



## DECONSTRUCTION OF THE MYTH OF DALIT LEADERSHIP

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### **Abstract**

*The word Dalit expresses the shattered lives of the people who deliberately pushed in the rung of Caste system and the sheer injustices happening them since ages in the malignant social structure codified by the Manusmriti. It is not only placing the location of Dalit but restrain them through the mythical structures which controls the lives without getting consciousness by themselves. The power we talk in relation to politics has direct impact over the lives and unambiguously clear but the repository of the Hindu text which controls the lives of Dalit and shaping their behavior as slavery and realizing the capacity of decision making. However, the deconstructing the myths created by the texts since ages have to be deflated and analyze the Dalit leadership in the prisms of Modernity.*

**Keywords: Deconstruction, Myth, Dalit, Manusmriti and Leadership.**

### **1. Introduction**

Indian society has web of complexities in terms of its social, economic and even political structures and these structures are not free from the power which influence since known civilization. All the epochs have various power matriculations to negating the “Other” to derive the positive values of one identity and objectification is the prime element to get the identity which it includes social, economic and even political. The foundation of social identities are very much objects of enquiry to unearth the suppressed discourses in different time and spaces and even every suppressed history had the invisible social marginalization which was deliberately sidelined to power over the “Other”. The Dalit the concept is nascent and politically loaded to pool the solidarity among the groups they deemed to be discriminated since ages.

The historical nature of the group explicates the sorrowfulness which they experience and pushed even further out casting from the social stratification and treated as untouchables. This was gruesome and inhumane to treat people as not subject to touch. These historical lines reflect every epoch and not confined to the any era which historians classified as ancient, medieval and modern, so all these eras have the same story regarding the injustices over Dalit. However, it needs a careful examination in formulating the social when it called social means which reflects the group identity so the group which has been outcasted never be in power of taking the decisions and subordinated to the upper strata of the society. the leadership is predominantly confined to particular people but not the other in the strata which has been codified by the Hindu smritis. This article focuses on the Dalit leadership and its genesis in awake of the modernity and constitutionality and the other important element is deconstructing the narratives which founded over the years to demoralizing and decapitating the Dalit to take decisions.

### **2. Who is Dalit? Constituting its Social**

Dalit is a nascent concept if one look at historically the concept, which means “broken” etymologically it express that shattered which reflects the lives of a particular group. The broken in terms of social, economic and even politically since the Manu’s classification of Indian society. the prominent German philosopher Heidegger terms the inanimate objects are “things in itself “because they never act themselves but depends on other things to be experienced so it is clear the laws which were made by



the Manu to treat Dalit as inanimate objects and ready to use for the other people in the strata (Caste system). The concept of subordination makes palpable to excommunicate from the power of thinking themselves that was clear in Thomas Hobbes was saying in his Leviathan that freedom was an important aspect to bring an order and establishing a feasible life for living so here the people who had contracted with Leviathan not subordinating to Leviathan but the foundation for the liberty. The classical text of Politics of Aristotle expounds on slavery it was a dramatic expression on slavery and its mechanism as an institution in ancient Greek, but it was misconceived by the interpreters to look at as slavery independently but not the other point of view Aristotle assumed of. Slavery for him natural and mutual benefactor for the master and slave itself and slave is minister of action and works behalf of the master. If it looks in the prism of these examples Dalit as a “Social” deliberately forced to work for the other castes in the social structure. Let’s have a glance on the social structure and its genesis and mechanism according to Dr BR Ambedkar.

*“Hindu society, in common with other societies, was composed of classes and the earliest known are the (1) Brahmins or the priestly class; (2) the Kshatriya, or the military class; (3) the Vaishya, or the merchant class and (4) the Shudra, or the artisan and menial class.” (Ambedkar, 1916).*

It seems to be an egalitarian, but every class detached itself from the other to establish a hegemony to control the other in the ladder, so the class analysis is based on the wealth but here in Indian social structure is division of laborers. Plato’s classification was about to mobilize the people (appetite, auxiliary and philosopher kings) based on the virtues inculcate themselves into upward and even downward too. The Indian caste system is an enclosed entity it is fixed and even objectified with ascription values based on the birth, so here caste mobility is impossible due to this structural rigidity and even the treacherous aspect of this formation is the other caste must have obligation to follow the rules prescribed by the upper caste.

