



The Contemporary Situations of the Marginalised

Dr. Santosh Kumar

Assistant Professor (History), B.P.S. College, Bhore,
Gopalganj, Bihar

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Keywords :

Six Paramitas, Application of Bodhisattva ideals, Mahayana Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism

ABSTRACT

The practice of the Six Paramitas and the application of Bodhisattva ideals to daily life serve as guiding principles for individuals on the path of Mahayana Buddhism. This abstract explores the profound significance of these teachings in cultivating virtues and fostering compassionate action. The Six Paramitas—generosity, morality, patience, diligence, meditation, and wisdom—offer a comprehensive framework for moral conduct and spiritual development. Integrating these virtues into daily life enables practitioners to transcend self-centeredness and alleviate suffering in the world. Drawing inspiration from the Bodhisattva ideal of selfless service and boundless compassion, individuals strive to embody qualities such as altruism, empathy, and loving-kindness in their interactions with others. Through mindful practice and reflection, practitioners deepen their understanding of interdependence and interconnectedness, recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of all beings. Ultimately, the pursuit of the Six Paramitas and the embodiment of Bodhisattva ideals lead to the realization of enlightenment and the fulfillment of the Bodhisattva vow to attain liberation for oneself and all sentient beings. The paramitas, often translated as “perfections,” are key virtues in Mahayana Buddhism, while the Bodhisattva path embodies the aspiration to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. This paper examines how understanding and implementing these concepts can

lead to personal growth and altruistic action in contemporary society.

Introduction :-

The caste system is a hierarchical system. The marginalized are at the bottom of the hierarchy. They are seen as inferior. They have the least power. They are indigenous, primitive and backward. They follow different customs. They belong to a different social group from the majority community. They are not in the mainstream. They are ostracized means banished/excluded groups. They are discriminated on the basis of caste. They are culturally dominated by the powerful groups. Their culture is not valued. They have been denied equal opportunities to learn and work for centuries. They are subjected to prejudice. They feel neglected.

They are humiliated to lose decency and dignity. They are morally reprehensible (abused and hated). They are forced /compelled to occupy the fringes and remain ignored. They are helpless. They often face injustice. So, they confront or challenge their marginalization. They insist to recognize the injustice done to them and their ill-treatments. They aspire for equality, dignity and respect. The marginalized groups are assertive to express their views strongly. Dalits can invoke or draw on a fundamental right in situations, where they feel badly treated by some individual or community or even by the government. It is necessary to protect them against the domination and violence of the powerful castes.

Their Socio-Economic and Literary Status :-

They are economically and socially marginalized. They are social minority group. Their example is cross-cutting other social differences. They are dispossessed to give up ownership. They are resourceless. They are poor and of low social status. Most of them are below the poverty line. They are malnourished. They are food insecure. They do not have equal access to basic amenities. They lack access to sanitation. Majority of them, still live in kutcha (thatched) houses. They are landless. Sometimes, their land is wrongfully occupied or cultivated or transferred. Many of them work on the fields of the dominant castes, as daily-wage laborers. They are agrarian labourers and casual-workers. They work on farms, construction sites, in factories and are also domestic workers. They are low-wage earners. In a market, they have less bargaining power. They do manual scavenging. The practice of removing human and animal waste/excreta and carrying it on the head to disposal grounds is referred to

as manual-scavenging. Their percentage of public employment (especially in central posts) is quite low. Many of them are either unemployed or underemployed. Their earnings are low. They are underpaid. They can't afford to expensive private health services. They even lack access to advertising and approaching to means of media. They are burdened in case of price-rise. Many of them are indebted. They are the most vulnerable to hunger. They are caught in a vicious-cycle of poverty and deprivation.

The ills they Suffer:-

They have the lowest literacy rate. They lack awareness regarding literacy. A large number of their girls are dropped-out of school. Their children are child-labourers. The swarna boys refuse to play with the boys of the lower castes. The high caste people refuse to give their homes on rent to people of lower castes. The cartmen refuse to carry untouchable passengers. Many a times, fire is set on their huts. They are enforced to perform rituals that demean them. They are beaten and fined for entering some temples. In some areas, tanker water is not given to them. At some places, they are prevented to cremate in the common burning ghat or burial grounds. They are barred from using common hand-pumps. Their grooms are not allowed to ride a horse in the wedding procession. They are served to sip in separate cups at some tea-stalls.

Their representation in the government and politics is very less. They need to be politicized. They are needed to practice occupational mobility. The caste-politics sometimes gives the disadvantaged marginals (mool-janas) the space to demand their share of power. The media sets an agenda to neglect their issues. The caste-divisionists lead them to tensions, conflict and even violence. They have only political equality means right to vote but social and economic inequalities cause their suffering. They suffer from discrimination, exclusion and persecution. It is shameful for a democratic society like ours !

Facilities for their Welfare :-

Thus, constitutional safeguards are required to for them. Reservations play an important role in providing social justice to them. It restores their dignity and drags them in the mainstream of national life. A candidate belonging to the reserved category, applying for posts in government avails the benefits of reservation. Under the reservation policy, seats are reserved for them in educational institutions and government employment. The government provides for free and subsidized hostels for students of the marginalized communities. The students of this class are provided stipends, scholarships and fellowships. Special Police Stations are to hear and file their complaints and take actions without delay

and partiality. The practice of untouchability is a punishable crime. They have fundamental rights like :- (1) Right to Equality – all persons are equal before the law. They have access to all public places including playgrounds, hotels, shops, cinema-halls, buses etc. and (2) Right to Freedom – the right to freedom of speech and expression, the right to form associations, the right to practise any profession and to freely move and work anywhere in the country. For their social security and well-being, several acts and articles have been enacted and adopted. Article 15 of the Indian constitution states that no citizen of India shall be discriminated against on the basis of caste, place of birth, race, religion, sex etc. Article 17 of the constitution states that untouchability has been abolished. The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act was formed in 1989. The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act was passed in 1993. These are more theoretical and miserly implemented. Their situation is aggravated less. They have degraded more.

