Marathi writer from Maharashtra. His famous works are—*Jevha Mi Jaat Chorli* (1963), *Maran Swaste Hot Ahe* (1969), *Sud* (1970), *Sahitya Ajache Kranti Vigyan and Ambedkar*. Namdev Dhasal, Raja Dhale and Arun Kamble were the original leaders of Dalit Panther. Namdeo Laxman Dhasal (1949-2014) was a Marathi poet, writer and Human Rights activist from Maharashtra. He won the Padma Shri and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Sahitya Academy in 2004. Namdeo Dhasal’s famous works are *Golpitha* (1973), *Tuhi Lyatta Kanchi* (1981), *Khel* (1983), *Ambedkari Chalwal*, *Andhale Shatak*, *Buddha Dharma: Kahi Shesh Prashna*. Arun Kamble’s famous works are *Arun Krushnaj Kamble*, 1983 (awarded as best poetry collection by Maharashtra Sahitya Prishad), *Mudra*, *Vad Samvad* and *Tarkateerth Ek Vadata Vyadhat*. Om Parkash Valmiki, Kanwal Bharti, Mohan Das Nemishray, Sheoraj Singh Bechain and Sharankumar Limbale are also

famous writers in Dalit literature. They are counted among new generation of Dalit writers. Sushila Tankbhore, Bama and Anita Bharti are some of the recognized female Dalit writers. Om Parkash Valmiki, well-known for his Autobiography, *Joothan* (1997) is considered a milestone in Dalit literature. Om Parkash Valmiki's other famous works are *Sadiyo Ka Santaap*, *Bas! Bahut Ho Chuka*, *Ab Aur Nahin*, *Salaam*, *Ghuspethiye*, *Dalit Sahitya Ka Saundary shastra* and *Do Chehre*. Mohan Das Nemishray, known for his autobiography *Apne-Apne Pinjarey*, is a distinguished Dalit writer. Sheoraj Singh Bechain's book *Mera Bachpan Mere Kandhon Par* has been much appreciated and awarded. Bama Faustina Soosairaj is a Tamil novelist. She has published three main works; an autobiography named *Karukku* (1992), two novels *Sangati* (1994) and *Vanman* (2002), and two collections of short stories *Kisumbukkaram* (1996) and *Oru Tattvum Erumaiyum* (2003). In the Indian society, dalits have been denied education for quite a long time because high caste people think education is not meant for untouchable. With the changing times, they are now getting education and some of them are using writing as a weapon for the social assertion. Dalit writers generally talk about the importance of education.

Send my boy to school

Lord and master

I tell you

Send my boy to school (Dangle 11).

In Dalit writings, we see the miserable condition of women as to how they are surviving in the society.

While Dalit men are the victims of caste and class oppression. Dalit women find themselves as the victims of double oppression-by the upper caste men as

well as by the men of their own community. Their struggle is for existence as well as to protect themselves against the hostile social environment. This hostility pervades all spheres- at home as well as outside. And hence, their struggle is continuous. The biggest handicap of Dalit women is their lack of education (Kumar 6).

Dalit as a class, as an ideology and as a social revolution, is the outcome of the irrational and unjustified social setup which is based on the caste system in which some people are treated as low born, slave and outcaste while others have the right to enjoy a privileged life. These privileged classes are considered pure, touchables and intellectuals and the others are considered as outcaste having lowest origin, lowest occupation and lowest intellect. So it had been almost impossible for these people to set their existence registered in the contemporary literature. Rather literature, as a privileged possession of the high castes was used as a medium for the justification of the unjustified social set up. So these people hardly ever got any positive presentation in literature. However, some depressed classes could be heard time and again even before the formal inauguration of Dalit literature in 20th century. We can trace a few instances of dalits, accepting the oppression and exploitation, with their hands tied and without resentment in ancient scriptures and epics. Shambuk in Ramayana and Eklavya in Mahabharata are the instances capable of stirring the sensibility of a common reader. Further the saint poets in 16th century started a campaign against untouchability and social disparity establishing the equality of all human beings. In 18th and 19th century, some high caste authors centered some of their works on depressed community and tried to depict the miserable plight of the poor and exploited dalits. Later these authors were joined by the educated intellectuals of Dalit community and notable works with the centrality of Dalit life and values started

