

**UNDERSTANDING CASTE & GENDER IN INDIA: CASE OF DALIT
LIBERATION MOVEMENT AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN INDIA**

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to read Dalit women in two broad social movements of struggle and identity in India- the Dalit Liberation Movement in Maharashtra and Women's Movement in India. In the first account, there will be an effort to see how Dalit struggles in Maharashtra for liberation and justice from a caste-based oppressive society invisibilized contribution of Dalit women in the movement and moulded it from a masculinist angle of praxis. This is to understand how role of women were narrowed down and perceived from a gendered angle by the movement. Also it is to understand how Dalit women were subjected only either to comparative analysis with women in caste or a victim of upper caste atrocities in Dalit male writings. Secondly locating Dalit women in mainstream women's movement in India, the paper attempts to show how this movement for equality for women has overlooked specific problems of Dalit women as an unauthentic subject by their drive to fight for women as a homogeneous category. The focus will be equally laid on to understand how a space for struggle of Dalit women is seen as a different and pluralising drive of feminism by the mainstream feminism in India dominated by women favoured by caste and class hierarchy.

KEYWORDS: *Dalit, Feminism, Movement, Caste, Ambedkar, Patriarchy, Hinduism.*

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