BLOGOSPHERE –
AN EMERGING PLATFORM FOR DALITS’ VOICES IN INDIA

C. SURESH KUMAR

PH.D,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY,
PUDUCHERRY, INDIA.

ABSTRACT
Dalits also called untouchables are the ‘lowest’ social group in India. Dalits have been historically excluded and discriminated from the mainstream public sphere. Many Dalit leaders have fought for the emancipation of Dalits. But the role of media towards cause is very crucial and vital. One of the main reasons for the inadequate media representation of Dalit issues in Indian mainstream media is the dearth of Dalit journalists in the media industry. As the Indian media industries are elite oriented and upper class monopolized, there was a need for Dalits to express and speak in a platform through which they can reach the rest of the world. Though efforts were taken by Dalit reformers to start their own media, owing to several factors, they could not sustain on par with the mainstream media. On account of the proliferation of Internet and the new digitalization, multiple alternative media have emerged. In response to the neglect by the mainstream media, Dalits have turned to the new media tool such as blogs as an alternative space to challenge the dominant public discourse through varied discursive practices. This study utilizes Bailey’s et al., frameworks of alternative media to analysis and discuss the extent where blogs have been made use by the Dalits as an alternative media to voice their views. The findings of the study testify that Dalit blogs are a new form of vibrant and dynamic virtual public sphere tool to communicate with like-minded Dalits and non-Dalits across the globe. The study also outlines that blogs are significantly utilized by the educated Dalits to air their voices without fear and to write about issues neglected and forgotten by the mainstream media.

KEY WORDS: Dalits, alternative media, caste, and blogs.

References
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