

# The Sustainable Development Goals And Ambedkar

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## Abstract

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was born on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1891 in a family of social outcasts, was a direct victim of social discrimination and inequality in both opportunities and standard of living. Yet he had overcome all odds to become the Father of the Indian Constitution and contributed monumentally towards eradicating poverty and improving the quality of life of marginalised communities in India. If one man, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, could imprint such a transformational and lasting effect on the nation of India encompassed with heights of social stigma and economic divide, how much more could the nation as a whole achieve by adopting his ideologies? This rationale is the basis of this paper.

In 2015, the United Nations adopted seventeen Sustainable Development Goals as a universal call to action to end poverty and reduce socio-economic divide. More than 165 countries have adopted and are striving to achieve the SDGs. However, reports indicate that most of the nations are too far from achieving the SDG goals by 2030. Across all 17 goals, Sweden tops the list of countries surveyed, where as India ranked around 120. In this context, it is critical to understand the ideology and the strategic policy framework of Babasaheb Ambedkar to forge a practical and adoptable action plan to achieve the SDGs. This paper proposes a practical and simple action plan following Ambedkar's ideologies towards successfully achieving five of the most important and essential SDGs.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development Goals, Babasaheb, Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, United Nations, economic progress, equality, sustainability

## I. Introduction

Quality of life, environmental health and sustainable development are interconnected social impact components that trade between synergy and antagonism. The world is surrounded by conflicting social standards - massive poverty, inequalities and poor standard of living co-exist with rapid industrialisation, urbanisation and technological advancements [1]. The socio-economic and political consequences deeply add to these linkages and compound progressive human development [2]. The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to overcome this conflict - the big divide in people's living standards [3]. These

SDGs are a collection of 17 interconnected global goals designed to improve quality of living and achieve a more sustainable future for all. The SDGs were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by 2030. The 17 SDGs are: (1) No Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (10) Reduced Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (12) Responsible Consumption and Production, (13) Climate Action, (14) Life Below Water, (15) Life On Land, (16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, (17) Partnerships for the Goals. The

SDGs are set up with a 15 year action plan encompassing holistic human development and improved quality of living in sectors including education, health, sanitation, employment and equality [4].

### **1.1. Global adoption and progression of the SDGs:**

The UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) is the annual space for global monitoring of the SDGs, under the auspices of the United Nations economic and Social Council. The online publication SDG-Tracker was launched in June 2018 and presents data across all available indicators [5, 6]. The SDG-Tracker has a global coverage and tracks whether the world is making progress towards the SDGs. It aims to make the data on the 17 goals available to a wide audience in an understandable manner. According to these tracker reports, more than 165 countries have adopted and are striving to achieve the SDGs. Across all 17 goals, Sweden tops the list of countries surveyed. It is, on average, 84.5% of the way to achieving the targets envisaged for 2030. Following closely were Scandinavian neighbours, Denmark, Norway and Finland. Western European countries took the remainder of the top 10 slots

and four of the top 20. Also in the top 20 were Canada, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. Asia-Pacific's top performers Japan, Singapore and Australia rounded off the list of the top 20. India ranked around 120, has shown a slow 20% improvement in its SDR ranking since 2002 and its progress continues to be slow but very steady.

### **1.2. Dr B. R. Ambedkar and his ideologies:**

Babasaheb Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar [7, 8] was born on 14th April, 1891 at Mhow, near Indore in the then Central Province, now Madhya Pradesh. Ambedkar was the son of Ramji Maloji Sakpal and Bhimabai. The life of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was marked by all kinds of struggles. Since his parents were Dalits, he was not given equal opportunities. During his growing years, he encountered many challenges and social discrimination. Teachers and other students treated Ambedkar with inferiority. Nevertheless as a prolific student, he proved that every hurdle in life can be surmounted with talent and firm determination. Ambedkar was a multi-talented personality. Eventually he is remembered as a reputed scholar, economist, lawyer, professor, politician, social activist, author, and a barrister. Apart from that, he served as a Military Secretary for a short period to the Gaikwad.



