



## **DALIT WOMEN CHALLENGES IN THE LOCAL BODIES (With special reference to violence on the Dalit women in Karnataka State)**

**Dr. Ramakrishnappa DC**

Assistant Professor of Sociology  
Government First Grade College  
Devanahalli

**Abstract :** *India is one of the fastest developing countries in the world with the population of 1.2 billion, In India; most of the rural population depends on agriculture and allied activities. The rural areas of Karnataka are still dependent on rain and seasonal cultivation. This creates poverty and unemployment and drives migration to cities like Bangalore. The situation of Dalits in the city is worsened due to the prevailing caste-based discrimination and poor standard of living. Migrant Dalits, and the local dalits with low earnings face various financial and the caste discriminations, particularly the women, face health issues and lack exposure to basic healthcare, Financial distress and healthcare published by Virtual Commons – "Bridgewater State University, 2020. The healthcare sector in India is undergoing a phase of reform propelled by the development of the country. The government is trying to focus on providing health security provisions to all individuals with a highly innovative, affordable, and accessible healthcare system over the past two decades, India has made remarkable progress in reducing extreme poverty. Between 2011 and 2018, the country is estimated to have halved the share of the population living in extreme poverty. In recent years, however, the pace of poverty reduction has slowed; key welfare indicators have also been slow to improve. But the reports suggests increase in the cases on dalits and the dalit women's has been increased more after 2017-2018, Inequality in consumption has remained persistent, but concerns remain about the inequality of jobs, financial services for the dalits population, especially dalit women's in the state. The research paper explains the issues and the problems faced by the dalit women`s, tribal and the rural dalit women's in the state.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indian government has announced various schemes for the rural and the tribal population, but due to lack of overall interests, only political interest is playing the major role in the state, Dalits, especially Dalit women, are deprived of the socio-economic and financial independence to access basic health care services. Unless one is economically empowered, access to a good and healthy life is very difficult. The very existence of

the caste system and lack of financial stability push Dalit workers to migrate to cities for better living conditions. Migrant Dalit men find work mainly in the construction industry and service-based informal sectors while most migrant Dalit women work as domestic helpers to earn their livelihood. Because of low literacy rates among Dalits, the awareness of government-run programs and initiatives to uplift the Dalit workers are not very effective. This adds to the burden on



Dalits in terms of their spending on their personal health and healthcare needs, largely due to the caste based discrimination prevailing in the country and problem of poverty which makes it difficult for the Dalit poor to avail health facilities (Ramaiah 2007). The researchers, in this study, are trying to understand the health issues of Dalit women migrant workers, one of the weakest sections of India.

### **SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES ON DALITS AND THE WEAKER SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY**

- Even today Dalit women along with their families are commonly clustered in segregated hamlets at the edge of a village or mohallas in one corner of the village, devoid of civic amenities, drinking water, health care, education, approach roads etc.
- In urban areas their homesteads are largely found in slum bases normally located in very unhygienic surrounding.
- The exploitation of them under the name of religious such as “Nude Worship,” practice of devadasi system and such other similar types of practices make them more submissive to violence, and discrimination.
- The UN Special Reporter on violence against women has noted that Dalit women face targeted violence, even rape and murder, by the state actors and powerful members of the dominant castes used to inflict political lessons and crush dissent within the community
- Very often cases are withdrawn and witnesses turn hostile because of pressure outside the system without adequate protection given to them.
- Sanctioned impunity on behalf of offenders is a major issue in India, and the police often deny or purposefully

neglect and delay Dalit women’s right to legal aid and justice.

There is a consistent pattern of delay in report filing and irregularities regarding criminal procedures, which leads to widespread impunity and creates serious barriers to justice for Dalit women

### **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE ON DALIT WOMEN**

- The risky workplaces compounded with a lack of labour rights protection measures render migrants dalit women more vulnerable to occupational injury.
- Further, the emerging problem of sub-contracting short-termed labour makes it more difficult for them to claim compensation when they are injured at work places.
- Dalit women are most vulnerable to abuse and exploitation by employers, migration agents, corrupts bureaucrats and criminal gangs.
- The enslavement trafficking also contributes to migration of large proportion of dalit women.
- There is a mind-set among the dominant castes that make them feel that they can do anything they want with dalit girls and that they will get away with it.
- The discrimination faced by Dalit women at the cost of the Brahmanical obsession with “purity and pollution” has had a detrimental effect on all the dimensions of development

### **FINDINGS**

The following are the major findings based on the in-depth interview and observation done by the researchers are on Poverty, caste-related discrimination, better job opportunities, accompanying spouse/parents are the major reasons for the migration of Dalit women. Low productivity and seasonal unemployment in the agriculture sector in rural areas



drive the migration to cities like Bangalore. Economic and financial deprivation, lack of education, poor health, caste and un-touchability-based discrimination, caste-based physical torture, sacred prostitution, gender-based discrimination are some of the major challenges faced by the Dalit women. Bangalore City offers job opportunities to migrant Dalit's largely in the informal sector. Dalit women mainly work as domestic helpers. Un-hygienic living conditions and improper self-care increases the health risks of Dalit women, body aches, injuries, respiratory problems, allergic reactions, pregnancy-related issues, menstrual hygiene issues are the major health problems faced by Dalit women.

Most of them are not eligible or not aware of welfare and social security measures, lack of identity proof and documents makes it difficult for them to avail these benefits, huge medical expenditure leads to financial toxicity for the migrant dalits. It also leads to physical, mental, emotional distress, irregular and informal income, job loss, illness add to the financial woes of the migrant women many employers complain about increased illegal activity and theft by the migrant population, and that is one major source of Dalit discrimination in ajor cities like in Bengaluru in the state.

### CONCLUSION

The Indian caste system originated in ancient India and gradually evolved concurrently with Indian history. Dalits in Indian history were considered as lower caste untouchables and were deprived of basic human rights. After the onset of modern economic development and the progressive initiatives taken by the government, the situation has improved considerably. The modern Indian state, since independence has been oriented

towards providing reservations for Dalits in education and other public services. However, even with continuous efforts to eradicate the caste system and numerous measures to improve their lives, Dalits, specifically Dalit women, are still deprived of their basic needs. Many of them have moved to urban areas to earn their livelihoods and find employment mostly in the unorganized sector. Empowering these large numbers of Dalit women is a challenging endeavour, especially when they are deprived and mostly unaware of basic healthcare needs. The present research paper aims to discover the factors influencing the migration of Dalit women. It explores the deteriorating quality of life experienced by Dalit women with increased out-of-pocket expenditures for healthcare.

### Reference

1. Financial Distress and Healthcare: A Study of Migrant Dalit Women Domestic Helpers in Bangalore, India by Nimble O. J. 1 and A. V. Chinnasamy2
2. NFHS-4 National Family Health Survey (2015), NFHS/factsheet\_NFHS4.shtml, accessed on 20/01/2020. NEWS 18 (2018) Caste Census in Bangalore,
3. Richard Pais : Scheduled Castes Employment and Social Mobility Research article in Dalits in Modern India Vision and Mission S M Michael,1 Vistar Publication New Delhi 1999.
4. Hanumantharayappa and Mutharayappa (1986) Backwardness and Welfare of Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes in India, Ashish Publishing House New Delhi