Women struggle in relation to the dalit feminism: Adressing identity and equality.

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Abstract -

This article studies several dalit feminist organization and links it to the women sustainance and their journey of development thru ages. For eg: it studies about Mahila sansad in mumbai, dalit stree sahitya manch, all india dalit women forum, vikas vanchit dalit parishad etc and on the other hand religious incidents of ancient times like burning of manusmriti and how it led to the introduction of all india women liberation day and later investigates a case study which tends to highlight the women journey from identity to equality.

In the 1980s, in a political context where the 'politics of presence' and the corresponding question of identity became increasingly important, there was a reconfiguration of the framework of universalism within which women's groups had hitherto functioned, irrespective of their perspectives on affiliation and autonomy. The recognition that 'difference', of class, caste, religion, sexuality, etc. formed significant axes around which the diversity of women's experience occurred, gave critical reflexivity to the women's movement, deepening its quest for substantive equality. On the other hand, it also opened up areas of tension, especially in the movement's position on gender justice and reform of religious personal laws, where acceptance of a differentiated universalism involved strategic withdrawal from the position of universalism.

The emergence of Dalit feminist voices from the mid-1980s drew attention to caste identities, which had hitherto been assumed as transcendable for the lalarger sister hood among women. This article studies several dalit feminist organization and links it to the women sustainance and their journey of development thru ages. For eg: it studies about Mahila sansad in mumbai, dalit stree sahitya manch, all india dalit women forum, vikas vanchit dalit parishad etc and on the other hand religious incidents of ancient times like burning of manusmriti and how it led to the introduction of all india women liberation day and later investigates a case study which tends to highlight the women journey from identity to equality.

Introduction -

The judgement triggered off protestsamong sections of Muslims, who called for upholding the sanctity of the Shariat (Islamic legal code). Subsequently, the then government brought a highly

retrograde legislation, the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill 1986, which freed Muslim men from the obligation placed on them by Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) vis-a-vis abandoned or divorced wives. The Shah Bano case, 1985, and the Muslim Women's Bill, 1986, became rallying issues for a diverse range of organizations, for the protectors of the Shariat and the autonomy of the Muslim community; for diverse strands of the women's movement; for democratic rights groups, who opposed the communalization of women's issues and appealed for a genderjust UCC; for Hindu communalists, for whom the Supreme Court judgement vindicated their claims that the Muslim community was 'barbaric' and 'anti-natinal'; and for their Muslim counterparts, for whom the reversal of the Supreme Court judgement became the ultimate source of redemption of their dignity as Muslims.

The debates and demonstrations following the incident of Sati in September 1987 in Deorala, a village in Rajasthan, reflected the manner in which the rights of Hindu women were similarly imbricated with questions of religious identity, community autonomy, and eventually 'a politics of power'. In both cases, what was at stake was women's economic freedom, their right to property, and the very bases on which the structures of domination within communities were organized. Wives and widows claiming their right to property threatened to destabilize more than just economic structures. They aimed to transform radically the multifarious whorls of domination that informed their lives as women. Yet, in both cases the (male) religious leaders and fundamentalists were able to raise the 'community in danger' alarm, and reaffirm their claims to representing the community. In both cases the government sacrificed women's rights in order to strike a balance with the two communities, aiming eventually at strengthening its electoral prospects with both (Kumar 1993: 177).

With the rise and consolidation of the Hindu right around the issue of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, which witnessed in its course communal riots and the demolition of the Babri Mosque at the temple site, government inactivity during the entire sequence of events, and the relative invisibility of (Hindu) public opposition to these, the Mulsim community closed its ranks, preferring reforms from within the community. The period also saw a vehement and vociferous rise in upper-caste opposition to caste-based reservations in jobs. The Hindu right-wing in particular kept up a tirade against the state for promoting caste and community-based privileges, and for 'pampering' religious minorities and Scheduled Castes and Tribes (SC/ST), raising vigorously the demand for a UCC. In this context, women's groups rethought their longstanding demand for a UCC. Apprehensive that in the changed political circumstances it had come to embody a universalism dominated by an ideology of exclusion through the denial and elimination of the religious-cultural identity of religious minorities, women's groups unanimously gave up the demand for a UCC.

