

IMPACT OF CASTE ATROCITIES ON DALIT WOMEN

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Abstract: Violence is a major obstacle to human development. Any family or community did not achieving any development with violent environment, The violence in the society delays development of the people. It is estimated with various studies that, one in every five women faces some form of violence during her lifetime leading to serious injury or death of women. Violence against women is a major threat to social and economic development. Violence against women is a concern for the public health as well as human rights. There is link between the Millennium Development Goals and the violence against women. The world could not achieve the target of Millennium Development Goals due to violence and violence's particularly against women in the society. The violence is one of the obstacles for achieving goals like eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, promote gender equality and empower women and improve maternal health.

In India the society is structured and every one functions in the society as per set norms and conditions imposed by the societal structure. This structure is based on the caste of the person and society wanted the person should function as per their normative caste and should not change their function. This division of societal structure leads to the structural position of lower caste and some are from higher caste. If anyone wanted to changes or challenges the caste structure then facing violence from the upper caste community we called this violence as caste atrocity against Dalit community. In India the mindset of the people is not changing and they are following some ways of functions which is written in the Hindu religions text. This paper will be highlights the impact of caste atrocity by the upper caste community on Dalit women in Maharashtra State.

Key words: cast atrocity, Dalit, caste system, Women issue

Introduction: Dalit women face complex web of discrimination and this web are made by Gender, caste, class, poverty and culture of the society. The Dalit women don't have socio, economic and political power so they becoming easy target for violence by the dominant caste men. The UN rapportuer on violence against women has noted that "Dalit women face targeted violence even rape and murder by the state actors and powerful members of dominant castes, used to inflict political lessons and crush dissent with the community." Some research analysis few cases of violence on Dalit women and their conclusion that Dalit women are targeted when they dare to assert their rights – be it for right to land, resources, government programs and for accessing legal justice The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in its Concluding Comments on India noted concern about "the ongoing atrocities committed against Dalit women and the culture of impunity for perpetrators of such atrocities". It also calls upon the State party to increase Dalit women's legal literacy and improve their access to justice in bringing claims of discrimination and violation of rights.

Within the Dalit community, Dalit women face more burdens due to caste and gender discrimination. Dalit women are subjected to systematic oppression and structural violence both from the general community and from within their own community and their families. Atrocities and violence against

dalit women are used as means to reinforce this systemic caste and gender discrimination as well as to punish them when they challenge caste and gender norms. As per study of 253 cases by EVIDENCE say that more than 70% of atrocities are committed as these women tried to assert their rights and challenge caste and gender norms. Violence is used to curb the assertion of the rights of dalit women in particular and of the community in general. Their socio-economic vulnerability combined with being a woman and Dalit also increase the incidence of violence on them. In this paper the author explore the impact of atrocities on Dalit women.

Atrocities on women lets data say something: It is widely acknowledged that deep-rooted ideologies of gender bias and discrimination - the confinement of women to the private domestic realm, restrictions on their mobility and exclusion from the public political sphere continue to daunt the majority; and the entitlements and public services, which constitute the poor women's life line, do not reach them. Such social and structural barriers to women's empowerment manifest themselves in various ways. Major amongst these is violence against women- in the home and outside. Violence against a woman affects her sense of self esteem, demolishes her self confidence and is often used as a potent tool of subjugation and disempowerment. The 2005-06 National Family Health Survey (NFHS- III) reported that one-third of women aged 15 to 49 had experienced physical violence, and approximately one

in 10 had been a victim of sexual violence. The survey also found that that only one in four abused women had ever sought help, and that 54% of women believed it was justified for a husband to beat his wife.

A study of the data from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) shows the increasing incidence of crimes against women. The total number of crimes against women increased by 29.6 per cent between 2006 and 2010. Further, these numbers have to be viewed keeping in mind that not all crimes against women are reported. The actual numbers may give even greater cause for concern. Under-reporting of Atrocities Act cases is a very common phenomenon and therefore the decline in the number of registered cases does not provide a true picture of the incidence of atrocities. An NGO in Gujarat, (Navsarjan) in a study covered 11 atrocities-prone districts for four

years, showed that 36% of atrocities cases were not registered under Atrocities Act and 84.4% of the cases where the Act was applied, the cases were registered under wrong provisions with a view to concealing actual and violent nature of the incidents. The study also documented that 121.2 hours lapsed between registration of murder cases and initiation of police action and for rape cases the gap between the incident and the reported action was 532.9 hours. The crime on Dalit community in India is increasing as per the various reports of National Crime Records Bureau and some of selected data on crime against Dalit community are follows.

