

# Russia's policy on the Kashmir issue and its relation with India

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***Abstract:** This article deals with Russia's stand on India's Kashmir dispute historically and the shaping and evolvement of India's relation with Russia over the years. It tries and examines the major policy relations and how the India-Russia foreign policy dynamics shaped Russian views on the Kashmir problem. It also discusses their treaties of friendship and cooperation in various fields and whether there has been any major changes in Russia's policy on the Kashmir issue over the years.*

**Keywords:** Article 370, Foreign Policy, Pakistan, Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, Russia, South Asia

## **Brief History on the Kashmir Issue**

On the eve of India's independence from the British rule on 15 August 1947, the Indian subcontinent was partitioned into two territories that were carved out of British Indian provinces to form the newly formed state of Pakistan. There were about 565 princely states, the fate of which were to be decided by the rulers in those states. Almost 500 of them joined either India or Pakistan. The state of Jammu and Kashmir was one among the princely states that did not join either of the two Union. The then ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, Maharaja Hari Singh established an agreement with Pakistan to continue administering on areas like communication, post and telegraphs, central excise etc and maintain its status quo. But it did not create any arrangements for rights and obligations from the accession. It was Pakistan that violated the agreement and pressurized the Jammu and Kashmir government to ensure its accession. When the ruler of Kashmir disagreed to accede, Pakistan imposed economic sanctions on Kashmir and basic supplies and services promised through the agreement were stopped. Despite that the Maharaja could not be forced to a decision. On 22 October 1947, tribals from north-west frontier invaded Kashmir causing great havoc and destruction, atrocities were committed against women, children, men ravaging villages and towns on their way through. Under such circumstances of an emergency attack, the ruler of Kashmir sought help from India and under the Instrument of

Accession acceded to the Union of India on 26 October 1947. The Instrument of Accession was unconditional, voluntary and absolute and bound the State of Jammu and Kashmir to India legally and constitutionally (Anand 2001). The very next day Indian troops flew to Kashmir and successfully pushed back the invaders from large parts of Kashmir. Since then Pakistan has launched an undeclared war on Kashmir. In a move to not further aggravate the situation in Kashmir, India took up the matter to the United Nations so that the countries of the world could put pressure on Pakistan to stop its aggression on Kashmir. Therefore, India by invoking articles 34 and 35 of the UN (United Nations) charter in the UN Security Council (UNSC) accused Pakistan of assisting its nationals and tribesman in invading Jammu and Kashmir and stated that such an assistance amounted to an act of aggression. The UNSC passed a resolution to this effect on 13 August 1948 and established the UN commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) after discussing the matter with the governments of India and Pakistan. The resolution had 3 parts one, dealing with the cease-fire agreement, second, was the truce agreement and last one dealt with determining the future status of Jammu and Kashmir according to the will of the people (Singh 1995). The resolution also called upon Pakistan to withdraw its tribesman from the State of Jammu and Kashmir as well as the Pakistani nationals that have been residing illegally in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. A very important recognition was that of Pakistani troops present inside the territory of Jammu and Kashmir which was constantly denied by Pakistan. Kashmir's legal accession to the union of India was upheld by the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. A constitution was drafted for the state of Jammu and Kashmir with effect from 26 January 1957. It declared that the "State of Jammu and Kashmir is and shall be an integral part of the Union of India". Kashmir which has often been described as a paradise on earth has undergone aggressions and conflicts over the years- in 1947, 1965, and again in 1971. Pakistan has been repeatedly asserting Kashmir's right of self-determination (Kapur 2005). We cannot overlook the fact that despite the accession, promises were made by prominent Indian leaders that Kashmiri people's aspirations would be taken into account as it becomes a part of India. This assertion was made under the condition that Pakistan would renounce its aggression and pull out its forces from Kashmir first. But till today Kashmir has not been clear of invaders and continues to occupy two-fifths of the state's territory (Singh, 1995). The Article 370 of Indian Constitution is a provision by the virtue of which the state of Jammu and Kashmir has acquired a special status. It enables the state to have its own constitution and its own national flag (The

Hindu 2019). And article 35A empowers the state of Jammu and Kashmir to define who are the “permanent residents” of the state and also the rights and privileges of those citizens. The state also could decide on who can purchase land and immovable property, including voting rights, employment and education.

### **Creation of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) or Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK)**

Azad Jammu and Kashmir or POK was an outcome of the division of the Dogra principality of Jammu and Kashmir, and a mass uprising in the Poonch area of Kashmir that happened during Indian intervention in 1947-48. Azad Kashmir or Pakistan Occupied Kashmir does not geographically belong to Pakistan, but it is not independent either. The people of Kashmir revolted against the ruler and occupied about one-third of the state of Jammu and Kashmir and ‘freed’ (Azad) while the maharaja asked India for help. Azad Kashmir declared self government on October 24, 1947.

Pakistan’s sharp reaction to the ‘accession’ and the revolt in Kashmir took shape into an Indo-Pak war with Pakistan backed Kashmiris who were opposing Kashmir’ accession. In the mean time India took up the Kashmir question to the UNSC on January 1, 1948. The next year on the same day the UN reinforced ceasefire between India and Pakistan. The UNSC Resolution of April 21, 1948 liberated areas of AJK. Sardar Mohammad Ibrahim Khan became the president of the interim government formed at AJK. The UNSC and UNCIP defines AJK as neither a sovereign state nor province of Pakistan but rather a ‘local authority’ with responsibility over the area assigned to it under the ceasefire agreement. A UNSC resolution states “pending a final solution, the territory evacuated by the Pakistani troops will be administered by the local authorities under the surveillance of the commission” (Mahmud, 2006). The UNCIP gave *de facto* recognition to the Azad Kashmir government. On September 2, 1948 member of UNCIP from India Joseph Korbel said that by the term ‘local authority’ India means the Azad Kashmir people, as recognition cannot be granted to the Azad Kashmir government. This was the last reference to Kashmir found in the UNSC relating to the status of AJK.

Pakistan’s stand on the Kashmir issue is that it considers the accession of Jammu and Kashmir itself as neither final nor legal. It believes that Kashmiri people should decide through a referendum whether they would like to join India or Pakistan. The constitutional clause of

Pakistan states that “when the people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir decide to accede to Pakistan, the relationship between Pakistan and the state shall be determined in accordance with the wishes of the people of that state (Mahmud, 2006).

The Indian government considers that Kashmir has always been an integral part of India since its accession to India and all its uprisings falls under India’s domestic affairs. India believes Pakistan has to relieve the illegally occupied territories of AJK, Gilgit and Baltistan and free those zones. India is ready for a discussion on Kashmir only within the framework of the Indian constitution and under the terms of Simla agreement through a bilateral framework.

The fate of India and Pakistan are inseparably linked. They share a common history, culture that goes back to centuries ago. For that reason, the resolution of Kashmir issue and conflict is very important. Efforts need to be made by both the countries to get over their troubled past by resolving their issues that has beleaguered their bilateral relations.

### **Evolution of India- Russia partnership and Russia’s Kashmir policy**

Russia was drawn towards the politics of the Indian subcontinent for a number of reasons like to assert its role in a region that became involved in Cold war politics due to Pakistan joining the Western-led alliance and to counterbalance the increasing Western diplomatic and strategic intervention into South and Southeast Asia. Another reason was also to further India’s policy of Non-alignment. The Soviet Union under its leadership, Nikita Khrushchev supported India’s policy of nonalignment due to the fact that the policy of nonalignment can keep the newly emerged independent countries of Asia and Africa away from joining any bloc politics<sup>1</sup>. The USSR appreciated and encouraged India's desire to remain nonaligned during the Cold War period, and also helped in enhancing India's international prestige by calling for her inclusion in many international conferences (Stein 1967). Following of India’s non-alignment policy by the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa kept them away from Bloc politics. At the same time during this period with the beginning of a Sino-Soviet rift the Soviet Union saw India as a counterweight to China’s increasing influence in Asia (Stein 1967).

### **India-Russia Foreign policy dynamics**

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<sup>1</sup> During the Cold War period (1947-1991) there was an ideological war between the Western Bloc or capitalist system (led by the U.S) and the Eastern Bloc or communist system (led by USSR).

Both India and Russia share a special and privileged strategic relationship. During the Soviet period India's strong relations with the Soviet Union was the reason for negative impact in Soviet-People's Republic of China relations (PRC) and Indo-PRC relations. It was also a reason due to which the Soviet Union was neutral during the border dispute of 1959 as well in the Sino-India war of 1962. The Soviet also agreed to share the technology of Mikoyan Gurevich MiG-21 fighter planes with India in 1962 (Donaldson 1972). Earlier in 1955 the First Secretary of the Communist Party, Nikita Khrushchev visited India and unequivocally supported Indian sovereignty over the disputed territory of Kashmir as well as the Portuguese coastal enclaves of Goa. The Soviet Union under Premier Alexei Kosygin successfully brokered peace between India and Pakistan after the war in 1965 and helped put an end to the military conflict over Kashmir. The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1971 also acted as a security agreement against possible Chinese attack from the side of West Pakistan in which India supported the secession of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) from West Pakistan. With Gorbachev's new third world policy further Indo-Soviet relations improved as Gorbachev's first visit to a third world state was his meeting with Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1986.

In the Cold war period, Russia helped India in difficult situations by vetoing UN resolutions. Russia's hundred veto in the UNSC on 22 June 1962 in support of India's stand on Kashmir was a heavy blow to the West's design to leverage the disputed region of Kashmir away from India's control and give it to Pakistan. Historically, Russia has supported India on Kashmir. Russia stood by India at a time when the Anglo-Americans were supporting Pakistan. During their visit in the year 1955, Soviet leaders Nikita Khrushchev and Bulganin visited Srinagar and laid the foundations of an extensive Indo-Soviet partnership. Khrushchev declared that Moscow was just across the border and India can give one shout if there is any trouble over Kashmir. Russia kept its word and vetoed the Anglo-American moves on Kashmir in the UN in 1950s.

Relations between India-Russia dates back to the 1950s when it was at its peak during the 1970s period but declined after that in the 1980s. Despite some de-escalation and decline of their relations in the 1990s period, the historical ties between India and Russia remain stable and enduring. The most important aspect of the India-Russia relationship has been that Russia has time and again proved to be a sensitive and vital strategic partner of India. Nikita Khrushchev, the secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the year 1955 gave a clear and

unequivocal support for India's stand on Kashmir, declaring Kashmir to be an integral part of India. And subsequently also in a number of resolutions of the United Nations Security Council during the years 1957, 1962 and 1971 Russia was the only country that vetoed West-led resolutions that was seeking UN interventions in Kashmir (Kumar 2019).

It was again in 1971 after many years a resolution on Kashmir was passed in the UN (Resolution 07, December 21, 1971) calling India and Pakistan to respect the ceasefire line after the Bangladesh war. After the Simla Agreement of 1972 both India and Pakistan initiated to renounce conflict and confrontation which had damaged their relations in the past and to work towards the establishment of durable peace, friendship and cooperation. The agreement further stated about peaceful resolution of all issues through direct bilateral approaches, people to people contacts and inviolability of the Line of control in Jammu and Kashmir. The Soviet Union helped by vetoing many resolutions that Pakistan tried to launch. After the Simla agreement of 1972 which committed to a bilateral resolution, the UNSC references to Kashmir ended entirely.

Recently, when the abrogation of Article 370 happened, Russia supported India by terming it as an "internal and domestic" issue. After nearly 50 years the Kashmir issue has re-emerged again on the UN Security Council. Yet again, Russia emphasized that the Kashmir issue is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan and it should be solved through political and diplomatic means. Russia is the first among the P-5 countries to have taken a stance and called for a resolution on the Kashmir issue through the Simla Agreement of 1972. There has been no major shift in Russia's policy towards India especially on Kashmir.

The Tashkent Conference was an initiative by Russia to organize a tripartite Indo-Pak summit, thus emphasizing Moscow's significant interest in the South Asian region. Pakistan, after having failed at stimulating the Kashmir issue at the UN Security Council saw this summit as an important political opportunity to show its valuable gesture towards Moscow (Seth 1969). Moreover, Pakistan was seeking an opportunity to recognize Kashmir as a disputed area and after India's repeated refusal at the UNSC, the Tashkent conference provided a chance to focus on the Kashmir issue. Russia's diplomacy played a successful role in consolidating a future rapprochement between Indo-Pak by a continuous Russian mediation. By announcing the Tashkent Declaration, Russia seemed to have assumed a moral responsibility for solving the Kashmir issue (Seth 1969). There is also no denying of the fact that the Indo-China war of 1962

had an impact on the India-Russia relations due to the Western aid received by India which raised doubts about India's policy of nonalignment. This distrust was further deepened with the death of Nehru and under the prime ministership of Indira Gandhi who undertook initiatives such as privatization of the industries and also inviting US capital investment. The bitterness in their relation was further accentuated by India's import of food supplies from the US. In such a scenario where India would accept only minor changes on Kashmir, while Pakistan would not be accepting any distribution short of total surrender of Kashmir it is a difficult task for Moscow to appease both India and Pakistan.

The Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation that exemplified the special bond between India and the then Soviet Union, now Russia, was signed in August 1971. The 1965 Indo-Pak war proved India to be a capable military power. India was growing as an economic and political power which meant that it was no longer reliant on Soviet backing. The period from 1971 to Mikhail Gorbachev's succession to the Soviet leadership it can be said that their bilateral relationship marked a clear tilt of the Russian side towards India. Like, when India conducted a nuclear test on May 1974 in the deserts of Rajasthan, despite Russia being a party to Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty the Soviet Union avoided criticizing India publicly. Similarly, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 worried India in terms of the threat to security in the South Asian region. And also the rearming of Pakistan by the U.S deeply concerned India as India's predominance in maintaining security in the South Asian region deeply troubled its aspirations. India may have asked in private to the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan but publicly it always refrained from criticizing Moscow. This was the kind of Soviet-India relationship of friendship and cooperation.

The period of 1980s was marked by liberalization in India and the Soviet Union. During the prime ministership of Rajiv Gandhi India's economy was being freed partially from government control and a campaign was launched towards modernizing science and technology. This meant that India had to keep its economy more open to the West-oriented approach. With Mikhail Gorbachev being appointed as the General Secretary in the year 1985 new reforms such as *perestroika* (political and economic restructuring) was introduced that made the Soviet Union open to improving relations with countries like the U.S, China etc. And this policy also had an effect on the Soviet policy towards South Asia. As it was reflected in Moscow's zest for



resolution of conflict with countries like Pakistan, that were erstwhile Cold War enemies. The reform introduced during the 1990s was also one reason for the breakdown of political and strategic basis of the Indo-Soviet relation.

The Cold War ended and new equations were forming, former enemies becoming today's frontier states against terror. Pakistan that has been previously supplied with military and economic aid from America was withheld services from the US and now the country is interested in setting up cordial relations with Russia. However, the fact is that the strategic location of Pakistan that provides access to the Silk Route, West Asia and Central Asia has acted as a main attraction to world's leading power.

Almost sixty per cent of India's military imports came from Russia in the 1980s period. One reason was due to the fact that the Western powers like UK, US and France refused to supply India with some weapon systems. On the other hand Moscow not only willingly gave India military hardware but gave license to Indian companies for manufacture of MiG-21 and MiG-27L. Credits were offered for arms procurement at a very low interest rates and payment could be made through amount generated from trade excesses. That changed after 1990 when payments were asked to be made by hard currency as both the countries calculated their interest and profits. Subsequently, over a period of time the Soviet Union withdrew its stand and absolute support on the Kashmir issue during the period of 1990-1991.

### **Changing trends in South Asia and Russia's stand on Kashmir**

Recently, the Russian foreign ministry stated the need for de-escalation of tensions and has conveyed that to Pakistan (Roche, 2019). This statement was made by Russia after Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan questioned the silence of the international community after India's move to abrogate Jammu and Kashmir's special status. The announcement came after Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan vowed to become the voice of Kashmir and raised the issue at all global forums in addition to at the United Nations. Russian foreign ministry stated and conveyed to Pakistan "that there is no alternative to resolve differences between Pakistan and India except bilaterally through political and diplomatic means". Russia's representative to the UN stand by to this consistent position. Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov issued this statement over a telephonic conversation with Pakistan's foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi.



Russia's disinterest in involving in the conflict as a third party highlights not only its unwillingness to involve in a bilateral conflict but also can be seen in the light of the fact that it wants India and Pakistan to solve the controversial issue through a common ground among themselves. It also reflects the importance of Russia's traditional policy in the post Cold war period.

Russia and India need to revive their relationship in a changed scenario of shifting foreign policies of the two countries. Russia's priorities have changed with its interest shifting more towards the West and Europe and relation with India has no longer been accorded with topmost priority. Likewise India has also shifted its focus towards the US. Despite that India and Russia maintain a deep bond in terms of military support. Russia supported India's nuclear programme at a time when the rest of the world imposed sanctions on India. Russia has stood by its friendship with India at adverse times. It can be said therefore that India has much more to gain from Russia.

If we see things from an Indian security perspective China's nuclear weapons program, and sale of missiles to Pakistan suggest serious security threats. The 1962 China-India war and India's losing Aksai Chin (northeast) region of Kashmir has a deep impact on the Indian mind (Nadkarni 1995). The growth of insurgency in Kashmir since 1987 backed and supported by Pakistan has added to India's security threats giving rise to questions of human rights violations in counter-revolutionary treatment of insurgents by the Indian armed forces. Pakistan is a nuclear capable state which is another cause of concern for India complicating the Kashmir issue.

Russia's political detachment from South Asia happened at such an ill-timing in India's domestic affairs. With the collapse of Soviet Union, India lost a valuable ally who played the role of a 'balancer' in the US-China-USSR triangle (Nadkarni, 1995). The US began losing interest on Pakistan after Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Easing of US-Pak ties began after 9/11 attacks which briefly improved India-US relations. But the US needs India to counter China's growing influence in Asia. Pakistan has also been successfully able to bring in the US to put pressure on India over the Kashmir issue as well as the NPT (Non Proliferation treaty). With a global economic shift towards Asia, Russia seeks to diversify its dependence away from China. Indian investors need to look at Russia's Far East exploring investment opportunity. Defence ties remains the keystone of India-Russia bilateral relations. India bought S-400 missile defence

system of \$ 5 billion sidelining US sanctions which again underlines New Delhi's importance attached to Russia-India defence ties.

Russia moving closer to Pakistan does not imply it is moving away from India. Despite Russia's upgraded relation with Pakistan, Moscow focuses on peaceful and bilateral resolution of the Kashmir issue. Recently, during the 5<sup>th</sup> Eastern Economic Forum held at Vladivostok, Russia on September 4, 2019 there was a statement from Russian embassy stating that "Moscow follows a policy of non-interference in domestic affairs of countries and will not mediate in the Kashmir issue unless requested by both India and Pakistan. India's decision on Jammu and Kashmir is a sovereign which is as per its constitution".

The support of countries like U.S, U.K and France to Pakistan was one reason why Kashmir got involved in the Cold War politics and therefore India insisted on a bilateral resolution of the conflict. With change in stance of these states China has become a chief ally of Pakistan. There is no doubt that China has become critical economic and geostrategic partner of Russia after Western sanctions. But it treats two countries as separate entities crucial for Russia and remains neutral in bilateral crisis like the recent Doklam crisis of July 2017 (Kumar 2019).

Despite Russia's upgraded relation with Pakistan, Moscow focuses on peaceful and bilateral resolution of the Kashmir issue. Pakistan's significance to Russia rises from its involvement in Afghanistan. Russia's negotiation with Taliban and its success depends on tacit approval of the Pakistan army. But that does not in any way mean Russia views Kashmir and Afghan crisis as interconnected.

There has been no substantial change in Russia's policy towards Kashmir. Russia understands India's importance in its geostrategic calculations. India supported Russia in its annexation of Crimea. Russia supported India's membership to Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) with India becoming full member of SCO by 2017. Russia reiterates in multilateral forums like SCO and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) about "sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs". Russia itself was a victim of Islamic radicalism and secessionism in Chechnya and so is unsupportive in such cases elsewhere (Kumar 2019).

## Conclusion

In the recent years despite some de-escalation and decline in India-Russia relations, the historical ties between India and Russia remain stable and enduring. It can be said that nothing much has changed in Russia's stand over India's Kashmir crisis. Russia continues to maintain its policy of non-intervention in domestic policy matters of other countries which is reflected in its policy over Kashmir as well. But Russia also believes Kashmir is a sovereign issue of India under its constitution. However, recently when India revoked Article 370 by removing special status of Kashmir, Russia invoked that India and Pakistan needs to solve the issue bilaterally, thereby deciding to take a neutral stand on Kashmir. Overall the most important aspect of the India-Russia relationship has been that Russia has time and again proved to be an all-weather friend of India.

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## Transformation of Myth into Reality: Media, Cultural Nationalism and Indian Politics

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### Abstract:

*The meteoric rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the last few decades, which has established a new political order in Indian politics, can be interpreted as the crystallization of the forces of cultural nationalism. Cultural nationalism is not a novel phenomenon in India; it was the dominant force in the anti-colonial movement in the pre-independent period, and it remains a deciding factor in Indian politics even today. Media play a tremendously powerful role in the production of cultural nationalism. They possess an enormous capacity to translate a cultural content into a political force. They can influence the public opinion through the dissemination of the political and cultural messages under the pretext of entertainment, and thus work as a political weapon in the hands of the dominant cultural groups. The article specifically focuses on the telecast of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata on the DD National channel in the 1980s, and attempts at gauging the impact of those popular TV serials on the development of an unprecedented wave of Hindutva, which subsequently created a climate of cultural nationalism in India contributing to the increasing popularity of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Indian politics.*

**Keywords:** Media, myth, cultural nationalism, Bharatiya Janata Party, Indian politics.

The statistics of the Indian General Election 2019 reveal that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won 353 seats out of 543 seats, and it was much ahead of its opponent, the Indian National Congress (INC)-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA), which won only 92 seats in the Lok Sabha. In terms of percentage of votes too NDA was in a much better position than the UPA, winning 45 per cent of 60.37 crores of votes that were polled, while UPA scored only 19.5 per cent. The phenomenal success of the BJP in the Lok Sabha Election 2019, winning an overwhelming majority to form the government for the two consecutive terms, can be said to be the culmination of the forces of cultural nationalism in India in the contemporary times. Despite the fact that the individual charisma of the Prime Minister and some other contestants, and the strategies adopted by the Party to fight the Election, had worked magically for the massive victory, the role that media played in shaping the public opinion can never be underestimated. In

fact, the role of media in modern day power politics is enormous; the success of the modern politics depends largely upon the appropriate (mis)use of the media. Media have the huge potency to convert popular culture into a political force. The roots of the success of the NDA in the Lok Sabha Election 2019 lie deeper, in the climate of cultural nationalism in India, mainly created by numerous ideologues of Hindu nationalism and the media. The unique combination of manifold factors culminated into the unprecedented victory of the NDA.

Ironically, the birth of the sectarian force occurred from the womb of secularism in India. It not only suggests the failure of secularism to address the diverse aspirations of the citizens, but it also speaks of the complicated and unpredictable nature of nationalism. The INC that had somehow maintained the ‘secular’ nature of the Indian Constitution from the time of Jawaharlal Nehru, deviated from its ‘secular’ nature in 1987, when Ajit Kumar Panja (1936-2008), the then Union Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting, officially allowed the DD National to telecast *Ramayana*, a television adaptation of Valmiki’s *Ramayana* and Tulsidas’s *Ramcharitmanas*. The serial, which continued from 25 January 1987 to 31 July 1988, became highly popular among the Indians, and it entered in the Limca Book of Records as the most watched mythological series. Needless to say that the serial created a huge sensation among the Hindus residing in the Indian territory. But, most significantly, it generated a kind of pan-nationalistic sentiment among the Hindus, as it was telecast in 55 countries with a total viewership of 650 million. Immediately after the *Ramayana* was the broadcast of *Mahabharata*, a television adaptation of Vyasa’s epic by the same name, which continued from 2 October 1988 to 24 June 1990, consisting of 94 episodes. The serial also earned huge popularity, breaking all time records of viewership on the television. The broadcast of these two great Indian epics surreptitiously strengthened the sense of nationhood among the Hindus in India. The prospect of the formation of the *Ram Rajya*, or the Hindu Nation, that had been latent in the psyche of the Indian Hindus for a long time came to be ignited with the visualization of the serials for more than three consecutive years. Each episode was like a heavy dose of Hindu nationalism for them. The characters of the *Ramayana* like Rama, Sita, Laxmana and, even Hanuman, which are fictional, came to be treated as ‘real’ characters, characters of the flesh-and-blood, as an inevitable effect of visual representation on the television. In other words, abstract characters became concrete. In his famous book *Imagined Communities* (1983), Benedict Anderson argues that nations are the ‘imagined communities’, and the imagining of the nation has some specific characteristics exemplified by the realistic novel and the daily newspaper. These two forms of writing “provided the technical means for ‘re-presenting’ the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation” (Anderson 2006). A realistic novel contains multitude of characters, who rarely meet each other, yet all the characters are united by time and space. They are connected by the fixed landscape within which they all

simultaneously exist. A similar kind of simultaneity of time and space occurs during the reading of the daily newspapers. The numerous events, which the newspapers describe, occur roughly at the same time. Moreover, the act of reading the newspapers creates a sense of community among the readers. For example, when we read the paper at breakfast, we are aware that possibly thousands of others are reading the papers precisely at the same time. Thus newspapers coincidentally create a sense of community among the readers. Nations, like realistic novels and the newspapers, tend to bring together a large variety of people into one collective body, but it is highly unlikely that one person will meet all his fellow nationals in his lifetime. The people of a nation think themselves belonging to

a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history. An American will never meet, or even know the names of more than a handful of his 240,000,000-odd fellow Americans. He has no idea of what they are up to at any one time. But he has complete confidence in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity. (Anderson 2006)

The 'steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity' of the people makes the nation possible. However, Anderson's conception can fairly be applied to the analysis of telecast of the serials entitled the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. The tripartite combination of time, space and simultaneity of action that is so vital in the imagining of the nation, is also equally an important factor in the telecast of the serials. The serials were telecast at a particular time of the day, when the viewers, particularly the Hindus all over India, simultaneously entered into the virtual world of imagination, which created a sense of community among them. The telecast of the serials is much more effective in the production of the sense of nationhood than the act of reading the daily newspapers, because of their audio-visual effects. We know that the serials are produced mainly for the purpose of entertainment. So there are strong elements of exaggeration and sentimentalisation, which intensify the effect of inculcation. This is one of the reasons why television is so powerful an electronic media in shaping the public opinion. It can mould the understanding of the populace under the garb of entertainment. It possesses an enormous capacity to transform an event into a political agenda. The epics have their unmistakable universal and secular messages; they are the embodiments the vibrant, argumentative and perennial cultural values of India. Nevertheless, they have also their strong religious messages. The subterranean wave of the Hindu nationalism began to flow more powerfully after the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and the vision of the Hindu Nation that was in its embryonic stage earlier began to take concrete shape from 1990s.

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), the ideological fountainhead of the BJP, which had already started from the mid-1980s the nationwide movement for construction of the temple of Rama at the disputed place of the Babri Masjid, tactfully grabbed the situation and heightened its demand with the strong



propaganda of Hindutva. The demand for construction of the temple of Rama in Ayodhya gradually consolidated and it spread an electrifying appeal among the Hindus in India. The movement of VHP gained further momentum when, on 25 September 1990, the then BJP President, L. K. Advani, launched a Rath Yatra from Somnath in Gujrat to Ayodhya, which created a nationwide wave of Hindutva sentiment. As the agenda of the BJP gained its mass appeal, the Party garnered political fruits, and it is reflected in the statistics of the General Elections of India. The number of Lok Sabha seats of BJP increased from 02 in 1984 to 85 in 1989; it further increased to 120 in the General Elections of 1991. In the 1996, the BJP emerged as the largest single party in the Lok Sabha, winning 161 seats. The number of seats increased to 182 in the 1999 Parliamentary elections. In 2014 Elections, it won a landslide victory with 282 seats, winning an outright majority in the Parliament. With the exceptions of 2004 and 2009 General Elections, in which the Party won 138 and 116 seats respectively, the Party had earned increasing popularity in the last four decades. The idea of the construction of the temple of Rama in Ayodhya, which had been floating around among the Indian Hindus for the last few decades, crystallized on 9 November 2019, with the verdict of the Supreme Court of India. However, it must be admitted that while political and cultural programmes of the VHP, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the BJP had collectively worked for the consistent success of the Party, the broadcast of the two mega-serials on the DD National had also contributed towards the success by disseminating the messages of the two epics. The moral and cultural values that the epics uphold are very much in consistent with the political ideology of the Party. They have set the foundation stones on which the Party had built up its political edifice.

Media are preeminent agents in the production of cultural values and political ideologies. Media, as defined by P. K. Nayar, “are technologies of communication, and therefore of meaning-production and meaning-dissemination” (Nayar 2011). In mass media the source is central and normally single, and the viewers who are huge in number are far away from the source. The mass media affect and influence a large number of people, and therefore integral to culture. The content that media circulate is usually ‘suggestive’ and ‘provocative’. Media do not openly propagate any ideology; it only ‘suggests’. But ironically, suggestions have wider implications than actual meanings. The content of the media is ‘provocative’ in the sense that they urge us to rethink what we know. This is where the broadcast of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* has a special significance. The contents of the serials, the subtle linguistic nuances of the dialogues of the characters, the settings etc. are highly suggestive and provocative. They motivate the people to think beyond their conventional ways of thinking and understanding. After all, the epics are mythical, and for that reason, they are allegorical. However, media work as powerful cultural tools of dissemination of political and ideological viewpoints. They can promote an ideological view more effectively than any piece

of political writing (Nayar 2011). Television, as a component of mass or popular culture, plays a vital role in generating meanings and ideas. Television represents not only communication, information and entertainment; it determines the construction of identities in a particular society. The relationship of culture and society is defined by Raymond Williams in the following words:

Our description of our experience comes to compose a network of relationships, and all our communication systems, including the arts, and literally parts of our social organization ... Since our way of seeing is literally our way of living, the process of communication is in fact the process of community: the offering, reception and comparison of new meanings, leading to the tensions and achievements of growth and change. (Quoted in Nayar 2011)

A society is not simply about economics and politics; it is about culture, as well. Meanings and values of a society reflect its cultural values, which are never ‘fixed’, but arrived through a process of negotiation and exchange. As we know that culture is not a ‘natural thing’, it is ‘produced’. And the “production and consumption of cultural artefacts defines one’s identity. But the production and consumption of artefacts depends on the ability to do so and the ways in which these artefacts have been marketed and sold” (Nayar 2011). Thus the production and consumption of culture is related to power, capitalism and identity. The cultural objects acquire power and value in a society when the superior authority legitimizes them. This brings to the fore the issue of ‘representation’ that is crucial in the production and consumption of cultural products, because it is the process of meaning-creation. Meanings are dependent on language, which is connected to the issues of class, power, ideology, discourse and the material conditions. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* serials used the Hindi language; and with the superb cocktail of Hindi-Hindu-Hinduism-Hindustan the media had defined the ‘meaning’ of Hindutva.

The brilliant success of the BJP in the Parliamentary Elections was largely conditioned by the coordination of the politics and culture. Nationalism, argues Anthony D. Smith, “is much more than a political ideology; it is a form of culture” (Smith 2013). Nationalism, as we know, is both a political and cultural phenomena. “While the political engages”, observes Sadanand Menon, “with concepts of freedom, self-determination, sovereignty and self-reliance, the cultural tosses up difficult, contentious paradigms of identity, a coherent historical past, artistic heritage and a moral self” (Menon 2016). The formation, evolution and continuation of the national culture is primarily a political act; it is manipulated by the nationalists to serve the political ends. The nation may constitute of the heterogeneous groups of people, nevertheless all the variant groups agree that the nation is a form of “*public culture*, open in principle to all members of the community” (Smith 2013). Nationalism is not just a private affair. The culture of the nation claims popular expression of the people’s political aspirations. The revival of the history and the vernacular culture must

make a public form and be politicized. The nation “is a form of public culture and political symbolism, and ultimately of politicized mass culture, one which seeks to mobilize the citizens to love their nation, observe its laws and defend their homeland” (Smith 2013). There is hardly secularism about nationalism, despite its pretension for secularism, nationalism is “ultimately more akin to ‘political religion’ than to political ideology” (Smith 2013).

For the last few decades India had passed through a phase of cultural nationalism. Cultural nationalism “is a rogue version of nationalism which is already present in the concepts of the nation state” (Menon 2016). It is highly contested domain of “irrational self-beliefs that give little credence to claims of history or any other kind of scientific research.” It is like “an imaginary homeland constructed out of imaginary hurts, insults, wounds and defeats inflicted by imaginary enemies, who always belong to religions and regions not your own” (Menon 2016). In fact, the idea of the nation is based on the notion of exclusiveness; and the chauvinistic nationalist disdainfully rejects alternative mode of thinking. Anderson suggests that memorization is as important as amnesia in the process of nation-formation. In other words, inclusion is as important as exclusion. The vision of the ‘Hindu Nation’ is based on the idea of exclusion, extermination and marginalisation of a large section of society on the issues of caste, gender, religion, culture and identity. Rabindranath Tagore writes in *Nationalism*:

... the idea of the Nation is one of the most powerful anaesthetics that man has invented. Under the influence of its fumes the whole people can carry out its systematic programme of the most virulent self-seeking without being in the least aware of its moral perversion—in fact can feel dangerously resentful if it is pointed out. (Tagore 2009)

The Indian nationalism, which was but the byproduct of the British colonialism, was a unique phenomenon. India is a multi-linguistic and multi-cultural society, yet this did not become an obstacle on the rise of nationalism. The historian A. R. Desai observes in his book *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*:

India was a vast country inhabited by a huge population, speaking many languages and professing different religions. Socially, the Hindus, comprising two-thirds of the population were almost atomized in various castes and sub-castes, a phenomenon peculiar to the Hindu society. Again, Hinduism itself was not a homogeneous religion but a conglomeration of religious cults which divided the Hindu people into a number of sects. This extreme social and religious division of the Hindus in particular and the Indians in general, presented a peculiar background to the growth of nationalism in India. (Desai 2016)

Nationalism in other nations of the world did not grow amidst such peculiarly heterogeneous conditions. Despite the multiple fragments within the Hindu society, the spread of modern education, modern communication and economic structure in the colonial era had contributed to the formation of a sense of

nascent national consciousness among the Hindus in the pre-independent period. The demand for Hindustan consolidated among the Hindus just before the Partition of India in 1947. V. D. Savarkar, the then President of the Hindu Mahasabha, vehemently opposed the proposal of the Partition of India and advocated the idea of the unified India. He wrote:

Mother India to us (the Hindus) is one and indivisible. Unity of Hindustan from the Vedic Age down to the present day was an established fact. That being so, the Hindus would never tolerate the partition of India into zones, as demanded by the Muslims.... (Quoted in Desai 2016).

Nationalism is the feeling of togetherness for belonging to a particular territory and culture, despite having manifold diversities and internal conflicts. Imagination plays a crucial role in the formation of the nation, because nation “is imagined as a community”, and “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 2006). The homogeneity of culture is convenient for the rise of the nation, and the nation rejects the idea of diversity and heterogeneity.

Nationalism is the conscious attachment to the nation. Love of the nation is believed to be the supreme virtue of a nationalist. This love “gives palpable expression to the abstraction of the nation” (Smith 2013). Nationalism is, after all,

love of one great family. But ‘family’ and ‘home’ go together in the popular imagination, and love demands that families have homes; homeless families need political roofs; a nation without a ‘homeland’ is a pariah people. So, ‘attachment’ and the ‘*homeland*’ reinforce each other in a quest for a return to roots. Even nations that reside in their homelands need ‘re-rooting’, reattaching themselves to their pristine origins, their authentic self. This is just one of the many meanings of the concept of the homeland. (Smith 2013)

The idea of the ‘homeland’ may also act “as a title-deed, a political claim to the specified area of land and its resources, often in the teeth of opposition from rival claimants” (Smith 2013). This might help us to understand why there is such an urgency to recover the land of Ayodhya from the opponents. The land is imagined to be an integral part of the authentic Hindu self, an ancestral holy land, where the forefathers and foremothers had their last resting places. One may remember in this context the idea of the ‘fatherland’ projected by Savarkar:

... in India, we Hindus are marked out as an abiding nation by ourselves. Not only do we own a common Fatherland, a territorial unity, but what is scarcely found anywhere else in the world, we have a common Holy land which is identified with our common Fatherland. This Bharat Bhumi, this Hindustan, India is both our Pitru Bhu and Punya Bhu...Then we have common affinities, Cultural, Religious, Historical, Linguistic and Racial, which through the

progress of countless centuries of association, and assimilation moulded us into a homogeneous and organic nation.’ (Quoted in Desai 2016)

Imaginative reconstruction of the past is thus necessary for the development of national consciousness among the people. The main political agenda of BJP had been to rebuild India in accordance with the Hindu culture and the formation of a strong unified State. In its quest for a social cohesion, it had always emphasized on the recovery of the spiritual authority of the scriptures, which are not only the foundations of the religious faiths, but also sources of political power. Reviving the Hindu way of life that was being rapidly superseded was the fundamental goal. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are believed to be the repository of the essential Hinduism and Indianness. The epics, based on the scriptural ‘truths’, are believed to be transcendent and sacrosanct, and hence beyond error. They are the perfect guide to living and society. Such an understanding of the epics is grounded on the urgency to return to the true religion for reclaiming the golden age of the past. The objective is to revive the sacred tradition that had been vitiated by the intruders to the nation. Authenticity or purity of the culture is an essential condition for the formation of the identity. Recovery of that authentic past was thus an issue of prime importance. A large section of the Hindus believes that the Mughals demolished a Hindu shrine and constructed the Babri Masjid on the spot. Hence recovery of Ayodhya, the sacred birthplace of Rama as described in the *Ramayana*, from the clutches of the Mughals was thus an urgent mission for recovering the genuine past of our culture. Demolition of the Babri Masjid was not simply a political agenda but a dire necessity for claiming the purity of the cultural past. It is an establishment of the legitimate claim over the territory with which the issue of identity is integrally connected.

Since nationalism claims the rediscovery and revivification of the unique cultural identity of the nation, this means going back to one’s authentic cultural roots in the ancestral homeland. There is a strong element of ‘romanticism’ in nationalism. Revival of the ancient cultural traditions of a country is essential for the construction of the cultural and national identity. For that very reason, myth, as a cultural component, holds an important place in the formation of the cultural identity of the people of a nation. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* are the two great Indian myths. M. H. Abrams defines myth as

one story in a mythology—a system of hereditary stories of ancient origin which were once believed to be true by a particular cultural group, and which served to explain why the world is as it is and things happen as they do, to provide a rationale for social customs and observances, and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives. (Abrams 2007)

A myth is a ‘system of hereditary stories’, which means that myths are stories which are transmitted orally from one generation to another. Hence, the people of a particular cultural community are always well

acquainted with the stories of the myths. The most important aspect of a myth is that although its origin is a dateless past, it is ‘believed to be true by a particular cultural group’. This a-historical nature of the myth is what makes it a cardinal aspect of the process of the formation of the cultural identity. Myth bears not the scientific truth, but the ‘psychological truth’ (Cuddon 1998), or the emotional truth. The French structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss thinks that the myths, although fictional, are like symbols, and like the language they have their signifying systems that are meaningful for a specific cultural community. The stories of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, which are embedded in the minds of the Indians, apart from their universal significances, have their culture-specific meanings to the Indians. The function of the myth is to help the human beings to face the changing social environments effectively. A myth is not to be understood as a collection of stories with ‘fixed’ and ‘final’ meanings; but as the German intellectual historian Hans Blumenberg argues in his book *Work on Myth* (1979), the meanings of myth change with the changing circumstances of life and society. The myths acquire special meanings in special contexts; it means that the meanings of the myths are not fixed, but the meanings are ‘constructed’ by the way they are interpreted. For example, if the conflict between Rama and Ravana is interpreted as the conflict between the Indians and the British in the colonial period, that same conflict would be interpreted in the post-independent period as the conflict between the Government and the Opposition, or between the Hindus and the Muslims, or between diverse cultural/religious/linguistic communities. This volatile nature of the meanings of the myths makes them convenient for the nationalists to target the myths and to interpret them in accordance with their petty political interests. The Hindu religious texts and myths came to be re-interpreted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by the Indian nationalists like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Aurobindo Ghose. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a staunch Hindu nationalist, wrote in the essay ‘Yearning for a Hindu Nation’:

During Vedic times India was a self-contained country. It was united as a great nation. That unity has disappeared bringing on us great degradation and it becomes the duty of the leaders to revive that union. A Hindu of this place is as much a Hindu as the one from Madras or Bombay. You might put on a different dress, speak a different language, but you should remember that the inner sentiments which move you all are the same. The study of the Gita, Ramayana and Mahabharata produce the same ideas throughout the country. Are not these common allegiance to the Vedas, the Gita and the Ramayana our common heritage? If we lay stress on it forgetting all the minor differences that exist between different sects, then by all grace of providence we shall, are long, be able to consolidate all the different sects into a mighty Hindu nation. This ought to be the ambition of every Hindu. (Tilak 2017)

The myths and religious texts, which were used by the Indian Hindu nationalists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to evoke the sense of nationhood among the Hindus in the colonial period, came to be used for the same political purposes by the Hindu nationalists in the post-independent period, but with



different shades of interpretations. The myths are thus essential components for the construction of national imaginaries.

The myths have another very important significance. They are not only essential for the construction of the identities of the people; they are ‘sacred’ texts, because they are the depositories of the spiritual values of a cultural community which provide the people to fight against the challenges posed by the materialistic forces, or the ‘enemies’. In the chapter entitled ‘The Women’s Question in Nationalism’ in his celebrated work *The Nation and Its Fragments*, Partha Chatterjee writes:

... nationalism separated the domain of culture into two spheres—the material and the spiritual. The claims of Western civilization were the most powerful in the material sphere. Science, technology, rational forms of economic organization, modern methods of statecraft—these had given the European countries the strength to subjugate the non-European people and to their dominance over the whole world. To overcome this domination, the colonized people had to learn those superior techniques of organizing material life and incorporate them within their own cultures...But this could not mean the imitation of the West in every aspect of life, for then the very distinction between the West and the East would vanish—the self-identity of national culture would itself be threatened. In fact, as Indian nationalists in the late nineteenth century argued, not only was it undesirable to imitate the West in anything other than the material aspects of life, it was even unnecessary to do so, because in the spiritual domain, the East was superior to the West. What was necessary was to cultivate the material techniques of modern Western civilization while retaining and strengthening the distinctive spiritual essence of the national culture. (Chatterjee 1999)

In course of time, this ‘material/spiritual distinction was condensed into an analogous, but ideologically far more powerful, dichotomy: that of the outer and the inner’ (Chatterjee 1999). The Indian nationalists in their fight against the British colonizers realized that the material sphere was external, and therefore not important. What was important for them was the preservation of the ‘inner’ sphere, or the spiritual domain of our culture, which is embodied in the literature, art and the cultural heritage of the country and the religion. The *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Gita* and the *Vedas* were thus important depositories of the essential spiritual and cultural values of the Hindu culture. They acted as the survival strategies against the Eurocentric cultural and material forces. In the present context too, the myths, while they acted as the force of resistance against the erosion of the cultural values, worked as catalysts to consolidate the sense of nationhood among the Hindus in India.

The broad ideological formulation of the material/spiritual dichotomy framed by Chatterjee was applied to the matter of concrete everyday life by dividing the social space into *ghar* and *bāhir*, the home and the world. Chatterjee argues:



The world is the external, the domain of the material; the home represents one's inner spiritual self, one's true identity. The world is a treacherous terrain of the pursuits of the material interests, where practical considerations reign supreme. It is also typically the domain of the male. The home in its essence must remain unaffected by the profane activities of the material world—and woman is its representation. (Chatterjee 1999)

This argument of Chatterjee highlights the issue of the association of woman, mother and nation in the nationalist discourse. The representation of nation in the image of mother Goddess began in India with Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Anandamath* (1882), particularly with the song 'Vande Mataram', in which Durga, the mother-Goddess, became one with the country. The country was not a mere fact of geography; it was the visible representation of the Mother. With *Anandamath*, the nationalism in India came to be equated with the Hindu nationalism, and the cult of glorifying the country in the image of the Mother came to be introduced. M. S. Golwalkar, the ideologue of Hindutva, reflects the same attitude when he asks the Hindus to take "pride in our glorious national past, in our unique cultural heritage and aspiration to see our Bharat Mata re-seated in her pristine glory and honour in the comity of nations..." (Golwalkar 1966). The same mode of exhibition of aggressive patriotism continues even in the present times, when the BJP ideologues call somebody 'anti-national' for not showing loyalty to the 'Bharat Mata'. Nationalism is, therefore, "a *gendered* discourse; it traffics in representations of men and women which serve to reinforce patriarchal inequalities between them. Nationalist representations have been in danger of perpetuating disempowering representations of women" (McLeod 2011).

The growth of cultural nationalism in India is a potential threat to the idea of secularism as embodied in the Indian Constitution. Cultural nationalism, which foregrounds the issues of nationhood, nationalism, religion, culture and identities, is prone to disturbing the liberal and democratic culture of the country. It vitiates the atmosphere of tolerance and inclusiveness, and generates a spirit of sectarianism, exclusiveness and marginalization. As a political force, cultural nationalism seeks to establish the majoritarian hegemony over the whole populace by suppressing the alternative mode of thinking. The media, which is largely instrumental in producing it, is also not immune from the pernicious effects of cultural nationalism. The role of media in a liberal and democratic country is inestimable; it is the mouthpiece of the conscientious and liberal-minded people in democracy. However, with the rampant growth of the forces of xenophobia and chauvinism, the role of media becomes questionable, as it fails to articulate the objective, free and fearless expression of people's voice. It becomes a tool in the hands of the nationalists to propagate the ideology of the dominant group. However, the growth of cultural nationalism is not typical of India. The worldwide manifestations of the forces of racial arrogance, cultural chauvinism, fundamentalism, narrow national prejudice, terrorism are symptomatic of the unchecked growth of the evils of cultural nationalism. The

development of an atmosphere of free, liberal and objective thinking and the growth of the spirit of love, tolerance and cooperation are urgent necessities for the peace and harmony in the national as well as international spheres.

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Inclusive

## Does Methodology Affect Inclusive Growth Status?

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### Abstract

*Financial inclusion is an area which has gained attention from different stakeholders in recent times. Various in-depth studies emphasise on distinct aspects of inclusion and came out with numerous methodologies to quantify it. Our aim is to compare and contrast the findings of 35 Indian states/ union territories for a time period spanning 17 years. The comparison is done on the basis of dimension wise and comprehensive index scores computed using two methodologies i.e. Sarma (2008) and Sarma (2012). States/Union territories were having wide dispersion in the level of penetration, availability and usage of services which lead to variations in the composite score. It was also found that the growth rate in the extent of inclusion is going in reverse direction in some cases.*

**Keywords** – Banking, Financial Inclusion, India, Sarma Methodology

**JEL Classification** – C43, E59, G21, N25, O16

### Introduction

Financial inclusion means that ‘individuals and businesses have access to useful and affordable financial products and services that meet their needs- transactions, payments, savings, credit and insurance delivered in a responsible and sustainable way’ (World Bank 2019). Inclusive growth has become extremely important in recent times because it is believed that financial development is of no use unless it is seen at the grassroots level. Various studies support the view that it leads to better growth, lesser inequality and poverty among masses (Chattopadhyay 2011, 1-41; Michael and Sharon 2014, 139; Park and Mercado 2015, 1; Rangarajan 2008, 1-167). It evolves the mindset of unemployed people to initiate business ventures and small firms to expand their scale through obtaining formal loans at affordable prices. Easy access to credit becomes a motivator for individuals to

undertake creative work and technological advancements in a country (King and Levine 1993, 717). For households, it provides an avenue to reduce volatility in consumption and start savings/investment. It also teaches them to prepare against adversities and manage risk efficiently (Sahay et al. 2015, 1). The current statistics for India present a different tale. The Economic Survey (2015-16, 52-65) revealed that on an average 46 per cent of the total population have a bank account across different states (Ranade 2017, 125-128) and Global Findex database believed it to have risen to 80 per cent of Indian adults in 2017 (World Bank 2017). However only 30 per cent of adults have access to digital accounts and less than one per cent of them used mobile banking. There are no qualms about last mile issues faced by people as bank branch is available for barely 27 per cent villages within a radius of 5kms (Ranade 2017, 125-128). An in-depth examination of households' access to formal and informal sources of credit revealed that richest one percent of population obtain formal credit six times as that of informal credit (Sinha and Azad 2018, 165). The All India Debt and Investment Survey 2013 stated that about 50 per cent of the farmers have no means to obtain loans from formal financial system. As per FII Survey 2016, approximately half of the population availing informal loans find themselves in debt trap vis-à-vis 28 per cent of those who secured bank loans (Sinha and Azad 2018, 165). Different regulatory agencies has made constant endeavour to bring neglected sections under the purview of formal system. Started with offering no-frills account, business correspondent model, banking ombudsman system, setting financial inclusion targets for banks, customised products for MSMEs and financial literacy programs (ADB 2014, 1-135; Khan 2011; RBI 2013). UIDAI came out with their ambitious project called Aadhaar which issued Unique Identification Number so as to resolve the issue of identity requirements (ADB 2014, 1-135). In 2014, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna (PMJDY) was introduced to provide no-frill accounts with lucrative benefits and set the groundwork for transfer of social security benefits like cooking gas subsidy, pension, insurance etc. Structural reforms were brought through licensing of new private banks, small finance banks and payments banks (RBI 2013, 2014a, 2014b).

Recognizing the current scenario, our study seeks to analyse the impact of change in methodology on the inclusion levels for Indian states/union territories. The rest of the paper is as follows: Section II discusses the literature on numerous index of financial inclusion. The research methodology is explained in Section III, findings and interpretation in Section IV and conclusion in Section V.

## I. Literature Review

Previous studies consider the multi-variate nature of financial inclusion and suggest distinct parameters to judge the level of inclusiveness. To quantify the level of inclusion, Mandira Sarma (2008) proposed an index based on the concept of normalised inverse Euclidean distance from the ideal solution. Its value lies between zero and one where zero means financial exclusion and one means complete inclusion. Park and Mercado (2015, 1-17) and Chattopadhyay (2011) came out with financial inclusion indicator in line with the Sarma (2008) methodology. Moreover cross country and inter-state analysis was done by Kuri and Laha (2011, 61-77) and Kodan and Chhikara (2013, 103-133). Pal and Vaidya (2011, 141-154) suggested an index of outreach of banking services involving access and usage parameters and these indicators were further promoted by Wang and Guan (2017, 1751-1762) with a focus on fraction of population having access to or using different services to judge the level of inclusion. Similar approach was adopted by Bozkurt, Karakuş and Yildiz(2018) to compute the extent of inclusion in 120 countries for the year 2011 and 2014. Another study was given by Mehrotra et al. (2009, 1) who considered four dimensions i.e. coverage, availability, input and output of banking institutions to compute the index. Chakravarty and Pal (2010, 1-36) suggested an IFI after considering the variables from Beck, Kunt and Levine (2007, 234-266) except loan-income ratio and deposit- income ratio for cross country and inter-state analysis. Following this, Mukhopadhyay (2016, 46-54) suggested an index of financial inclusion based on demand side indicators. An improved version of the Sarma (2008) index was suggested by Sarma (2012) which is based on two concepts i.e. distance from the ideal and distance from the worst for all the parameters i.e. banking penetration, availability and usage of financial services. It suggested the use of pre-defined minimum value, maximum value and different weights for the calculation of dimension index. Sethy and Goyari (2018, 447-454) gauged the status for Indian states in line with Sarma (2012) methodology. This concept had been further promoted by Goel and Sharma (2017, 949-956) using demographic and geographic characteristics of indicators.

Gupte, Venkataramani and Gupta(2012, 133-149) proposed an IFI for India for the years 2008 and 2009 using four indicators namely outreach, usage, ease of transactions and cost of transactions. Camara and Tuesta (2014, 1-35) studied demand and supply side determinants to construct financial inclusion index for 82 countries in the year 2011. It undertook two stage principal component analysis involving the parameters of access, barriers and usage of financial services. In the study published by IMF, Amidzic, Massara and Mialou(2014, 4-31)

used common factor analysis to construct a comprehensive index of financial inclusion by considering outreach and usage dimension. Similarly Park and Mercado (2017, 1-35) recommended another index which considers proportion of population having access, availability and usage of banking system. The study by CRISIL (2015, 7-58) is the first of its kind that combined the data on three critical parameters for banks and microfinance institutions to suggest multi-dimensional IFI. An altogether different approach was adopted by Yadav and Sharma (2016, 328-351) wherein they applied Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) method for the computation of Index of Financial Inclusion. So far the indices suggested at different points of time measured the level of inclusion from supply side only so a well thought out index encompassing demand, supply and infrastructure factors had been propagated by Ambarkhane, Singh and Venkataramani(2016, 216-235). However certain elements impeded the rate of progress made over time and therefore named as drag factors. The composite index was obtained using the displaced ideal method and accounting for negative impact of drag factors. A new measure of financial inclusion was given by Ibrahim, Ozdeser and Cavusoglu(2018, 1-18) wherein four pillars namely microcredit, demand deposits, insurance and time deposits acted as a bedrock for the financial inclusion index.

## **II. Research Methodology**

### **1. Objectives of the study**

An insight into the previous studies suggests that different methodologies exist for measuring the degree of inclusiveness in a country. Even two index of financial inclusion encompassing banking penetration, availability and usage has been presented by MandiraSarma in the year 2008 and subsequently in 2012. In accordance, our main objective is to analyse the impact of these methodologies on:

- Attainment of dimension wise score as well as composite score for all Indian states and Union Territories
- Trend in each dimension for each state/ union territory over a period of 17 years
- Comparative position of states on the basis of value of composite index
- Rate of growth in the extent of inclusion



## 2. Data

Annual data on 35 Indian States/ Union Territories for a period of 2000-01 to 2016-17 has been taken from secondary sources. For number of deposit accounts, deposit money bank branches, volume of deposits and credit, data sources include 'Basic Statistical Returns of Scheduled Commercial Banks' published by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Data pertaining to net state domestic product at current prices and population have been gathered from Central Statistics Office (CSO) and CensusIndia.gov.in website respectively.

## 3. Research Methods

The index has been computed using two methodologies i.e. Sarma (2008) and Sarma (2012) methodology. The reason for considering both methodologies is they are so different from each other that we wanted to compare and contrast the findings for different states and union territories over time. Let us discuss the methodologies in an elaborate manner.

### i. Sarma (2008) methodology

Mandira Sarma (2008) suggested the index of financial inclusion which attempts to judge the degree of inclusiveness with the help of three basic aspects i.e. banking penetration, availability and usage of financial services. The index is based on the notion of 'distance from the ideal' which helps to satisfy various mathematical properties such as normalisation, symmetry (or anonymity), monotonicity, proximity, uniformity and signaling (collectively termed NAMPUS). The representative of banking penetration was number of deposit accounts; the number of deposit money bank branches has been used as a proxy for availability; volume of deposits and credit for usage of financial services.

First of all, we compute the dimension index for  $i$ th dimension ( $d_i$ ) as

$$d_i = \frac{A_i - m_i}{M_i - m_i}$$

$$M_i - m_i$$

where

$A_i$  = Actual value of dimension  $i$

$m_i$  = minimum value of dimension  $i$

$M_i$  = maximum value of dimension  $i$

This keeps the value of  $d_i$  between zero and one. If we take  $n$ -dimensions of financial inclusion, then a country/state will be represented by  $D = (d_1, d_2, d_3, \dots, d_n)$  on the  $n$ -

dimensional Cartesian space. The point  $O = (0, 0, 0, \dots, 0)$  means no inclusion or complete financial exclusion whereas point  $I = (1, 1, 1, \dots, 1)$  belongs to highest degree of inclusion. Normalised inverse Euclidean distance of the point  $D_i$  from the ideal point  $I$  is computed in the equation below:

$$IFI = 1 - \frac{\sqrt{((1-d_1)^2 + (1-d_2)^2 + (1-d_3)^2 + \dots + (1-d_n)^2)}}{\sqrt{n}}$$

Accordingly dimension wise scores can be calculated for banking penetration ( $p_i$ ), availability ( $a_i$ ) and usage ( $u_i$ ). The composite index of financial inclusion is as follows:

$$IFI = 1 - \frac{\sqrt{((1-p_i)^2 + (1-a_i)^2 + (1-u_i)^2)}}{\sqrt{3}}$$

ii. Sarma (2012) methodology

An improved version of the index (Sarma 2008 Methodology) was put forth by Mandira Sarma (2012) with an intent to have more apt measure of inclusiveness. A broader approach is adopted by considering ‘distance from the ideal’ and ‘distance from the worst’ for all the parameters. The index is composed of above mentioned aspects or dimensions but variables are now considered in relative terms. As per original index (Sarma 2012), banking penetration has been measured by the number of deposit accounts per 1000 adults; the number of bank branches per 1,00,000 adults and number of ATMs per 1,00,000 adults have been taken as a proxy for availability; volume of deposits and credit as a proportion of NSDP has been used as a representative for usage of financial services. However certain elements have been modified in our study. For banking penetration we have used ‘number of deposit accounts per 1000 population’ due to non-availability of data on number of adult population. Also we have to drop ‘number of ATMs per 1,00,000 adults’ due to absence of data on ATMs and adults. Therefore ‘number of bank branches per 100000 population’ is used as a representative of ‘availability’ dimension. Volume of deposits and credit as a proportion of NSDP has been taken as a proxy for usage of financial services.

The weighted dimension index for  $i$ th dimension is given by:

$$d_i = w_i [A_i - m_i]$$

$M_i - m_i$

Where

$w_i$  = weight attached to the dimension  $i$ ,  $0 \leq w_i \leq 1$

$A_i$  = Actual value of dimension  $i$

$m_i$  = minimum value of dimension  $i$

$M_i$  = maximum value of dimension  $i$

Sarma justified using fixed minimum and maximum values to obtain dimension wise scores. Since the reasons did not apply in our case, we have taken empirically observed minimum and maximum values over the years

The formula ensures  $0 < d_i < 1$ . A state/ UTs position will improve with higher value of  $d_i$ . If there are  $n$ -dimensions of financial inclusion, then a country/state will be represented by  $X = (d_1, d_2, d_3, \dots, d_n)$  on the  $n$ -dimensional Cartesian space. The point  $O = (0, 0, 0, \dots, 0)$  shows worst position whereas point  $W = (w_1, w_2, w_3, \dots, w_n)$  refers to ideal position. The standing of point  $X$  w.r.t worst point  $O$  and ideal point  $W$  is a critical factor for judging the level of inclusiveness. Greater distance between  $X$  and  $O$ ; and smaller distance between  $X$  and  $W$  means higher inclusion and vice versa.

To calculate IFI, let us figure out  $X_1$  where numerator gives Euclidean distance of actual position from worst point  $O$ , normalised by the distance between worst point  $O$  and ideal point  $W$ . In case of  $X_2$ , numerator gives Euclidean distance from ideal point  $W$ , normalised by the distance between worst point  $O$  and ideal point  $W$ ; and difference from 1 gives inverse normalised distance. Finally a simple average of  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  is taken to achieve IFI. The relevant equations are as follows:

$$X_1 = \frac{\sqrt{(d_1^2 + d_2^2 + d_3^2 + \dots + d_n^2)}}{\sqrt{(w_1^2 + w_2^2 + w_3^2 + \dots + w_n^2)}}$$

$$\sqrt{(w_1^2 + w_2^2 + w_3^2 + \dots + w_n^2)}$$

$$X_2 = 1 - \frac{\sqrt{((w_1 - d_1)^2 + (w_2 - d_2)^2 + (w_3 - d_3)^2 + \dots + (w_n - d_n)^2)}}{\sqrt{(w_1^2 + w_2^2 + w_3^2 + \dots + w_n^2)}}$$

$$\sqrt{(w_1^2 + w_2^2 + w_3^2 + \dots + w_n^2)}$$

$$IFI = \frac{X_1 + X_2}{2}$$

2

In the present index, following weights are used: 1 for banking penetration index, 0.50 for availability index and 0.50 for usage index. Accordingly the relevant equations are:

$$X_1 = \frac{\sqrt{(p_i^2 + a_i^2 + u_i^2)}}{\sqrt{(1^2 + 0.50^2 + 0.50^2)}}$$

$$\sqrt{(1^2 + 0.50^2 + 0.50^2)}$$

$$X_2 = 1 - \frac{\sqrt{((1-p_i)^2 + (0.50-a_i)^2 + (0.50-u_i)^2)}}{\sqrt{(1^2 + 0.50^2 + 0.50^2)}}$$

$$\sqrt{(1^2 + 0.50^2 + 0.50^2)}$$

$$IFI = \frac{X_1 + X_2}{2}$$

2

Log linear regression has been used to quantify the rate of growth in the extent of inclusion. Here the regressor is composite score for each state/union territory and the regressand is time (Gujarati, Porter and Gunasekar 2012, 159). It is determined separately for IFI scores as per Sarma (2008) and Sarma (2012) methodology in the following way:

$$\text{Log (IFI) } t = \beta_1 + \beta_2 T + \mu_t$$

$$\text{Instantaneous Rate of Growth} = \beta_2 * 100$$

$$\text{Compound Rate of Growth} = \text{Antilog}(\beta_2) - 1$$

We use the dimension values, index values and comparative ranks computed by Goel (2019a) <sup>[1]</sup> and Goel (2019b) <sup>[2]</sup> for 35 states/union territories in India\*. The incremental values are obtained by deducting the values obtained as per Sarma (2008) methodology from that of Sarma (2012) methodology. The trend in dimension scores/composite index and growth in the extent of inclusion have been compared across the two methodologies.

