7.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC:

To begin with, Dr. Ambedkar’s concept of ideal society is most relevant and suited to the needs of modern Indian society. To him, society is an integrated whole and each individual is related to another with social ties. His view of society fully endures that an individual is mainly responsible for his own welfare, and at the same time he shares the collective responsibility for the good of society. His cherished goal of an ideal society is to guarantee to all its members justice. Political, social and economic, and accounting to him, the attainment of his human ideal should be by democratic process. His advocacy of non-violence along with a democratic way of life is highly commendable in the existing conditions in India. Non-violent or the Constitutional method is the main feature of his philosophy of social humanism which is of utmost necessity in India today for its national unity and integrity.

As a sociologist, Dr. Ambedkar was one of the very few Indians who struggled to restructure the Indian society on the most egalitarian and humanitarian principles. He believed that the State has to play crucial role in restructuring the society under democratic polity and the foundation of democracy would be feeble and shall if there was no social and economic democracy constituent with political democracy. He proposed a strategy of
development based on growth with justice. Various scholarly works of Dr. Ambedkar indicate his contribution to economic thought and explain his deep insight the socio-economic problems of Indian society and his perspective of development.

Obviously, Dr. Ambedkar opined that the existing social and economic institution, particularly caste and land tenure system, were not conducive for accelerating economic development with social justice and there was a need for reforming them. He believed that the desired social and economic change could be brought about under democratic polity through Constitutional measures. For him, democracy means not only political democracy but also social and economic democracy and emphasized the need for removing these inequalities as per condition per stable democracy and rapid economic development with justice. He strongly believed that the social over based on the caste system was mainly responsible for the existing social and economic in equalities and economic backwardness and hence the need for annihilating caste system.

Dr. Ambedkar argued that caste system as a social institution did not promote the unity and integrity of nation and economic organization did not result in efficiency. But event today the defendant the caste system argue that it is another name for division of labour and if division of labour is necessary feature of every civilized society and that there is nothing wrong in the caste system. Dr. Ambedkar dismissed this kind of arguments and
emphatically argued that caste system does not represent division of labour on certain urgent grounds.

Caste is not nearly division of labour. It is also a division of labourers. It is hierarchical. The division of labourers are graded one above the other. Civilized society undoubtedly needs division of labours. But in no civilized society division of labour is accompanied by this unnatural division of labourers into water tight compartments. In no other country, the division labour is accompanied by the gradation of labourers. ¹

Caste system as a form of division of labourers suffer from another serious defects as it is based on the dogma of predestination. Individual preference has no place in it. And certain occupation assigned by caste system are degraded and the people engaged in such occupation were treated as defiling group and were put to social stigma untouchability. As a result, people engaged in such occupation were provoked to aversion and there was constant desire to avoid and escape from such occupation. In a system under which neither men’s hearts nor minds are at their work, there cannot be any efficiency. As an economic organization caste is, therefore, a harmful institution in as much as, it involves the subordination of man’s natural powers and inclinations to the exigencies of social rules.

Untouchability, which was the by product of caste system, was not only a form of social discrimination, but also a source of economic exploitation. Untouchables for centuries were not allowed to enter the villages during day time and to use the public utilize such as roads, wells,
tank etc. They were made to live on the outskirts of the village and physically segregated from the mainstream of life. They were assigned those occupations which were unclean and filthy and they were forced to remain in the same occupations. They were discriminated in the product market and in the factor market on the ground of untouchability. Under such circumstances, there was under utilization of labour. Economy ought to suffer on this account. The untouchables were denied right to education. They were denied the right of owning land and wearing jewellery. They were also denied the right of bargaining for wages and they should accept whatever was paid to them. They had to perform a number of duties in villages without any remuneration. Dr. Ambedkar observed that untouchability was more than a religious system. It was also an economic system worse than slavery. In slavery the master at any rate of slave would decline. But under untouchability the maintenance of the untouchable was the responsibility of nobody. Untouchability as an economic system permits exploitation without obligation. “Untouchability is not only a system of unmitigated economic exploitation, but is also a system of uncontrolled economic exploitation”.