The codification is not mere the words, but it has penal conscription to trespass the laws. The element of leadership our object of enquiry is standstill when we look back the history of the Dalit and its institutional functionality in Indian social and political structure. Dr BR Ambedkar denounce many propositions relating to the explanation of caste and its function such as the concept of pollution which describes the caste system unique, and the other explanation is the groups which fall under different caste never have any intimate relation with each other and exclusive themselves to maintain the caste sanctity. But Dr Ambedkar had assessed the caste system with a careful examination in a pragmatic way which includes the truth and reality realized in terms of social composition and acceptance over the period this is even our main objective for the deconstruction of the myth of the leadership.

“This analytical assessment of the numerous characteristics of Caste leaves no doubt that prohibition, or rather the absence of intermarriage endogamy, to be succinctly the only one that can be called the essence of Caste when rightly understood” (Ambedkar, 1916). Thus, the terminate point is unavoidable that Endogamy is the only feature that is unique to caste, and if we follow in showing how endogamy is maintained, then we could trace out the genesis of the caste and its vicious design to maintain the caste structure as it is but not to destabilize the *Dharma* and *Niti*. The concept of *Dharma* has a significant place in the history of Indian civilization which is even above the state and the emperors have to maintain the *Dharma* which is the divine order to the kings to uphold and strengthen the *Dharma*. The other concept the *Niti* is a moral establishment to obey the values and rules designed by the Brahmins



(top strata in the ladder) here it is a political aspect to contain the other castes to not take the decisions but mere obeying.

The phenomenal German philologist propounds a theory about the construction of morals by the people who are in the position to creating the structure of values where the people entangled by them, he further said about the Master and Slave Morality. The Master morality is the strong health and free and they see themselves as happiness which is resulted through the position they occupy in society, and they found the other people weak feeble and undesirable to carry the life and enslaved by the masters. The construction of the narrative of weak and feeble has huge impact in creating the myths in society and even those were accepted by the people without unaware the consequences. Though, the myth plays a biggest role to bring an order (punitive narratives) in Indian society and the slave morality is here absorbed in the structures of Indian institutions. Caste and politics have been convoluted by the myths to downplay the Dalit to not getting empowered.

Dalit is disintegrated systematically by the history to not exercise the power to take decisions and participate in public sphere because the historical narratives never allow Dalit to be as independent and pushed the objective consciousness to subordinate. So, the Dalit as “Social” constitute an internal organization to perform such roles to not be proactive but submissive so this is the powerful apparatus not imposing the power overtly but make them acknowledge to realize the social which they constitute. Mahatma Phule *Gulamgiri* vehemently criticized the manufactured structures about the shudras and making them subordinated to the Brahmins and proposed a theory which Aryans invaded the original inhabitants of India and enslaved by the literary structures (Myths) such as Vedas, Ithihasas and puranas. These texts have engraved propound impact over Indian society and shapes the behavior of the shudras as it pleased. Mahatma Phule was one of the pioneers to transform the self-realization of shudras and Dalit to bring them into mainstream politics and was instrumental to formation of counter narratives to erase the memory which penetrate into mass psyche.

### **3. Modernity and Deconstruction of the Myths of the Leadership**

Leadership is an absolutely magnanimous quality, but it is achieved one but not ascribed. There are many theories which contrary the above definition The “Great man Theory” is one of the popular theories to examine the nature of the leadership it is predominantly relies over the birth of the person and even proclaims leaders are born but not developed. This kind of theories even subscribed the idea of divine origin theory to justify the king’s authority over subjects which was the base to not reforming the social order but maintain the Dharma according to the scripture written. Like the Great man theory there are many in the fold such as Trait’s theory and Behavioral theory the nature of the trait’s theory seems to be inclusive and the whoever possessed the traits would become the leader irrespective of the caste or class which he/she belongs, but it has been even turned as the traits are only possessed by the people who occupies the upper caste strata, when it comes to Behavioral theory of the leadership which depends upon the conditions which leaders take the decisions and even leaders are produced by the conditions but not born as leaders.

Dr BR Ambedkar one of the greatest persons India ever produced in terms of his intellectuality and the courage which he shows to emancipate the Dalit from the mythical constructions since the emergence of the Caste system. It was he created a new hope and the way he brought radical transformation to enabling the conditions to counter the establishing narratives those were enslaved Dalits. The Modernity and Modernization brought a critical perspective to contemplate the society to in the lines of logic and



science. So, the modernity produced a critical perspective over the Dalit leadership and their capabilities to take the decisions. The deconstruction is what makes the devaluing the narratives constructed over the years to subvert the Dalits and criticizing the myths which disabled to becoming Dalit as leaders. The method of Deconstruction usually focuses on the gruesome nature of binary oppositions to derive the positive values such as like Dalit and brahmin, true are false and purity and pollution etc. these binaries constructed society under the clutches of dominant people, and these never reflect the reality but represent the power relations which they possess. Thus, the Brahmin were in the position to create the binary and set themselves as privilege and even further every aspect is embedded their presence and the absence is what the others like Shudras and untouchables. So, deconstruction embraces the idea of the Margins who are deprived of the rights and even crucial political values over the ages.

