



## **Dalit in Jharkhand : Problems and Solutions**

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**Abstract :** - History testifies the presence of social cleavages in Indian society, in terms of caste, class, gender and the like. Such cleavages has changed the entire social fabric of Indian society, whereby the exploited section, be it the Dalits, adivasis or women, have been systematically pushed to the periphery by the traditional Brahmanical structure of oppression. Dalits are the people who are economically, socially, politically exploited from centuries. Unable to live in the society of human beings, they have been living outside the village depending on lower level of occupation, and lived as —untouchable .This exploitation is due to the discrimination followed by age old caste hierarchical tradition in the Hindu society. This hierarchy has been the cause for oppression of Dalits in each and every sphere of society since centuries. After several years of protests, negotiations, and political maneuvering, the government of India passed the Bihar Reorganization Act in August 2000, which led to the formation of the state of Jharkhand. The new state was carved out of the southern part of Bihar, with Ranchi as its capital. The natives of this region had been demanding Jharkhand state for a long time. The Dalit community was also a major group in the Jharkhand state demand movement. The people here believed that by getting the status of a new state, they would get more opportunities for development. But despite being the largest part of Jharkhand's population, the indigenous and Dalit communities are socially and economically backward. This research paper presents a review of the current status of the Dalit community in the state of Jharkhand, as well as presents the problems of the Dalit community and suggestions for its solution.

**Keywords :** Jharkhand, Dalit, Socio-Economic Status, Human Rights.

**Dalit –Conceptual Framework:** The concept of Dalit primarily used to refer to those who belong to the lowest in the traditional Hindu social hierarchy. The term "Dalit" comes from the Sanskrit word "dalita," which means "oppressed" or "crushed." Dalits are considered "untouchable" or "impure" and face social, economic, and political discrimination and oppression. In recent years, the term "Dalit" has been used to refer to a broader range of marginalized and oppressed groups in India, including those from lower castes, indigenous communities, and religious minorities. The term has been used to highlight the intersectionality of different forms of oppression faced by marginalized communities in India. The concept of Dalit is not limited to India and has been used to describe similar marginalized communities in other parts of South Asia, including Nepal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. The term has also been used in a global context to describe communities that face discrimination and exclusion based on their race, ethnicity, or social status. According to the 2011 Census of India, the population of Dalits in India was 201,378,000, which is approximately 16.6% of the total population of the country.

Problems to Dalit Community in Jharkhand: According to the 2011 Census of India, the Scheduled Caste (SC) population in Jharkhand was 4,342,966, which represents approximately 12.08% of the state's total population. The Scheduled Castes in Jharkhand are composed of various communities, including the Agaria, Bansphor, Bhuiya, Chamar, Dhobi, Dom, Dusadh, Ghasi, Hari, Karmi, Kharwar, Musahar, Pasi, Rajwar, and Tatwa. The government of Jharkhand has implemented various policies and programs aimed at the upliftment and empowerment of the Scheduled Castes. This includes the provision of reservations in education and government jobs, financial assistance for housing and entrepreneurship, and the implementation of special schemes for the development of SC communities. However, there are still significant challenges faced by the SC population in Jharkhand, including landlessness, caste-based discrimination and violence, and inadequate access to basic services. Dalit issues in Jharkhand are complex and multifaceted. Jharkhand has a significant Dalit population, and they face various forms of discrimination and oppression, including social, economic, and political exclusion.

One of the major issues faced by Dalits in Jharkhand is landlessness. Despite the implementation of land reforms, many Dalits in the state do not have access to land, which is essential for their economic and social empowerment. This has led to a cycle of poverty and exploitation, as many Dalits are forced to work as bonded laborers or in low-paying jobs. A study conducted by the Indian Social Institute (ISI) in 2018 found that landlessness in Jharkhand is most acute among the Scheduled Tribes (STs), Scheduled Castes (SCs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). The study noted that 32.5% of the STs, 27.4% of the SCs, and 25.4% of the OBCs in Jharkhand are landless. A report by the Centre for Land Governance (CLG) and the Oxfam India in 2016 highlighted the high incidence of landlessness among women in Jharkhand. The report noted that women own only about 13% of the land in the state, and around 27% of women in rural areas of Jharkhand are landless.

Another issue faced by Dalits in Jharkhand is caste-based discrimination and violence. They are often denied access to basic services such as education, healthcare, and sanitation, and face social exclusion and violence from dominant castes. Dalit women also face gender-based violence, including sexual assault and harassment. The National Dalit Watch (NDW), a network of organizations working for Dalit rights, has documented several incidents of caste-based discrimination and violence in Jharkhand. These include cases of Dalit families being evicted from their homes and land, Dalit women being subjected to sexual violence, and Dalit children being denied education and access to public facilities. According to a report by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) published in 2020, Jharkhand has recorded a high number of cases of atrocities against Dalits under the Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989. The report notes that in 2019, Jharkhand reported the third-highest number of cases of atrocities against Dalits among all Indian states, with 1,147 cases registered. A study conducted by the Centre for Equity Studies (CES) in 2018 found that the incidence of violence against Dalits in Jharkhand has increased in recent years. The study noted that Dalits in Jharkhand face violence and discrimination in various forms, including social boycotts, forced labor, and denial of access to common property resources.