coming. But right from the onset there has been a big difference between the treatment of Dalit issues by non-Dalit writers and the Dalit writers. This difference lies not only in terms of depth of treatment but also in terms of effects and influences. Often there is a distorted depiction of Dalit life and experience in non-Dalit authors. This distortion of the facts is due to the difference between two basic factors of writing i.e. knowledge and experience. Knowing and experiencing are two different things particularly when it comes to the realistic depiction of Dalit life. Arjun Dangle locates the position of Dalit literature in *Poisoned Bread*:

Past, present and future equate this difference of knowledge and experience with that of view. There is as much a difference between a Dalit view and Dalit vision as there is between having a look at the map of a city and actually living in that city. When a view of life is experienced by a writer in its multiform distinct totality he could be said to have had a vision of his own point of view (Dangle 268).

The famous Dalit author Narendra Jadhav has something different to say on this issue:

Non-Dalit writing for Dalits written out of sympathy. Empathy is a right word, but there is always a difference between mothers love and a wet nurse love. There is a substantial difference between Dalit writing about themselves and other doing it. Because they have a second hand experience and they could the first person account (Anand 33).

Works written out of mere sympathy and compassion mostly prove to be “ivory tower view” (Lal 48). Of course, there is deep humanism in these writings but the will to change the order of things is half-hearted. These writings woe over the sufferings, humiliation and exploitation undergone by dalits but the streak of protest

against these evils is weak in them. To an extent, their works do not register the anger, pride and assertion of dalit community which is supposed to be the soul of Dalit literature. On the other hand, Dalit writers only portray the injustice and exploitation in all its forms but also fiercely protest against it at every juncture. Thus, a Dalit writer can portray the life values of dalit community in a far more realistic and critical manner. Therefore, they are more appealing and influential than the non-Dalit writings about dalits. But the non-Dalit writers also cannot be ignored completely on the ground that expresses a second hand experience or they lack the protest element in them. It owes a great deal for its commencement to non-Dalit writers because they provided a notable start to Dalit literature when literacy and literature were things beyond the access of this section of society. But the big task of redefining themselves rests upon their own efforts as in past they had been wrongly interpreted by the high society. However in the noble task of liberating the common man from injustice and restoring him to his rightful place, the sincere efforts from non-Dalit writers must be welcomed. According to the definition given by Marxist commentators, not only the scheduled castes and sub-castes but all exploited are dalit. Namdeo Dhasal has offered a definition: "Dalits are the scheduled castes, sub-castes, Buddhist, working masses, labourers, landless farm workers, yayawars and adivasi" (Limbale 75). Wankhede and Dhasal included all the powerless sectors of society in their definitions of Dalit. These definitions are constructed from feelings of comprehensive social and political unity. In fact, these are not just definitions, but also a kind of call to action, to prepare for struggle. In Dalit literature a common man is the hero who fights for self-respect. Dalit literature is not the literature of imagination rather it is experiencing literature. It tells about the social reality and inequality. As Dangle says:

In our colony

The postman gets bamboozled

Teaching get confused

Civilization stumbles

The sun-even he is darkened

Our houses stand

Like footprints of cattle in the mud

In the midst of it all is a soul

Eager to swim along the current (Dangle 13).

Dalits are rejected by the caste Hindus and they are treated as animals. They think that the touch, shadow and the voice of Dalit will impure them. Dalits had to live in a separate locality out of the village and the city. They cannot enter the temple of high caste and cannot drink water on the river banks possessed by the high caste. They cannot marry, eat, and live with the high caste. They were only slaves. Now the Indian caste system is changing, but not fast enough.

