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## Review Article

### Status of Dalit Women's in India-A Need for Inclusive Efforts

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#### ABSTRACT

Dalits in India are at the lowest of the caste system. Dalit women are positioned at the bottom of India's caste, class and gender hierarchies. They experience endemic gender and caste discrimination and violence as an outcome of severely imbalanced social, economic, and political power equations. Dalit women record that they are often subjected to indecent and inhuman treatment by non-Dalits. The Dalit woman is the uppermost victim of discrimination as she is a woman, she is a Dalit and she is poor. A high number of caste-related crimes occur against Dalit women. Dalit women faced a lot of problems in public as well as private sectors. While working as bonded laborers, they face unpleasant, immoral sexual comments, eve-teasing, sexual exploitation, and rape by the high castes. Dalit women are discriminated against not only by people of higher castes but also within their communities. In this paper, there will be a focus on the status of Dalit women in India. This paper is to study the situation of Dalit women - socially, culturally, economically, and politically. This discrimination and oppression have adversely affected the development process. And the worst hits are the Dalit women.

**KEYWORDS:** Women's, Discrimination, Violation, and Exploitation

#### INTRODUCTION

The Dalit is derived from the Sanskrit language where it is used both as noun and adjective. As a noun, Dalit stands for all three genders: Masculine, Feminine, and Neuter. It has as its root dal, which means to split open, to crack, etc. When used as a noun or adjective, it means to burst, split, broken down-trodden, scattered, crushed, destroyed, etc. In other words, Dalits are people who are broken, crushed, and torn apart. They are extremely poor and lowly. The term Dalit can be used for any oppressed group or people who are marginalized and dehumanized. Over 200 million people are Dalits, also known as untouchables or outcasts.

Violence is used by dominant castes as a social mechanism for humiliating entire Dalit communities. Dominant castes use violence against Dalit women to degrade their honor and self-respect, control their bodies and sexuality, and demand women's submission to supply labor for livelihood. As a result, violence converts into atrocity as it is the combination of violence against Dalits by non-Dalits to teach them lessons. In most of the cases of atrocities, Dalit women have been threatened by the perpetrators to remain silent about the incidents withdraw police cases, or be pressured for 'compromises' when cases have been registered. Often Dalit women responded to verbal abuse of the dominant castes with silence and walked away without replying to maintain their dignity.

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Atrocities prevent the overall development and enjoyment of human rights for Dalit women and their community as well. So, the assertion of Dalit women for their rights to equality, dignity, and identity as human beings should be encouraged positively.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study mainly depends upon both types of data as like primary and secondary data. The secondary data have been collected through various sources such as reports of the government of India, Research reports Research books, Research Journals, Census reports, magazines related to research work, etc. The necessary primary data regarding the measurement of social-economic development it collected through the questionnaire method. For this study researcher purposefully selected the Karvir Tehsil because karvir Tehsil is the second highest population Tehsil in Kolhapur district and their Dalit population is highest than other Tahasil in Kolhapur district. In Karvir Tehsil main occupation is agriculture and animal Husbandry, their main crops are Jawar, soybean, and groundnut, and their agriculture largely depends upon rains. Some lucky farmers got wells and managed to take more than one crop.

## Dalits in India

Dalits in India are the most discriminated caste of all known societies in human history with their peculiar form of caste. The caste System separates forces that have been used to divide human beings, mainly into two categories; higher castes and lower castes. This simple division is backed by certain religious sanctions, which yield to what sociologists term 'Purity' and 'Pollution' concepts. These religious sanctions make possible a renewal of the legitimacy of the Indian caste system even after it has been challenged throughout history. Thus, the Caste system still exists in all the regions of India with different pollution concepts. In India, the government and NGOs made various provisions for the upliftment of Dalits but still, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Dalits faced various types of discrimination in modern India. In India, Dalits are politically, socially, and economically neglected. The Dalits in India are socially outcast, politically dominant, and economically very poor in terms of education and occupation. There are shown the demographical profiles of Dalit males and females in India, according to the 2001 and 2011 censuses of the government of India.