Nature of Crimes: With a view to knowing the seriousness of atrocities, it may be relevant to see the incidence of heinous crimes against Scheduled Castes. The following statement gives out the serious cases registered under the three laws:

Year	Murder	Hurt	Rape	PCR	SC/ST (Prev)	Total
2009	624	4410	1346	168	11143	17691
2010	570	4376	1349	143	10513	16951
2011	673	4247	1557	67	11342	17886
2012	651	3855	1576	62	12576	18720
2013	676	4901	2073	62	13975	21687
Total	3194	21789	7901	502	59549	92935

There is continuous increase in crime against SC under the three Acts, during five years (2009-2013) total crime is 92,935 and 64 per cent of crime came under the SC/ST PoA Act. There is 3194 deaths of Dalit in India by using physical violence by the general community. The crime against women has increased e.g. the rate of rape on Dalit women has increased and last five years 7901 rape cases are registered under Indian Penal Code.

Geographical Distribution of Atrocities: The geographical distribution of atrocities against Scheduled Castes may provide an idea of the areas / locations which are particularly prone to this type of violence. The break-up of crimes committed against Scheduled Castes in major States, as extracted below would provide this information.

Year	U.P.	Raj	MP	Mha	Guj	AP	TN	Bihar	N.E.	UTs	Other	Total
2009	7522	4985	3040	1096	1182	4504	1312	3836	23	65	6029	33594
2010	6272	4979	3374	1132	1008	4321	1631	3516	21	47	6411	32712
2011	7702	5182	3245	1143	1063	4016	1391	3623	31	49	6323	33719
2012	6202	5559	2875	1091	1028	3057	1647	4821	85	70	7290	33655
2013	7078	6475	2945	1678	1190	3270	1845	6721	63	81	8143	39408
Total	34776	27180	15479	6140	5471	19168	7826	22517	223	312	34196	173088

In the year (2009-2013) Uttar Pradesh had higher incidence of the SC atrocities in India and second number is Rajasthan. In India five states has contributed 69 percent atrocities and this state are Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. In the year 2013 there is 5753 crime incidence higher than the last year, it means there is 17 per cent increase in the rate of crimes against Dalit in India during 2013 and major contributor for increasing crime is Uttar Pradesh. The number of crimes increased in the year 2013 which is 876, as compared to the year 2012.

Proneness of States to Specific Crimes: By positioning incidence of specific heinous crimes in major atrocities prone States, the proneness of a State to serious cases of violence, as also to a specific type of atrocity, would be reflected which could then be sociologically investigated to understand the causal connections. The State-wise break-up of heinous crimes against Scheduled Castes is provided in the following tables:

MURDER												
Year	U.P.	Raj	MP	Mha	Guj	AP	TN	Bihar	N.E.	UTs	Other	Total
2009	234	65	101	27	20	35	27	22	2	0	91	624
2010	229	56	102	24	15	43	20	24	0	1	56	570
2011	286	51	99	26	12	64	29	29	1	0	76	673
2012	234	66	88	36	23	54	37	27	3	2	83	651
2013	222	76	77	40	29	53	28	50	3	0	98	676
Total	1205	314	467	153	99	249	141	152	9	3	404	3196

HURT												
Year	U.P.	Raj	MP	Mha	Guj	AP	TN	Bihar	N.E.	UTs	Other	Total
2009	403	557	714	56	241	722	105	539	8	0	1065	4410
2010	323	564	877	77	291	709	149	351	3	1	1031	4376
2011	320	510	900	84	279	708	206	355	12	0	0873	4247
2012	281	568	704	81	236	626	191	191	36	0	0941	3855
2013	302	574	817	167	273	659	260	289	16	1	1544	4901
Total	1629	2773	4012	465	1320	3424	911	1725	75	2	5454	21789