**Figure 1. The Father of the Indian Constitution, Dr B.R. Ambedkar, 1891 - 1956.**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was recognized as one of the greatest scholars and was invited to lead the committee to draft the Indian constitution. Ambedkar is termed as the father of the Constitution of India. Though he hailed from a socially backward caste, he rose to an unparalleled height and framed the constitution of India. As a result of casteism, he was subjected to blatant discrimination at school. However, it did not hold him back from attaining excellent marks and pursuing higher education. Out of all the bitter experiences, he had gone through; he was determined to bring about a radical change in society.

In 1956, he became a Buddhist follower. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar inspired the Dalit Buddhist Movement and campaigned against social discrimination against untouchables (Dalits), and also supported the rights of women and labour. He held the post of the first law minister of our Independent India. He wanted to bring about dynamic social reforms in India. He lent his voice to the suppressed and backward community. He was determined to eradicate the caste system, promote education, and uplift the Untouchables. He was the founder of the Independent Labour Party and the Scheduled Caste Federation. His contributions to the Finance Commission of India and Reserve Bank of India are commendable. He passed away on December 6, 1956 and was posthumously conferred with the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in 1990.

### **I.3. SDGs and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar:**

The UN SDGs are directly in line with the vision and tireless efforts of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, towards ensuring excluded groups were politically, socially and economically empowered [41]. The UN Development Programme Administrator Achim Steiner has categorically stated that Ambedkar's vision of equality and social justice echoes the ambitions of the UN's 2030 development agenda [9, 10, 41]. It may wonder how the UN SDGs which are yet to be achieved by 2030 were envisioned by a man, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, nearly a century earlier. It goes to show the revolutionary visionary in him and the tremendous foresight he possesses.

Ambedkar's policies were path-breaking but over the decades his ideas have been forgotten and buried, but many still continue to have the potential to make drastic changes to the system [11, 12]. As a social reformer, he played a key role in eradicating untouchability and discrimination. There by creating equal opportunities to all. As law minister he framed and passed laws that guaranteed gender equality and right to education and employment. It is because of one man's relentless efforts that nearly 26% of the Indian population owned him with a great slogan, "We are because he was."

### **I.4. Contribution of this paper: An Ambedkar driver action plan to achieve SDGs.**

The key contribution of this paper is to place forth a practical and simple action plan following Ambedkar's strategic ideologies and decisions to successfully achieve the SDGs. Babasaheb Ambedkar's views and ideologies provide direction with clarity and action plan as the socio-economic divide is expanding with time in India. The SDGs aim to achieve sustained development of every individual human being which is in line with reducing the socio-economic divide. However the SDG tracker indicates that the countries are too far from achieving the SDG goals by 2030. If one man, Babasaheb Ambedkar, could achieve so much of what the SDGs aim to achieve, in a short span of his time, how much more could all nations together under the UN framework achieve by 2030? It hence becomes critical to observe and investigate the aspects of Babasaheb Ambedkar's ideologies and practicalities involved therein to forge a connected action plan to achieve the SDGs. This paper outlines the synergy and coherence of the SDGs with the vision and ideologies and experiences of Babasaheb Ambedkar and proposes an adoptable action plan that is in line with the framework of Babasaheb Ambedkar.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. Sections II - VI analyse the SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5 and 10 and present Babasaheb Ambedkar's ideological coherence with the SDGs and subsequently propose the Babasaheb driven action plan, i.e., the action plan that Ambedkar

would have proposed to achieve the said SDGs. Section VII summarises the proposed action plan and section VIII presents the concluding remarks.

## **2. SDG 1 - No poverty**

The UN SDG 1, one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015, calls for the end of poverty in all forms [13, 14]. Achieving this goal includes finding solutions to new threats caused by socio-economic divides. SDG 1 focuses not just on people living in poverty, but also on the services people rely on and social policy that either promotes or prevents poverty. The outcome targets of this SDG are eradication of extreme poverty, reduction of all poverty by half, implementation of social protection systems, ensuring equal rights to ownership, basic services, technology and economic resources, and the building of resilience to environmental, economic and social disasters. The two targets related to "means of achieving" SDG 1 are mobilisation of resources to end poverty and the establishment of poverty eradication policy frameworks at all levels.