\*Also given in Appendix 1 and 2

### III. Findings and Interpretation

The comparative analysis of states is done on the basis of dimension scores as per two methodology i.e. Sarma (2008) and Sarma (2012). The level of penetration is found to be extremely dispersed in five states. Chandigarh, Delhi and Goa are the states which secured higher number of deposit accounts on per capita basis while Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh

went ahead in absolute terms owing to large geographical area and size of the population. This is followed by chunk of states with large differences in their performance. Those who have attained higher position on relative basis are Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Pondicherry, Sikkim and Uttaranchal. On the other continuum lies Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal. It is interesting to note that the quantum of change in dimension values is small during initial phases but the gap widened overtime in case of Haryana, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Punjab. This is accompanied by shift in the bank account-population curve for Kerala and Manipur. Tamil Nadu is the only state with symmetric per capita number of accounts and dramatic reduction in deviations across the methodologies overtime. Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Karnataka and Orissa have also seen symmetry in bank account-population curve after some time but they continue to have small deviations. The condition deteriorated on relative basis for Nagaland. Rest of the states are found to be less affected by the manner of calculation (Table 1 and 2).

Secondly Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh are the states with huge number of bank branches but failed miserably to align the pace of expansion with the rising population.

This is followed by another group of states namely Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. No doubt Chandigarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Mizoram and Sikkim have limited presence of banks but it is sufficient enough to cater the needs of inhabitants. Nagaland is the only state that has witnessed improvement such that the branch-population ratio transformed from being skewed to symmetric after a point of time. Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya, Pondicherry, Tripura and Uttaranchal have slightly better results in branch- population ratio vis-à-vis absolute number of branches. The converse holds true for rest of the states <sup>[3]</sup>. (Refer table 1# and 2#)

Thirdly, Maharashtra is a state with impressive amount of financial transactions across the peers but its position altered dramatically when considered in relation to state domestic product. Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are another group of states with large differences between the methods. Chandigarh was perceived to have average usage of bank accounts but it came out as a top performer on relative basis. Assam, Delhi, Manipur, Orissa and Punjab are the states with less variation in dimension values and improvement in

per capita usage during the period. The incremental usage decelerated on per capita basis for Nagaland. The remaining states have similar values irrespective of the methodology used <sup>[4]</sup>. (Refer table 3# and 4#)

When the trends in dimension values were compared across the methods, it was seen to be going in opposite direction for some states <sup>[1] [2]</sup>. The penetration was improving but it could not keep pace with the population for Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Punjab, Uttaranchal and West Bengal. The contrary was seen in case of Nagaland. Lakshadweep and Uttar Pradesh saw no absolute change in dimension values but they have downward and upward slope on relative basis respectively. There was change of direction in the availability dimension in case of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala and Meghalaya. The presence of banks was expanding in line with the population for Goa. The contrary holds true for Lakshadweep and Uttar Pradesh. Although the total volume of deposits and credit was falling but a greater proportion of state domestic product was channelised towards financial transactions for Assam, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Meghalaya, Pondicherry, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal among other states. Maharashtra is the only state that consistently had largest amount of deposits and credit and that represented greater fraction of its income with the passage of time. (Refer Table 5# and 6#)

The manner of calculation has witnessed maximum impact in the composite scores. Maharashtra has put forth great results among its peers but that remains inadequate to serve such a large magnitude of inhabitants. Contrary to this, Chandigarh and Goa are the states with commendable performance such that there is high degree of inclusiveness of its population. The choice of methodology has large impact on the scores of states like Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Pondicherry, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttaranchal and West Bengal. Assam is the only state with low level of absolute outreach but has gained pace with the population after a point of time. Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu have experienced large dispersion in IFI scores on the basis of absolute and relative penetration, availability and usage of financial services in the initial phases. This is coupled with marked improvement in relative performance and narrowing the gap with the absolute one. On the other hand, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab and Tripura have attained similar positions in both cases during commencement but relative performance outpaced the absolute one at an increasing pace. Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir got promoted from low to medium

category of inclusion on the basis of relative performance while it continued to have low inclusion as per former method. There was minute differences in IFI values for rest of the states (Table 3 and 4).

There is dramatic rise in the ranking of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Chandigarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Pondicherry, Sikkim and Uttaranchal according to relative performance. This is followed by some change in case of Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Meghalaya, Punjab and Tripura. The ranking fell phenomenally for Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Another category of fall includes Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Manipur, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu. From a different perspective, it has been seen that the level of inclusiveness is rising for ten states i.e. Delhi, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Meghalaya, Punjab, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal w.r.t. their population and income but the absolute numbers present an different story. The opposite holds true for Nagaland (Table 5 and 6).

Another interesting observation is that the methodologies are so distinct that the growth rate in the extent of inclusion is going in reverse direction <sup>[1] [2]</sup>. Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have positive growth in the index values involving relative parameters while it is negative for the scores computed on the basis of absolute parameters. The contrary situation happened for Nagaland. Moreover, the relative method presents strong growth or deceleration in Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal while it is not so according to absolute measure. Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Nagaland, Pondicherry and West Bengal have significant rate of change as per absolute method but it is not supported by relative measure. (Refer Table 7# and 8#)

Particulars	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.1794	0.1860	0.1879	0.1691	0.1741	0.2021	0.1951	0.1983
Andhra Pradesh	-0.3235	-0.3446	-0.3600	-0.3832	-0.4037	-0.3892	-0.3916	-0.3733
Arunachal Pradesh	0.1118	0.1064	0.0995	0.0772	0.0666	0.0910	0.0906	0.1099
Assam	-0.0271	-0.0312	-0.0306	-0.0314	-0.0377	-0.0321	-0.0354	-0.0248



Bihar	-0.2361	-0.2413	-0.2448	-0.2434	-0.2513	-0.2453	-0.2487	-0.2396
Chandigarh	0.9752	0.9729	0.9644	0.8935	0.8539	0.8172	0.7854	0.8675
Chhattisgarh	-0.0206	-0.0181	-0.0158	-0.0148	-0.0214	-0.0185	-0.0221	-0.0129
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.1099	0.1119	0.1359	0.1645	0.1860	0.2291	0.2159	0.2486
Daman & Diu	0.3440	0.3216	0.3787	0.3695	0.3316	0.3275	0.3441	0.3833
Delhi	0.4083	0.3680	0.3597	0.3400	0.3218	0.3319	0.3326	0.3775
Goa	0.9481	0.9336	0.9597	0.9578	0.9573	0.9584	0.9594	0.9620
Gujarat	-0.1651	-0.1830	-0.1881	-0.1978	-0.2043	-0.2039	-0.2013	-0.1733
Haryana	0.0554	0.0460	0.0475	0.0428	0.0372	0.0447	0.0461	0.0744
Himachal Pradesh	0.2470	0.2404	0.2521	0.2431	0.2390	0.2456	0.2341	0.2726
Jammu & Kashmir	0.1285	0.1254	0.1261	0.1273	0.1212	0.1410	0.1391	0.1569
Jharkhand	-0.0249	-0.0271	-0.0285	-0.0298	-0.0363	-0.0315	-0.0329	-0.0209
Karnataka	-0.1987	-0.2143	-0.2160	-0.2268	-0.2345	-0.2290	-0.2286	-0.1949
Kerala	-0.0158	-0.0311	-0.0291	-0.0338	-0.0332	-0.0203	-0.0054	0.0257
Lakshadweep	0.3969	0.1859	0.1466	0.1423	0.1413	0.1602	0.1862	0.1984
Madhya Pradesh	-0.1738	-0.1812	-0.1842	-0.1906	-0.1980	-0.1980	-0.2029	-0.1852
Maharashtra	-0.5039	-0.5927	-0.5932	-0.6005	-0.5919	-0.5926	-0.5818	-0.5498
Manipur	-0.0038	-0.0039	-0.0039	-0.0036	-0.0041	-0.0041	-0.0045	-0.0043
Meghalaya	0.0799	0.0808	0.0815	0.0774	0.0685	0.0761	0.0743	0.0817
Mizoram	0.0121	0.0096	0.0152	0.0179	0.0253	0.0385	0.0425	0.0553
Nagaland	0.0042	0.0039	0.0049	0.0063	-0.0002	0.0083	0.0006	0.0090
Orissa	-0.0743	-0.0762	-0.0754	-0.0754	-0.0815	-0.0778	-0.0797	-0.0646
Pondicherry	0.3252	0.3375	0.3501	0.3342	0.3493	0.3515	0.3760	0.3892
Punjab	0.0919	0.0719	0.0740	0.0624	0.0558	0.0701	0.0743	0.1207
Rajasthan	-0.1639	-0.1719	-0.1759	-0.1802	-0.1884	-0.1884	-0.1900	-0.1801
Sikkim	0.0672	0.0859	0.0941	0.1119	0.1111	0.1634	0.1279	0.1448
Tamil Nadu	-0.2800	-0.2915	-0.2924	-0.3034	-0.3104	-0.3054	-0.3037	-0.2690
Tripura	0.0927	0.0919	0.0953	0.0911	0.0814	0.1035	0.1018	0.1126
Uttar Pradesh	-0.8510	-0.8592	-0.8600	-0.8633	-0.8706	-0.8667	-0.8687	-0.8530
Uttaranchal	0.2103	0.1935	0.1939	0.1734	0.1710	0.1776	0.1746	0.1988
West Bengal	-0.3804	-0.3933	-0.3865	-0.3805	-0.3812	-0.3856	-0.3642	-0.3402

Source: Goel (2019a, 2019b)

Inclusive

Table 2: Computation of incremental dimension value for banking penetration (pi) 2008-16									
Particulars	2008-	2009-	2010-	2011-	2012-	2013-	2014-	2015-	2016-

	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.1986	0.1754	0.2010	0.2227	0.1247	0.2082	0.2291	0.2231	0.2075
Andhra Pradesh	-0.3532	-0.3499	-0.3024	-0.2846	-0.4291	-0.2404	-0.1969	-0.1693	-0.1672
Arunachal Pradesh	0.1193	0.1242	0.1375	0.1416	0.0666	0.1346	0.1606	0.1884	0.2181
Assam	-0.0223	-0.0256	-0.0151	-0.0068	-0.0542	0.0178	0.0415	0.0846	0.1286
Bihar	-0.2440	-0.2532	-0.2563	-0.2643	-0.2835	-0.2452	-0.2487	-0.2315	-0.2320
Chandigarh	0.8253	0.7604	0.7866	0.7543	0.4180	0.7021	0.6942	0.7230	0.7218
Chhattisgarh	-0.0095	-0.0081	0.0040	0.0122	-0.0289	0.0455	0.1081	0.1601	0.2015
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.2778	0.2632	0.2948	0.3341	0.2039	0.4027	0.4587	0.4898	0.5454
Daman & Diu	0.3929	0.3712	0.3757	0.4032	0.2449	0.4296	0.4302	0.4411	0.4763
Delhi	0.4116	0.6349	0.5230	0.4691	0.1753	0.4660	0.4900	0.5205	0.5367
Goa	0.9651	0.8915	0.9694	0.9701	0.5603	0.9718	0.9741	0.9763	0.9771
Gujarat	-0.1504	-0.1494	-0.1190	-0.1082	-0.2085	-0.0650	-0.0371	-0.0016	0.0175
Haryana	0.0925	0.0940	0.1321	0.1448	0.0150	0.1884	0.2189	0.2838	0.3130
Himachal Pradesh	0.2832	0.2904	0.3357	0.3674	0.1933	0.3940	0.4181	0.4469	0.4753
Jammu & Kashmir	0.1563	0.1710	0.2005	0.2193	0.1000	0.2446	0.2849	0.3175	0.3475
Jharkhand	-0.0192	-0.0243	-0.0115	-0.0033	-0.0546	0.0324	0.0458	0.0936	0.1189
Karnataka	-0.1624	-0.1579	-0.1113	-0.0936	-0.2413	-0.0370	0.0135	0.0570	0.0834
Kerala	0.0499	0.0514	0.1027	0.1154	-0.0345	0.2096	0.2385	0.2720	0.2808
Lakshadweep	0.2073	0.2114	0.2946	0.2814	0.1779	0.3065	0.2951	0.2739	0.2022
Madhya Pradesh	-0.1843	-0.1956	-0.1880	-0.1865	-0.2333	-0.1591	-0.1457	-0.1102	-0.1020
Maharashtra	-0.5011	-0.4762	-0.4665	-0.4774	-0.6065	-0.4389	-0.3989	-0.3430	-0.3268
Manipur	-0.0048	0.0036	-0.0055	-0.0056	0.0111	0.0586	0.1044	0.1269	0.1652
Meghalaya	0.0749	0.0711	0.0886	0.1059	0.0599	0.1180	0.1211	0.3498	0.1593
Mizoram	0.0657	0.0659	0.0673	0.0887	0.0685	0.1563	0.1763	0.2279	0.2704
Nagaland	0.0024	-0.0048	-0.0037	-0.0040	-0.0049	-0.0046	-0.0050	-0.0048	-0.0051
Orissa	-0.0584	-0.0604	-0.0434	-0.0252	-0.0931	0.0126	0.0422	0.0772	0.1053
Pondicherry	0.3937	0.3815	0.3847	0.3922	0.2238	0.4258	0.4212	0.4227	0.4129
Punjab	0.1435	0.1424	0.1946	0.2111	0.0281	0.2492	0.2840	0.3445	0.3839
Rajasthan	-0.1742	-0.1787	-0.1695	-0.1674	-0.2093	-0.1418	-0.1326	-0.0961	-0.0912
Sikkim	0.1504	0.1721	0.1969	0.2185	0.1496	0.2842	0.3084	0.3696	0.4016

Tamil Nadu	-0.2343	-0.2293	-0.1739	-0.1546	-0.3078	-0.0894	-0.0388	0.0170	0.0439
Tripura	0.1349	0.1348	0.1567	0.1664	0.0993	0.2659	0.3033	0.3618	0.3929
Uttar Pradesh	-0.8452	-0.8505	-0.8337	-0.8295	-0.8950	-0.8007	-0.7890	-0.7587	-0.7561
Uttaranchal	0.2125	0.2146	0.2494	0.2735	0.1344	0.3008	0.3430	0.3910	0.4257
West Bengal	-0.3157	-0.3157	-0.2898	-0.2845	0.5094	-0.2453	-0.2240	-0.1800	-0.1611

Source: Goel (2019a, 2019b)

Inclusive

Table 3: Computation of incremental index of financial inclusion (IFI) 2000-07								
Particulars	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.1740	0.1765	0.1788	0.1657	0.1685	0.1869	0.1824	0.1787
Andhra Pradesh	-0.2688	-0.2574	-0.2485	-0.2478	-0.2442	-0.2292	-0.2219	-0.2027
Arunachal Pradesh	0.1034	0.0984	0.0962	0.0806	0.0716	0.0888	0.0908	0.1076
Assam	-0.0207	-0.0223	-0.0206	-0.0214	-0.0251	-0.0178	-0.0183	-0.0099
Bihar	-0.2006	-0.1929	-0.1912	-0.1843	-0.1885	-0.1842	-0.1875	-0.1780
Chandigarh	0.9372	0.9336	0.9341	0.8897	0.8384	0.8255	0.7895	0.8415
Chhattisgarh	-0.0188	-0.0153	-0.0098	-0.0094	-0.0151	-0.0117	-0.0154	-0.0084
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Daman & Diu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delhi	0.3173	0.3149	0.3235	0.3219	0.3128	0.3251	0.3262	0.3585
Goa	0.7876	0.7860	0.8025	0.7984	0.7811	0.7885	0.7802	0.7688
Gujarat	-0.1674	-0.1579	-0.1533	-0.1546	-0.1529	-0.1379	-0.1305	-0.1137
Haryana	0.0504	0.0487	0.0526	0.0514	0.0481	0.0542	0.0550	0.0773
Himachal Pradesh	0.2437	0.2399	0.2520	0.2474	0.2438	0.2483	0.2430	0.2685
Jammu & Kashmir	0.1310	0.1329	0.1365	0.1398	0.1366	0.1512	0.1532	0.1627
Jharkhand	-0.0161	-0.0121	-0.0110	-0.0116	-0.0194	-0.0117	-0.0096	-0.0052
Karnataka	-0.1878	-0.1782	-0.1746	-0.1737	-0.1757	-0.1629	-0.1518	-0.1291
Kerala	-0.0081	-0.0018	0.0032	0.0165	0.0311	0.0305	0.0480	0.0608
Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	-0.1713	-0.1664	-0.1596	-0.1605	-0.1608	-0.1554	-0.1556	-0.1451
Maharashtra	-0.5758	-0.5925	-0.5821	-0.5833	-0.5810	-0.5747	-0.5698	-0.5462
Manipur	-0.0007	-0.0036	-0.0035	-0.0040	-0.0038	-0.0046	-0.0045	-0.0042
Meghalaya	0.0981	0.0972	0.1022	0.1047	0.0989	0.1011	0.0960	0.0975
Mizoram	0.0742	0.0728	0.0762	0.0780	0.0812	0.0870	0.0947	0.1020
Nagaland	0.0064	0.0033	0.0054	0.0062	-0.0014	0.0063	0.0033	0.0095
Orissa	-0.0704	-0.0668	-0.0607	-0.0614	-0.0663	-0.0585	-0.0587	-0.0477
Pondicherry	0.2780	0.2841	0.2946	0.2826	0.2987	0.2924	0.3139	0.3252
Punjab	0.0875	0.0885	0.0995	0.0974	0.0943	0.1069	0.1052	0.1405
Rajasthan	-0.1581	-0.1550	-0.1481	-0.1516	-0.1535	-0.1484	-0.1508	-0.1375
Sikkim	0.1174	0.1330	0.1471	0.1609	0.1658	0.1943	0.1831	0.2068
Tamil Nadu	-0.2648	-0.2464	-0.2416	-0.2378	-0.2321	-0.2183	-0.2075	-0.1793
Tripura	0.0837	0.0824	0.0866	0.0833	0.0750	0.0918	0.0912	0.0998
Uttar Pradesh	-0.4859	-0.4667	-0.4607	-0.4530	-0.4454	-0.4275	-0.4208	-0.3987
Uttaranchal	0.2045	0.1967	0.2044	0.1915	0.1855	0.1871	0.1835	0.2002

West Bengal	-0.2895	-0.2779	-0.2730	-0.2704	-0.2674	-0.2510	-0.2463	-0.2257
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Source: Goel (2019a, 2019b)

Particulars	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.1749	0.1564	0.1782	0.1919	0.1239	0.1834	0.1971	0.1930	0.1848
Andhra Pradesh	-0.1876	-0.1825	-0.1552	-0.1506	-0.2309	-0.0771	-0.1099	-0.1184	-0.1251
Arunachal Pradesh	0.1148	0.1162	0.1259	0.1279	0.0751	0.1269	0.1438	0.1651	0.1907
Assam	-0.0092	-0.0081	-0.0010	0.0072	-0.0283	0.0240	0.0477	0.0769	0.1132
Bihar	-0.1855	-0.1891	-0.1928	-0.1905	-0.2024	-0.1733	-0.1693	-0.1401	-0.1292
Chandigarh	0.8371	0.7987	0.8099	0.7652	0.5285	0.7113	0.7121	0.7127	0.7162
Chhattisgarh	-0.0068	0.0033	0.0109	0.0167	-0.0121	0.0399	0.0958	0.1338	0.1644
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Daman & Diu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delhi	0.3699	0.5126	0.4440	0.3999	0.2069	0.3938	0.4055	0.4198	0.4237
Goa	0.7629	0.7390	0.7634	0.7561	0.5458	0.7958	0.7810	0.7763	0.7742
Gujarat	-0.1070	-0.1105	-0.0987	-0.0918	-0.1707	-0.0615	-0.0444	-0.0294	-0.0223
Haryana	0.0855	0.0871	0.1131	0.1205	0.0256	0.1501	0.1732	0.2179	0.2352
Himachal Pradesh	0.2772	0.2856	0.3159	0.3372	0.2149	0.3563	0.3762	0.3955	0.4156
Jammu & Kashmir	0.1580	0.1718	0.1870	0.2024	-	0.2283	0.2652	0.2817	0.3048
Jharkhand	-0.0030	-0.0032	0.0031	0.0121	-0.0255	0.0407	0.0518	0.0957	0.1154
Karnataka	-0.1185	-0.1049	-0.0773	-0.0634	-0.1645	-0.0207	0.0154	0.0265	0.0378
Kerala	0.0643	0.0655	0.1007	0.1044	0.0023	0.1817	0.1975	0.2142	0.2152

Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	-0.1499	-0.1493	-0.1399	-0.1336	-0.1706	-0.1067	-0.0873	-0.0592	-0.0571
Maharashtra	-0.5242	-0.5125	-0.5069	-0.5023	-0.5760	-0.4576	-0.4276	-0.3998	-0.3950
Manipur	-0.0041	0.0023	-0.0045	-0.0047	0.0104	0.0445	0.0790	0.0951	0.1250
Meghalaya	0.0952	0.0974	0.1085	0.1174	0.0872	0.1296	0.1375	0.3339	0.1726
Mizoram	0.1078	0.1113	0.1071	0.1226	0.1053	0.1683	0.1806	0.2216	0.2581
Nagaland	0.0048	0.0052	0.0068	0.0068	0.0042	0.0029	0.0026	0.0001	-0.0007
Orissa	-0.0444	-0.0380	-0.0265	-0.0077	-0.0501	0.0201	0.0484	0.0724	0.0935
Pondicherry	0.3325	0.3269	0.3313	0.3349	0.2140	0.3523	0.3568	0.3533	0.3456
Punjab	0.1464	0.1459	0.1795	0.1896	0.0606	0.2181	0.2447	0.2855	0.3131
Rajasthan	-0.1388	-0.1440	-0.1425	-0.1424	-0.1759	-0.1244	-0.1125	-0.0795	-0.0799
Sikkim	0.1989	0.1983	0.2170	0.2291	0.1802	0.2777	0.2973	0.3403	0.3602
Tamil Nadu	-0.1647	-0.1563	-0.1337	-0.1241	-0.2287	-0.0588	-0.0304	-0.0078	0.0021
Tripura	0.1172	0.1194	0.1353	0.1433	0.0942	0.2156	0.2460	0.2866	-
Uttar Pradesh	-0.4012	-0.4074	-0.3942	-0.3970	-0.4473	-0.3825	-0.3765	-0.3611	-0.3755
Uttaranchal	0.2080	0.2080	0.2305	0.2487	0.1495	0.2674	0.3017	0.3347	0.3607
West Bengal	-0.2202	-0.2200	-0.2027	-0.1949	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Goel (2019a, 2019b)



Particulars	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	-16	-16	-16	-16	-16	-15	-15	-15
Andhra Pradesh	10	10	10	9	9	8	8	9
Arunachal Pradesh	-8	-5	-5	-3	-2	-3	-3	-5
Assam	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	11
Bihar	18	18	19	17	17	17	18	17
Chandigarh	-22	-22	-22	-22	-22	-22	-22	-22
Chhattisgarh	12	12	11	12	12	11	11	11
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Daman & Diu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delhi	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5	-5
Goa	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20
Gujarat	7	7	8	8	8	9	8	9



Daman & Diu	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delhi	-5	-6	-5	-5	-	-5	-5	-4	-7
Goa	-20	-19	-20	-20	-	-21	-21	-21	-21
Gujarat	8	7	9	8	-	9	9	10	9
Haryana	-2	-2	-2	-2	-	-1	-3	-4	-4
Himachal Pradesh	-14	-16	-16	-16	-	-13	-13	-14	-14
Jammu & Kashmir	-6	-6	-6	-6	-	-6	-7	-7	-8
Jharkhand	9	8	8	7	-	6	8	5	3
Karnataka	3	3	3	2	-	4	2	4	2
Kerala	-3	-2	-3	-3	-	-4	-5	-7	-7
Lakshadweep	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	16	17	16	16	-	13	12	14	12
Maharashtra	10	11	11	10	-	9	8	10	10
Manipur	3	3	3	3	-	3	2	3	2
Meghalaya	1	0	-2	-1	-	-1	1	-11	1
Mizoram	-7	-7	-5	-5	-	-10	-10	-8	-10
Nagaland	4	4	4	4	-	3	3	2	0
Orissa	7	7	7	5	-	3	3	3	1
Pondicherry	-21	-20	-19	-17	-	-15	-15	-14	-12
Punjab	-9	-9	-9	-9	-	-9	-9	-9	-9
Rajasthan	14	15	16	16	-	16	16	14	12
Sikkim	-15	-15	-16	-15	-	-16	-17	-16	-18
Tamil Nadu	5	5	5	4	-	2	4	3	5
Tripura	-4	-5	-5	-4	-	-7	-8	-7	-
Uttar Pradesh	17	18	18	19	-	19	20	21	20
Uttaranchal	-7	-8	-8	-7	-	-7	-9	-10	-10
West Bengal	12	11	12	12	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Goel (2019a, 2019b)

#### IV. Conclusion

The comparative analysis of states revealed that the level of penetration is extremely dispersed in five states, presence of bank branches in nine states and quantum of use in two states. The manner of calculation has witnessed maximum impact in the composite scores. Maharashtra has put forth great results among its peers but that remains inadequate to serve such a large magnitude of inhabitants. Contrary to this, Chandigarh and Goa are the states with commendable performance such that there is high degree of inclusiveness of its population. Assam is the only state with low level of absolute outreach but has gained pace with the population after a point of time. In terms of ranking, eight states have seen dramatic rise according to relative performance but it fell phenomenally for ten states. Another interesting observation is that the methodologies are so distinct that the growth rate in the extent of inclusion is going in reverse direction. Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have positive growth in the index values involving relative parameters while it is negative for the scores computed on the basis of absolute parameters. The contrary situation happened for Nagaland.

#### Notes

[1] For details on computed values of three dimensions (banking penetration, availability, usage), composite index, comparative ranks, trend and rate of growth as per Sarma (2008) methodology see Appendix 1.

[2] For details on computed values of three dimensions (banking penetration, availability, usage), composite index, comparative rank, trend and rate of growth as per Sarma (2012) methodology see Appendix 2.

[3] The incremental dimension value for availability ( $a_i$ ) has been calculated in the same manner as banking penetration ( $p_i$ ) but it has not been presented here due to brevity. For details on computed value as per Sarma (2008) and Sarma (2012) methodology, refer Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

[4] The incremental dimension value for usage ( $u_i$ ) has been calculated in the same manner as banking penetration ( $p_i$ ) but it has not been presented here due to brevity. For details on

computed value as per Sarma (2008) and Sarma (2012) methodology, refer Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.

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## **Ethnicity, Development and Polity: Case of the *Karbis in Kamrup (M), Assam.***

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### **Abstract:**

*The ethnic assertion has been an innate problem of entire North-Eastern India over the years, partly because of its diversified demographic pattern and some pertaining economic issues. Though these Ethnic movements have been initiated with an ideological note of overall social, political, cultural and economic development of the community concern, it gets diversified in due course of time by the vested interest of the leaders. The political proliferation of the electoral vote bank politics plays a significant rule in this regard. Karbi, the third-largest community of Assam, especially living in the Kamrup Metropolitan district, is going through a similar pain since the last four decades, resulting in the split within the community. My endeavour in this paper is to find out the root cause of this problem and offer a sustainable solution so that the issue can be resolved with the full participation of the community, which will also ensure the overall development of this age-old community in the studied place.*

**Keywords:** Karbi, Kamrup, Development, Amri, Ethnicity, Assam.

### **Introduction:**

The global rising phenomenon of ethnicity or ethnic identity movement has its distinctive local history of deprivation in the social, political, economic sphere and cultural hegemony by the larger group. On the other side of social, economic, political development and the technological advancement it grows concurrently among the marginal groups in a multiethnic society. However, marginal is not always ethnic. Common belief in common descent, language, religion, and culture make a group ethnic. These ethnic movements in any parts of the world are intended for the overall development of the community concern, at par to the larger group or ruling class. Thus, both the issues of ethnicity and development are interrelated and need to be addressed more inclusively.

However, fate and future of both the issues largely depend on the problem-solving attitude of the lawmakers who frame the developmental policy. Ideally, in a democratic set up with an equal right to the basic amenities of life, the developmental policy should effortlessly reach to the marginal ethnic community to address their issues in the process of making a nation.

Assam, the land of a bio-Cultural hotchpotch of the Indian subcontinent is historically significant for racial and cultural synthesis, as a meeting point of two great lines of influx of population from South-East Asia and the rest of India. From various early pieces of literature of the country and abroad, penetration of people to Assam and via Assam to different parts of the country and outside the country can be traced

through various probable routes in all four directions. Mills rightly remarked Assam as ‘One of the great migration routes of mankind’<sup>1</sup>. People of varied racial strain had entered into Assam or passes through the province at different intervals of time, and subsequently left their mark both physically and culturally, resulting into the formation of a greater composite Assamese culture. Assimilation is a robust mechanism here. It became more effective after the entrance of Hindu Aryan speakers, who have entered into the land through the western route, in a much later period than the people of the chino-Tibeto stock of Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman family ( Choudhury 1966, 76). People with Mongolian racial stock were attracted to the lifeways of Aryan Hindus and adopted the same gradually. However, they are still maintaining their cultural and linguistic identity. On the other hand, due to the influence of the Mongolian way of life the Hindu caste system is a relax scenario here. Thus, historically assimilation and mutual impact are active in this part of the country, resulting in the formation of bio-cultural Hotchpots, with its unique identity, problem, and prospect which is markedly different from the rest of the Great Indian Republic.

Development, particularly the economic well being and political participation in the decision-making process of the state are the primary concern of many of the ethnic communities of Assam from the day of the country's independence. Over the years, they were left alienated and became marginal in the social, economic, political way of life from the so-called mainland population of the state. With the spread of education and influence of modernity, the younger educated section of these marginalized communities had started raising their voice for the constitutional safeguard, so that they can live at par to that of the larger group by maintaining their unique identity. However, the political proliferation of electoral vote bank policy of the lawmakers and personal ambition of the leaders of the community concern has increased the intensity of the problem than the solution. Under these circumstantial situations, the present issue is addressed to provide a sustainable solution, so that the social harmony of the concerned area could be maintained more inclusively.

### **The problem:**

*Karbi* previously known as *Mikir* in the constitutional order of India is a hill tribe, though living presently in different plain districts of Assam. Racially they belong to great Mongoloid stock with Tibeto-Burman linguistic family. Along with various districts of Assam like *Karbi Anglong*, *North Cachar*, *Lakhimpur*, *Sonitpur*, *Golaghat*, *Nagaon*, *Morigaon* and *Kamrup*, *Karbhis* are also an inhabitant of Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, and Sylhet district of Bangladesh as reported by various scholars. (Stack and Lyall 1908, 2).

*Dimoria* in the present *Kamrup* metropolitan district of Assam is a tribal development block; predominant by the *Karbhis*, has historical significance in the medieval history of Assam. In the absence of conventional historical records, *Karbhis* are demanding their ethnicity in this historically significant

place since last 4-5 decades based on their folklore material. Further, they are also not accorded with the status of a scheduled tribe, as enjoyed by their hill counterparts in *Karbi Anglong* and *North-Cachar Hill* districts. Thus, ethnic assertion movement has started gaining its importance among the common *Karbhis* of this area as early as the independence of the country. Political responses to this movement are very ambiguous. The reckless action of the lawmakers of the state, instead of averting the crisis, has created the schism even within the community. This has resulted in the deviation from their desire goal, which was aimed for the overall development of the community by maintaining their identity. My endeavour in this paper is to address the problem in its context and offer a sustainable solution so that the concerned community can prosper in a proper sense.

### **The historicity of the Problem:**

In the late second decades of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century colonial period, after encroaching Assam, the ruler had decided to keep the aboriginal hilly tribe separate from the direct administration of British rule, not because to flourish the distinct language and culture but to conveniently collecting tax from the traditional leaders of these inaccessible land. As such *Mikir Hill* amongst others was brought under the Scheduled district act of 1874 and the people *Mikir* was considered as Tribal. Just before independence in 1946, the first *Karbi* organization '*Karbi Adorbar*' was formed not only to bring all *Karbi* individuals under one banner but also to tabled their demand to general administration for the preservation of cultural, social and political identity of the community. (Rongpi 2014, 73). Immediately after India got independence in 1947, the *Karbi Adorbar* had submitted a memorandum to the cabinet sub-committee headed by Gopinath Bordoloi, first chief minister of Assam, which was formed in 1945 to look after the rights of citizens, minorities, and tribal excluded areas. The Memorandum demanded the creation of separate hill districts with political autonomy and *Karbi* as their official language. Subsequently, in 1952, demand was granted and *Karbi* autonomous hill district with two legislative assemblies has been created. However, this creation was guided by the colonial Anthropological conception of the Scheduled geographical area identified by a particular community (Bordoloi 2013, 18). As such perception has been made in the administrative mechanism that people living in the Scheduled vicinity are the only tribal community with a particular identity. People living outside this Schedule area, even after having a common descent is not considered as tribal.

On the other hand, *Karbhis* living in the plains of present *Kamrup* Metropolitan district popularly known as *Dumrali* had opposed this separate form of administrative mechanism, as they assimilated with the caste Assamese by maintaining their unique identity<sup>2</sup>. However, under the Autonomous hill district of Schedule area, hill *Karbi* has been enjoying the constitutional safeguard in the socio-economic and political sector under the Scheduling system of the constitution of India. Whereas, *Dumrali* *Karbhis* are deprived of enjoying such benefits. Even after living for hundreds of years, the presence of *Karbi* people outside these two hill districts has never been shown in the census of India. Hence, the fund allotted by

the government of India under the tribal Sub plan has never been used for the overall uplift of these people. Further, as being a ruling community of tributary *Dimoria* kingdom in the recent historical period, *Karbi* people of this area feeling alienated day by day in the social milieu due to the continuous subordination by the progressive caste neighbours, in the branded name of 'Tribal'. As dominated by Tribal people, *Dimoria* was accredited with 'Tribal belt' under section 10 of land and revenue act 1950 Assam, which ensures the land right exclusively to the tribal. Subsequently, during state re-organization of 1972, it was upgraded as the *Dimoria* Tribal development block. But unfortunately, in the name of modernization and corruption in the highest level of administration, a large amount of agricultural land of this protected area has been registered against the Non-tribal<sup>3</sup>.

After two-three decades of independence, *Dumrali Karbis* were exposed to the widespread impact of modern education and gradually accessing the intention of exploitation by the ruling class. Suddenly, they have found themselves in a state of losing everything. Thus, the decades of resentment and resistance have resulted in the struggle for ethnic assertion, revivalism and space in the administrative mechanism of the state to break the virtual monopoly of the Assamese middle class. As such numbers of organizations representing the *Dumrali Karbis* have emerged and fighting for the crisis of their identity.

### **Interpretation and Analysis:**

Present Tribal Development block, *Dimoria* is a heterogeneous locality in *Kamrup* Metropolitan district of Assam, where *Karbis* are predominant. Various ethnic groups of people with their caste counterparts have contributed in the formation of the cultural mosaic of *Dimoria*. Though mention of *Dimoruwa*<sup>4</sup> is very frequent in the medieval history of Assam as a tributary kingdom of various powerhouses like *Ahom*, *Koch*, *Khasi* and *Jayantiya*, *Kachari* and so on, ironically *Dimoria* doesn't have its own written history till date. On the other hand, *Karbis* of *Dimoria* are demanding since the long past that they are Autochthones and ruled the *Dimoria* once. However, history is quite obscure about their origin and migration in *Kamrup*. The *Karbis* of *Kamrup* is very rich in their oral literature. This lyrical tribe prefers to live and die in nature's lap. Their experiences of love and woe, fear and hope, proximity and confrontation with nature are depicted in various forms of oral narratives, which bear historical significance. They perceive their glorious past in this land through such generational memories which are found in various oral literary forms.

However, in the social reality of *Dimoria*, *Karbis* are not enjoying the status of a ruling class in this multiethnic locality. In the proximity of nature, with subsistence economic condition and limited access to modern education, they are living in isolation. Further, with the increasing numbers of caste Assamese Hindus with the state reconstruction in 1972, when the capital was shifted from *Shillong* to *Guwahati*, *Karbis* in the adjacent areas were not only pushed to the corner but also silently forced to adopt the socio-cultural hegemony of Assamese middle class<sup>5</sup>. In various socio-cultural practices, they were given the

impression of inferiority under the brand name of Tribal. Inter cast marriage of the *Karbis* with the cast Assamese was not accepted in the social milieu. Gradually section of *Karbi* people had started adopting the cast Assamese way of life through the process of Sanskritization. Thus, a new social class with the brand name of *Koch* had appeared in the demographic pattern of *Dimoria*. This newly created social class is not the descendent of great *Koch* dynasty<sup>6</sup>. Rather they are the upgraded version of tribal people who had adopted the cast Assamese Hindus way of life.

It is mentionable here that though *Karbi Anglong* autonomous hill district was created under the scheduled district act in 1948, because of its wide distribution of population *Karbis* living outside the schedule district territory were also recognized as tribal. However, With the set up of state capital at *Guwahati* in 1972, *Karbis* that were living in many of the prominent places of present *Guwahati* city like *Zoo road, Ulubari, Ganeshguri, Beltola*, moved or motivated to move to a surrounding isolated place, as it was difficult for them to cope with the changing city flavour. Further, with the state reconstruction, a notification was published that the *Karbis* living only in the territory of schedule district area will be treated as tribal. Under these exigent environments, the educated youth of the community felt that in coming days they will gradually lose their identity through assimilation. Further, with the expansion of capital city *Guwahati*, this simple living native tribe will be pushed away to the corner and they will be deprived of their land, economic and political right. Thus, the demand was raised to accord the Tribal status to the community so that they can be protected and developed within the framework of the constitution even in the modern world. Later on, with the larger participation of the community, the demand was expanded to self-administration in the form of autonomy.

With their legitimate due to Tribal status, leaders of the community had successfully tabled their demand time to time before concerned state and central government. In due course of time, their demand for tribal status has been approved with limited access to Education, Employment and Economy. However, political right under the provision of tribal status has not been accorded. In any scheduled tribe reserve constituency, *Karbis* of *Kamrup* can't fight any election in the brand name of tribal<sup>7</sup>. Thus, the demand for self-administration in the form of autonomy is still a matter of great concern for the community.

North-East India, particularly Assam has witnessed a series of ethnic assertion movements since the era of independence. The demographic pattern of the state is very unique in comparison to the rest of the country. Various ethnic groups of people are living here for generations with their history and culture. Geographically though they are living within the periphery Assam since generations, they are strictly maintaining their identity. But after the independence of India, within the new federal structure of democracy, a newly affluent class has emerged, who ruled the state for a considerable long period. Even in the social milieu, this class had started ruling the ethnic minorities. In the absence of inclusive policy formation of development over the years, various marginal ethnic communities started raising their voice for development. Years of humiliation in social sectors and resentment of deprivation in economic and



political spheres led the communities to come up with various ethnic movements. The *Boro* movement, *Rabha* movement, *Tiwa* movement, *Missing* movement, *Karbi* movement are some of the extreme examples of this kind.

On the other hand, because of its territorial isolation, proper attention has not been given by the successive central governments after independence for its prosperity. With huge areas of fertile land in both the banks of River Brahmaputra, excessive tea production, large areas of the oil field, and world-class silk, the state could have the richest position in India in last 70 years of independence. This would have resulted in the status of a self-sufficient state without the unemployment problem. On the contrary, young educated Assamese people had started showing their resentment in various platforms for the negligence and exploitation of the central government towards the state after two decades of independence. A perception has been developed among the common mass of Assam that Indian government is neither responsible nor interested in the growth of its territory towards east beyond West Bengal. However, they are solely eyeing on the natural resources that are found abundantly in the state. This has resulted in the germination of a separatist movement in the brand name of ULFA with mass support in turbulent 80s of last century. Various student organizations also started functioning actively during this period.

Under such a fertile background, 'Kamrup Karbi convention' was organized in 1977 at *Lakhara*, Guwahati. The prime focus of this convention was to fulfil their legitimate demand of scheduled tribe status for *Karbis* living outside the *Karbi-Anglong* autonomous hill district and formation of an autonomous district council. However, the demand of autonomous district council seems to be impossible for the *Karbis* of *Kamrup* as an autonomous council already exist for the *Karbis* in *Karbi-Anglong* district. A section of leaders, after an elaborate discussion and suggestion of their *Khasi* comrade, had decided to rename the organization as 'Amri Karbi national council'. But this renaming was vehemently opposed by another section by saying that *Amri* is not a subdivision of *Karbi* tribe. Rather it is a place name historically associated with the tribe<sup>8</sup>. By referring Stack and Lyall, they said *Karbis* living in Assam can be divided into four basic divisions according to the local or place name. These are *Chintong*, *Ronghang*, *Amri*, and *Dumrali*. The majority of the *Karbis* living in the present *Karbi Anglong* district of Assam are of the *Chinthong* group, while the *Ronghangs* are abundantly found in the hilly region of *Nowgaon* and *North-Cachar* hill district. While the *Amri* section is found in the *Khasi* and *Jayantia* hill (present Meghalaya). Regarding this division, Lyall opined that *Amri* may be a *Khasi* river name while the *Ronghang* is the legendary site of *Karbi* king capital. Importantly all these three divisions of *Karbis* are living in the hilly region. Presently the *Karbis* living in the plain district of *Nowgaon*, *Morigaon* and *Kamrup* metro districts of Assam, who has taken up plough cultivation, are known as *Dumrali* by the other *Karbi*. However, these are not the real exogamous divisions of the tribe (Stack and Lyall 1908, 10).



Thus, another section of the leadership had formed another group for the similar demand of tribal status and autonomous council named as 'All Assam plains *Karbi Adarbar*'.

The schism between the two sections became much evident with the add-on flavour of religion. The idealistic differences between the groups became leadership and religious centric. After the creation of *Amri Karbi* national council, they were taught that they have to learn the English language to represent their demand properly in the respective platform. In 1982, the first English medium school was established in village *Amguri* by the Christian Missionary and subsequently good numbers of households had converted into Christianity under one of their veteran leader<sup>9</sup>. It was a tremendous blow on the sentiment of other section as they are very close to Hinduism since centuries, though they have their animistic belief. They also had started organizing people on the ground that this act of conversion is against our tradition and eventually we will lose our identity.

Over the years both the organizations are showing their identity by performing various agitations in the form of petitioning, *Dharna*, and *Bandh*. Gradually volume of both the organizations had increased with the support of their respective student union. However, political influence on the functioning of both organizations can't be ignored. Indeed, political proliferation for the electoral vote bank politics of the prestigious capital constituency of the state, made the split wider within the community. Though both the organizations were actively engaged in their struggle of recognition, lawmakers had preferred the *Amri* section and *Amri Karbi* development council came into effect in 2010. Recognition of this *Amrism* had intensified the division of *Karbhis* in *Kamrup* not only in the organizational level rather in the social settings of the community. After the creation of *Amri Karbi* development council, the other section had initiated a more intense campaign against this move of the government and demanded to rename the council as 'Karbi development council' for the *Karbhis* living in the plain areas of Assam. According to them, *Karbi* is only *Karbi*. No *Amri*, no non-*Amri*. All *Karbhis* living in Assam are kin to one another and all of them belong to their five exogamous clans *Enghi*, *Be*, *Engti*, *Teron* and *Tumung*. Thus, dividing the community regionally, in the name of development is a politically motivated move, which will be beneficial for a certain section of leadership than the common mass. Constant agitation of this group under these circumstances resulted in the formation of another development council for the *Karbhis* living outside the periphery of *Karbi-Anglong* autonomous hill district council. In 2016, Government of Assam had announced another development council as 'Karbi Development council', for the development of same *Karbi* people of seven districts namely *Kamrup*, *Morigaon*, *Nagaon*, *Golaghat*, *Sonitpur*, *Lakhimpur* and *Cachar*, as it was declared in 2010 for *Amri Karbi* development council. However, even after having two development councils for the same people living in these seven districts, most of them are still in their socio-economic pit. Both these councils have created a set of leadership within the community, who are seen to be more concern about their wellbeing than the community. *Dimoria* Tribal development block, prime location of the *Karbhis* of *Kamrup*, where land right is restricted to the tribal,

has taken the cosmopolitan shape just within a decade or two. On the contrary, the land right has not been allotted to the *Karbis* living since generations in different hilly areas of the locality, for the last three to four decades. Thus, the development and sustainability of the *Karbis* in *Kamrup* is merely a game of power and politics among the leader of the community and state administration. An inclusive policy formation and its proper implementation by using the resources of their own, both human and natural, are of the urgent need to reduce the subordination of the community in every sphere of life. An economic well being for all will automatically create social security among the mass and resulted in social solidarity and cohesion.

### **Conclusion:**

The ethnic assertion has been a booming industry in North-Eastern India, particularly Assam for the educated unemployed youth of the locality. Despite having abundant natural resources, unemployment is being a matter of concern for the youth of the state. Probably because of the richness of the state, people are less laborious and historically focusing on the survival need rather than surplus production. Many of the ethnic communities living today in Assam had their kingdom in the recent historical period within the geographical boundary of present Assam. This aura of historicity has compelled them for a carefree life, resulting in the minimum engagement in many of the lineal job or self-employment in present time. On the other hand, fertile land and abundant natural resources had attracted many illegal immigrants to the different parts of Assam, which posed serious demographic crises to the state. Gradually these newly migrant populations had adopted both the production and service sector. Over time, they not only become self-sufficient but controlled a healthy segment of the state economy by rendering the service of the labour and selling their products to the original inhabitant of the state. On the other hand, the affluent class from outside the state had controlled the entire business of the state.

With the spread of education and the impact of modernization, the younger section of many of the ethnic communities had started aspiring for a respectable position in the socio-economic-political sectors of the state. Though they believe to be the autochthones of the state, they had found themselves as marginal. Thus, the movement of ethnic assertion comes into effect. However, these movements were largely seized upon by the political opportunist. The formation of two development council for the *Karbis* living outside the *Karbi-Anglong* autonomous hill district in 2010 and 2016, clearly suggest the electoral consolidation of the vote in the respective assembly election. On the other hand, the section of leaders of the community, with their status-quo is still trying to fulfil their ambition by ignoring the larger demand of the community. In short, legitimate demand of the *Karbis* of *Kamrup* for tribal status and political participation in the decision making process for the overall development of the community, are floating in the cloud in between the leadership and authority. Even after the creation of two developmental councils, neither it has changed the socio-economic-political conditions of the community nor the mindset of the community that they are marginal and exploited.

In modern time the idea of development is essentially attached to the concept of sustainability. To achieve the sustainable development goal of the studied community in the present context, an inclusive policy formation is a prime necessity, where every individual of the targeted community will take part in its natural setting. In the modern economic scale, the majority of them are living in a position of below the poverty line. At present, economically they are living in a transitional stage. Since the last 25-30 years, because of various environmental issues, low production and high cost of labour, Jhum cultivation is replacing by banana, bamboo, rubber, brush and pineapple plantation. Presently though they are aware of the market economy, trying hard to cope with this changing scenario, partly because of outsiders intrusion and limited access to the resources

The land right is a big issue here. Under *Kamrup* Metropolitan district *Dimoria* is a tribal development block, where ideally land right is restricted to constitutionally protected class. But it has been observed since the last two decades that the demographic pattern of the area has changed drastically, and it has started taking the colour of cosmopolitan characters. Further *Karbis* living in the hill areas of this region since generations are now landless people. Land records are not allotted to them since the early '60s of the last century. At present less than 10 per cent of people are having land records and all remaining hill areas are categorized by the forest department as 'Reserve forest' and 'proposed Reserve forest'<sup>10</sup>. Thus, despite having abundant resources, they cannot enjoy it as their own. Planers and development authority must think in this line.

From the extensive use of pig and fowl in their every Socio-Religious practice, it can easily be ascertained that they had domesticated these animals at an early age. Even today in every household one will find these pig and fowl. This can be elevated to a large scale farming level, for which there is a huge market in the neighbouring area.

Weaving is another potential area need to explore by the planers and development authority. *Karbi* women are expert weaver. It is an innate quality of *Karbi* women. Even today clothing requirement of the entire family in a village setting is maintained by the womenfolk in their family loom. Women's participation in economic affairs among the *Karbis* of *Kamrup* is very significant and commendable since the historical period.

As mentioned earlier *Karbis* of *Kamrup* is very rich in their oral literature. Uncountable numbers of folksong and legends are still reverberating in the sky of *Dimoria*. However, with the impact of modernity, this traditional knowledge base is limited to popular virtuosi or age-old folk. Planers and development authority can take necessary measures in creating a professional class among the younger interested section, through which they can earn a living and simultaneously these precious verbal documents will be preserved through repeated practices.

Another most promising unexplored area of development among the *Karbis* of *Kamrup* is sports. Especially the younger male section of the community is very fond of playing football. Being a hill tribe they have a muscular body with short-medium stature. But lack of economic security compelled them to go for earning a living than playing football regularly. However, occasionally they organize friendly league matches against their neighbour, where considerable numbers of local people gather to watch the matches. Thus, there is a huge prospect of development for the planers.

Considering all the above discussion it can be summarized that the issue of development is not merely an agenda of the political class and bias leadership of the community. Rather it should be in the line of social reality and inclusive in nature. *Karbi* is a hill tribe living in different parts of present Assam. *Karbi* is only *Karbi*. Considering their present habitat, they should not be deprived of their legitimate right of tribal status under the constitutional framework of India. Further, focusing on the different arena of development as mentioned earlier, the community can be uplifted in their natural context, which in turn will bring social solidarity and harmony and subsequently contribute to the healthy growth of composite Assamese culture.

## Notes and References.

### Notes:

1. See J.P. Mills, 1928: *Assam Review* P-24.
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## **Gandhi's Creed of Nonviolence in the Context of Rise in Extremism in Post-Globalization India**

**Persis Latika Dass**

### **Abstract**

*Gandhi was a doyen of peace for both India and the World. His lessons on 'Ahimsa' though basically envisioned for the Indian National Movement were applied by many world leaders across time and space. The year 2019 was officially earmarked worldwide by many organizations to be observed as the year of Gandhi. The Indian Government too lined up a series of programs in his commemoration. However the issue that bothers every scholar of his philosophy is the degree of deference enjoyed by the Mahatma in the land of his birth. Does his creed of nonviolence receive any footing in any of the State policy in India? Do the masses, whose ancestors had brought nearly blind faith on Gandhi during the nation's struggle for independence, appreciate or practice his values in their everyday lives? The answer is an explicit no. Twenty-first Century India is strongly tilted towards extremism. Not only the people, but the State too reflects the same as both actually mirror each other's aspirations in the new consumerist India. The paper is a comment on the rise of extremism in post-liberalization India and its anomalous incongruity with the 150 years celebration of Mahatma Gandhi.*

### **Keywords**

*Globalization-Extremism-India- State-Consumerism-Religion*

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“He was right. He knew he was right, we all knew he was right. The man who killed him knew he was right. However long the follies of the violent continue, they but prove that Gandhi was right...Resist to the very end, he said, but without violence...Of violence the world is sick...Oh, India, dare to be worthy of your Gandhi!”

Pearl S Buck

American writer

The year 2019 was celebrated as the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, who not only ushered in independence for our country but like a benevolent 'Bapu' gave us a way of life, which if practiced would have certainly created a 'Dream India' for the millions of people still languishing in poverty.

Living in Twenty First Century Globalized India it becomes imperative to review the value-system of the age. It is a blatant reality that we had digressed from Gandhi immediately after independence but Gandhi remained alive subconsciously in our hearts and minds as a moral ideology. In spite of the surging



corruption in public as well as personal domain, Gandhi stayed as a beacon of hope and justice for the baffled countrymen. Post 1991 India stepped in the age of globalization and the lures of consumerism changed the mores and ethics of the spartanly spiritual Indians.

Globalization is another term for the second phase of slavery India is experiencing which ironically reappeared in its full form in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. Irrespective of geographical and administrative boundaries it has brought in the 'Bazaar Culture' across the globe. Economic liberalization is disrupting the smooth and steady flow of everyday life. It has sucked in the youth into the quagmire of raw desire and immorality. In this age humanity and values have no say, only profit matters. Man is treated like a commodity to be exploited and discarded. Unfortunately, the governments who ushered in liberalization used media and even academicians to eulogize the merits of this profit-centric system. New definitions of development were introduced that resulted in rise in GDP but less employment opportunities in the regular sector. The unskilled or semi-skilled were the worst affected. Emphasis was given on growth models that ushered in new ramifications for the already crushed marginalized groups. To open new vistas for the rapidly investing MNCs the State took on the responsibility to suppress insurgency with added vigour. Stringent laws that had been in use sparingly in the past were imposed with utmost fervour in regions voicing disagreement with the State. Numerous hurried military operations were galvanized to bring instant curbing of dissent that left no hiatus for dialogue. To distract the people a very sanguine image was created that webbed a superficial structure lacking the base for fundamental growth. This magical world blinded the people from perceiving the truth creating a pseudo atmosphere where even the Indian intelligentsia got lost in a maze of quantitative data and reports showing financial growth. Whereas in reality, the condition of the poor has deteriorated while the rich have moved up the financial ladder. Globalization is also marked with rapid growth in the field of Science and Technology. After the initial euphoria, this kind of progress often gives birth to suffocation, boredom and disappointment. Mankind finds itself at an ideological conflict. This new age has ushered in a state of disillusionment as well as disenchantment. The changing life situation has forced us to rethink the nature of all human relationships. These new relationships challenged the efficacy of our traditional value system. Man inflicted with self-love started cracking up internally and weakening down with the pain of smashed hopes. At such a juncture new life values were designed to meet the situation. Today, man no more wishes to struggle against difficult situations. His life is like a spare part of a machine. In spite of having attained all materialistic facilities humankind lacks spiritual peace. The situation has reached such an impasse that instead of visualizing one's own image in national development majority are in the race for individual advancement following whatever way appearing suitable to them. Disintegration, separatism, selfishness, suffocating atmosphere has made the average Indian lose faith in

his culture and values. The old social values appear as hurdles in this fast-paced life of high-strung sensibilities wherein sex, love, marriage, freedom, etc., constitute an intrinsic part. As a result, a new set of values have been formulated and propagated that subtly eliminated the traditional value system of India which Gandhi had vouched for in his ideology.

### **Globalization and Extremism**

The eighth decade of the twentieth century ushered in the age of free global market projecting a mirage of unhindered flow of ideas and products which would result in the elimination of poverty and conflict ultimately creating a peaceful world. The implementation proved true the prediction of thinkers like Karl Polanyi who analytically connected destruction of social values and rise of Fascism in the years between the two world wars, with liberalization of economy (Polanyi, 1944). The US Central Intelligence Agency Report 'Global Trends 2015' released in 2000 too foretold a similar scenario wherein Globalization would foster violent political, religious and cultural extremism (CIA 2000). The States withdrew public employment, food subsidies, health care initiatives, privatised land, accessible education, in turn, cutting down corporate tax and labour cost, thereby reducing the production cost for the MNCs. This had a detrimental effect on the developing countries where small landholders and businessmen suffered direly. The disparity in incomes soared high, giving impetus to the regional and communal clashes consequently jeopardizing the political integration of the country. State adopts the strategy of neopatrimonialism. Political leaders keep the prospective voters embroiled in issues pertaining to caste and community, generally conceding to the 'majority way' of doing things. Historical and cultural icons, myths, memories are reinterpreted in a fundamentalist strain exerting for the return of the elusive 'Golden Past.' Another observation is the western hegemonic cultural assault on the dress, language, food, views towards sex and gender, generating clashes with social authorities vouching indigenous norms of virtuosity. (Sandbrook and Romano, 2004, 1007-1030)

Globalization creating a mirage of prosperity, to all intents and purposes, is per se an age of extremism. Unfortunately, the same seems to have seeped into the Indian character. Extremism in its core has the seeds of violence and keeps on simmering till it gets the vent to erupt fiercely at the first instance. Gandhi wrote in *Young India* (6-4-1921): "If India makes violence her creed, and I have survived, I would not care to live in India. She will cease to evoke any pride in me." Gandhi was a firm believer of the creed of 'Ahimsa' and considered it to be an essential requisite that segregates humanity from the animal world. Non-violence is the greatest force dispensable to mankind and mightier than the most indigenous weapon of mass destruction. Gandhian Ahimsa, has neither a beginning nor an end. It transcends time, nations and people. The believer in nonviolence shares with many others the goal of a decent, just and equitable



society. He wants to see an end to injustice, tyranny, corruption, and the exploitation of men by their fellows. He is deeply concerned with establishing peace in the world. The follower of Ahimsa believes in the greatest good of all and even dies in the attempt to realize his ideals. Gandhi believed that nonviolence has to be learned just like any other subject of study. The votary of nonviolence has to cultivate the ability to sacrifice as well as be fearless and most important love his oppressor. The penchant for nonviolence only comes with deliberate effort and practice. It is part of the basic creed of every religion of the world. Nonviolence is the purest manifestation of Godly love. Many argued that nonviolence was only for individual emancipation and not suitable for worldly affairs but Gandhi refuted them declaring it to be elemental for everyday life. Truth and nonviolence are the two sides of the same coin and complement each other. Still for better understanding nonviolence could be categorized as the means to achieve the goal of truth. An adherent of nonviolence not only abhors violence in thought, speech and action but exerts himself to comprehend and ameliorates the troubles and tribulations of humanity at large. In this way nonviolence is not a passive creed but an action oriented forceful methodology. Had mankind endeavoured to create ammunition to spread peace and nonviolence with the same persistence as he did for war the world would have been a better place to live and leave for our children.

### **State Extremism**

Since its inception the Indian union has had to hear the dissenting voices of autonomy, statehood and separatism hailing from different part of the country. As seen earlier the base policy of the State has been dialogue and peace missions albeit sometimes marred with use of arms also. However, twenty-first century India has hardened its anti-insurgency policy. Not only that, it even started augmenting its defense forces by buying the latest from the global arms market. Kashmir and North East were the first casualty to the cause of promoting 'LPG' in India. The discord dates back to the year of independence, but now the State wanted a quick disposal of the problem. The rapidity and magnitude with which the global business giants were investing in the country the Indian State had to give up its former policy of peace talks and dialogue with the insurgent groups and resort to military action. In 1990 AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act) was imposed for the first time in the whole of Jammu and Kashmir. The states of the North-East, especially Assam had been the first to bear the brunt of AFSPA in 1958; however, the onset of economic liberalization with India's 'Look East Policy' resulted in a fresh wave of its imposition in the whole region. The policy aims at opening up India's economy and market to South-East Asia and East Asia especially, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia, for free trade. In such a scenario the natural resource of the North-East, especially oil, natural gas, tea, forest produce and waterfalls, also appear lucrative enough for new ventures with MNCs (Thingnam 2009, 68-69). The urgency of the State in suppressing the discontentment can be perceived through the renaming of 'Look

East Policy' as 'Act East Policy' (12<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-India Summit 2014) with countering terrorism as its primary objective (Singh 2018). Besides employing AFSPA the State conducted major armed operations like 'Bajrang,' 'Rhino' and 'Bluebird,' aiming at total annihilation of the anti-state sections in the region. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act grants special prosecution rights to the officers posted in 'disturbed areas.' The Kashmir Valley is still occupied by more than half a million troops and nearly the same number is doing so in the North-East under AFSPA. Over the years both the regions have had innumerable cases of torture, rape, custodial and summary killings reported against the Indian State by the civil society and human rights groups. Such incidents create doubt among the local population towards the intention of the State. Since 1990, many lives have been lost, the number of insurgent groups has gone up and civilian population has suffered at the hands of both the insurgents as well as the State. The situation is deteriorating over the years. In Arunachal Pradesh itself the insurgency related incidents and civilian casualties have escalated from 5 per cent in 2012 to 20 per cent in 2017 (Policy Research Studies 2018, 1-2). Amidst such chaos the sixteen years hunger strike of Irom Sharmila, demanding withdrawal of the draconian AFSPA is a veritable example of holding on to the voice of peace even in an aggressively antagonistic atmosphere coaxing us to remember Gandhi when he said, "Democracy and violence can hardly go together. The States that are today nominally democratic, have either to become frankly totalitarian or if they are to become truly democratic, they must become courageously non-violent" (*Harijan 12-11-1928*). Continuing in the same strain Gandhi said, "Repression has never worked. I challenge anybody to point to me a single episode in either ancient or modern history, which proves that repression has even once achieved the end to which it has been directed. The English failed in America.....(it) failed in South Africa after the Boer War, it failed in Ireland yesterday....it will fail in India tomorrow. If repression succeeds in anything, it is in advertising the cause of the enemy." Globalization has put the Indian State under pressure to do away with its 'soft' image in order to create a disciplined ambience for the transnational investment. In doing so India's image internationally has suffered irrevocably in its human rights record. Its 'carrot and stick' policy in both Kashmir and North-East has yielded no concrete result; the insurgents continue their 'cat and mouse' game persistently gaining support with the civilians as well as international observers, attesting the above quoted words of Gandhi.

Due to liberalization India has also forsaken the policy of peace, nonviolence and disarmament it had been following since independence. The change came in late 80s with India importing armaments worth 12,235 million USD (UNDP 1994, 58) between the years 1988-1992. Our defence expenditure has been steadily on the rise. It was 11.2 Billion USD in 1998 (Federation of American Scientists 1999) and rose to 52.5 Billion USD in 2017 (IISS, *The Military Balance 2018*, 499-509). Since, India has been topping the world rankings for weapon imports, organizing vigorous air and naval exercises with USA and Israel. The

reasons cited are quite common and reminiscent of the ones given by European countries at the onset of world war, like threat from neighboring countries and armament is a deterrent to war. In 1998 renouncing its stand on global nuclear disarmament India became a nuclear power. The decision called in economic sanctions and trade embargo by US and its allies but the government survived it by ushering in a second wave of reforms. With the goal of attracting 10 Billion USD annually in FDI, foreign exchange controls were removed, insurance industry was opened to foreign investment, internet services were privatized and tariffs were cut down. India was the world's second largest importer of major arms in 2014–19 and accounted for 9.2 per cent of the global total, according to the 'Trends in International Arms Transfer 2019' published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI 2020, 1-12).

