

DALIT WOMEN AND THEIR PRESENT STATUS IN INDIA
(With special reference to Kandasamy's TOUCH and Dalit women in Gujarat and Karnataka State)

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ABSTRACT

Dalit women are supposed as sub human being. She has been supposed as double exploited women physically, psychologically, sexually and socially. In her own family she has been exploiting and at the work place she has to face the exploitation of the higher caste master or boss. There are not double income sources for the Dalit family. Dalit women have to compel to do something to support the family. Maximum Dalit women are labour worker. They are illiterate, unemployed, confidenceless and courageless worker. For daily livelihood they want daily work. They don't want to oppose the land lord or the master. They are ignorant about the lows and articles of Indian constitution which prepared for the women point of views. So this paper is an attempt to focus on the miserable conditions of the Dalit women in the 21st century with special reference to Meena Kandasamy's TOUCH anthology and Dalit women in the state of Gujarat.

Keywords: Double exploitation, income source, labour worker, Dalit women.

Meena Kandasamy has composed eight four poems in TOUCH anthology her poems are severely attacked on the Dalit women's exploitation. Dalit women are helpless to oppose the injustice and exploitation of landlords or masters where they are working. This helplessness of Dalit women portrayed Kandasamy in poem Aggression in the following lines:

*Our is a silence
that waits. Endless waits. (Kandasamy, 38)*

Dalit women never easily oppose against the injustice of male dominated society. They have more capacity to bear the injustice of patriarchy. Even they do not ready to complain against injustice. They feel that if they disclose their injustice society will at first blame the woman but do not man. In every field of work these types of injustice and exploitation happen with

Dalit women. The higher caste people supposed that Dalit women are weak in nature they easily accept the purpose of the higher caste rich people for the sake of money. That's why the rich higher caste people's attitude is not good about Dalit women.

Superstitious ideas and evil spirits are inculcated only on Dalit women. Actually these things are the phobias which are related with psychological diseases. Dalit women are very emotional and kind. They have no courage to face the calamities and obstacles occur in the life. Due to the lack of money and income they do not take correct diagnosis from the doctor. At last they die due to the lack of medicine. Other caste people suppose that died Dalit woman is converted into ghost. Due to this the whole Dalit family boycott and get bad treatment from others. In this situation they supposed that they are suffered from evil spirits. This Dalit women's psychology Kandasamy depicted in the following lines:

*Ghost-tasted, we rot away. We rot away
Remember, rotting is long procedure.....
Day by day, we grow coffin cold and slowly
Life creeps out, a lazy earthworm. At last, we die
We die. (Kandasamy, 45)*

Only Dalit women are suffered from the ghost and evil spirits but no any higher caste rich women suffered from the ghost and evil things. What is the reason behind this? There are many reasons but main reasons are as illiteracy, lack of confidence, helplessness, and aimlessness, suffered from phobia. Dalit women believe in God existence. If anything happen they worship God to free from the calamities. They used to vow to complete their wish. But in Hindu religion Dalits are untouchable for the higher caste people. There is pollution if unknowingly Dalit touch the higher caste people. The higher caste people take bath to purify from the pollution of untouchable. But sometime the higher caste people take disadvantages of untouchable to free from the crime. Already the mistakes are done by the touchable deliberately but punishment given to the untouchable Dalits. This type of incident Kandasamy portrayed in poem *Narration* in the following lines:

*The priest, his lecherous eyes,
Glances that disrobed, defiled
I was not polluting at four feet. (Kandasamy, 56)*

The illegal things are committed by the priest himself but all his crimes he put on the untouchable lady. The lusty priest forcibly molested the Dalit woman in the temple. The poetess questioned, is there no pollution happened with the priest. To complete the sexual lust the priest rapes the Dalit woman. These types of injustice and exploitation are going on with the Dalit women in this 21st century also.

The same is the case with the Dalit women even in the 21st century though we are living in global and technological era. But till untouchability and caste discrimination is continue in independent India. For instances in the following paragraph it indicates:

Dalits are being subjected to false political propaganda. Now a day's whatever Gujrat development model propaganda is going on, it is not totally hundred percentages correct. In reality till now there is existence of untouchability. For an instance, there are separate pre-primary schools for Dalit's candidates. In Hagipur District Patan, there are two separate pre-primary schools, School No.159 is for special Dalit students and School No.160 is for Patel and Brahmin Community candidates. (Loksatta News, 09)

Now days there does caste discrimination and untouchability exist in an independent India? The answer will yes. The information it indicates untochability and caste discrimination till present in India. Apart from this the following News also indicates the disdainful treatment is given to the Dalit woman in the state of Karnataka:

"Students are leaving the school; they don't want to eat food, which prepared by the Dalit woman which created the student's dropping problem, in Govt. high school Kagganhali, district Kolar in the state of Karnataka".
(Loksatta News, page10)

In the state of Karnataka in this 21st century Dalit women is supposed as untouchable even in the government high school. The higher caste representatives do not go oppose the system. Indian government again and again put laws and articles against casteism but nothing happen from the good side of Dalit women's life. Though something will happen well but Dalitness and untouchability remain in the mind of the higher caste people.

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