### **2.1. SDG 1 and Ambedkar:**

Ambedkar was the first Indian to pursue a doctorate in economics abroad. His ideology was that industrialisation and agricultural growth could enhance the economy. Ambedkar was one of the pioneers who examined the relationship between socio-economic and political variables co-jointly and the role of development projects in transforming India. He was the first Indian economist who comprehensively studied the public finances, and taxation and also the monetary standards of British India, and explained the adverse effects of both the internal and external taxes on local business in British India. He studied extensively on rural poverty, marginalised economic surge, lagging industrial growth and proposed solutions and tax policies under the democratic framework to uplift the marginalised and downtrodden. In 1951, Ambedkar established the Finance Commission of India. He opposed income tax for low-income groups [16]. He contributed to Land Revenue Tax and excise duty policies to stabilise the economy.

He played an important role in land reform and the state economic development. He diagnosed that poverty of the depressed backward classes in India is due to the unjustified unequal distribution of natural resources and their denial to the poor. It is different for the rich high classes [17]. He further emphasised the need to arrange checks and balances in the existing economic system to inhibit perpetual exploitation and inequalities. Babasaheb Ambedkar justified the government interference within the decision making framework of economic reforms saying that non-interference of government would mean private autocracy [18].

The 1918 essay of Ambedkar on farming and farm holdings still has great relevance for contemporary economic debate [19]. Here Ambedkar argued that land holdings itself was not the cause for perpetual poverty, but the optimal use of resources and availability of capital stock too are critical for economic growth. He advocated industrial growth where there is insufficiency of capital stock for agricultural growth.

### **2.2. Observations and proposals:**

One of the two UN targets towards achieving SDG 1 is the establishment of poverty eradication policy frameworks at all levels. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had made clear strategic propositions to alleviate poverty amongst the downtrodden, which is directly connected to the target of establishing poverty eradication policy frameworks at all levels. His strategic propositions resulted in low income tax rates / No income tax for the marginalised and economically depressed. They can be further summarised as (1) sufficient checks and balances in the economic system to impede exploitation of the poor by the rich, (2) national level economic policies to protect perpetual national growth, including land reforms, (3) strike a right balance between economic and agricultural growth, etc.

## **3. SDG 2 - No hunger**

According to the United Nations, there are around 690 million people who are hungry, which accounts for slightly less than 10 percent of the world population. One in every nine people goes

to bed hungry each night, including 20 million people currently at risk of famine in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria. Under-nutrition has been on the rise since 2015, after falling for decades. This majorly results from the various stresses in food systems that reduce the purchasing power and the capacity to produce and distribute food. The UN SDG 2 aims to achieve Zero Hunger and end all forms of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, making sure all people—especially children—have sufficient and nutritious food all year [20, 21]. This involves promoting sustainable agriculture, supporting small-scale farmers and equal access to land, technology and markets. It also requires international cooperation to ensure investment in infrastructure and technology to improve agricultural productivity.

There are five outcome targets of SDG 2, which include ‘ending hunger and improving access to food’, ‘ending all forms of malnutrition’, ‘agricultural productivity’, ‘sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices’ and ‘genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals investments, research and technology’. The three proposed means of achieving targets include: ‘addressing trade restrictions’, ‘distortions in world agricultural markets’ and ‘food commodity markets and their derivatives’.

### 3.1. SDG 2 and Ambedkar:

Babasaheb Ambedkar stressed investment in agriculture as the key component for food security and sufficiency. His theory of socialism is three-pronged: state ownership of agricultural land, the maintenance of resources for production by the state, and a just distribution of these resources to the population. He emphasised a free economy with a stable currency. In 2015 at the 57th Dhammachakra Pravartan Din function, former Union Minister Sharad Pawar said that Ambedkar's vision helped the government to achieve its food security goal [22]. Ambedkar advocated collective / cooperative farming and urged reforms in laws and abolishing Zamindari, Watans including those granted to downtrodden or any other titled holdings with a view to eradicate monopoly of land distribution and

thereby uplift the stature of farmers of all classes [23].

The present day agricultural system involves not only self sufficiency but also extensive food trade. Current reforms under this framework have renewed the economic doctrine - now is the day of the fittest. The fittest survive. This economic principle has no place in Dr. Ambedkar's thought which inherits basics from doctrine of compassion and equality from Gautama Buddha [24].