The cap for foreign investment limit in the domestic defense industry is 49 per cent without seeking government approval. India is wooed by global arms firms from Britain, France and USA to secure Billion Dollar deals. In defense matters the Indian State is now desirous to export defense equipments to the world. The orient known to give philosophical meditations and peaceful ideology to the world wants to sell arms in this age of globalization. A country where millions are still languishing around the poverty line with a below average annual HDI value an annual defense budget of billions appears to be foolhardy. In 2017 India spent 1,190,51 Billion USD to contain violence. This comes to nearly 9 per cent of the GDP i.e., 595.4 USD nearly over 40,000 per person (Institute for Economics and Peace 2018, 32). The number of armed force personnel has multiplied drastically. From 1,270,000 in 1994 it has surged to 3,031,000 in 2017(IISS, *The Military Balance* 2018). In 2019 India's defence budget is Rs 3.18 Lakh Crores (PIB 2019). There does seem to exist an entangled relationship between this race for armament and economic liberalization. Opening doors for foreign investment is turning India into an armed State. Could it be reparation for our lost masculinity, when we allow the outsiders to exploit our men and material for their enormous profit? Interestingly, India's relationship with its neighbors has not improved rather it appears to be deteriorating on many issues. The country has been ranked 141 out of 163 countries by Global Peace Index 2019(IEP 2019). India has been using military aid to suppress internal dissent instead of lending ear to the grievances and making feasible concessions.

Since antiquity, East has been known for its peaceful and magnanimous demeanor against aggression and it is the same indigenous Indian spirit that was invoked by Gandhi when he wrote, "The Rishis who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized the uselessness and taught a weary world that the way to salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence" (*Young India* 11-08-1920). Gandhi was utterly against India imitating the West, especially in its gluttony for power and armament. He prophesized the momentary victory India might

gain by following this path but simultaneously predicted rise in problems due to militarization. He visualized a lot of potential in India and wanted it to set a lesson to the world. He said: “I am only hoping and praying that....there will rise a new and robust India-not warlike, basely imitating the west in all its hideousness, but a new India learning the best the west has to give and becoming the hope not only of Asia and Africa, but the whole of aching world.....”(Harijan 7-12-1947)

### **Corporeal Extremism**

Gandhi was a pragmatic teacher who taught by example. He knew India will never be truly free till millions of its people continue to languish in abject hunger and poverty. To empathize with his countrymen, he had reduced his basic wants of food and clothing to the minimum. With regard to sex he had taken the vow of celibacy, his food was restricted to a minimal intake of seasonal fruits and vegetables and had adopted the loin cloth to promote the indigenous cottage industry. Unfortunately, Globalization has convinced India to reject the Gandhian concept of controlling the wants, especially pertaining to food, possessions and sex. For Gandhi, food was to be taken only to keep the body alive and functioning and not at all to please the palate. Similarly, he discouraged acquiring worldly possessions and advocated a spirit of contentment and voluntary poverty. He said, “The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted, while millions are starved to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want.” (*From Yervada Mandir*)

Globalization ushered in international brands in clothes, cars, electronic goods and gadgets in the Indian market which whetted the materialistic lust of the otherwise Spartan Indians. Studies in the field predicted that the Indian luxury market is worth billions of US Dollars. It will continue to expand many folds in coming years and the number of millionaires is also expected to multiply. Due to the high purchasing power of the upper class in tier II and III cities, the Indian market is a huge opportunity for foreign luxury players. The luxury goods sector includes products like apparel, accessories, home decor, pens, watches, wines and spirits, jewelry, and services, such as fine dining, concierge services, travel, hotels, spa-assets as fine arts, yachts and automobiles (ASSOCHAM 2014). The change could be viewed most drastically in the country's small towns and the villages out-skirting these towns. The rural and semi-rural settlements got exposed to a myriad of experiences worldwide. This wave of liberalization did give some relief to the claustrophobic atmosphere but for the majority, the transition was superficial and frivolous. The Indian countryside still bereft of basic amenities like water, electricity, roads, sewerage and civic-safety became stuffed with international brands of drinks, eatables and mobiles. According to a report published by Euromonitor International (2018) the restaurant market in India will double from 2013 to 2021 because the rising number of millennials in India, prefer to eat outside than home cook food with

Chinese and Latin American cuisines topping their preferences. Aaron Allen and Associates (2017), Global Restaurant Consultants has declared the Indian food service industry as one of the fastest growing in the world whose worth will reach 126 Billion USD by 2020 in spite of demonetization and GST (Goods and Services Tax). A major chunk of this market is ruled by global players like McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, Domino's, Subway and Barista. However domestic players like Nirula, Coffee Day Group, Haldiram, etc., also occupy substantial space. Irony is that a large percent of children in rural India are still undernourished whereas urban India is suffering with the challenge of over nutrition. As per National Family Health Survey 4 (2015-16) the percentage of overweight or obese men and women (age 15-49 years) is 18.9 and 20.6 respectively as compared to NFHS 3 (2005-06) where the figure was 9.3 and 12.6. At the same time the State's efforts to reign in Anemia has not given remarkable results. As compared to NFHS 3 (2005-06) the percentage of children (age 6-59 months) suffering with anemia has gone down marginally; from being 69.4 to 58.6 in NFHS 4(2015-16). Amidst all this disparity India's rich are riding high. In 2007 there were only 36 Indians featuring in Forbes Billionaire List, and by 2019 the number grew to a whopping 131 with Mukesh Ambani the Chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), getting the highest-rank among the Indians in the list, at No. 13 with a net worth of 5002 Billion USD. Stuck in the bedlam, the middle-class lured by consumerism was the worst affected. The greater availability of consumer goods created 'desire' amongst the low-income groups. LPG has transformed the Indian economy of need into an economy of desire. The rise in inflation and the inability of the low-income groups to possess the 'desired' commodities not only widened the gap between the 'haves and have-nots' but also generated high levels of frustration leading to rise in crime in the society. Exposed to the western culture of sexual promiscuity the young generation readily lapped up the trend. Live-ins and pre- or extra-marital sex is no more to be shunned or tagged amoral. As per a poll conducted by *Inshorts* a news app, in May 2018 with a sample of 1.4 lakh netizens in the age group of 18-35 years, more than 80 percent supported live-ins with 26 percent millennial choosing lifelong live-in over marriage. Interestingly the survey included a large number of women respondents (Indian Express May 20, 2018). One-night stands, casual relationships or live-in, have become the way of life. The revelation is a shock in a land known for traditional values like frugality, idealism, dharma, karma, transcendentalism, vegetarianism, religious tolerance and ahimsa. Techno-savvy dating practices, free love, sexually transmitted diseases, international cuisines, pizzas and burgers, Gucci and Armani stores constitute the new India of twenty first century.

Unfortunately, Globalization has convinced India to reject the Gandhian concept of controlling the wants, pertaining to food, possessions and sex. For Gandhi, food was to be taken only to keep the body alive and functioning and not at all to please the palate. Similarly, he discouraged acquiring worldly possessions and advocated a spirit of contentment and voluntary poverty. He said, "The rich have a superfluous store

of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted, while millions are starved to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want” (Gandhi 1930, 21). Gandhi considered the sexual energy as a portent power capable of doing wonders if used for the betterment of mankind. He was against wasting it in satisfying fleeting and momentary pleasures. For Gandhi, it was a gift of God to be used only for procreation. Gandhi was a votary of ‘Brahmacharya’ or Chastity as an ideal way of life. However, Gandhi’s definition of Brahmacharya was not limited to physical lust but a general reign in over all sense organs. According to him it was to be observed in thought, word and deed. The ears, the eyes and touch, all need to be trained to do so. India’s fall into the abyss of desire, when hunger, poverty, physical and sexual crime against women, children, Dalits and other marginalized sections are on the rise calls forth an appeal to the observance of Brahmacharya if not in its literal form but at least in a restrained way as a panacea to the afore stated maladies.

### **Caste and Communal Extremism**

Writing in *Young India* (25-9-1924) Gandhi said: “I believe in absolute oneness of God and therefore also of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction, but they have the same source.”

Ironically, the twenty-first century India is more zealous in guarding and practicing the vagaries and nuances of their communities than any other time in the past and is therefore more religious and caste conscious than before. There exists a strong link between liberalization and the suffusion of such psycho-social bearing. Globalization exposed the Indians to such novel experiences, that the very roots of Indian cultural ethos were rattled. The spartanly simple lifestyle of pre-90s was swept away and under the intoxication of materialism, the average Indian readily submitted to the forbidden impulses and desires in everyday life. This metamorphosis tormented the Indian conscience which felt guilty over its memorization with foreign influences. This realization resulted in an ontological search for identity that led to a guilt-ridden aggressive tilt towards religious fanaticism and caste loyalties and peculiarities and an indigenous binding to one’s culture and identity. The transformation is most nonsensical and paradoxical because adherence to such idiosyncrasies should have ended due to the liberal western ideals accompanying liberalization, yet caste and religion have come to matter more for the ‘Global Indian.’ Researchers attribute the trend to a global phenomenon that could be traced in other neoliberal nations of the world. In India it materialized in a spurt in pilgrimages as well as a boom in the god-men industry. The 2013 flash floods of Kedarnath due to overflow of pilgrims to the sight is a veritable example of the ritual turning into a fad with the believers. Figures by Badrinath and Kedarnath Temple Trusts show a fivefold jump in number of pilgrims visiting the shrines between 2003 and 2013. In Kedarnath the number of visitors grew from 1,69,217 to 5,75,040 and Badrinath from 1,34,010 to 5,95,020. According



to 2011 provisional data 2.5 crore tourists visited the state of Uttarakhand with a population of 1.5 crore whereas government data reports merely 4,547 registered hotels, guest houses and night shelters. This alone proves the existence of numerous illegal non-registered structures to accommodate the tourist influx (Deka, 2013). In spite of the recent spree of cases of sexual assault and corruption pending against the god-men there has been no lessening in their popular appeal among the masses and their public meetings are thronged by devotees from different sections of the society. The country has experienced a mushrooming of religious sites also. As per 2011 Census India has registered 3.01 million places of worship, much more than schools, colleges, hospitals and factories (Kishore, 2016). In Delhi alone the number of registered religious building rose from 560 in 1980 to 2000 in 1997, and this figure does not include the unregistered, unaccounted and encroached structures (Nanda 2009, 71). An interesting observation is that this rise in religious fervor can be seen in all sections of the Indian community. A 2007 State of the Nation Survey done by CNN-IBN, claimed that 38 per cent of Indian Muslims, 47 per cent of Indian Christians, 33 per cent of Sikhs and 27 per cent of Hindus have become more religious in the past five years. The State of the Nation Survey was based on interviews of 14,680 respondents spread across 883 villages and urban areas covering 19 states (Nanda 2009, 70). The trend continues to be in vogue. As per 2015 Pew Research Center Survey 8/10 Indians admitted that religion is very important in their lives (Majumdar, 2018). Furthermore, this religious fetish is totally ritualistic and based on blind faith and bereft of any reason or logic. Such religiosity only results in rigidity and fanaticism.

India being a nation of many caste, classes and religions has always had linguistic, communal and caste differences. However, post-liberalization and especially after the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 and Mandal Commission recommendations, communal and caste issues got flared up in India, the embers of which continue to simmer till date. Although dubbed by many as a diversion strategy of the Indian Government to distract the critiques of liberalization, the episode has created major cracks in the cohesive social fabric of the country spawning an environment of doubt and suspicion between the leading religious communities of the country. This distrust has helped the fundamentalist and terrorist outfits of each community to gain sympathizers and followers amongst the civil population. Since 2007 India's score in Social Hostility Index has been on the rise. The country has scored higher than 7.2 and been assigned position higher than Syria and Iraq in the Social Hostility Index calculated at the end of 2016. The reason cited is communal tension and violence against low caste Dalits (Pew Research Centre, 2017, 53). Gandhi laid the onus of safeguarding the minority on the shoulders of the majority. In a prayer speech dated 22-9-1947 during the days of Delhi riots he clearly stated, "Surely it is cowardly on the part of the majority to kill or banish the minority for fear that they will all be traitors. Scrupulous regard for the right of the minorities well becomes a majority. Disregard of them makes of a majority a laughing stock. Robust faith in oneself and brave trust of the opponent, so-called or real, is the best safeguard." The



culture of mob lynching perpetrated by vigilante groups merely on the doubt of cow trade or beef consumption is a sad reminder of the above discussed wedge which does not seem to be bridging up. Interestingly Gandhi had a very pragmatic and lucid approach towards the subject. He said, “The Panchayats should see to cattle improvement. They should show steady increase in the milk yield. Our cattle had become a burden on the land for want of care. It was gross ignorance to blame the Muslims for cow slaughter. Gandhiji held that it was the Hindus who kill the cattle by inches through ill-treatment. Slow death by torture was far worse than outright killing.”

In such a dismal scenario, a brief overview of Gandhian egalitarian values becomes de rigueur. For Gandhi, God could not be found in temples or idols, or places of worship built by man’s hands, nor could He be found by abstinence. God could be found only through love, not earthly but divine. Gandhi had an unflinching faith in the basic unity and co-existence of the two major religious communities of India. He blamed the British for the divide and held that he had not a shadow of doubt that the iceberg of communal differences will melt under the warmth of the sun of freedom. As providence would have it, he did not live to see his conviction blasted in twenty-first century India. Gandhi was a man of religion. A youth survey conducted jointly by Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi and German Political Foundation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, with 6,122 respondents in age group 15-34 years, across 19 states in April-May 2016, reported Indian youth to be a complex amalgamation of both conservative and liberal. They are modern in appearance with stylish shoes, clothes, watches but are covertly inclined towards intolerance and conservatism. 79 per cent pray regularly while 68 per cent go to places of worship with 35 per cent fasting regularly. 92 per cent favor Intra-Caste marriage and 45 per cent totally disapprove of Inter-Religious marriage. Although 58 percent are non-vegetarian, but on the question of beef eating a strong 48 per cent did not accept it as personal choice and supported State intervention on the matter. Similarly, a whopping 60 per cent concurred that films hurting religious sentiments should be banned (Harikrishnan 2017). As such the contemporary fad for the gods in India should coincide with Gandhi’s religious thought, but sadly it does not. For Gandhi, religion was a means to understand the ‘How’ and ‘Why’ of life. He vouched the wisdom behind religious traditions yet at the same time was very much conscious of the clammy hold of such rituals on religion. He never took part in any of the traditional religious rituals and his prayers contained texts from all the religions of the world. Untouchability, which still thrives in post-liberalization India, was declared a disgraceful blot on Hinduism by Gandhi. Unfortunately, manual scavenging continues to be practiced in many parts of techno-savvy India. Gandhi was inapprehensive about rejecting the scriptures if they promulgated the vicious custom. According to him, it served no useful purpose and kept a large section of the human race suppressed. At the same time Gandhi rejected caste-based reservation because he felt it would alienate the already ostracized low castes and hamper their smooth synthesis with the caste Hindus. He also feared

that it will give birth to an indelible antipathy between them. As with other Gandhian sayings, this too has proved prophetic. India was never so caste conscious as it is in the twenty-first century India. The situation has worsened with the politicians playing the caste card. At this juncture, Indian society stands divided, both vertically and horizontally and once again we need to draw inspiration from Gandhi to face the challenges of the globalized world.

## **Conclusion**

Globalization ushered in a host of new experiences for the nation, not only economically but socio-politically as well. It brought India out of its reclusiveness to play an active role in global affairs; unfortunately, in order to adopt the homogeneity of the global culture, the heterogynous composition of its polity, society and culture suffered. The open market did give 'choice' to the consumer but also created 'chaos and confusion' leading to frustration among the majority because the State could not bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. Social networking sites that could have played the same role of molding public opinion as nationalist newspapers in colonial India, became a gallery for narcissist 'Selfies' and Private affairs. Moreover, this bold and brazen India is also audaciously religious and caste conscious, further complicating the situation. 'Liberalization' could have truly liberated India from all its maladies if implemented in tune with the indigenous characteristics of the country's polity, society and economy and that could have been possible only with the Gandhian model falling between ultra-modernism of the west and irrational fetish obsession of the traditional east. Gandhi understood the difference between economic and real progress. For him the real progress was based on moral values like truth, love and nonviolence whereas economic advancement was limited to material growth. He was not against materialism but only if it had been acquired within the perimeter of morality. However material progress above a given minimum would surely be in conflict with moral progress. Gandhi comprehended the Indian spirit like no one else. His critical traditionalism was timelessly efficacious for the nation and would have definitely delivered India of its troubles. Unfortunately, it was not to be so as a result one-sixth of India remains afflicted with insurgency, its borders continue to be vulnerable, farmers are persistently committing suicides, parents are still selling their children and rape and abuse of women and children goes on unabashedly.

The twenty-first century globalized Indian youth comprising nearly sixty per cent of the country's population, views Gandhi, the 'Father of the Nation,' as a mere water-mark on the Indian paper-notes, in photographs hanging in the backdrop of every corrupt Government official, subject of passivity and ridicule in Indian cinema, as quotable quotes during school debates and elocutions, in speeches of politicians and finally in relation to the nomenclature of roads, circles and insipid government schemes. Gandhi stopped existing or mattering for India under the deluge of globalization but the flame has to be

kept burning. Hope has to be kept alive that a generation of Indians will come who instead of blaming Gandhi for all the maladies in their life will understand and appreciate the contribution made by Gandhi not only as a harbinger of independence for the nation but a guiding light for everyday life.

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# **Politics of Immigration Issue in Assam in the Post-Assam Accord Period: An Analytical Study**

**Kalyani Chakravorty**

## **Introduction**

The issue of continuous migration of population since the British Colonial period coupled with immigration in the post-independence period has posed a perennial problem in Assam. It continues to be the most sensitive issue concerning the State in recent times. It is a vexed issue which assumes greater significance due to its far-reaching consequences on the demographic, socio-economic, and cultural scenario of the state. Not only this, the issue has its profound impact on the politics of Assam. The issue has often been politicized on the eve of almost every election, and various political parties and groups have periodically utilized this particular issue as a tool to reap political dividends. Over the years, the issue has become complicated and continues to rock the state from time to time.

It may be noted that, migration involves (more or less) permanent movement of individuals or groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas and communities (Singh 2009, 7). It is well known that migration or movement from one place to another is a natural phenomenon and in fact, has been an inseparable part of history. It is thus a global phenomenon and majority of the countries of the world have witnessed migration of people at one point of history or the other. In the similar manner, migration to Northeast India, especially in Assam is not new. Since antiquity people belonging to various races and cultures have migrated and settled in this particular region. However, such coming of people was never an important issue in Assam. But the situation began to change during the Colonial period when various groups of people were brought to Assam by the British to serve their various interests. More particularly, the arrival of Bengali migrants was a cause of resentment among the Assamese people and generated a sense of fear and apprehension among them which persisted and manifested in diverse forms. Although population flow to Assam during the British period were merely inter-district or inter-provincial in nature, even such migrations were highly communalized and subjected to massive politicization during the successive Congress and Muslim League ministries in the state. In the years after independence too, population inflow from East Pakistan and later Bangladesh continued for various reasons like, religious persecution, economic, environmental, political, and so on. Thus the fear and apprehension already borne by the Assamese and the people of various ethnic communities about the Bengali population for historical reasons continued to persist, and this simmering tension has often been capitalized by various political and non-political forces to serve

their vested interests thereby leading to a volatile situation in the state over the years. In this backdrop, the paper seeks to discuss the immigration problem in Assam from historical perspective and thereby analyze the politicization of the immigration issue in Assam in the period following the signing of historic Assam Accord, 1985. Required data and information for the study has been collected from secondary sources like books, journals and e-resources.

### **Immigration Problem in Assam: Historical Backdrop**

At the very outset, it may be noted that, the process of migration to Assam is not a new phenomenon and since long past, people belonging to various races and cultures had migrated and settled in this region, and in most instances underwent a process of assimilation with the local people. However, in the modern period the process of migration can be traced to the British annexation of Assam in 1826. The arrival of the British paved the way for the migration of various groups of people to Assam. Thus the first group of people to come to Assam after the British occupation was the Hindu Bengali 'Babus' from the neighbouring Bengal Presidency for managing the various administrative tasks of the British administration so also the emerging plantation offices. As a matter of fact, these people by virtue of their early exposure to the British rule so also modern English education were already acquainted with the British system of administration and hence had a comparative advantage over the local population. Thus the arrival of the Hindu Bengalese and their monopolization of the Government jobs caused much resentment among the local people. Moreover, the introduction of Bengali as the official language of the state in 1836 met with severe protests and most importantly, it created a sense of distrust and apprehension in the minds of the local people and these feelings and sentiments were sure to bore its fruit in the days to come. Apart from the Hindu Bengali, other groups of people to migrate to Assam in the pre-independence period were: tea labourers, Nepali graziers, Marwari businessmen, Muslim peasants from the thickly populated East Bengal districts and so on. Now, strictly speaking, the migration of various groups of people to Assam in the pre-independence period cannot be considered as immigration in the true sense of the term because it was just a movement of the people from one part of the country to the other, but it set the stage for various future conflicts between the immigrants and the indigenous ethnic communities.

In the wake of Partition and independence of India, the immigration issue altogether assumed a new dimension. In fact, it was only with independence that the actual process of immigration started in India. The Partition of India and transfer of Sylhet in 1947 brought about a tremendous humanitarian crisis; large number of Hindu Bengali refugees crossed over to the Indian side due to large scale communal riots and violence, various discriminatory property Acts etc and took shelter in Assam so also in various NE states and later, even a section of them took shelter in other Indian states. And the flow of people from East Pakistan



continued over the years due to religious persecution and other communal disturbances. On the other side of the picture, alongside with the Hindu displaced persons, in the years after independence, there had been flow of Muslim immigrants to Assam mainly for economic reasons.

Next, Assam witnessed another major phase of immigration on the eve of the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. There was an exodus of large number of Hindu refugees to Assam so also in other states of India bordering erstwhile East Pakistan --- presently Bangladesh. Majority of these people were rehabilitated in various refugee camps, set up for the evacuees, and a large section of them did not stay in any camp and stayed with their relatives and friends. However, although the majority of these people went back after the formation of Bangladesh and the signing of the Indira-Mujib Pact in 1972; in the years following, the flow of people continued in a clandestine manner due to resumption of religious persecution and other communal disturbances in Bangladesh. With this, the fear psychosis of the Assamese people about the immigrant Bengali population once again became prominent and this time they were not in a mood to compromise. The spark that finally ignited the fire was the announcement of by-election of the Mangaldoi Parliamentary constituency which fell vacant following the death of its sitting MP Hiralal Patowary. Prior to the election, when the work of revision of electoral rolls was going on, it came to the notice that there had been an abnormal increase in the number of electors in that particular constituency. This particular development alarmed the people and further intensified the existing apprehension of being outnumbered and overwhelmed by the Bangladeshi immigrants. Thus, the six years long Assam Movement or the 'Anti-Foreigners Agitation' started under the leadership of AASU and AAGSP with the demand of 'detection, deletion and deportation' of foreigners from Assam which ended with the signing of the historic Assam Accord in 1985. In the post-Accord period, a new political party named Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) was formed by a section of the erstwhile AASU members. It won the Assam Legislative Assembly elections in 1985 and formed the government. Although the new government was formed with high expectations, with the passage of time, it became evident that the government failed to fulfill the expectations of the people and it could not do anything substantial towards the solution of the issue. Since then, many governments had been formed and dissolved in Assam so also in the Centre, but it is quite unfortunate that even after more than 34 years of signing of the Assam Accord, the immigration issue in Assam still remains unresolved.

### **Politics of Immigration in Assam in the Post-Accord Period**

As already noted, since the British annexation of Assam the migration of various groups of people to the province, particularly the Bengalese from the neighbouring Bengal Presidency was, by and large, never on a welcome note and in fact, generated tensions and bitter feelings in the minds of the local people particularly the Assamese. Moreover, the territorial reorganization of Assam time and again by the British further

accentuated the fear-psychosis of the Assamese population and they began to consider the Bengalese as a threat to their culture and identity. In this regard, it is certain that the British through the application of 'divide and rule' policy were quite successful in creating a dividing line among the people of Assam particularly between the two principal communities- Bengalese and the Assamese on linguistic and religious basis. This fear and apprehension of the Assamese people about the migrant population ultimately created a xenophobic tendency among the former. And subsequently, this fear-psychosis of the Assamese and people of other ethnic groups have been capitalized by various political forces to serve their vested interests. What was basically an economic issue during Colonial period was time and again flared up and given a political and communal dimension by various political parties both in the pre-independence and post-independence period obviously to serve their parochial vested interests and the practice continues to this day also. No doubt certain piecemeal measures were adopted at different points of times but time proved beyond doubt that these measures were merely pacifying in nature and hence could not serve the purpose.

Resultantly, the Assam Movement or the Anti-Foreigners Agitation led by AASU-AAGSP commenced in 1979 which continued for six years and concluded with the signing of the Assam Accord between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the leaders of the AASU-AAGSP on August 15, 1985. The Accord, apart from settling the cut-off date and year for the 'detection, deletion and deportation' of foreigners to Assam, 'promised peace, offered guarantees for Assam's cultural, social and linguistic identity and heritage and reaffirmed the centre's commitment to the north-east's economic advance'(De 2005, 60). As per the Assam Accord, March 25, 1971 was decided as the cut-off date and year for the purpose of detection and deportation of foreigners from Assam. And needless to say, AASU-AAGSP leaders certainly agreed to this date and year, as they were also signatories to this Accord. But, the most pertinent question is: what suddenly prompted AASU leaders to agree to the March 25, 1971 as the cut-off date and year after the lapse of six years of the Anti-Foreigners Agitation? Despite the fact that since inception, Mrs. Gandhi offered this particular date and year for the identification of foreigners, but the AASU leaders were adamant in their demand of 1951 as the cut-off year. This naturally brings in question the honesty and dedication of AASU to the cause for which they had fought for six long years. In fact, political ambitions of a section of the student leaders cannot be ruled out as a factor which might have induced them to prolong the movement, and the problem could easily be sorted out quite earlier if they had the desired will and commitment to the cause.

After the signing of the Assam Accord, a section of the AASU members formed a new political party 'Asom Gana Parishad' (AGP) and it contested the forthcoming elections to the Assam Assembly in 1986. The erstwhile AASU leaders were already in the good book of the people and naturally in the elections, the mandate was in favour of the party; and AGP formed the ministry. However, although the government was formed with high expectations, as time rolled on, it became evident that the achievement fell far short of the

expectations and the first AGP government utterly failed to do anything substantial towards the solution of this vexed problem. It was much expected of AGP that since it came to power on the plank of the anti-foreigners issue; it would at least honestly and seriously strive to bring a practical solution to the immigration problem facing Assam. But much to the disillusionment of the people, time proved beyond doubt that the erstwhile student leaders promised too much and in practice could deliver too little. No sooner had they rose to the position of power, they also adopted an indifferent attitude like the previous governments and the whole issue fell into oblivion. They could neither initiate the border fencing work during their tenure nor could adopt any measure to strengthen other security mechanisms in the Indo-Bangladesh border. As a matter of fact, the ministers of the AGP government were basically student leaders, who came to power in a tender age in connection with their active involvement in the Anti-Foreigners agitation in Assam. Hence, neither they were politically mature nor had any expertise in the art of governance. So, once they came to power and got used to the power position, they adopted an easy-going attitude and thus failed to fulfill the expectations of the people. No doubt, for such sort of attitude, they had to pay a heavy price, as in the next Assembly elections of 1991, AGP suffered a setback and once again Congress (I) government under Hiteswar Saikia came to power. Initially, Saikia sought to utilize his come back to power to strengthen the position of the Congress and initiated the border fencing work at a high pace. However, unfortunately the work could not be completed and the border continued to be porous as before. After Saikia's tenure, the AGP once again returned to power and began its second innings. But this time also, its achievements fell far short of the expectations for which after completion of its tenure in 1996, it never returned to power in the state independently.

Therefore, in the years following the signing of the Assam Accord, the implementation of the Accord remained one of the agenda for every government that were formed in the subsequent period and naturally, it turned into a hotly debated issue with political ramifications. In fact, the issue continued to come or rather was brought to focus and hence remained one of the agenda of all the political parties on the eve of almost all the Assembly and Parliamentary elections in the state. Naturally, the issue has often been politicized and thus an uneasy situation continued to prevail in the state. Successive governments both at the Centre and the state however, failed to solve the problem. It is true that electoral politics in India is but a number game and so, for electoral success of any political party minority votes matter a lot. This is true in case of Assam also. Perhaps, this is one of the primary reasons behind the inactiveness of various political parties in Assam over the immigration issue. After all, no party could afford to put at stake its position by initiating any action detrimental to the interests of its committed vote banks.

Therefore, it follows that even after the lapse of 34 years of the signing of the Assam Accord the contentious foreign nationals' issue remains unresolved. The barbed wire border fencing along the 262 kilometers long

India-Bangladesh border which was one of the major provisions of the Assam Accord has not been completed yet. It is true that, several portions of the India-Bangladesh border are riverine and also due to other geo-physical barriers, it is not possible to guard the border by erecting barbed wire fencing. But that certainly cannot be an excuse to keep the extremely porous India-Bangladesh border totally unguarded. Lack of political will and also to a certain extent differences of perception are the primary factors which led to the mismanagement of the international borders of India with Bangladesh. Although every time, during the tenure of each of the successive governments, the issue of fencing has been raised; unfortunately, no significant progress could be achieved due to the indifferent and lackadaisical attitude of the political parties and the government. Perhaps, the political parties in power are merely concerned with their own political survival and hence could never realize the volatile situation prevailing in Assam centering on the immigration issue. The Government of India admitted in the Supreme Court of India that in the last eight years, only 26 kilometers of fencing was constructed in a year and faced strong criticisms from the Court (*Assam Tribune*, December 15, 2017). Another point is that the Assam Accord signed by Rajiv Gandhi with the representatives of the AASU-AAGSP was never ratified in the Parliament and it is quite astonishing that neither AASU nor any other political party or group has ever raised this issue of ratification. Thus, Assam Accord remains only a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the PM with the leaders of the AASU-AAGSP. Further, although it is desirable that every country should have its own immigration law and all the major countries of the world like USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Germany and many other countries have their own immigration laws to address the issues relating to immigration; it is quite astonishing that, in India, although periodically there is a much hue and cry over the issue of 'illegal' immigration; however, in India there is no separate immigration law to deal with the issues of immigration-both legal and illegal even after so many years of independence.

A significant development of the period was the enactment of the infamous Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act i.e. IM(DT), by the Congress (I) government in the Parliament of India in 1983. This Act defined the term 'illegal migrant' under Section 3(1) c as "a person who entered into the Indian territory without a valid passport or travel document of any lawful authority on or after 25 March, 1971" (De 2005, 61). The Act, was, however, silent and did not empower Tribunals to decide the fate of the pre-1971 immigrants. As per the Act, tribunals were to be set up to try the cases of the suspected foreigners and after completion of the trial, if a suspect is adjudged to be an 'illegal' immigrant either entered or staying in India without authorization, that person was to be summarily deported by the state police. However, although the Act was designed to detect and deport foreigners; with the passage of time, it became evident that the Act was largely ineffective and certain provisions of the said Act made it practically impossible to detect foreigners, let alone their deportation. Thus the Act totally failed to solve the problem of immigration in

Assam. It is generally considered that in the guise of this Act, the Congress, in fact, sought to give protection to the immigrants staying in Assam, and thereby secure its precious vote bank. This point is further evident from the fact that the Act was enacted at a time when there were no representatives to the Parliament from Assam, as the people boycotted the 1980 elections. The Foreigners Act applicable in other parts of the country was, in fact, more effective than IMDT Act which was deliberately put under cold storage just to make way for the implementation of an Act like IMDT. With the passing of years, realizing the evil effects of the said Act in Assam, demands were put at different forums for the repeal of the Act. However, even at that time, the Congress still insisted that the Act was a necessary safeguard for the protection of the 'minorities' against their unnecessary harassment in the name of detection and deportation of foreigners. Finally, on July 12, 2005 the Supreme Court of India in a judgment on a PIL filed by AASU leader Sarbananda Sonowal struck down the Act declaring it 'null and void' or unconstitutional on the ground that the said Act clearly violate Article 355 of Constitution of India.

Next, amidst various controversies, the process of updation of National Register of Citizens (NRC) started in Assam. During the post-independence period, the first NRC was prepared in Assam in the year 1951 while the present one, an updated version of the 1951 Register is based on 1951 NRC with additions thereto of the genuine citizens as established by other documents and listed in the electoral rolls up to March 24, 1971 including their dependents. In fact, the demand for 1951-NRC updation in Assam was persistent here for a long time and it gained strong ground, particularly after the scrapping of the IMDT Act in 2005. But the process could not get underway for several administrative reasons. The updation process was formally started in 2013 at the intervention of the honourable Supreme Court of India in connection with its combined judgment on three writ petitions filed by Assam Public Works (2009), Assam Sanmilita Mahasangha (2012) and All Assam Ahom Association (2014) (Dutta 2018, 19). In 2015 the work started under the supervision of the honourable Supreme Court of India and an IAS officer Prateek Hazela was appointed by the Supreme Court as a nodal officer. The updation process was one of the gigantic tasks with lakhs of documents submitted by 3.29 people of Assam. The whole work proceeded through a complicated procedure and accordingly, the first draft was published on December 31, 2017, containing 1.9 crores and the final draft on July 30, 2018, containing 2, 89, 83,677 crore applicants, out of the total of 3.29 crores; approx. 40 lakh people were thus excluded. Claims and objections were entertained thereafter following which the final NRC was published on August 31, 2019 with 31,121,004 lakhs of people, out of a total of 3.29 crores; 19,06,657 people being excluded from it.

It may be noted that since the very beginning NRC updation in Assam was vitiated by politicization and communalization of the issue and there had been repeated attempts to create chaos and disruption in the whole process. Several rumours were periodically spread intentionally or unintentionally by various

disruptive elements to stir up the emotions of the people and thus often an uneasy and tensed situation developed in the state. Political figures also do not lag behind in this respect. Further, the NRC updation process itself, since inception was an intricate and cumbersome one. Beginning with the filing of the application, to collection of requisite documents, to family tree verification, legacy establishment and so on it was an extremely arduous procedure. Frequent changes in the operating procedures and modalities; and commissions and omissions at the administrative and execution level resulted into many complications and unnecessary harassment to the people. In fact, the base document that is 1951 NRC was not available for many districts. The complex task of family tree verification was highly challenging not only for the officials, but for the people also. People were to travel distant places for hearing, that also in short notice, causing physical and mental stress and involving huge expenses. Again, in the name of verification, people listed in the Draft List were also summoned multiple times in the Seva Kendra which created a lot of chaos and confusion. Even people possessing proper documents faced difficulties in convincing the officials about the genuineness of the documents. Ironically, it was rather a process of exclusion and not inclusion. Non-cooperation and lack of promptness of some other states in matters of cross-verification of documents also created hardships to people, particularly the women married from those states; some of them were even excluded from the draft list. Further, rejection of Panchayat Certificate as admissible public document (*Monowara Bewa vs. the Union of India 2017*) and the non-acceptance of Refugee Certificate by the NRC officials as valid documents for claim of nationality caused distress and confusion among the people. Finally however, the judgment of Supreme Court (*Rupajan Begum vs. Union of India 2017*) which ruled the validity of Panchayat Certificates as acceptable document brought relief to lakhs of those applicants who submitted these certificates as supporting documents to prove their nationality. In another judgment the court declared that Refugee Certificate, Citizenship Certificate and Certificate of granting govt. relief should be treated as valid document. The whole process of updation underwent through chaos and confusion due to rumours and fear mongering engineered by several unscrupulous elements and groups which confused the people to any extent. Many people even committed suicide out of agony fearing social ostracism and failing to trace requisite documents and legacy data of their forefathers and thus getting their names included in the list. Many people whose names are not there in the final list are still apprehensive and seriously fearing to be pushed to a wretched life in detention camps or deported to Bangladesh. Despite the limitations, the updation was expected to deliver a correct register of genuine citizens; but the outcome of the process far from solving the problem, has delivered a further complicated scenario. A good section of people and the political parties, barring a few, are not accepting the outcome and seek for its rejection at any cost. Even the advocates for the revised version of NRC, like the AASU and Assam Public Works have also expressed their utter



dissatisfaction and consider the list to be erroneous on the ground that the number of foreigners in Assam, to their estimate, is much more high.

However, a more pressing concern pertains to the fate of those persons who are ultimately proved to be foreigners after the completion of the process. It is because, on the first place, India does not have either any repatriation treaty or any other agreement with Bangladesh to deport the illegal immigrants and it is improbable that India would venture to have any such treaty with Bangladesh at the risk of the 'Neighbourhood First' policy and also keeping in view the strategic importance of Bangladesh to counter China's growing geo-political ambitions in the region. On the other side, it is evident from various literatures that formerly East Pakistan and presently Bangladesh has never accepted the fact that a chunk of her nationals crossed the international border surreptitiously and thus are staying in India without authorization and, in fact, outrightly denied the presence of any Bangladeshi nationals in India. Rather they put forward their counter argument to create an impression that Bangladesh is at present a sufficiently developed country and there is no reason for her people to immigrate to India. Their argument might be partially true, but it is undeniable that Bangladesh is still a much poor and backward country with heavy population pressure compared to other neighbouring countries particularly India and hence Bangladeshi people have sufficient reasons- economic, political, environmental and also religious persecution to immigrate to India.

Again, during the NRC updation process, Bangladesh's top ranking officials time and again, commented that NRC is an internal affair of India with which the former has no business. However, in a twist of affairs, recently in the wake of the anti NRC and CAA stir in India, Bangladesh's foreign minister A.K Abdul Momin asked India for a list of illegal Bangladeshi nationals present in India and declared that Bangladesh would take them back after verification. But the irony is that the normal process of repatriation is extremely complicated one and in the absence of any treaty it would take many years to push back a considerable number of immigrants. Government is going ahead with the construction of new detention camp in Goalpara in Assam and increasing the capacity of the existing camps to house more foreigners; but detaining these people for indefinite period cannot be a solution taking into consideration the huge financial burden on the government and the serious human rights issues involved in such camps.

In this context, it may be noted that the incumbent BJP government both at the Centre and the state do not lag behind in utilizing the vexed immigration issue as a tool to reap political dividends. BJP, a right-wing party committed to the Hindutva ideology has so far addressed the issue on communal lines and the standpoint of the BJP is that the Muslim immigrants are but infiltrators and ought to be sent back to their home country i.e. Bangladesh; whereas the Hindu immigrants are considered as 'refugees' and has time and again expressed its commitment to protect and safeguard their rights and provide them shelter in India. Therefore, BJP has



adopted a double standard in respect of the immigration issue in Assam and it is further evident from the fact that at the time of election campaigns during the 2014 Lok Sabha elections Narendra Modi, the prime ministerial candidate in a public gathering gave a call to the 'Bangladeshi' immigrants to pack their baggage and remain prepared to go to Bangladesh. He promised that if BJP comes to power then the immigration problem would be solved and the Bangladeshi immigrants staying in India without authorization would be deported to Bangladesh. Such a commitment from a PM candidate and above all from a charismatic leader like Narendra Modi had its mass appeal in Assam and helped the party to ensure victory in majority of the Parliamentary seats in the Brahmaputra Valley. On the other side of the picture, during the election campaign in the Barak Valley Modi altogether gave a different opinion and assured the Hindu immigrants to shed off all their fear and anxieties and expressed the commitment of the party to provide them shelter and protection in India. Although BJP could not win in either of the two Parliamentary seats in the Barak Valley, but it was somewhat successful in establishing a ray of hope among the Hindu Bengali people and the people developed a soft corner towards the party. In the similar manner, BJP party in alliance with the AGP used the immigration issue during the 2016 Assam Legislative Assembly polls and thus could easily secure their victory in the election. This trend was also noticeable during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections in Assam.

Recently, the Indian Parliament has enacted the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019 to grant citizenship to the people of six religious minority groups, viz., Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis coming from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan being compelled, owing to religious persecution, to take shelter in India till December 31, 2014; and through this legislation the incumbent BJP government seeks to guarantee the citizenship of Hindu Bengali NRC dropouts and thereby secure its solid vote bank, while maintaining silence on the destiny of the other NRC drop-outs. The introduction of such legislation was, in fact, an electoral promise of the BJP during the 2019 Parliamentary elections and naturally during its second innings, the govt. was committed to pass this Act. However, the passage of this Act has once again sparked off debates over the possible implication of this Act on Assam and the North East in particular and brought the old foreigner issue to the limelight. Consequently, protests are aloud and gave voice to the simmering tensions over the foreigners' problem; although, doubts are made from different quarters as regards the efficacy of this particular Act in providing relief to the uprooted refugees particularly in Assam. Not only in Assam or the North East, but protests are also echoed in other parts of the country under the aegis of various political parties so also non-political factions in opposition to this particular legislation. In Assam, Congress and AIUDF are at the forefront to opposition to this Act on the ground that it violates the secular tenets of the Indian Constitution. However, Congress for long alluded the Hindu Bengalese when it was in power in Assam and assured them at the time of elections of providing them permanent residency and citizenship without any cut-off. But Congress suffered a defeat in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections and 2016

Assam Assembly elections and so APCC took a somersault from its position in its bid to grab the opportunity to once again impress upon the voters in the Brahmaputra Valley by siding with them. This is what is called politics!

Thus, the immigration issue continues to be politicized; and most often both the NRC and the Citizenship Amendment Act are clubbed together to further complicate the situation. Meanwhile, Union Minister of Home, Amit Shah has expressed his government's commitment to implement NRC throughout the country, including Assam, with a uniform cut-off date so as to make India free from all infiltrators, though PM Narendra Modi contradicts the former's claims and denies any plan of the government to implement nation-wide NRC. In such circumstances, people here at Assam are puzzled and under the apprehension of its accuracy, if at all made, taking into consideration the experiences encountered in preparing NRC-2019 and most importantly, since the fate of the former still remains undecided. It is because, eight months have lapsed since the publication of NRC-2019; the rejection slips citing the grounds of rejection of the dropouts have not been issued by the NRC authority; the appropriate authority couldn't arrive at any decision on the next course of action as regards the drop outs. Confusion persists as to what would be the determinants for the citizenship of the drop-outs and whether or not this NRC would receive legal recognition through gazette notification. There is also no clear direction on the process of appeal in the Foreigner Tribunals for defending the claim of Citizenship. As yet, there is no direction from the Supreme Court also in any of these issues. Taking advantage of the situation, the political parties are desperately playing communal card to hasten religious polarization and maximizing their vote banks. Such attempts while nurturing a xenophobic feeling among the Assamese people is also creating a sense of alienation among the people at large. Further, the bitter experience encountered in Assam during the updation process also prompts to ponder about its accuracy in other Indian states. Of late, protests are echoing in other Indian states to oppose NRC in their states. Thus immigration problem remains a burning issue in Assam.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Summing up, immigration from Bangladesh is an intricate and contentious issue in the state of Assam. It is more so because of the fact that often the issue is politicized and various political parties and groups have periodically utilized this particular issue as a tool to reap political dividends. There has been little serious attempt so far to penetrate deep to the roots of the problem and sort it out. Thus, over the years, the issue has become complicated and continues to rock the state from time to time. Although, it is an established fact that migration or population flow to Assam is as old as the history itself; however, if the present issue is analyzed from a historical perspective, it can be observed that the roots of the problem to a large extent lie in the past, i.e. in the British annexation of the province of Assam in 1826 and mostly had its beginning since that time.

The advent of the British to Assam opened new vistas for the arrival of several groups of people to Assam over the years. Although the coming of many groups of people during the British period cannot be considered immigration in the true sense of the term, as at that point of time the migration was mainly inter-district or at best inter-provincial in nature; the coming of certain sections of people particularly the Bengali people coupled with the British policy of divide and rule and the periodic territorial re-organization of the province of Assam during the Colonial period paved the way for a complicated situation in the days to come in the post-independence period.

Therefore, the actual process of immigration started in India vis-a-vis Assam only with the Partition and independence of India. Partition of the country brought in its trail millions of displaced and homeless people. In the eastern sector, the worst victims of the Partition were the Hindu Bengalese. Apart from this, large number of Muslims also came to Assam over the years mainly for economic reasons. And the flow of people continued after the creation of Bangladesh also. With that, the historically deep rooted fear and apprehensions about the Bengali population once again became prominent in the minds of the Assamese people. However, although it is true that large scale immigration of people from Bangladesh had its effect on the demographic structure of the state and to substantiate the claim often the Census figures are utilized to highlight the increase in the population of the state so also of the Muslim population as compared to the country as a whole; it has not been ascertained till now about the number of immigrants- both Hindus and Muslims from Bangladesh actually staying in Assam without authorization. Further, the high growth of population in Assam does not necessarily indicate that this population increase is entirely due to immigration. Under such a situation, a section of the unscrupulous elements are propagating false fear and misinformation to stir the emotions of the common people. Since inception, every political party be it Congress, BJP, AGP and others have so far used the issue as a tool to reap political dividends without ever attempting to bring any practical solution to this vexed problem. The problem in Assam could be solved to a large extent many years ago if there were sufficient political will. Unfortunately, the issue was not taken seriously. Rather to whip up the emotions of the people and thereby keep the issue lively ever, various political parties and non-political factions with vested interests preferred to politicize the issue by propagating false ideas and misinformation and consequently the fear and apprehension which was already borne by the Assamese people due to historical reasons of being submerged and thereby becoming minority due to the immigration of Bengalese persisted over the years which heightened the tensions and the ill feelings mainly between the two communities- Assamese and the Bengalese. Over the years the situation deteriorated leading to a volatile situation in periodic intervals.

Now the things have come almost to a saturation point. Thus time demands a permanent solution of the immigration issue faced by Assam. The first step in this regard should be to seal the international borders

with Bangladesh at the earliest in a time bound manner so that fresh immigration does not take place surreptitiously, if any. And even in those areas where construction of fences is not possible due to the riverine nature of the border, other security mechanisms viz. building of laser walls, an increase of both border patrolling posts and security personnel, installation of more high power flood lights in the border posts etc. should be strengthened. Moreover, since a major cause of immigration from Bangladesh is due to economic factors, the government can consider about providing financial assistance to Bangladesh for improvement of the economy of the latter through enhanced development so that people have less compulsion to immigrate to other countries. As regards the incoming of Hindu displaced persons, the whole issue should be perceived from a humanitarian angle. Therefore, first of all, India must consider signing the 1951 Refugee Convention. This would legalize the stay of these people in India and further enable them to enjoy all the rights and privileges that a refugee is entitled to enjoy as per the aforesaid Convention. Besides, the government should effectively implement the CAA, 2019 to grant citizenship to the post-1971 refugees from Bangladesh.

Other measures include introduction of a system similar to the quota system as exists in the US and point based immigration system of Canada through which the respective countries fix annually a definite percentage of immigrants to be admitted under different categories like economic migrants, refugees and so on and thereby accord a permanent resident status; introduction of work permits to both skilled, semi-skilled and even low-skilled workers for a stipulated period of time; formulation of a comprehensive immigration policy, economic development of Assam and so on. India, using diplomatic tactics should engage in dialogue with Bangladesh Government so as to persuade the latter to adopt suitable measures to contain violence and discriminatory treatment against religious and ethnic minorities which compel them to leave their country and take shelter in a foreign land. Moreover, the government can consider about providing financial assistance to Bangladesh for improvement of the economy of the latter through enhanced development so that people have less compulsion to immigrate to other countries. Above all, there must be strong political will for the solution of this problem; otherwise any effective solution to the problem would remain a far-cry.

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Inclusive

## Mapping Ethics of Indian News Media: From Sting Operations to Paid News

Shiladitya Chakraborty

### Abstract

*Media is regarded as one of the four pillars of democracy. Media especially the news media (both print and electronic) play a very important role in shaping public opinion and raising our awareness by transmitting an immense amount of knowledge & information. Unfortunately, in the post-globalization period in India, the media is gradually getting dictated by political and commercial interests. In an increasingly competitive market in India, the media is deliberately distorting facts and sensationalizing news for grabbing the attention of viewers and readers. As a result of this, the principles of journalistic ethics are gradually getting eroded. It is against this background this paper explores the concept of media ethics with special reference to the Indian news media. In doing so, the research paper focuses on several issues starting with the impact of news media on Indian democracy, the media production model, and how ethics is getting eroded from the news prepared by the news agencies in India. Lastly, the article concludes by suggesting how ethics in Indian news media can be reestablished.*

**Key Words: Media Ethics, Yellow journalism, paid news, Sting Operation.**

### Introduction:

The Indian news media has come a long way since colonial times when it enjoyed only limited freedom of expression. In the post-independence era, its role in spreading awareness about burning social issues like poverty, illiteracy, and social backwardness was momentous. It also promoted liberal social values together with modern scientific ideas. Perhaps the most important contribution of the Indian news media was its role in protecting the liberty and promoting the human rights of the Indian citizens in times of crisis like the National emergency of 1975. Due to all these factors, the Indian news media has acquired a special place in the democratic fabric of independent India.

However, over time, there has been a paradigm shift in the functioning of the fourth estate in India. This is attributed to the fact that the post-liberalization period saw an impressive growth in the news media in

India. It created an increasingly competitive market, where the news media unwittingly distort facts and sensationalize news for grabbing the attention of viewers and readers. This resulted in the erosion of the principles of journalistic ethics. As a result, ‘media ethics’ is the word which has gained preeminence rather than ‘media freedom’ in the post-globalization period in India. It is against this background, that this paper explores the concept of media ethics with special reference to the Indian news media. In doing so, the research paper focuses on several issues starting with the impact of the various extraneous factors on the media news production model and discusses how these factors are gradual eroding ethics from the Indian news media in recent times. Lastly, the article would conclude by suggesting how journalistic ethics can be protected and promoted in Indian news media.

### **1. What is Media Ethics?**

News media has radically changed with the onset of globalization in India and in this process of change ethics is the first casualty. Before dwelling on the meaning of media ethics, it is necessary for us to understand the meaning of the terms ‘media’ and ‘ethics’. Media are often defined as ‘technologies designed to store and distribute meanings’. (Meulemann and Hagenah 2009, 2) It involves the collective communication sources or mediums including television, radio, newspapers, internet, social media sites and various relevant sites and blogs. The foremost purpose of media is to educate the readers through the dissemination of information and knowledge. Media is one of the most effective means of communication with the mass audience. Today people all across the globe, rely upon the media for keeping themselves updated on various current issues. Therefore, media plays a vital role in the whole society as it hugely impacts the minds of a vast majority of people.

The word ethics has its etymological origin in the Greek term *ethikos* implying arising out of habit. Narrowly defined ethics is a branch of philosophy that studies ideal human behavior. To quote Karen L. Rich –“Ethics is a systematic approach to understanding, analyzing and distinguishing matters of right and wrong, good and bad, and admirable and deplorable as they relate to the well -being of and the relationships among sentient beings.” (Butts & Rich 2016, 4) Raziel Abelson, in his essay ‘Encyclopedia of Philosophy’ has stated three different interpretations of the term ethics. Firstly, it means a general pattern or ‘way of life’; secondly it means a set of rules of conduct or moral code and lastly, an inquiry about ways of life and rules of conduct. (Jain 2018, 94-95) Ethics is thus a code of values, which govern our lives, and are thus very essential for moral and healthy life. In the context of the media, “Ethics” in the word of former Chairman of Press Council of India Justice G. N. Ray may be described as – ‘a set of



moral principles or values, which guide the conduct of journalism. Ethics are essentially the self-restraint to be practiced by the journalists voluntarily, to preserve and promote the trust of the people and to maintain their own credibility.’ (Ray 2007, 2) Unfortunately, in the post-liberalization period in India, corruption in the Indian news media has gone way beyond the corruption of individual journalists and specific media organizations which has led to the erosion of ethics. To re-establish the ethical values, we need to first understand and analyze the factors giving rise to corruption in the Indian news media.

## **2. Filters in News Production Models:**

Sarah Oates in her book *Introduction to Media and Politics* has talked about the different types of media models. She said that scholars like Siebert have divided the news production models into four different types viz: Libertarian as in case of countries like the USA. The libertarian model actively propagates the notion that opinions should be aired freely. The second model is the socially responsible model which comes closer to that of the U.K. broadcasting sector. The socially responsible model actively propagates that the media should work diligently to include all segments of society in its coverage. The third model is the authoritarian model which is found in countries like Iran and Myanmar which actively support the political interests of the authoritarian regime in power. The last model is the Soviet model. Although Soviet Union has collapsed, this model continues in countries like China and Russia where the media requires supporting the Marxist-Leninist view of reality. (Oates 2008, 5) These models help us to conceptualize how news is produced. The news production model as developed by Sarah Oates help us to examine the influence of the political environment, media norms, regulations, ownership and the journalistic profession on the production of the news. This model helps us to understand how the media content is shaped by these varied factors. The news content in India is also shaped by these factors or filters which influence the content of the news thereby shaping its ethical content. The filters which influence the ethical content of news in India are as follows -

### **4.1 Political Environment of India.**

The principal filter in modeling news production is the broad- ranging political condition of the country. The overall political environment in which the news organizations must function is a very important filter affecting the content of the news. Siebert et al in 1963 discussed four models of the press as authoritarian, Soviet, libertarian and socially responsible which link the news agencies with the political forces. The news agencies operate within the political parameters.

India the world's largest democracy has a very vibrant political system in which the news agencies which include both the print and the electronic play a very important role in influencing public opinion. Indian constitution under Article 19(1) (a) assures freedom of speech and expression. Way back in 1950, the Supreme Court of India had observed in the *Romesh Thapar v. the State of Madras*, that Freedom of speech of the press formed the foundation of all democratic organizations. The Supreme Court also held that without free political discussion no public education was possible which formed the basis for the proper functioning of a popular government. (Bhatia 2013.)

The citizens in India are inadequately informed about the actions of the Government. They are not much aware of the performance and political antecedents of their political leaders. It is the mass media, especially the news agencies, which inform them about the performance of the political leaders, helps them to scrutinize the Government better and thereby covertly influence their voting behavior. This, in turn, induces the political parties and politicians to influence the media to serve their vested political interests in India. It is against this background, that the concept of 'media capture' assumes importance. Political scientist Alina Mungiu-Pippidi has defined the term 'media capture' as – 'a situation in which the media have not succeeded in becoming autonomous in manifesting a will of their own, nor able to exercise their main function, notably of informing people. Instead, they have persisted in an intermediate state, with vested interests, and not just the government, using them for other purposes.' (Schiffrin 2017, 8)

Every type of news media especially newspapers, want to reach to a large audience since the sale and advertising revenue are linked to circulation. This competition for an increase in audience and market helps the political parties to influence the media. This takes a variety of forms ranging from cash bribes offered to individual journalists, giving advertisements to them, and violent threats to censorship. Some are more subtle and are not illegal. The government can pass regulations that benefit the ultimate owner of a particular media outlet. (Besley et al. 2002, 50)

This, in turn, has led to the growth of a new brand of news media in India which are ardently populist or ideologically biased and covertly try to promote partisan political views leading to political polarization. The news media in recent times have been used by the political parties in India to embarrass their political opponents. Perhaps the most prominent case has been 'Operation West End' the first sting operation done by Tehelka in 2001 on the murky defense deals during the NDA regime. The sting operation was done on several corrupt defense officials and politicians of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government including Bhartiya Janta Party then President Late Bangaru Laxman. The operation took seven and a half months to complete and adversely damaged the image of BJP and its allies in the public

eye. The investigation into the sting operation took a dramatic turn when it was revealed that even prostitutes were supplied to three defense officials. This system of honey-trapping defense officials was not only condemned by political parties and defense officials but it raised a very pertinent question on the ethical or moral side of investigative journalism in India. (Bhatt, August 22 2001) What is even more shocking is the fact was the massive expose by Times Now which revealed that the Congress President Sonia Gandhi had allegedly written two letters in 2004 to the then Finance Minister P. Chidambaram to look into the matter of victimization of the Tehelka financier First Global (FG) by the revenue enforcement agencies like ED and SEBI on a priority basis. First Global (FG) which had a small investment - 14.5 percent shares in Buffalo Networks, which owns *Tehelka.com*. Interestingly, just four days after the letters were written, a Group of Ministers (GoM) was formed by the UPA government which cleared all charges against First Global. It is to be noted that it was around the same time when *Tehelka.com* was successively doing stories on the then Gujarat Chief Minister, Narendra Modi. (Times Now, November 24 2017) The reason this private firm got this special treatment was that they were the financiers to the news portal *Tehelka*. The letter exposes an alleged quid pro quo between the Congress President and *Tehelka* after a seeming conflict of interest.

#### **4.2 Media Norms in India**

Media plays the vital role of a conscious keeper, a watchdog of the society and attempts to rectify the wrongs in our system. However, media freedom also involves a certain degree of responsibility. There are quite different conventions about the appropriate role the media should play in society and politics. This definition varies from country to country. For instance, the U.S. has a libertarian media system in which the news agencies run their news almost like business houses where the content of the news is driven by consumer needs. On the other hand in U.K., there is a mixture of two models that is the Broadcast model based on the principles of social responsibility (where it is expected that news should shape public opinion) and the libertarian model based on consumer needs. Traditionally, the Indian media is based on the British model where it plays the vital role of a conscious keeper, a watchdog of the functionaries of society and attempted to change the wrongs in our society. However, in doing so, the media sometimes get carried away. This phenomenon is popularly called a media trial which creates a widespread perception of guilt about an individual, regardless of any verdict in a court of law.

In recent times the media in several cases have behaved irresponsibly in matters that were subjudice in the Court of Law. An important case in this regard was the Ayushi murder case of May 2008. The media, however, drew disapprobation while reporting on the Aarushi Talwar murder case, when it jumped the gun and reported that both her parents Dr. Rajesh Talwar and Dr. Nupur Talwar were involved in her

murder. However, later on, during the investigation, the CBI could not prove that Rajesh Talwar was guilty of murder. (Hindustan Times, Oct 12 2017) Therefore, the media must be more restraint in comments on pending cases, especially on criminal cases where the life or liberty of a citizen is involved. The media must understand that these are a delicate issue and should be carefully scrutinized by them. Moreover they must be conscious of the fact that judges are also humans, and sometimes it may be difficult for them not to get influenced by such news. In fact there are some countries like British where law does not permit the media to indiscriminately report on cases which are subjudice, No comments can be made on such cases by the British media. It is not the job of the media to be a prosecutor, judge and executor. Indian news agencies should show more restraint in dealing with such sensitive matters.

Indian media which was based on the British model is gradually making a transition towards the consumer-driven American model in this regard. As a result, the Indian media is seen to sensationalize news items and engage in yellow journalism. In an increasingly competitive market for grabbing the attention of viewers and readers, media reports often resort to distortion of facts and spread half-truth. In a recent high profile case involving the death of Bollywood superstar Sridevi Kapoor, some television channels resorted to distortion of facts. Indian actor Sridevi accidentally drowned herself to death in a bath-tub in a Dubai hotel on 24 February 2018. Some sections of the Indian media immediately started analyzing and dissecting the circumstances of her death and came up with some bizarre conspiracy theories that Sridevi was murdered in her Dubai hotel room. Several news channels hired non-journalists and shady characters that had no idea about what was happening to spread this fabricated murder theory. Every aspect of her personal life, marriage with Bonney Kapoor and her financial conditions which have nothing to do with her tragic death were scrutinized via the lens of the media. (Jacob, March1, 2018) These, unfortunately, incidents have started a new debate between those who support a largely uncensored, free press and those who place a higher priority on an individual's right to privacy.

### **4.3 Media Regulations in India**

The rapid growth in the media sector has generated a lot of competition and commercial pressure. This, in turn, has resulted in the loss of objectivity in reporting. Every country has a specific set of regulations for the media. Therefore, a plethora of laws has come into existence that regulates the news agencies. As far as India is concerned, the Press Council of India is the apex controlling body of the print media. It was established in 1966 as a statutory body with quasi-judicial powers to act as a watchdog for the print media. Under Section 13 of the Press Council Act of 1978, its main objective is to 'preserve the freedom of the Press and to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India.' (Press Council Act, 1978, 5) Under Section 14 of the Press Council Act 1978 the PCI – 'on receipt of a

complaint made to it or otherwise, the Council has reason to believe that a newspaper or news agency has offended against the standards of journalistic ethics or public taste or that an editor or a working journalist has committed any professional misconduct, the Council may, after giving the newspaper, or news agency, the editor or journalist concerned an opportunity of being heard, hold an inquiry in such manner as may be provided by regulations made under this Act and, if it is satisfied that it is necessary so to do, it may, for reasons to be recorded in writing, warn, admonish or censure the newspaper, the news agency, the editor or the journalist or disapprove the conduct of the editor or the journalist...’ (Press Council Act, 1978, 6)

Despite such powers enjoyed by the Press Council of India, the disconcerting fact is that the fate of most of the cases filed before the Press Council often comes to an unfortunate end. There are several controversial cases that did not even come up for hearing before the Press Council of India like the election time paid news, the controversies regarding the Neera Radia tapes, the publishing of MMS pictures by leading Hindi daily and cases of regional newspapers reporting hate speech. (Akoijam, September 17, 2012) As far as the case of electronic media like the television news channels, the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) looks into violation of the code of ethics laid out by the News Broadcasters Association (NBA). However, the News Broadcasting Standards Authority is a self-regulatory body and its membership is voluntary. As a result, many news channels have not taken membership in the News Broadcasters Association (NBA) and are beyond the ambit of any regulation of the NBA. Under the circumstances these two self-regulating media bodies are at best, toothless tigers.

