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Topic - Dalit Public Sphere: From Print Journals of Gandhi & Ambedkar to Online Media

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Findings

The study finds that Mahatma Gandhi's *Harijan* and Dr B R Ambedkar's *Janata* consistently raised the issues of Dalits and contributed to Dalit Public Sphere in their own ways. *Harijan*'s focus was maximum on the issues and challenges related to the Social Empowerment of Dalits. At the same time, the journal ignored the issue of Dalit Political Participation. In *Janata*, it is evident that Dalit consciousness was its top priority. *Harijan* gave more focus to Anti-Untouchability and Dalit Assimilation issue and less attention to Atrocities against Dalits. Likewise, *Janata* focused more on Dalit Education and less on Dalit Health and Hygiene

Devoted to the Dalit cause, the two journals regularly reflected the ideological positioning of Gandhi and Ambedkar and the changes in their approaches over the period which shaped the Dalit Public Sphere. In *Harijan*, the reflection of Gandhi's continuous emphasis on finding solutions to Dalit problems within the Hindu fold and in *Janata*, Ambedkar's initial efforts to raise Dalit status in Hindu religion and later his complete rejection of Hindu religion gave an ideological base to Dalit Public Sphere.

The discussion unveils that the most of social, political and economic issues of Dalits raised by Gandhi's *Harijan* and Ambedkar's *Janata* during their period, also have great significance in the current Digital age. The study reflects that atrocities against Dalits is still the main issue for Dalits. And that is why in the coverage of issues concerning Dalits, caste-based discrimination and atrocities find a sizable space in the content of Online Media working on Dalit issues.

One noticeable point in these platforms is that they are very assertive in highlighting the history, culture and achievements of Dalits, ideas and great works of lower caste social reformers and Saints. This underlines the robustness of the Online Dalit Public Sphere, where Dalits are interpreting their history from their own perspectives.