There is a fundamental difference, however, in the grounds on which the different strands in the women's movement have sought to reconcile the goal of gender justice with the democratic ideal of diversity and pluralism. While the AIDWA, a mass-based women's organization affiliated to the CPI (M), has taken the position that gender justice need not necessarily be linked to an umbrella legislation and that such a legislation might actually prove counter-productive preferring reforms in personal laws, other women's groups have been more inclined to see personal laws as 'conceptually flawed' (Raman 1999:4). Broadly, the latter have couched their demands in terms of an 'exit' option for women's groups have been more inclined to see personal .Laws as 'conceptually flawed' (Raman 1999:4). Broadly, the latter. Have couched their demands in terms of an 'exit' option for assumed as

transcendable for the larger sisterhood among women.Young Dalit feminists in Mumbai formed the Mahila Sansad, and by the mid-1990s, Samvadini-Dalit Stree Sahitya Manch, a forum of the Dalit feminist literary movement, had emerged. By the 1990s, there were several independent and autonomous assertions by Dalit women, including the formation of the National Federation of Dalit Women and the All India Dalit Women's Forum. In December 1996, the Vikas Vanchit Dalit Mahila Parishad organized at Chandrapur put forth a proposal to commemorate 25 December, the day on which, in 1927, B.R. Ambedkar had symbolically burnt the Manusmriti at Mahad, as the Bharatiya Streemukti Divas or the Indian Women's Liberation Day. In 1997 the Christi Mahila Sangharsh Sangathana, an organization of Dalit Christian women, was established (Rege 1998: 20).

Literature Review -

1. REGE (2006) - Chisti Mahila Sangathan which is an organization of Dalit Chistian women which later led to upholding of shariat sanctity which led to legislation of muslim women bill 1986 for protection of rights of divorce for women.

2. Kumar (1993) - introduces an incident of Sati Pratha in Deorala Rajasthan, depicts rights of women merging with questions of religious identity and community id as well and later transforms into power question. But it was stated that in both men and women power, somewhere the element risked is women right to property and freedom.

Objective -

1. Indepth study of women struggle from ancient to this modern century and their journey through the ages.

2. Association of women struggle and dalit feminism and how both are identical and interlinked to each other.

3. How sense of religion merges with communism and how these factors impact the life of women at a large extent.

Hypothesis -

 1. There is a significant impact of political feminist movements on women lives.

2.There is a positive and negative association between women life and the sense of rigid religious and dalit communism in society.

Methodology and Tool of study -

Datas can be obtained through secondary datas regard to the interlink between women and prominent political dalit feminist incidents and to what an extent it effects the life of a women. Secondly, an indepth analysis can be obtained regard to the negative and positive association of women and other dalit movements through construction of questionnaire and distributed among 100 respondents . Random sampling method can be obtained and viewpoints of them should be taken to know the viewpoint if contemporary society in regard to dalit movements and women struggle.

Interview schedule can be enumerated and conducted for taking the viewpojnt of people who are illiterate.

The area of my tentative study will be the city of maharashtra where an very prominent mahila sansad was formed in 1990 by young dalit feminist and later a forum of dalit street sahitya manch was emerged. And the viewpoint of the contemporary society can be taken in regard to position of the dalit feminist movements and what is their view regard to women life and it's association with politics. Datas can be evaluated and analysed with the usage oof SPSS SOFTWARE. Chi – Square and regression method can be used for analysis of data collected.

Conclusion -

Over the years, the women's movement in India has grappled with issues that have required the delineation of a unified feminist political subject and a feminist politics, while simultaneously taking into account the different and layered lived experiences of women. Within the movement itself, the need to evolve a specifically feminist understanding and critique of women's oppression has jostled with perspectives that see women's issues as inextricably embedded in broader issues of democratic change, or those that see the struggle against women's oppression as one which has to be fought in diverse, and sometimes disparate, locations of domination. The women's movement, therefore, exhibits both ideological diversity and a continual effort to build radical alliances within and outside the movement in a concerted struggle for liberatory change. Successive churnings within the movement have alerted it to the political and ideological dangers of putting forward 'women' as a unified category. A unified, collective body of women-as agents and subjects of liberatory change-proves elusive as it attempts to homogenize distinct entities, ironically within an v 35abstracted category of universal woman. Within a plural society and the differential life experiences of women, spaces for women's politics emerge in dispersed locations and in response to diverse forms of oppression such as caste, class, religion, race, and the like. The struggles of women in their own local conditions demarcate in precise terms the domain in which they could usher in change and over which they could exercise control. At the same time, however, as common and integral components of various movements-peasant, tribal, Dalit, and environmental-women also become conduits for building alliances among movements. The retraction from articulating the abstract hegemonic woman as the universal feminist subject marked the opening up of spaces for recognizing the differences of caste, class, and community among women. It also provides the basis for a feminist understanding of lived experiences of women at the intersections along these axes, and the idea of a feminist politics that involves the logic of encompassment whereby differences are seen to follow a dialectical hierarchy. While leading to an absolute and universal value of emancipation, difference is retained as a higher value, propelling the movement forward. It is this logic of encompassment that may be seen as embodied in the different strands along which the women's movement has emerged, and the issues that have taken priority at specific moments. Also, it is in the nature of encompassment that the women's movement has not unfolded as a discrete movement, but exists in an interlocking relationship of radical alliances with other social movements and socially progressive forces at the grassroots, where, too, women constitute a significant group. Such a relationship not only helps sharpen feminist politics, it dispels allegations of non representativeness of the movement, and opens up grounds for a common struggle against domination.

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