#### **4.4 Media Ownership in India**

In countries like USA, most of the news agencies are owned by corporations and are strictly commercial agencies. The same is the case in U.K. but the single most influential agency in the U.K. is the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) which is under government control. Ownership of news agencies determines in what way the news gets politicized. This, in turn, hampers access information free of bias and prejudice. In the case of India, the media organizations are owned and controlled by a wide variety of organizations which includes corporate bodies, trusts, and private individuals. Renowned journalist Paranjoy Guha Thakurta had pointed out a few salient aspects about media ownership in India. Firstly, according to Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, the media market in India is oligopolistic. It is dominated by only a few players. Secondly, there are no restrictions on cross-media ownership in India. As a result, particular companies or groups or conglomerates dominate the Indian media market both vertically that is, across different media such as print, radio, television and the internet as well as horizontally that is in a particular

geographical region. Thirdly, the most astounding fact is that even political parties and persons with strong political affiliation can own or control the media in India. Lastly, the promoters and controllers of media groups in India have interests in many other subsidiary businesses and continue to use their media clout to further their other business interests. For instance, the renowned Dainik Bhaskar group, which started as a single edition Hindi newspaper from Bhopal in 1958, as of July 30<sup>th</sup> 2010, built a market capitalization worth Rs 4,454 crore. The Dainik Bhaskar group today owns several newspapers, magazines and radio stations. Apart from that it has a significant presence in the printing, textiles, oils, solvent extraction, hotels, real estate, and power-generation industries. (Guha Thakurta, June 30 2012)

In this context, it is pertinent to point out that the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB) sponsored a study in 2009 through Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI). The study focused on the nature and extent of cross-media ownership, the existing regulatory framework in India, relevant markets and international experience. The Administrative Staff College of India in its report made the following recommendations regarding cross-media ownership rules for broadcasting, print, and new media which are relevant even today –

- a. Cross-media ownership rules for broadcasting print and the new media must be implemented as there is ample evidence of market dominance in certain relevant markets.
- b. As regards vertical integration, a cap on vertical holdings must be carefully determined based on existing market conditions.
- c. Before the setting of media rules, it is essential to conduct market surveys taking note of the structure of relevant markets and competition.
- d. Market survey is to be done every 3 to 4 years and the media ownership rules should be changed accordingly
- e. There should be public disclosure on cross media affiliations and ownership. (TRAI, 2013, 21-26.)

#### **4.5 Journalist and public relations industry in India**

The final filter in the news production model is the individual journalists and their link with sophisticated public relations strategists who exercise tremendous control over the content of the news produced. There have been many cases both in India and abroad where certain news was published in lieu of money. This phenomenon is known as paid news — which involves someone paying a newspaper and getting something favourable published for him. For instance, in recent times, the behind-the-scenes influence of sophisticated public relations strategists on individual journalists was made particularly apparent by the

leaking of tapes recording conversations of Niira Radia during the investigation of 2G Spectrum scam. She was a powerful lobbyist with clients such as the Tata group and Reliance Industries. The tapes included around 5,000 conversations between lobbyist Niira Radia and her clients which included a variety of businessmen, politicians, and senior journalists like Barkha Dutt of NDTV, Prabhu Chawla the then editor of India Today Magazine, Shalini Singh or Vir Sanghvi. The news gained prominence following sustained pressure on social networking sites like Twitter and Facebook. There was a concerted effort by many prominent Indian TV channels and newspapers to blackout this news which exposed the corrupt underbelly of the Indian media. This episode also revealed what had long been an open secret: the collusion and uncomfortable closeness among corporate units, politicians and journalists. (Kumar, A., February 2, 2018)

## 5. Conclusion

Although the press in India has always been at the forefront of national life, there has been considerable erosion of ethics over the decades since independence. Thus the central question is how to build a free and independent media in India. The issue of media regulation is central to reforming the media in India. The new paradigm is that the media should be ruled by the same basic competition policy principles that apply to other industries which are in turn based on the principles of *laissez-faire*. Moreover, the news media should also forget the fact that the paramount duty of media is to be the fourth estate without making any compromise with a vested interest. A free and independent media working in conjunction with democratic institutions can make governments more responsive to the needs of the citizen. Thus with the belief in the ancient Hindu aphorism '*Bahujana sukhaya bahujana hitaya cha*' implying 'for the happiness of the many, for the welfare of the many' the Indian news media must endlessly strive towards the creation of a vibrant and developing India.

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Inclusive

**Historical Development of Press in Princely India: The case of Jammu and Kashmir state, c. 1867–  
1947**

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**Abstract**

*The article traces the origin and growth of the press in princely India with a special focus on the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It fills a major gap in the South Asian media scholarship that has for long ignored the media cultures of the princely states, which covered two-fifth of the territory and possessed a quarter of the population of what was simply referred to as India. The article attempts to map and recognise socio-political actors that have contributed to the growth of the press while tracing their relationship with the princely politics, indigenous politico-religious movements, and the British colonial state. The larger aim of the article is to bring back media cultures of the princely India onto the centre stage of postcolonial historiography of media. It offers an assessment of the coming of the press in the state and its impact on the discursive construction of local communities.*

**Key words:** Media History, Politics, Press, Princely India, South Asia

## Introduction

Scholarly inquiries under the rubric of colonial and postcolonial historiographical critique suggest that despite covering two-fifth of the territory and possessing a quarter of the population of what was simply referred to as India, princely states of the nineteenth and the twentieth century South Asia have not been properly problematized. This flaw in the existing literature has been succinctly termed by scholars as the 'colonial mode of historiography' that sought to ignore the realities of princely states in the larger discussions on polity, society, and economy of the British India (Singh 2003). A consequence of this mode of historiography was an overemphasis on colonial India while princely states appeared marginalized, a trend which continues in the post-colonial historiographical practice (Kumar and Dar 2015).

During the last three decades, however, a rich corpus of scholarship has emerged on the subject of princely states, which discusses their polity, economy, and society while building some vital connections with colonial India and beyond (Bhagavan 2003, Copland 1997, Copland 2005, Ernst and Pati 2007, Handa 1968, Jeffrey 1978, Kooiman 2003, Ramusack 2004). Despite this work, princely states as an analytical category still remain, in the words of Fiona Groenhout, separate and subordinate to the historiography of British India (Groenhout 2006). Nowhere can this subordination be more prominently located than in the media historiography of colonial India, which reduces the entire press history of the subcontinent around the Indian nationalist movement against the British colonial state and the role of newspapers towards the cause of independence (Barns 1940, Bhargava 1987, Boyce 1988, Israel 1994, Lovett 1938, Narain 1970, Natarajan 1962). Such a framework, significant though it is, tends to sideline the press histories of princely India and ignores to interrogate the relationship of local newspapers with the princely politics, local socio-political movements, and the British colonial state.

Furthermore, despite the presence of complex press systems in the princely states, the contours of which were often shaped by socio-political and economic developments in colonial India and beyond, not much has been written about them even as they formed part of global networks, movements, and ideas (Zutshi 2009). The problem becomes ever more complicated as scholars point out the importance of studying the nineteenth century—and, in fact, the twentieth century—in ushering in vast media changes. Thus, it has been suggested that new research should investigate transformations in communication and media environment for a holistic understanding of critical developments in imperial history (Kaul 2006), of which princely states form an important part of the landscape.

Drawing on archival documents, yet-to-be-translated Urdu monographs and autobiographies, this article traces the origin and growth of newspapers in Jammu and Kashmir, a premier princely state, from the second half of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century. In so doing, it fills a gap in the South Asian media scholarship, which for long has ignored the media systems of the native states. The account that follows traces the origin and growth of the periodical press in Jammu and Kashmir and maps the socio-political actors that have contributed to the growth of the press while tracing their relationship with princely politics, indigenous politico-religious movements, and the British colonial state. The larger aim of the article is to bring back media cultures of the princely India onto the centre stage of postcolonial media historiography, which is by far overwhelmingly saturated on the media culture of British India. It offers an assessment of the coming of the press in Jammu and Kashmir and its impact on discursive construction of communities, which had hitherto remained outside the purview of the print technology of lithography that was already in widespread use in much of colonial South Asia.

### **A Princely Printing Sphere: Newspapers as Master's Voice**

In the second half of the nineteenth century, when newspapers had become an important feature of daily life in colonial India and beyond, the press was slowly emerging in the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. This early publishing arrangement was, however, limited to the princely political circles. The newspapers emerging out of this ecology were supported by the Dogra darbar and their agenda was to create a kingly public sphere, one that valorised the authority of the Dogra state and the king. In this clique of newspapers, *Vidya Vilas* was the first weekly to be issued from Jammu province in 1867, published every Saturday in Urdu language and Devanagari script (Taseer 1988, 72–74; Sharma 1995, 106). It was the official organ of Vidya Vilas Sabha, a literary and cultural organization headed by the second Dogra ruler Maharaja Ranbir Singh (Charak 1985, 270; Mohiuddin 2006 [1972], 20; Shrivastava 2013, 74). *Vilas* published the proceedings of the Vidya Vilas Sabha and its aim was to present a homogenous point of view, one that belonged to the ruler and him alone. *Vilas* represented an ideal-typical newspaper existing in princely India, the likes of which princes used to bolster their image as natural rulers. But, as shall be demonstrated in this article, the Dogra rulers consistency silenced other voices from emerging in the sphere of the press while newspapers like *Vilas* became bulwarks of print technology in the princely India in the second half of the nineteenth century. Interestingly, these newspapers were run by trained printers from colonial India on behalf of the Dogra or the British colonial state with agenda to serve their masters.

The second periodical to be published from the state, *Tohfa-i Kashmir*, was a classic example of a newspaper being established in a princely state by a trained printer from colonial India. It was started by Harsukh Rai in Urdu language from Srinagar in 1876, few years after he established a litho press with the name Tohfa-i-Kashmir Press (Charak 1985, 270–271; Taseer 1988, 74). Earlier in 1850, Harsukh Rai had established the Koh-i-Noor Press in Lahore on the invitation and with the help of the East India Company. He had subsequently launched the Urdu-language newspaper *Koh-i Noor* which was editorially ‘sympathetic to the government concerns’ (Mir 2010, 33). Since Harsukh Rai was helped by the East India Company to launch the *Koh-i-Noor*, it seems probable that the British were behind the emergence of *Tohfa-i Kashmir* too because as C. A. Bayly remarks the quest for information was one of the most remarkable components of the British colonial project (Bayly 1996). To that end, a newspaper was a vital tool for the British colonial state to monitor the princely politics, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir, which was a buffer state between the competing British and the Soviet empires. As it appears from *Vilas* and *Tohfa-i Kashmir*, Dogra darbar and British colonial state were the major forces behind early periodicals, which were either sympathetic to them or merely their agents. The bilingual *Dharam Darpan* and *Jammu Gazette* were other periodicals of such nature (Taseer 1988, 75).

### **Against Double Colonization: Local Kashmiris’ Printing Endeavours**

In comparison to newspapers backed by the Dogra darbar and British colonial state, the periodicals started by local Kashmiris sought not only to quiz the princely political order but also interrogated the larger British colonial apparatus. For these editors, the job was to address the complexity of what I call a double colonization, one princely and the other British. Such newspapers, although short-lived, tried to build a pro-people discourse and sought to rally for the rights of the local population, the majority of which was illiterate. In this category of periodicals, *Al-Rafeeq* was a major force during the closure of the nineteenth century. Started in 1896 from Srinagar by Abdul Salam Rafequi, a Kashmiri Muslim and founder-member of Anglo-Oriental Education Conference in colonial India, *Al-Rafeeq* could only print two issues in which Rafequi launched a scathing attack on the autocratic rule of the Dogras and printed detailed reports on the plight of Kashmiris who had migrated to other parts of India, fleeing hunger and poverty back home, during the famine of 1877–79. Pratap Singh, the third Dogra ruler, not only banned the periodical but also seized the property of Rafequi and banished him from the state. However, in 1906, Rafequi started *Al-Rafeeq* from Rangoon (now Myanmar) where he was living in exile. In 1909, he established Al-Rafeeq Press in Rangoon



and began to print and distribute anti-British literature. In 1910, Rafequi sent three letters to the British Government in which he criticized the imperial policies and advocated for an internal self-government for the people of India. His early documentation of the Dogra state's oppression on Kashmiris was instrumental in building a parallel, pro-people discourse which offer new points of departure to analysing the Dogra power. Rafequi symbolized those local actors in princely India who opposed the larger British colonial apparatus through their writings. Yet journalists like Rafequi, who 'sacrificed everything' for journalism, remain forgotten in the modern history of princely India (Faraz 1994). Both the Dogra state and British colonial apparatus suppressed the emergence of newspapers like *Al-Rafeeq*. In 1905, a Kashmiri Muslim Muhammad Din Fouq submitted an application to Maharaja Pratap Singh seeking permission to start a newspaper with the name *Kasheer*. His application was not only turned down but an official declaration was made that the Maharaja's government would not at any cost entertain such applications in future, leave aside granting permission to any publication (Taseer 1988, 77–78).

### **Translators of Modernity: Missionary Press and its Limits**

The local efforts to start periodicals in Jammu and Kashmir were complimented by the coming of Christian missionary groups. The German Christian Protestant Mission brought a lithography press from Himachal Pradesh through the Rohtang Pass.<sup>1</sup> The press was first used to print Ladakhi Grammar and a classical Tibeti version of the New Testament. In 1903, the mission official August Hermann Francke introduced the first monthly newspaper *Ladakhi News*. In his personal memoirs, Francke has remarked that it was quite difficult for him to translate global phenomena to the general Ladakhi public and make them understand the features of modernity and technology such as the working of a ship (Taseer 1988, 80–81). In other words, *Ladakhi News* became a translator of modernity, spreading new and modern ideas in the hinterlands of the British empire. However, it is interesting to note that *Ladakhi News* was started without any official permission from the Dogra darbar. After the closure of *Ladakhi News* in 1904, Rev. J. F. Peter started *Ladakhi Phooiyan* in Bodhi language.<sup>2</sup> Again, no permission was sought for opening of the periodical.

At the start of the twentieth century, the princely India became a terrain where the British colonial state sought to contest the printerly work of German Christian missionaries. These contestations overlapped with the global political-economic fissures that were unfolding in the wake of Germany's political dominance in Europe. The German missionary press in Ladakh became one such realm where the British colonial state sought to intervene, apparently to tackle the printerly success of German mission in the princely J&K state following the issuance of *Ladakhi News* and *Ladakhi Phooiyan*. Thus, the British Resident in Srinagar wrote to the Dogra maharaja in 1904, asking him about the presence of newspapers in Jammu and Kashmir and the existing laws that govern their permission and functioning. The Dogra ruler responded to the Resident that no

newspapers were being published from Jammu and Kashmir and that since there were no newspapers the question of laws for their governance did not arise. After a year, the Resident sent another letter to the Dogra ruler and attached a copy of *Ladakhi Phooiyan*. Following this, Pratap Singh issued an edict in which he proscribed publication of any newspaper without the permission of the Dogra State Government. He concurrently ordered the High Court to make stringent laws for the issuance of newspaper licenses and obligations so that ‘no one misuses the freedom of expression’ (Taseer 1988, 82–83). Although Rev. Peter was permitted to start *Phooiyan* anew on account of being a European, he was directed that no political, social, economic or any other comment must be published and no writings be printed about the policies of the Dogra ruler. *Phooiyan* thus began publishing Christian missionary material in the form of human-interest stories.

Alongside this publishing arrangement, the Dogra state permitted loyal associations to publish newspapers. For instance, the Dogra Committee Jammu started monthly *Dogra Gazette* in 1907. In the same year, Hans Raj Gupta on behalf of Dogra Sabha sought permission from the Dogra darbar to start monthly *Neeti Pattar*, and in 1908 he started monthly *Dogra Samachar*. The periodicals like *Dogra Gazette*, *Neeti Pattar*, and *Dogra Samachar* symbolized the printerly dominance of those semi-political organizations that were ‘faithful to the person and throne of the Maharaja and his government’ (Khan 1980, 54).

### **Decade of Silence: Controlling the Press as Institution and Practice**

The first half of the twentieth century ushered in a major socio-political transformation in Jammu and Kashmir with the newspaper press playing a significant role as informer and educator. Prior to this period, however, the Dogra autocracy had imposed the first-of-its-kind press act, Jammu and Kashmir Press and Publications Regulation 1914, in the state. The act put a blanket restriction on newspaper publishing in the state for nearly a decade. During this period, no Kashmiri could defy the orders of the Dogra ruler. Anyone desiring to publish a newspaper had to owe complete allegiance to the Maharaja and his government. Under the act, the Dogra state had the power to ban the press, seal printing devices, and seize any packets coming out from the state if the government suspected any anti-government books or other printed material.

After ten years of the imposition of the ban, a Hindu Dogra Mulk Raj Saraf was in 1924 given permission to start a weekly newspaper *Ranbir* from Jammu after three of his applications were turned down by the Dogra Maharaja (Saraf 1967, 29–30).<sup>3</sup> In June 1924, the first issue of *Ranbir* was published; Saraf terms the day of its publication as ‘red letter day in the history of journalism’ in Jammu and Kashmir (Saraf 1967, 39–46). *Ranbir*’s critiques have argued that the newspaper used to praise the despotic rule of the Dogras in order to safeguard its printerly presence.<sup>4</sup> Yet, evidence suggests that newspapers loyal to the princely order and

critical to the British government became targets of the colonial state for their portrayal of events in princely India. The reporting of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's arrest by the British during his famous Salt Agitation in March 1930 by *Ranbir* serves as a classic example. In its coverage of pro-Gandhi demonstrations in Jammu, *Ranbir* portrayed British government in negative by publishing protestors' slogans such as 'down with British imperialism' and 'long live Maharaja Hari Singh'. From *Ranbir*'s coverage, it appeared to the British Resident in Srinagar that the newspaper was loyal to the Maharaja and it was the Maharaja who was behind the protests in Jammu. Hari Singh, in order to prove where his allegiances lay and fulfil the terms of suzerainty, banned *Ranbir* in May 1930. Saraf writes in a poetic tone that '*Ranbir* was thus sacrificed at the altar of political exigency' (Saraf 1967, 61). The ban on *Ranbir* was an obligation for Maharaja to adhere to the paramountcy of the British over the princely state despite the newspaper being sympathetic to the Dogra state. *Ranbir* presents a classic case of newspapers in princely India that became sites of contestation between the British colonial state and the princely political order.

### **Changing Publishing Dynamics: Glancy Commission and Periodical Press of the 1930s**

One of the strong historical forces behind the freedom of press and publication in the state was the political mobilization of Kashmiri Muslims against the Dogra regime and the open enunciation of their sentiment that reached its zenith on 13 July 1931. The Dogra administration reacted with 'floggings, arrests and shootings' across the valley of Kashmir, unleashing a reign of terror on protestors (Khan 1983, 61). Under tremendous pressure, the Maharaja appointed a commission, Kashmir Constitutional Reforms Conference, headed by B. J. Glancy of the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India.<sup>5</sup> The commission was assigned to assess the issues facing Muslims and other affairs of the state. Under the recommendations of the Glancy Commission, a new press act Jammu and Kashmir Press and Publications Act of 1932 was enacted on 25 April 1932.

Prior to Glancy Commission and during the period of Pratap Singh, Hindus and Sikhs had their forums such as Sanatan Dharam Sabha, Sanatan Dharam Pratap, and Arya Sabha, which were all involved in social uplift of their communities. However, the ban on any forum-making was imposed only on the Muslims of the state. Glancy Commission did away with this trend. The first political organization of Muslims of the state was Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Political Conference which was established with the holding of its first yearly convention from 14–16 October 1932 at Pathar Masjid in Srinagar. Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah was nominated as the president with Choudhary Ghulam Abbas Khan as its secretary. In the aftermath of this development, the periodical publication henceforth gained momentum in Jammu and Kashmir. On the other hand, much before the establishment of Muslim Conference, Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam, founded by *Mirwaiz* of Kashmir Maulvi Rasool Shah in 1905, had taken root in Srinagar city of the Kashmir province. The

agenda of the Anjuman was to impart education to backward children of the Muslim community, to ‘infuse in Muslims the true spirit of Islam’ and ‘inculcate good manners’ among the people (Khan 1980, 60).

Post Glancy Commission, there was an explosion of periodicals in Jammu and Kashmir. Till 1930 the periodicals were directly subservient to the Dogra ruler. Such editors received praise and financial assistance. This state–media complex was given and so explicit that editors themselves have documented such a state of affairs in princely India.<sup>6</sup> Thereafter from 1932 to 1947, periodicals appeared randomly and closed down frequently. Opening a periodical had also become a habit of those who were unemployed; Sadr-ud-din Mujahid was a classic example who started a newspaper with the title *Bekar* or jobless (Taseer 1988, 154).

A major transition in periodical publication took place in 1932 when myriad periodicals appeared majority of them in Urdu language. It was after ages that Kashmiris of all faiths had been given an opportunity to express themselves as collective wholes.<sup>7</sup> The result of these myriad expressions led to many collective wholes, in the ambit of which people of different faiths tried to express their thoughts in order to safeguard their interests and contest competing politico-religious ideologies. After the recommendations of the Glancy Commission, *Vitasta* was the first newspaper to be published from Srinagar city of the Jammu and Kashmir state on 31 October 1932 by Prem Nath Bazaz. The agenda of *Vitasta* was to ‘popularize the ideal of secular politics and fight for the establishment of a responsible government’ (Bazaz 1954, 165). Bazaz was the newspaper’s printer, publisher and editor. *Vitasta* survived for a year and its publication stopped subsequently owing to, what Bazaz has termed, ‘the hostility of the reactionary Hindus.’

### **Press in the Service of Politico-Religious Revivalism**

Critical scholarship on colonial India has shown how the technology of lithographic printing was embraced by the members of ulema and other educated Muslims ‘as a method of increasing popular religious knowledge and promoting forms of renewal and revival among Indian Muslims’ (Robinson 1993, 240–241). In princely Jammu and Kashmir state, though the periodicals were started and managed by individuals in the beginning, new patterns of ownership emerged as it was realized that a periodical cannot be run without financial and human resource support. Influential Hindu and Muslim individuals published periodicals based on their own editorial ideas, much of which was aimed at social emancipation of either of the religious group. In the context of colonial India, Muhammad Hashim Kidwai shows the intermixing of the religious and the journalistic field through the case of Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Islamic scholar and the translator of the Quran. Daryabadi entered into journalism in 1925 and became the editor of the weekly ‘Sach’ of Lucknow. The periodical was famous for its high-quality essays, which was one of the most prominent journalistic genres in colonial South Asia. Names like ‘Sach’ were also adopted by the early printers in

princely Jammu and Kashmir state, precisely because of the philosophical claims of journalism to tell the truth.

The weekly *Addal* was started by Dina Nath Bazaz in 1936 from Srinagar for social uplift of Kashmiri Hindus and *Prakash* (est. 1939) was to highlight the issues facing the Hindu community while *Qaumi Dard* (est. 1935) was started by Jia Lal Kilam to refine the Hindu culture and safeguard the interests of Hindus. These periodicals were, however, slowly absorbed by religious or political organizations because they couldn't survive on their own and needed finances and direction to operate. In turn, these periodicals became organs of propaganda for these organizations or political parties. *Sadaqat*, the second periodical of the state started by M. A. Saabir on 21 December 1932, became the official organ of the Muslim Conference in 1933. The publication of periodicals was principally undertaken by religious and socio-political organizations. Anjuman Tablig-ul-Islam Kashmir or the Organization for Propagation of Islam, started weekly *Jahangir* under the editorship of Maulana Muhammad Sayyid Masudi and Muhammad Yahaya Rafequi in December 1932. In its wake, Kashmiri Pandit Sabha started daily *Martand* under the editorship of Pandit Kashap Bandhu to put forward its point of view and safeguard the interests of the Kashmiri Hindu community.

Thus, periodicals with two broad orientations were published from 1932 to 1947 and these orientations were sacrosanct for editors and publishers to adhere to. In reference to the Punjab, Margarita Barns writes that the press in vernacular languages such as Urdu, Hindi, and Gurumukhi represented multiple sectarian viewpoints of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh orientations (Barns 1940, 427). As Khan outlines, the press in Jammu and Kashmir was either oriented towards Hinduism or Islam and the editorial policy of early periodicals was hooked to these normative orientations (Khan 1978). The periodical *Islam* was started in June 1935 from Srinagar under the supervision of Mirwaiz Kashmir Maulana Muhammad Yousuf Shah. It furthered the cause of Islam and Mirwaiz's organization. Maulana Ghulam Nabi Mubarki had devoted *Tawheed* (est. 1 January 1935) for the service of Islam and teachings of Prophet Muhammad. On the other hand, the weekly *Nav Jeevan* (est. 1939) became the mouthpiece of Sanathan Dharam Sabha, an organization of Hindus. The weekly *Paigaam* (est. 1940) and weekly *Milat* (est. 1940) were run by Muslim Conference. Jamiat Hamdania, on the other hand, started the weekly *Hidayat* in February 1935 to further the cause of Muslim interests.

### **‘A Spark will be kindled’: Newspapers as Alternative and Critical Voices**

Periodicals with individual ownership were mostly romantic adventures with a revolutionary sense of public service, lacking capital and human resource.<sup>8</sup> Yet their editors confronted the Dogra administration and wrote about widespread injustice prevalent in the state. Prominent among these periodicals was *Al-Barq* that

highlighted the phenomenon of employment among the Kashmiri Muslims and their maltreatment by the administration. In its 8 August 1935 issue *Al-Barq* wrote:

The truth is that the way Muslim rights have been trampled down during the time of the present Revenue Minister is without a parallel. Contrary to the recommendations of the Glancy report, the Muslims have been deprived even of the concessions granted to them before his time. If this goes on, we are sure that in the near future a spark will be kindled which will ‘reduce the barn of the tranquillity to ashes.’ On 1st Har 1991<sup>9</sup> there were 28 Muslim revenue officers, but in the time of the present Revenue Minister the number has fallen to 21.<sup>10</sup>

*Al-Barq* was blacklisted by the Dogra administration for its ‘wanton attacks on administration’ and its editor was threatened with ‘further action’ if he continued to publish such writings. The newspaper was put in the ‘white list’ after its editor wrote to the government that *Al-Barq*—the ‘Muslim newspaper’—had been treated differently in comparison with ‘non-Muslim’ newspapers such as *Wattan* and *Amar*, which were blacklisted but restored back immediately to receiving government advertisements.

Another clique of periodicals in princely India, evoking ‘a place-based imagination’ (Yaqoob 2015), demonstrated their own version of nationalism distinct from the British India. Atul Saklani discusses the role of newspapers in the intellectual awakening of princely Tehri state and the emergence of ‘Garhwali nationalism’ in earlier decades of the twentieth century. He writes of one fortnightly newspaper declaring that ‘we have got our own king, own flag, own national anthem and our own language’ (Saklani 1987, 156–158). In princely Jammu and Kashmir state, Urdu periodicals including *Khidmat*, *Qaumi Dard*, *Kesari*, *Desh*, *Khalid*, and *Noor* contributed to the ‘growth of nationalism and political consciousness’. *Khidmat* had become a powerful newspaper and was scathingly attacking the Dogra regime for its misconduct towards the Kashmiri Muslim population. Khan notes that *Khidmat* ‘raised the tone of the Srinagar press and infused a spirit of strength, fearlessness, and nationalism in Srinagar journalism’ (Khan 1978, 183). The *Kesari* published by Kashyap Bandhu in 1936 stressed that ‘nationalism would lead to the common good of Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir’. The weekly *Hamdard* was started by Prem Nath Bazaz and Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah on 1 August 1935 from Srinagar to ‘lay the foundation of progressive nationalism’ in Jammu and Kashmir. Bazaz writes about *Hamdard* that ‘[i]n a country where all other newspapers were either thoroughly Muslim or totally Hindu in their outlook *The Hamdard* stood alone, a class by itself’ (Bazaz 1954, 167).

**Connected History: Influence of the Punjab Press on Periodicals in Princely Kashmir State**



The growth and success of newspapers in Jammu and Kashmir is in major part attributed to the activism-driven Urdu journalism of the Punjab. The Kashmiris who had migrated to Lahore before the Partition of India published their own newspapers and became ambassadors of those left behind. These newspapers not only depicted the grim conditions of Kashmiris but also voiced dissent against the Dogra kingdom, in response to which the Dogra government banned them from entering the state. In 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru termed Kashmir as an extension of the Punjab, both in culture as well as politics. In his 'Note on Second Visit to Kashmir' submitted to the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on 12 August 1946, Nehru wrote that

The Kashmiris are very excitable people, timid and at the same time inclined to occasional violence, and politically rather immature. Having *no proper press of their own* they are influenced greatly by the Punjab Urdu press which, as is well known, is of the lowest type. [...] It is really the extension of the Punjab and suffers from Punjab's communalism (Sharma and Bakshi 1995, 117–118).

Despite Nehru's cynicism, the newspapers published in British India by the Kashmiri émigré were instrumental in building confidence among the local educated cohort to start their own newspapers. Khan (1978) offers a discussion on the role of these periodicals and newspapers which covered a great deal about the affairs of the Jammu and Kashmir state. He argues that the periodicals of the Punjab were 'organs of local Kashmiri opinion'. Zutshi writes that the socio-cultural contact of pre-1947 Kashmir with the Punjab encouraged expansion of the publications market in Jammu and Kashmir particularly in Srinagar (Zutshi 2003, 157). It was because of Kashmir's association with the Punjab that circulation figures of periodicals and daily newspapers would in later years exponentially increase.

### **Role of Socio-Religious Reform Movements and Political Organisations**

The early socio-religious reform and political movements were among the major driving forces behind the emergence of newspaper press in Jammu and Kashmir. Khan discusses the role of these organizations for the uplift of local Kashmiris from chambers of ignorance and darkness to light. These movements brought about a 'revolution in thought' (Khan 1980, 49–103). However, as was highlighted in the preceding discussion, these movements did not carry a common agenda but were hooked to two communities, Muslim and Hindu, and their politico-religious orientations. For instance, Arya Kumar Sabha, an extension of Arya Samaj, was established in Srinagar during the last decade of the nineteenth century to serve Kashmiri Hindu community. Various other organizations on the pattern of Kumar Sabha emerged which had the common agenda to work for the advancement of the Hindu community.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, Muslims of the state began to form their



own socio-religious movements at the beginning of the twentieth century to rescue Kashmiri Muslims from the stagnation of backwardness. In this context, Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam assumes a higher degree of historical significance for its key contribution in the awakening and rise of the Muslim consciousness. Simultaneously, other organizations were born which were both socio-religious in nature as well as political. Some had, however, a purely religious agenda. These organisations, although pulling strings in idiosyncratic directions, prepared the much-needed ground on which the edifice of the press could later be laid out.

### **Landscapes of Readership: Emergence of Reading Rooms and Alternative Public Sphere**

The coming of the press created a new reading public that bolstered already-existing reading rooms in urban centres such as Srinagar and Jammu. The Arya Kumar Sabha, a socio-religious organization for the uplift of the Hindus, established reading rooms where young Kashmiri Hindus were invited to read literature and discuss various aspects of Hindu religion and society (Kaur 1996, 134–136). In 1930, an organization with the name Reading Room Party came into existence in Srinagar. Ravinderjit Kaur writes that during the 1920s the number of educated young men increased who had studied in universities of the British India. Frustrated with the phenomenon of unemployment, these young men felt the need to have a space where they could sit together and discuss myriad problems faced by Muslims. Therefore, they submitted an application to the governor of Kashmir seeking permission for setting up of a reading room specifically for Muslims who formed a large chunk of population. Prior to the establishment of Reading Room Party, there were nearly half a dozen reading rooms in Jammu and Kashmir. Although under constant surveillance of the Dogra government, these reading rooms became alternative spaces where educated Kashmiris shared ideas with fellow members of the community. Official estimates point to the rising phenomenon of reading in Jammu as well as Kashmir provinces during the '30s. In 1935, Sri Ranbir Library at Jammu issued a total number of 5349 books to readers, 3849 on loan and 1500 in the reading room.<sup>12</sup> In Kashmir, on the other hand, 20122 books—5209 on loan and 14913 in the reading room—were issued to readers by Sri Pratap Library. These statistics are staggering because the numbers suggest a trend in readership that was gaining momentum during the 1930s. Concurrently, with the rise of readers, the number of newspapers rose too. In 1935, Sri Ranbir Library was a subscriber of twenty-nine newspapers and periodicals while thirty were being delivered to Sri Pratap Library. Yet evidence suggests that only those newspapers were subscribed for government institutions which had enjoyed the patronage of the state. For instance, a 1936 list of newspapers, magazines, and periodicals subscribed for the educational institutions of the state reveals widespread bias. Among the fifty newspapers and magazines subscribed for colleges and schools, none that belonged to the so-called 'Muslim Press' of Kashmir province was subscribed.<sup>13</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The media systems and cultures of princely India still remain understudied in the larger scholarship on media in South Asia. This article attempted to map the media culture of princely Jammu and Kashmir state with an aim to recognise socio-political actors that have contributed to the growth of the press while tracing their relationship with the princely politics, indigenous politico-religious movements, and the British colonial state. Such a line of inquiry is vital to theorise the press in princely India and connect it with the colonial rule and other socio-political ideologies and movements in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century South Asia.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Rohtang Pass is a high mountain passage running through Pir Panjal Range of the Himalayas. It was constructed by Christian missionaries during the late 1850s with the help of 29 workers.

<sup>2</sup> Besides Urdu and Hindi, Bodhi was the third vernacular to be used as a language in a periodical.

<sup>3</sup> Maharaja Ranbir Singh (r. 1857-1885) was the son of Maharaja Gulab Singh (r. 1846-1857), the first Dogra ruler; the title of the weekly Ranbir appears to coincide with Ranbir Singh's name. The name might have helped Mulk Raj Saraf gain the Dogra ruler's confidence to allow publication of Ranbir that concurrently resurrected the name of one of their dynasty icons. Saraf too acknowledges this 'coincidence' but notes that 'in reality 'Ranbir' was 'Ranvir' literally meaning 'knight of the battlefield.'" See Saraf, Mulk Raj. *Fifty Years as a Journalist*. Jammu: Raj Mahal Publishers.

<sup>4</sup> Among Ranbir's critiques was Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah, the Kashmiri Muslim leader, who steered Kashmir's nationalist movement against the Dogra darbar. See Taseer, Rashid. *Naqoosh-i Sahafat: Tarikh-i Sahafat Jammu o Kashmir, 1867 ta 31 July 1988*. Srinagar: Mohafiz Publications, 1988.

<sup>5</sup> Mulk Raj Saraf writes that B. J. Glancy, then Minister In-charge Police and Finance Departments, first opposed his application in the council for starting a newspaper in 1921. Saraf was, however, told that if he takes the responsibility to contradict anti-British and anti-Dogra news published from across India and continues his support to the state government, the permission shall be granted. Glancy, therefore, wanted Saraf to be a propaganda machine for the Dogra State and the British Government. After a decade, however, Glancy would in a report recommend publication of newspapers in the state. See Saraf, op. cit., 26.

<sup>6</sup> Pratap Singh donated one hundred rupees annually while Hari Singh fifty rupees annually to Mulk Raj Saraf for his "pioneer enterprise," the weekly Ranbir. See Saraf, op. cit., 34. In colonial India, vernacular newspapers too had been dependent on the donations of local rajas. See Gupta, Uma Das. 1977. "The Indian Press 1870-1880: A Small World of Journalism." *Modern Asian Studies* 11, no. 2: 219-220.

<sup>7</sup> According to one account, there was only one Urdu weekly published in Jammu and Kashmir when Maharaja Hari Singh came into power in 1925. By 1949 the number had increased to 67. See Sharma, O.P. "The State of Press During Maharaja Hari Singh's Regime in Maharaja Hari Singh (1895-1961)." In Maharaja Hari Singh, 1895-1961, edited by M. L. Kapur. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> Among these periodicals include *Haqeeqat* (1932), *Tarjuman* (1933), *Rehbar* (1933), *Kashmir Jadeed* (1933), *Al-Barq* (1934), *Paigam Sa'at* (1934), *Insaan* (1936), and *Awraash* (1936).

<sup>9</sup> 1991 of Vikram Samvat calendar is 1934 of the Solar Gregorian calendar, the former being 56.7 years ahead (in count) than the latter. During the Dogra rule, Vikram Samvat—Nepal's official Hindu calendar—was also the official calendar of the princely State of Jammu and Kashmir.

<sup>10</sup> Jammu and Kashmir State Archives Repository (Jammu), Publicity Department, File No. 167/321/N-152/B. The fragment is a translation of the original version published by Al-Barq in Urdu.

<sup>11</sup> These organisations include Dogra Sabha, Dharam Sabha, Fraternity Society, and Yuvak Sabha.

<sup>12</sup> Government of Jammu and Kashmir, *Annual Administration Report of the Sri Ranbir Library Jammu and Sri Pratap Library Srinagar for the Fasli Year 1993-1994*. Jammu: The Ranbir Government Press, 1938.

<sup>13</sup> The local periodicals subscribed were Ranbir, Pasbaan, Chand, Rattan, Amar, Kashmir Times, and Kashmir Government Gazette. See Jammu and Kashmir State Archives Repository (Jammu), Publicity Department, File No. 265/PP-93.

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Inclusive

# Covariates of Women Unemployment among Working Age Cohort in Eastern Plain of West Bengal, India: Analysis from National Sample Survey, 68<sup>th</sup> round Employment and Unemployment Database

Tanu Das, Tamal Basu Roy and Pradip Chouhan

## Abstract

*Nowadays women unemployment is one of the major highlighted issues in lower and middle income states of India. Eastern plain of West Bengal (WB) is an agro-based region and a huge portion of it comes under rural background. Since no large scale industry has been emerged here, the chunks of population are engaged in agricultural activities. There is some inherent latent factor lies within the domain of women's lack of involvement in workforce. In this juncture it is the need of hour to expose the viable reasons beyond such persistence discrepancy exists in between male and female participation in work force. The present study aims to examine about the key covariates and their role as a potent factor for women unemployment in Eastern Plain of West Bengal. The result of binary logistic regression indicates that the covariates of age group, vocational training attainment status, general educational level of women, and marital status of respondent are positively associated with the issue of women unemployment. The findings of this study suggest that providing better education; vocational training could be an effective strategy to reduce the chances of unemployment among the women's within working age group.*

## Key Word

Working age cohort, Eastern Plain, Covariates, Unemployment, Employment

## Introduction

Unemployment and under employment both are the global issues in the present context. West Bengal, a north eastern state of India is no exception of it. Though the state is passing through the phases of demographic dividend, more than 50 per cent of its population live below the age of 25 and more than 65 Percentage of its population live below the age of 35. Generally, Demographic dividend indicates large number of working age population consisting by men and women. But all the people in that working age cohort are not economically active more

specially the women. The male work-force participation rates in the said region are generally high and it is quite impressive than those of female participation rate (ILO 2012). Low levels of women work-force participation can have negative economic effects (Kapsos et al. 2014) on the society. Female work Force Participation (FWPR) plays an important role for the advancement and socio economic development of a nation because it promotes efficiency and equality. Generally, high women participation in labour market expound two things; Enhancement in the economic and social position of women and empowerment of women which endorses equity and enhances the utilization of human potential. This can help in building a higher capacity for economic growth and poverty reduction (Mujahid 2014; Fatima and Sultana 2009; Rai and Mukherjee 2019; Kapsos et al. 2014). The decision of women about the joining to labour market and the nature of work in which they will engaged themselves are largely influenced by the decision taken in the household level and depends on multiple factors (Rai and Mukherjee 2019), among all the factors non-economic factors are also significant. Involvement of women in the paid work is determined by the factors as diverse as demographic, reproductive, social, religious, cultural and personal factors (Sundar 1981; Srivastava and asrivastava 2010; Rai and Mukherjee 2019). Various previous studies show that women's participation in labour market largely depends on country's level of development (Goldin 1994; psacharopoulos and Tzannatos 1989; Sackey 2005; Schultz 1961). Some studies undertaken in Pakistan, Kuwait, Egypt and Nigeria, illustrated that education is one of the prime factor influencing women's tendency to participate in work-force (Becker 1975; psacharopoulos and Tzannatos 1989; Schultz 1961; Khadim and Akram 2013). Some of the scholars concluded that job oriented education or vocational education for the women may be the main policy option available, if we want greater participation of women in the labour-force (Chaudhry and Anwar 2009; Agüero and Marks 2008). Furthermore demographic factors such as marital status, household size, age, religion, place of residence are also added for women's participation decision (Faridi, Chaudhry and Anwar 2009). Topography also plays a crucial role for the engagement of FWPR. Gender division in work-force participation is relative low in highland area where as it is too high in low land area or plain land (Rai and Mukherjee 2019). After long stagnation of FWPR, now it is started to rise at the turn of the century (Esteve-volart 2004; Klasen and Lamanna 2009). But there is a wide range of heterogeneity in women labour-force participation across the region and the nations (Standing 1981) also.



Research on the relatively low work-force participation of women in the eastern plain of West Bengal of India is somewhat limited. A large number of women participation in work-force can be a significant source of future growth of economy because high female participation in work-force is always be the important component of demographic dividend (Bloom and Williamson 1998). According to the census report of India, female work-force participation rate for the state WB is 18.08 per cent whereas it is 57.07 per cent for male. If we look at female labour force participation rate per 1000 female for the age group 15 and above, the result shows that it is only 187 whereas the country average is 311 according to employment unemployment survey; labour Bureau, Ministry of labour and employment (2013-2014). As per the NSS data of unemployment rates, the female unemployment rate is 4.5 per cent in rural areas and it is 9.8 per cent in urban areas which are further above the national level. To improve the employability of women in all the states of our country as well as Eastern Plain of WB the said region are still far from the desired equity about employability. The inherent latent factor lies within the domain of women's lack of involvement in workforce. In this juncture it is the need of hour to expose the viable reasons beyond such persistence discrepancy exists in between male and female participation in work force. The present study aims to examine about the key covariates and their role as a potent factor for women unemployment in Eastern Plain of West Bengal.

### **Study Area**

West Bengal (WB), a north eastern state of India, which is coded as 19 in National Sample Survey's Employment and Unemployment Survey, 2011-2012, 68<sup>th</sup> round. The Eastern plain is one of the NSS sub-region of WB (coded as 192), and the districts of Uttar Dinajpur (code 4), Dakshin Dinajpur (Code 5), Malda (Code 6), Murshidabad (code 7), Birbhum (Code 8), and Nadia (Code 10) comes under it. West Bengal is a state where the female literacy rate (70.54 per cent), Sex ratio (950 females /1000 males) is in good position in compare to Country average (65.46 per cent and sex ratio 924 femals /1000 males) but female workforce participation rate (18.08 per cent) is far behind from country's average (25.51 per cent). Female labour force participation rate for person aged 15 years and above is also lower (187/1000 Women) than country average (311/1000 women). Female unemployment rate for the person aged 15 years and above in WB is 77 (per 1000) while in India it is 49 (per 1000). In intra district comparison, all the districts of eastern plain (NSS Sub-region) still lies in dark position in comparison to other districts of WB to achieve well socio economic and demographic characteristics till today, after 72 years of independence. Large areas of this



plain covers rural background, wherein women can't gate self-decision making power for employment, education, marriage, etc. The location map of this present has given below.

## **Material and Methods**

### **Data Source**

We have used the 68<sup>th</sup> round of the National Sample Survey (NSS), Employment and Unemployment data from Schedule 10, conducted during 2011-2012. It is nationally representative cross-sectional survey of 1, 01, 724 households (59,700 in rural areas and 42,024 in urban areas). Eastern Plain of West Bengal is one of NSS sub region in the North eastern state of India, covering the districts of Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, Birbhum and Nadia. From where 6, 557 cases are collected and among them 3, 246 are women, on which 2, 121 women are belonging in the age cohort of 15 -60 and those are the targeted population in this present study. The NSS Employment, unemployment survey was carried out under the aegis of Ministry of Statistics and Program implementation (MOSPI), Govt. of India. The sample was selected on the basis of a stratified multi stage designed survey. The First Stage Units (FSU<sub>s</sub>) were selected on basis of 2001 Census villages for rural sector and Urban Frame Survey (UFS<sub>s</sub>) blocks for the urban sector. In case of large FSUs, one intermediate stage of sampling has been conducted. Detail description of sampling design and survey procedure is provided in the National Sample Survey (NSS) report of 'Key indicators of Employment and Unemployment in India', NSS 68<sup>th</sup> round 2011-2012(NSS & MOSPI, 2013). The main purpose of this survey was to provide important and reliable data related to employment and unemployment and the periodic interval survey helps us to estimate the level of parameters on various employment and unemployment characteristics at national and state level. The statistical indicators of labour market are very much useful for plan, policy and decision making at various level, both within the government and outside (NSS, 2019). The data for this present study is currently available in public domain and could be accessed upon a request from the data repository of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) through online (<http://microdata.gov.in/>). Therefore, ethical approval is not required for conducting this survey

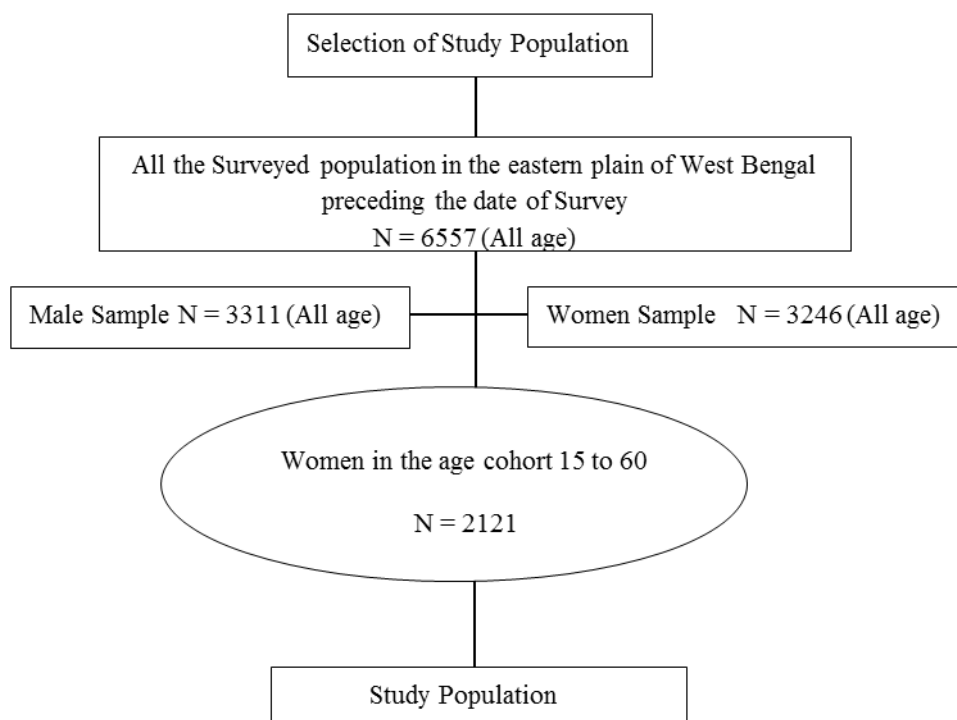


Fig: 1. Flow chart for study population, NSS 68<sup>th</sup> round, Schedule 10.

### Study Participants

NSSO interviewed 6557 individuals in the eastern plain of West Bengal. Among them 3311 are males and rest of these are females. However our present study is limited to 2121 women who are belonging in the age cohort of 15 to 60 (Fig: 1). Because this age cohort is known as working age cohort as per Census of India 2011 and the prime focus of the present study is to recognize the important covariates which pose the potent accountability for women unemployment in working age cohort. Economically active women or employed women are determined jointly on usual principal activity (PS) status and usual subsidiary activity (SS) status on the basis of reference period of one year for PS and 30 days for SS from the preceding date of survey (NSS, 2019).

### Outcome variable

Employment status of Women is the dependent variable in this study. The employment status of women was dichotomized variable as the unemployed women as per usual status (PS+SS) (assigned as '1') and employed woman (assigned as '0'). The data of employment status of women were collected in written form in schedule 10, Block 5.1, NSS employment and unemployment survey 2011 – 2012.

### Explanatory Variables

Various literatures on women unemployment already proved that the employment status of women is not associated only by a single factor but depends on a multiple factors (Kiros and Abebe, 2019), such as marital status, age, education, household income, husband occupation, family size, availability of vocational education, pressure of domestic work etc. By keeping in mind, of the previous literatures the entire study were carried out through three sets of variables such as (1) Demographic variables (2) Educational variables and (3) Socio - Economic variables. In demographic variable the study have considered only age of the respondent and the age of the respondent is categorised into three sub groups – (i) 15 – 30 years (ii) 31 - 45 years and (iii) 46 – 60 years. The youngest category (15 – 30 years) is adopted as a reference category to compare the age differentials in unemployment condition of women. General education, vocational training is comes under the educational variables. General education of women is divided into five groups e.g. Illiterate, up to primary, up to secondary, Higher secondary and above, and other informal education. Vocational training of respondents is a binary response variable where receive of vocational training is coded as ‘1’ and did not receive of vocational training is considered as ‘0’. Social variable includes marital status women and registration of employment exchange. Marital status of women is included to examine the influence of marital status in the occurrence of women unemployment. Women registration on employment exchange is categorised into four categories and these are (i) registered with only govt. employment exchange (ii) registered with only private employment exchange (iii) registered with both govt. and private employment exchange and (iv) rest category as not registered and all these are included to examine the influence of employment exchange on unemployment situation of women. All the controlled or explanatory variables were selected by reliving the existing situation of eastern plain of WB, where vocational training facility is not distributed uniformly. Child marriage is also a prime issue in the patriarch society of WB. All the women are not fully apprehensive to understand the good effect of registration on employment exchange till now in the eastern plain of WB more specifically in rural area. House hold income (R.s /Month) is categorised into four groups such as (i) <5,000 (ii) 5,001 -10,000 (iii) 10,001 -20,000 and (iv) >20,000 to access the income differentials on women unemployment.

### **Statistical Analysis**

Firstly descriptive statistics were carried out to explain about the information on the socio economic and demographic characteristics as well as the distribution of outcome and explanatory variable of unemployed woman. Then bivariate percentage distribution was

estimated to assess the differences between economically active or inactive women of working age cohort (15 to 60) by employment status. Finally Binary logistic model were developed to examine the association among different socio demographic aspects and unemployment condition of women. ‘Forward LR’ method was introduced to fit the logistic model. This method creates the first model without any independent variable and in the next model it adds the independent variable which has more impact on dependent variable and it goes on step after step and each model is called forward. Pearson’s chi-square test has been carried out between the outcome and explanatory variables prior to perform the multivariate analysis and variable with significance level  $p \leq .005$  were included in the final logistic model. All the statistical analysis has been conducted by IBM SPSS statistics, version 22.

## Results

Table 1 depicts socio economic and demographic Characteristic of respondents. Nearly one third of respondents (32.2per cent) were illiterate. A Person who can both read and write a simple message with understanding in at least one language is to be considered literate and vice versa (NSSO, 2019; Census of India 2011). Considerably half (42.8per cent) of the women are taken education from non-formal background of institution. Here achieving literacy by attending Non-formal Education Course (NFEC) or adult Education Centres (AEC) or by attending primary schools created under Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) were considered as non-formal education (NSSO, 2019).Specifically 83.7per cent of respondents did not receive any vocational training whereas only 13.8per cent of the women were received vocational training. A vocational training may broadly be defined as training, which prepares an individual for a specific vocation or occupation (NSSO, 2019). Near about half (46.8per cent) of the women were young aged 15 – 30 years. Majority of the women (75.8per cent) were currently married. A substantial proportion of women (70.4per cent) did not register themselves with any employment exchange authority which is an important issue for majority of women are unemployed. More than half of household’s (53.70per cent) income ranges between 5,000 -10,000Rs/month this is an indication of weaker economic background of eastern plain of West Bengal.

Table: 1 Socio economic and demographic characteristic of Sample, NSS 68<sup>th</sup> round, Employment and Unemployment Survey, 2011-2012

Explanatory Variables	Number	Per cent (%)
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		

**General Education**

Illiterate	682	32.2
Literate from non-formal Background	908	42.8
Up to Primary	391	18.4
Up to Secondary	130	6.1
Up to Higher Secondary and above	10	0.5

**Whether Receive Any Vocational Training**

Did Not Receive Any Vocational Training	1776	83.7
Receive Vocational Training	292	13.8
Did not know/Missing	53	2.5

**Demographic Characteristics****Age Group**

15 to 30 Years	993	46.8
31 to 45 Years	725	34.2
46 to 60 Years	403	19

**Socio Economic Characteristics****Marital Status of member**

Never married	378	17.8
Currently married	1607	75.8
Widowed	123	5.8
Divorced/separated	13	0.6

**Registration in Employment Exchange**

Only in government employment exchange	205	9.7
Only in private placement agencies	15	0.7
Both govt. employment exchanges and private	3	0.1
not registered	1493	70.4
Did not know/Missing	405	19.1

**House Hold Income (Rs/Month)**

<5000	57	2.69
5000 – 10000	1139	53.70
10001 - 20000	361	17.02
.>20000	564	26.59

Source: Authors own calculation

Economic activity statuses of selected women in the age cohort 15 to 60 are presented in Table 2. We were selected six (General education, vocational training attainment, age group of respondent, marital status of respondent, employment registration, and household income) sets of explanatory variables as the affecting factors of women unemployment and all have the significant effects on the issue of women unemployment that has been confirmed by the 'p value' derived by Pearson Chi-square test which is significant at 0.001. It is observed in

Table 2, the percentages of unemployed respondents are higher in non-formal education than the formal education. The percentages of unemployed women are tending to decrease with improving the educational status of women except the primary education. A lower proportion of women being unemployed had received vocational training (60.27 per cent) than those who did not have vocational training (86.20 per cent). Similarly, a significant lower percentage of women being unemployed who are in the age cohort of 31 to 45 (79.03 per cent) & 46 to 60 (79.90 per cent) compared with those who are in the age cohort of 15 to 30 (86.40 per cent). Significant differences in women unemployment were also found by socio-economic characteristics of women. A significantly higher percentage of women who were never married (82.53 per cent) and currently married (83.13 per cent) were unemployed compared to those women who were widow (57.72 per cent) and divorced or separated (53.85 per cent) as for being independent and own source of income. Most of the time, they have to take the responsibilities of their family. A lower percentage (66.67 per cent) of women were unemployed who were registered their name both in govt. and private exchange but whenever the name was registered only for govt. exchange (82.92 per cent) or only for private exchange (73.33 per cent), the percentage of unemployment became higher. A significant lower percentage of women were unemployed who were belonging from rich families than those families with relatively low income.

Table: 2 Percentage distribution of Explanatory Variables by outcome variable for sample women in western plain of WB, NSS, 2011- 12, 68<sup>th</sup> schedule (n = 2121)

Explanatory Variables	Total Sample (n)	Economic activity Status (Per Cent)		P-value
		Unemployed (PS+SS)	Employed (PS+SS)	
<b>Educational Variables</b>				
<b>General Education of respondents</b>				
Illiterate	682	77.86	22.14	
Other non-formal Education	908	86.12	13.88	
Up to Primary	391	86.70	13.29	
Up to secondary	130	73.08	26.92	
Higher Secondary and Above	10	60.00	40.00	0.000
<b>Vocational Training Attainment status</b>				
Receive Vocational training	292	60.27	39.72	
Did not Receive Vocational training	1776	86.20	13.79	
Did not Know/Missing	53	75.47	24.53	0.000
<b>Demographic Variables</b>				
<b>Age group of respondent</b>				0.000

15 - 30	993	86.40	13.59	
31 - 45	725	79.03	20.96	
46 - 60	403	79.90	20.09	
<b>Socio-Economic Variables</b>				
<b>Marital Status of respondents</b>				
Never Married	378	82.53	17.46	
Currently Married	1607	83.13	15.18	
widow	123	57.72	42.27	
Divorced/Separated	13	53.85	46.15	0.000
<b>Registered with Employment Exchange</b>				
Only Govt. Exchange	205	82.92	17.07	
Only Private Exchange	15	73.33	26.66	
Both Govt. and Private Exchange	3	66.67	33.33	
Not Registered	1493	83.46	16.54	
Did not Know/Missing	405	77.28	22.72	0.000
<b>House hold Income (Rs / Month)</b>				
<5000	57	71.92	28.07	
5001 - 10000	1139	64.18	35.82	
10001 - 20000	361	86.15	13.85	
>20000	564	72.87	27.13	0.000

Note: P value is derived from Pearson's Chi-Square test.

US: Usual principal activity status SS: Subsidiary Economic activity status

Source: Authors own calculation

Table: 3 Miss Classification & Correctly classification table of selected sample

Classification Table <sup>a</sup>		Predicted		per cent Correct
Step	Observed	Economically & Non-Active Population		
		Economically Active	Economically Non-Active	
1	Economically Active	0	287	0
	Economically Non Active	0	1428	100
	Over all percentage			83.3
2	Economically Active	29	258	10.1
	Economically Non Active	10	1418	99.3
	Over all percentage			84.4
3	Economically Active	45	242	15.7
	Economically Non Active	25	1403	98.2
	Over all percentage			84.4
4	Economically Active	63	224	22
	Economically Non Active	38	1390	97.3
	Over all percentage			84.7

Note: a The cut value is .500; Missing value sample are Excluded from Analysis



Here we have used 'Forward LR' method of logistic regression, that's why the whole model is displayed by four separate steps. For better discussion of this model, we have considered step 4 only out of all steps. Table 3 represents classification table which is used to find out the accuracy of the model. In this model 63 employed women or E.A Women are correctly classified and 1390 unemployed women or E.N.A women are correctly classified. Over all 84.7 per cent has correctly classified which reflects the model in explanatory strength.

Table:4 combinedtables for testing overall model fit and data fit to the model.

<b>Table:4.1 Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients</b>				
Step	Extraction	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	Step	97.266	1	.000
	Block	97.266	1	.000
	Model	97.266	1	.000
2	Step	98.254	3	.000
	Block	96.056	4	.000
	Model	99.256	4	.000
3	Step	101.714	4	.000
	Block	102.744	8	.000
	Model	102.744	8	.000
4	Step	102.260	1	.019
	Block	103.266	9	.000
	Model	103.266	9	.000
<b>Table: 4.2 Model Summary</b>				
Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square	Method = Forward Step Wise (Likelihood Ratio)
1	82.278	0.055	0.536	
2	77.122	0.086	0.651	
3	75.166	0.068	0.689	
4	73.296	0.621	0.712	
<b>Table: 4.3 Hosmer and Lemeshow Test</b>				
Step	Chi-square	df	Sig.	
1	0	0	.	
2	1.816	2	0.403	
3	8.784	6	0.186	
4	8.13	7	0.321	

Table 4.1 shows the Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients. Here the model (Step 4) under extraction includes all the predictors. The Chi-square value of this test is 103.266 which are significant at 0.05. It is a test of null model, adding the predictors to the model has not

significantly influenced the women unemployment. We have already mentioned that the model is significant at 95per cent confidence level. So, we can conclude that the model including all the predictors has significantly influenced the issue of women unemployment.

Table 4.2 represents the likelihood ratio test which is commonly a suitable measure to assess the overall model fit in logistic regression, which is simply the difference of chi-square between the null model and the model adding all the predictors. From the model summary table, we find that the value of -2 Log likelihood statistics is 73.296. This statistic shows how the model predicts the issue of unemployment condition. Generally, lesser the value of the statistics represents better the model. We know that the Cox & Snell R Square or Nagelkerke R Square is an analogous statistic in binary logistic regression to the co-efficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) in simple linear regression, even not too close. The Cox & Snell R Square aims to simulate multiple R square on the basis of likelihood. In this current study related to issue of women unemployment, the value of Cox & Snell R Square (0.621) indicates that the explanatory variables have explained 62.1per cent variations in the dependent variable of women unemployment. Similarly, by the value of Nagelkerke R Square (0.712) undoubtedly expresses the ability to explain 71.2per cent variation of the dependent variable by the explanatory variables.

The Omnibus Tests are used to show the overall model fit whereas the Hosmer and Lemeshow Test are for testing data fits the model. Here, table 4.3 shows that the p-value is 0.321 which is more than the level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Therefore we can say that the collected data fits to the model well and good fit.

### **Interpreting the model: Odd and Odd ratios**

The association between Women unemployment and its related covariates have been discussed in Table 5. This is a binary logistic regression model which is done by 'Forward LR' method. This model has been applied by several steps for adjoining and reduction of different covariates as per its nature of association.

