



Caste Discrimination and struggle in the Autobiographies of Sharankumar Limbale and Narendra Jadhav

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DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.20489488

Abstract:

Dalit autobiographies are very important in Indian literature because they describe the real experiences of people who have been socially marginalized and oppressed by the caste system. The autobiographical writings of Sharankumar Limbale and Narendra Jadhav show the difficult realities faced by Dalits, such as caste discrimination, poverty, humiliation, and their continuous struggle for respect and dignity. Limbale's The Outcaste (Akkarmashi) explains the painful experiences of untouchability, social rejection, and the author's search for identity. On the other hand, Jadhav's Outcaste: A Memoir tells the story of a Dalit family that overcomes discrimination and poverty through education, determination, and hard work. This research paper studies how caste discrimination and the struggle for a better life are portrayed in these autobiographies. It also discusses social reform movements and the ideas of B. R. Ambedkar helped in developing awareness, self-respect, and resistance among Dalits.

Introduction:

Dalit autobiographies are an important part of Indian literature because they describe the real life experiences of people who have suffered because of the caste system. These writings help readers understand the difficulties faced by marginalized communities. The autobiographies written by Sharankumar Limbale and Narendra Jadhav clearly show the problems of caste discrimination, poverty, humiliation, and the struggle to live with dignity.

In *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)*, Limbale shares his painful experiences of untouchability, social rejection, and the confusion about his identity in a caste-based society. In contrast, *Outcaste: A Memoir* by Jadhav tells the story of a Dalit family that fights against discrimination and tries to achieve a better life through education and determination.

This research paper studies how both writers present caste discrimination and the

struggles of Dalit people in their autobiographies. It also explains the ideas and social reforms of Ambedkar helped create awareness, self-respect, and the courage to resist injustice among Dalits.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To analyze the struggles faced by Dalit individuals in Indian society.
2. To explore the themes of poverty, identity, and social exclusion in Dalit autobiographies.
3. To study the influence of B. R. Ambedkar's ideology on Dalit consciousness.

Research Methodology:

This research paper uses a qualitative and analytical approach to study the topic. It is mainly based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources are the autobiographies *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)* by Sharankumar Limbale

and *Outcaste: A Memoir* by Narendra Jadhav. To support the study, different secondary sources such as books, research papers, and critical writings on Dalit literature are also used. The research mainly examines the important themes in these autobiographies in order to understand how caste discrimination and the struggles of Dalit people are presented by the authors.

Literature Review:

Many scholars have studied Dalit autobiographies as strong expressions of the voices of marginalized people. Sharankumar Limbale, in his book *Towards an Aesthetic of Dalit Literature*, explains the purpose of Dalit writing. He says that Dalit literature tries to show social injustice and make people aware of the suffering faced by oppressed communities.

Researchers have also studied *The Outcaste (Akkarmashi)* as an important work that describes the painful experiences of untouchability and the author's struggle with identity. The autobiography honestly shows the poverty, hunger, and humiliation that many Dalits faced in society.

In the same way, *Outcaste: A Memoir* by Narendra Jadhav is often seen as an inspiring story. It shows how education and social awareness can help improve the lives of Dalit people. The book also reflects the influence of B. R. Ambedkar and his ideas, which encouraged Dalits to fight for equality and self-respect.

These studies show that Dalit autobiographies are not only personal life stories but also important social records that explain the reality of caste discrimination and the struggle for equality

Caste Discrimination in The Outcaste:

1. Birth:

Caste discrimination begins from Limbale's birth. He was born to a high-caste

landlord father and a Dalit mother. Because of this, he is not fully accepted by either community. Society calls him "illegitimate," which creates a strong identity crisis and social rejection.

2. Experiences in School:

During his school life, Limbale faces humiliation and discrimination because of his caste. Dalit children are often treated differently by teachers and other students. These experiences make his education difficult and painful.

3. Family Occupation:

Limbale's family lives in extreme poverty. His mother works for upper-caste landlords and depends on them for survival. This shows how caste controls the type of work Dalit families can do and keeps them in poor social and economic conditions.

4. Struggle in Education and Career:

Despite many difficulties like poverty, hunger, and discrimination, Limbale continues his education. He believes that education is the only way to improve his life and gain dignity. His struggle shows the determination of Dalit individuals to overcome caste barriers

Caste Discrimination and Struggle in Outcaste: A Memoir

1. Birth:

In the autobiography, the family faces discrimination because they belong to the Dalit caste. From birth, Dalit children are treated as inferior in society because of the caste system.

2. Experiences in School:

During school life, Dalit children often face social discrimination from classmates and sometimes teachers. Even though they study hard, they are sometimes treated differently because of their caste background.

3. Family Occupation:

The autobiography mainly focuses on the life of Jadhav's father, Damu. He works in difficult conditions and faces discrimination at his

workplace because he is a Dalit. His job opportunities are limited due to caste prejudice.

4. Struggle in Education and Career:

Damu strongly believes that education can change the life of his children. Despite poverty and social discrimination, he encourages them to study and build successful careers. Inspired by the ideas of B. R. Ambedkar, the family believes that education is the key to equality and progress.

Comparative Analysis:

Caste Discrimination:

Both autobiographies show the harsh reality of caste discrimination in Indian society.

Limbale's Perspective:

The *Outcaste* (Akkarmashi) by Sharankumar Limbale focuses more on pain, humiliation, and the emotional suffering faced by Dalits.

Identity Struggle:

Limbale's story strongly highlights the identity crisis and psychological effects of caste discrimination.

Jadhav's Perspective:

Outcaste: A Memoir by Narendra Jadhav shows a more hopeful view of Dalit life.

Role of Education:

Jadhav's autobiography explains how education and social reform help Dalits improve their lives and overcome discrimination.

Overall Understanding:

Together, both autobiographies help readers understand Dalit life, their struggles, and the challenges faced by marginalized communities.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the autobiographies of Sharankumar Limbale and Narendra Jadhav clearly show the reality of caste discrimination and the struggles faced by Dalits in Indian society. The *Outcaste* (Akkarmashi) presents the pain, poverty, and humiliation experienced by Dalits, while *Outcaste: A Memoir* shows how education and determination can help overcome social barriers. These autobiographies help readers understand the importance of equality, dignity, and social justice.

On the other hand, *Outcaste: A Memoir* presents a story of struggle, determination, and progress. It highlights how education, awareness, and strong determination can help people overcome social barriers and improve their lives. The influence of B. R. Ambedkar and his ideas of equality and social justice are also visible in the narrative.

Together, these autobiographies help readers understand the real conditions of Dalit life and the importance of dignity, equality, and social change in society.

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