### 3.2. Observations and proposals:

The UN proposed means of achieving SDG 2 include: addressing trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets and food commodity markets and their derivatives. This is straightforwardly in line with the current food generation (agriculture) and trade policies. Those nations export and import to make someone self-sufficient and hence alleviate hunger. However this paper observes an interesting philosophical conflict in the vision and ideology of Ambedkar. He strongly advocates self sufficiency both in terms of agricultural production and national economic structure. From Babasaheb Ambedkar's principles, the strategic formulation to eradicate hunger would be to (1) achieve food security by becoming self-sufficient producers of crop, (2) equal distribution of land, and (3) governmental interference in land holdings.

Following in the footsteps of Babasaheb's policy framework, India has experienced remarkable economic growth in recent years. In 2016, India ranked 97 among 118 developing countries according to the Global Hunger Index (GHI) [25]. Though 58.4% of children remain anaemic in 2015-16, there has been a substantial improvement from 2005-06 levels by 11 percentage points.

Incidence of anaemia among pregnant women has gone down by about 8 percentage points between 2005-06 and 2015-16: About 53% of the non-pregnant women (15-49 years) suffered from anaemia in 2016 as compared to 55.2% in 2005-06. This goes to show that Ambedkar's ideology of food security via sustainable food production practices and agricultural land holding policies

continue to reap benefits and hence should be included as a proposed means to achieve SDG 2.

#### **4. SDG 4 - Quality education**

The SDG 4 ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all [26]. The SDG aims to provide children and young people with quality and easily accessible education plus other learning opportunities. One of its targets is to achieve universal literacy and numeracy. The seven "outcome-oriented targets" are: 'free primary and secondary education'; 'equal access to quality pre-primary education'; 'affordable technical, vocational and higher education'; 'increased number of people with relevant skills for financial success'; 'elimination of all discrimination in education'; 'universal literacy and numeracy'; and 'education for sustainable development and global citizenship'. The three "means of achieving targets" are: 'build and upgrade inclusive and safe schools'; 'expand higher education scholarships for developing countries'; and 'increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries'.

##### **4.1. SDG 4 and Ambedkar:**

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is the greatest exemplar of the belief that education enables a man to overcome all obstacles in life, be they social, cultural or economic in nature [27]. Ambedkar holds the distinction of being the first Indian to pursue a doctoral degree in economics abroad [42]. He was the first PhD in economics and the first double doctorate holder in economics in South Asia. He was also among the most highly educated Indians of his generation. However, Ambedkar experienced untouchability and discrimination since he was a child. There were instances he was not offered a bullock cart and had to walk in the hot sun for several kilometres. He was refused even a glass of drinking water and

the village pump. Ambedkar conceived the Mahad Satyagraha in 1927 to highlight the issue of untouchability and caste discrimination. Consequently, In December 1937, the Bombay high court ruled that untouchables have the right to drink and use water from the tank.

Delhi Minister Manish Sisodia, specifically quoted "Babasaheb wanted the highest quality of education for every child [28]". Ambedkar's policies were to provide good education to all sections of people barring all castes and creeds. He worked relentlessly to provide educational reservations to the marginalised classes of people.

##### **4.2. Observations and proposals:**

The three means of achieving targets towards providing quality education to all sects people are very much in-line with the ideology of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Ambedkar's contribution to this mostly included empowerment of children from marginalised classes. The social marginalisation in education leads to economic marginalisation in employment. This socio-economic divide will pull down any good brought forth from the three UN proposed means of achieving the targets. This paper hence proposes that there should be an inclusion to create reservations/ benefits for marginalised classes of people to access high quality education without which any efforts to provide quality education will only result in a huge divide between the rich and the poor.