Table: 5 Variables in Equation: Response Variable (Women Unemployment) and explanatory variable

<b>Variables in the Equation (Explanatory Variables)</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>Wald</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp. (B)</b>	<b>95 per cent C.I. for EXP(B)</b>	
							<b>Lower</b>	<b>Upper</b>

<b>Vocational Training Attainment</b>									
<b>Step</b>	Reference Category : Receive Vocational Training								
<b>1</b>	Did not receive any Vocational Training	1.532	0.15	104.01	1	0.000***	4.628	3.448	6.213
	Constant	0.399	0.128	9.713	1	0.002	1.49		
<b>Vocational Training Attainment</b>									
	Reference Category : Receive Vocational Training								
	Did not receive any Vocational Training	1.516	0.155	95.977	1	0.000***	4.553	3.362	6.166
<b>Step</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>								
<b>2</b>	Reference Category : Divorce / Separated								
	Never Married	1.714	0.674	6.461	1	0.011*	5.552	1.48	20.818
	Currently Married	1.768	0.663	7.112	1	0.008***	5.86	1.598	21.49
	Widow	-0.899	0.761	1.394	1	0.238	0.407	0.092	1.81
	Constant	-1.239	0.671	3.409	1	0.065	0.29		
<b>General Education</b>									
	Reference Category : Up to H. S & above								
	Illiterate	1.444	0.736	3.849	1	0.050**	4.238	1.002	17.929
	Literate from non-formal background	2.1	0.736	8.149	1	0.004***	8.168	1.931	34.543
	Up to primary	2.663	0.755	12.43	1	0.000***	14.342	3.263	63.032
	Up to Secondary	1.319	0.762	2.992	1	0.084*	3.739	0.839	16.658
<b>Vocational Training Attainment</b>									
<b>Step</b>	Reference Category : Receive Vocational Training								
<b>3</b>	Did not receive any Vocational Training	1.558	0.159	95.738	1	0.000***	4.751	3.477	6.492
	<b>Marital Status</b>								
	Reference Category : Divorce / Separated								
	Never Married	1.496	0.679	4.858	1	0.028**	4.466	1.18	16.896
	Currently Married	1.819	0.666	7.467	1	0.006***	6.166	1.673	22.734
	Widow	-0.824	0.765	1.161	1	0.281	0.438	0.098	1.965
	Constant	-3.163	0.997	10.061	1	0.002	0.042		
<b>Age Group</b>									
<b>Step</b>	Reference Category : 31 to 45 Years								
<b>4</b>	15 to 30 Years	0.374	0.161	5.438	1	0.020**	1.454	1.062	1.991

**General Education**

Reference Category : Up to H. S &amp; above

Illiterate	1.421	0.731	3.778	1	0.052*	4.143	0.988	17.37
Literate from non-formal background	2.03	0.731	7.704	1	0.006***	7.616	1.816	31.943
Up to primary	2.559	0.752	11.579	1	0.001***	12.92	2.959	56.405
Up to Secondary	1.245	0.759	2.694	1	0.100*	3.473	0.785	15.362

**Vocational Training Attainment**

Reference Category : Receive Vocational Training

Did not receive any Vocational Training	1.568	0.16	96.195	1	0.000***	4.797	3.506	6.562
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**Marital Status**

Reference Category : Divorce / Separated

Never Married	1.272	0.684	3.463	1	0.063*	3.57	0.934	13.636
Currently Married	1.765	0.664	7.062	1	0.008***	5.84	1.589	21.464
Widow	-0.757	0.764	0.98	1	0.322	0.469	0.105	2.098
Constant	-3.226	0.993	10.559	1	0.001	0.04		

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Notes: Significant level \*\*\*P<0.01, \*\*P<0.05, \*P<0.1; C.I Confidence Interval

In the 1<sup>st</sup> step, the model includes only vocational training attainment status as a covariate whereas in the 2<sup>nd</sup> step the model adds the marital status just after the vocational training attainment status as the predictors of women unemployment. The most important fact is that general education level is presided before vocational training attainment and marital status as the determining predictors of women unemployment. Step 4 represents the final model of association between the dependent and independent variables. The model only considers the four predictors (Age group, General education level, vocational training attainment, and marital status) out of six. Household income and employment exchange registration of respondent is excluded by the model. The following results have been discussed on the basis of step 4 for better understanding.

At first, we assess association between age group and women unemployment. The association is positive because the  $\beta = >0$  (0.374) and it is significant (0.020) at 0.05. The association reveals that the odds of being unemployed for the age group of 15 to 30 years is 1.454 times higher than the odds of 31 to 45 years.

After that, we assess association between different category of general education and women unemployment. The association is positive for each category, e.g.  $\beta$  value for illiterate is 1.421, literate from non-formal background (2.03), up to primary (2.559), up to secondary (1.245). The association between women unemployment and illiterate (0.052) and also women unemployment with up to secondary level of education (0.100) is significant at 0.10. However, the association of women unemployment with literate from non-formal background (0.006) and also up to primary level of education (0.001) both are significant at 0.01. The result reveals that the likelihood of women unemployment for illiterate women is 4.143 times higher than those whose education levels are up to H.S & above. Similarly, the result also reveals that the odds of being unemployed for literate from non-formal background, up to primary and secondary education level are 7.616, 12.92 and 3.473 times higher than the reference category respectively. Now, how do the risks of being unemployed for the women whose education level is limited up to primary compare with the risks for those who have attained up to secondary education? This can be calculated from the model as they are both referenced to the education level of H.S and above. Thus the odds for the two groups are simply  $(12.92/3.473) = 3.72$ . So, the odds of being unemployed are 3.72 times greater for the women whose education level is up to primary with compared to those women who have attained up to secondary education.

Then, we assess association between the women who do not receive any vocational training and women unemployment. The positive association is found here as the  $\beta$  value is greater than 0 (1.568) and the association is significant at 0.000. The association reveals that the odds of being unemployed for the women who do not receive any kind of vocational training over the odds of being unemployed for the women who receive vocational training is 4.797. So, we can say that the chances of being unemployed for the women without vocational training are 3.797 times higher than the women who have taken vocational training.

Lastly, we have analysed the relationship of women unemployment regarding their marital status. It is found from the model that the never married and currently married women are positively associated with women unemployment because the  $\beta$  value is 1.272 for never married and 1.765 for currently married women respectively. But the widow women are negatively associated with women unemployment. It means with the increasing of widow women, the chances of being unemployed gradually decreases, as we all know that in most of the time, the widow women have to be self-dependent. The association between never married women (0.063) and women unemployment is significant at 0.1 whereas the

association between currently married (0.008) women and unemployment is significant at 0.01. But insignificant (0.322) association is revealed for the widow women. Here, the result shows that the odds of being unemployed for never married and currently married women are 3.57 and 5.84 times greater than the referenced category. If we compare the risks of being unemployed between never married and currently married women, we find that unemployment for never married women is  $(3.57/5.84) = 0.611$  times lesser than those of currently married women.

## Conclusion

WLPR is a compulsory tool for the enhancement and socio-economic improvement of a nation as it helps to promote efficiency and equity. That's why we should encourage higher WLPR and also should try to address the causes which discourage the women employment. For this reason, we have tried to find out which socio-economic and demographic factors must encourage the females for participating in the labour market through this study.

The findings of the study suggest the importance of vocational training and quality education, which have a significant impact to reduce the women unemployment. So, we have to take necessary steps for providing vocational training and better education for each and every women in the age cohort of 15 to 60 years as per their needs which may create employment opportunity for them. Furthermore, targeted intervention is needed to aware about the fact that age and marital status of women is not a barrier for getting a job, which could combat the incidence of women unemployment. It is an urgent need to revamp the broad education system to job oriented education system through the dual education system of vocational education and training in the state as well as throughout the country.

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## **Do Age and Gender Play a Major Role in Emotions and Reactions of Victim Teenagers of Cyber-bullying? Evidences from a Cosmopolitan City in India**

Sucharita Pramanick and Shovan Ghosh

### **Abstract**

*Digital environment or cyber space is a reflection of socio-cultural space and computer mediated communication is a performative element of spatial production. Virtual space has projected itself as a mere reflection of offline space. Today, the growth of internet based activities, like that of gaining knowledge, entertainment and most importantly communication has introduced several negativities in the society, which young people has to combat during their adolescents. With addition to traditional forms of bullying, cyber-bullying is also affecting their mental development. In India, much research has been conducted on the traditional forms of bullying, but researches focusing on different aspects of the cyber-bullying and specially effects on adolescents are very few. Against these backdrops, the present paper seeks to explore the impact of cyber-bullying on the mental health of urban teenagers with respect to their emotions, reactions and behavioural patterns and its variations based on age and gender. Questionnaire survey was conducted in selected schools of Kolkata based on stratified random sampling methods. The results of inferential statistical analysis indicate that age and gender, the two most important biological factors play a major role on the scale and range of emotions experienced, reactions and behaviours of the victim teens of cyber-bullying. Both gender variation and age variations in the psychological impact on the teenagers are eminent from the study.*

**Key words:** cyber-bullying, cosmopolitan, emotions, reactions, teenagers

### **Introduction**

Virtual space is a mere reflection of offline space (Nunes, 2006). The invention and diffusion of computers and cyber technology are defining social, economic and geographical processes of late twentieth century (Adams and Warf, 1997). Exponential advancement into the field of technology has provided an easy opening into the outside world. The advent and growing popularity of cyber communication is creating new

negativities in the society with which young people have to combat during their adolescents. With addition to traditional forms of bullying, cyber-bullying is also affecting their mental development.

Cyber-bullying is 'when a child, preteen, teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using internet, interactive or digital technologies, or mobile phones. It has to have minors on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor' (Aftab, 2000; Marczak and Coyne, 2015, pg 147). So both the bully and the victim have to be minor to call it 'cyber-bullying' (Burton, 2014). Adolescents involved in cyber-bullying can be categorized into three distinct groups: bullies, bully-victim and victims. While bullies engage in aggressive behaviour to achieve certain goals, victims are the ones subjected to harassment of bullies and bully-victims are the ones who retaliate the attack or later themselves get engaged in bullying others (Arıcak, Siyahhan, Uzunhasanoglu, Saribeyoglu, Ciplak, Yilmaz, Memmedov, 2008).

Adolescents' social development is influenced by hormonal changes along with social influences (Boyd, 2000; Tolman, 2002). During this stage of life, the conditions are favourable for bullying to take place as most of the adolescents are confused and have started getting outer world exposures (Shariff and Hoff, 2007). Though there are some benefits of online communication, but the incidence of cyber bullying is increasing and threatening the growing years of adolescent population (Lee, Boshnakova, Goldblatt, 2017). Sometimes it can be even more harmful than traditional bullying because of its features and characters like escaping is hard and hurtful or embarrassing pictures, videos can be shared among innumerable people. In some instances, it becomes the tool of revenge and rage. Adolescents most of the time do not have the mental strength of not considering and avoiding the acts of bully. It let down their juvenile spirits and lowers their self-esteem and self-confidence (Price and Dalgleish, 2010). They feel sad, hopeless and bad about themselves. Feeling of frustration and hopelessness are often transformed into anger and rage (Beran and Li, 2005). Since the bully is anonymous in many cases, the victim even finds it difficult to trust friends and family. Hence, they start avoiding friends and activities and loss the urge to socialize (Best, Manktelow & Taylor, 2014). So this mental state makes them hopeless, lonely, isolated socially and ultimately causing acute depression. All these passive psychological effects defer their healthy mental development. The harassment is affecting their mind and they find it difficult to concentrate in their studies. They do not like going to school, causing long absenteeism and lowering of examination grades (Brown, Jackson & Cassidy, 2006). They even have experienced stress related health problems like headache, stomach ache, apathy for food, nausea, vertigo etc. Problems like bed wetting, bad dreams, chronic pain, eating disorder, mood swings, loss of sleep and appetite are very commonly observed in the adolescents (Tolia, 2016).

The psychological effect of online bullying is so intense sometimes that adolescents can even think of harming or hurting themselves and others. The sense of no escape is making them contemplating, attempting or actually committing suicide. The post-hoc assessment of the profiles of some of the suicide victim teens have shown indications of their vulnerable state of mind (Shapiro and Margolin, 2004). It is also paving the way for them to become delinquent juveniles and having criminal adulthood in future. Innumerable cases of suicides associated with cyber-bullying, have been noted as well as recorded throughout the world (High, 2007).

The present study is an attempt to scrutinize the impact of some important factors like age and gender on the psychological effects of cyber-bullying on the victim adolescents of a cosmopolitan city. Its nature and dynamics is appearing in more complicated manner in the complex cultural background of a cosmopolitan city like that of Kolkata, of West Bengal state in India. So the haunting questions are -

- How gender effects the emotions of the adolescents on being victimized by online bullying?
- Is there any variation based on age on the level of emotions and reactions of cyber-bullying?

This study opts to investigate the relation of psychological impacts of cyber-bullying on adolescents of urban India and the two main biological factors, i.e. age and gender. So the objectives of the study are-

- To examine the dichotomous nature of such emotions and behaviour and reactions based on gender among the victim adolescents
- To investigate the existence of variation in experience and level of emotions and reactions of the teenage victims of both the genders based on age.

## **Methodology**

### ***Literature Review***

The first step was an intense literature review of the concept of cyber-bullying, its effects, specially the psychological effects on teenagers along with the studies related to socio-economic conditions of the study area i.e. the cosmopolitan city of Kolkata. The extensive literature survey of the different journal articles, books and thesis based on the psychological effects of cyber-bullying helped to list the items related to psychological and other associated reactions and behaviours of the victim teens. The review of the already existing literature is used to develop the list of questions of the questionnaire and its improvement by content validity.

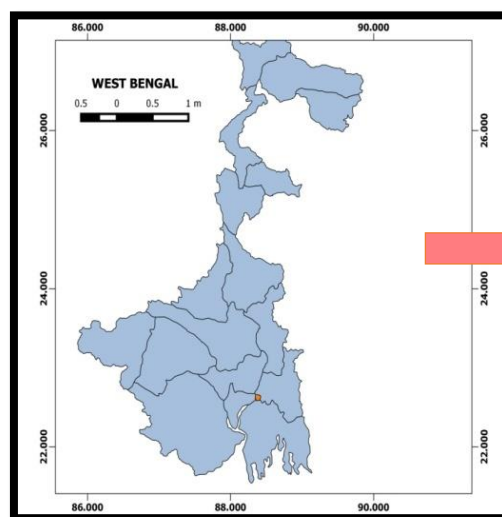
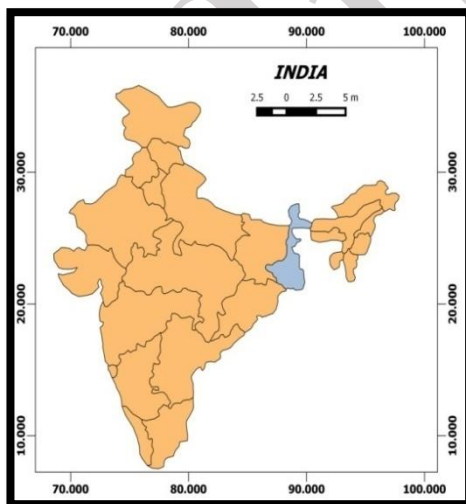
### ***Developing item pools and taking expert opinion***

The drafted list of questions was evaluated and examined by the researchers based on three areas of concern: content validity, clearness and accuracy. Each of the questions were organized in a matrix, with these three concern areas and only questions which full fill all the three requirements of the study were selected after revise.

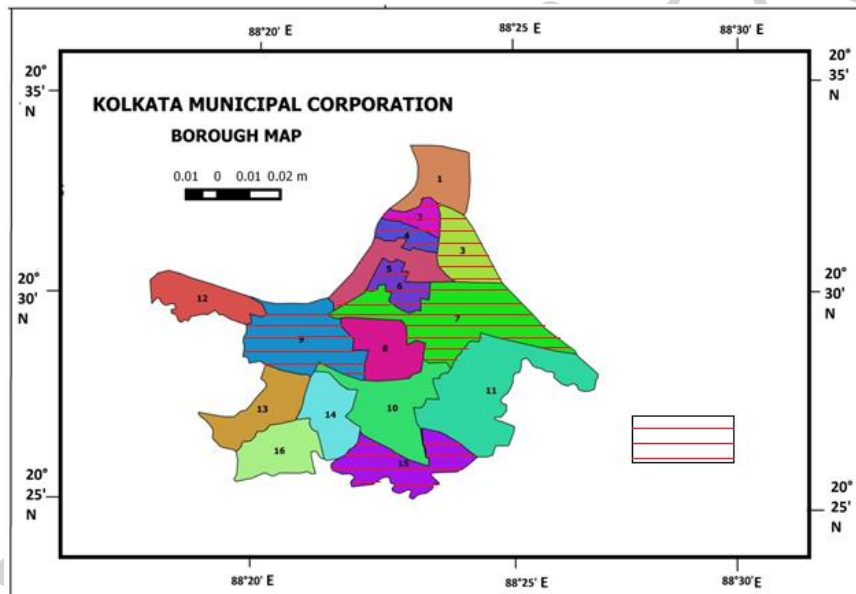
The revised items were then put forward to the teachers (n=12) and parents (n=8). They were asked to examine the questions again with the relevance to the purpose and objectivity of the study. According to the suggestions received, one more question was added and two questions were removed from the drafted list of questions selected from the previously mentioned matrix. Along with these problem oriented questions, targeted to measure the mild and intense psychological effects of cyber-bullying, some general questions related to the background of the samples and overall experience of the cyber-bullying was also included in the pilot survey draft questionnaire.

### ***Sample and its collection***

Kolkata, formerly known as Calcutta was and is a cosmopolitan-port-capital city with the major community of Hindus- both aboriginals and migrated from neighbouring areas, a fairly substantial Anglo-Indian presence, Chinese, Goans, Syrian Christians, Parsis and Jews along with a large Muslim community. The city can be divided spatially into different zones based on its socio-cultural mosaic like the regions of affluent high class residential areas of Alipore, New Alipore, Bullygaunge; the highly educated service oriented middle class areas of Behala, Tollygaunge, Shayambazar; the minority areas of Ekbalpur, Mominpur, Park Circus, Tangra and the areas with immigrants from other states like Posta, Bara Bazar.



Location of minority dominated area



**Figure- 1:** Location of the demarcate the boroughs of Corporation

For the current minority (Figure 1) have the focus area.

Location Map: study area that minority dominated Kolkata Municipal

study, only the dominated areas been considered as From the above

mentioned zone, purposive sampling technique has been employed to unfold the objective reality. Students from grade nine to twelve were mainly surveyed. Students of grades below nine were not surveyed during the pilot survey as it became evident that below this grade using internet for communication and having email id or profiles on social networking is very rare, at least in case of teenagers of Kolkata. Hence, the selection of the adolescents was done based on their age and only students between the age of 14 years to 19 years was allowed to take part in the study.

The pilot survey sample consisted of 40 teenagers (23 females and 17 males) from the minority dominated areas like that of Ekbalpur and Park Circus areas of the city. The second sample of the main study consisted of 288 teenagers (144 females and 144 males) from Mominpur, Ekbalpur, Park Circus and Rajabazar areas of

Kolkata, which are the main residing places of the minorities. The samples were surveyed based on the validation and revised questionnaire built from the responses of the first sample pilot survey.

### ***Measure and procedure***

The questionnaire included multiple choice questions with maximum questions being closed types in order to reduce errors. Each question was revised to match the reading level of high school students before conducting the survey. The survey was conducted during the library period or lunch break. The participants required an average time of 25 minutes to fill up the questionnaire. Prior to the survey, a brief information and instruction was given to the students to make them aware about the way to fill up the questionnaire. Five-point response format has been the measuring method to evaluate most of the online and internet use related answers.

There are 11 questions related to the emotions felt by victims on being bullied online, while there are 13 questions on the reactions and behaviour of the victims. By summing up the Likert scale values, the total score of each of the two factors has been obtained for each respondent. So for emotions felt a respondent can have a minimum score of 11 and a maximum score of 55. While for the reactions and behaviour factor, a respondent can have a minimum score of 13 and a maximum score of 65. Later the scores are divided into three classes of mild, medium and intense ones for both the factors.

### ***Data Analysis***

Application of the inferential analysis have been the methods of data analysis to examine the behaviour, reactions and impact of cyber-bullying on the teenagers. The statistical package SPSS 20 for Windows have been used for this purpose. First, t-test has been conducted to examine the existence of gender variations in the impact of cyber-bullying on the victims. For the t-test, the t values along with mean and standard deviation of both male and female have been calculated for each of the variables of the two factors- emotions felt and reactions and behaviour of the victim teens.

In the second part of the analysis, Chi-square test has been used to test the bivariate association between the age of the teenagers and the impact of cyber-bullying on them. It has been calculated separately for both male and females. The summation of the Likert scale values of the different variables of both the two factors have been used for calculating the chi square test, after grouping the summation values into mild, medium and intense effects. Separate calculations have been done for males, females and considering together both males and females.

## **Results**



The impact of cyber-bullying on the victims have been categorized into two types- the emotions they experienced and their behaviours and reactions due to such emotional feelings. Results of t- test on gender and reactions and emotions felt by the victim teens reveals the presence of interactions between gender with behavioural reactions and emotions. The difference in the mean values of the males and females justifies the gender variations in case of emotions felt and reactions of the victims.

Table1: Emotional effects- A comparisons between genders

Emotions	Male	Female	T value	df	Sig
I feel angry	1.96(1.28)	1.46(1.18)	2.428	172	0.01*
I feel sad	1.79(0.75)	1.47(0.80)	2.465	172	0.01*
I feel anxious	1.65(1.27)	1.43(1.21)	1.076	172	0.28
I feel embarrassed	1.86(1.28)	1.56(1.36)	1.386	172	0.17
I wanted to cry	1.76(1.28)	1.44(1.25)	1.510	172	0.13
I don't feel like going to school	1.75(1.24)	1.36(1.21)	1.900	172	0.05**
I found difficulty in trusting others	1.82(1.27)	1.36(1.20)	2.223	172	0.02**
I blamed myself	1.69(1.18)	1.28(1.18)	2.119	172	0.03**
I isolated myself socially	1.64(1.13)	1.25(1.09)	2.095	172	0.03**

Values in parentheses indicate standard deviation

\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*  $p \leq .05$

Source- Computed by authors, 2019

The emotions of feeling of anger ( $t=2.428$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ) and sad ( $t=2.465$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ) are found to be highly varied among male and female counter parts and highly significant. They are followed by emotions like that of feeling of not liking to go to school ( $t=1.900$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ), finding it difficult to concentrate in study ( $t=2.223$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ), blaming themselves for bullying incident ( $t=2.119$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ) and slowly isolating themselves socially ( $t=2.095$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ). The other emotions of anxiousness, embarrassment and wanting to cry, though have not shown significant results, but the difference in the mean value points out the presence gender variation in these emotions also. The analysis of all the variables related to the factor emotions (Table 1), shows that mean values of the male victims are higher than that of the female victims. So the observation clearly indicates that the intensity of the various emotions felt by the males are more than the females, on being victimised by online bullying.

Table 2: Reactions and behaviour – A comparison between genders

Reactions and Behaviour	Male	Female	T value	df	Sig
I loss temper	1.81(1.09)	1.57(0.92)	1.402	172	0.16
It lowered my self esteem	1.82(1.32)	1.50(1.37)	1.420	172	0.16
I was scared	1.86(1.39)	1.56(1.36)	1.334	172	0.18
I was depressed	1.96(1.29)	1.42(1.24)	2.563	172	0.01*
I started avoiding friends	1.82(1.25)	1.58(1.35)	1.089	172	0.28
I had poor concentration in studies	1.74(1.26)	1.37(1.14)	1.804	172	0.07
My grades lowered	1.76(1.29)	1.36(1.14)	1.980	172	0.05**
I had physical health problem	1.65(1.22)	1.28(1.10)	1.931	172	0.05**
I had mental health problem	1.72(1.28)	1.17(1.02)	2.878	172	0.00*
I felt like harming myself	1.55(1.19)	1.17(1.01)	2.121	172	0.03**
I felt like committing suicide	1.49(1.14)	1.19(1.08)	1.575	172	0.11
I felt like harming others	1.43(1.15)	1.12(1.07)	1.649	172	0.10
I had long absence in school	1.76(1.26)	1.44(1.31)	1.491	172	0.13

Values in parentheses indicate standard deviation

\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*  $p \leq .05$

Source- Computed by authors, 2019

The result of the t-tests of the variables measuring the factor of reaction and behaviour (Table 2) of the victim teens also demonstrate similar trend. The reaction and behaviours like the thought of harming themselves ( $t=2.121$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ), experience of depression ( $t=2.563$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ), problems in physical health ( $t=1.931$ ,  $p \leq .05$ )

and mental health ( $t=2.878$ ,  $p \leq .01$ ) along with lowering of grades in examinations ( $t=1.980$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ) are highly significant for gender based variations. For the other reactions and behaviours like losing of temper, avoiding friends, poor concentration in studies, long absence in school, thought of harming others or committing suicide, the mean values of male victims are higher than the female victims. So even in case of reactions and behaviours the males manifest more severe reactions on being cyber bullied than females.

Since it has already been observed that gender influences the impact intensity, while considering age as an important factor of cyber-bullying the impact on males and females have been dealt separately along with considering both together. The result indicated interesting observations. When relation of emotions felt by the victim teens and their age was analysed by the help of the chi square, the result (Table 3) shows strong association between them. So there is a significant co-relation between age and the emotions felt ( $\chi^2 = 21.300$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0.006$ ).

Table 3: Emotional effects and age

<b>BOTH MALE AND FEMALE</b>				
<b>Age</b>	<b>Mild</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Intense</b>	<b>Total</b>
14	26 (20.0)	16 (14.5)	4 (8.3)	46 (16)
15	34 (26.2)	48 (43.6)	24 (50)	106 (36.8)
16	24 (18.5)	16 (14.5)	20 (41.7)	60 (20.8)
17	40 (30.8)	22 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	62 (21.5)
18	6 (4.6)	8 (7.3)	0 (0.0)	14 (4.9)
Total	130 (100)	110 (100)	24 (100)	288 (100)

$\chi^2 = 21.300^*$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0.006$

<b>MALE</b>				
<b>Age</b>	<b>Mild</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Intense</b>	<b>Total</b>
14	12 (20)	6 (11.1)	2 (6.7)	20 (13.9)
15	16 (11.7)	30 (10.5)	10 (5.8)	56 (28.0)
16	10 (16.7)	6 (11.1)	18 (60.0)	34 (23.6)

17	20 (33.3)	10 (18.5)	0 (0.0)	30 (20.8)
18	2 (3.3)	2 (3.7)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.8)
Total	60 (100)	54 (100)	30 (100)	144 (100)

$$\chi^2=21.510^*, df=8, p=0.006$$

### FEMALE

Age	Mild	Medium	Intense	Total
14	14 (20.0)	10 (17.2)	2 (11.1)	26 (17.8)
15	18 (25.7)	18 (31.0)	14 (77.8)	50 (34.2)
16	14 (20.0)	12 (20.7)	2 (11.1)	28 (19.2)
17	20 (28.6)	12 (20.7)	0 (0.0)	32 (21.9)
18	4 (5.7)	36 (10.3)	0 (0.0)	10 (6.8)
Total	70 (100)	58 (100)	18 (100)	146 (100)

$$\chi^2=10.389, df=8, p=0.239$$

Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*  $p \leq .05$

Source- Computed by authors, 2019

Table 4: Reactions and Behaviour and age

BOTH MALE AND FEMALE				
Age	Mild	Medium	Intense	Total
14	30 (17.4)	28 (18.9)	2 (4.8)	46 (16.0)
15	46 (26.7)	80 (54.1)	20 (47.6)	106 (36.8)
16	36 (20.9)	12 (8.1)	18 (42.9)	60 (20.8)
17	50 (29.1)	20 (13.5)	12 (4.8)	62 (21.5)
18	10 (5.8)	8 (5.4)	0 (0.0)	14 (4.9)
Total	172 (100)	74 (100)	42 (100)	288 (100)

$$\chi^2=23.081^*, df=8, p=0.003$$

### MALE

Age	Mild	Medium	Intense	Total
14	14 (16.3)	4 (14.3)	2 (6.7)	20 (13.9)
15	28 (32.6)	18 (64.3)	10 (33.3)	56 (38.9)
16	12 (14.0)	4 (14.3)	18 (60.0)	34 (23.6)
17	28 (32.6)	2 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	30 (208)
18	4 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.8)
Total	86 (100)	28 (100)	30 (100)	144 (100)

$$\chi^2 = 22.823^*, df=8, p=0.004$$

### FEMALE

Age	Mild	Medium	Intense	Total
14	18 (18.8)	8 (22.2)	0 (0.0)	26 (18.1)
15	20 (20.8)	20 (55.6)	10 (83.3)	50 (34.7)
16	24 (25.0)	2 (5.6)	0 (0.0)	26 (18.1)
17	26 (27.1)	4 (11.1)	2 (16.7)	32 (22.2)
18	8 (8.3)	2 (5.6)	0 (0.0)	10 (6.9)
Total	96 (100)	36 (100)	12 (100)	144 (100)

$$\chi^2 = 16.386^{**}, df=8, p=0.037$$

Values in parentheses indicate percentage.

\*  $p \leq .01$ , \*\*  $p \leq .05$

Source- Computed by authors, 2019

Now the gender perspective adds a new dimension to the study of relation of these two factors. When the two genders were considered separately, significant relationship was found in case of males, ( $\chi^2 = 21.510$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0.006$ ) only. The relation appears to be not significant for female victim teens ( $\chi^2 = 10.389$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0.239$ ). In other words, it can be said age influences the dimension of emotions felt by the victim teens. But it is gender sensitive and it does not hold true for females. It can also be derived as an observational fact that emotions of males are more influenced by age of the victim with compare to female counterparts.

The chi square test results of the association of reaction and behaviour of the victim teenagers of cyberbullying with age (Table 4) is considered and the result appears to be significant ( $\chi^2 = 23.081$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). So the age appears to be a significant factor influencing the level of reaction and behaviour of the victim teens on being bullied online. The result shows no variation in case of males ( $\chi^2 = 22.823$ ,  $df=8$ ,

$p=0.004$ ) and females ( $\chi^2 =16.386$ ,  $df=8$ ,  $p=0.037$ ). Both the genders showed similar trend i.e. having significant relation between age and reactions and behaviour.

## **Discussion**

From the study, gender appeared to be an important factor in case of difference in emotions and reactions among the victims. The males demonstrated more intense reactions and emotions than that of the females. More specially the males display more severity in feeling the emotions, coping with it and finally reacting to the online bullying. Biologically the females are less aggressive than the males and they always try to avoid combat and confrontation (Geen, 2001). The coping mechanism of the females with the adverse situations, which has to be dealt with maturity and mental strength is stronger than their male counterparts. In India, the social environment displays adverse tolerance trend towards deviant behaviour of females. From the early childhood, they are forced to suppress their emotions, feelings and show controlled dignified reactions, even to the abuse and violence towards them. This imposed attitude on the girls is also reflected in their reactions towards cyber-bullying. On the counterpart, the males often grow up with the impression that aggression and violence is a sign of masculinity. They have the freedom to express their feelings and emotions with no restrictions on their reactions to any experience. It indirectly discourages them to learn how to master the skill of controlling their emotions and making them mentally weak to deal with problems like that of online bullying during adolescents.

When age is considered as an important factor, influencing the emotions and reactions of the victim teens, the results of chi square test for males and females manifest the existence of variations. The impact of age on the consequences of online bullying on victims is very prominent for boys. As results have already revealed gender as an important factor, the case of males and females has been considered separately. The males, as already articulated as the gender with intense emotions and expressive behaviour and reactions of this emotions, has also shown variations in the levels of these reactions with respect to age. But the females on the other hand, has shown different levels of reactions only for mild reactions like that of feeling sad, felt like crying, feeling like not going to school or not talking to friends, except of deterioration of serious mental health, blaming themselves and isolating themselves from the society. The maturity of the males grows with age and in fact they attain the maturity of handling complex emotions and controlling their reactions in difficult situations at an older age than their female counterpart adolescents. As it is already stated that the norms of the society also play a major role here, very young teens are given a subtle encouragement in expressing freely. It is only in the later ages of adolescence the male teens learn the art of societally

acceptable behaviour of adults. But this absence or very low control over reactions and behaviours, in response to negative acts towards them like that of cyber-bullying can often led to the path of violent reactions of thinking about self-harm, or harming others, reckless acts and even trying to and actually committing suicide. As the males in their younger age, find it difficult to control their reactions to abuse, act of bully etc. they sometimes end up committing crime. The growing incidence of juvenile delinquency in India is a reflection of this observation. While females appear to act in a matured way from a very early age, the strict societal norms make them learn the emotional techniques to control their feelings and behave in a proper manner. Though the freedom action and expressing feelings is the right of both the genders, but in India the female child in majority of the circumstances are advised to behave in socially acceptable ways by their families, due to the fear of being out casted from the society. Moreover, biologically also female child attains maturity at a very early age. Hence, as the girls can control their behaviour and act in the socially accepted proper manner of a conservative orthodox society, age appears to be a recessive factor when the intensity of their reaction is considered with their age in response to being bullied online.

## **Conclusion**

The paper has contributed some important findings to the main objective of understanding the impact of age and gender on the emotions and reactions of teenagers, victim of cyber-bullying. The observation clearly identified existence of gender variation in this regard and explicitly indicated that the male teenagers demonstrate more severe emotions and reactions than female teens. The further analysis, emphasising on the factor age, showed that the teens acquire the ability to subsist the cyber-bullying experience with age. But the females appear to develop the endurance at an earlier age than males.

The expanding cyber world and escalating importance of cyber communication in day to day life and activities is slowly magnifying not only the need of acquiring competence, but also the use of this technology from early days of life. The social and academic life of teenagers is blooming in the modern cyber space. But their immaturity is often turning them into victims of cybercrime or leading them to commit offences like cyber-bullying, affecting their overall development and health. The findings of the present study, addressing age and gender as factors influencing the mental effects of cyber-bullying on victim, stipulated and specified them as the factors having major influence on emotions, reactions and behaviour of the victim teenagers. Variation in the mental experience, intensity and severity of emotions felt and reactions exists based on gender and age. Male victims exhibit more vulnerability and intensity in emotions and reactions on being bullied online than females. While with age, the maturity of the teenagers grows rendering them the ability to



deal with cyber-bullying experiences. Thus the study sets forth the further need of studying these two factors with other dimensional analysis for future assistance of young victims.

This study has adopted the self-report method where the participants filled up the questionnaire by themselves during the survey. This can be a potential source of error in the collected data rendering to the limitation of the study. Further, the data has been collected from the minority dominated boroughs of Kolkata in West Bengal state of India and hence, the findings are limited to Indian scenario. The study has been done in specific circumstances and may not be generalized for all the cosmopolitan cities.

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**Do Age and Gender Play a Major Role in Emotions and Reactions of Victim Teenagers of Cyberbullying? Evidences from a Cosmopolitan City in India**

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Inclusive

# **Decentralisation and Collective Action in Watershed Development Programme: The Killiyar Mission in Kerala**

**Manju S.Nair and Saisree K.G.,**

## **Introduction**

The restoration, conservation, and management of rivers or watersheds are becoming one of the major thrusts in resource management projects across all countries, as conflicts on shared water resources are increasing and ecosystem of watersheds tends to become fragile owing to agricultural, industrial and urban domestic usage. The problem of degraded watershed and its management is a complex and multi-dimensional one and attempts at addressing this issue is done across globe, participatory watershed development approach, being one among them. Apparently fostering human resources, creating awareness, cultivating skills and capabilities in youth to work and manage in watershed development, and nurturing water resources on a sustainable basis becomes important. The scenario of decentralised governance, if used properly can provide ample setting for successful management of the aforesaid through adopting people centred or auxiliary approaches with use of balanced inputs and partnership of agencies having common interest resulting in collective action. The present study tries to document the process of a participatory watershed management program run by Local Self Government in the state of Kerala, India and how it turned scientific and unique in its planning and implementation which was later acclaimed as a model in watershed management programs. Section I of the article looks into the general features of water shed management programs in India and the relevance of participatory approaches. Section II gives a glimpse into the study area and broader objectives and plan of action of the water shed management program and reviews the components of the program. Section III is the discussion part which analyses the characteristics of the program and the factors that made the program successful and replicable.

## **Section I: Watershed management programmes in India and relevance of participatory approaches**

A watershed is a topographically delineated area that is drained by a stream system, i.e. the total land area above some point on a stream or river that drains past that point. The watershed is a hydrologic unit that is increasingly recognized as a physical-biological and socio-economic model unit for integrated territorial planning and strategic land-use management at different scales (Brooks 1993, 35-41).

Watershed Management (WM) is the process of guiding and organizing the use of water, land and other resources in a watershed in order to provide desired goods and services without adversely affecting the environment and its natural resource base. This concept is based on the close interrelationship among land use, soil protection and water cycle balance, as well as on upstream–downstream linkages. A WM

approach is thus a coordinating framework that focuses on public, community and private sector land and water management activities within a hydrologically defined geographic area. Such a framework is valuable because watersheds provide many important environmental, social and economic services (FAO2001, 1-4). In short, watershed management focuses on maintaining ecological balance by conserving natural resources so as to harness them effectively. It includes measures to prevent soil run off, regenerate natural vegetation, harvest rain water and promote agro-based livelihood activities.

India, with its huge population and growing domestic, agricultural and industrial water needs, faces issue of scarcity and poor quality of water and hence watershed management became a thrust area of public policy from the earlier days. Unlike the pre-independence period when watershed management was a community affair, post-independence era witnessed formulation of centrally sponsored programs for watershed management (University of Bonn 2010, 1-11). The three initial programs adopted by the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development include Integrated Wasteland Development Program (IWDP), Drought Prone Areas Program (DPAP), and District Development Program (DPP). Later on, Ministry of Rural Development shifted their focus and adopted watershed approach in 1987 and Integrated Watershed Management Program (IWMP) was initiated by the Ministry in 1989 with an aim to conserve natural resources, particularly water resources and ensure sustainable income and rural livelihood. Since then around one lakh million is spent per annum for watershed development programs across India (Government of India 2015, 1).

A radical shift from the centralized implementation of watershed management programs came in 1995, when the District Panchayat was given the authority to implement the programs with the technical support of Project Implementation agency using watershed associations formed by the local people. As a result, successful watershed development programs such as Rajiv Gandhi Watershed mission, Karnataka Watershed mission and Gujarat's village level water harvesting structures were implemented through joint and collaborative efforts of both government and non-governmental institutions. And, these programs showed the extent to which watershed development programs can be executed when the power is delegated to state and district authorities, with the financial support from Central Government. Additionally, support from international agencies has helped in developing scientific watershed management programs in India. For instance, World Bank sanctioned US\$ 178.50 million for the program 'Neerchal', a decentralized watershed development program in 2014 and documented the best practices within this programme for replication in other areas. (Roy 2016, 1)

Studies show that most of these programs were featured by basic resource survey/benchmark data collection, plan preparation and implementation through community participation funded either by government or external agencies. And these projects worked in mission mode, where the project implementation officer executed the programs with the support of community (Sikka, A.K.; Islam, A.;

Rao, K.V. 2018, 72-81). Apparently, these integrated watershed program included activities to ensure rural livelihood and income generation such as works related to water harvesting, ground water recharge, creation of check dams and sustainable agricultural activities including integrated farming (Madhu V 2002, 15-26).

However, the above said programmes were not free from challenges, several studies mentioned lack of coordination between different technical agencies, inadequacy of skilled and trained workforce, lopsided planning and evaluation, absence of participatory skills and people-friendly approaches, shortage of financial and material resources and dearth of political will as the major challenges faced during the implementation of the above said water shed development programmes (Bagdi 2014, 57-66;Rajan2005,11-13).

As a strategy to meet these challenges, new approaches based on participatory and collective action towards rural development was envisioned and made possible through administrative and legal advancements that fostered the creation of new participatory institutions for managing degraded forests, canals/streams and micro-watersheds and this has generated a shift to more creative, innovative and responsive programs by allowing local level experimentation (Moujahed 2005, 78-83). Ability of people to indulge in collective action- to voluntarily cooperate as a group to solve a common problem with coordination and dedication- and prudence with which natural resources are managed, seems to be an important factor in these local level programs, conditioned by the quality of human capital and institutions that influence the creation of collective action. In addition, this has also contributed towards unity and political stability by allowing people to manage public programs at the local level.

In this regard, Bekele A Shifreaw (2009) discusses two forms of arrangements for collective action such as organizational arrangements and institutional arrangements. Organizational arrangements include the development of local mechanisms with coordination for achieving successful implementation and proper use of natural resources engaging all types of user groups and leaderships. Institutional arrangements involve rules and regulations for management and governance of public assets and arrangements, resolution of conflicts and approved norms for deciding costs and benefits (Bekele A ,Tewodros A, V. Ratna2009, 1-9).

Kerala, being a state which has experimented with democratic decentralisation in early 1990s by giving power to the Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) to plan and implement projects at the local level, with participation of all stakeholders, has capitalised the strength of collective action (Pillai N 2018, 14-30). The present study is based on Killiyar Mission- A successful watershed development program implemented by Nedumangad Block Panchayat (LSG at the intermediate level) with the support of multiple stakeholders in the district of Trivandrum, state of Kerala. The mission assumes importance in public policy as it reinstated the importance of the Block Panchayat- the meso level in the three-tier

system, in coordinating the district panchayats and village panchayats and various government departments in materialising a program, reinforced by the collective action of local people. In addition, the unique initiative followed an integrated watershed management approach instead of adopting traditional methods to rejuvenate River Killi. The aim of the paper is to understand the organisational and institutional arrangements and interactions among different organisational and institutional structures by which the Block Panchayat coordinated all stakeholders and developed a scientific watershed management program, assessing the local needs and how people were mobilised and organised, enabling collective action to make the mission successful. Similarly, aspects related to harnessing financial resources is one important feature of the program that has to be looked into, as the Block Panchayat managed to conduct the program without seeking exclusive financial resources from authorities and instead identified resources by integrating various aspects of the program to existing centrally/state sponsored schemes. To understand the activities and strategies adopted with regard to Killiyar Mission, the research team made observational visits to the Block and had several rounds of detailed reflective discussions with President, elected representatives, officials of Irrigation Department, Forest Department, District Planning Committee and local residents. In-depth interviews were conducted with implementing officers including Block Development Officer, and with officials of other agencies including Haritha Kerala Mission, Suchitwa Mission and Kudumbasree. Focus Group Discussions were conducted to assess the activities of different committees and other community-based organisations and to elicit views, opinions, information and suggestions from the stakeholders. The article is based on the evidences we have from these sources and also from the documented policy initiatives and interventions.

The following section describes the study area and narrates the broader objectives and plan of action of the water shed management programme titled 'Killiyar Mission'.

## **Section II: Killiyar Water Shed Development Programme: Documenting Processes and Phases**

This study is based on Killi river in Thiruvananthapuram district, locally known as Killiyar, a tributary of Karamana River, located between latitudes  $8^{\circ}40'30''N$ ,  $8^{\circ}27'0''N$  and longitudes  $76^{\circ}57'E$ ,  $77^{\circ}2'0''E$  in Kerala, South India (Fig.1). Killiyar originates from Karinchathanmoolain Panavoor Grama Panchayat of Nedumangad Taluk in Thiruvananthapuram District, the capital city of Kerala. The river, with an average width between 19m to 20m, pass through different habitats such as rural, semi-urban areas and agricultural landscape for about 32 km and finally join the Karamana River at Kalladimukham near Thiruvallom. The Killi River flows through five panchayaths around twenty-two kilometres within the Nedumangad Block panchayat.

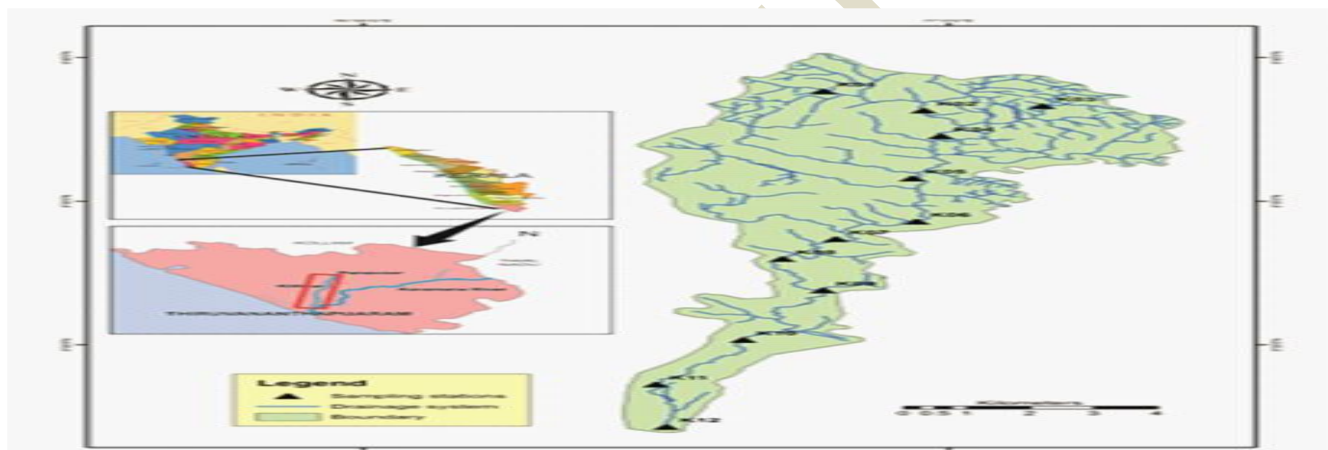
Studies have documented the fact that the river gets polluted while flowing, a major reason being dumping of garbage including left-over from slaughter houses and fish markets, opening of sewage pipeline to the river, open defecation by local people, bathing of cattle and laundering. In addition,



encroachment of riverside for cultivation and construction and sand mining activities disrupts natural flow of water with harmful effects on quality of water and bio-diversity in the area. In addition, studies reported concentration of nitrate-N, microbial contamination and presence of E.coli, and stated that ground water has become acidic and is bacteriologically contaminated (Dinesh et al. 2017; Harikumar 2017, 15-20). Since Killiyar flows through the semi-urban landscapes, and is a source of sand, water, and other resources, ecologists and water quality control managers were sceptical of the extent to which the depletion of water quality could be controlled and the ecological sustainability of the river could be maintained.

The abundant and precious land resources in the catchment area and the irrigation and drinking water needs of the Panchayat made it difficult to initiate policies and programmes aimed at watershed management of Killiar. It is against these challenges that Killiar Mission, a mission to restore the river was launched by Nedumangad Block Panchayat.

**Fig. 1: Map of Killiyar**



### **Killiyar Mission**

Killiyar Mission, initiated by the Block Panchayat, Nedumangad is a participatory project for rejuvenating river Killiyar in which local self-government authorities, people's representatives, various government departments and local people joined hands successfully to clean the river to ensure its free flow through its entire course. The mission covered twenty-two kilometres area from 'Ottakkombu-Karinchajathimula-Tirthankara to Vazhayila' and the whole stretch having an average width of 19 m was cleaned. The Mission not only created an ecological value but added a social and economic value since the people in the area heavily relied on the river for meeting their primary needs, agricultural activities and for fishing. These activities hitherto were being threatened by the unprecedented amount of waste

dumped into the river. The mission aimed at sustainable management of Killiriver and its environment and water ecosystem through decentralised and participatory development processes as evidenced by the objectives of the programme given below,

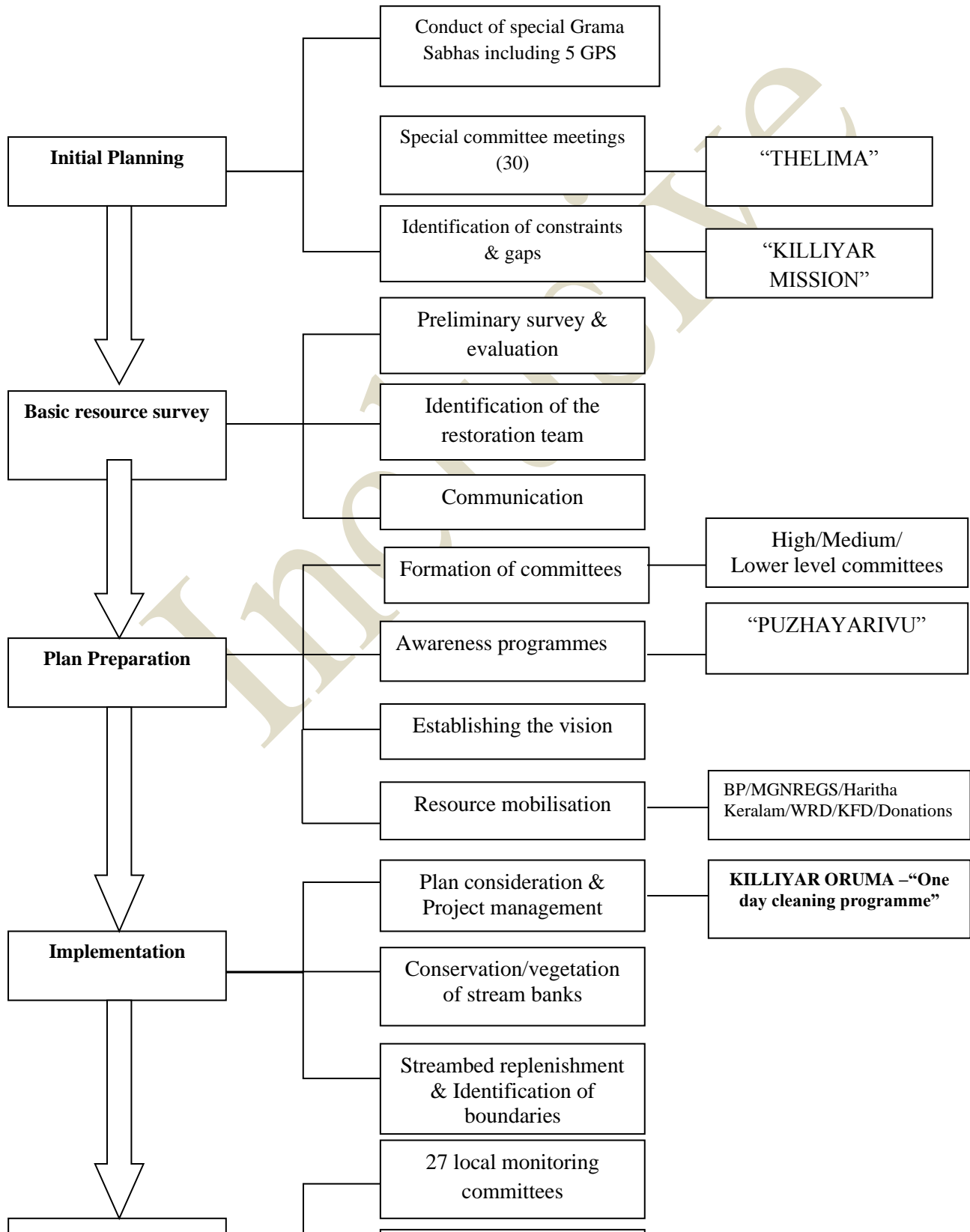
1. Creating awareness among local people about the significance of Killiyar and the extent of pollution effected in the river ecosystem by conducting 'Puzhayarivu' program.
2. Organizing a one-time event (One day cleaning programme)with the support of all stakeholders to clean the river and its tributaries to ensure regular flow and to maintain water level in the river during the whole year.
3. Endingthe encroachment on the river basin by adopting regulatory measures
4. Eliminating sources of water pollution with the help of nearby landowners and institutions
5. Ensuring mindful use of water resource to meet the needs (drinking and irrigation)of local people.
6. Guaranteeingprotection of river side and catchment area by planting trees and beautification along with rejuvenation of local water bodies including wells

The project was carried out in several stagesby synergising various stakeholders including the District, Block, Grama Panchayats, Municipal Council, Forest Department, Water Resources Department, Sanitation Mission, Health, Agriculture and Revenue Department. It turned out to be an innovative and dynamic environmental management programme for the Block Panchayat, coordinating general public and government, with various objectives, managing different elements and integrating multiple financial sources.

### **Different stages of Killiyar Mission**

The structureof the Mission and stages and processes through which the Killiyar Mission was accomplished is detailed in this section. The concepts underlying and findingsare based on the insights from field work andthe meetings conducted with all stakeholders who participated in the mission. To understand the process, detailed interviews were conducted with Block Panchayat President, ward members and local people and documents related to the project were reviewed.The framework was developed from various studies (Larsen 1996, 140; Sun2001, 25-36, Sharon Woolsey et. al. 2007, 752-769)and other literature related to river restoration and watershed development planning.

**Fig 2: Different stages of Killiyar Mission**



*Source: Authors construct*

The mission consists of five stages (shown in figure 2), namely; Initial Planning, Basic Resource Survey, Plan Preparation, Implementation and Monitoring, each described below.

#### **a) Initial Planning**

The first step towards initial planning consisted of efforts towards community mobilisation to initiate collective action. This stage of watershed development program involved various discussions held for analysing the problems associated with Killiyar by conducting local level meetings and initiating discussions in Grama Sabhas. According to Mr. Biju, Block Panchayat President, more than thirty meetings were held in village councils, and block councils, which also included the special meetings convened in five-grampanchayats in Nedumangad Block Panchayat, from 2015 to 2017. These meetings became helpful in analysing available resources, defining the problem, identifying the constraints and gaps, formulating the objectives, jolting step-wise work plan to achieve the objectives within defined time frame and planning with available budget. The authorities of Block panchayat named it as “Thelima” since the activities in this stage were directed towards assessing the existing situation and planning the mission with support of all stakeholders.

#### **b) Basic Resource Survey / Investigation**

The main purpose of second stage was to identify the processes that have contributed towards pollution of the river and the possible areas of intervention, which was completed through a preliminary survey. At this stage the available man power for the program was identified with the support of ward members in each Panchayat.

The preliminary study conducted by the Block Panchyat revealed that the river was gravely polluted and garbage including plastics have been thrown to the river indiscriminately. Most of the sewage pipes from houses and drainage pipes from markets and slaughter houses were opened to the river and along with this open defecation, bathing of cattle and laundering made the situation worse. On understanding the severity

of pollution, The Block Panchayat informed all authorities and institutions including Nedumangad municipality, Suchitwa Bhaarith Mission, Irrigation Department, Forest Department, District Planning Committee, Jalasree, Revenue Department, Health Department and Haritha Kerala Mission to take an action to control the situation. It is understood that, none of the institutions were entrusted with a comprehensive and exclusive responsibility to protect the river and to regulate activities that adversely affect the catchment area of river. The Block Panchayat realised that many levels of authorities, professionals, and representational services were needed to find a solution to the problem and coordinated efforts from all people had to be developed. With a vision to create public opinion on the matter and attract people and professionals from various spectrum of stakeholders, a call for restoration was done by the Block Panchayat. The aim was to create a joint vision of Killiyar mission and discuss the feasibility of the mission, so as to identify the hurdles and plan accordingly. Support was received from all government departments, civil society actors and local people and the strength of decentralisation was seen in this unique endeavour of deepening democracy where public opinion raised in Gram Sabhas and meetings at different tiers of government acted as the base for formulation of the program which was implemented with the help of various government authorities. At this stage the Block Panchayat sought support from various government agencies/departments such as Suchitwa Mission, Irrigation Department, Forest Department, Revenue Department and a consensus was reached with regard to a joint action by all stakeholders.

### c) Plan Preparation

A working model for watershed management program was developed at this stage. The Block Panchayat and the Urban Council decided to organize a centralized Killiyar Mission Convention which was to be led by Nedumangad Block Panchayat. The Patron Committee was constituted, comprising of Ministers, MPs, MLAs, District Panchayat President, District Collector and Municipal Chairmen. Killiyar Mission Committee was formed comprising a Chairman and Convener. Special Conventions and Mission Committees were constituted at Gram Panchayats and Urban Councils. The committees were divided into three; Higher level committee, Mid level committee and local level committee (Table 1). Regional Killiyar Mission Committees were also set up. The project was implemented jointly with the support from people's representatives, technicians, beneficiaries, Kudumbasree activists, MGNREG members, public activists, clubs, cultural activists, students, youth organizations and nature lovers. Apparently, schemes such as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme were incorporated with the program to ensure availability of both financial resources and man power needed for completion of the program.

**Table 1: Different levels of committees**

Committees	Participants
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Highlevel committee	MPs, MLAs, District Panchayat President, District Collector and Municipal Chairman
Mid level committee	People's representatives, technicians, beneficiaries, Kudumbasree activists, public activists, clubs, cultural activists, students, youth organizations and nature lovers
Local level committee	Members of MGNREGs, Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee Scheme and other local people

Stakeholder participation and acceptance by the public are the two important factors that contribute towards success of any decentralised initiative. Realising this, the block level authorities conducted an awareness programme to raise public awareness, and to share information regarding the importance of watershed development program. The awareness program named as Puzhayarivu – ‘Get to know the river’ conducted on 5th April 2018 became a great success since people in the Panchayat participated in the program actively. Two pedestrian marches were conducted starting from the origin of the river till the end, which was led by MPs, MLAs, block & panchayat representatives, municipality representatives, workers and local people. Along these marches, the workers of Killiyar Mission were directed to record the current status of wetlands, watersheds, waste and erosion zones, including encroachments. This was used for planning the activities and resources needed at implementation stage. Puzhayarivu, as the name implies created awareness among the people regarding the river ‘Killiyar’ and its pathetic state. During the march led by hundreds of activists and coastal residents, leaflets were distributed, notice boards were fixed, and art, street drama, and crowd funding were also adopted for propaganda. Thus Puzhaarivu, created an awareness among people about the need for watershed management and the valuable role each citizen can play in the initiative. It created a positive atmosphere in the village towards the ought to be implemented program.

#### **d) Implementation / Plan Execution**

The one-day cleaning program- ‘KilliarOruma’ made the actual difference in the area and it showed how common lands can be protected through mobilisation and collective action at the grass root level. A meeting was organised by Nedumangad Block Panchayat and Haritha Kerala Mission. The Killiyar Mission Committees of all levels joined together and conducted this mass meeting, which was held on 14th April 2018 and was called locally ‘KilliyarOruma’ which means ‘United Killiyar’. The Convenor, Killiar Karma Samiti, opined that they expected around 1,000 people to join the meeting, but surprisingly more than 20,000 people attended this marvellous event.

Five lakhs rupees were mobilised by Nedumangad Block Panchayat by appropriating the funds from various government projects including National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Haritha Kerala Karma Program Allocation, and Water Resources Department Scheme. In addition, voluntary services

from people and crowd funding were also used to mobilise funds for the program. The innovativeness in which Panchayat raised funds from the other schemes in the form of convergence, without depending on external sources of funding needs special mention. It is appreciable that all government departments worked very closely with local self-governments, and shared responsibilities. This coordination and understanding of the roles and responsibilities reduced the conflicts, contradictions and issues and it acted as a major reason for success of the program.

In the one-daylong cleaning campaign titled “KilliyarOruma”, thirty-two thousand people cleaned the 22 km of river and its 31 canals/channels, materialising the theme of the programme ‘Killiyar will flow calmly’ (*KilliyarOzhukumSwasthamayi*). The cleaning campaign aimed at removing pollutants gathered over the years, ensuring that the river will flow peacefully or freely in future. The cleaning started from the origin of the river at Karinjathi moola located at Panavoor panchayat. As many as 32,000 people who are beneficiaries of MGNREGs and Ayyankali Employment Guarantee scheme, members of resident’s associations, political leaders and volunteers participated in this day-long cleaning mission to protect the river from its slow death. Finance Minister, Tourism Minister, Water Resource Minister, Forest Minister, Opposition Leader, MLAs and other high-level officials flagged off the campaign at each region.

During the process, those who were polluting the river by dumping of sewage/garbage into it were identified and a notice was issued. The banks of the river were recorded to avoid encroachment and trees were planted on the banks, thus checking the sources of future pollution. A comprehensive programme was conceived not only to restore the river through a cleaning process but also, follow up action was envisaged by planting of tree saplings and preparing coir geo-textile to maintain stability of side wall. Local level committees and around sixty collectives were formed with this purpose. And thus, the program adopted the methods of integrated watershed management to ensure rejuvenation of ground water and biodiversity.

#### **e) Monitoring**

Killiyar Mission has been envisaged as a program to foster rural development process, via strengthening the governmental structures and by capitalising labour force at stake, through a participatory approach where the demand for development comes from public opinion. At present twenty-seven local/regional committees serve as monitoring committees. As part of its ongoing work, the municipality and the village panchayat have closed more than thousand drainage pipes which helped in making the river as a source of clean water. The next phase of this mission is already started with the help of government support, and the mission is to take stringent measures to end the encroachments in Killiyar river bed area by demarcating the banks and riparian zone.



For preserving ecological balance, the major conservation activities completed in these areas include coastal soil protection, planting grass and bamboo trees. As a part of rejuvenating the streams nearby, 5,000 tree saplings including bamboo saplings and fruit tree saplings were planted on and near the banks of the river during World Environment Day. Five Grama Panchayats belonging to Nedumangad Block Panchayat participated in this conservation program. According to the Finance Minister, “the main source of pollution is the hotels and houses situated along the river. With an aim to end this problem Killiyar Sanitation project fully supported by the government will be executed. The state government would bear the cost of the second stage of the Killiyar mission as during the first phase of Killiyar Mission programme exemplary work has been done. The funds for the second stage will be provided from the Rural Infrastructure Fund, and during the third phase the mission would be included in the Kerala Reconstruction Programme”.

### **Discussion**

The restoration, conservation, and management of rivers or watersheds are becoming one of the major resource management projects in all countries of the world. In a country like India, conflicts on shared water resources are increasing and also the ecosystem of watersheds are becoming fragile due to anthropogenic unsustainable activities. The problem of initiating a positive change to degraded watersheds and its management is a complex and multi-dimensional one, it can only be made possible through participatory watershed development approach, strengthening of human resources, awareness about sustainable development, initiation of skills in youth to work and manage in watershed development, and also managing water resources on a sustainable basis. Several studies have been conducted to assess the successful watershed programmes in India through participatory development and the results show that these are implemented on a micro level through the joint and collaborative efforts like “Mission Mode”, examples being “Rajiv Gandhi Watershed Mission” in Madhya Pradesh, “Karnataka Watershed Mission” and Gujarat’s village level water harvesting structures implemented with the help of private sector. However, critics argue that there were many constraints in evaluating and monitoring of such projects due to lack of competence among social organisations, lack of baseline data, problems of coordination in local self-governments with line departments, lack of participatory impact monitoring etc. Against this backdrop, this study examined the watershed development mission in the state of Kerala (locally known as Killiyar Mission) to argue that implementing decentralized and participatory development practices in watershed development and approaches fostering collective action can go a long way perpetuating the decentralized structure of resource management and augmenting state’s water resources.