A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS) titled "Socio-Economic Status of Dalits in Jharkhand" provides insights into the various aspects of the socio-economic status of Dalits in the state.

According to the study, Dalits in Jharkhand face multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization, including in education, employment, and access to basic services such as healthcare and housing. The study also notes that poverty and unemployment are more prevalent among Dalits in Jharkhand compared to other communities, and that this has contributed to their social and economic exclusion. Another report by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) titled "India Dalit Atrocities 2019" highlights the link between caste-based discrimination and socio-economic status of Dalits in Jharkhand. The report notes that Dalits in Jharkhand are often denied access to land, education, and employment opportunities due to their caste identity, which further exacerbates their socio-economic vulnerability.

The implementation of affirmative action policies such as reservations in education and government jobs has provided some relief to Dalits in Jharkhand. However, the policies are often inadequately implemented, and Dalits face resistance from dominant castes in accessing these benefits. There is also a lack of political representation for Dalits in Jharkhand, with very few Dalit leaders in positions of power. This leads to a lack of political will to address Dalit issues and implement policies that benefit them. According to a report by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) titled "Status of Dalit Political Participation in India," the representation of Dalits in the political system of Jharkhand has improved over the years, but it is still inadequate. The report notes that although Dalits account for around 12% of the population in Jharkhand, their representation in the state legislative assembly is only around 10%. Furthermore, the report highlights that Dalit women are particularly underrepresented in the political system of Jharkhand.

A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Dalit Studies (IIDS) titled "Socio-Economic Status of Dalits in Jharkhand" provides insights into the various aspects of the educational status of Dalits in the state. According to the study, the literacy rate among Dalits in Jharkhand was 50.3% in 2011, which was lower than the overall literacy rate in the state. The study also notes that the dropout rates among Dalit children are high, particularly among girls, and that access to quality education is limited for Dalits due to social and economic factors. Another report by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) titled "India Dalit Atrocities 2019" highlights the link between caste-based discrimination and the educational status of Dalits in Jharkhand. The report notes that Dalit children in Jharkhand often face discrimination and exclusion in schools, which affects their academic performance and reduces their chances of pursuing higher education.

A report by the National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR) titled "Dalit Leadership in India: Challenges and Opportunities" highlights the crisis of Dalit leadership in Jharkhand. According to the report, there is a dearth of Dalit leaders in the state who can effectively represent the interests of the Dalit community. The report notes that while some Dalit leaders have emerged at the local level, they often lack the resources and support to make a significant impact. The report further highlights that the mainstream political parties in Jharkhand have not done enough to promote the emergence of Dalit leaders. According to the report, the political parties often treat Dalit leaders as vote banks rather than as potential leaders who can represent the interests of the Dalit community.

Suggestions for Solution of Dalit Problems in Jharkhand: Dalit issues in Jharkhand are complex and require a comprehensive approach to address the social, economic, and political exclusion faced by the community. It requires the active participation of civil society organizations, government agencies, and the dominant castes to work towards creating a more just and equitable society for all. There are various suggestions and solutions to address the problems faced by Dalits in Jharkhand–

□ Implementation of protective legislation: There are various laws in India that are meant to protect the rights of Dalits, such as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, and the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013. However, these laws are often not implemented effectively, and there is a need for greater enforcement to ensure the safety and protection of Dalits.

□ Promotion of education: Education is one of the most effective tools for empowerment and upward social mobility. The government can promote education among Dalits by providing scholarships and other financial assistance, establishing schools and colleges in Dalit-dominated areas, and ensuring that Dalit children have access to quality education.

□ Economic empowerment: Poverty and unemployment are major issues faced by Dalits in Jharkhand. The government can promote economic empowerment by providing vocational training, setting up micro-enterprises, and ensuring that Dalits have access to credit and other financial services.

□ Representation in political and administrative bodies: There is a need for greater representation of Dalits in political and administrative bodies at all levels. This can be achieved through reservations in electoral and administrative bodies, and by promoting political awareness and participation among Dalits.

□ Awareness campaigns and social mobilization: There is a need for greater awareness about the issues faced by Dalits, and for social mobilization to address these issues. The government and civil society organizations can promote awareness campaigns and programs to sensitize people about caste-based discrimination and violence, and to mobilize support for the rights of Dalits.

Conclusion: Dalits in Jharkhand face numerous problems including caste-based discrimination, violence, socio-economic inequality, and lack of political representation. These issues are rooted in the historical and structural injustices of the caste system, and require comprehensive solutions that address all dimensions of the problem. Some potential solutions to address the problems faced by Dalits in Jharkhand include the effective implementation of protective legislation, promotion of education, economic empowerment, greater representation in political and administrative bodies, and awareness campaigns and social mobilization. However, these solutions require sustained efforts from both the government and civil society organizations. It is also important to acknowledge the crisis of Dalit leadership in Jharkhand, and the need for greater support and resources to promote the emergence of effective Dalit leaders who can represent the interests of the community. Thus, addressing the problems faced by Dalits in Jharkhand requires a multi-faceted approach that acknowledges the root causes of these issues and works towards the social, economic, and political empowerment of the community.

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