

## **RISE AND GROWTH OF DALIT POLITICAL MOVEMENT IN KARNATAKA: A CRITICAL STUDY**

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### **Abstract**

The privileged Brahmin was treated with high respect and had the superior power in hand and the less privileged Dalits were treated equal to animals and mere slaves. Their writing started in the times of Mukti movement and it flourished into various genres in the time of Dalit Panther movement which started in 1970's with the influence of Black Panther movement from the west. These writings were to break the long silence of the dalits of thousand years they found the space to express their revolt against the social evil imposed on them for centuries. Majority of writers who wrote the brahminical text wrote with a Brahmin touch in order to sustain their mode of living in the society and they occupied the upper positions and leaving the dalits to do the lower job by subjugating them from the top in the form of religion, birth, caste etc. The proposition of the paper will deal with the rise of the political movement in Karnataka as the Dalit movement which was initiated in Maharashtra led to the momentum of initiating other movements in different states.

**Keywords: Dalits; Brahmins; Caste; Religion; Politics.**

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Dalit literary movement in Kannada literature started in the 1970's of the twentieth century. In 12th century Basavanna a saint from north raised voice for the Dalits and the social movement gave a new form of writing in Karnataka named as "Vachana Sahitya". Vokkaligas and Lingayats started the non-Brahmin movement in 1917's in old Mysore state supported by the organizations like Vokkaliga Sangha 1906 and Central Muslim Association 1909 to uplift the socio-economic state of the Dalits. Krishna Raja Wodeyar IV the Maharaj of Mysore gave 75% reservation for Dalit castes in the administration of the State. Some other movements also emerged during those periods were the Peasants Movement, Language Movement, Women's Movement etc. Artist Federation and writers of Karnataka in 1973 firstly used the word Dalit in their writings.

The spark for the right to education gave the Dalits to start the movement in Karnataka when the Basavalingappa a minister of Karnataka was invited to give speech on the topic "Tradition, Social structure and New Views" in 1973 in that speech he stated Kannada Literature is a Boosa (fodder) Literature, this incident created a revolt and he resigned the minister position. Again in Kolar in 1971 due to the land dispute Sheshagiriappa the potter was killed then Dalit Sangharsha Samiti took up the issue to seek justice, the third incident was when Dalita Sangharsha Samithi (DSS) was established in Badravathi when there was a problem to the factory workers in Badravathi, Shimoga District.

In Karnataka the Dalit movement started in 1974 under the leadership of Prof. B.Krishnappa. Many DSS groups were started in different parts of Karnataka and many educated Dalits gave speeches and wrote their sufferings and rights in literature and explained to the other illiterate people about the need of change in the society. Many journalists and writers were produced and people who belonged to various professions and occupations participated in the movement, it gave strength to the Dalits. Many Dalit writers like Devanoor Mahadeva, Dr. Siddalingaiah, Prof. Arvinda Malagatti, Mullur Nagaraj, Gangaram Chandala. Dr. M.N. Javaraiah (MANAJA) Dr. Govindaiah, Munivenkatappa, K.B. Siddaiah, L. Hanumanthaiah, H. Balaraju, Indudhar Honnapura, Devaiah Harave, and Mogally Ganesh poured their works in to the Kannada Dalit literature. Due to the writings of various literate Dalits many journals and articles were published among them there are the Dalit voice by V.T. Rajashekar, Hosa Dikku by M. Gopinath,

Panchama by Govindaiah , Ambedkar Vahini“ by Polanki Ramamurthy and Andholana by Rajashekar Koti etc.

The Karnataka Dalapada Academy gives Dalapada award for the people who work for the social change and participate in various movements. In 1983 politics started entering into the movements before that the movements were only for the social cause it was when Professor Krishnappa wanted to follow the Dalita Soshita Samaj Sangarsha Samiti of Uttarpradesh and asked the people to support. Bahujan Samaj Party BSP of the state, while K. Ramdas and others didn't want politics to be a part of the movement. Many supported this as the congress then ruler was against Ambedkar and the people wished to give their support to the non-congress party. Many atrocities were done to the Dalits and in 1985 DSS declared its support to Janata Party it created a rift and lead to patrician of the party, the people who supported the politics voiced out as Ballot than Bullet as they were following the pioneers like Buddha, Basavanna and Ambedkar they were called Active Committee (Sanchalaka Samithi) of D.S.S. The other group of people influenced by Karl Marx theory than politics voiced that they would struggle against government themselves and was named as Coordination committee (Sanyojaka Samithi) of D.S.S.

In the later period even is the Active committee of D.S.S. again splits in to two divisions. They are Praja Vimochana Chaluvalli (PVC) Karnataka Samata Sainkika Dala (SSD). Dalit Mahasabha of Andrapradesh and Dalit Panther Movement in Maharastra gave full support to politics and people felt that power is needed to destroy and diminish the power, while some people felt that among the movement the leaders of the party were doing things for money and personal desires were achieved and it created a rift among the movements. Many organizations of the Dalit movement were created such as: Karnataka Dalita Sangarsha Samithi (Active Committee), Karnataka Dalita Sangarsha Samithi (Coordination committee), Karnataka Dalita Sangarsha Samithi (Ambedkar Vada), Karnataka Janandolan Sangha, Karnataka Dalita Kriya Vedike, Karnataka Samata Sainka Dala, Karnataka Dalit Federation Committee, Karnataka Dalit Kriya Samithi, Praja vimochana movement, Dalit writers forum, Karnataka Dalita Jagruthi Samithi, Ambedkar Jagratha Maha Samithi, Karnataka State SC/ST Federation, Karnataka Madiga Dandora, Karnataka Dalita Vidyarthi Okkuta, Karnataka Dalita Artists Federation and Karnataka Women Federation. Recently the D.S.S. launched a new party in the state “Sarvodaya

Karnataka Party” with the help of Raitha Sangha of Karnataka, Devanoor Mahadeva and K.S. Puttannaiah are the main leaders of this party. Few people like Sridhar Kaliveer and other are in support of Bahujana Samaj Party.

In 1920 Brahmin and Non-brahmin had a clash in Mysore the Adi-Dravida Abhiviruddhi Sangha by Muruges Pillai includes the Kannadigas and Adi-jambava Sangha which included the Madigas were formed. Muruges Pillai and Gopalaswamy Aiyar organised a political conference of Panchamas in 1920. Ambedkar was invited by he could not attend it as he was banned to enter into the state. The conference was also held in 1923 and 1925 resolutions were passed in the conference using Adi-karnataka and Adi-Dravida terminology. Before independence the Dalits were not able to break the caste violence as Ambedkar was not allowed to enter into the state and the Mysore Maharaj honored Gandhi in the state.

The main objective of the Dalit movement is to attain equality, justice, identity and humanism. Brahmanism is the root cause of the Dalit movement hence Dalit movement is against the Brahmanism and not Brahmins. Though untouchability is abolished, the social justice and the ill-treatment of one caste by the other is not still abolished on political, economical and social grounds. Dalit movement has its roots in the Vedic period and gained momentum in the post Vedic period. With the help of the western language and Christianity as religion the Dalits began to fight for their right and struggles.

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