Social and cultural factors play a seminal role in the development of human consciousness. Culture is a term derived from the word 'cultura' which means 'cultivation'. The word "*Culture*" refers to the beliefs, rituals and practices of a given social or ethnic group or nation. Today the term *Culture* has become more complex due to its plural and inclusive nature. Now, it incorporates all those disciplines which, both directly and indirectly play their role in the shaping of human understanding. In his much celebrated book *Culture and Anarchy* Matthew Arnold defined culture as "the best that has been thought and said" in the world (Habib172). Raymond Williams traces the emergence of culture as a historical formation from the narrower meanings

given above to its most comprehensive signification as “a whole way of life,” which includes areas of private experience. This broadened notion of culture, says Williams, was essentially a response to the new political and social developments signified by the altered meanings of democracy, class, industry, and art (Habib 178).

Dalit literature is the product of Dalit consciousness. Human freedom is the inspiration behind it. This literature is a revolutionary struggle. This revolutionary struggle is for social and economic changes. A revolutionary voice spiced with dejection and anger perennially runs through these writings. Besides, Dalit writing also comes up with a strong desire aimed at deconstructing the whole archeology of knowledge in which dalits have been treated as marginal and untouchable subjects. *Hindu* and *Dalit Brahmin* are two seminal works by Sharankumar Limbale. The author depicts the plight of dalits in the backdrop of hegemonic cultural stereotypes. The condition of Dalits was miserable, they had no land to till nor could they follow any profession. They are shown as doing pitiable jobs and other menial works forced on them by those people who stood at the highest rank in the caste hierarchy. Treated like animals, they were forced to live in separate and far-flung villages. Brahmins thought that they were naturally damned to be destitute. The higher caste people avoided any physical contact with them, for they thought that it would contaminate them. As Dangle defines:

Hindu religious texts forbade them to wear good clothes or ornaments or even footwear, and prescribed severe and humiliating punishment for violating these orders. Even for a basic necessity like water they were helplessly dependent on the higher castes' good will. The most perverted practice of untouchability was that which at one time compelled the untouchables to tie an earthen pot around their necks so that their sputum should not fall to the earth

and pollute it. Another was the compulsion to tie a broom behind them so that their footprints would be erased before others set their eyes on them (Dangle xxi).

In both *Hindu* and *Dalit Brahmin*, we see how they have lived in huts outside the village and how they have fed on the broken-meals. Dalits are non-vegetarian; they drink liquor too. Because of their work being very hard at day and night, they drink wine to ignore their body pain. The initial objective of the study involves a detailed inquiry into the social and cultural development of dalits, especially with the representation of marginalized languages, literatures and cultural artifacts. The focal aim of the study is to trace the drastic cultural and social developments as well as the exploration of the dalits and politics of Brahminism which is involved in it. To proceed, it is necessary to locate the Dalit with the help of selected Dalit texts in the overall hegemonic cultural set up. It would explore the role of education in the enlightenment of dalits and also explore how upper class people fore-grounded and deformed the image of dalits for their personal benefits. It would explore the change in traditional work to modern work in Dalit community and also how caste system and religious controversies influenced Dalit identity. Finally, the study explores, with special reference to the core texts on Dalitism, how dalits can represent, revitalize and reinforce Indian society through education and get rid of the tyranny of caste hierarchy as well as how can it form a new pinnacle in Indian society. The impact and significance of the Dalit writings in the ethnic, socio-cultural context will be the prime area of inquiry in this study. It also inquires how the Brahminism and the dominant languages and cultures have enforced themselves upon the lower caste people, caste system, education system and politics. The attempt made here is to study the tremendous cultural controversy, corruption in religion and society and self-made

discourse of Brahminism. If it is possible to improve their education system, way of living and awareness would be a milestone in the society. If it is possible to follow the concept of equality, liberty, fraternity and justice would be a great achievement for us. Attempts will also be made to study possession of Dalit women, conversion or so-called “Ghar Wapsi,” politics, awareness and change in traditional work to modern, barriers of inter-caste marriage and other related issues. The research makes use of an interdisciplinary approach that includes the historical, sociological, cultural and literary studies that throw light on the complex and unique identity and existence of the Dalits. The plan is executed through the set of selected texts that deal with the marginalized communities, their endangered culture and question of identity.

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