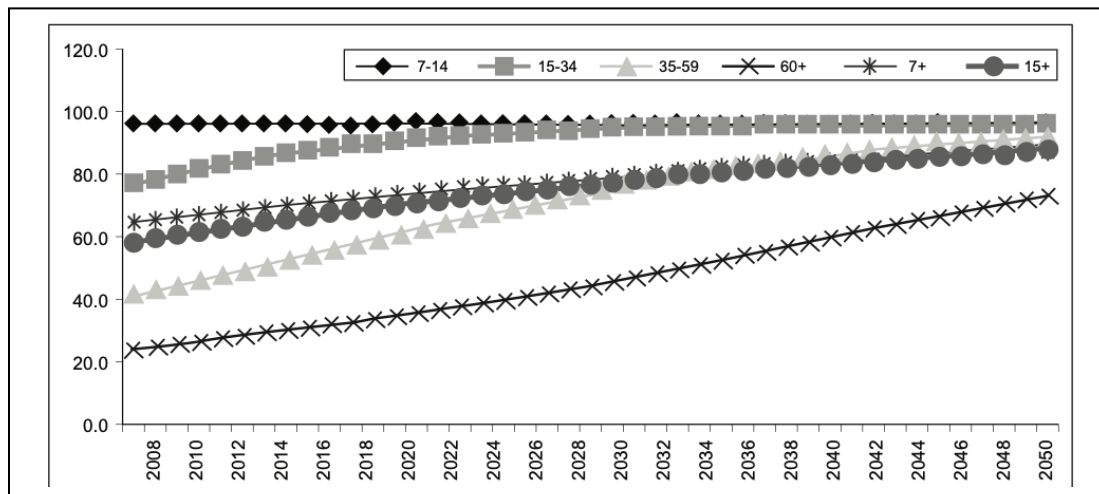
This ideology of Ambedkar is being followed per se in most states of India. As an example, The relentless efforts of the former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh (Late) Shri YS Rajasekhara Reddy and the present Chief Minister Shri YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in giving free professional education to all poor people (see Figure 3) has turned upside the entire education fabric of Andhra Pradesh and the state is teeming with engineering and other course professionals ready to take a job [29, 30].



**Figure 2. (Late) Shri YS Rajasekhara Reddy, Former CM of Andhra Pradesh initiating fees reimbursement,**



**Figure 3. Shri YS Jaganmohan Reddy, CM of Andhra Pradesh giving full fees reimbursement**



**Figure 4. Projected Literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh - Age group specific**

The author of this article in the capacity of Principal of an Engineering college, located at a rural village in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh holds a real-time on-field working experience on Dr. Ambedkar’s thoughts and ideology and has proven commitment to the cause of bringing up marginalized students to great success in higher education. Efforts are placed to bring out the hidden potential in students who heir from the humble backgrounds and extreme poverty to exhibit and showcase their latent talent at

National Platforms. The results are tangible. Students who are mentored to participate in a National Level competition, called Smart India Hackathon, organised by the All India council for Technical Education, New Delhi won the competition consecutively for three years in a row (2018, 2019, and 2020) and stood as National Winners. These marginalized students settled in their careers by obtaining good positions in some reputed Multi-National Companies and have gone to become bread winners for their entire families and brought esteem to their respective families in the society.



**Figure 5. Winners of SMART INDIA HACKATHON from WISTM College, Visakhapatnam – 2018, 2019 & 2020**



**Figure 6. T. Prasad (Regd. No. 315129510053), student of WISTM with two job offers from TCS & WIPRO, whose father was a cycle mechanic**

## 5. SDG 5 - Gender equality

The SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls [31]. Based on data from 87 countries, 1 in 5 women under the age of 50 will have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner. It has been found that women do 2.6 times more unpaid care and domestic work than men. While families, societies and economies depend on this work, for women, it leads to lower earnings and less time to engage in non-work activities. In addition to equal distribution of economic resources, which accelerates development in multiple areas, there needs to be a fair balance of responsibility for unpaid care work between men and women. Achieving Gender equality by 2030 requires urgent action to eliminate the some root causes of discrimination that still curtail women's rights in private and public spheres.

SDG 5 has nine targets and 14 indicators. Six of the targets are "outcome-oriented": 'ending all forms of discrimination against all women and

girls everywhere'; 'ending violence and exploitation of women and girls'; 'eliminating harmful practices such as child', 'early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation'; 'increasing value of unpaid care and promoting shared domestic responsibilities'; 'ensuring full participation of women in leadership and decision-making'; and 'ensuring access to universal reproductive rights and health'. The three "means of achieving" targets are: 'fostering equal rights to economic resources, property ownership and financial services for women'; 'promoting empowerment of women through technology'; 'adopting, 'strengthening policies and enforcing legislation for gender equality.