In view of the above reason, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar felt that there was an immediate need of annihilation caste. So that there was no contradiction between socio-economic conditions, existing in the Indian society, and political democracy. It was the pre-condition for accelerating economic development through democratic methods. Dr. Ambedkar, in his speech
delivered to the Constituent Assembly in November 25, 1949, referred to contradiction, that is, equality in politics and inequality in social and economic life, the country was going to enter upon after the migration of the new Constitution of January 26, 1950, Dr. Ambedkar said

“How long summed we continue to deny equality in our social and economic life? If we continue to den it for long, we will do so only by putting our political democracy imperil. We must remove these contradictions at the earliest possible movement or less those who suffer from inequality will blow up the structure of political democracy which this assembly has so laboriously built up”. 2

“States and minorities”, a memorandum which Dr. Ambedkar prepared and submitted to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the All Indian Scheduled Caste Federation, depicts the blue print of Dr. Ambedkar’s model of economic development. His model of Economic Development further represents a modified form of State Socialism which was two special features: (1) it propose State socialism in important fields of economic life and (2) it does not leave the establishment of State Socialism to the well of legislature. 3

7.2 SALIENT FEATURES OF STATE SOCIALISM 4

The salient features of State Socialism proposed by Dr. Ambedkar are as follows.

1) Industries which are key industries or which may be declared to be key industries short be owned and run by the State.

2) The industries which are not key industries, but which are basic industries shall be owned the State and shall be run by the State or by corporation established by the State.
3) The insurance shall be the monopoly of the State and that the State shall compel every adult citizen to take out a life insurance policy commensurate.

4) The agricultural industry shall be State industry.

5) The State shall acquire the subsisting rights in such industries, insurance and agricultural land held by private individuals, whether as owners tenants or mortgages, and pay them compensation in the form of debenture equal to the value of his or her right in the land.

6) They shall also determine how and when the debenture holder shall be entitled to claim cash payment.

7) The debenture shall be transferable and inheritable property, but neither the debenture holder nor the transfer from the original holder nor his heir shall be entitled to claim the return of the land or enters in any industrial concern acquired by the State or be entitled to deal with it in any way.

8) The debenture holder shall be entitled interest on his debenture at such rate as may be designed by the law to be paid by the State in cash in kinds as the State may deem it fit.

9) Agricultural industry shall be organized on the following basis
   
   a. They shall divide the land acquired into forms of standard size and let out the farm for cultivation to residents of the village tenants (made up of groups of families) to cultivate on the following conditions.
i. The farm shall be cultivated as a collective form.

ii. The farm shall be cultivated in accordance with rules and directions issued by government.

iii. The tenants shall share among themselves in the manner prescribed the produce of the farm left after, the payment of charges properly leviable on the farm.

b. The land shall be let out of villages without distinction of caste or creed and in such manner that there will be no land lord, no tenant and no landless labour.

c. It shall be the obligation of the State to finance the cultivation of the collective farms by the supply of water drought animals, implements, manure, seeds etc.

d. The State shall be entitled to

i. Levy the following charges on the produce of the farm.

1. A portion of land revenue.

2. A portion to pay debenture holders and

3. A portion to pay for the use of capital goods supplied, and

ii. To prescribe penalties against the tenants, who break the conditions of tenancy or willfully neglect to make the boot use of the means of cultivations offered by the State or otherwise act prejudicially to the scheme of collective farming.  

5
10. The scheme shall be brought into operation as early as possible, but in no case shall the period extend beyond the tenth year from the date given in the Constitution earning into operation.

