



SOCIOLOGY OF SOCIAL MEDIA



(Editors)

Abdul Matin, M H Laskar, N Purkayastha and BI Laskar



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By : Abdul Matin

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Nabarun Purkayastha

BI Laskar

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14. Social Media on Dalit in India

Rohidas Mondal

Introduction

The term Dalit was used for the first time by Jyotirao Phule in the context of his social movement in Pune, Maharashtra. The term used for those people who are oppressed, suppressed and depressed in Indian society. It is an act of violation of human rights according to liberal thoughts. The Dalits in India have been suffering from socio-economic exploitation for centuries as the other marginal groups abroad such as the Blacks in the USA and Europe (Channa 2013). The Dalit Bahujans of India had been under the domination of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas for centuries. This suffering has been continuing till today. But the Indian nation has accepted the democratic communitarian and peaceful ruling system rejecting the Brahmanical and Kshatriya and religious domination. The Dalit Bahujans have been challenging the religious and political exploitation of the domination of the ruling power. They dare to raise the question of inequality in society. They have been struggling from ancient times for social and spiritual equality. But they still have been under the indirect control of Brahmanism (Shepherd 2021).

The mainstream social media of India have no interest to provide actual news for supporting Dalits but to sustain dominative ruling powers due to their financial interest. It cannot be pluralistic and liberal even in the twenty-first century but social media has provided opportunities to the Dalits to protest against the disparity, exploitation of mainstream society. Several social networking platforms have been created on Facebook, Instagram, and youtube for protesting against caste atrocities. Social media provides opportunities to the Dalit communities to communicate with each other for sharing an opinion, thoughts, photos, videos, information, news and various kinds of events through websites of social media.

The Dalits are now able to share the stories and activities of their heroes and social reformers of different parts of the country without fear. They are sharing the information of the activities of B. R Ambedkar, Jyotirao Phule, Periyar Ramaswamy, Guruchand Thakur, et.al. They can compete with the Hindu gentries as they are the largest social unit of the country (Channa 2013). But they could not do enough due to the lack of unity and consciousness. Now the social media open the door to be united and fight for a liberal and prosperous nation.

This majority section of Indians is financially backward due to the domination and exploitation of the privileged castes. But the present socio-cultural atmosphere and technologies enabled them to get out from the corner of the village to the world of knowledge. Even a rickshaw puller or a poor farmer can buy android mobile phones and can share his views with his fellowmen through the network sites in WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, messengers in-country and abroad. They can share various contents, audio-video and information in a social group of their own. They are sharing their ideology, information, problems, government policy, activities, foreign policy, national security but they are unable to participate actively in the government body to make any role in decision making for the nation. A section of Dalit Bahujans can resist the dominant caste to move against caste-based discrimination. This section can make counter-narratives within the subaltern digital sphere through social media (Thakur 2020).

This study aimed to explore the social media activities of Dalit in India to find out their behavioural change with the effect of social media. The Objectives of the study are to explore the impact of social media on the movement of the Dalit Bahujans, to analyze their