### 5.1. SDG 5 and Ambedkar:

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar quoted, "I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved." His philosophy was put to action in the Hindu Code Bill formulation. The Hindu code was brought into existence first by Jawaharlal Nehru. It was



revised by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in 1948 and was referred to a select committee under the chairmanship of law minister. The committee made a number of important changes to the bill, including making the laws applicable to even non-Hindus [32]. According to this bill, portions of inheritance to daughters, while giving widows complete property rights which had previously been restricted, was passed. The bill hence put forth gender equality in laws of inheritance and marriage.

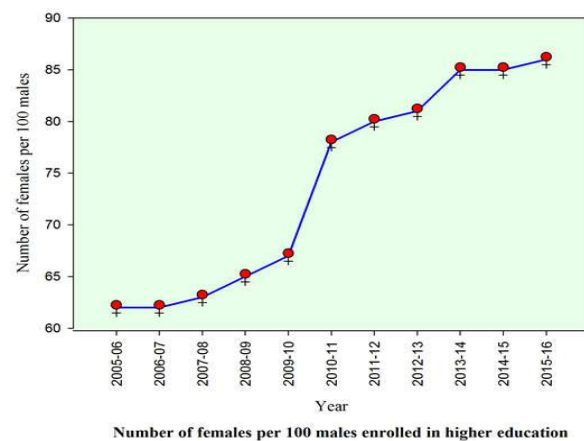
Babasaheb Ambedkar worked to ensure that women were also protected under labour laws [33]. He was instrumental in reducing the number of working hours and improving the working conditions. In 1928, as a member of the Legislative Council of Bombay, he supported a Bill granting paid maternity leave for women working in factories. Babasaheb Ambedkar also suggested strategies for emancipation of women from oppression. He found their emancipation in Buddhist values, which promotes equality, self-respect and education. The Indian National Policy for the Empowerment of Women 2001 was framed on these principles of equality and respect [33].

For the Indian women's movement Ambedkar provided a powerful source of inspiration to formulate a feminist political agenda which simultaneously addresses the issues of class, caste and gender in the contemporary socio-political set up, which still keeps conservative and reactionary values in many respects, particularly on gender relations. Ambedkar saw women as the victims of the oppressive, caste-based and rigid hierarchical social system. "Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar believed that society should be based on reason and not on dreadful tradition of caste system. His aim was to challenge the socio-political foundations of the hierarchical caste system that denied liberty, equality, and human poise to women in Hindu Society. He suggested the same in "The Annihilation of Caste System."

As law minister he made constitutional reforms and provisions for gender equality. He collated the common Civil Code for Hindus and other sections of the Indian social order [35, 36]. He indicated that women should be given all round development more notably social education, their well-being and socio-cultural rights. He

highlighted that Indian women of every section of the society should be given their due share and it is a duty to preserve and protect self-respect and reticence of women.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar provided strong constitutional safeguards to women. Ambedkar tried an ample inclusion of women's rights in the political lexis and Constitution of India. The Indian constitution has the following articles which give enough scope for the protection of women against any sort of discrimination, they are: Article 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39, 42, 51 A (e). Free legal aid (Article 39A of the Constitution). A direct consequence of Ambedkar's gender equality laws has resulted in nearly 90 females per 100 males enrolled in higher education as on 2016 (as shown in figure 7) and this shall become 1:1 soon.



**Figure7.Females with respect to males enrolment in Higher Education**

## 5.2. Observations and proposals:

The three means of achieving gender equality, as proposed by the UN SDGs are: equal rights, and property ownership; promoting empowerment of women through technology; and constitutional provisions. From what can be directly connected to these targets, the visionary Babasaheb Ambedkar has already worked extensively on the three means. He ensured constitutional provision for (1) equal rights, (2) property ownership, and (3) empowerment, safety and free legal aid.

The author of this article in the capacity of heading an institute and being a technocrat promoted Gender equality through encouraging

girl students from socially marginalized and economically deprived backgrounds to get equal opportunities to exhibiting their Technical skills and leadership on national level platforms. It can be observed from the figure-5, that nearly 75% of the national winning champions are girl students. This is in-line with achieving SDG5 and Dr.B.R. Ambedkar's Ideology on Gender equality.