Thus, he proposed State ownership of agriculture with a collectivized method of cultivation and a modified form of State Socialism in the field of industry. He explains the merits of this scheme on the following grounds. It should be the obligations of the State to supply capital, necessary for agriculture as well as for industry. The insurance was also proposed to be nationalized with a double objective. Nationalized insurance film does in a much as it pledges the insurance money. It also gives for the ultimate resources necessary for financing its economic planning, in the absence of which, it would have to resort to borrowing from the money market at higher rate of interest. State Socialism is essential for rapid industrialization. Private enterprise cannot do it and if it did, it would produce those inequalities of wealth which private capitalism has produced in Europe and which should be a warning to Indians. He also opined consolidation of holdings and tenancy. Legislation are worse themselves. They cannot bring about prosperity in agriculture. Neither consolidation nor tenancy legislation can be of any help to the 60 millions of untouchables who are just landless labourers. Only collective farms can help them.

Dr. Ambedkar also proposed that the above scheme of State Socialism should not be left to the will of the legislature and it should be established by the law of Constitution so that it will be beyond the reach of a
parliamentary majority to suspend, amend or abrogate it. This guarantee's State Socialism while retaining Parliamentary Democracy

“It is only by this that one can achieve the triple object, namely to establish socialism, retain parliamentary democracy and avoid dictatorship”.6

Dr. Ambedkar also believed that his plan of socialism was essential form increasing productivity without closing every avenue to private sector and also distributing wealth equitably. “The main purpose behind this clause is to put an obligation on the States to plan the economic life of people on lines which would lead to highest point of productivity without closing every avenue to the private enterprise and also private for the equitable distribution of wealth.” 7

Further, Dr. Ambedkar also argued that if democracy was to live up to its principle of one man one man one value. It was essential to define both the economic structure as well as the political structure of society by the law of Constitution.8

7.3 POLITICAL POWERS OF DALIT RIGHTS:

“While feel nobody can remove our grievances as well as, we can, and we cannot remove them unless we get political powers in our own hands, I am afraid the depressed classes have wanted too long for a time to work its miracles”.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar - he said that political power was the key to all social progress and the Scheduled Caste could achieve their salvation if they captured the power by organizing themselves into a third party and held the balance of power between the rival political parties the congress and the socialists.9
Dr. Ambedkar says,

“I am confident that the future generation of Hindus will appreciate any services, when they study the history of Round Table Conference”. 10

It is thus clear that the population of the untouchables has been estimated to be somewhere about 50 millions that this is the population of the untouchables had been found by the census commission of 1911 and confirmed by the causes commission of 1921 and by the Simon Commission in 1929. This fact was never challenged by any Hindu during the twenty years it stood on the record. Indeed in so far as the Hindu view could be of urged from the reports of the different communities appointed by the provisional and the central legislatures to cooperate with the Simon Commission, there can be no doubt that they accepted this figure without any demur.

Suddenly, however, in 1932 when the Lothian Committee came and began its investigation, the Hindus adopted a challenging mood and refused to accept this figure as the correct one. In some of provinces Hindus went to the length of denying that there were nay untouchable there at all. Thus, episode reveals the mentality of the Hindu and as such deserves to be told in some details. 11

The Lothian Committee appointed in consequences of the recommendations made by the Franchise sub-committee of the Indian Round Table Conference. The committee toured the whole of Indians visited all provinces except central provinces and Assam. To aid the committee
there were constituted in each province by the provincial government, provincial committees comprising, so far as possible spokesmen of the various schools of thought and of the various political interests existing in each province. These provincial committees were in the main composed of members of the provincial councils with non-officials as chairmen. With a view to concentrating discussion, the Indian Franchise Committee, issued a questionnaire covering the field included in its terms of reference. The procedure laid down by the Franchises Committee was that provincial government should formulate their own views on the points raised in the questionnaire and discuss them with the committee and that the provincial committees who were regarded as authoritative advisers should independently formulate their views and should at their direction conduct a preliminary examination of witness on the basis of their witness Statement. The report of the Indian Franchise Committee was therefore, a thorough piece of work based upon detailed investigation. 12