RAPE												
Year	U.P.	Raj	MP	Mha	Guj	AP	TN	Bihar	N.E.	UTs	Other	Total
2009	317	163	321	105	28	99	11	19	1	0	282	1346
2010	311	200	316	89	34	100	11	16	0	0	272	1349
2011	397	216	327	95	45	131	11	29	8	0	298	1557
2012	285	202	367	97	45	149	34	39	7	0	351	1576
2013	391	294	397	179	75	114	28	68	4	1	523	2073
Total	1701	1075	1728	565	227	593	95	171	20	1	1726	7901

In the NCRB crime report there is no special provision for recording crime on Dalit women but the minister of home affairs on 13th Aug 2013 answer question on Dalit atrocity in Parliament where Minister said that as per information provided by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), separate data on crimes committed on men, women and children belonging to SC/ST community are not maintained centrally. However, a total of 654, 772 and 729 rape cases were registered under crime against ST women and a total of 5,885, 5,756 and 5,922 cases reported under crime against ST during 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively. Similarly, a total of 1,349, 1,557 and 1,576 rape cases were registered under crime against SC women and a total of 32,712, 33,719 and 33,655 cases reported under crime against SC during 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively.

Impact of Caste Atrocities on women: Physical injuries: The form of violence on Dalit are changing and common form of violence is physical. As per NCRB data rate of Murder, rape and hurt are increasing and each and every violence are directly and indirectly affecting the women, if a male member of the family is murdered then the whole responsibilities of family is on the women. As per various research studies and case studies on the violence on Dalit women highlighted that the accused are using physical violence on women. In this

village, the general community used stick, iron rod, stone and other hard thing to hit women and men. The impact of this target violence is that women are feeling insecure and they are always under constant fear that any time the general community people may come and attack us. The women narrated that the general community destroyed their houses and belongings.

Sense of helplessness: The population of the Dalits in the village is less than 10 per cent and Dalit community depend upon the general community for their livelihood and other services. The violence happened in the village and there is no support system in the village which can protect the Dalit from the general community violence. The state machinery also work against Dalit, when the police came in the village the police only heard the general community and did not allow Dalit community to speak about the violence act by the general communities. The Dalit community feel that they don't have a support system which can help them in the difficult situations.

Constant Fear and Anxiety: There is lots of incidence of verbal abuse by the general community, not allowed to fetch water from public well and tap, using abusive words and targeting Dalit youth etc. the general community always make a false police complaint about Dalit youth, who are taking higher

education. This environment of the village created fear of violence and insecurity of career through education of any youth because of false compliant.

Low self esteem: Dalit women are the direct victim of the atrocities on Dalit, Every day they are under pressure that anything will happen in village and destroy the resources which are collected by hard efforts. This all lead to the low self esteem among Dalit women and they are feeling that being Dalit, they are facing all the caste atrocities which leads to low self esteem. Also Dalit women are blaming self for the all the situation, one women said that if by birth she was in general community than she would not having face the violence. Women feel blame self for being a Dalit.

Social boycott by Dominant Castes: In any village the Dalit population is less than 10 per cent population belong to the Dalits and the rest of the population are from general community. When violence happen, then the general community always boycott Dalit from taking village services like no grain shop would give them grains, the water supply is stopped, there is restriction to visit main village and nobody talk to them etc. The Dalit people are facing problems due to social boycott by the general community and they have to bring all the necessary

goods from the district place which is more than 10 KM away from the village.

Livelihood insecurity: The upper caste community did not employed Dalit in their farm and Dalit are going to district place for the jobs and they loose assured employment in the village. The insecurity of the livelihood created more tension among the women. The Dalit in this village are landless and for employment they totally depend upon the general community and if they did not provide opportunity to work than the Dalit has no option to work at district place as a labour or semi-skilled worker which did not provide financial support for sustaining life as a individual.

Conclusion: As per the observation by Amnesty International the women activists in India played a crucial role in highlighting the problems faced by women. The women organizations come together regularly in protest against incidents of violence and put pressure on the authorities to take action against the perpetrators. Without such pressure, many victims would be left alone and without any means of obtaining justice but this happened only in city not in rural areas of India. The challenge in defending human rights is compounded by gender discrimination inherent within traditional societies as well as within state structures.

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