## **6. SDG 10 - Reduced inequality**

The SDG 10 aims to reduce income inequality within and among countries [37]. This UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, "Equality of opportunity and development for all" at its heart is the shadow of its forerunner ideologies of Mahatma Gandhi and Bhimrao Ambedkar who made groundbreaking contributions towards reducing social and economic inequalities in India [41]. Reducing inequalities and ensuring no one is left behind are integral to achieving the SDGs. Inequality within and among countries is a persistent cause for concern. Despite some positive signs toward reducing inequality in some dimensions in some countries, inequality in India still persists.

The Goal has ten targets to be achieved by 2030. Progress towards targets will be measured by indicators. The first seven targets are "outcome targets": 'Reduce income inequalities'; 'promote universal social, economic and political inclusion'; 'ensure equal opportunities and end discrimination'; 'adopt fiscal and social policies that promotes equality'; 'improved regulation of global financial markets and institutions'; 'enhanced representation for developing countries in financial institutions'; 'responsible and well-managed migration policies'. The other three targets are "means of achievement" targets: 'Special and differential treatment for developing countries'; 'encourage development assistance and investment in least developed countries'; 'reduce transaction costs for migrant remittances'.

### **6.1. SDG 10 and Ambedkar:**

"What are we having this liberty for? We are having this liberty in order to reform our social system, which is fuel of inequality, discrimination and other things, which conflict

with our fundamental Rights" – Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

Caste posed a great challenge to the world both due to its origin and implications. Most of the academics have analysed its existence and described the operations with some implications. Ambedkar had not only written on the issues of caste inequality but also fought against it in India, especially for the human rights of untouchables/social outcasts known as Dalits [38]. According to him, the fundamental principle of the caste system is graded inequality. The system of caste does not provide any scope for the development of individual capacities; rather, it imposes the social status of parents on the children to go for hereditary occupation. Individual sentiment and preference have no place in it, and it is based on the dogma of predestination (Ambedkar, 1936, p. 47). As per his analysis, caste has two aspects. First, it divides men into separate communities. Second, it places these communities in graded order one above the other in social status. Each takes its pride and consolation in the fact that, in the scale of castes, it is above some other castes. All are slaves of the caste system, but all of them are not in equal status.

According to Babasaheb Ambedkar, the ideal society should be based on liberty, equality and fraternity. It should be mobile, full of channels for conveying a change taking place in one part to other parts. In an ideal society, there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be social endosmosis in the society [39].

Dr. Ambedkar had been closely involved in the struggle to give Indian outcasts, specifically the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people solid statutory safeguard. He was a delegate at the roundtable conference in London, where he argued for a separate electorate for the dalits. It is not a surprise that subsequently the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes were guaranteed in the 1949 constitution of India in the form of reservation in various fields such as legislative, employment and education. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a great champion for overcoming social inequalities in India. He succeeded in

turning the depressed class movement into a revolutionary movement throughout India [40].

### **6.2. Observations and proposals:**

The SDG aims to reduce inequality in the form of income. But what still persists and permeates within most societies is the inequality in the form of educational opportunities, social marginalisation, etc. that indeed lead to inequality of employment and consequently a economic divide. The UN proposed means of achievement for reducing this economic inequality are: ‘Special and differential treatment for developing countries’; ‘encourage development assistance and investment in least developed countries’; ‘reduce transaction costs for migrant remittances’. The same ideology has been put to action by Babasaheb Ambedkar in reducing the sociological inequalities: (1) reservations to the marginalised classes of people/countries, (2) additional benefits to uplift these marginalised classes, (3) providing constitutional inclusions in all areas of socio-economic aspects. Hence it may be perceived that unless social inequalities are eradicated it is not possible to eliminate economic inequalities.

Another aspect that tremendously helped Ambedkar reduce inequalities in the early 1950s is the idea of Educate, Agitate, Organise. Ambedkar’s project of educating the dalits began when he started the fortnightly Mook Nayak in 1920. His mission and vision were revealed through the publications of various magazines and journals, representations to government and related bodies for passing of legislatives helpful to promote the education of the depressed classes. It finally culminated in the establishment of schools, colleges, hostels and other educational

institutions. This ideology of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to reduce Socio-economic inequalities should be extensively practised by a developing country like India, which suffers from corruption and other limitations.