**Table 1.1:** Population of Scheduled Caste in India

Sex	2011	2001
Male	103.5	86.1
Female	103.5	86.1
Persons	201.4	166.6

Source: Census 2011

As per the data from the above table, the Indian Scheduled Castes Population and variation of total persons as well as male and female. There is highest population variation in Scheduled Castes as well as male and female populations that mean in Dalit communities women's proportion is increased in every census. According to Census of India 2011, it indicates a nearby equal

proportion of male and female in the Dalit community. This proves that the Dalit community does not distinguish between a son and a daughter.

**Table 1.2:** Variation of Scheduled castes Population in India

Sex	2011	2001	Variation
Male	86.1	103.5	20.30%
Female	80.5	97.9	20.80%
Persons	166.6	201.4	21.50%

Source: Census 2011

As per the data from the above table, according to the Census of India 2011, 24.4% of the population in the Scheduled Castes is compared to the total population in various states and United Tertiary. At some places, this ratio is very high, and some places are very less. It shows the difference between Census 2001 and Census 2011.

## Populations of Schedule Castes of States/UTs

**Table 1.3:** Top 5 States/UTs

States/UT's	Population %
West Bengal	23.5%
Uttar Pradesh	20.7%
Punjab	31.9%
Himachal Pradesh	25.2%
Haryana	20.2%

Source: Census 2011

As per the data from the above table, the top five states of India where the scheduled population is more than 20%. It shows that Punjab has the highest percentage of Scheduled castes population 31.9 % proposes Himachal Pradesh 25.2%, west Bengal 23.5%, Utter Pradesh 20.7% and Haryana 20.2% respectively.

**Table 1.4:** Bottom 5 States/UTs

States/UT's	Population %
D & N Haveli	2.5%
Daman and Diu	1.8%
Goa	1.7%
Meghalaya	0.6%
Mizoram	0.1%

Source: Census 2011

As per the data from the above table, the lowest five states of India where the scheduled population is less than 5%. It shows that Mizoram has a very low percentage of Scheduled castes population 0.1 % compared the Meghalaya 0.6%, Goa 1.7%, Daman and Diu 1.8% and Daman and N Haveli respectively. According to the census of India, 2011 Dalits made up 24.4% of Indian Population among Indian states, in the 2011 census Dalits were the most prevalent in Punjab at 31.9% while Mizoram had the lowest at approximately 0.1%. According to a Report to the Ministry of Minority Affairs (2015) by Amitabh Kundu, 33.8% of the scheduled caste (SC) population in rural India was living below the poverty line in 2011-12.

**Table 1.5:** Scheduled Caste Populations in Maharashtra (In Millions)

S. No	Census Year	Total SC Population
1	2011	132.75
2	2001	98.81
3	1991	87.52
4	1981	44.79
5	1971	30.25
6	1961	22.26

Source: Census 2011

### Dalit in Kolhapur District

Kolhapur is one of the districts in Maharashtra. Kolhapur is famous by the historical contribution of Rajashri Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja, the king of Kolhapur state, who devoted his life for socioeconomic development of the region and for social revolution. He tried to increase the status of backward classes, but the people of higher castes made the differences between castes, they opposed King Shahu. Even the upper caste people of the area made his work very hard but the king did not go back with this work. He tried to eradicate the inequality in the caste system. In Kolhapur district scheduled caste population is more than the scheduled tribe population, with 13% Scheduled caste population and 0.8% Scheduled tribe population. According to the Census of 2011, the district has 12 Tehsils.

**Table 1.6:** Tehsil-wise SC's Population in Kolhapur District

S.NO	Tehsil	Male	Female	Total
1	Ajara	4901	5273	10174
2	Bavda	2565	2505	5070
3	Bhudargad	7237	7440	14677
4	Chandagad	8258	8372	16630
5	Hathkangale	44169	42967	87,136
6	Gadhinglaj	9839	10204	20,043
7	Kagal	15,050	14,931	29,981
8	Karvir	37,367	36,284	73,651
9	Panhal	16,980	16,623	33,603
10	Radhanagari	10,520	10,473	20993
11	Shahuwadi	9,888	10,065	19,953
12	Shirol	26,717	26,358	53,075
13	Total	2,53,390	2,51,071	5,04,461

Source: Census 2011

### Political Participation of Dalit Women's

In India, the overall political participation of Dalit women is very poor, In the Kolhapur district rarely found rural Dalit women's participation in politics. Dalit Women faced problems in contesting the elections, Dalit community was neglected from any development.

