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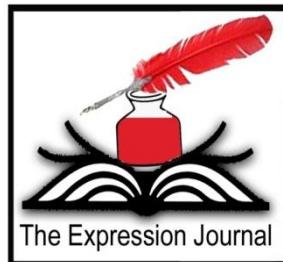
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## THE DOWNTRODDEN CLASS OF INDIA: AN ANALYSIS

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### Abstract

Downtrodden is like an incurable disease in which a victim feels oppressed, deprived or humiliated or kept down by a situation or a ruler. A downtrodden is a subjugated, tyrannized and persecuted by those who had got powers or authority. A downtrodden is a person who is facing a grievous, deprivation and paucity; he is subjected to humiliation and social isolation at the hands of so called higher caste people. They are exploited and this creation is manmade. Men of all nations, castes, races, colors are made of same soil created by Supreme Power. It is the man himself who had created barriers among themselves in the form of caste system. Hinduism divided the society in four classes and named them different castes on the basis of social status, believing that it is God who created these castes. Brahmins is considered as the upper most class or priestly class who are near to God. They believe they are not born to earn, other castes will take responsibility for their livings. Kshatriyas- the ruling class; kings, queens, lords and other rulers fall in this category, Vaishyas –the class of merchants, traders, farmers etc and the Sudras are considered as the class downtrodden people and Brahma had created them for the service of other classes. This caste system divided the people with same blood from each other and gave rise to the classes like upper class and downtrodden class.

### Key-Words

Downtrodden Class, Subjugation, Discrimination, Marginalization, India etc.

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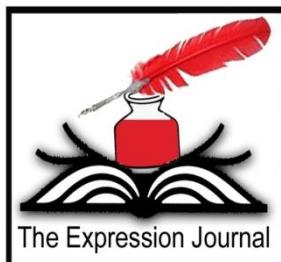
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If we analyse the cause of the cause of exploitation and we find large number of reasons. The most important one is the lack of bargaining capacity of the people whether in economic, social or political sphere to demand a respectable place in the society in spite of their numbers. There are people who work for hours together only to find that they are getting wages not equal with their efforts and time spent. There are also people who inspite of their valuable contribution to the welfare and betterment of the society are not being appreciated, compensated or recognized. These people are literally called low caste people in other words they are recognized in the society by a common name called *downtrodden people*. Gender based exploitation is also one type of deprivation leading them to be downtrodden. The number of downtrodden is rising in such a way that these people find solace in their being in majority. By attaining majority they are also getting power which they are likely to enjoy day by day. They now require unity, boldness, alertness, self-respect, self belief, self esteem, perseverance, and resolve. The most important thing that they need is education. The other reason is over population. There are shortages of food potable water, arable land, dwelling facilities add to their problems. These scarcities and deprivations gave a rise to inferiority complex among themselves which made them submissive and helpless before the people who believe themselves as upper castes. This social indifference between different classes weakens our country day by day.

Another important reason behind this heresy is social disrespect shown to them by upper classes of society. The caste difference surfing inside the minds of the people is more harmful than the open abuses showered on them. The reservation given to the down trodden through positively discriminative step, is like '*take my freedom and give me bread*'

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*forever*'. This does not mean reservation should be abolished altogether. But the self-respect and self-esteem of the downtrodden is to be maintained. Let the non-deserving people be away from the benefits of reservation so that the less privileged – poor and downtrodden people get the benefits of reservation till they are socially free and enjoy their equal rights and freedom in society. A large group of people who are socially and economically developed and educated are shamelessly exploiting the benefits of reservation which is the right of these uneducated downtrodden classes of people. At some places in India these downtrodden people are restricted from entering the holy places even for worship purposes. This feeling made them much isolated and full of hatred which is not beneficial for a good society and erects a concrete wall between the different classes of people of the same nation.

India is a country which has a large class of folk without a leader and this class comprises over twenty percent of total population, this class is none other than the downtrodden class. These people are divided, disunited, fragmented and broken into various sub-groups based on their intra-caste differences, steering a rudderless ship. They are also politically exploited, humiliated and violated which is another important cause responsible in maintaining this class difference. They are deprived if their rights and could not get what they deserve. The upper class society also exploit them politically and sow the seeds of hatred for each other.