“*It is evident from the discussions, which have occurred in various connections in the (Indian Round Table) Conference that the new Constitution must make adequate provisions for the representation of the depressed classes and that the method of representation by nomination is no longer regarded as appropriate. As you are aware, there is a difference of opinion whether the system of separate electorates should be instituted for the depressed classes and your committees investigation should contribute towards the decision of this question by indicating the extent to which the*
depressed classes would be likely, through such general extension of the Franchise as you may recommend, to secure the right to vote in ordinary electorates. On the other hand, should it be decided eventually to generally in those provinces in which they form a distinct and separate element in the population. Your committees inquiry into the general problem of extending the franchise should place you in possession of facts which would facilitate the division of a method of separate representation for the depressed classes”. 13

7.4 POLITICAL REFORM MUST PRECEDE SOCIAL REFORM:

Depressed classes from various parts of southern division presented a joint address to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar at Belgaum on May 24, 1932, Dewan Bahadur Lathe, who presided introduced the guest as a strong nationalist at heart. The address eulogized the service of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to cause of the depressed classes. The address and a pulse of Rs. 500 were then presented to Dr. Ambedkar.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his reply said political reform must precede social reform and without political power to the depressed classes their status would not improve. Though his striving for the good of depressed classes alone might be considered selfish, it could be justified in view of the great injustice done to them by the nation hitherto. 14

7.5 THE POLITICAL DEMANDS OF THE UNTOUCHABLES:

The problem of the untouchables is an enormous. As a matter of fact and in a brief compass what the nature of problem is and the solution which
the untouchables have themselves propounded. It cannot do better than begin by drawing attention to the following resolutions which were passed at the All India Scheduled Castes (under the government of India Act of 1935, the untouchables are designated as Scheduled Castes). Conference held in the city of Nagpur on 18th and 19th July 1942.

I. Resolution No. II: Consent Essential to Constitution:

“This conference declares that no Constitution will be acceptable to the Scheduled Castes unless.

i) It has the consent of the Scheduled Castes.

ii) It recognizes the fact that the Scheduled Castes are distinct and separate from the Indus and constitute an important element in the national life of India, and

iii) Contains within itself provisions which will give to the Scheduled Castes a real sense of security under the new Constitution and which are set out in the following resolution”. 15

II. Resolution No. III: Essential Provisions in the New Constitutions:

“For creating this sense of security in the Scheduled Castes’ this conference demands that the following provisions shall be made in the new Constitutions:

i) That in the budget of every provisional government are annual such as may be determined upon by a government be set a part for promoting the primary education among the children of the Scheduled Castes and another annual sum for promoting
advanced education among them such sums shall be declared to be the first change on the revenues of the province.

ii) That provisions shall be made by law for securing representation to the Scheduled Castes in all executive governments – central and provincial the proportion of which shall be determined in accordance with their number, their needs and their importance.

iii) That provision shall be made by law for securing representation to the Scheduled Castes in the public services the proportion of which shall be fixed in accordance with their number their needs and their importance. This conference further insists that in the case of security services such as judiciary, police and revenue, provisions shall, subject to the rule of minimum qualification, be realized a period of ten years.

iv) That provision shall be made by law for guaranteeing to the Scheduled Castes representation in all legislatures and local bodies in accordance with their number, needs and importance.

v) That provision shall be made by law whereby the representation of the Scheduled Castes in all legislatures and local bodies shall be by the method of separate electorates.

vi) That provision shall be made by law for the representation of the Scheduled Castes on all Public Service Commissions, Central and Provincial."
III. Resolution No. IV: Separate settlements:

“It is the considered opinion of the conference

i) That so long as the Scheduled Castes continue to live on the outskirts of the Hindu villages, with no source of livelihood and in small number as compared to Hindus, they will continue to remain untouchables and subject to the tyranny and oppression of the Hindus and will not be able to enjoy free and full life.

