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IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION: A STUDY OF DALIT LITERATURE WRITERS  
*Dr. NARENDRA JADHAV'S OUTCASTE: A MEMOIR, URMILA PAWAR'S AAYDAN,  
DAYA PAWAR'S BALUTA AND Y.B SATHYANARAYAN'S MY FATHER BALIAH*



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### ABSTRACT

*Dalit literature is not just a literature about the poverty and suffering. It is also about the struggle of dalit people to live with self-respect and get education which was denied to them for centuries. Due to the influence of Dr. Ambedkar they learn about the importance of education and determined to teach their children no matter how hard they have to work for it. Writers like Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Urmila Pawar, Daya Pawar and Y.B Sathyanarayan in their book written about their struggle to get education and to live*

*with self-respect life. In their work, they describe in detail the challenges they experienced in obtaining an education and how they eventually succeeded. Many individuals, including themselves, find inspiration in their work. The value of education in the lives of Dalit authors is highlighted in this study.*

### KEY WORDS

*Dalit, Education, Struggle, Success*

## RESEARCH PAPER

“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.” Said Nelson Mandela. If someone truly wants to make a beneficial difference in society, they should pursue education since it cultivates a scientific temperament that aids in the eradication of bad behaviors. Although education is a basic human necessity, Dalits have been denied it for generations. However, great individuals like as Mahatma Phule and Dr. Ambedkar helped to bring about change in the community by raising awareness about societal ills such as sati, child marriage, and caste. Dr. Ambedkar was personally affected by the caste system, and as a result, he instilled pride and confidence in the dalits, according to him.

“It is disgraceful to live at the cost of one’s self- respect. Self-respect is most vital in life. Without it man is a cipher to live worthily with respect one has to overcome difficulties. It is out of hard and ceaseless struggle alone that one derives strength confidence and recognition.”

Dr. Ambedkar created awareness among Dalits about importance of education and because of that Dalits started to get education no matter how hard they have to work. Being poor it was not easy for them to educate their children but they did whatever possible for them to educate their children. Dr. Ambedkar said,

“The backward classes have come to realize that after all education is the greatest material benefit for which they can fight. We may forego of material benefits, we may forego of material benefits of civilization, but we cannot forego our right and opportunities to reap the benefit of the highest education to the fullest extent. That the importance of this question from the point of view of the backward classes who have just realized that without education their existence is not safe.”

Central character Damu from *Outcaste: A Memoir* by Dr. Narendra Jadhav was inspired by Dr. Ambedkar, he was determined to work hard to give good education to his children. In his Author’s note Jadhav describes Damu as,

“Damu was not a leader...but he refused to define himself by circumstances and aimed at shaping his own destiny. Or, Damu had no formal education...yet he steered his children to educational heights and inculcated in them the spirit of excellence. Or Damu was not a guru... but he taught his children to believe in themselves and retain human dignity”.

Fortunately, the children achieve his ambitions and advance to positions of leadership in their chosen fields, where they contribute to the betterment of their community. Jayavant went on to become an IAS official, Dinesh went on to work for the Mumbai Municipal Corporation as an administrative officer, and Dr. Narendra went on to become a well-known economist and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Pune.

Dagadu in Daya Pawar’s *Baluta* was a poor dalit boy but to get education he stayed in government aided boarding house which was specially ran for backward class students. His mother used to work as a cook in the same boarding house. After passing Matriculation it was possible for Dagadu to get the job as a teacher. But he opted for higher education. Education had instilled self confidence in him. He writes:

“I realized my true personality at a school in Tahsil place. We are devoid of any weakness. We have to break free from the bondages of the village. For that we have to get education. After coming into the town it was surprising to know that I can easily overcome the high caste students in studies.”

By bringing in such a change in his attitude Dagadu succeeded in his life and also showed the path of success to the others.

In Dr. Y.B. Sathyanarayan's *My Father Baliah*, Baliah realized the importance of education and insisted that his children should be educated in order to get job in the railways to put an end to all suffering. He left no stone turned to get his children education. He inculcated the same passion in his children and most of his children too imbibed the urge of their father to be educated. Although Baliah learned to read and write a little, his sons are the real first-generation learners in his family. Baliah was determined to help his sons to pursue higher studies at any cost. Along with Baliah his elder son Balraj ensured that the children get quality education. The author Y.B Sathyanarayan, his brother Abbasayulu, Narsimlu and Anjiah realized and fulfilled the dreams of their father and their brother Balraj. Despite several odds and adversities, the author Y.B Sathyanarayan pursue higher studies and became a professor, obtained a Ph.D. and became a Principal of a college, a post he held until his retirement. He writes,

“Had my father not felt the importance of education, had he not been in the railways, we would probably not have seen the days and good fortune that we did. His determination was responsible for us getting an education despite our poverty and social maladies like segregation and untouchability that were quite prevalent in that era”

Urmila Pawar writes in her book *The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoirs* that while Urmila Pawar was born in Adagon, her family moved to Phansawale near Ratnagiri for her education. Pawar's father established a home in Ratnagiri so that his children, nephews, and nieces could have a higher education. To get her and her cousins to attend to school, her schoolmaster father used to whip them. She thought it was harsh as a youngster, but she subsequently realized that he was justified in placing such a high emphasis on education. Her family supported her throughout her youth, allowing her to attend college. She then became a writer and rose to fame and prominence.

As a result, we may conclude that education has made a significant difference in the lives of Dalits. Many Dalits have worked hard and succeeded in achieving success and living with dignity, which they have only been able to do because of education.

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