The downtrodden people in India are also economically isolated not because of harvest failure or inadequate monsoon or shortage of food production or loss of production in the industrial sector, but because of imbalanced growth rate of economic development and distribution of wealth among the people. There is no proper distribution of wealth and economic advancement among the people. The downtrodden class of people is deprived from enjoying the fruit of economic prosperity of the nation. In order to overcome this imbalance the downtrodden have to self-propel certain measures to make them self-reliant. There should be concerted efforts by the downtrodden to mobilize fund and spend the same for its economic advancement. Upper class groups should also think over these matters to maintain national integrity and communal harmony so that the country would run swiftly on the track of prosperity.

Cultural activities are also enjoyed by higher caste people as they have got it inheritance and the lower class society is deprived here too which ignites the flame of hatred more and more in the hearts of deprived people against the manipulating groups. The important forms of cultural activities are Dance, Music, and Drama. Though there are bundles of opportunities for the downtrodden to participate in cultural activities, hardly do they ever peep into these areas because of pre-occupation with their search for means for survival. If they will be given chances to participate in these cultural activities they will gain a confidence and will try to improve in their lives at every aspect like socially, economically,

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politically, spiritually, mentally even the will try to educate their generations which will be a solid step for the development of country.

More over this downtrodden class is mentally and spiritually tortured by other upper classes. Personal and collective liberation will require more than, for example, a mass adoption of a rational religion and of the practices of yoga, meditation and reading radical works on politics and philosophy. Meditation grows one's awareness and these spiritual pursuits work surely for millions of people today, as in the past. With the help of meditation and yoga the seekers became able to see within and without more clearly and objectively, provided these tools are not simply used as mere enhancements to a consuming life style or for embellishing the worldly life and aging body. Real meditation makes one's mind wise and spirit compassionate and this can alleviate one's being downtrodden and serve to alleviate it for others. We are spiritually downtrodden. And the answer is within us. People may be more spiritually downtrodden than actually downtrodden. So a spiritual path that reckons with material challenges seems to be the right course. The downtrodden will awaken with the passage of time when these people rise from their slumber and unite, considerate and fight against the evil forces of caste system, hatred and religious fanaticism.

Gandhi called them Harijans (the children of God), the high caste Hindus called them Untouchables, while they called themselves as Dalits. Dalit literally means one who is downtrodden both socially and economically. Dalits are those who have been forced to do dirty work, on whom the rules of untouchability is forced, who have been deprived of education and free trade. The practice of untouchability was formally outlawed by the Constitution of India in 1950 but in practice, the Dalits are still subjected to extreme forms of social and economic exclusion, discrimination and torture. Their attempts to assert their rights are often met with strong resistance from the higher castes, resulting in inhuman torture and atrocities.

This down trodden class is considered a set of castes living in India since ancient times like Dalits, Harijans, Chamars etc. Discriminated on account of various factors the Dalits are the victims of various structures that constructs society like economic, social, gender based, cultural, etc. Long suppressed into submission and silence the marginalized or dalits have since emerged out of the shadows of centuries of subjugation. Inspired by revolutionary social activists they have now given a voice to their identity through a literature of their own.

In fact, Dalit is not a caste, it is a constructed identity, which is a comprehensive term comprising of not only the scheduled castes, tribes and other backward classes but also takes into its purview any person, group or community that finds itself shoved to the periphery like women for instance. In other words:

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"Dalit" implies those who have been broken and ground down by those above them in the social hierarchy in a deliberate and active way. There is in the word itself an inherent denial of pollution, karma, and justified caste hierarchy." (Jain p.172),

Hence it is clear that class conflict and poverty is the main issue responsible for the existence of downtrodden class who are exposed to numerous exploitations, miseries, violations, humiliations, ill-treatment, abuses, curses, insults etc. etc. by the upper class and sophisticated Indian society. We should overcome from these problems by giving information to the people about humanism, religion, Gandhian philosophy and provide education to those too who are not economically prepared to educate their wards. In short lectures and movements of social reforms can eradicate these social abuses to a great extent.

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