ii) That for the better protection of the Scheduled Caste from the tyranny and oppression of the caste Hindus, which may take a worse form under swaraj which cannot but be a Hindu raj and

iii) To unable the Scheduled Castes to develop to their fullest manhood to give them economic and social security as also to pave the way for the removal of untouchability. This conference has after long and nature deliberation come to the conclusion that a radical change must be made in the village system now prevalent in India and which is the parent of all the ills from which the Scheduled Castes are suffering for so many centuries at the hands of the Hindus. Realizing the necessity of these changes this conference holds that along with the Constitutional changes in the system of government there must be a change in the village system now prevalent, made along the following lines.

a. The Constitutional should provide for the transfer of the Scheduled Castes from their present habituation and form
separate Scheduled Caste villages away from and independent of Hindu villages.

b. For the settlement of the Scheduled Castes in new villages a provision shall be made by the Constitution for the establishment of a settlement commission.

c. All government laws which is cultivable and which is not occupied shall be handed over to the commission to be held in trust for the purpose of making new settlements of the Scheduled Castes.

d. The Commission shall be empowered to purchase new land under the Land Acquisition Act from private owners to complete the scheme of settlement of Scheduled Castes.

e. The Constitution shall provide that the Central government shall grant to the settlement commission a minimum sum of rupees five crores per annum to enable the commission to carry out their duty in this behalf. 17

7.6 HINDU OPPOSITION:

The demand set forth in those resolution fall into three categories (1) political (2) educational and (3) economic and social.

Taking the political demands just it is obvious that they are for three safeguards.
1) That the legislature shall not be merely representative of the people, but it shall be representative separately of both categories Hindu as well as untouchables.

2) That the executive shall not be merely responsible to the legislature, which means to the Hindus, but shall also be responsible both to the Hindus as well as the untouchables.

3) That the administration shall not be merely efficient, but shall also be worthy of trust by all sanctions of the people and also of the untouchables and shall contain sufficient number of representatives of the untouchables, holding key positions so that the untouchables may have confidence in it. 18

These political demands of the untouchables have been the subject matter of great controversy between the untouchables and the Hindus. Mr. Gandhi the friends of the untouchables, preferred to fast unto death rather than consent to them and although he yielded he is not reconciled to the justice underlying these demands.

Dr. Ambedkar, the people should show political power in a democratic government. Without sharing such power, the fate of a community may not be bright, political liberty means political power to capture the machinery of government. Political power is the most precious thing in the life of a community especially if it is position is constantly being challenged and the community is required to maintain it by meeting challenge political power in the only means by which it can sustain its
position. He does not want the people to use bad means in order to achieve political power. He condemns false propaganda, mis-representations or the hire of office or gold for share in the government organization. To him, independent organization is necessary for capturing the political power, he says

“if you are to share political power, you must organized as one solid remit before you could successfully fight for the due right in the future governments of the country. I must warn you against having too many leader who believed in paper bodies and paper parties.”

In his opinion, the downtrodden communities cannot take make any progress without sharing political power. He holds that political power is the key to all social progress. 19

According to Dr. Ambedkar political democracy rests on four premises.

1) The individual is an end in himself.

2) The individual has certain alienable rights which must be guaranteed to him by the Constitution

3) The individual shall not be required to relinquish any of his Constitutional rights as a condition precedent to the deceits of a privilege and

4) The State shall not delegate powers to private persons to govern others. Before passing any judgment on any scheme of political relationship the people must consider the ground plan, i.e., social relations indeed, the social structure has a profound effect on the
political structure, it may modify it in its working. It may nullify it or it may even make a mockery of it’. Democracy to him, should be realistic. His idea of democracy is tinged with social realism, human experience and reason, pragmatic and humanistic outlook on life.\textsuperscript{20} It is in the political, social and economic justice, in the promotion of social progress and better standard of life with peace and security in all spheres of human life.