### **7. Summary**

This section summarises the action plan to achieve SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5 and 10 in coherence with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar’s Ideology. The SDG 1 aims to alleviate poverty of all kinds in all individuals; the UN action plan is synonymous to the Babasaheb driven action plan proposed in this paper. The SDG 2 aims to eradicate hunger and improve quality of life in all individuals; the UN action plan is possibly in disagreement with the Babasaheb driven action plan proposed in this paper as Babasaheb encourages self sufficiency and internal production while the UN encourages international trade to provide food to all mankind. The SDG 4 aims to provide high quality education to all children; the UN action plan is synonymous to the Babasaheb driven action plan proposed in this paper but the latter would possibly propose to include reservations to the poor to reduce the academic divide between the rich and the poor. The SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality; the UN action plan is synonymous to the Babasaheb driven action plan proposed in this paper. The SDG 10 aims to reduce inequality in all forms; the UN action plan is synonymous to the Babasaheb driven action plan proposed in this paper.

The Sustainable Development Goals and UN suggested means to achieve them and proposed Babasaheb Ambedkar Driven Action Plan are presented below in tabular forms.

SDG	1 - No poverty
Means to Achieve the SDG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mobilisation of resources to end poverty.</li> <li>2. Establishment of poverty eradication policy frameworks at all levels.</li> </ol>
Ambedkar driven action plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No income tax for the marginalised and economically backward employees.</li> <li>2. Sufficient checks and balances in the economic system to impede exploitation of the poor by the rich.</li> <li>3. National level economic policies to protect perpetual national growth, including land reforms.</li> <li>4. Strike a right balance between economic and agricultural growth, etc.</li> </ol>

SDG	2 - No hunger
Means to Achieve the SDG	Addressing trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets and food commodity markets and their derivatives.
Ambedkar driven action plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Achieve food security by becoming self-sufficient producers of crops.</li> <li>2. Equal distribution of agricultural land.</li> <li>3. Governmental interference in distribution and allocation of land holdings.</li> </ol>

SDG	4 - Quality education
Means to Achieve the SDG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build and upgrade inclusive and safe schools.</li> <li>2. Expand higher education scholarships for developing countries.</li> <li>3. Increase the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries.</li> </ol>
Ambedkar driven action plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inclusion of reservations / benefits for marginalised classes</li> <li>2. Provision of high quality education to all classes of people without which any efforts to provide quality education will only result in a huge divide between the rich and the poor.</li> <li>3. Free education to marginalized students</li> </ol>

SDG	5 - Gender equality
Means to Achieve the SDG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fostering equal rights to economic resources, property ownership and financial services for women.</li> <li>2. Promoting empowerment of women through technology.</li> <li>3. Adopting, strengthening policies and enforcing legislation for gender equality.</li> </ol>
Ambedkar driven action plan	(1) Equal rights, (2) Property ownership, (3) Women empowerment, safety and free legal aid, (4) Women Leadership (5) Special constitutional provisions to women

SDG	10 - Reduced inequality
Means to Achieve the SDG	1. Special and differential treatment for developing countries; 2. Encourage development assistance and investment in least developed countries; 3. Reduce transaction costs for migrant remittances.
Ambedkar driven action plan	1. Reservations to the marginalised classes of people. 2. Additional benefits to uplift these marginalised classes.. 3. Providing constitutional inclusions in all areas of socio-economic aspects.

## 8. Conclusion

Babasaheb Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar is a pioneering soul who worked for the cause of the upliftment of the downtrodden and marginalised communities in India and proposed solutions within a democratic framework to reduce the socio-economic divide in people. This paper proposed an Ambedkar driven action plan to achieve the UN SDGs to create a happy and contented world / nation India by 2030. This paper focussed on SDGs 1, 2, 4, 5 and 10 and made a descriptive analysis of the coherence in the ideologies of Babasaheb Ambedkar with the SDGs. The key contention of this study is that if one man, Babasaheb Ambedkar, possessing the same spirit and passion with which the SDGs have been framed, could achieve transformational change in a country as geographically and socially varied as India, then the strategic policies and ideologies of this could be straightforwardly adopted by a country as a whole in unison to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

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