

**Programme:** Bachelor of Arts (Second Year)  
**Subject:** Sociology  
**Paper Code:** SOD 105  
**Paper Title:** Sociology of Marginalised Groups  
**Unit:** II  
**Module Name:** Early Life of Dr. B.R Ambedkar  
**Module No:** 06  
**Name of the Presenter:** Raisa CARdozo

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## Notes

### Dr. B. R. Ambedkar

**Name:** Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

**Born:** 14 April, 1891

**Place of Birth:** Mhow in Central Provinces (currently Madhya Pradesh)

**Parents:** Ramji Maloji Sakpal (father) and Bhimabai Murbadkar Sakpal (mother)

**Spouse:** Ramabai Ambedkar (1906-1935); Dr. Sharada Kabir rechristened Savita Ambedkar (1948-1956)

**Education:** Elphinstone High School, University of Bombay, Columbia University, London School of Economics

**Associations:** Samata Sainik Dal, Independent Labour Party, Scheduled Castes Federation

**Political Ideology:** Right winged; Equalism

**Religious Beliefs:** Hinduism by birth; Buddhism 1956 onwards

**Publications:** Essays on Untouchables and Untouchability, The Annihilation of Caste, Waiting for a Visa

**Passed Away:** 6, December, 1956

Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar, was a jurist, social reformer and politician. He is also known as the Father of Indian Constitution. A well-known politician and an eminent jurist, his efforts to eradicate social evils like untouchability and caste restrictions were remarkable. Throughout his life, he fought for the rights of the Dalits and other socially backward classes. Ambedkar was appointed as India's first Law Minister in the Cabinet of Jawaharlal Nehru. He was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor, in 1990.

## **Childhood & Early Life**

Bhimrao Ambedkar was born to Bhimabai and Ramji on 14 April 1891 in Mhow Army Cantonment, Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh). Ambedkar's father was a Subedar in the Indian Army and after his retirement in 1894, the family moved to Satara, also in Central Provinces. Shortly after this, Bhimrao's mother passed away. Four years later, his father remarried and the family shifted to Bombay. In 1906, 15 year old Bhimrao married Ramabai, a 9 year old girl. His father Ramji Sakpal died in Bombay, in 1912.

Throughout his childhood, Ambedkar faced the stigmas of caste discrimination. Hailing from the Hindu Mahar caste, his family was viewed as "untouchable" by the upper classes. The discrimination and humiliation haunted Ambedkar at the Army school. Fearing social outcry, the teachers would segregate the students of lower class from that of Brahmins and other upper classes. The untouchable students were often asked by the teacher to sit outside the class. After shifting to Satara, he was enrolled at a local school but the change of school did not change the fate of young Bhimrao. Discrimination followed wherever he went. After coming back from US, Ambedkar was appointed as the Defence secretary to the King of Baroda but there also he had to face the humiliation for being an 'Untouchable'.

## **Education**

He cleared his matriculation in 1908 from Elphinstone High School. In 1908, Ambedkar got the opportunity to study at the Elphinstone College and obtained his graduate degree in Economics and Political Science in the year 1912 from Bombay University. Besides clearing all the exams successfully Ambedkar also obtained a scholarship of twenty five rupees a month from the Gaekwad ruler of Baroda, Sahyaji Rao III. Ambedkar decided to use the money for higher studies in the USA. He enrolled in the Columbia University in New York City to study Economics. He completed his Master's degree in June 1915 after successfully completing his thesis titled 'Ancient Indian Commerce'.

In 1916, he enrolled in the London School of Economics and started working on his doctoral thesis titled "The problem of the rupee: Its origin and its solution". With the help of the former Bombay Governor Lord Sydenham, Ambedkar became a professor of political economy at the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics in Bombay. In order to continue his further studies, he went to England in 1920 at his own expense. There he was received the D.Sc by the London University. Ambedkar also spent a few months at the University of Bonn, Germany, to study economics. He received his PhD degree in Economics in 1927. On 8 June, 1927, he was awarded a Doctorate by the University of Columbia.