Some organization, have come forward to organize welfare and development for the Dalits started as.

In 2002, the Hindu Sunday Magazine published an article. A Statement of self confidence by Dr. Meena Radhakrishna, which discussed new strategies and partnerships being formed by national conference of Dalit organizations (now the national confederation of Dalit organizations or NACDOR) to combat caste atrocities and empower Dalits in a globalize economy.

“Come together let us transform this world” ended the article which spoke about the communities call for building partnerships with progressive institutions and people in a bid to build a movement that changed the discourse from one of demanding justice to one of claiming rights.

Ten years on NACDOR has grown to be one of the largest platforms of Dalit organization in India. With more than 1,500 organizations of different kinds affiliated to it, including civil society organization, SC/ST employee welfare associations, Dalit Cultural and religious groups writers
and poet groups, students and teachers groups, workers and peasant
groups. Their aim to remains to bridge the developmental divide between
Dalits and non-Dalits.

The strategy was evident at the third National Conference of Dalit
organizations held in New Delhi between December 4 and 8, 2012. Where
over 10,000 grass root leaders and activities had gathered from over
20 States in the country to highlight their demands for essential services and
a life of dignity through rallies, street performances, music literatures, panel
discussion and interactions with members of parliament, government
representatives, civil society leaders and academics, three important strands
of conversion emerged, as grassroots leaders and activists narrated stories
their everyday lives.

Despite India’s impressive and inspiring Constitutional provisions
and laws that ban caste discrimination and untouchability, the reality is that
equality, equity and social justice are still mere words for thousands of
Dalits and other members of marginalized communities.

Article 17 of the Indian Constitution seeks to abolish untouchability
and its practice in any form in forbidden. The official report of the
commission of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (1998), however,
observed that the major causes of atrocities and other offences against
Scheduled Casts and Scheduled Tribes are related to issues of land and
property access to water, wage payments, indebtedness and bonded or force
and labour.
Dalit women are thrice alienated on the basis of caste, class and gender. Dalit grassroots women workers and activists at the conference deliberated on the dialogue with the women’s movement and emphasized the need for Dalit women to engage with mainstream movement and take on leadership roles in all mainstream campaigns to combat the huge money of non-Dalit women and Dalit men. Rajni Tilak, convener of the Rashtirya Dalit Mahila Andolan, says we struggle everyday on all fronts. We are Dalits, we are poor, and we are women, all we want is to work with dignity, without fear, to send our children to school where they will learn and not be mocked and humiliated.”

Dalits are also now a part of the mainstream economy as entrepreneurs and as consumers. Milind Kamble, founder chairman of DICCI. Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that the Dalit community has made an immense contribution to the economy. Urging that society rethink the way in which it looks at Dalits he said ‘3000 members of DICCI together are worth Rs. 30,000 crores, we are not dependent only on government largess. We are entrepreneurs and we pay taxes, we employ people, we have right a rightful share in economy, we have become provider of woke not just seekers of work. We must get the benefits of the government’s policies of privatization. We must become a part of this mainstream economy, and fight caste with capital’’.
In its bid to change the discourse from human rights violation to the larger agenda of social cultural and economic rights of Dalits NACD or has followed a two pronged path of advocacy and mobilization.  

7.7 CONCLUSION:

Obviously, that the existing social and economic institution, particularly caste and land tenure system, were not conducive for accelerating economic development with social justice and there was a need for reforming them, and they desired social and economic change could be brought about under democratic polity through Constitutional measures. Economic ought suffer on this account. The untouchables were denied right to education they were divided the light of owning land and weaving richly cloth and ornaments etc., and also they were also denied the right of bargaining for wages and they should accept whatever paid to them. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in his reply said political reform must precede social reform and without political power to the depressed classes their status would not improve though his striving for the good of depressed classes alone might be considered selfish, it would be justified in view of the great injustice done to them by the nations.
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