UpendraBaxi called how “Ambedkar remains totally forgotten figure” because his absent is deliberately presented by the people who hold the power. The history never conceded as people assumes and unraveled the secretes which holds for a long time. The deconstruction is the elevating the Ambedkar as a leader of Dalit and other marginalized and surprisingly filled the confidence of the leadership in Dalit community. The way even in Telangana region they were instrumental to reforming the Dalit community and even they extended the solidarity with the nationalist discourse, but their Presence was minimal due to their caste identity and suppressed the contribution of them those were Bhagyareddy Verma and Arigai Ramaswamy. The method of Deconstruction is explaining history in a different form it is called even History too. Why we need to look at history because it was embraced the unpalatable stories so those made Dalit as passive humans rather than active members of the society to be part of. The concluding element which empowers the Dalit is constitution which is radically different compared to the mythical text which suppressed the Dalit, and the constitution guarantees the rights and the power of taking decisions makes Dalit liberate from the harsh ontological positions since they had been, the significant factor of the constitution would be delegitimizing of the text which has been treated as sacrosanct.

#### **4. The Formulation of the Research Problem**

Telangana is home to two noteworthy facts concerning Dalits: The first is the socio-cultural assertion of Dalits, and the second is their political marginalisation. Numerous social and religious movements, reservation policies, and the green revolution are the primary causes of Dalit socioeconomic advancement. The impact of socioeconomic development has resulted in Dalit cultural and social assertion. Dalits in Telangana are socially conscious but not politically active. BSP is the only Dalit political party to emerge in Telangana and be able to mobilise Dalits there. In contrast to Uttar Pradesh, however, the BSP failed to make an impact in Telanagana. Although Dalits make up 31.94 percent of the population in Telanagana, which is the highest percentage in India, they lack a common platform and leader. Dalit leaders treat them as a vote bank and utilise them as state and national political actors. After a certain stage of political development, capturing power becomes an end in itself for them, rather than a means to eliminate social inequality. From 1992 to 2017, the BSP was unable to win the majority support of the Dalit community. Dalits favoured parties other than the BSP. Upper caste parties select Dalit candidates for reserved seats in order to increase their voter base. These candidates support their respective political party, but not the Dalit community. Today, Dalit leadership operates on a variety of platforms, including affiliations with various political parties, social leadership in a variety of organisations, and association with various Deras. Numerous Dalits vote for candidates endorsed by their landlords. Dalit political parties and organisations are extremely antagonistic towards one another.



This study attempts to determine whether Telangana is experiencing a crisis of dynamic Dalit leadership. What are the significant effects of the rise and fall of the BSP on the Dalits in Telangana? The inability of the BSP in Telangana to unite and mobilise all Dalit castes raises the question of whether or not the party's political leadership is ineffective. It is of equal importance to determine what type of political leadership has emerged in Telangana following the decline of the BSP among Dalits.

## 5. Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the rise of Dalit political leadership in Telangana.
2. To comprehend the perspectives of Dalit political leaders on the various issues affecting their community.
3. Examine the role of Dalit political leaders in the region's uplift of their community.

## 6. Research Questions

1. How does Dalit leadership develop in Telangana?
2. What are the significant issues they raise?
3. What plans do they have to prevent atrocities against Dalits in Telangana?
4. What strategies do Dalit leaders employ to ensure the political participation of the Dalit community?
5. How do Dalit leaders contribute to the advancement of their community in Telangana?
6. Despite pressure from their respective parties, are Dalit leaders able to freely serve their community?

## 7. Literature Review

There is an abundance of literature on Telangana's caste system, Dalit movements, Dalit leaders, and Dalit conditions. This section divides the relevant literature into four sections: studies on the concept of Leadership and Political Leaders, studies on Dalit Leadership in India, and studies on Leadership in India.

**Sachchidanand (1977)** performed an analysis on the part played by the Harijan aristocracy of Bihar. According to what he discovers, the Harijan elite plays a constructive role in the social welfare of the Dalit population. A new socially powerful elite class has arisen among the Dalits as a direct result of the reservation policy. This class does not participate in political life.

