



# CASTE

## DISCRIMINATION



edited by  
Jagan Karade

“This volume is one more addition to the existing literature on this very important issue. This volume has serious material that can be used by researchers working on caste. It contains multidimensional aspects of caste and Indian culture.”

**Dr. Kancha Ilaiah,**

Director, Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy,  
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# Socio-economic Discrimination and Transformation of Dalits – Some Evidences

An Analysis Based on Dalit Autobiography

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Praveen K. Jadhav

The discrimination against 'Dalits' in various social intercourses is being practiced since hundreds of years, which is based on the caste hierarchy. The social discrimination as 'untouchability' has been most critical and inhuman. Although the Constitution of India (Art. 14) has abolished the discrimination on the bases of race, religion, caste and gender, it is being practiced in many parts of India. Action Aid Report (2002) has given many evidences of practice of untouchability in the recent period. The scholars have explained several forms of social discrimination against Dalits. Some of them also have explained the need for protective discrimination (Thorat and Umakant, 2004). However, the economic discrimination against Dalits in a strict sense has not been the focus so far. Social discrimination is closely connected with the economic discrimination and it is hard to separate them from each other. In this effort very few scholars have explained the economic discrimination against Dalits. Sukhadeo Thorat and

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caste barriers. However, Dr Ambedkar's famous statement 'Educate, Agitate and Organise' brought a change in the mindset of the Dalits. Dr Ambedkar created an inspiration and motivation to Dalits, especially the youth. As a result of this, Dalits started to get education, in spite of all inhuman treatment. Mr Kharat completed his higher education and reached to the highest post in the educational system. This was the highest intrageneration occupational mobility. The achieved status of Mr Kharat was remarkable and he acknowledges his gratitude towards Dr Ambedkar. In general, the Dalits migrated to urban; they and their next generation received higher education. On the basis of education and reservation, they also got the employment. Thus, a social and economic transformation took place in case of the Dalits. The intensity of caste hierarchy, especially in urban area, has been declining. (At least, it is not visible. It might have taken an invisible form.) The rights of the Dalits are protected. The Dalits are organized to fight against the discrimination and exploitation. These changes among the Dalits took place because of Dr Ambedkar's thoughts and agitations. Even today, that is, 54 years after the sad demise of Dr Ambedkar, his followers or the Dalits remember him on all important occasions. The most powerful elite group among the Dalits, that is, 'Neo-Buddhists' are strong in their social, economical, political and cultural angle. They have established their separate social identity. The formation of identity is the biggest achievement. As a whole, despite severe discrimination and exploitation, many of the higher educated 'Dalits' could bring the social and economic transformation in their lives. This has been the result of the application of the thoughts of Dr Ambedkar.

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