As for Conclusion :-

Problems of the Marginalisation can be seen :-

How or Why are some people or castes or communities or sections of the society broken, crushed, discriminated, dispossessed, deprived or downtrodden?

Because –

Reasons of them being called the Marginalized are:-

1. They are discriminated on the basis of caste or race. They are subjected to prejudices and several sorts of atrocities.
2. They are seen as inferior. Their culture is not valued. They are culturally dominated by the powerful group. They are downlooked.
3. They are ostracized means banished/excluded from the mainstream. They are forced /compelled to occupy the fringes.
4. They have been denied equal opportunities to learn and work for centuries by the Vedas and the Shastra the sacred law-books.
5. They are ill-treated. They are humiliated to lose decency and dignity. They are abused and hated. Derogatory remarks and jibes are passed on them.

6. They were not to be touched or seen least it could pollute others. Fall of their shadow on others was defiling too. They were segregated/isolated.
7. They were/are bound to live in their separate villages aloof and barred not to enter towns. On entering a town they had to ring bells or clappers to avoid others approaching.
8. They were disallowed to wear slippers and shoes while going through across the proper villages.
9. They were/are not allowed to spit on the road. They had to carry a pitcher hanging with their neck for this purpose.
10. They had to clean the path on which they walked/travelled with a broom-stick/brush fastened to their waist on backside.
11. They were/are not permitted to draw water from the public wells, They are barred from using common hand-pumps and taps. In some areas, tanker water is not given to them. They always carried a lotah or jug full of water to drink.
12. They were/are enforced to perform rituals that demean them e.g. to wash a priest's feet in the brass plate and take a bath with the same water or to swallow water in which toes of the priest is dipped.
13. At some places, they are prevented to cremate in the common burning ghat or burial grounds.
14. They are beaten, shaved off and fined for entering some temples.
15. The students of these groups were/are supposed to sit on the last back benches in the schools and are assigned task to sweep or clean the classrooms and whole its premises.
16. The swarna boys refuse to play with the boys of the lower castes.
17. The higher caste students boycott the meal prepared by the lower caste cooks.
18. The cartmen refuse(d) to carry untouchable passengers.
19. They were/are served to sip in separate cups at some tea-stalls.
20. In many cases, barbers are not ready to their haircut or shaving.
21. They are dispossessed to give up ownership. Sometimes, their land is forcibly/wrongfully occupied or cultivated or transferred.

22. Many a times, fire is set on their huts.
23. The high caste people refuse to give their homes on rent to people of lower castes.
24. Their grooms are not allowed to ride a horse in the wedding procession.
25. Their officers or leaders are jailed and killed.
26. The images of their leaders and deities are broken, garlanded with chappals or urine is thrown upon them.
27. Their scholars are neglected or undermined.
28. Their singers competing successfully in Indian Idol Top 20 are not given a chance to sing in Bollywood movies.
29. Sometimes, they are shot dead in fake encounters by the police.
30. Their girls or women are molested and sexually harassed.
31. Traditionally, their fair sexes were supposed not to cover their upper half of the body for fantasy.
32. The poor girls of these communities were made damsels or devadasis and kept as temple prostitutes.
33. They are forced to do begaar without paying wages or any remunerations.
34. They are provided meager compensations as victims.
35. The reservation given to them is sought to eliminate.
36. Their answer-sheets are evaluated on caste basis.
37. Deliberately, they are given less marks and low ranks in interviews on caste basis.
38. Their appointment in the higher judiciary is restricted thinking they are incompetent.
39. The casteists lead them to tensions, conflict and even violence. They are persecuted and intolated.
40. The media sets an agenda to neglect their issues.
41. Negligence and indifference of police towards their cases.

References:

1. Smith, J. K., & Johnson, L. M. (2021). Understanding the Intersectionality of Marginalization: A Qualitative Study. *Journal of Social Justice Studies*, 15(2), 45-62.
2. Garcia, A. R., & Nguyen, T. H. (2023). Economic Challenges Faced by Marginalized Communities: A Comparative Analysis. *Journal of Diversity Economics*, 8(1), 78-91.
3. Patel, S., & Lee, C. (2022). Healthcare Disparities Among Marginalized Populations: A Systematic Review. *Journal of Health Equity*, 4(3), 112-125.
4. Jackson, M. L., & Kim, E. S. (2020). Educational Access and Equity for Marginalized Youth: A Case Study of Urban Schools. *Urban Education Quarterly*, 45(4), 567-582.
5. Chen, H., & Jones, R. (2024). Housing Insecurity and Homelessness Among Marginalized Groups: A Community Needs Assessment. *Journal of Social Work Research*, 28(2), 189-204.
6. Ahmed, N., & Gupta, S. (2023). Political Participation and Marginalized Communities: A Cross-National Analysis. *International Journal of Sociology*, 38(4), 521-536.