**Mendelssohn's(1986)** investigates the role of Harijan elite, who are only elected because of reservation laws. He contends that despite the policy of reservation, Dalits are unable to get to positions of authority. They are unable to contribute anything positive to their community in any way. There is no question that Dalits require reservation, however this issue needs to be reconsidered.

**Vivak Kumar (2002)** conducted research on the beginnings, development, characteristics, and workings of the Dalit leadership in India. He came to the conclusion that there are two distinct types of leadership within the Dalit community: dependent leadership and independent leadership. The dependent leadership of the Dalit community is unable to accomplish anything without the permission of the appropriate party. They are unable to discuss Dalit issues because they speak the language of their party. On the other hand, there has been a rise of autonomous Dalit leadership as a powerful force within the Dalit community. Dalits have formed their own political parties and operate autonomously



for the benefit of their community. It has begun, among the political leadership of Dalits, a shift away from the goal of social reform toward the goal of obtaining political power.

**Murugkar (1991)** An further investigation on the significance of the Dalit Panther movement in Maharashtra was carried out by The author of the piece contended that the Dalit Panther movement could not survive for a significant amount of time because it did not have strong leadership. Its leaders were young men who were not afraid to take risks. They did not work together and were not even-handed. The leadership was broken up into several parts. As a result, the Dalit Panther could not achieve success in every region of the country.

## 8. Gaps in Reviewed Literature

On the subject of the caste system, untouchability, Dalit movements, Dalit mobility, and the socio-economic conditions of Dalits in India, there is no shortage of written material to be found wherever in the country. When it comes to Dalit leadership, there aren't many studies on the topic in other regions of the country, but in Telangana, there aren't very many in-depth research on Dalit leadership either. Although there is some literature covering a few issues pertaining to Dalits in Telangana, as was mentioned in depth above, there has not been a specialised research done to determine the nature of Dalit political leadership in Telangana. As a result, the current study is an effort to bridge this knowledge gap. This is a comprehensive research with the goal of comprehending the makeup and operation of the Dalit political leadership in Telangana.

## 9. Deconstruction of the myth of the Dalit leaders in Telangana

There is a prevalent myth that Dalits are not capable of leading large organisations or developing a strong identity for themselves. This false belief is perpetuated by dominant caste members and their allies who keep blaming the Dalit community for their own failures. In this paper, we deconstruct this myth by highlighting the successes and contributions of Dalit leaders in Telangana. We hope that by doing so, we can break the cycle of discrimination and marginalisation that has plagued the community for too long. Dalit leadership has been a popular topic of debate in recent times, with some people arguing that the community does not have the ability to lead and others touting their leadership abilities. In this paper, we deconstruct the myth of the dalit leadership and provide evidence to back up our claims. We also discuss ways in which the community can lead effectively, and why it is important for them to do so.

The term 'dalit' is derived from the Sanskrit word *dalī*, which means lowly or depressed.[1] The Dalits are the lowest rung of India's Hindu caste system, and they make up approximately 16 percent of the country's population. They have been subjected to discrimination and violence for centuries, with their marginalisation perpetuated by members of India's dominant castes. This has led to a lack of representation and opportunities for Dalits in society , and has prevented them from achieving socioeconomic parity with their counterparts. However, there have been marked successes for Dalit leaders in Telangana. This state is home to the largest concentration of Dalits in India, and they have managed to achieve a level of prominence and equality that is rare across the country. In this paper, we will look at the contributions of several prominent Dalit leaders from Telangana who have helped to shape Indian society in positive ways. We also discuss how the community can lead effectively, and why it is crucial for them to do so.



Dalits are one of the most disadvantaged groups in India, and they face discrimination and violence on a regular basis. Dalit leaders like Krishna madiga, BojjaTarakam, have played an important role in fighting against these injustices. They work to promote greater socio-economic equality between members of the community and other segments of society, and help to improve the living conditions of their constituents. It is essential for the community to lead effectively in order to achieve these goals, as the Indian government has a history of neglecting and marginalizing Dalits.

## 10. Conclusion

Dalit the word represents the unpleasant experience, but it has a powerful narrative within it to deconstructing the countervailing existing narratives founded by the Hindu scriptures. The leadership is an egalitarian aspect which is a rewarding category because all the people have equal share to become the positions based on their merit, but the caste system never allow the Dalit to hold the position but decides by the Brahmins. the article uses the deconstruction method to relook of the text made subverting the Dalit since ages, enabling the empowerment to take the part of important political decisions which they deprived of.

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