Though Kerala is rich with forty-four rivers, most of them face environmental problems due to urbanization, modernization and consumerism; leading to extensive pollution in major water bodies of the

state. Killiyar is a tributary of the Karamana River, one of the major rivers flowing through the capital city of Kerala which originates from one of the Grama Panchayat within the Nedumangad Block Panchayat. In general, Block panchayats or Block Samithies usually help in the projects of the Grama panchayats and work on centralized projects. In contrast, the innovative projects run by the Nedumangad Block Panchayat are aimed at protecting the environment and creating sustainable development through integrating social, economic, political and environmental aspects in all sectors. The Killiyar Mission is a good example of this. The Nedumangad Block Panchayat received several national, state and regional awards for their contribution in innovative ideas and developments in organic farming, poverty alleviation programmes and social welfare programmes. The watershed development program “Killiyar Mission” is a successful initiative of Nedumangad Block Panchayat as a result of the continuous effort of the Block from 2015 to 2018. The model framework (different stages of Killiyar Mission) followed is built on the basic structure of the Killiyar Mission, which differs from other successful watershed development mission in India. This study also enquires upon how collective action has contributed towards the development of a watershed in Kerala. The analysis was intended to investigate the processes that took place for bringing together different stakeholders to undertake this collective action. This was not intended to validate the output of the Killiyar Mission, but to explore the prevailing factors and processes that led stakeholders to collectively act. To understand the process in detail, two detailed interviews with Block panchayat members including Block Panchayat President and citizens were conducted and the project documents were reviewed. In the case of the Killiyar Mission, the Block Panchayat brought together the organizational arrangements and institutional arrangements of collective action through proper planning, management and monitoring, to make the watershed development programme a successful one. Efficiency and sustainability of watershed development programs is determined by the quality of institutional structures created during the project period, and interactions among them and with other relevant agencies active in the vicinity (Government of India 2008, 5-32). Thus, Killiyar Mission is a unique experimentation of watershed development in Kerala as the programme achieved success within a short span of time and the institutional arrangements and interactions among different institutional structures that happened over the period, ensembles both the properties of collective action and the advantages of democratic decentralisation.

***Organisational and Institutional Arrangements for Collective Action:*** The ad hoc organisational and institutional arrangements established during the mission period in the form of primary stakeholder organisations and institutions are the most important part of arrangement that made the program a success.

***Primary Stakeholder Committees:*** Local level committees constituted by including the members of MGNREGA, Ayyankali Urban Employment Guarantee scheme and local people acted as the primary stakeholders who were both executors and beneficiaries of the scheme. On the one hand, the Block

Panchayat succeeded in ensuring monetary benefits to the primary stakeholders who are attached to employment guarantee schemes for taking part in the mission, and at the same time all the local people were given awareness by conducting, Puzhaarivu, the awareness program and thus the need and social value attached to the mission was popularised. This double pronged strategy adopted by the Block Panchayat ensured whole hearted support from primary stakeholders, and their apprehensions were resolved through dialoguing.

Similarly, the monitoring committees constituted of local people for looking into the encroachments and to prevent the sources of pollution, helped in creating a sense of ownership about the program among local people and this had a positive impact in avoiding conflicts among the primary stakeholders. For instance, those who were served with a notice from the authorities to close down the drainage pipe outlets to the river, fully cooperated and took immediate measures to resolve the issue. As a positive reinforcement, the BPL cardholders were given financial support from the respective Gram Panchayats for construction of sanitation pits and drainage. Thus, issues that arose during the time of execution was solved by these committees and smooth functioning of the project was ensured.

Primary stakeholders collectively worked for success of the mission, and the strong network that was created as a result of regular interaction within and outside the primary stakeholder committees succeeded in resolving the apprehensions among local people regarding the intentions of mission, and gradually local people acted as the key executors of the mission, since they became aware of the pathetic condition of river, the extend of pollution and the benefit they may receive from the watershed development program.

*Support Structures:* Another important aspect of the program was the diverse institutional support structures ranging from Mid-Level Committees to High level Committees where the political leaders directly involved in providing technical support and in issuing administrative clearances.

The midlevel committee in which people's representatives, technicians Kudumbasree members, social activists, students and nature lovers included worked in close coordination with the Local level Committee and acted as a support system for planning and implementation of activities. Similarly, the High-level committee consisting of District Collector, Municipal Chairman and MLAs and MPs guided the entire program and took responsibility of the activities.

The role played by Local Self Governments, especially by the Nedumangad Block Panchayat in coordinating the five Gram Panchayats and leading the mission is commendable. The mission was materialised as a result of continuous effort of the Block Panchayat from 2015 to 2018 and it was the Block Panchayat which initiated the idea of Killiyar Mission and jolted the plan of action. Apparently, the Block Panchayat authorities succeeded in bringing together multiple stakeholders and guided the

organisational and institutional arrangements of collective action required for planning, management, implementation and monitoring the mission to materialise its dream of watershed development in Killi river.

***Interactions among different institutional structures:*** One important aspect of the mission was the interactions among different institutional structures, these interactions being both structural and functional.

Haritha Kerala Mission, the public centric mission of government to ensure waste management, soil and water conservation and agriculture took leadership to carry out the one-day cleaning program 'KilliyarOruma' with the involvement of local bodies. Various government departments including Irrigation Department, Forest Department, District Planning Committee, Revenue Department and Suchitwa Mission joined hands together for ensuring all support for the program. It was opined by ward members that, during the initial period, some employers' unions and ward level committees were not supportive of the mission and there was suspicion with regard to the objectives and many people questioned the feasibility of the program, since there was no pilot study. However, the systematic intervention of officials in Block Panchayat and Haritha Kerala Mission to convince all stakeholders through regular interaction facilitated creation of various committees at different levels and these committees acted as a whistle blower, which enabled the authorities to forecast the constraints and gaps that can leap into the execution level. Apparently, the process helped in creation of good rapport among people and also with the governmental departments. It was largely due to the pressure from Block panchayat members that the project received clearances from all the concerned departments.

The scientific approach followed, firstly, by conducting a study on the current status of pollution and submitting the reports to various departments and then by leading a grass root level movement demanding a watershed program, ensuring the smooth functioning of the program. The Block Panchayat succeeded in making their idea of watershed development as a product of common consensus and the stakeholders who participated in the program felt ownership of the program and this helped in settling the opinion differences among various stakeholders.

It is evident that the success of the program is largely based on the mutual trust and judicious sharing of various responsibilities among various departments and the beauty with which different institutional structures were positioned in the implementation of the program.

***Post project Sustainability:*** In most of the watershed development programs, post project sustainability is a major issue since the institutional arrangements cease functioning once the project period is completed. However, Killiyar Mission has overcome this problem since the primary stakeholder committees have a more political nature and they continue their work since it includes social activists, people's

representatives, labourers and local people. The monitoring committee is active during the second phase of the mission and priority is given to the removal of encroachments near river basins. Another major initiative in the phase is proper demarcation of the river boundaries that have been completed in the Grama panchayats of Karakulam, Aruvikkara, Anad, and Panavoor and the Nedumangad municipality with the aim to stop further encroachments. Similarly, measures to protect the river banks by planting trees are going on with the intention to sustain the efforts. In addition, Trivandrum Corporation has announced and initiated 'Killiyar City Mission' to clean the rest of the river that flows through its jurisdiction. As recognition from the part of government, Nedumangad Block Panchayat received several state and national level awards for their contribution towards innovative programs to foster rural development.

## **Conclusion**

Killiyar mission shows a pathway towards sustainable watershed management in a state where environmental problems arising from urbanization, modernization and consumerism results in pollution of major water bodies. The model framework (different stages of Killiyar Mission) is built on the basic structure of the Killiyar Mission, which differs from other watershed development missions. It exemplifies how collective action has contributed towards the development of watershed management in the area and also on the importance of institutional arrangements and how interactions among different organisational and institutional structures helped in successful completion of the project. In the case of Killiyar Mission, the Block Panchayat took lead in providing the required organizational and institutional arrangements through proper planning, management and monitoring, to make the watershed development programme a success. In fact, Block Panchayat succeeded in coordinating with the five Gram Panchayats through which Killiyar is flowing and only this unified effort could restore the river. More importantly, both the bureaucratic and the political leaders in the local self-government institutions succeeded in creating a sense of ownership and responsibility among the local people and transforming them as the primary stakeholders of the program to effectively involve in all activities planned. Also, Block Panchayat fully managed the financial resources by incorporating the already existing self-employment schemes into the program which ensured availability of cleaning workers and mobilisation of financial resources. Thus, with the power of decentralised administration, through institutional arrangements, collective action was boosted at grass root level, and the watershed development program was materialised. The positive effect of this mission was evidenced during the period of the disastrous flood that affected Kerala during August 2018. During this time, when all the other rivers in Kerala flooded, Killiyar flowed calmly providing natural testimony to the success of the Mission.

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## Impact of Street vending on Livability of Residents: Context of Pune

Isha P. Panse and P.M. Raval

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### Abstract

*In India, street vendors are a visible part of everyday street activity and they represent the dynamic and temporal streetscape. This study explores the effect of the presence of street vendors on the livability of an area. Livability encompasses broad human needs ranging from food and basic security to beauty, cultural expression, and a sense of belonging to a community or a place. (Myers 1988). The factors of livability depend on locally prevailing socio-economic and cultural circumstances. This study attempts to understand street vending as one such local phenomenon which contributes to the easy availability of certain goods and services, adds vibrancy and activity on street, acts as 'eyes on the street'- making streets safer.*

*In the mainstream urban planning process, their presence is not considered in plan-making. Guidelines, norms, or criteria regarding their location and space requirements have not been framed. This results in the generation of urban problems like aggravating traffic congestions, inconvenience to pedestrians, the effect on aesthetics of the street due to their displays.*

*The purpose of this study is to examine how this activity of street vending, which has become an integral part of not only the urban street but also the Indian lifestyle, affects the local livability of the residents. The study uses quantitative and qualitative data. These include field notes, a questionnaire survey of residents on various parameters of livability. Field mapping, photography, and observations are used to triangulate the conclusions from quantitative calculations. Descriptive statistics such as means and frequencies were used to present the findings. Co-relations, established have been then triangulated based on field survey observations.*

*Through questionnaires, the perception of other residents towards the activity of street*

*vending affecting the parameters of livability is evaluated. Relationships obtained during the study between street vendor numbers and parameters of livability affected by vending would prove crucial in the framing of guidelines for vending and can help in reducing the negative impacts of street vending and recognizing its contributions.*

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### **The Culture of Street Vending**

In India, streets always have held great importance in the lifestyle of the people (Deore and Lathia 2018). The streets in India, are not merely conduits for traffic but places for celebration, protests, playing cricket matches and other forms of socializing.

Street vendors are a visible and distinctive part of the everyday street activity (Kleinenhammans 2009). The Indian consumer culture also depends on street vendors, where fresh fruits and vegetables are not bought and stored for weeks but rather, are bought fresh almost twice a week, usually from the most accessible street vendor. They feel that the vendors have fresh and good quality since they do not have the items in large quantities. Shopping and marketing, in a traditional Indian sense, have primarily been informal. Indian markets are characterized by social interactions, as opposed to the mechanized and sterile concept of shopping favored by the modern, supermarket structures (Singh 2000).

The usual street vendor, at the corner, becomes a part of everyday routine for necessities like newspapers, raw foods, flowers, seasonal items, etc. Many people buy items from a specific vendor, whom they have come to trust for the freshest fruits and the latest items in the market. The visit to the vendor becomes a form of social interaction, rather than merely the activity of buying and selling.

The Street vendors selling prepared food items, often have regular customers depending on them for their snacks, quick breakfasts. Soon these spots vendors, become places for getting together and socializing. The tea stalls, the 'paan' kiosks, are places where people meet for a quick break and chat. Vendors provide people with reasons to spend time outdoors. The presence of these street vendors generates a lot of activity at this spot adding to the liveliness

of the place.

People from lower socio-economic strata, living in the city, get a chance to participate in the consumer culture and buy their items of daily needs and other goods from the street vendors, who sell them at cheaper rates. (WEIGO 2018). Street vendors provide services at convenient locations, thus enabling the people to have better accessibility to the items of need. By identifying the need of the customers according to location and seasonal variations, the vendors have a strategic advantage which helps them cater better to the demands. For example, the number of vendors selling lemonade in a shady spot, on the street increases during summers, vendors selling nuts and ready to eat snacks locate themselves near recreational areas like gardens. There are some goods which are specific to the street vendors like balloons, goods required during festivals, etc.

The ‘informal activity’ of street vending is thus, an integral part of the socio-cultural urban fabric.

### **Planning for Street Vending:**

The approach of physical planning in India, being influenced by the Western concepts of planning, failed to take the cognizance of the ‘informal activities’ like street vending, which were getting generated and multiplied due to the trends of urbanization. The approach of physical planning towards street vending was to try to eliminate the activity since it existed beyond the boundaries of ‘legal’. Far from getting eliminated, these activities continued to grow, due to the rapid migrations from rural to urban areas.

The awareness and vision for including the activity of Street vending within the domain of physical planning, in India were propelled by two major things. Firstly, the globally changing outlook of planning concepts and secondly the legislation passed by the Government of India giving clear directives about the policies for vending, and in turn ‘regularising’ this activity.

The paradigm shift in the approaches of urban planning over the decades has led to the promotion of sustainable development with a focus on planning for People, environment, and

financial viability principles. Also, the planning process became flexible in accommodating the local variations in the city. The planning process expanded to focus on inclusive planning, people's participation, and specific issues relating to the weaker sections of the society. These approaches are best suited to give physical plans the framework to cope with the dimensions of temporality, diversity, and creativity in Indian cities. The activity of street vending best represents these dimensions in the urban areas.

### Street Vending Legislation:

A look at the Timeline for various acts passed on vending reveal that efforts to regularise the activity of Street vending by the Government of India are going on since 1999.

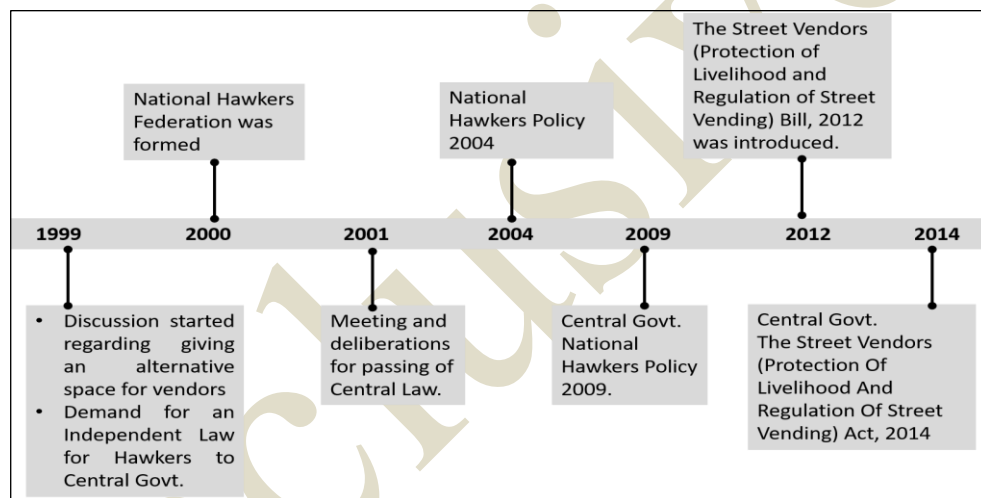


Fig 1: Timeline of Street vendor Legislation in India

The Street Vendors Act, 2014, enforced on May 1, 2014, is an attempt to recognize and regularise all the street vendors in India. This makes the profession of street vending legal and brings relief from the continued threat of evictions by the Local Authority. This act gives clear directives on accommodating the street vendors in the Physical plan of the city, unlike its earlier precedents. The Act suggests 5 stages as a framework for including street vendors in the city. Stage 4, Conversion of the policy directives into a physical plan for vending, taking the context of each city and its stakeholders is challenging.

According to the Act, this plan is meant to be prepared by local authorities in consultation with the Town Vending Committee (TVC). It involves laying down vending zones, non-

vending zones, and restricted zones for various markets. Civic amenities have to be created and regulated. Over-crowding and sanitary concerns cannot be the grounds of the declaration of no-vending zones.

Thus, there is a need to fill this gap between Policy and actual physical planning of the provisions of the Street vendors Act 2014. This research aims to provide a defined guideline spatial integration of street vendors in the plan of the city. It is necessary to examine the broader contextual urban setting of street vending since this urban setting also influences the characteristics of vending like display, location, a commodity sold to understand the locational preferences of the vendors. Also, the perceptions of residents in the surrounding area need to be studied and accounted for.

### **Street Vending in Pune City:**

The study is based on Pune, a city in the state of Maharashtra, India. City of Pune (approximately 250 sq. km. with a population of around 4 Million - neither a Metro nor a small city. Like most of the towns in India, Pune city has grown organically with natural growth rather than pre-planned growth; then Pune is not an exception (Hiraskar.G. 1993). More than design, the city has developed to its current form due to socio-economic changes. The city has developed in a radial pattern, with concentric rings. The core area of the city is the nucleus of this development, as the town since the natural tendency of the people is to keep this core as near as possible.

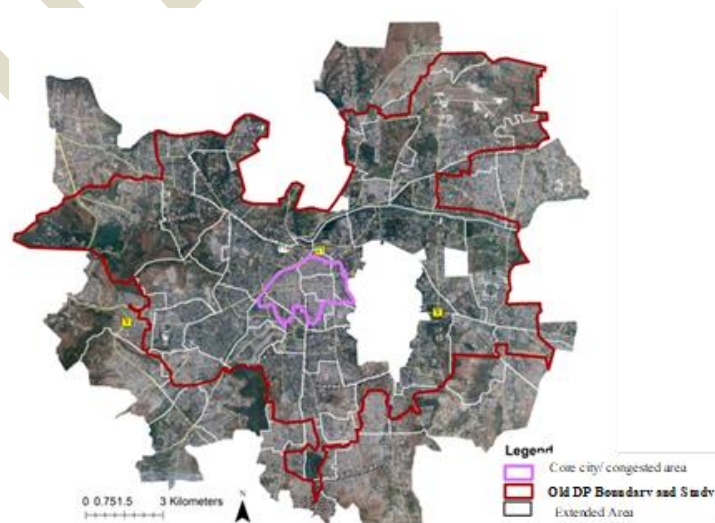


Fig 2: Study Area boundary

In Pune, street vendors and market traders account for 2% of the non-agricultural employment. which is about 21,850 vendors (2011-2012) (WEIGO 2018). According to the data from Encroachment Department at Pune Municipal Corporation, PMC there are 28,000 vendors registered as per the survey carried out in September 2018.

The appropriation of public spaces for commercial activities is visibly rampant in the city and the footpaths are lined with small businesses operating on what is nominally public space: cooked food stalls, mobile vendors, vegetable sellers, tea stands

### **The Concept of Livability**

The term 'Livability' is well-established and the literature points to its core concept as well as its subjective measurements. (Lewis 2017). 'Livability encompasses broad human needs ranging from food and basic security to beauty, cultural expression, and a sense of belonging to a community or a place.' (Nasreldin 2017). Apart from factors such as affordability, safety, employment opportunities, and presence of civic amenities, the environmental and social quality of an area as perceived by residents, employees, customers, and visitors also determines what makes the area a great place to live in (Rama U Pandey 2013). This perceived "livability" of cities—that is, the quality of the person-environment relationship, or how well the built environment and the available services fulfill the residents' needs and expectations have been taken as a framework for assessment in this paper. Livability is a temporal concept. The concept of Livability responds to scale. i.e. City level, neighborhood level. This Study deals with Livability as perceived by Residents at a neighborhood level.

The literature study points out some basic elements of livability: the urban living environment (both natural and built elements), its connection to the individuals, e.g., according to their needs or capabilities, etc. The parameters for assessment of livability can be divided across two themes – first, basic needs (shelter, safety, clean water, electricity, etc.), where the physical environment and infrastructure are dominant, and advanced needs (sense of belonging, creative activities, or prestige), where the environment is just the medium in

which some of these activities take place. In this sense, the more needs a place can “effectively” satisfy, the more livable it is. Street vendors thus affect these parameters of livability, though not all of them.

A list of 34 parameters of livability that seem to appear in the literature of Street vending was drawn upon and later Expert Opinion survey was used to shortlist the indicators of Livability that seem to be affected by the presence of vendors in the context of the study area.

Expert opinion plays a substantial role in the qualitative analysis or mixed-method analysis. For this study 30 experts were selected. The Expert Opinion Survey is important for this study because it helps to determine the parameters which are most affected by the presence of street vendors. Likert scale was used for the survey.

The Likert Scale seeks to measure the Likelihood and extent of Street vending, influencing the indicators of livability for a neighborhood with a 5 pointer Scale of likelihood.

Experts were identified from different organizations:

- 1) From Academic Institutions.
- 2) From Government Authorities.
- 3) From NGOs.

Table 1: Parameters and indicators of livability

Indicator		Parameter
Safety and Security	1.	Feelings of safety on the streets and other public places.
	2.	Safety of people from vehicular traffic (accidents, Generation of traffic, congestion, affecting vehicle movement, increase in conflict points)
Crime	3.	The occurrence of Vandalism, Pickpocketing, anti-social behavior
	4.	Eve Teasing and Harassment
Natural Environment	5.	The greenery (Tree cover, areas marked for neighborhood plantation)
	6.	Noise level
Local Economy	7.	Local business turnover



	8.	Sources of earning/ creating employment opportunities
Cost of Living	9.	Level of prices of items. (bringing down/ keeping the price of everyday food and other items in check)
	10.	Personal Expenditure on everyday items (reduce your expenses)
	11.	Expenditure on travel for daily necessities
Sanitation	12.	Feeling of Cleanliness
	13.	Trash collection and management
	14.	Wastewater disposal
Public Health and Health Behaviors	15.	The spread of infectious diseases
	16.	Choice of Healthy food
	17.	Access to food
Road/ Footpath (Physical components)	18.	Road / Footpath width
	19.	Street furniture
	20.	Road / Footpath Condition
Road/ Footpath (Formal Functions)	21.	Pedestrian Mobility
	22.	Vehicular Mobility
	23.	On-street Parking
Retail Amenities and Consumer services	24.	Convenience and availability
	25.	Healthy Competition, offering choices
Public and Open Spaces	26.	Conversion of Open Spaces
	27.	The utility of Public/Open spaces
	28.	Access to Public Space
Distinct Character and memorability	29.	Harmony of elements and facades
	30.	Visual Experiences
	31.	The vibrancy of a place
Community Cohesion (induce/sustainsocial bonds)	32.	Productive interaction e.g. business transactions
	33.	Loitering e.g. hangouts of teenagers
	34.	Schmoozing e.g. gossip, relaxed interaction

After rating of parameters on the Likert scale by experts, three of the above parameters, 1. Greenery, 2. Local Business Turnover, 3. Wastewater disposal had a score of less than 3 and hence were eliminated.

### Study Area Selection:

#### Clusters and Concentrations of Street vendors

This analysis is done using the Heat Map analysis tool in ArcGIS. This generates the hotspots for vendors. The locational data of 16,000 street vendors have been analyzed as mapped by the Pune Municipal Corporation. Heat maps are used to analyze the location and distribution of features. They capture where high and low values for an attribute are clustered. In this case, the attribute used is the number of street vendors.

There are two types of heat maps – Line density map and Point density map. In this study, Point Density Maps have been generated. These maps calculate the density of point features around each output raster cell. This Point Density map calculates the density of street vendors around each output grid cell. Units of density in the map are points per unit of area.

For this study, Map units are meters, so default units of density are points per square meter in the neighborhood. In this study a unit\_scale\_factor of 100 (100 by 100 meters is one hectare). And so, the numbers represent points per hectare.

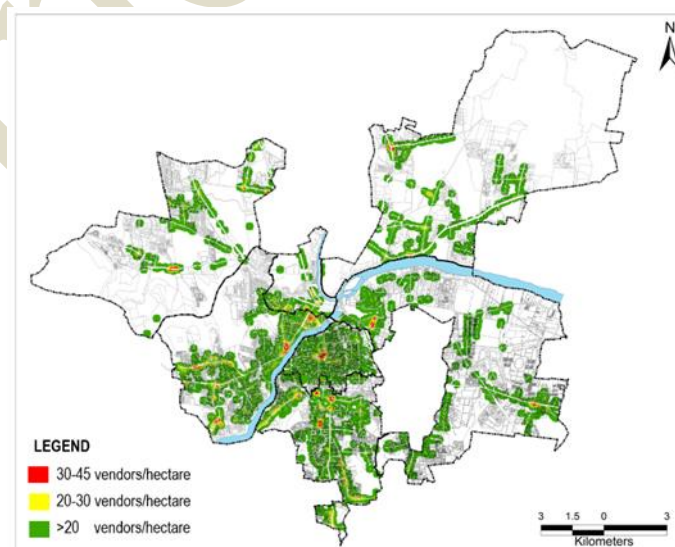


Fig 3: Heat Map showing concentrations of vendors in Pune City

The above map shows us the distribution of vendors in Pune city is along the major transport corridors. The following study areas were finalized based on the hot spots generated, the highest density of street vendors was seen as 30-45 vendors/hectare which was seen in the core area of Pune city.

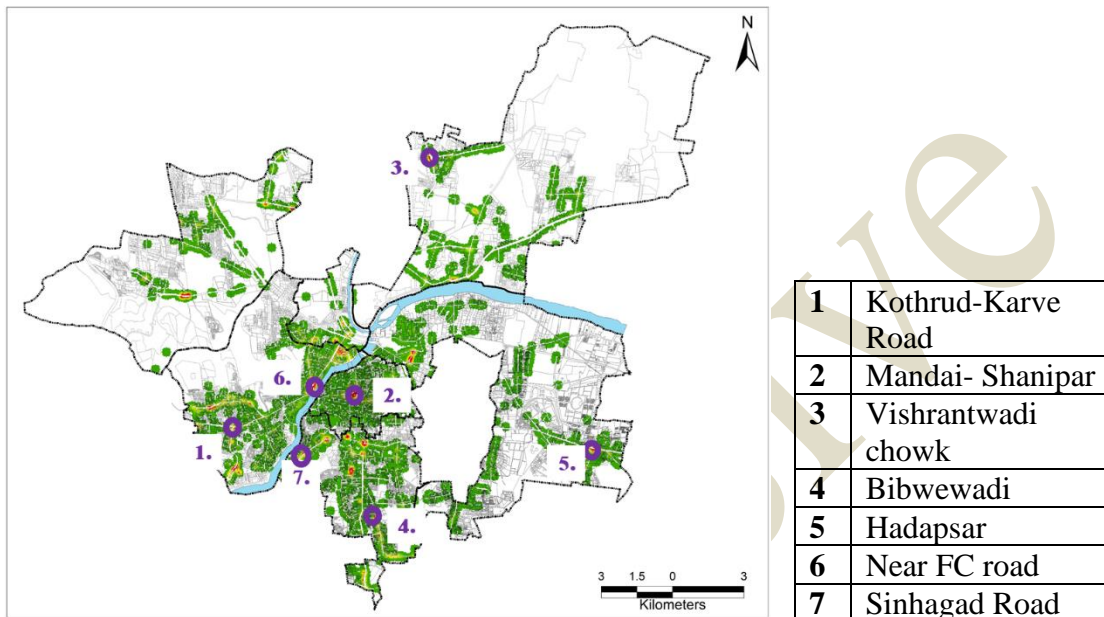


Fig 4: Selection of Study area for area-level study

The pedestrian shed is a structuring component in neighborhood planning. In urban planning, the five-minute walk sets a scope for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data at a human scale. Based on the distance of Walkability. An influence area of 500 m was taken around the hotspots as an area getting influenced by the presence of street vendors. Residents survey samples would be taken from this area.

## Results and Discussions:

### Characteristics of Vending:

The Activity of Vending in the Ward was studied based on the following characteristics

1. Typology of Vendors
2. Distribution of Vendors
3. Location of Vendor within the street space

### **1. Typology of Vending:**

The literature shows that over a period, the Street vendors and their activity has been classified based on various criteria. The vendors can be classified based on Commodity Sold - (1) unprocessed and semi-processed food, (2) prepared food, (3) Non-foods, and (4) services (T. G. McGee, 1977). The prepared food category is divided into two subgroups, i.e. prepared food to eat in the place and ready meals to take home. (Murtanti Jani Rahayua, Nov 2015). The Street vendors act 2014, Government of India classifies the vendor into two categories based on the location in which they carry out the activity: 1.) Stationary Vendor - street vendors who carry out vending activities regularly at a specific location; 2.) Mobile vendor - street vendors who carry out vending activities by moving on different spots within a designated area.

After field mapping in Pune city and to suit the purpose of this study, the typology has been established based on types of display used for the vending activity – (Hand cart, cycle, Tables, on ground display, etc.) as well as the commodity sold - Raw food (Fruits, vegetable, nuts, etc.), Non-Food (Clothes, toys, household equipment, books, jewelry, etc.), Services (Barbershop, tire repairs, tailor, printers and copiers, key maker, etc.). Both these parameters influence the space utilized by the vendors. Hence the typology of the vendors observed in the study can be best depicted in the form of a matrix considering the commodity sold and the type of display (Fig 5). Some of the typologies in the matrix were not observed in the study. For example: for providing services like repairs or for a barber, a certain amount of space is required. Hence a single standing vendor, providing these services is not observed. Similarly, vendors selling prepared food that is displayed on the ground have also not been observed.

Type of Display	Standing Vendor	Handcart	Cycle	Stalls	On ground display
Type of Commodity					
<b>Raw food</b> Fruits, Vegetable, Fish, nuts					
<b>Non food :</b> Clothes, toys, books, jewellery					
<b>Services :</b> Barber shop, tire repairs, tailor, key maker	NA		NA		
<b>Prepared Food:</b> Street food vendors					NA

Fig 5: Matrix of Classification of Vendors

## 2. Distribution of Vendors across typologies

Out of the total vendors observed, the number of vendors for different categories was as shown in (Table 2). The most seen typology is ‘On-road type display’ selling fruits and vegetables. Thus, this gives an idea of space approximation. The maximum commodity sold by vendors is raw foods, 44.02%. Also, on ground display is used by a maximum number of vendors for their activity. The vendors use Mats, boxes spread out on the ground on which the goods are displayed.

Table 2: Distribution of vendors according to typology Matrix

	Distribution of types of vendors				Total % as per display space
	Raw Food	Non-Food	Services	Prepared food	
<b>Standing Vendor</b>	NA	5%	NA	NA	5%
<b>Handcart</b>	7%	2.50%	NA	6.26%	16%
<b>Cycle</b>	4%	NA	NA	NA	4%
<b>Stalls</b>	6.80%	2%	2.50%	6.70%	18%
<b>On ground Display</b>	16.80%	16%	1.20%	NA	34%
<b>Table Display</b>	9.18%	8.16%	NA	5.66%	23%
<b>Total % as per commodity</b>	44.02%	33.66%	3.70%	18.62%	

### 3. Location of Vendors within the Street space

The space on the street can be divided into 4 major parts: 1. Footpaths, 2. Carriageway, 3. On-street parking area, 4. Setbacks of private buildings. The setbacks of the building come under the status of private space, whereas the footpath, parking space, and the carriageway are public spaces.

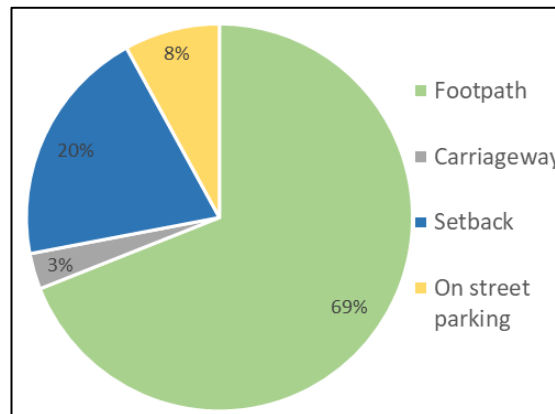


Fig 6: Street vendor location within Street space

From the average space requirement, type, and the number of vendors it is estimated that 12-15% of the available footpath area is occupied by street vendors. At certain points, where street vendor density, people were forced to resort to jaywalking.

#### Sample Size

A full factorial design (fully crossed design) power curve was used to identify the optimum sample size. This facilitated the study in which the effect of each factor on the response variable, as well as the effects of interactions between factors on the response variable.

Four factors with a different number of levels (Vendor count - 7, gender - 2, age - 3, socioeconomic - 3), each with 10 replicates. This seems to give higher power for detecting even smaller differences of size 0.5.

For each combination 10 values. So, total 60 for each hotspot, 60X 7 hotspots = 420 samples

To represent the entire target population by the respondents, all categories must have a

minimum of 10 samples (Kirk, 2007). Hence all study areas put together, there should be a minimum of 10 samples of each independent variable mentioned above. Hence a minimum quota of 10 will be set for all independent variables (clusters). Within the cluster, random probability sampling will be done.

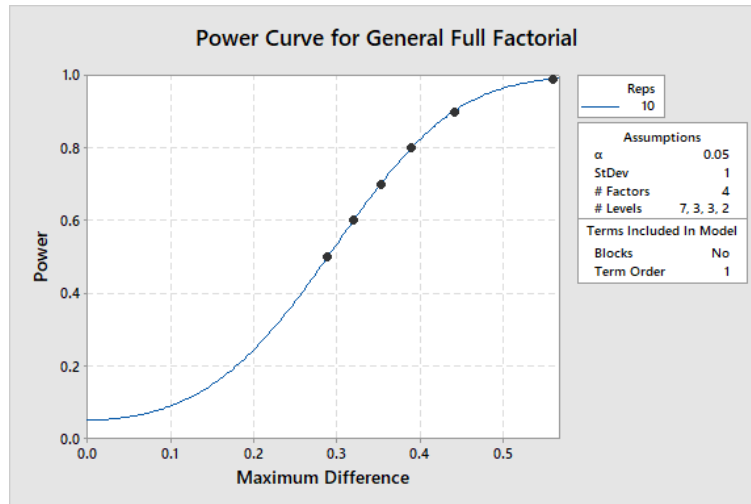


Fig 7: Power Curve for Full Factorial Model

## Residents Opinion Survey – Methodology

5 point Bipolar Likert scale has been used to understand the opinions of residents. The questionnaires were designed based on – This survey was based on the System Usability Scale (SUS) that has items that alternate between positive and negative wording. In fact, of the most frequently used questionnaires to measure attitudes about usability all but one uses a mix of positive and negative items (J Krosnick, 2009)

Advantages of alternating the wording are,

1. Reducing Acquiescent Bias: Participants may go on autopilot and agree to all statements. There is a possibility that on a 5-pointer scale, most responses would be 4 or 5.
2. Reducing Extreme Response Bias: This is similar to the acquiescent bias except that few participants pick the most extreme rating without thorough thought.

Through this, the study expects that the participants would think over the statement and provide a more meaningful response.



### Effect on Livability due to the presence of vendors

By analyzing the responses from 7 different study areas the following average scores are obtained.

Considering that all the factors of Livability are affected positively by the presence of street vendors, the highest score possible is 38 variables  $\times$  5 = 190. This table shows the averages of the total score for each location.

Table 3: Vendor numbers and livability scores in study areas

Area code	Name of study Location	Number of vendors present	Average Scores
1	Kothrud-Karve Road	143	94.80
4	Bibwewadi	328	100.92
7	Sinhagad Road	489	102.28
6	Near FC road	558	100.44
5	Hadapsar	693	94.52
3	Vishrantwadi Chowk	758	92.31
2	Mandai- Shanipar	1244	98.48

The effect of vendors on livability leans more towards the positive impact and contribution. The scores indicate that people perceive the positive effects of street vendors if the number of street vendors in the area is limited. As soon as the number of vendors in the walking radius increases beyond 500 street vendors, the livability scores reduce. This means that the negative effects of street vending start showing when the number of vendors goes beyond 500.

However, Area 2 being from the core of Pune City, stands out as an exception. The reason could be accounted to the fact that the residents of that area were used to the presence of vendors so much that more than inserts the vendors have become an integral part of that area. The presence of a vegetable market in this area is there since colonial times and the residents see the vendors as an extension to this market and not as encroachments. The graph below

further highlights this analysis.

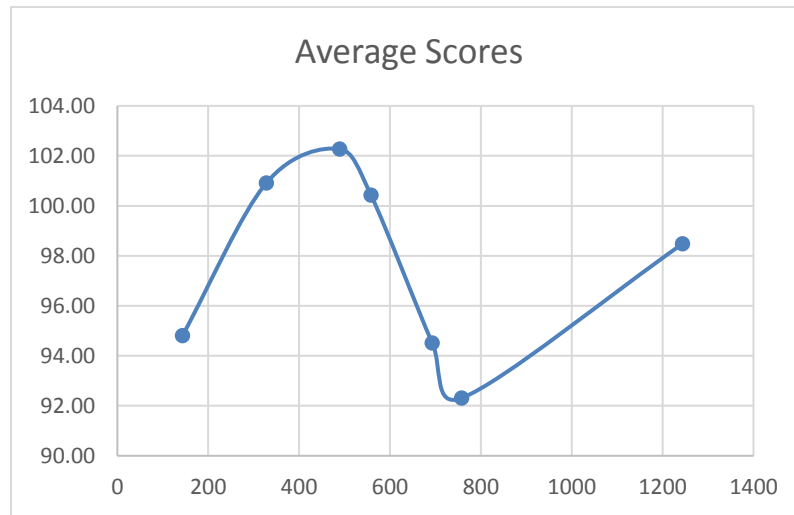


Fig 8: Average livability scores and number of vendors for each area

The mode was taken from all the responses to understand whether the said indicator is positively or negatively affected by Street Vending. Out of 38 indicators, 14 indicators are positively affected by vendor presence, whereas 19 indicators of livability are negatively affected. Most indicators of livability were said to be positively affected by the presence of vendors. Especially the contribution of vendors to improving the perception of security, managing expenditure at the household level, contribution to the local economy as well as improving social interactions. Parameters affected negatively by the vendors are the Physical infrastructure of the area (road and transportation) as well as the utility of this infrastructure.

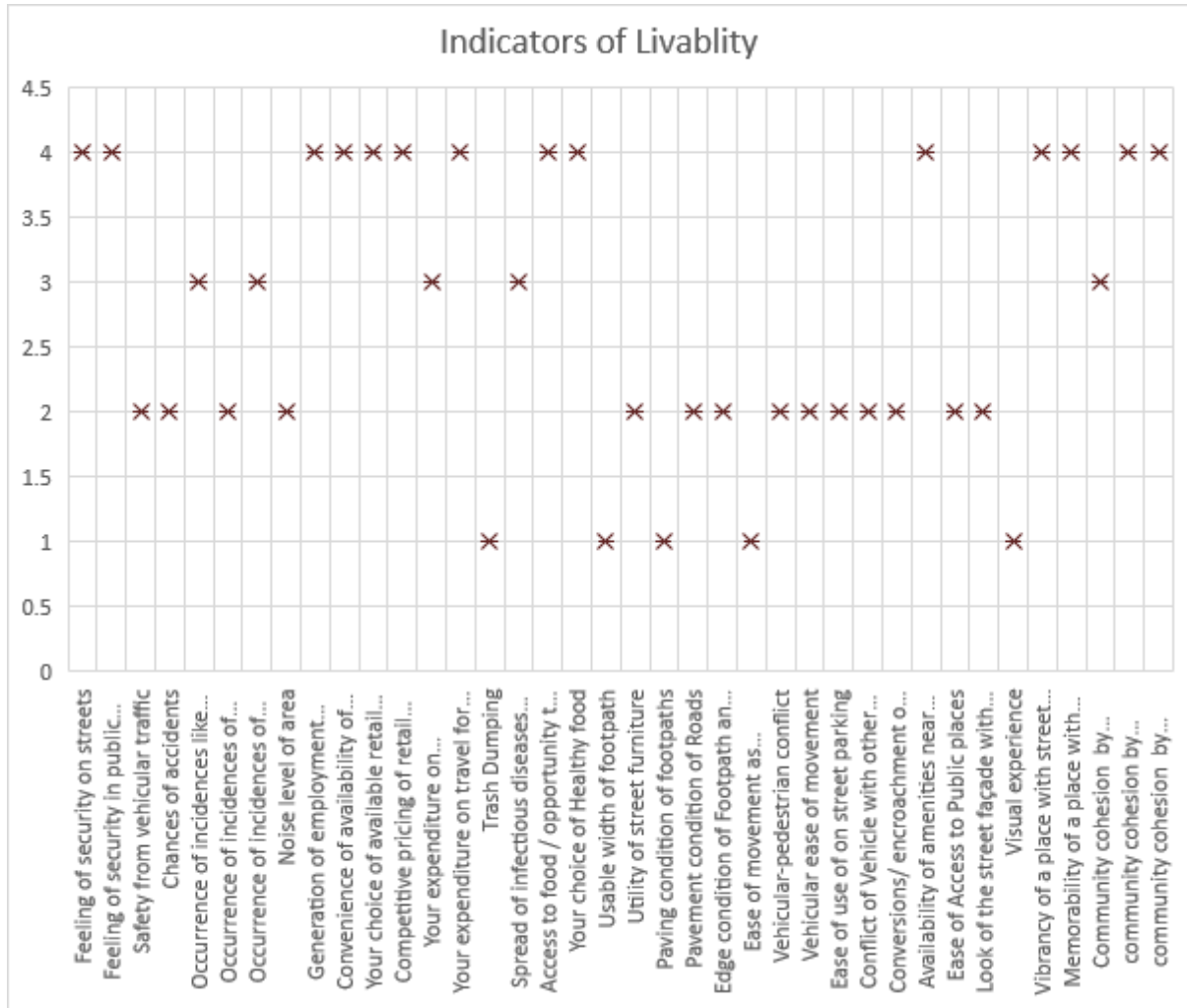


Fig 9: Mode of scores for each indicator of livability

### Conclusion and Further Scope:

This study was conducted with the main research objective to find out how livability of residents of an area is affected by the presence of street vendors. In the context of Pune city, it was found that the Street vendors subsequently affect the livability of the residents, and this effect can be related to the number of street vendors. It identifies the indicators of livability that are most likely to get affected by the presence of vendors.

The effects of the presence of street vendors in an area may be positive as well as negative, depending on the indicator.

The study can be used for framing guidelines regarding the number of street vendors that should be allowed in an area such that the negative effects of street vending on traffic and Road infrastructure are minimized.

The results of this study are significant in the field of urban planning especially in cities of developing nations where street vending is an activity that needs to be integrated into the physical planning of the city.

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Inclusive

## Understanding Secularism in India

Paromita Sarkar

### Abstract

*The framers of the Indian Constitution wanted to guarantee rights to its citizens and also establish a democratic state. It was a challenging task for the framers to balance these two resolutions, especially with regard to religion. Secularism in India assumed a distinctive character, which meant non establishment of religion but without the strict separation of religion and the state. Some of the political scientists are of the view that India was never meant to be secular, whereas others have accepted the distinctive character of Indian secularism in order to accomplish the constitutional goals. In this article I would try to understand secularism in India from various perspectives.*

Secularism is one of the most debatable issues in contemporary Indian politics. After independence India adopted a secular constitution, because the framers of the constitution felt that it was the only viable option for them in the context of politicization and polarization of religious identities. They believed that the establishment of a secular state was the only possible way of preserving national unity and geographical integrity of India. The India society which has deep religious diversity, as a part of its socio and cultural landscape, with time India has developed its own form of secularism which is different from the western concept of secularism. In India secularism has to coexist with politized religion and it has been institutionalized in the context of polarization of religious identities.

The word 'secularization' was first used in 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years' War in Europe, to refer to the transfer of church properties to the exclusive control of the princes. George Jacob Halyoake coined the word 'secularism' in 1852 to refer to the rationalist movement of protest led by him, in England. He advocated a form of secularism that could accommodate religion and bring about the highest development of the physical, moral and intellectual capabilities of man. With enlightenment Europe brought about the separation of the political sphere from the religious sphere. The underlying assumption of this concept is that religion and state function or politics is two different realms of human activity. The state should not promote, control or interfere in religion. Religion on the other hand should not seek political power. It is often felt that for the sake of democracy, there should not be concentration of power in any one institution. If people influential in religious affairs start exercising political power that would lead to undermining of democratic values.

India is a country of religious diversity, in order to curb inter-religious conflicts the state needed a set of intellectual ideas. But the state also had to bring about transformations in the communities in order to ensure equality and justice for all its citizens. When ideas are transplanted from one cultural context to another it often becomes unidentifiable as it adapts itself, the same thing happened with secularism in India. So secularism in India had to be different from the west centric model because India cannot follow a strict separation between religious and political institutions. When India came under the communal rule the society got introduced to new ideas like equality, rights and dignity of person. So the happy coexistence of numerous communities, each living with minimal interactions, though cordial understandings, could no more be taken for granted, as was the case in earlier times. Various communities tried to have a share in power and a new type of competition emerged. As tolerance and mutual perseverance between communities lessened, the need arose for a secular doctrine of governance. So Javeed Alaam has argued that the principle, “secularism” is an internally propelled emergence and thus becomes a *presence* irrespective of our choice. (Javeed 2007)

### **Nehru and Gandhi on Secularism**

Jawaharlal Nehru the first Indian Prime Minister who is universally looked upon as the apostle of modern Indian secularism wished to keep religion away from both the public and the private sphere. He preferred the notion of secularism of *dharma nirapekshata* or that the state would not be moved by religious considerations in enacting policy. It actually means religious coexistence or inter religious tolerance. Arun K. Patnaik calls, Jawaharlal Nehru’s definition of secularism a classic case of non-sectarian positive secularism or atheistic secularism. Non-sectarian positive secularism may include negative secularism or atheistic secularism. (Patnaik 2011) Nehru believed that communalism will die its own natural death when scientific and technological education is imparted and scientific temper cultivated. Nehru defined Indian secularism in his speech at Oxford in mid 1950s as the state giving equal protection to all religions while keeping equal distance from all religions. But its true that Nehruvian insistence on a separation of religion from politics is not feasible in a country with a unique colonial and post colonial history of communal relationships that India has witnessed. It is an imposition in the sense that it assumed that secularism stood outside the substantive arena of political commitments especially to people who never wished to separate religion from politics in their everyday life. Way back in 1936 he observed that ‘the communal problem is not a religious problem, it has nothing to do with religion’ and further that ‘it was not religious differences as such but its exploitation by calculating politicians for the achievement of secular ends which had produced the communal divides. (Nehru 1982) Mahatma Gandhi on the other hand claimed that those who thought that religion and politics could be kept separate, understood neither religion nor politics. Gandhi’s notion of *sarva dharma sambhava* was not only a pragmatic principle designed to bring people together, it was also a normative principle that recognized the value of religion in people’s lives. He derived his religious tolerance from

Hinduism, not from secular politics. Gandhi's understanding of religion challenges the concept of "public" and "private" as understood in western discourses of secularism. He insisted that politics must be infused with religion or spirituality but the state should never interfere with matters of religion.

### **The Anti-Secularists**

AshisNandy has called himself an anti-secularist.(Ashish 2002) According to Nandy the idea of secularism that has gained popularity among the middle-class cultures and state actors of South Asia is an import from 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. According to this idea secularism has little to say about cultures and it is differentially ethnophobic and frequently ethnocidal. To such secularists religion is an ideology in opposition to the ideology of modern statecraft and therefore needs to be contained. It is often argued that the Western concept of state and civil society is intrinsically out of place in India where primordial loyalties, reinforced by the colonial experience of well over two centuries and the bitter legacy of Partition in August 1947, exercise a pervasive influence in the public and private domain, and where religion is not just recognized as a mediating force in political and social affairs but legitimized through private state intervention. Nehruvian secularism is an alien imposition upon people who never wished to separate religion from politics in their everyday life and thinking. That is why the secularizing forces associated with literacy, urban growth and industrial expansion are said to have only touched the fringes of urban life.(Nandy, A Critique of Modernist Secularism 1999)Nandy believes that since religious identities constitute an endearing feature of humanity they must inevitably make their appearance in the public sphere. This is made possible through the democratization of the polity. The problem is that religious identities, which are unwanted by formal politics, make their appearance either in the form of religious instrumentalism, or religious fundamentalism. Nandy has talked about the self - avowed "genuine secularists" – political actors and ideologues who have an instrumental concept of secularism. They see secularism partly as a means of mounting an attack on the traditional secularists and partly as a justification for majoritarian politics. These are the people who often use, participate in, or provoke communal frenzy, not on grounds of faith but on secular, political cost calculations. They use religion rationally, dispassionately, and instrumentally, untouched by any theory of transcendence.(Nandy 1997)Whereas the negativities of religion have found political expression, the strengths of religion are not available for checking corruption and violence in public life. Most secular models heavily depend on the analysis of ideology to identify the sources of ethnic violence and fight them. Many influential explanations of communal riots in India stress communal ideology, believing that

communalism as an ideology is the ultimate source of all communal riots. Communal violence has turned into another form of organized politics. Communal violence are organized by groups keen to encash the political results of such violence. These groups are not necessarily communal. Often these professionals, though belonging to antagonistic religious or ethnic communities, maintain excellent personal, social, and political relationships with each other. Asghar Ali Engineer says, ‘the politicians are the principal and anti-social elements, at their beck and call, the subsidiary agents in promoting and inciting communal violence’.(Ali 1985)

Nandy believes that as an alternative to secular public spaces we need to recover the tradition of tolerance which already exists in faiths. Religious communities in traditional societies have known how to live with one another. Faith, writes Nandy, ‘is more lived out than articulated and tolerance or forgiveness is given expression in the actualities of living, not in ideological or even theological propositions. Traditional ways of life have, over centuries, developed internal principles of tolerance and these principles must have a play in contemporary politics.(Nandy 1999) For example, when the modern Indians project the ideology of secularism into the past, to say that Emperor Ashoka was secular, they ignore that Ashoka was not exactly a secular ruler. He based his tolerance on Buddhism, not on secularism. In short, Nandy who is a critic of modernity prefer to apply universalistic and transhistorical categories to attack the Western, rootless, and alien concept of secularism that has been accepted in the state practices in India.

T. N Madan is often regarded as anti-secularist alongside Nandy. Yet there are major differences between Nandy and Madan’s position. Madan has not altogether dismissed secularism. What he has done was caution against the ‘easy confidence of secularists regarding the unproblematic adoption of secularism.(Madan 1987) According to him in South Asia religion establishes the place of individuals in society, because it gives meaning to their lives. It is both moral arrogance and political folly to impose the ideology of secularism on believers. He suggests that traditions of religious pluralism can help us foster inter-religious harmony just as Gandhi used the resources of religious tolerance to promote inter-religious understanding. It also implies placing spiritually justified limitations on religious institutions and symbols in certain areas of collective life.

The communal resurgence in the 1980s and 1990s has been the controversy surrounding the Babri Masjid in the Hindu pilgrimage city of Ayodhya. The controversy has acquired a broad significance for the two religious communities in India, leading to attempts on part of both Muslim and Hindu politicians to redefine the status and boundaries of the two communities and their relationship with each other. It has involved the self conscious and deliberate resurrection by national political leaders of a long dormant local dispute and its transformation into a vital issue affecting the faiths and requiring the solidarity of the two communities. As a remedy to communal problems both Nandy and Madan has given importance to the idea of tolerance. It

important to discover and strengthen the internal sources of religious pluralism and tolerance. Each riot produces instances of bravery shown by persons who protect their neighbors at immense risk to their own lives and that of their family. Nandy feels that resistance is stronger where communities have not splintered into atomized individuals.(Nandy 1997) Madan has suggested that the state practices of secularism have to be based on the recognition of religious practices.

### **The other views**

Achin Vinayak feels that traditional beliefs and practices are responsible for undermining the secular state, because they have blocked the project rationalizing and democratization of society. Far from endorsing religious beliefs, Vanaik argues that the root cause of religious communalism is religion itself. The struggle against religion should not be limited to setting up a state equally tolerant of all religions, but extend to the secularization and diminution of religion in civil society. Secularism in India must mean three things: the right to freedom of worship, the primacy of citizenship, and the non-affiliation of the state to any religion and impartiality.(Vinaik 1997)

Akeel Bilgrami on the other hand not only recognizes the political presence of religious communities in India, but also feels that these communities had a larger role to play in designing the secular principle. According to him when the Indian state adopted the doctrine of secularism it was not an outcome of a negotiation between different communities. Nehru failed to provide for a creative dialogue between communities. The Congress under Nehru refused to let a secular policy emerge through negotiation. The ground for this denial according to Bilgrami was simply that as a secular party they could not accept that they did not represent all the communities in India. So secularism never got a chance to emerge out of a creative dialogue between these different communities. So he feels that it is the Archimedeanism of doctrine, and not the statist imposition, that is the deepest flaw in Nehru's vision and has nothing essentially to do with modernity.(Bilgrami 1999) If secularism emerged out of a debate and the understanding of different communities, it would have proved more compelling, and all social groups would have been enthused to subscribe to the notion of secularism.

## **Secularism and Minority Rights**

### **The Idea of Tolerance**

Writing against the background of the demolition of the Babri mosque and the subsequent communal riots in 1994, Partha Chatterjee has questioned the idea of secularism in India. As an important principle of secularism separation of state and religion has been recognized in the Constitution of India, which declares

that there shall be no official state religion, no religious instruction in state schools, and no taxes to support any particular religion. But in a number of instances the state has become entangled in the affairs of religion in numerous ways. So the 'wall of separation' doctrine of US constitutional law can hardly be applied to the Indian scenario. Cultural and historical realities of the Indian situation call for a different relationship between state and civil society. As a solution to this problem Chatterjee has made use of Foucault's idea of governmentality. According to Foucault's governmentality cutting across the liberal divide between state and civil society there is a very specific form of power that entrenches itself in modern society, having as its goal the well-being of a population. Thus if the Indian state adopts secularism as separation, then minorities cannot be protected. A better way to protect minorities, suggested by Chatterjee, is through the establishment of the norm of toleration. Toleration here would be premised on autonomy and respect for persons, but it would be sensitive to the varying political salience of the institutional contexts in which reasons are debated. (Chatterjee 1994) Chatterjee in effect moves away from the normative principles of secularism to another normative principle, that of democratic accountability within groups, in order to build in minority rights into the principle of toleration.

### **Contextual Secularism**

Rajeev Bhargava strongly supports the idea of secularism and believes that there is no alternative to secularism. According to him the doctrinal, ideological and theoretical formulations of Western secularism have become highly restricted and inadequate, as have the formal politics and laws inspired by these doctrines and ideologies. If we wish to redefine secularism we need to reduce our reliance on the French and the American models of exclusionary separation of church and state, as well as the formal, institutional political practices of most European states. He begins his argument by distinguishing between three kinds of secularism. The first kind, hyper-substantive secularism, seeks to bring about a separation between religion and state in the name of a package of ultimate substantive values, for example autonomy, development, or reason. The second kind of secularism, ultra-procedural secularism separates religion from the state in the name of purely impersonal, value free, rational procedures and rules, such as bureaucratic and technocratic rationality. The third kind, and the one preferred by Bhargava is the idea of contextual secularism. Contextual secularism implies that the state must keep a principled distance from all public or private and individual-oriented or community-oriented religious institutions for the sake of the equally significant- and sometimes conflicting- values of peace, worldly goods, dignity, liberty, equality and fraternity in all of its complicated individualistic and non-individualistic versions. (Bhargava, Reimagining Secularism, Respect, Domination and Principled Distance 2013) Indian secularism, then, is an ethically sensitive, negotiated



settlement between diverse groups and divergent values. He wants to emphasize that principled distance means that religion may be included in the affairs of the state only on the ground that such inclusion promotes freedom, equality, or any other value integral to secularism and in the process reduces inter or intra-religious domination. Indian secularism is an ethically sensitive negotiated settlement between diverse groups and divergent values. The principles of secularism needs to be fixed in accordance to the conflicts and situations its facing in a society. Almost everything is a matter of situational thinking and contextual reasoning. Secularism enshrined in the Indian constitution enjoins the state to exclude religion for some purposes, for instance in the decision to exclude separate religious electorates, and to include it for others, as, for example, in accepting personal laws. If secularism is to survive as a transcultural normative perspective, it must be de-Christianised, de-Westernised, de-privatised, and de-individualised. It should be able to accommodate norms derived from civilizations other than the West only with such forms of secularism and a state nourished by them can deep diversity be managed.(Bhargava, The Promise of India's Secular Democracy 2010)

## **Conclusion**

It has to be accepted that secularism has persisted in India. The political elite and rulers have always wanted to project a secular stance but trying to establish a state with no formal role for religion in a deeply religious society is paradoxical. The Indian constitution reserves the right to selectively intervene in religious practices, the constitution also talks about giving aid to educational institutions established by religious minorities. The term secular has covered all the places along the religious/ non-religious spectrum, from being at one end severely anti-religious to being vehemently in favor of the majority religion at the other. All the different images of secularism are born of a stupendously free play on the meaning of the term secular. Though the secular state is expected to remove the suspicions of the various ethnic and religious communities over which it rules, the paranoia of fundamentalists or religious and ethnic chauvinists often finds a new basis in the actions of the state, however secular. Religious and ethnic demands in India are increasingly being made by professional politicians trying to aggregate public sentiments. Often these sentiments do not even exist, they are provoked or generated as part of electoral politics and support mobilization. Especially the atmosphere of hostility and polarization arises when religions are seen as competitors. Secularist parties have often failed to emphasize social and economic development as their political agenda, they still give importance traditional identities. The discontent with secularism in India has produced many distinct and interesting lines of argument, but they definitely do not undermine the basic case

for secularism in this country which has an integrally pluralist society. In order to truly uphold the secular nature of India it is required that law is equally applied to all. Faith should never be allowed to undermine the Constitution.

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Inclusive

## **Repercussions of Climate Change and Policies & Progress for Social Sector Development to Improve Quality of Life in India**

**Ishu Chadda and Vikram Chadha,**

### **Introduction**

The flustering race to speedy economic development has entailed serious repercussions for ecology. The greenhouse gases emitted by factories and vehicles; the toxic effluents expelled in process of industrial manufacturing and the poisonous substances seeping into the earth in the process of agricultural operations, are all contaminating ecology. The combined effect of all these has manifested in climate change which is grimly impacting the quality of human life and therefore, the quality of economic development. Floods and other natural disasters devastate the poor. Diseases spread, livelihoods and dwellings are lost; and all these hit the poor hard, and the quality of life gets a diabolic hit.

Thus, reckless development of economics has polluted air; contaminated water and filled the atmosphere with greenhouse gases, and caused ecological imbalance and thus, resulted in climate change. Economic development hinges not only on growth of income, wealth and assets; it leans more on human welfare and development. The ill effects of the pernicious climate change needs to be mitigated and public policy must progressively address itself to the sustainability of human development in the face of ecological catastrophe. Human development is connected with human welfare base of economic development that makes growth inclusive. Human development is enhanced by strengthening the social sectors and provides a basis for developing human capital in the long run which further builds human capabilities. Human development thus, is viewed as the process of broadening a person's capacities to function with the comprehensive things that a person could incorporate in his life, articulated as expanding choices in the HDRs (Sen, 1989).

Climate change means a statistically significant variation from the mean state of climate for a long time. It alters the composition of global atmosphere and therefore adversely affects health, air and water quality, food availability and production activity. As explained; climate change particularly induced by human activities, will adversely affect human development and welfare. The factors causing climate change have resulted in

pollution and toxicity in the environment; diseases and epidemics spread- a challenge for public health. Food security is under threat. It has led to insanitation, soil contamination and degradation of air, water and atmosphere. The ground water is depleting. Flooding of rivers and draughts has devastated the quality of life.

Welfare and well being; that can be measured via three different ways viz. “economic welfare, social well being and subjective well being”. Economic welfare measures and refers to monetary concept only by using GDP. The second measurement is based on socio economic and well being development. HDI is one of the most important concepts to measure socio economic wellbeing; which is used and followed globally. Later on, GDP and HDI failed to reflect the level of well being and welfare in the society. Both are not comprehensive to explain the concept of human wellbeing, welfare and quality of life. So, to overcome these, a new index by deploying unique methodology has been developed called Quality of Life Index (QLI) to give a broader picture to human welfare. To determine QLI, nine indicators were represented viz. “material wellbeing; health; political stability and security; family life; community life, climate and geography, job security, political freedom and gender equality. India yet to make any marked leaps on the quality of living index scale” (OECD, 2011).

In the light of the above, the present paper aims at analyzing India’s efforts and policies to improve the quality of human life and human welfare through exacerbating spending and adding physical infrastructure into its social sector in the face of drubbing to quality of life owing to climate change resulting from natural and human causes.

And, therefore, the paper also dwells upon the schemes, programmes, efforts and the expenditure incurred by Government of India on social sector like health, epidemic activities, clean drinking water, sanitation and rural development as a whole in an endeavour to mitigate or neutralize the deleterious effects of an adverse climate change, and to improve the levels of human welfare and development in quality of life.

### **Database, Scope and Methodology**

The study is based on secondary data. Secondary data for the present study have been taken from various reports of Planning Commission, Economic Surveys, Annual Budgets, newspapers and magazines. The study covers the period from 1991-2016.

In order to study the pattern, compound growth rates have been used. For doing so, we estimate the exponential relation:

$$Y_t = ab^t e^{ut}$$

Transforming the equation in linear form:

$$\log Y_t = \log a + t \log b + u_t$$

$\log Y_t$  = value of dependent variable, whose growth rate is to be computed.

$t$  = trend/time variable.

$u$  = stochastic disturbance term a & b are constant.

From the estimated value of regression co-efficient 'b' the compound growth rate was calculated as follows:

$$r = \text{antilog}(b-1) * 100$$

Where,

$r$  = compound growth rate

$b$  = estimated value of the ordinary least square (OLS)

To gauge the degree of variation in different variables related with social sector development over time, coefficient of variation has been computed using this form,

$$k = \sigma / \bar{X}$$

Where,

$k$  = Coefficient of Variation

$\sigma$  = Standard Deviation

$\bar{X}$  = Average

The secondary data related with financial expenditure have been deflated by using appropriate GNP deflator to arrive at real values based on 2003-04 at prices.

## Climate Change and Quality of Life

Climate change has repercussions for quality of life and human development & welfare which are the very basic of economic development. Therefore, if the developing countries want the real progress, they must create a sustainable climate and mitigate ill-effects of ecological imbalances and climate change. Climate change is the underlying driver of numerous problems which are connected directly or indirectly with human activities. Climate change will significantly impact crop yields; human health; energy supply, and hence affects the sustainable development. Without dynamic acclimatization and extenuating measures, climate change is predictable to further exaggerate the vulnerabilities, put human health and

security in danger and hinder the sustainable development. Integration of social measures into these facets is essential.