**Table 1.7:** Political Participation of Rural Dalit Women.

Sr. No.	Political Participation	No. of Women	Percentage
1	Yes	6	12%
2	No	44	88%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey

As per the data from the above table out of the total respondents, only 12% of respondents participate in politics and 88% of

respondents do not participate in politics. Those respondents who participate in politics also suffer problems because of upper caste. Dalit women faced bad experiences in politics.

### The approach of Girls in Education

Education is important for every citizen and it is the basic right for every child in India, there should be no discrimination based on caste, gender, or class. Nowadays educational status has improved in India and there is no difference between male children and female child to take education. But still, in some places, Dalit girls faced problems to take education.

**Table 1.8:** Approaches of Rural Dalit Women for Girls Education

S. No.	Approach to Girl's Education	No. of Women	Percentage
1	Positive	46	92%
2	Negative	4	8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey

As per the data from the above table, out of the total respondents, 92% of respondents show a positive approach to girls' education, they do not discriminate based on gender, they support girls' education and they treat equally to girls and boys. Only 8% of respondents approach negative about girl education because these women are not aware of education.

### Atrocity

Dalit people face atrocities at temples, villages, and other workplaces. The higher caste people violate the rights of lower castes.

**Table 1.9:** Atrocity Face Problems of Rural Dalit Women

S. No	Variable		No. of Women	Percentage
1	Are you facing casteism?	Yes	48	96%
		No	02	4%
2	Are You entering to Village Temple?	Yes	3	6%
		No	47	94%
3	Are You Participating in Religious Functions in the Village?	Yes	10	20%
		No	40	80%
4	Are You participating to Political Programme in the village?	Yes	15	30%
		No	35	70%
5	Give you equal treatment with upper caste women.	Yes	03	6%
		No	47	94%

Source: Field Survey

As per the data from the above table, in this table total of five questions were asked for respondents, the first question was are you facing casteism, out of a total of respondents 96 percent respondents responded that they are facing casteism while only 4 percent respondents respond that they are not facing casteism. With this data, it proves that the majority of the respondents face casteism. The second question was asked of the respondents are you entering to village temples, out of the total respondents 94 percent respondents responded that they are not allowed to enter

the village temples while only 6 percent respondents responded that they are allowed to enter the village temples. It shows that majority of the respondents are not allowed to enter in village temples. The third question was asked the respondents Do you participate religious functions in the village, out of the total respondents 20 percent respondents responded that they are participating in religious functions while 80 percent respondents responded that they are not participating in religious functions in the village. It shows that the majority of the respondents are not participating in religious functions. The fourth question asked the respondents are they participate in political programs, out of the total respondents 30 percent respondents responded that they are entering the political programs that were held at the village level, while 70 percent of respondents responded that they are not participating in political programs. It shows that the majority of the respondents are not participating in political programs. The fifth question was asked for the respondent's equal treatment with upper caste women, out of the total respondents 94 percent of respondents responded that they are not equally treated as upper caste women's treated while only 6 percent of respondents responded that they are equally treated. With this data, it shows that there is no equal treatment of Dalit women with upper caste women. There is purposefully participation in political programs for the vote. There is free entry in the village temple because their upper caste people to low of atrocity their untouchability is shown not directly but indirectly to express that the Dalit community is afraid.

## CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, we can conclude that Dalit women suffer large-scale violations of their human rights, including acts of atrocities such as physical assaults, public humiliation, sexual harassment, rape, and attempt to murder. These atrocities also include psychological abuse and exploitation, residential segregation, denial of access and discriminatory treatment in basic public resources and services, and discriminatory restrictions on public behavior. Sometimes they have become the victims of atrocities because they asserted basic rights, such as the right to speak, the right to work, freedom of movement, and the right to equality and respect. It also has been accepted by National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, "Whenever Dalits have tried to organize themselves or assert their rights; there has been a backlash from the feudal lords resulting in mass killings of Dalits, gang rapes, looting and arson, etc. of Dalit basties." Thus, atrocities prevent the overall development and enjoyment of human rights for Dalit women and their community as well. So, the assertion of Dalit women for their rights to equality, dignity, and identity as human beings should be encouraged positively.

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