**Triggers of Climate Change:** Various natural and manmade causes of climate change are explained below:

**Natural Causes:** Among the natural causes of climate change include, continental drift, volcanic eruption, ocean currents, earth's orbital changes and solar variation. Due to natural drift in the land mass over millions of years, the present day continents have been formed, which has changed the physical features of the land mass and positions of water bodies. It also changed ocean currents and winds, all there impacted the climate.

Similarly, volcanic eruptions spew up sulphur dioxide, water vapors, ash and dust and gases into atmosphere, which affect climate. The gases and dust particles block sunrays and sulphur dioxide vapor also reflect some energy. The result is lowering temperature.

Likewise ocean currents also affect the pattern and intensity of seasons. Ocean plays an important role in determining the atmosphere, concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Besides these, earth's orbital changes bring about seasonal variations. With minuscule variations in the earth's tilt along its axis, bring about changes in intensity of summers and winters. Solar variations, though gradual, has caused changes in energy base of the climate. Since energy has contributed in global warming by releasing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, raising temperature on earth.

**Climate Change due to Human Activities:** On the others hand, human activity and manmade cause have also resulted in climate change, such as burning of fossils fuel and changes in land use including agriculture and deforestation. The industrial revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a large scale of burning fossil fuels for industrial activity including coal, natural gas, oil to run vehicles and machines. It has resulted in global warming due to emission of greenhouse gases.

Agriculture significantly affects climate changes as many greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrogen oxide are released in agricultural operations and allied activities like dairying. Fertilizers contaminate soil and emit gases. Stagnant water in paddy fields release methane. These augment toxicity in the atmosphere.

Deforestation has spoiled the eco system. Rain forests absorb carbon dioxide, and as forests are cut or burnt, the greenhouse gases accumulate in the environment causing climate



change. Deforestation is carried out to change land use for agriculture or industrialization. Thus, biomass is lost; use of cut wood for fuel emits CO<sub>2</sub>.

Industrialization pressurizes mineral resources, consumes lots of energy, emits smoke and poisonous gases, and expels effluents into waters and earth's soil. Thus, natural resources are depleted and greenhouses have altered climatic conditions.

### **Impact of Climate Change**

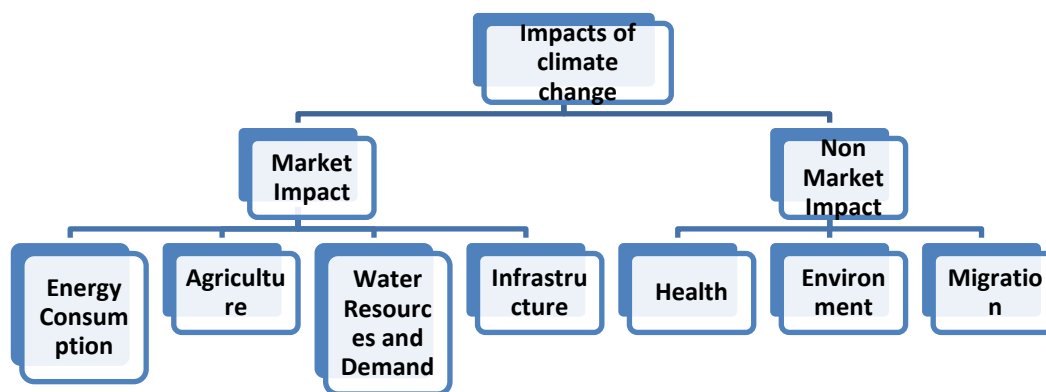
Climate Change has far reaching impact on ecosystem causing scarcities. Climate change has affected the pattern of rainfall, agricultural output, human health and energy security. Temperatures are climbing, seasons are shifting, sea level rising and human health is being adversely affected.

Climate change has manifested in rising temperature, global warming due to greenhouse gases. Rainfall pattern has changed drastically and summer seasons are highly unpredictable. This triggers frequent droughts and flooding-adversely impacting agricultural activity and hence food security.

Similarly, climate change resulted in melting glaciers and loss of snow, which in turn would reduce flows in many rivers, significantly impacting irrigation for agriculture and threatening food production. Melting of glaciers resulted in floods and rising sea levels.

The major impact of climate change is on human health that impinges upon human welfare and quality of life. Climate Change has caused spread of epidemics, diseases and premature deaths. Due to variations in weather pattern, temperature, atmospheric precipitation and worsening quality of food, soil, air and water, it is a challenge to longevity. Thus, Climate change would result in a catastrophic effect on human kind.

The results of Climate change, by classifying these outcomes, are bifurcated in two categories viz. Market Impacts and Non Market Impacts, which influence the economy at large. Market impacts influence the economy that consists of agriculture, energy consumption, water resources and infrastructure; while non market impacts are paying attention to humans and society that consider health and environment (Jamet and Morlot, 2009).



- **Energy Consumption:** An increase in temperature would raise the demand for summer air conditioning, leading to an ambiguous average effect.
- **Agriculture:** The impact would affect regions and food availability as increase in temperature along with the alterations in precipitation. It would be a challenge as the floods and droughts would affect the crop, yields and variations in the cultivated areas. Malnutrition and consequent disorders would result in stunted growth of children. Besides, humidity and climate precipitation affects bio organisms and causes spread of diseases.
- **Water Resources and Demand:** Climate change will worsen the shortages of water in many areas of the world. Not only that, the over spilled water due to floods, likely mixes up with sewage resulted in contaminated water and water borne diseases.
- **Infrastructure:** Rise in sea level could damage the infrastructure related to coast areas that further increase the explicit cost of coastal infrastructure.
- **Health:** Climate change more importantly have negative impact on health that would have increased the vector borne diseases and non vector borne diseases, spread of epidemics, containment and rise in toxins. Global Warming will breed insects and mosquitoes that would spread diseases ailment of different kinds, resulted in increased morbidity and mortality.
- **Environment:** Rapid climate change would threaten many species by impacting nutritional levels and a lopsided eco system. Deforestation and soil erosion caused floods which reduce productivity and poor quality of food. Bio diversity of the earth is shattered, impinging health and food availability.

- **Migration:** Rise in sea level could result into migration of certain population groups, leading to overcrowding; congestions and pollution, which again have repercussions for health and sanitation.

So, in nutshell, climate change due to natural and human activity has repercussions for food security; sanitation; health; public health; water availability and in fact, agriculture and rural development. All these negative impact of climate change has impinged on human development and welfare and had devastated the quality of life of Indians.

### **Programmes of Government of India to improve the Quality of Life and Welfare**

Government of India is committed to improving the quality of life to maximize welfare being a welfare state. The standard of living and quality of life will be elevated with increasing the spending on education, health, public health and Epidemic elimination, clean dwelling, access to potable water, food security, pollution control and overall rural development. The attributes of a good quality of life and human welfare become a further challenge for policy makers in the face of hostile climate change as described above. To mitigate the pernicious effects of climate change, the government has launched a number of schemes and policies, explained as follows:

- **National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP):** The main goals of the programme were to ensure coverage of all rural habitations in the remote and hard core rural areas of India with regular supply of clean and potable water.
- **National Rural Health Mission:** NRHM commenced on 12th April, 2005 throughout the country to ensure the quality health services for each and every citizen. The objectives include the pre natal and post natal services to decrease the child and maternal mortality; provide the public services for food and nutrition and sanitation.
- **Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Surksha Yojana (PMSSY):** To provide “accessible, affordable and accountable quality health services to the poorest households in the remotest rural regions”.
- **National Programmes on prevention and control of Epidemics and diseases:** These programmes were implemented to establish a fully functional; community owned and decentralized health delivery system to ensure simultaneous execution of determinants of health like water, sanitation, education, nutrition, social and gender

equality to make India disease free. It also controls and eradicates diseases and also provides preventive and curative health care system in India.

- **Immunization of Children:** The main motive behind Mission Indradhanush was to achieve the full immunization coverage for pregnant women as well as children. Mission Indradhanusha reinitiated in 2014 by retrieving the existed programme called Universal Immunization Programme (UIP). This mission focused on children up to the age of two years and pregnant mothers by identifying 201 districts across the country. This scheme was continued till August 2017 and covering more than 68 lakh pregnant women and 2.53 crore children across the country. Later on, in the month of October 2017, Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) commenced with the objective of covering those women and children who have left behind under earlier mission especially the remote areas.
- **Total Sanitation Scheme (TSC), Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA):** “TSC aimed at the targeting the people for having sanitation practices in the living and more associated areas to have safe and hygiene environment. TSC provided separate toilets for boys and girls in all the schools/anganwadis in rural areas within the country. The programme was revised in 2012 and was renamed as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan which further restructured in 2015 as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan”.
- **Paryavaran Sanrakshan Van Vridhi (Environment Protection and Afforestation):** Afforestation of Area covered under plantation and seeds plantation on public and forest lands. It includes the improvement of the water quality of rivers and also to restore and converse the polluted and degraded rivers and water bodies of country. It also focuses on reduction of environment pollution and makes the rural as well as urban areas clean. It also promotes recycling and reuse of both solid and liquid waste.
- **Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP):** DPAP was the area development programme implemented by the Central Government to handle the problems related to severe drought conditions and depletion faced by fragile regions.
- **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY):** Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana commenced by Prime Minister in 2016 with the objective of safeguarding the health of children and women. In India, many households were deprived of LPG and coal, dung cakes, firewood etc used for cooking. So, the smoke inhaled by women &

children caused the harmful respiratory disorders and diseases. This scheme targeted the below poverty line families by providing them Rs. 1600 per connection for the three years. This scheme also focused on empowerment of rural women as connections of LPG issued in the name of women. In addition to this, employment would be generated and more business opportunities would also take place in India as manufacturers of gas stoves, cylinders, gas hose and regulators would expand.

The schemes will have synergetic effect for conserving ecology as well as augmenting the quality of human life. This study attempts to analyze India's policy framework towards climate change with the objective to augment quality of human life with special emphasis on selected components of human development i.e. water supply and sanitation, public health, pollution control and rural development.

### **Physical and Financial Performance of the Government's Efforts in reducing the harmful Impact of Climate Change**

The development of human resources contributes to sustained growth and human welfare. Social sector development is the means to achieve human welfare, which includes crucial sector viz. health, family, human resources development, social justice, labour and employment, social security schemes, housing, road connectivity, water supply, sanitation, rural and urban development. So, to improve the quality of human life, government puts many efforts to dent deprivation and diseases, by providing public health facilities, more coverage of villages related to accessibility of potable drinking water, disease prevention and control, cleaning of major contaminated river, more coverage of forest and diminishing the decadal population growth rate.

The World Health Organization emphasized on the three specific dimensions of health which are, the physical, the mental, and the social. Factors which influenced health are inherited problems, environmental issues, lifestyle, adequate housing facilities, good hygiene and potable water, basic sanitation and sewerage facilities, income earned; education, availability and quality of health infrastructure (Park, 1994).

Table 1 emphasizes the progressive expansion of health services reflected in the demographic, epidemiological and infrastructural indicators over the time period of 1991 to 2015. The life expectancy which was 59.4 years has augmented to 68.3 years. The crude birth

rate has scaled down 25.9 per thousand in the 1991 to 21.6 per thousand in 2015. The crude death rate was 9.8 per thousand in 1991 declined to 7.0 per thousand in 2015. Infant mortality rate has plunged from 80 to 42 per thousand in 1991 and 2015 respectively. Mother Mortality ratio dropped from 398 in the 1991 to 216 in the year 2015 (Government of India, 2013).

Malaria has been reduced to 1.31 million cases in the year 2011 which used to cause 2.12 million cases in 1991. Leprosy has been eliminated as public health problem in 32 states and 83 per cent districts. Small pox and guinea have been eradicated, last cases occurred in the country in May 1975 and July 1996 respectively. Polio eradication is very bright in near future (Government of India, 2013). Hence, incidence of epidemics like Malaria, small pox, leprosy and polio has plummeted.

**Table 1: Physical Achievements in Welfare Indicators in India**

Indicators	1991	2001	2011	2015
<b>Health</b>				
<b>Demographic Change</b>				
Life Expectancy Rate	59.4	64.6	66.90	68.35
Crude Birth Rate	29.50	26.1	21.8	19.65
Crude Death Rate	9.80	8.4	7.1	7.30
Infant Mortality Rate	80	66	44	37.9
Mother Mortality Ratio	398	301	237	216
<b>Epidemiological Shifts</b>				
Malaria (cases in Millions)	2.12	2.02	1.31	NA
Small Pox (no. of cases)	-	-	-	-
Guinea Worm Disease (no. of cases)		Eradicated	--	-
Polio (cases in Millions)		265	NA	NA
<b>Infrastructure Development</b>				
SC/PHC/CHC (lakh)	1.54	1.65	1.77	1.93
Dispensaries and Hospitals (all) (in '000)	38.61	38.83	43.33	63.30
Beds(Private and Public) (lakh)	8.11	10.68	18.95	21.25
Nursing Personnel (lakh)	3.40	3.83	4.89	5.59
Doctors (lakh)	3.94	6.22	8.84	9.22
<b>Access to potable Water Supply</b>				
Rural (per cent)	56.3	73.9	76	91
Urban (per cent)	77.8	83.8	92	97
<b>Sanitation Facilities</b>				
Rural (per cent)	9.5	17.4	25.2	30
Urban (per cent)	45.9	60.1	63.9	70

Sources: 1. Government of India (various issues), *Annual Reports*, New Delhi: Planning Commission.

2. Government of India (2011), *Health information of India, Central Bureau of Health Intelligence*, New Delhi: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Note: NA- Not available.

The National Rural Health Mission (2005) has permeated every room & corner of the country; by expanding the health facilities and also made people aware about the benefits

distributed to them. By increasing the personnel in the public health sector and by improving health facilities, the main focus of NRHM was the shifting of current policy to removing the inequalities as it covered the inaccessible, remote areas and poorly performing districts.

The access to potable water supply and sanitation facilities in rural and urban areas of India had increased from 56.3 per cent to 91 per cent and 77.8 per cent to 97 per cent respectively over the period of 1991 to 2015. Sanitation facilities had also gone up from 9.5 per cent to 30 per cent and 45.9 per cent to 70 per cent in rural and urban areas respectively over the same period.

Table 2 explains the physical achievements in welfare indicators in India since economic reforms. Increasing 'Number of People recovered under different epidemiological diseases' and 'per cent of child immunized out of total child population' have become significant contributor to improve the quality of life. There had been eradication of the diseases like smallpox, plague, poliomyelitis, measles and diphtheria with the implementation of many government national programmes. Effective surveillance machinery established for the diseases like leprosy, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and malaria so that these become vehicle for an efficient disease surveillance system for the country in the future. Government introduced numerous health measures effectively and efficiently in the country and as a result the losses due to diseases like leprosy and polio reduced significantly however; infectious diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria prevalence are still escalating (Gupte, Ramachandran and Mutatkar, 2001).

The services of immunization, health check-up and referral services were provided through the public health infrastructure, i.e. "Health Sub-Centre, Primary Health Centre and Community Health Centre. Immunization services were delivered by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare under its Reproductive Child Health (RCH) Programme. Health services included the regular health check-ups, recording of weights, immunization, management of malnutrition, treatment of diarrhoea and distribution of simple medicines etc" (Government of India, 2011).

'Access to Potable Water'; 'Per cent of population who have availability of toilets' and 'Per cent of population served by sewage treatment' indicates the increasing trend in India since 1991 has been revealed in table 2. The table shows that 70.5 per cent of rural inhabitants and 77 per cent of urban habitants covered for the drinking water supply in India.



Indian Government has been attempting to follow the novel modern legal mechanism to ensure that every villages, towns and cities of the country must have potable water supply. The problem was insufficient water supply availability to different areas.

**Table 2: Physical Achievements in Welfare Indicators in India since Economic Reforms**

Years	Patients recovered under Epidemiological diseases out of total population (per cent)	Child immunized out of total child population (per cent)	Population access to potable water (per cent)	Population who have availability of toilets (per cent)	Population served by sewage treatment (per cent)
1991-92	12.41	75.1	72	17	61
1992-93	11.54	74.1	73	18	63
1993-94	11.05	75.1	74	19	65
1994-95	10.79	76.0	75	20	67
1995-96	10.15	78.4	76	21	68
1996-97	18.93	75.9	77	22	70
1997-98	16.75	75.5	78	23	71
1998-99	15.75	75.0	79	24	73
1999-2000	14.42	74.4	80	25	75
2000-01	14.00	72.4	82	26	77
2001-02	13.52	73.4	83	27	78
2002-03	14.17	73.1	84	28	80
2003-04	14.80	74.0	85	29	82
2004-05	15.08	74.0	86	30	83.75
2005-06	15.58	73.6	87	31	85.5
2006-07	17.75	73.5	87	32	87.1
2007-08	17.99	79.4	88	33	88.6
2008-09	18.45	76.2	89	34	89.4
2009-10	19.03	76.7	90	35	90.1
2010-11	19.80	77.1	91	36	90.9
2011-12	19.44	77.8	92	37	91.6
2012-13	19.29	74.3	93	38	92.2
2013-14	20.22	80.3	94	39	92.9
2014-15	21.68	79.7	94	40	93.7
2015-16	22.14	79.1	95	41	94.4

Sources: 1. Government of India (various issues), *Annual Reports*, New Delhi: Planning Commission.

2. Government of India (2011), *Health information of India*, Central Bureau of Health Intelligence, New Delhi: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Despite of many efforts, India still lagged behind in case of providing sanitation facility. Due to lack of basic sanitation facility, polluted water and unhealthy conditions;

about 70 per cent of India's rural and slum population are still facing the water borne and vector borne diseases. The benefits of this scheme had not been equally distributed because the benefits were enjoyed by the economically better off sections of the community (Kumar and Das, 2014).

The poor, vulnerable and destitute people had been underprivileged of their due and apposite share. The main constraint seemed to be the inconvenient locations of government for public supply junctions as people belong to tribal and desert areas were not able to use such sources. This is because of lack of community support, participation and contribution in implementation and operation as well as maintenance of the programme concerned.

Allocation and outlays of Central and State governments on health and water supply and sanitation have shown the rising trend in recent years reflecting the higher priority given to these indicators of human development in Table 3. Medical & Public Health has increased from Rs. 2.6 thousand crore in the year 1991-92 to Rs. 26 thousand crore at an average growth of 10.18 per cent respectively in the year 2015-16 for the approved share. The actual outlays for the same also reveals the increased marginally with Rs. 14 thousand crore at an average growth of 10.21 per cent during the same period. It was that observed the negligible upward trend in health expenditure from 0.8 per cent GDP in 1980-81 to 0.92 per cent in 1989-90 which further reduced to 0.76 per cent in 1997-98. There is a sudden need to raise health sector spending, as it was quite low. The National Health Policy (2002) and Common Minimum Programme (CMP) had stressed the need for achieving the acceptable level of good health amongst the population of country. Public expenditure on health should be increased to at least 2-3 per cent of GDP (Chopra, 2008).

The ratio of allocations and outlays for water supply & sanitation to the total allocation and total expenditure have shown the increasing trend from the year 1991 to the year 2000 that is 3.5 per cent to 4.0 per cent for both and afterwards the decreasing trend have been observed from 2001 to 2013 of nearly 1 per cent in both while amount invested in this component has indicated the rising trend of Rs. 10 thousand crore approximately over the period of 1991-92 to 2015-16 at an average growth rate of 6.5 per cent.

Rural Development has also highlighted the rising trend of allotted amount and of expended money over the period of 1991-92 to 2015-16. The amount which is allocated and used for the development of rural sector is Rs 9 thousand crore approximately of each which

has spiralled up to Rs. 43 thousand crore and Rs. 63 thousand crore respectively. The percentage of rural development allocation and expenditure on total expenditure out of total central government expenditure is indicating that there is increasing trend but at marginal pace from 6.14 per cent in the year 1991-92 to 7.00 per cent in the year 2015-16 for allocation while giving the increasing trend for the outlays from 6.40 per cent in the year 1991-92 to 11.35 per cent in the year 2007-08 and which further declined to 8.30 in the year 2015-16 during the period of 25 years since economic reforms.

Since 1950, Government introduced several new schemes and programmes for rural development yet it did not attain the expected outcomes i.e. to provide better quality of life. Many rural development projects and programmes failed because of sluggish implementation of the planning. The main reasons were lack of micro level planning, absence of appropriate rural development policy, lack of coordination by the agencies and less people participation that did not yield the desired results. Proper planning along with coordinated efforts from people and agencies would give the new phase to rural development (Patel, 2010).

Among these welfare heads, the expenditure incurred on 'Medical and Public Health' grew fastest followed by expenditure on 'Rural development' and 'Water Supply & Sanitation'. Any improvement in these human development indicators is a vital component in the development and human well being. The coefficient of variation is found to be highest in 'Medical and Public Health' grew fastest, followed by expenditure on 'Rural Development' and 'Water Supply & Sanitation'.

The underlying argument is that people must be the important point of a fruitful change, to a universe of broad and adjusted worldwide decreases in outflows and improved flexibility, with explicit regard for the most helpless gatherings, and their job in creating arrangements and expanding versatility. The objectives of this progress must incorporate satisfaction of fundamental needs, happiness regarding human rights, wellbeing, value, social security, conventional work, equivalent support and great administration (UNFCCC, 2011). In other words, the menace of climate change can be negotiated by investing in social sector that would jack up quality of human life.

**Table 3: Allocations and Actual Outlays on some areas of Human Development**

Years	Medical & Public Health		Water Supply & Sanitation		Rural Development	
	Outlays	Actual Exp	Outlays	Actual Exp	Outlays	Actual Exp
1991-92	2651.22 (1.6)	2168.24 (1.4)	5623.04 (3.5)	5423.05 (3.5)	9934.66 (6.14)	10262.25 (6.40)
1992-93	2623.65 (1.6)	2495.47 (1.7)	4511.25 (2.7)	5696.00 (3.1)	10298.90 (6.20)	10466.19 (6.99)
1993-94	3031.75 (1.6)	2630.29 (1.5)	5503.93 (2.9)	6082.73 (3.1)	11564.25 (6.18)	13144.88 (7.99)
1994-95	3095.06 (1.6)	2866.41 (1.7)	6105.61 (3.2)	6546.13 (3.3)	14678.86 (7.69)	14831.56 (8.88)
1995-96	3382.54 (1.7)	4002.61 (1.8)	6729.94 (3.4)	6874.20 (3.5)	15600.21 (7.79)	15513.68 (9.28)
1996-97	4174.93 (2.0)	4440.88 (1.9)	7270.57 (3.4)	7734.38 (3.8)	15932.07 (7.56)	18602.18 (8.45)
1997-98	4395.86 (2.1)	4960.39 (2.1)	8068.96 (3.8)	8557.99 (4.1)	15113.68 (7.16)	23730.54 (7.81)
1998-99	4736.92 (2.0)	5784.24 (3.6)	8728.76 (3.7)	9305.74 (5.2)	14181.33 (6.09)	26534.20 (7.25)
1999-2000	5265.44 (2.3)	6335.19 (2.2)	9129.81 (3.9)	10637.46 (4.4)	14610.44 (6.26)	282003.39 (7.02)
2000-01	5932.10 (2.5)	6675.62 (2.1)	9536.89 (4.0)	10675.89 (4.0)	15508.18 (6.49)	29679.14 (6.30)
2001-02	6365.79 (2.4)	7018.94 (2.4)	9454.06 (3.6)	11993.11 (3.5)	15305.96 (5.87)	32305.74 (7.64)
2002-03	5629.45 (2.1)	7215.94 (2.1)	9998.00 (3.7)	12250.31 (3.8)	16976.95 (6.36)	34005.67 (9.40)
2003-04	6448.56 (2.4)	7916.06 (2.1)	10523.10 (3.9)	12794.38 (4.0)	16798.54 (6.20)	373222.42 (9.22)
2004-05	6048.02 (2.1)	8282.60 (2.3)	10838.66 (3.8)	13157.80 (3.7)	17634.16 (6.13)	18584.55 (7.05)
2005-06	8740.92 (2.5)	7921.84(3.3)	11847.27 (3.4)	12098.25 (5.1)	22961.66 (6.62)	24997.93 (10.54)
2006-07	10423.99(2.6)	9314.58(3.3)	13169.09 (3.3)	13940.55 (5.0)	27692.98 (6.96)	30227.01 (10.82)
2007-08	10934.06(2.3)	10548.40(3.4)	14224.94 (3.0)	15572.50 (5.1)	26732.44 (5.63)	34859.7 (11.35)
2008-09	12780.95(2.4)	11839.60(2.4)	15873.97 (3.0)	17133.30 (3.5)	29016.99 (5.41)	40297.45 (8.18)
2009-10	12516.82(2.1)	13227.59(2.5)	16346.30 (2.8)	17463.84 (3.3)	28395.80 (4.83)	43334.69 (8.17)
2010-11	14264.15(2.3)	14991.20(2.7)	16552.62 (2.6)	17000.32 (3.0)	29938.41 (4.74)	45474.51 (8.11)
2011-12	18763.53(2.6)	15816.11(2.7)	18406.10 (2.7)	17324.41 (2.6)	37265.21 (5.00)	48251.23 (7.20)
2012-13	20736.29(2.8)	16005.31(3.3)	19291.09 (2.6)	16046.60 (2.5)	32206.31 (5.76)	44741.35 (7.4)
2013-14	21953.91(3.1)	18430.24 (3.5)	19785.0 (2.6)	16390.12 (2.8)	36306.74 (5.58)	52133.34(7.90)
2014-15	23644.46 (3.5)	20263.85 (3.7)	21550.21 (2.8)	17846.60 (3.0)	39125.10 (6.80)	57884.8 (8.10)
2015-16	26752.0 (3.9)	22681.14 (4.0)	22598.53 (2.9)	19018.98 (3.1)	43219.23(7.00)	63316.9 (8.30)
<b>CAGR</b>	10.18	10.21	6.55	6.81	7.36	7.76
<b>CV</b>	66.12	65.59	40.49	43.56	47.65	53.31

Sources: 1. Government of India (various issues), *Annual Reports*, New Delhi: Planning Commission.

2. Government of India (various issues), *Economic Survey*, New Delhi: Ministry of Finance.

3. Government of India (various issues), *Outlays Budget (Vol. 1)*, New Delhi: Ministry of Finance.

## V

### **Conclusion and Policy Implications**

In the reckless surge for achieving rapid development, we ought to have focused on ecological balance and pollution control in atmosphere, air and water. The major causes of climate change are land use change, deforestation, greenhouse gas emission, air pollution, toxic pollutants, agriculture intensification, over transportation, urbanization and over population. Climate change alteration adversely affects health, air and water quality, food availability and production activity. In other words, climate change has repercussions for quality of life and human development & welfare which are the very basic of economic development.

The main objective of the present paper is to highlight the programmes, policies and efforts of Government of India in improving quality of life and human welfare by spending on social sector like health, epidemic activities, clean drinking water, sanitation and rural development as a whole. All these means will help neutralize the deleterious effects of climate change and thus improve the quality of life and human welfare of the people.

Climate Change has severely impacted eco system, causing change in rainfall pattern; agricultural production and food security, human health and energy security. Temperatures are rising due to global warming; seasons and rainfall have become unpredictable, causing floods or draughts erratically – challenging food security and spread of epidemics. All these impacts of climate change have reduced longevity, food security, health, sanitation, air pollution; bio diversity is shattered; livelihood sources are lost and poverty increases.

Deteriorating quality of life on account of degradation of climate can be tackled by improving various facets of human welfare and development including health, family, social justice, labour and employment, social security, connecting roads, water supply, sanitation and overall rural development. In other words, the menace of climate change can be negotiated by investing in social sector that would jack up quality of human life.

The well planned transition can be achieved in a low-cost, equitable and inclusive manner, with targeted support, to make sure that people on low incomes or experiencing disadvantage are not left worse off. India has undertaken the issue of climate change seriously, because it has started adversely affecting the quality of life and human welfare of the people, which would unfavourably impact the efficiency and productivity, health and status of people. A

large number of initiatives and schemes have been taken upfront to mitigate the effect of climate change on human development and welfare in India. In the above analysis, we found that Indian Government has been spending on various facets of human development to sustain improvement in the quality of life.

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## **Understanding the dynamic nature of urban vulnerability: Narratives emerging from slum-dwelling women in Madhya Pradesh, India**

**Sanjay Jothe**

### **1. Introduction**

With the increasing rate of urbanization, the question of migration and associated vulnerabilities is gaining more significance. In recent decades, interesting patterns are emerging in the processes of urbanization and migration in India, where the rate and direction of population movements are changing (Srivastava, 2019). The changing pattern of urbanization is, further, influencing people's understanding about the opportunities they may stand to benefit by in urban settlements, which in turn influences the pattern of migration itself. Thus, in order to understand changes in patterns of migration, it is important to analyze the rural poor's perceptions and knowledge of potential urban opportunities. These play a crucial role in the decisions they make about the possible gains and associated risks in the city. In order to understand this process of decision making, it is necessary to look into their conscious selection of slums with multiple vulnerabilities (Loughhead, Mittal, and Wood, 2000)

Migrants may see certain opportunities in the low-lying areas in cities which are prone to pluvial floods, communicable diseases, and other risks of forced evacuations and social problems (Zhou, Qu, and Zou, 2015). These areas are often chosen as easy places to occupy and to start a new life in the city, from where they can best exploit new opportunities. Other people may not see the same opportunity in these areas, rather risks and threats to their lives. The available literature defines the slum as a place with inappropriate facilities and multiple risks and threats where people are forced to live a substandard life, often leading to communicable diseases (Jones, 2015). However, the slum dwellers and rural poor have a different perception of slums, as they are able to see new opportunities for their progress and empowerment.

This difference in perception stands at the centre of the present analysis. Different actors have different calculations about what they could gain or lose in a given situation and time. Many

studies show that different people and groups exhibit different types of risk perception and susceptibility in the face of a similar threat (Ochoa and Sampalis, 2014). This applies to all socioeconomic and natural shocks in any setting. Hence, in a given society or community, certain groups are more vulnerable than others (Birkmann, 2007). For example, with reference to urban flooding, lower-income people face greater threats than their financially well-off counterparts do. Similarly, physically weak, disabled and older people prove more vulnerable than others (Whittle et al., 2012).

This paper argues that both the vulnerable population and their vulnerability are constantly subject to transformations, the complex interaction of which demands a correspondingly dynamic concept of vulnerability. In other words, the vulnerability must be seen as a process dependent on dynamic variables. A vulnerable population is not a mere victim of the situation they have some abilities that define their capabilities in a certain context (Hick, 2014). The risks and threats associated with poor urban settlements are often seen through the narrow lens of physical and environmental vulnerabilities. This approach is fragmented in many senses as it does not always pay sufficient attention to the social and human aspects of vulnerability (Cutter, 2003); it has created many analytical problems by largely ignoring the qualitative aspects of vulnerability. Following this observation, many scholars highlighted the need for a better and more inclusive approach in which social and natural factors can be seen together in the context of disaster (Ray and Shaw 2018).

## **2. Urbanization and social vulnerability:**

The world is urbanizing at unprecedented speed and the burden on its resources and potentialities is increasing. Statistics show that in 1800, only 2 per cent of the world's population lived in cities, whereas today some 54 per cent of the world's population is living in cities. The future projections further show that this proportion is going to rise to over 67 per cent by 2050 (Andrey and Jones, 2008). Since the rural poor see opportunity in certain vulnerable areas, the question of spatial concentration of people and their activities has become significant in recent years. High population density creates major social issues in urban areas (Pelling, 2003). Hence, in order to plan for better responses, both the physical and social aspects of vulnerability should be seen in the proper context. The vulnerability literature is increasingly becoming aware of factors such as

social networks and social capital and is trying to penetrate deeper into the dynamic nature of vulnerability (Cutter, Boruff, and Shirley 2003, 245).

### **3. Women as an agency in migration**

Women often migrate with their husbands who are searching for better opportunities in urban settings. The role of men is seen as pivotal in decision making related to migration, be it from rural to urban or urban to urban settings. Women are here often not seen as active agents but the field observations and recent studies show that women certainly do play an active role in decision-making. They seek opportunities for empowerment for themselves and especially for their children. Their concerns are very well articulated when it comes to discussing education and its implications for their children's future (Vaijayanti and Subramanian, 2014). Women are also increasingly becoming aware of the idea of freedom and personal space and this motivates them to practice their agency in household discussions as well. The basic driver of their will to move towards a city or town is mainly tied to two factors, first, employment for their husbands and, second, education for their children. Both these concerns are deeply rooted in the aspiration towards self-empowerment.

The question of agency is fundamentally linked to the idea of empowerment, which has been defined in many ways. In the context of urbanization and migration, empowerment can be seen as an ability to assert certain choices. The notion of having a choice and a space to enact this choice defines the extent of empowerment. According to Naila Kabeer (1999, 437), 'My understanding of the notion of empowerment is that it is inescapably bound up with the condition of disempowerment and refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such an ability. In other words, empowerment entails a process of change.' In the larger development context, the question of empowerment relates to the concept of power. Kabeer further writes:

However, to be made relevant to the analysis of power, the notion of choice has to be qualified in a number of ways. First of all, choice necessarily implies the possibility of alternatives, the ability to have chosen otherwise... The second dimension of power relates to agency - the ability to define one's goals and act upon them. Agency is about more than observable action; it also encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring to their activity, their sense of agency, or 'the power within'. While agency tends to be operationalized as 'decision-making' in the social science literature, it can take a number of other forms. (1999, 438)

This has to be seen through the lens of political sociology where power plays a vital role in defining the dynamics between different actors (Giddens and Sutton, 2014). The interplay of power and choice is crucial in understanding the role of women as an agency in decision-making because there are clear choices to be made between the steps that may lead to empowerment or disempowerment. In rural life especially considering the highly patriarchal nature of society, women are able to see the implications of their move out of the village. This moving out is a journey towards more choices and freedom for themselves and their children. Migration for them brings many benefits allowing them to mitigate the caste-based discrimination and exploitation, which are often at the centre of their concerns.

#### **4. Method and data**

The data for this paper has been collected from Bhopal and Indore city in Madhya Pradesh India. This research is a part of a doctoral thesis under the department of Habitat Studies in Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, India. The main objective of the research is to understand the nature and context of urban vulnerabilities through the day-to-day experience of the slum dwellers. This paper focuses on the qualitative data as collected through twenty focused group discussions (FGDs) in the slums of Bhopal and Indore.

#### **5. Findings and analysis**

The narratives and stories coming out of the data analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) show that the risks, opportunities, and threats to slum-dwellers are dynamic and are associated with multiple factors and dynamic ways of experiencing them in rural as well as urban areas. The socio-economic background and the kind of social networks and social capital people have in the villages show variance and the same variance is seen in their destinations in the slums as well. Not only their respective socio-economic conditions are different but also the way they interact with each other is also highly dynamic. This dynamism is further increased by some typical characteristics of Indian society like caste and varna, which influence the very idea of belonging and cooperation and hence redefines the nature and extent of social capital the poor have (Viswanath, 2014).

Further complexity is added by external forces such as market, the mechanization of farming and construction sector, and the opportunities emerging or shrinking in rural and urban areas

(Chandrasekhar and Mitra, 2018). In this constantly changing situation, the urban and rural poor heavily depend on their kin, relatives, and friends. Here, the most important factors prove to be the social networks and capital of the urban poor. Social networks (or social capital) are vital in defining the ability to face the risks by mobilizing physical and human resources (Loughhead and Mittal, 2000). This is reflected in the role and influence of social networking with their kinship and non-kinship networks and in urban and rural areas. The role of social capital and social network is also very visible in the frequency and nature of assistance and support they obtain from them (Sutherland and Burton, 2011).

To achieve a better analysis of data and proper understanding of the emerging narratives, this paper uses the following analysis plan for the qualitative data. The focused group discussions are transcribed using the *Doctool* software and were coded properly with words and sentences relevant to the major research questions of the study. For this paper, two major questions are addressed:

- a. Why do the rural poor women migrate?
- b. How do women decide to migrate?

<b>Thematic analysis plan for findings and discussion</b>	
<b>Organizing themes</b>	<b>Narratives coming from FGDs</b>
<b>1. Why do rural poor women migrate?</b>	1.1 Lack of employment opportunities
	1.2 Poverty and exploitation
	1.3 Lack of education and health facilities
	1.4 The problem of social distance
<b>2. How do they decide to migrate?</b>	2.1 Opportunities as seen in the city
	2.2 Women taking the lead

### **5.1. Why do rural poor women migrate?**

In this section, the paper discusses the first thematic question. This question is seen through some relevant problems and factors that are shared by the respondents during the data collection.

### **6.1.1 Lack of employment opportunities**

The most important factor for migration turns out to be the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas. There is no sufficient presence of the organized or unorganized sector to provide jobs. In the rural areas, there are no opportunities for construction labour, technicians, manual loading and unloading, private guards, bank employees, office boys, waiters, cooks, washer men, skilled labour, or painters. These categories of jobs are to a large extent specific to cities. Further, the service sector is also almost nonexistent in rural areas. Hence the rural poor, especially young couples with little education and very little or no landholding, want to move to cities.

As recounted by one of the respondents, Akka Chauhan:

... in the village, there is only agriculture-related work ... nothing else ... here we start with wage labour only ... then construction labour work ... then since we knew the shoemaking art, finally we started it ... gradually, as we earned and collected some money, we started our shoe shop here... earlier we lived in huts somewhere else.... then after many years we came here... bought the plot and constructed the house recently... (Indore, FGD-8, p. 2)

The rural poor are often confronted with the temporary or seasonal nature of employment in rural areas, which are largely agriculture-based. In this situation, they often get employment for three or four months; that too is not regular or certain. This situation is indicative of the overall problem associated with employment opportunities in villages; another aspect is the period of employment and nature of payment for their labour, which is comparatively very low.

### **6.1.2 Poverty and exploitation**

Poverty, humiliation, and exploitation are other important factors that are instrumental in making rural poor to think about migration. Poverty explains the nature of exploitation as they stem from the same root. The nature of exploitation is similar to its manifestation in the social and economic interaction between the property owners and the poor in villages. Often, social

structure and social distance play a crucial role in these interactions. The respondents share the level of poverty as follows:

Munni Rekwai says:

In the village there is no land, no agriculture and no water for us ... the wages are 50-100 Rs, ... if we go to work on others' land, then for the whole day the Patidar will ask you to work hard ... and we won't get more than 50 or 100 Rs. ... now for 100 Rs what you will eat and how can you educate the children?... (Bhopal, FGD – 8 p. 2)

Here, it is interesting to note that the surname 'Patidar' is used for the landowners and big farmers in the Indore region. The local people, especially Patidars of the Indore and Ujjain regions, proudly say that is another variation of 'Patel' and 'Patil' as used in Gujarat and Maharashtra respectively. This is a woman from other backward castes (OBC) caste and it follows the same kind of caste mentality against the scheduled caste (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs) in the Malwa region, which is followed against them by the Vaishya, Kshatriya, and Brahmin.

This seems a very significant point because most of the respondents belong to OBC, SC and ST categories whereas the landlords and farmers belong to high castes and different dynamics obtain between these castes. Often, the high-caste landlords exploit the lower-caste labourers by creating a nexus of high-caste people who do not increase their wages. This can be seen in the difference of landholdings among the respondents of different caste groups. Because of this unequal distribution of a vital resource for livelihood and social capital, the life of most of the rural poor is miserable (Mohanty 2016). This generates a different type of power dynamics in the villages, which is further reflected in the wages, nature and frequency of payments. In the cities, the nature of employer-employee relations and interaction changes because of the anonymity of slum dwellers and workers. Further, in cities the urban poor often has more opportunities and choices for work, their employees often pay them better and more regularly.

Ramto Bai shares:

Some (people) get work for wheat harvesting...for the whole day's work you get 5KG or 10KG wheat ... here for the same labour you get 300-400 Rs. in the city... (Bhopal FGD-1, p.1)



Another important issue is the debt; in villages, people often borrow money from the same landlords and employers. Often the *Baniya* or trader community act as major moneylenders who have their own peculiar ways of exploiting the rural poor in return for any money they have borrowed. The respondents say that the debt is often passed on to the next generation if the father has borrowed some money his son or daughters may have to pay it for many years and there is no end to it in the villages.

Jyoti Ateda comments:

It is like a tradition ... if the father has done something then the son will have to follow. If there is a debt of father, then the son has to pay for it by his labour. Even small kids need to work in this situation. (Indore, FGD – 6, p. 12)

Rural poor feel the exploitation when they are exposed to the poor working conditions in fields in the villages. Here, the social and cultural capital of different social groups and castes set the dynamics of power, which further controls the working conditions, and nature of the treatment of the wage labourers. There seems to be a set pattern of social interaction and hierarchy in most villages. This pattern is transferred to the next generation by the day-to-day interaction between the wage labourers and their employers. That is how debt can flow from one generation to the next; the borrower and moneylender's generations may change, but the nature of the relationship remains the same.

Regarding working conditions and related challenges, Hemlata Singh says:

There, you have to work in the fields, in the sun; here, we work in shade, here we work for eight hours; there in the village, if you go to Patel's house, you work from six o'clock in the morning until late in the night, around nine or ten ... (Indore FGD-6, p. 6)

The exploitation as felt and as shared by the slum dwellers is indicative of their aspirations and expectations as well. Unlike the people from the old generation, the young and middle-aged people are better articulating the nature of exploitation and struggle in the villages. People of the older generation, especially those in their late fifties or sixties, tend to express that whatever has happened to them was the way of life, and what can one do about it? However, the younger generation is not only able to criticize this situation but clearly articulate how to put things in the proper context.

### **6.1.3 Lack of education and health facilities**

The current and the future generation among most rural poor feel the importance of education and health facilities equally. Women, in particular, are more aware of the need for better education facilities, which is a positive factor noted and observed during the data collection. This is especially true for recent decades when communication between the urban and rural poor has improved (Harriss-White, 2016). The respondents often express the role of education in improving job opportunities and lifestyle. They seem to see the relationship between their generation's misery and their own poor level of education.

Reena Malviya said:

We came here for our children only; they will get a good education, they will go to schools, colleges... We are sitting in homes; at least our children will study, will get the education, and become something. (Indore FGD-4, p. 4)

Health is also emerging as an important concern for women in the villages. There are obvious reasons like issues related to their pregnancy and motherhood, which further involve their children's vaccination and nutrition. Apart from this, they are also concerned about common communicable diseases and lifestyle diseases as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, which are on the increase among the rural poor (Dorélien, Balk, and Todd, 2013). They often share the stories of persons with sugar (diabetes) and heart attack etc.

#### **6.1.4 Social discrimination and social distance**

One of the most important factors controlling social interaction is the social distance among the village poor. This was recorded as a classical characteristic of Indian society even during the British era and immediately after the independence of India. One of the studies conducted reveals that caste differences are affecting every single dimension of social and political life (Murphy, 1953). This problem was keenly observed during the data collection survey as well as in the FGDs in both the cities. The experiences shared by them tell the reality of the current practices as most of the respondents regularly visit their villages and have regular interaction with village life. It is also interesting to note that the same kind of discrimination is also found in cities. Not only the Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya practice it against the OBCs, SCs, and STs, but also surprisingly, they all practice it against the caste immediately 'below' them. In many senses, they are recreating village culture in the cities through their practice and way of life.

Munni Bai adds here:

In the village at the tea shop you can't take tea ... they will give you water from a distance ... In the villages there is a lot of discrimination based on caste ... you are from this caste and I am from that caste ... they ask you to maintain distance ... behaviour is shaped by this ... here it's not like this, for example, people live together and they are equal (Bhopal, FGD-8, p. 3 and 7)

Often the rural poor are not aware of the existence of caste-based discrimination in the same sense a slum dweller is. This is a typical case of caste blindness, where the people who live with cast discrimination internalize the practice and then it becomes an accepted norm. But the rural poor who migrate and who are able to see the urban way of life, where caste discrimination is not as acute as it is in the village, have a different way of articulating it. Caste-based discrimination is not only associated with the idea of purity and pollution but has a strong influence on people's day-to-day interaction regarding their economic, trade-related behaviour as well. Different caste groups have their preferences about who can do certain activities in their village and for what cost. This opens new doors in the lives of rural poor whose agency, choices are limited by the social structure, and they are forced to live a life confined by traditional boundaries and set norms. The following example is one of the most important statements exemplifying this tendency in Indian society.

Saloni Malviya says:

In the village what happened with me is I opened a shop and started earning something, but the influential people in the village felt jealous and they cancelled my 'below poverty line' ration card, saying that you are earning well now, so then there was no kerosene, no light in the house ... then we were in trouble ... then I decided we can't live in the village and we came here. (Indore, FGD-6, p. 8)

This is an interesting statement for yet another reason. This person is a woman from a lower caste and it was difficult for the upper-caste men to see her progress. The root of the problem in these cases is also clearly expressed by the respondents. Every lower-caste person, and especially women, are supposed to exercise their traditional occupation and should not opt for any new means of livelihood. This rule itself is the expression of the dominance of caste and masculinity principles often invoked by men against the lower-caste women. For Dalit women to live a dignified life is more challenging than others because of the caste system (Malik, 1999).

The experience shared by Saloni Malviya, who comes from the Balai caste (scheduled caste), is evident in the difference between the mean of the monthly income of different caste categories. This signifies the nature of caste and sub-caste-based social networks in their respective localities. Social networks often create and influence the nature of social capital people have in villages and cities. This social capital controls people's ability to realize their entrepreneurial capabilities and freedom (Fanning, Haase, and O'Boyle, 2010).

This is significant as there is a major change in people's perceptions and expectations. Especially in the urban settlements where they are living in close proximities and where they are dependent on each other's help, there is a certain sense of welcoming different caste people. Interestingly, when they come to this level of acceptance and liberal outlook, suddenly they are also able to comment on the brutality of caste-based discrimination in the villages. This indicates that they are learning to adapt to the new situations in cities and they are able to perform a trade-off between the security offered by old beliefs in villages and that offered by a liberal outlook in the cities.

The same respondents indicate why it is important to respect the hierarchy of social categories when they answer questions related to their sense of belonging and mutual assistance. For them, such behaviour gives a sense of security, and with this, they can expect more help from their families and relatives. They use a peculiar word to explain it, which is 'Maryada'. This term refers to the same caste-based distance glorified in the traditional way, which again says that respecting this 'distance' is something 'sacred' and should not be violated beyond a certain limit.

In recent years, this tendency has penetrated another dimension, which is discrimination based on religion. Some Muslim women in Bhopal share interesting observations and experiences concerning their struggle for livelihood in villages. One of the respondents' husbands had a chicken and meat shop in Bhopal, and some Hindu groups have pressurised him to close his shop and move away. The poor Muslim had to close his shop. This woman and her friends in the same locality relate that these days the threats against Muslims are increasing. It appears that they are gradually losing their sense of security and belonging among Hindus in villages and cities as well.

Ayesha Bi says:

They (Hindus) asked us to close down our meat shop, do not sell this meat, they say... they are banning many things now... Now your business will be finished... in villages, also they are banning this... (Bhopal, FGD-7, p. 12)

The other urban poor do not feel threatened because of their religion; they do not feel or see any such threat against themselves. Identities based on religion and ethnicities play an important role in people's sense of belonging, security, and well-being (Mohammadrezaie et al. 2011). People in urban areas often tend to form different types of associations, which further create different levels of interactions and cooperation based on religious and cultural identities. Religious social capital thus plays an important role in defining a sense of well-being and security in urban areas (Stroope, 2011). This is tremendously important for this research for it indicates that people are often blind to the threats and risks as perceived by the other castes in rural and urban contexts.

#### **6.1.5 Women's issues and adjustment in and family**

Family dynamics, especially in the villages, play a vital role in motivating migration. The patriarchal nature of the Indian family gives a lesser space to women and often creates a situation where the daughter-in-law has little or no say in the family. The nature of relations in joint families often plays an important role in defining the well being and liberty of women in these families (Allendorf, 2012). This is evident in the data collected from the respondents as Babita Chauhan comments:

I came here because of a quarrel at home. There were too many utensils to clean in the village, I said I do not feel like cleaning them... then there was a quarrel in the home, then I decided to come here to the city with my relatives. (Indore, FGD-6, p. 3).

With the increasing communication between the rural and urban families, a new trend is also emerging which is a marriage between the urban girls and rural boys. Because of increasing unemployment rates in cities, it is becoming difficult to find a suitable boy; the eligible girls have to look towards villages in search of a groom. In this situation, a new problem arises, since the girls born and raised in urban slums find it difficult to adjust in the rural environment. They cannot respect the traditional pattern of life in the villages especially with their in-laws in the initial years of their marriage. This concern is also raised by Rajkumari who says:

I was born in Indore in Palasia... after my marriage, I did not like the village, and then I said whatever it takes I would live in Indore. (Indore, FGD-2, p. 5)

## **6.2 How do women decide to migrate?**

This section of the paper deals with the second thematic question. Here the findings and discussion are based on the respondent's narratives of their decision-making process and day-to-day adaptations with the new situations.

### **6.2.1 The new opportunities as they see**

Women's decision making for any move out of the village depends on two major factors. First, are the problem and risk they see in rural life and the second is the opportunities they see in the cities. This paper wants to emphasize that the second point is more important than the first point. It is the presences of opportunities, which enable the women, compare between their achievements and their rural families achievements. However, it is not true that they are always aware of the opportunities and their implications for their family's empowerment. Observations show that they compare the risk and gain using whatever information they have about the new opportunities.

For most of the respondents, the decision to move is not sudden; they take time in discussing, as shared by Akka Chauhan:

Not suddenly,... it was gradual ... for example if someone came here in the city they shared their experience and then we learned and came here... gradually with each others' help, through each other's relatives guidance and support we came here (Indore, FGD-8, p. 4).

People often rely on the advice and suggestions from their relatives and friends, especially the rural poor have their system of gathering the information. Here this information is not the same as we see in the common development literature. What kind of information people need and how they interpret it depends on the assessment of people's current state in the village. Where the urban managers and policymakers see a risk, the rural poor see an opportunity. This is apparent in the commitment they show to assert their will to move. As Tulsi Bai mentions:

We decided that whatever we have to face... we will face ...we will do anything, any work... and we will earn and eat on our own, but we will not live here (in the village), then god helped us... (Indore, FGD-6, p. 13)

This is a strong statement saying that their decision was firm and they did whatever it took them to move out and settle in the city. They are aware of the possible hardships they may have to go through in the city but they are determined to move out. The journey after this is also interesting where they gradually learn the ways of urban life, especially making small changes in their lifestyle etc. They eventually learn from their first supporters and neighbours and they try to adapt to the new needs and demands. Most importantly, this learning is about managing their work, income and expenses in the slums. Since the main reason for them was about employment and income, they show a great deal of preparedness for learning the management of their day to day earning and expenses in slums.

Sumitra Bai shares her experience as:

Then gradually we made friends and then someone suggested you save something like this or that... Gradually then we knew some people some relations grew and we progressed slowly ...Yes... with each other's help we find the way ... for example we followed them and then someone else followed us ... thus with each other's help, we managed ... (Bhopal, FGD-7, P. 4).

The process of learning and adaptation also involves making new relationships. Since most of the people are coming from similar villages and towns, they often tend to strengthen the old relations. Women in these slums share many stories about how they started their lives and how they maintain good relations with their new neighbours. At the same time, they are equally aware of the help and support they can get from their rural families.

Even after a sad departure from the village, eventually, the urban and rural families develop a healthy relationship and they start visiting each other. The rural families try to help them with the grains and pulses they collect from villages. On the other hand, the urban poor help the rural one by providing a temporary stay where rural relatives can stay and search for opportunities for employment, education, or health. This is another interesting aspect of the urban-rural interaction, which further explains the process of day-to-day adaptation with risks and vulnerabilities in urban slums.



### 6.2.1 Women taking the lead

During the discussion with women, it appeared that their role in asserting their decisions is largely undermined. This is particularly true among the rural women coming from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and other backward classes. Not only do they have more say in their families but they also put forward a rationale for their aspiration to move out of the villages. One interesting point was noted in Indore where Babita Chauhan states here:

...Our men were not earning there, they were not doing labour work properly, and we are not living with peace and not even eating properly. Not even treating their children properly, no cloth ... In villages, sometimes children eat at aunt's house, sometimes at some uncle's house, so they (husbands) do not feel their responsibilities. (Indore, FGD-6, P.1-2).

This statement has many dimensions to reveal which are equally significant for our discussion. There is a problem associated with the self-respect of the husband, and if he is not working, then women have to work because in villages they are preferred for temporary works. In this situation, there is always a power struggle between the husband and wife, and the in-laws are always biased against the women. In many such cases, the husband starts stealing money and becomes a drunkard because he cannot afford to be dependent on his wife. The respondents in Bhopal and Indore carefully discuss this aspect of the husband's unemployment in length.

## 7. Conclusion

Despite the poor living conditions and poor facilities as recorded in several studies on slums, people tend to see a lot of hope in these settlements. The stories and narratives as shared by the urban slum-dwellers have different meanings for themselves and for their rural kins and relatives. The literature often talks about the physical and social nature of risks and vulnerabilities, but at the same time, rural poor find their own ways of calculating the risks and possible gains. This dimension is often missing in mainstream literature. Policymakers often see urban vulnerabilities through the lens of environmental determinism and often ignore the social aspects.

This paper has explored people's narratives as the expression of their felt experiences in rural and urban areas. We can see that the women in urban slums are able to see the possible gains and they are able to articulate their decisions in the proper context. Reading through these narratives,

we find that they are experiencing risks and vulnerabilities in various ways. This signifies that the vulnerability cannot be understood as a static concept. The nature of the vulnerability is dynamic and it has different implications for different people which further depend on actors own understanding of their social-economic status.

Slum-dwelling women are often more concerned about better opportunities for greater empowerment and they try to exploit the new opportunities by asserting their agency in various ways. Women's agency in rural and urban areas comes to bear in different social and economic contexts, but the underlying message and motive remain the same. In their narratives, they tend to express that the urban areas raise new hopes for them. To realise these hopes, in contrast to what they know from the villages, it is worth paying a price. Here we see that a trade-off and bargaining occur between the risks and opportunities in the slums.

The paper concludes that policymakers should be more attentive to the dynamic nature of vulnerability by focusing on the social and human aspects of life in the slums. Too much focus on the environmental factors is misleading, which has serious implications for understanding the dynamics of slum life. A better understanding of the nature of vulnerability and people's aspirations for an empowered life in the slum can help in better planning for future cities. This is necessary in our times as India is progressing towards building smart cities and the government will in coming years, be mobilizing more energy and resources to do so. In these new cities, the social aspect of life in slums cannot, and should not, be ignored.

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## Secularism in India

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### Abstract

*Secularism and its different aspects are much debated and discussed in our time and age. Though predominantly a Western theoretical construct it has a distinct Indian flavor which has seen crisis at different points in time. The first part of this article talks about the theoretical construct. The second part talks about the evolution of secularism in India with special reference to the constitutional aspect. The third part talks about the crisis of Indian secularism and fourth part talks about the way forward for Indian secularism.*

Key Words: Secularism, Indian secularism, Constitution, Constituent assembly, Supreme Court.

Secularism as a theoretical construct was developed in Western countries which espoused for a complete separation between church and the state or in other words state was not to intervene in religious affairs, and religious institution were not supposed to intervene in the affairs of the government or the state. The church had its own sphere and the state had its own sphere. Secularism came out of the conflict between the church and the state. The conflict in western world between the church and state started with the rise of Christianity. Through the ancient and middle ages the conflict continued. It was during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century out of political and social compulsion the concept of secularism aroused. The British utilitarians were the philosophically sponsors of secularism. It was George Jacob Holyoake who can be given the credit for propounding the doctrine of secularism (Holyoake 1871, 1-3).

The Western notion of secularism holds some distinct features (Chandoke 2018, 333-334) viz., that the state shall not concern itself with religious beliefs; practices, and institutions; that the state shall not be associated with a particular religion; that the state shall permit the freedom of conscience, belief and religion for its all citizens; and that the state shall not discriminate between citizen on the basis of their religious beliefs. This notion of secularism was more profound in United States of America. The Western notion of secularism has been discussed broadly in terms of some models (Bhargava, 2013, 81-84) there are three models: the French and the American. In addition, there is a third found in the rest of Western Europe. In The French model the state can intervene in the matters of religion but the religion cannot intervene in the matters of state. So this is known as one-sided exclusion. France has tried to inculcate philosophical secular outlook in schools by banning religious symbols, forbidding organised prayers. France has tried to promote secularisation by differentiation, privatisation and decline of religious beliefs and practices. This has helped in stopping religious domination in public sphere and also intra religious domination. But there is a flip side to it ,which is that the Catholic Church and its practices have been given more preference vis-à-vis other religions. The second model is known as the idealized American model which is based on complete

isolation of religion and the state. It means neither the state nor the religion can interfere in each other's sphere. It operates at three distinct level Viz., Institutional and personnel, and law and public policy. The positive side of this model is that the state does not promote any of the religion and the negative side is that the state even if it requires in public interest to intervene in the matters of religion, it cannot intervene. Bhargava points out that the French and the American version developed in the context of a single religion society and is a way to solve the problems of one religion namely Christianity. They were not designed to deal with deep religious diversity. The third type of model is found in most of the European societies which is a middle way between American and French model. It is called moderate secularism. It is less hostile towards religion and yet able to have some degree of state church separation. These States have a stable regime of individual rights including the right of religious liberty.

### **The Indian Experience of Secularism**

The Indian experience of secularism has been altogether different from that of Western notion. The Indian secularism was invented on its soil only. While discussing secularism in India it is important to take into account the views of two of our founding fathers that are Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. As far as Indian secularism is concerned, during freedom struggle, it was Mahatma Gandhi who brought the notion of '*Sarv dharma sambhav*' which means equality of religion or all religion should be treated equally. Perhaps Mahatma Gandhi knew that at the time of freedom struggle there was politicisation of religious identities by different groups. It was hard to bind people together. Gandhi knew that to fight colonial power it was important that people of all faith work hand in hand and in close cooperation. For Mahatma Gandhi, the notion of sarv dharm sambhav was not only pragmatic principal design to bring people together but it was also a normative principle that recognised value of religion in people's lives. Pandit Nehru gradually with the advancement of freedom struggles and with understanding of the Indian politics realised that sarv dharm sambhav was a great idea to bind people together. For Nehru the concept of secular state carried three meanings (1) Freedom of religion or irreligion for all, (2) The state will honour all faith equally, (3) That the state shall not be attached to one faith or religion which by that act becomes the state religion. Perhaps this understanding of Indian secularism has been a dominant notion prevalent over a period of time and this notion took distinctive shape as Indian flavour of secularism which was entirely different from the Western notion of secularism, which did not have deep religious diversity like India. In fact Supreme Court of India has also reiterated this view on various occasions. (Chandoke 2018, 335-336). Several features of Indian secularism has been identified by Bhargava(2013,85-86). The first feature is the presence of deep religious diversity which is an integral part of India's social and cultural landscape. The second feature is the commitment to multiple values, namely, liberty, equality and fraternity and which also includes peace, toleration, and mutual respect between communities. The third feature is acceptance of community-specific rights. The fourth feature is called principled distance which means though there are boundaries between religion and state but they are porous. It allows the state to intervene or hinder in the matters of religion as and when it requires. The fifth feature is that the Indian secularism is not entirely averse to the public character of religion. The Sixth feature relates to the way religion is responded. It is combination of active hostility and passive indifference and disrespectful hostility and respectful indifference. The Seventh feature is that Indian secularism doesn't mark rigid boundaries between the public and private. It is left to the courts and democratic politics. The eighth feature is that



Indian secularism shows a marked for morally grounded secularization. The ninth feature is that it allows for possibility of multiple secularisms. The tenth feature is that Indian secularism is modern but entirely different from mainstream Western notion of secularism. And the final feature is that Indian Secularism is Contextual, ethically sensitive, politically negotiated arrangement. Thus Indian experience of secularism is unique in many senses having a broad spectrum.

### **Constituent Assembly and Secularism**

India's Constitution-making body known as Constituent assembly, referred as 'Microcosm in action' (Austin2006, 1) deliberated on all aspects of Indian polity and objectives of state. Its debates shows that its members took secularism for granted and saw no need for its explicit mention (Noorani 2016). Yet the members of Constituent assembly did deliberate upon the idea of secularism. Professor K.T Shah was the one being a member of constituent assembly advocated strongly for the insertion of the word secular in the constitution. Shah was an alumnus of London School of economics, a Professor of economics in Bombay University, a very active member of the constituent assembly, and, in 1952 made headlines when he contested against Rajendra Prasad for the election of President. On December 3, 1948, Professor K.T. Shah moved this amendment. "The state in India being secular shall have no concern with any religion, creed or profession of faith; and shall observe an attitude of absolute neutrality in all matters relating to the religion of any class of its citizens or other persons in the Union." He acknowledged that "We have proclaimed it time and again that the State in India is secular". Members agreed with that. There was no need to state the obvious. The amendment got nowhere. But in retrospect shah's taking a firm principled position on issue of secularism deserves admiration. On the same day, Lokanath Misra also said: "We have *declared* the state to be a secular state". On December 6, H.V. Kamath said: "We have certainly declared that India would be a secular state". He was followed by Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra, who said: "By secular state, as I understand it, is meant that the state is not going to make any discrimination whatsoever on the ground of religion or community against any person professing any particular form of religious faith. This means in essence that no particular religion in the state will receive any state patronage whatsoever. The state is not going to establish, patronise or endow any particular religion to the exclusion of or in preference to others and that no citizen in the state will have any preferential treatment or will be discriminated against simply on the ground that he professed a particular form of religion. In other words in the affairs of the state the possessing of any particular religion will not be taken into consideration at all". On December 7, 1948, M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, later Speaker of the Lok Sabha, acknowledged: "We are pledged to make the state a secular one" (Noorani 2016). While dealing with categorisation of type of debates in constituent assembly on the issue of secularism Bhattacharya (2016) points out that there were three types of opinion which emerged during the discourse on the issue of secularism. The first category belonged to the people who wanted that India should declare itself the secular state in the constitution as mentioned earlier it was led by K.T. Shah and he was the leader of this group. The second group of people belonged to those who wanted that place of religion should be recognised in public life. People related to this group included K.M.Munshi, Mahavir Tyagi, H.V.Kamath, M.Ananthasayanam Ayyangar and others. The third group advocated a middle path between the first two approaches. Some of these members used the term 'composite culture' to avoid the discourse of religion altogether. Ambedkar and Nehru led the third group. Arguably, Both

Nehru's and Ambedkar's approach to the concept of secularism arises more from the discourse of justice and equality than from anti religious position. Nehru, while taking part in debate in constituent assembly cautioned all the members of constituent assembly to deliberate carefully and responsibly. Perhaps he wanted all the clarity on the issue of secularism. The Concept of secularism was, no doubt, born in Western Europe, but the Constituent assembly and the Nehruvian style put it in an Indian garb. Nehru's contribution to this process was the notion of composite culture. One can trace its origin in Tagore's notion of unity the Indian civilisation achieved by absorbing various ethnic cultures within India and from outside India; likewise, there was Mahatma Gandhi's vision of unity across the communal divide. Nehru in 1946 popularised the notion of unity in diversity in 'The Discovery of India' (Bhattaacharya 2016). And Though there was a great deal of discussion ,debate and deliberation in constituent assembly, India's Constitution-makers did not feel the need to explain the unique brand, leaving it to lawmakers and the courts to make sense of it through constitutional provisions. Therefore, it is not surprising that the word "secularism" does not find mention in the original Constitution. As secularism finds expression in a number of constitutional provisions, the Constitution-makers rightly thought it unnecessary to proclaim India a secular republic even in the Preamble. Besides, secularism being a complex term defied easy definition; therefore, putting it in the Preamble without defining it elsewhere would lend the term to various interpretations not originally envisaged by the Constitution-makers. So it was believed at the time of the making of the Constitution. But Parliament's insertion of the word "secular" along with the word "socialist" to describe the Indian Republic in the Preamble during the Emergency (1975-77) was, to infer from the debates, aimed at emphasising the "larger objective". That it was conceived by the rulers as just an objective in the mid 1970s showed that the country was still far from realising it fully (Venkatesan, 2017).But One interesting fact pointed out by Bhattacharya(2016) is that though there was no insertion of the word 'secular' at the time of framing the constitution by the constituent assembly yet there was a consensual agenda for the constituent assembly which gave a central place to secularism as the word 'secular' occurs sixty seven times in the recorded assembly proceedings, leaving out its mention in connected official papers and drafts.

### **Constitution and Secularism**

As already pointed out that the Constituent Assembly at the time of framing of original constitution did not insert the word 'Secular'. The Indian constitution made a formal and basic commitment to the idea of a secular state as late as through 42<sup>nd</sup> Constitutional amendment act of 1976 when it inserted the word 'Secular' to its preamble (Noorani 2016; Basu 2007, 27). Yet as the experts states that the Indian Constitution has provisions of secularism in the forms of different articles like, citizenship (Article 9); on non-discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, etc. (Article 15), generally and specifically in public employment (Article 16); the fundamental rights to freedom of religion individually (Article 25) and collectively (Article 26); ban on discrimination in state-aided educational institutions (Article 29(2)), on taxes for the promotion of religion (Article 27); on religious instruction in them (Article 28) and on exclusion from the general electoral roll on any such ground as well (Article 325) for secularism (Noorani 2016).The unity and fraternity of the people of India, professing numerous faiths has been sought to be achieved by enshrining the ideal of a secular state, which means that the state protects all religions equally and does not itself uphold any religion as the state religion. Secularism is a part of the basic structure of the

constitution. There is no provision in the constitution making any religion the ‘established Church’ as some other constitutions do (Basu 2007, 27). Since preamble is an integral part of the constitution and forms the part of basic structure of the constitution, Arora and Goyal (2013, 75-76) points out that the preamble of the Indian constitution provides a framework of ideals and values for the Indian administration also. Since the responsibility of enforcing the constitution is that of the government, it is expected of the administrative system, which is an integral component of the executive branch of government to facilitate the application of the ideals of liberty, equality, justice, socialism and secularism in the governance of the country. Not only need the government laws and politics reflect these interrelated ideals, but functioning of the administrative system, including the attitudinal orientations and behaviour of administrators, should manifest these ideals and values. In an ideal-typical situation, the nature and performance of the administrative system would be judged in the context of the values forming its context. Arora and Goyal gives a clarion call to administrators or the permanent executive to remain faithful to the ideals of the constitution and do not loose sight of these values while performing their duty. They need not to be partisan in their approach.

### **Supreme Court and Secularism**

It would be very interesting to know the views of The Supreme Court of India. The Supreme Court on various occasions has expressed its views on the aspect of secularism. The Supreme Court put the imprimatur of its approval of “secularism” as part of the unamendable “basic structure” of the Constitution when it heard a batch of petitions on the imposition of President’s Rule in the States. *S.R. Bommai & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Ors.* Which Was decided by the Supreme Court on March 11, 1994, ((1994) 3 Supreme Court Cases). In a bench of nine judges, seven judges held secularism to be part of the basic structure. They were A.M. Ahmadi, P.B. Sawant and Kuldip Singh with Ratnavel Pandian concurring; K. Ramaswamy and Jeevan Reddy with S.C. Agrawal concurring.

Justice Ahmadi said: “Notwithstanding the fact that the words ‘socialist’ and ‘secular’ were added in the Preamble of the Constitution in 1976 by the 42nd Amendment, the concept of secularism was very much embedded in our constitutional philosophy. The term ‘secular’ has advisedly not been defined presumably because it is a very elastic term not capable of a precise definition and perhaps best left undefined. By this amendment what was implicit was made explicit. The Preamble itself spoke of liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship. ...I am, therefore, in agreement with the views expressed by my learned colleagues Sawant, Ramaswamy and Reddy, JJ, that secularism is a basic feature of our Constitution”

Justices Sawant and Kuldip Singh held: “Secularism is a part of the basic structure of the Constitution. The acts of a State government which are calculated to subvert or sabotage secularism, as enshrined in our Constitution, can lawfully be deemed to give rise to a situation in which the government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution”. Justice Ramaswamy said: “The Constitution has chosen secularism as its vehicle to establish an egalitarian social order. I am respectfully in agreement with our brethren [P.B.] Sawant and [B.P.] Jeevan Reddy, JJ, in this respect. Secularism, therefore, is part of the fundamental law and basic structure of the Indian political system to secure to its entire people socio-economic needs essential for man’s excellence and of [sic] his moral well-being, fulfilment of material prosperity and political justice”.

What Justices Jeevan Reddy and S.C. Agrawal noted that “The significance of the 42nd (Amendment) Act lies in the fact that it formalised the pre-existing situation. It put the matter beyond any doubt leaving no room for any controversy. In such a situation, the debate whether the Preamble to the Constitution is included within the words ‘the provisions of this Constitution’ is really unnecessary. Preamble is a key to the understanding of the relevant provisions of the Constitution. The 42nd (Amendment) Act has furnished the key in unmistakable terms.” He added: “The fact that a party may be entitled to go to people seeking a mandate for a drastic amendment of the Constitution or its replacement by another Constitution is wholly irrelevant in the context. We do not know how the Constitution can be amended so as to remove secularism from the basic structure of the Constitution. Nor do we know how the present Constitution can be replaced by another; it is enough for us to know that the Constitution does not provide for such a course—that it does not provide for its own demise” (Noorani2016). In *Bal Patil V. Union Of India* case the supreme court ruled that the concept of secularism to put it in a nutshell is that the state will have no religion (Bakshi 2018,5). Thus supreme court from time to time has made this clear that secularism is a basic feature of the constitution and basic feature cannot be amended or removed.

### **Crisis of Indian Secularism**

Indian secularism has been dented at many points in time after independence. Riots in different parts of country, the inter-religious hate, the extension of communal propaganda by different groups, has all contributed in division among communities and in turn giving a serious blow to our secular ethos. And while discussing the crisis of this sort, Mander (2019) states that above all, if there is one thing that stands most dangerously damaged, it is our constitutional pledge of a secular democracy. The imagination of secularism in the Indian Republic was rooted in its singularly pluralist civilisational ethos, in the lives and work of Ashoka and Akbar, in the teachings of Buddha, Kabir and Nanak. It was illuminated by our struggle for freedom, in the humanist and egalitarian convictions of Gandhi and Ambedkar, Maulana Azad and Nehru. It was the central iridescent idea: that this newly-freed country would belong equally to all its people. People of no religion, no language, no caste, no ethnicity, no gender, and no class would be entitled to lay claim to the country more than any other. Secularism is the soul of India’s Constitution. Today the letter of this Constitution still remains unaltered, but its soul is mangled and choked. And while discussing the crisis, one scholar indicates that the appeal to religious identity, always a part of India’s political landscape, has now become much more blatant (Ayoob2019). In recent times the manifestation of communal hatred has become more explicit and venomous, this is resulting in growing social disharmony. Another scholar suggests that India’s brand of secularism is a complex mix of constitutional provisions that guarantee all persons freedom of conscience and the right to free profession, practice and propagation of religion; the freedom to manage religious affairs; the freedom from being compelled to pay taxes to promote a particular religion; and protection of the interests of minorities. But the enforcement of these provisions, in practice, has given rise to a number of challenges from both the state and non-state actors (Venkatesan 2017). While talking about the crisis of secularism Chandoke (2018,336-337) states that inability of the state to prevent communal riots, and the role of state officials in fomenting communalism, has necessarily caused a great deal of consternation and apprehension. She poses some serious questions like --- has secularism been able to achieve the desired objective of safeguarding the life, property, dignity of citizens? Has secularism been able to ensure equality to all religious groups or help in

establishing inter-religious harmony? Given the communalisation of Indian society and the polity, it is not surprising that scholars wonder whether secularism is appropriate for the country at all. All this poses a serious challenge to our secular democracy and requires an approach and some serious actions to protect it.

### **The way forward**

Justice Vikramjit Sen, a retired judge of the Supreme Court, once observed during the hearing of a case in 2015: ‘India is a secular country, but I don’t know how long it will remain so’ ( Venkatesan 2017 ). This statement by a judge cast aspersions and his observation are not wrong but as Somebody points out with a hope that there is no denying the fact that India’s unique brand of secularism, despite being subjected to various stresses and strains, has proved resilient. And hopefully it remains resilient. As the Supreme Court has held in a number of cases, secularism not only is a basic feature of the Constitution beyond the amending power of Parliament but is its priceless jewel, which deserves to be jealously protected at all costs (ibid 2017).

And while suggesting the way to protect secularism Bhargava (2019) states that justice to all citizens, affirmation of all reasonable religious identities, rejection of majority communalism, careful defence of legitimate minority rights only when accompanied by a robust critique of minority extremism, and a critical appraisal of religions with a deeper, empathetic grasp of their traditions will help to protect. Bhargava (2019) further points out that the government’s primary business is to prevent religion-based violence, oppression and discrimination. Perhaps, those outside the government should attend to its other functions. Scholars also suggests to deepen secularism through democratising the polity in real terms, bringing back the tradition of tolerance etc. Together, with sustained efforts, we may just rescue our genuine long cherished and hard earned secularism.

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## Tarabai Shinde's *Stri Purush Tulana*: A noteworthy voice against gender-bias in 19<sup>th</sup> Century India

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### *Abstract*

*Tarabai Shinde, a feminist activist, is known for her work Stri Purush Tulana, published in the year 1882. She protested against upper-caste patriarchy in 19<sup>th</sup> century India. Her pamphlet is considered to be the first Indian feminist text. It was controversial for its time in challenging the Hindu religious scriptures themselves as a source of women's oppression, a view that continues to be controversial and debated today.*

*Shinde's essay is an attack on the dominance of patriarchal society. She criticized the social inequality of caste. Her work is significant because she was able to broaden the scope of feminist analysis to include the ideological fabric of patriarchal society, while other intellectuals and activists were only concerned with the hardships and atrocities faced by a Hindu widow.*

*In her essay, Tarabai poses questions to God: her rhetorical query immediately brings out the suffering that women have had to face down the ages. She goes on to successively defend every charge pressed against women, including but not limited to theft, incest, murder, robbery, deception, fraud and falsehood.*

**Keywords: Patriarchy; gender-bias; discrimination; inequalities; Indian Feminism.**

### **Introduction: Feminism and the Sex-Gender System**

Feminism is understood to be a system of ideas that examine the root and reasons for women's subordination in relation to male/masculine privilege. It is an ideology and also a movement for socio-political change. It posits gender as the primary category of analysis. Feminism is not only about individual men and women, but about understanding the ways in which men and women are produced and inserted into patriarchies. Feminism refers to an awareness of identity as a woman and her problems. According to Janet Richards "The essence of Feminism has a strong fundamental case intended to mean only that there are



excellent reasons for thinking that women suffer from systematic social injustice because of their sex, the proposition is to be regarded constituting feminism". (Richard: 1981: 3) Feminists advocate the elimination of that injustice by challenging through efforts to change the prevailing ideas and social practices, the coercive power, force or authority (family, state, culture, religion) that upholds masculine prerogative in that particular culture. The feminists recognize the validity of women's own interpretation of their lived experience and needs and acknowledge the values women claim publicly as their own in assessing their status in society relative to men. Gender is a cultural construct. While sexual differences are biological. The sex differences have been denoted by male/female binaries whereas gender difference has been referred as masculine/ feminine binaries.

The sex-gender system is argued to be a set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into gendered beings whose activities and roles are expected to correlate with biology; deviations from assigned and anticipated "entailments" from one's biological sex are taken as signs of pathological or criminal behaviour. Within this (dichotomized) sex/gender system, then, biological sex is taken as given, and gender is assumed to "naturally" follow – as is the appropriate object-choice of desire. Gender, thus is an analytical category that refers to the social organization of the relation between the sexes. The term gender is used to designate psychological social and cultural aspects of maleness and femaleness, although even biological sex as a natural kind is now questioned by many theorists. (Potter, 2001, pp 61-71)

Each culture imposes certain norms on the behaviour of men and women. These are prescriptions for appropriate behaviour. Like in most cultures, ideally men are expected to be aggressive, assertive and brave and women are expected to be passive, receptive and caring. Gender divisions are present in all cultures. Feminists have been systematically pointing out that all human societies till date are not only divided on the lines of gender roles, these roles are always discriminatory. Therefore, gender not only symbolizes difference but also discrimination. The discrimination has always put in a disadvantaged position. Discrimination begins by placing men and women in different social positions – one is placed in the core and the other in the periphery. The one in the periphery is marginalized, silenced and made invisible. This position is either ignored or monitored by the core. (Moitra, 2000: 8)

## Gender Discrimination

Feminists usually talk about three forms of gender discrimination – Sexism, androcentrism or phallocentrism and patriarchy. Sexism relates to overt behaviour. Any visible act or speech or attitude or theory which treats women as inferiors to men, subjugating women, and subsequently this subjugation is thought to be legitimate is a form of sexism. phallocentrism is a form of conceptual male domination. In a phallocentric conceptual scheme woman is always relegated to a subordinate position. It is required that she gains equality by transcending her female identity, that is, by ignoring her lived experience as a woman. And this is only possible for her through a neutral existence. There is a hidden manoeuvre in this prescription of asking men and women to converge in a neutral human ideal since the concept human is not above gender bias in patriarchy. In phallocentrism the masculine is granted an autonomous self-defined position while the female has a secondary position having a dependent definition. (Moitra, 2000: 10-12)

Patriarchy refers to structural oppression. Patriarchy is a political-social system. It insists that men are dominating and superior to everything, especially females. Men are endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence. In Patriarchy, institutions and customs are all conducive to male supremacy. Patriarchy has specific roles assigned to men and women. Women are objectified in this social mode. The modes vary from society to society and from one period of history to another. The common element is the male supremacy. Patriarchy is rooted in men's control of women's productive and reproductive labour. Patriarchy is necessarily related to power. Those who have power have the right to control the destiny of those who are powerless as superiority justifies domination. (Moitra, 2000: 9)

## Indian Feminism

In the Indian context the rise of feminism is primarily aimed at defending equal political, social and economic rights and opportunities for women in India. The history of feminism in India can be divided into three phases: the first phase (1850 – 1915); the second phase (1915 – 1947) and the third phase (Post 1947). According to Maitrayee Chaudhuri, (2005) unlike the Western feminist movement, India's movement was initiated by men, and later joined by women. In Maharashtra Savitribai Phule, one of the pioneering advocates of women's rights and education started the first school for girls in India (1848); Tarabai Shinde, who wrote the India's first feminist text *Stri Purush Tulana* (1882); and Pandita Ramabai, who criticized

patriarchy and caste-system in Hinduism, married outside her caste and converted to Christianity (1880s). However, most of the writings reveal discontent with the prevalence of patriarchy and gender injustices. But there was absence of any kind of active resistance. Women found themselves subjugated by the male patriarchal ideologies and the feelings of deprivation and anger against the injustices translated into an awareness and a feminist identity. As Tharu and Lalita's landmark collection of women writings in India (1991) indicates there existed ideas about gender construction and gender norms during the late 1800s when Tarabai Shinde wrote *Stri Purush Tulana* (A Comparison of Men and Women), where she discusses about the construction of gender norms as a radical critique of patriarchy.

### **Tarabai Shinde's *Stri Purush Tulana***

Tarabai Shinde's *Stri Purush Tulana* (A Comparison between Women and Men) can be considered as the first Indian feminist work, which defied the prevalent norms and paved the way to the feminism we experience today. She defied the inherent patriarchy found in Hindu Scriptures and her views still remain controversial even today. She points out the patriarchal discrimination in the prevailing society. She writes in the introduction of her essay, "I'm just a poor woman without any real intelligence, who's been kept locked up and confined...But every day now we have to look at some new and more horrible example of men who are really wicked, and their shameless lying tricks. And people go about pinning the blame on women all the time, as if everything bad was their fault. When I saw this, my whole mind began churning and shaking. I lost all my fear, I just couldn't stop myself writing about it in this very biting language" (Shinde 1994/1882: 77).

"So is it true that only woman's bodies are home to all the different kinds of recklessness and vice? Or have men got just the same faults as we find in women?" (Shinde 1994/1882: 75)

Her essay is regarded as one of India's first modern feminist texts. According to Susie Tharu and K. Lalita, "...*Stri Purush Tulana* is probably the first full fledged and extant feminist argument after the poetry of the Bhakti Period. But Tarabai's work is also significant because at a time when intellectuals and activists alike were primarily concerned with the hardship of a Hindu widow's life and other easily identifiable atrocities perpetrated on women, Tarabai Shinde, apparently working in isolation, was able to broaden the scope of analysis to include the ideological fabric of patriarchal society. Women everywhere, she implies, are similarly oppressed." (Tharu & Lalita, 1991: 221)

Tarabai Shinde, born in the year 1850 in Buldhana, in present day Maharashtra, was a feminist activist who spoke against patriarchy and caste in 19<sup>th</sup> century India. Raised in a high-caste, well-to-do Maratha family, she studied Marathi, Sanskrit and English and was well read in classical and modern literature. Her father Bapuji Hari Shinde, a head clerk in the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Revenues, and a radical who himself published a book called *Hint to the Educated Natives* in 1871. Tarabai was the only daughter, she had four brothers. She was home schooled by her father as there was no girls' school in the area. She was married very young, but was granted more freedom in the household than most other Marathi wives of the time since her husband moved into her parents' home. Shinde was an associate of social activists Jotirao and Savitribai Phule and was a member of their *Satyashodhak Samaj*. The Phules and Shinde shared an awareness of the intertwined nature of oppression that constitutes gender and caste. Her association with the Phules influenced her sole writing venture as well.

Tarabai's popular literary work is *Stri Purush Tulana* originally published in Marathi in 1882. It was written in response to an article which appeared in 1881, in *Pune Vaibhav*, an orthodox newspaper published from Pune, about a criminal case against a young Brahmin (upper-caste) widow, Vijayalakshmi in Surat, who had been convicted of murdering her illegitimate son for the fear of public disgrace and ostracism and sentenced to be hanged (later appealed and modified to transportation for life). Shinde, having worked with widows from upper caste societies, who were forbidden to remarry, was well aware of incidents of widows being impregnated by relatives.

### **Shinde's Arguments against Men and Defense of Women**

Shinde's essay is an attack on the dominance of patriarchal society. She was married at a young age and her marriage did not prove to be successful. Her text reflects her frustration of being a sufferer in the hands of men. She puts forward some arguments that are against women and followed in the societal structure. Then she goes on to reject them on logical grounds justifying the innocence of women, thereby blaming the men for those.

She begins her essay by posing a question to the just role of God. In the introduction of her essay she clarify the purpose of writing, "God brought this amazing universe into being, and he it was also who created men and women both. So is it true that only women's bodies are home to all kinds of wicked vices? Or have men got just the same faults as we find in women? I wanted this to be shown absolutely clearly, and that is the reason I've written this

small book, to defend the honour of my entire sister countrywomen. I'm not looking at particular castes or families here. It's a comparison just between women and men" (Shinde 1994/1882: 75). She states that God has given every kind of happiness to men only. On the other hand, He deprived women of all these things and made them suffer through ages. Shinde asks how He can forget His creatures (Women) after creating them. A woman is always considered to be a material being with no identity of her own. Sins of women are considered to be worse in the society than any blunders committed by men. Even small mistake by women leads her to disgrace in the society.

Shinde begins her arguments against men and states that "If there's a force greater than evil incarnations in that device of women, you're stronger than her when it comes to brains. Is there anything you haven't done with those great brains of yours, a single monstrous deed in the world you haven't committed? What strength have women got next to you and your huge power? They've got nothing at all" (Shinde 1994/1882: 100). She points out that though women are often accused of witchcraft in the society, and as men have more intellect than that of women, so the evil deeds committed by men are far worse than witchcraft. Secondly, women are considered to be suspicious and whimsical. She writes, "...it's true women are whirled about by many whims! But it's because they're uneducated that every kind of whim makes its home in their minds. Even so, theirs only go as far as their own families. But if we look at your minds, all the whims there go round as fast we can hardly see them. Your minds are constantly churned up with all sorts of cunning schemes, to do with things native and foreign, imaginary and practical" (Shinde 1994/1882: 100). Shinde maintains that as women are uneducated, thus all kinds of doubts arise in their minds. On the other hand educated men are full of treacherous ideas. They can go to any extent and act wrong deeds to meet their ends. Such ills will never arise in the minds of women. Women are often considered to be arrogant. However, if examined justly, it will be found that men are more arrogant. Women are accused of committing mistakes. However, Shinde writes men commit crimes without hesitation. Though men are educated, the prisons are mostly filled with men and not women. She said, "Women are ignorant....they may not be able to read or write, but does that mean God never gave them any intelligence at all? They may be thoughtless, but they're still much between than you. You men are all very clever, it's true. But you just go and look in one of our prisons – you'll find it so stuffed full of your countrymen you can hardly put your foot on the ground." (Shinde 1994/1882: 101)

Women are considered to be violators of social norms. However their condition makes them so. Shinde explains. “There are some rich gentlemen so fond of their daughters that they marry them to a boy from a poor family, so they can have the pair close to them at home... She’s from a wealthy home, used to being kept in comfort and luxury, bright and intelligent; and her husband has been nothing but a poor wretch all his life...So the woman takes a dislike to him – it’s as if someone’s patched a fine shawl with a dirty bit of old blanket.” (Shinde 1994/1882: 106) Shinde points out that rich parents marry their daughter to poor man who lives at their home. The man considers his wife everything till he acquires money, after which she becomes useless. She further writes, “You wouldn’t like to be stuck with some oaf of a wife who was nasty, ugly, vicious and filthy, would you? Why should a wife like it any better? Doesn’t she want a good husband, just like you want a good wife?” (Shinde 1994/1882: 106)

Tarabai argues that though women are considered fraudulent but men are more deceitful. She states, “Which of us is really soaked a hundred times over in deceit? You’re number one here. How can we describe your deceit? Every step and there’s an example. Look at all the disguises you get yourself up in – you could even paint your body black and yellow striped and change into a tiger.” (Shinde 1994/1882: 107-108) Shinde blames the men who becomes *babas* or religious preachers and show their religious devotion but in reality they only extract money and lead a luxurious life.

Shinde points out that in movies a woman is portrayed having ill mentality and wicked. Media has also been promoting social inequality by proving the incapability of women in the society. Shinde maintains the view that men entrap beautiful girls by praising them and innocent girls falls prey to the fake appreciation. However the spiritual love of men vanishes as soon as the girl becomes pregnant. Then she becomes useless and characterless. Shinde points out that the differences and inequalities between men and women are created by society. She discusses the institution of prostitution and clearly indicates the role of men in the creation of prostitutes. To quote Shinde’s defense against the blame of prostitution and wickedness of women, “...women are the beginning of all wickedness. No- wickedness starts off with you and you alone. You desert your own dharma and carry on just as you please, getting drunk and rolling in the road, going round looking at young boys in tamashas, gambling, smoking ganja, keeping whores, all sorts of badness and filth...what is a whore? Do you think she’s some form of life that wasn’t made in the same way as the rest of creation? Was it some other God who made her? In fact, whores are just some of those



women you've seduced and lured away from their homes." (Shinde 1994/1882: 111) Therefore, Tarabai refutes each and every flaw women are said to have. Her work exposes the males for their hypocritical norms and argues against them. She is blatant in her allegations against men. Importantly, she was a satirical writer who engages with irony to explicate her arguments.

She reveals the double standards in the treatment of men and women regarding marriage, she asks, what is the greatest crime that women commit? Is it Adultery? Can adultery really be considered as act of the most heinous nature? Our *Shastras* certainly do not seem to think that such things did not happen in the past. She writes, "...it isn't true that women in the past have never done it...take the *Shastras*, whose power you all talk so big about....if a king died then without a direct heir, his queen could prolong the line with whichever of the sages she fancied. And her majesty would keep him on the job, wouldn't she, till she'd got not one but ten sons. What was going on there, then? Wasn't that illicit sex? Wasn't that illicit sex? Wasn't that adultery?" (Shinde 1994/1882: 102). Tarabai's knowledge about the Hindu *Shastras* is seen in her deconstruction of the same. A major reason for the rigidity of the Hindu social order was that several of the practices have divine sanction. According to Shinde, the greatest crime that a woman can commit is adultery. In the matter of adultery, Shinde openly declares that men are at fault. She further states that the Hindu *Shastras* do not consider adultery to be a heinous crime. In *Shastras*, it is written that a widowed queen can have sons from a *Rishi* but are not allowed to remarry. Summarily put, Shinde problematised the comparison between men and women. While comparing them, she pointed out that faults commonly ascribed to women, such as superstition, suspicion, treachery and insolence were found to be more common in men. At a time when activists were primarily concerned with easily identifiable atrocities against women, she broadened the scope of analysis to include the entire ideological fabric of patriarchal society. Though she primarily talks about Hindu women and tried to voice the presence of gender-bias existing in the Hindu patriarchal society, but she tried to voice that women everywhere are similarly oppressed.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Tarabai, the first Indian feminist critic, throughout her essay, argued for women's equal share with men. She refused to accept male superiority in gender relation. She is known for her strength in the face of adversity, fierce independence and her ability to challenge the norms meant for women in the society. She believed that women had to walk the line between a



good woman and a prostitute. She used harsh language in writing. And her attitude and belief had a hostile reception and eventually caused the publication of her book to stop for almost one hundred years. She received vicious and demeaning blowback for her work from society and press. Some contend that widespread condemnation of her work forced her into the margins and she never wrote further.

It was only Jyotirao Phule, a prominent Marathi social reformer, who referred to Tarabai's work in his later writings. Phule suggested that the sharp criticism received for her work is because of the fact that very men she condemned were the ones publishing the newspapers. The work, however, finds mention in the second issue of *Satsar*, the magazine of *Satyashodhak Samaj*, started by Jyotirao Phule in 1885. But the work was republished in 1975 and remained unknown till then.

Nevertheless, Tarabai's work *Stri Purus Tulana* definitely pierced the existing predominant male discourse and made way for a niche for female voice. She used her persuasive language and passionate writing to convince society that the simple solution to societal gender-bias is to ensure equality between men and women. Her feminism is a constructive one that demanded a replacement of the existing gender dynamics in the society with a more equitable relationship of mutual respect and affection in the domestic and public spheres.

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# Statistical Analysis on the Interrelationship between Socio-Demographic and Anxiety of Landslide among the Tribal People

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**Abstract:**

*Landslides are one of the most important and major natural hazards that mankind is facing all over the world. This phenomenon is very common in the hilly regions of the Nilgiri district, Tamil Nadu. This paper tries to analyze the anxiety level of tribal men and women in relation with socio-economic status, psychological vulnerability, risk perception and social trust. This study is based on primary data which includes questionnaire survey and face to face interview. It helped to bring out the tribal's perception on landslide risk, vulnerability and anxiety. The data were statistically analyzed by using frequency table, multiple regression model and ANOVA.*

**Keywords:** Landslide, Risk Perception, Vulnerability, Anxiety

**Introduction**

Tribal groups have a close attachment with their natural environment, unique from other cultural groups, which often results in cultural variations and perceptions. This difference in the way people recognize, interpret, identify, access and handle risk within the existing environment is further attributed to a cultural global view. These are generally derived from mixtures of traditional beliefs and values, knowledge, custom, religion, social structure, length of time in coexistence with, or livelihood of a particular geographical location, and historical and modern experiences. The Nilgiri district is located in Tamil Nadu, and it is the home for six distinctive tribal communities. Most of the settlements areas of these tribes are vulnerable to landslides as it receives heavy rainfall from both South-West and North-East monsoons. This has made a significant negative impact on the environment (fauna and flora) and tribal settlements in this region. So it is important to know their anxiety level on the risk of landslide.

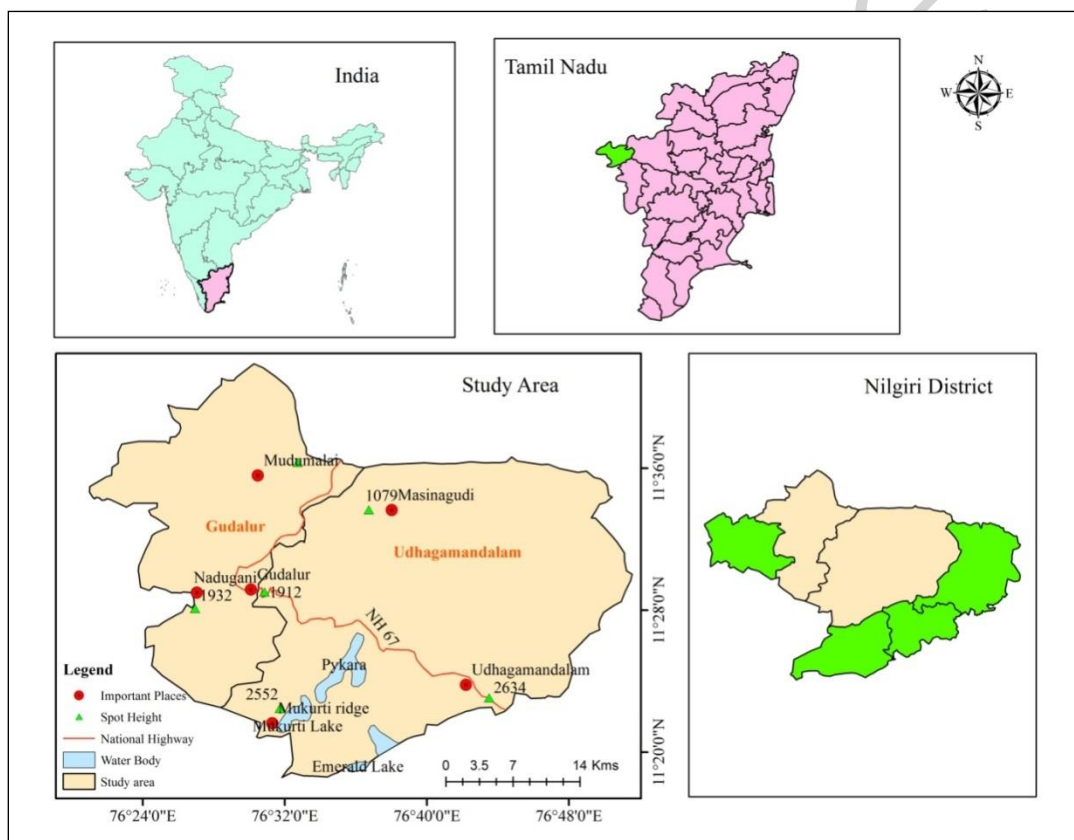
Landslide risk perception stands on human relations and reliance on the natural environment, and can be heightened by a close interdependence. Understanding cultural differences and group dynamics is fundamental for understanding differences in risk perception, and can help guide risk assessment and risk mitigation, and determine future actions. This provides another dimension to consider in risk assessment and management, requiring in-depth understanding of cultural values, learning and human behavior. All cultures differ in some way in their understanding, perception, reaction, coping mechanisms and solutions to risk. Culture and impacts on culture are also significant determinants for understanding behavior's and causal factors that lead to risk.

The main objective of this study is to assess gender wise perception of tribal people, their anxiety over landslide and what they believe about landslide; and whether these perceptions and beliefs make a difference in adopting mitigation. In addition to demographic variables, this study focuses on psychological variables such as perceived vulnerability, risk perception and social trust. These psychological variables are not limited to a theoretical

framework, which typically includes perceived likelihood of the hazards and severity of the impacts. Rather, they reflect attitudes (Ajzen 1991) to natural hazards, such as fatalism belief and trust (cognitive component), worry and dread (affective component). According to attitude theory, the behavior of people can be predicted from relevant beliefs, affects and values. Thus, to know how these attitude components can be changed to increase the implementation of mitigation is essential to communication regarding risk and in proposing effective intervention strategy. However, a better understanding of the psychological processes associated with aging may provide insight into behavior that can be changed.

## Study area

The study area of Gudalur and Udhagamandalam are municipality and taluk in western part of Nilgiris district.



(Figure: 1) Location map of study area

These regions are located in Tamil Nadu, lies between latitude  $11^{\circ}18'34''\text{N}$  to  $11^{\circ}41'52''\text{N}$  and longitude  $76^{\circ}20'59''\text{E}$  to  $76^{\circ}51'33''\text{E}$  (Figure 1). Gudalur is situated at 52 km Ooty from in the hilly terrain. The total area of this region is 506.38 sq km with a density of 193.85. According to 2011 census the total population of Gudalur is 104768, in which the ST population of this area is 6616. The sex ratio is around 1034 and the literacy rate of Gudalur is 86.7. Udhagamandalam, also spelled Uthagamandalam. The total area of this region is 880.02 sq km with a density of 233.67. The total population of Udhagamandalam is 191960, and the ST population is 6113 (2011 census). The sex ratio of this region is 1049 and the literacy rate of is 89.9.

## Methodology

The study involves a well-designed and structured questionnaire survey and face to face interview, which was carried out in the month of July 2019. The questionnaire helped to examine the perception and the level of anxiety among male and female tribes on landslide risk, vulnerability, and mitigation. For this study a stratified random sampling procedure was used to obtain the total samples of 150, out of which 90 males and 60 female respondents were interviewed. For this study the collected data were examined by using various statistical methods with the help of SPSS software. Here, Frequency distribution table has been used to find out the socio-demographic status of the tribal people. Multiple regression model and ANOVA statistical methods were used to analyze tribal people's anxiety on life and anxiety on financial loss.

## Result and Discussion

The study consists of three age groups with below 25 years of age (14 per cent), 25 to 45 years of age (42 per cent) and greater than 45 years of age (44 per cent). Also to say that 85 per cent of the samples are in the age group of greater than 25 which mean they have large awareness on their habitats. Regarding the gender --- 60 per cent of the samples are male and remaining 40 per cent of the samples are females. More than 78 per cent of the samples are married whereas 22 per cent of the samples are unmarried. More than 45 per cent of the samples are Illiterate, 26 per cent are primary and 28 per cent are above secondary. The very less tribal people going for higher education particularly in gudalur area because absence of nearby higher education institution (Rao, 2013) as well as they are contributing themselves for economic improvement of their family (Sinu, 2013). The type of houses are categorized into three they are pucca house (28 per cent), Semi- pucca house (54 per cent) and samples who are staying hut are 18 per cent. More than 52 per cent of the samples are staying in the joint family and 48 per cent of the samples are staying in nuclear family. Regarding their occupation 14 per cent are engaged with agriculture, 28 per cent are engaged in animal husbandry, 34 per cent of the samples are agriculture labour and remaining 24 per cent are marginal labour shown in the Table 01.

**Table 01** Socio Democratic details

Variables	Category	Frequency	Per cent
Age	<25	21	14.0
	25-45	63	42.0
	>45	66	44.0
Gender	Male	90	60.0
	Female	60	40.0
Marital Status	Married	117	78.0
	Unmarried	33	22.0
Education	Illiterate	69	46.0
	Primary	39	26.0
	Secondary	42	28.0
House Type	Pucca	42	28.0

	Semi-Pucca	81	54.0
	Hut	27	18.0
Family Type	Nuclear Family	72	48.0
	Joint Family	78	52.0
Family Size	<4	87	58.0
	4-8	63	42.0
Occupation	Agriculture	21	14.0
	Animal Husbandry	42	28.0
	Agriculture Labour	51	34.0
	Marginal Labour	36	24.0

Source: Primary data, Collected by Researcher

### Multiple regressions 1: Anxiety on Life

The analysis of multiple regressions has been followed to predict the variable for calculating the anxiety on the life of the tribal people concerning landslide. Anxiety on the life of the tribal people is taken as dependent variable whereas Age of the tribal people and their gender, family size, house type, occupation, marital status, education and family type are taken as independent variables.

**Table 02 Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.
1	.681 <sup>a</sup>	.493	.328	.318	.213	4.765	8	141	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Family Size, House Type, Occupation, Gender, Marital Status, Education, Family Type

b. Dependent Variable: anxiety on life

Table 02 shows the model summary of the multiple regressions which represent various values. R is coefficient of correlation for multiple regressions deemed as the measurement on how worth the prediction of the dependent variable. The value of R from the model summary is 0.681 shows that there is the good level of prediction. The R square value is indicating the quantity of variance in the dependent variance is explained by the independent variables. The value of R square is 0.493 which represents that 49.3 per cent of variance in the anxiety of life (Dependent variable) is explained by the independent variables.

**Table 03 ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.844	8	.480	4.765	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	14.216	141	.101		
Total	18.060	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety on Life

b. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Family Size, House Type, Occupation, Gender, Marital Status, Education, Family Type

The overall goodness of the model is explained by the analysis of variance given in the Table 03. The significant value of 0.000 lesser than the 0.05 (alpha value) represents that independent variables statistically significant for the prediction of the dependent variable,  $F(8, 141) = 4.765$   $p < 0.05$ . Coefficients of the multiple regressions shown in the

Table 04 indicates the relation between anxiety on life due to landslide and other independent variables. Significant values tells that except Marital status ( $p>0.05$ ) all other independent variables are statistically significant, so marital status does not have any relation with the anxiety on life due to landslide.

**Table 04** Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.189	.247		4.817	.000
Gender	.073	.071	.103	1.023	.008
Marital Status	-.138	.085	-.165	-1.631	.105
Education	.212	.046	.515	4.565	.000
House Type	.115	.051	.222	2.238	.027
Family Type	-.243	.087	-.350	-2.786	.006
Family Size	.239	.079	.340	3.018	.003
Occupation	-.042	.029	-.119	-1.442	.052
Age	.120	.042	.242	2.874	.005

a. Dependent Variable: anxiety on life

Gender ( $t = 1.023$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), Education ( $t = 4.565$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), House type ( $t = 2.238$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), Family type ( $t = -2.786$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), family size ( $t = 3.018$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), occupation ( $t = -1.442$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and age ( $t = 2.874$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) are statistically significant predictor for the anxiety of life due to land slide. Based on the magnitude of the t value education has more impact on the dependent variable conformed by beta value whereas t value of family type is very low so less impact on the anxiety on life due to landslide confirmed by beta value. From the model, when the family type and occupation are inversely proportional to the dependent variable whereas Gender, education, house type, family size and age are directly proportional to the dependent variable based on the Unstandardized coefficients.

Finally, the model suggest the equation in order to predict the Anxiety on life due to landslide is given by

$$\text{Anxiety on Life due to landslide (DV)} = 1.189 + (0.073 \times \text{Gender}) + (0.212 \times \text{Education}) + (0.115 \times \text{house type}) - (0.243 \times \text{Family type}) + (0.239 \times \text{family size}) - (0.042 \times \text{Occupation}) + (0.120 \times \text{Age}) + \text{Error}$$

### Multiple regressions 2: Anxiety on Financial loss

The analysis of multiple regressions has been used in order to predict the variable for calculating the anxiety on financial loss due to landslide among the tribal people. Dependent variable is Anxiety on financial loss whereas Age of the tribal people and their gender, family size, house type, occupation, marital status, education and family type are taken as independent variables.

**Table 05** Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.



1	.714 <sup>a</sup>	.510	.483	.354	.510	18.371	8	141	.000
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Family Size, House Type, Occupation, Gender, Marital Status, Education, Family Type

b. Dependent Variable: Anxiety On Financial Loss

The value of R from the model summary is 0.715 shows that there is the very good level of prediction. The R square value is indicating the quantity of variance in the dependent variance is explained by the independent variables. The value of R square is 0.510 which represents that 51 per cent of variance in the anxiety of financial loss (Dependent variable) is explained by the independent variables shown in the Table 05.

**Table 06 ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	18.373	8	2.297	18.371	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	17.627	141	.125		
Total	36.000	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety On Financial Loss

b. Predictors: (Constant), Age, Family Size, House Type, Occupation, Gender, Marital Status, Education, Family Type

The overall goodness of the model is explained by the analysis of variance given in the Table 06. The significant value of 0.000 lesser than the 0.05 (alpha value) represents that independent variables statistically significant for the prediction of the dependent variable,  $F(8, 141) = 18.371, p < 0.05$ . Coefficients of the multiple regressions shown in the Table 07 indicate the relation between anxiety on financial loss due to landslide and other independent variables. Significant values tells that except Marital status ( $p > 0.05$ ) all other independent variables are statistically significant, So marital status does not have any relation with the anxiety on life due to landslide.

**Table 07 Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.868	.275		6.796	.000
Gender	-.017	.079	-.017	-.217	.028
Marital Status	.051	.094	.043	.542	.589
Education	-.384	.052	.659	-7.418	.000
House Type	-.175	.057	-.240	-3.062	.003
Family Type	.685	.097	.698	7.045	.000
Family Size	-.315	.088	-.317	-3.572	.000
Occupation	-.064	.032	-.130	-1.992	.048
Age	.132	.047	.189	2.841	.005

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety On Financial Loss

Gender ( $t = -0.217, p < 0.05$ ), Education ( $t = -7.418, p < 0.05$ ), House type ( $t = -3.062, p < 0.05$ ), Family type ( $t = 7.045, p < 0.05$ ), family size ( $t = -3.572, p < 0.05$ ), occupation ( $t = -1.992, p < 0.05$ ) and age ( $t = 2.841, p < 0.05$ ) are statistically significant predictor for the anxiety of financial due to land slide. Based on the magnitude of the t value

family size has more impact on the dependent variable conformed by beta value whereas t value of education is very low so less impact on the anxiety on financial loss due to landslide confirmed by beta value. From the model, when the Gender, Education, House type, Family size and occupation are inversely proportional to the dependent variable whereas family type and age are directly proportional to the dependent variable based on the Unstandardized coefficients. Finally, the model suggest the equation in order to predict the Anxiety on financial loss due to landslide is given by

$$\text{Anxiety on financial loss due to landslide (DV)} = 1.868 - (0.017 \times \text{Gender}) - (0.384 \times \text{Education}) - (0.175 \times \text{house type}) + (0.685 \times \text{Family type}) - (0.315 \times \text{family size}) - (0.064 \times \text{Occupation}) + (0.132 \times \text{Age}) + \text{Error}$$

### Conclusion:

The study concludes that the socio democratic status of the tribes plays a significant role on their anxiety on life and financial loss due to landslide. Education of the tribal people exerts more impact on their anxiety of life regarding the landslide followed by their age and house type whereas family type of the tribal people has less impact on the anxiety of life on landslide. So, it shows that improving their education will increase their anxiety on their life due to getting awareness on the landslide. The study concludes that socio democratic status of the tribe is most significant in indentifying anxiety of the tribal people over the loss of financial due to landslide. Family type of the tribal people has most impact on determination of anxiety due to financial loss. Education of the tribal has inversely proportional on the determination of anxiety on financial loss due to landslide. It convinces that if the people are well in education they obtain the confidence in earning. The suggestion from the result is that to encourage the tribal people for proper education so that they can increase the knowledge of landside and they themselves can analyze the risk of landslide in their settlement area. The government and NGOs can help creating awareness among these tribal communities in order to reduce the anxiety on life due to landslide.

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# Culture, Society and Economy of Majuli: World's Largest River Island

Deepthi Shanker

Soubhagya Ranjan Padhi

## Abstract

*Majuli Island is known as the cultural capital of the Assamese civilization since times immemorial. It is the reservoir of Satras (religious and cultural centers), hub for multi ethnic indigenous tribal population and home for variety of migratory birds and endangered species. However, the island is under threat due to extensive soil erosion of its banks. Displacement of people and loss of property in Majuli Island due to floods has been a regular feature. As a result, people live harsh lives fighting the forces of nature. Efforts are under way to preserve its rich civilization. It has been nominated for the 'World Heritage Site Status' under UNESCO's 'cultural landscape' category. In this article, we explore the socio-culture, economic, demographic and physiographic aspects of the river island with special reference to Mishing tribe known for their river-bank settlements and river-culture.*

**Key words:** *Majuli River Island, Culture and Traditions, Mishing Tribes, Assam.*

## Introduction

Majuli is a river-island situated to the north of Jorhat (Assam) in India where the mighty Brahmaputra and Subansiri rivers converge. In 2016, it was the first island to be declared as a 'district'. The river island covers an area of around 880 sq. km. Floods are a natural phenomenon in this region and it deeply impacts the social and economic structure of the island. Sources reveal that in 1950s, the island was spread over 1255 sq.km which is now reduced drastically due to continuous erosion of banks by the Brahmaputra thus wiping out villages and displacing masses (Sharma and Phukan, 2004). Floods affect about 0.13 million people every year depriving them of their basic needs. Loss of life and property is being periodically assessed and it is found that erosion and flood have not only environmental impact but also have socio-

economic issues and implications for Majuli Island (Government of Assam, 1967). Nevertheless, Majuli has a rich civilization of its own nurtured by its people since past five centuries. The island is known for hosting indigenous tribal population, preserving the Satras (religious and cultural centers) and for its biodiversity (hotspot of endangered species). It is a hotspot for migratory birds that arrive during winter. The Greater Adjutant, Stork, Pelican, Siberian Crane and Whistling Teal are some of the birds seen in the island. With a view to protect the cultural heritage and unique landscape, the Government of India has nominated the island for the World Heritage Site Status. Recently, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has included Majuli Island in its tentative list of 'cultural landscapes'. Additionally, Majuli Island was also declared as the largest river-island in the world by the Guinness World Records. This article attempts to revisit Majuli and examine the socio-culture and economic, demographic and physiographic aspects of the river-island with special reference to Mishing tribes since they constitute a large proportion of the island's population.

### **Demography and Physiography**

According to Census 2011, the total population of the Majuli Island was 1,67,304; of which 85,566 are male and 81,738 are female. About 51 per cent of the population is male and the rest are female. Majuli is home to tribal, non-tribal and also scheduled caste people. The total number of ST (Scheduled Tribe) population in the island is 77,603 while the total SC (Scheduled Caste) population is 23,878 and the remaining constitutes 65,823. Thus, about 46 per cent belong to scheduled tribe category, while 15 per cent belong to scheduled caste category and the about 39 per cent belong to general population. About 70 per cent of Majuli's population belongs to tribal communities namely Mishing, Deuri, Kachari, and Koch-Rajbongsi. Majuli is divided into two development blocks namely Ujani Majuli Development Block and Majuli Development Block. There are about 20 village panchayats; eight in the earlier block and 12 in the later block. Under these panchayats, there are about 246 cadastral villages. Some villages were submerged in the river due to floods and hence there is no habitation. According to the census reports, more than 30 odd villages remain uninhabited.

Majuli is disconnected from the mainland of Assam by 2.5 kilometers. The only access to the island is by a ferry from Nimati Ghat in the Jorhat district of Assam in North East India. The island was formed due to the course changes of the Brahmaputra river and its tributaries, mainly



the Lohit in the south and south west; Kherkatia-Suti (branch of the river Brahmaputra in the North East); which is joined by the outlet of Subansiri River and its tributaries (Ranganadi, Dikrong, Dubla, Chici and Tune) in the North and North west. The river and its tributaries bring with them dreadful floods and loads of residues. Formation of islets around Majuli largely due to the braided and plaited nature of the river is another interesting feature. In the local language, these islets are called as *Chaporis*. There are small ponds and lake formations (similar to wetlands) on the island popularly known as *beels* in local lingo. Experts claim that these beels are rich in 'flora and fauna' and act as a breeding hotspot for many rare and unique species. Majuli Island which is surrounded by rivers and their tributaries; several chaporis and beels, together constitute the world's largest mid-river delta system. (UNESCO-<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1870/>).

### **Majuli and its People**

The north eastern region of India has been home to several tribes since time immemorial. Majuli Island in Assam is a sub-hub for tribal ethnicity. Majuli has provided shelter to all immigrants since the Middle Ages, particularly from its northern border across the river Subansiri. It is believed that this river has served as a migration route since ancient times and it was through this river route that a section of the hill tribes called Miri, now called as Mishing or Mising, came down and settled in the northern and northeastern parts of the island. Majuli Island has diversified demography as already mentioned. It includes a large cluster of tribes and also a segment of acculturated Brahmins, Kayasthas and other privileged and less-privileged caste groups. The scheduled castes include the Kaivartas, Brittial, Baniyas etc. The non-tribal communities include Koch, Kalitas, Ahoms, Chutiyas, Keot, Yogis, etc. The tribal communities include the Mishing, the Deoris and the Sonowal Kacharis. Linguistically speaking, the island is now home to many Bengalis, Marwaris, Biharis, Nepalis, few Muslims, besides Assamese non-tribal and tribal population.

The island is largely inhabited by Mishing tribes of 'Awho', originally from Arunachal Pradesh. The popular language or dialect is Assamese, Mishing and Deori. Mishings are also known as 'Miri' among the common Assamese people. They form the major ethnic group in Assam and constitutionally belong to the category of 'Scheduled Tribes' (plains). The Mishings in Majuli belong to Pargo-Mishing<sup>1</sup> section. In other words, it can be stated that one of the largest

concentrations of the Pagro-Mishing is in Majuli. The interaction between Pagro-Mishing and other communities in Majuli Island is minimal. Even though Mishing village is situated close to a Hindu village, institutional communication between the two seems to be missing. The Assamese Hindus consciously avoid them and equate them with the untouchables. On the other hand, the Pagro-Mishing do not feel the dire need for a social, economic or ritual interaction with the Assamese Hindus (Bhandari, 1992).

### **Education, Economy and Livelihood – Mishing Tribes**

Mishing's fondness for river bank settlements is evident in their habitat and lifestyle. They depend upon both land and water for their economy. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in the island and paddy is the main crop they grow. Along with farming, people also engage themselves in fishing, pottery, handloom, boat making, mask making and silk weaving to drive the economy of the island. Rice, millet, jobstear, maize etc. and different kinds of vegetables are cultivated by them. While rice is produced for domestic consumption, mustard seeds and black pulse are produced for commercial purpose. Ali- Ali-Aye-Leegang and Pohrag are the two famous festivals celebrated by Mishing people. These festivals are associated with agriculture.

Most of the houses in Majuli Island are built with bamboo upon an elevated platform for protection from flood water which is a frequent occurrence. Traditionally, the dwelling of the Mishing on stilts is called as *Chang Ghars*. The front of the house usually faces the river. Some houses have lofts below the ceiling inside their houses used for storing pots. Mishing huts have space below the elevated wooden hut meant for livestock/ cattle (mainly pigs) and pets. Bamboo is used for flooring and also for walls. Ladder or wooden planks are used to climb in and out of the houses. The vast space below the homes is used for multi-purpose activities that include, swings for babies, leisure area to play, weaving and storage space for firewood, hay, etc. Mishing women are particularly known for their handloom tradition which has rich patterns and designs. Weaving is exclusively the women's domain and most Mishing women are trained in this craft. Since cotton is grown and readily available, they extensively use cotton yarns. Some of them also use silk yarns. Of them, the *endi* yarn (obtained from silk worms fed on the leaves of castor-oil plants) and golden *muga* (silk obtained from worms fed on the *Som* tree) and white *paat* (silk obtained from worms fed on mulberry leaves) are popular. They are also known for

making blankets and *mirizen* shawls. They are particularly famous for the diamond patterns in the shawls. (Sharma, 2012). Studies reveal that there is a transition in Mishing handloom and textiles practices. In the recent years, there has been a gradual shift from the production of traditional costumes for daily use towards designer products. These new products are a blend of both modern and traditional designs to meet the aesthetic needs of customers. Mishing artisans are largely driven by commercial pursuits in the recent times. Through innovation and diversification of the products, the traditional Mishing handloom products are now used as modern textiles for commercial consumption (Chutia and Sarma, 2015).

The only means of transport to Majuli Island is the river. Everything gets to the island by a boat or a ferry. It is mind boggling to see the heavy vehicles from trucks, cars, people, small creatures, big animals, cargos getting transported by ferry. This is the fact of life in Majuli. People commute daily to their offices, schools and local markets using ferry and boats, which is the lifeline of Majuli people. Within Majuli Island, there are a few roads connecting to the main village. Life is harsh for people in Majuli Island as they have to fight with the forces of nature like floods, epidemics etc., for survival. Displacement in Majuli Island due to erosion is a known fact. Due to the erosion, Mishing families are often found living in the embankments on the road side across the river. Erosion disturbs agricultural and pig rearing activities. Shrinking of land mass also affects several occupations. Boat making, mask making, pottery, weaving and goat rearing gets severely affected leaving the people vulnerable. They lack the money and land required to undertake these occupations (Naik, 2002).

Majority of people in Mishing tribe are poor and backward. Health, education and employment situation of these people is deplorable. There are very few successful educated professionals from this tribe. Mishings have distinctive dialect that poses challenges. They find it difficult to study in Assamese language and at the same time their own dialect does not have its script. Besides, they are the victims of political and ethnic discrimination which prevents them from getting integrated into the larger developed society. Illiteracy and poverty are the major drawbacks. The disturbed younger population find it easier to get involved with the several insurgency groups. Although they are ignored by the ruling elite, they are a culturally vibrant tribe.

### **Traditional Practices**

Geographically isolated, Majuli is known for its rich river tradition and culture. Mishing tribes have five clans among them namely: Mayang, Bagra, Delu, Ayong and Sayung. According to some sources, the traditional practices of all the clans are the same. There is no hierarchy among them and they are equal to each other. They tend to marry outside their own clan, i.e. into any of the other four groups but not outside their main tribe. As a part of the Mishing tradition, in an arranged marriage, the groom's side offers 101 betel nuts to the bride's family. This act is symbolic of offering money. Later, the bride along with her family is brought to the groom's house and offered 'apong' (rice wine) as a customary practice in the marriage ceremony. This drink also known as rice beer is served as welcome drink in every Mishing home (Mahanta, 2001). The tradition of art and craft is vibrant in Majuli. Basketry, ivory, silver filigree works are well known besides wood and bamboo work.

The Mishing society is patriarchal in nature. The eldest male member in the family is considered as the head of the family. Since they practice the tradition of joint family system, the head of the family along with the married and unmarried sons live in the same house. Daughters after marriage usually leave their parental home. Daughters have no right over property (Kakoti, 2017). In the current times, much has changed among the Mishing tribes. Earlier, the focus was on the number of children; more the number of children, higher was the status and pride of the family. However now, the focus is on education. Even the literacy rate has increased among the tribes in the island. Love marriages are accepted. It is very common for the youth to travel out of Majuli on daily basis for seeking education, and later for employment and trade. The new generation youths among the Mishing tribe consider themselves as Hindus and some worship Lord Krishna. In the recent days, Mishing society has undergone drastic transformation in their life and outlook. Many have utilized the government's developmental schemes. Several have availed the benefits of the Hindu and Christian organizations which has impacted their way of life and thought process. However, Mishing society and its people have maintained the distinct identity of their ethnic group that separates them from others in the island.

### **Culture, Religion and Society**

Majuli is well-known in the world for the Satras<sup>ii</sup> which have preserved the Vaisnavite culture. Sri Sankardev began the movement of Vaishnavism in the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD, and as a result, a

number of Vaishnava Satras were established in different parts of Assam. Majuli was also the place where Sankardev met Madhavdeva who became his chief disciple and was instrumental in the spread of Ekanatha Dharma. According to popular local folklore, interestingly, when Sankardev established several Satras in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the whole area was not an island. It was only a peninsula between Brahmaputra and another river. However, due to heavy floods in 1750 that lasted for 15 days, the Brahmaputra rushed out and captured the adjacent river channel converting the peninsula into an island.

Originally, there were 65 Satras which were set up in Majuli, of which only 22 have survived. The Vaishnavite Satras were established by an Ahom king Rudra Singh (1696-1714 AD). Satras are the religious institutions of Vaishnavas and each Satra is under a spiritual head known as 'Gossain' or 'Satradhikar' who has a number of disciples under him. Satras occupy an extremely important place in the religious and cultural life of Vaishnavite Hindus of Assam. Majuli became a center stage and favored destination to establish Satras when Ahom kings started harassing and persecuting the Satradhikars and their followers. Many Satradhikars fled to Majuli Island and established their Satras as it turned out to be a safe place from the persecutors. Each Satras within its region, acts as a center for cultural activities. Some of them even play the role of democratic institutions to settle local disputes. Every village is associated with the respective Satra which lies in its region. During festivals and special occasions, people regularly participate in the various activities of their own Satras. Most prominent Satras are Auiati, Dakshinpath, Garamur and Kamalabari (Nath, 2009).

Majuli is a storehouse of art and culture. In the ancient times; it was considered as the center of Assamese civilization. Satras have contributed to the overall well-being of the Majuli society since the ancient times by supporting the Ekal movement. They act as a social and religious machinery to help the poor people by providing basic education and daily needs. They contribute to the local economy and development of the region by acting as a tourist destination and pilgrimage centers. However, an interesting aspect of the Satras is that they do not allow the meat eaters to participate in their events. As a result, several sections of Majuli population are attracted to the Christian missionaries. There are a few Christian missionaries on the island who have supported the people in their pursuit of education and employment. There are many tribal people who have converted into Christianity. Many of them claimed that the conversion was voluntary based on their own willingness and interest.

## Conclusions

The general argument is that river Brahmaputra ritually eats up the Majuli Island every year. Since the past 60 years, it has consumed more than half of the island. Disappearance of land leads to the loss of traditional means of livelihood to the people of the island, especially who depend upon farming and agriculture. This has led to mass migration of people from Majuli Island to nearby districts in search of livelihood. Displacement due to erosion is not new to Majuli. Several boards and committees have been set up to help the inhabitants of Majuli Island who were affected by the floods. Crores of rupees are spent to provide relief to the displaced. Yet, the problem continues every year and there has not been any definite solution. The government spends money on erecting porcupines and spurs to stop erosions. Often, these preventive blocks are found in the middle of the Brahmaputra river after few months leaving the government bodies and the locals helpless. Critics suggest that lack of proper research has led to frequent loss of money and material. Majuli Island has never received its due credit. Although it is a treasure of rich culture, it is constantly struggling for survival and existence. The struggle for survival is due to natural factors like erosion and also due to the political factors. Few instances and incidents have revealed that development in some pockets of Majuli Island has been obstructed by the extremist's interference.

The island is under threat due to the extensive soil erosion of its banks. It is very crucial that the 'pollution free' island is saved, because there is a symbiotic relationship that prevails between the ecology and the inherent culture of the people. Majuli has been the cultural capital and the cradle of Assamese civilization for the past five hundred years. It is believed that the Satras of Majuli over the centuries have given a direction on the cultural front of Assam. Some of the Satras in Majuli Island are well maintained in their original character and protected from external pressure for change and distortion. They are an authentic glimpse and insight into Assam's cultural past. With the socio-economic development in the island in the last few years, Majuli now has the distinction of being the only place in Assam where the past blends with the present in an enchanting manner. It is important that these existing Sastras are preserved and protected from extinction. Majuli has the potential to be India's key tourist destination. Every part of the Majuli Island is a scenic spot. Whether it is the bamboo houses, pristine green pastures, roaring waves of the river, the spiritual Satras, the beautiful wicker bridges, wetlands or

the small ponds, the island looks like a post card with picture-perfect visuals. Efforts are underway to preserve Majuli as a World Heritage Center. Contextual and planned effort is necessary to bring sustainable development in the island.

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## END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Pagro-Mishing group belong to Barogam division of the Mishing tribe. Others clans which constitute this group are Bomi and Tayo-taye and a number of smaller groups. Pagro group or Pagrophratry is the largest, and they are also believed to be the earliest emigrants to the plains of Assam. The other clans which are smaller in size emigrated later and they were gradually incorporated in the Pagro-Mishing society. Hence, the group is largely known by name



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Pagro-Mishing as the term encompasses the inclusion of other phratries. Hence Barogam-Mishing is also referred to as Pagro-Mishing (Bhandari, 1992).

<sup>ii</sup> A Satra is normally named by prefixing the name of place or its location. It is a socio-religious institution under the spiritual and religious authority which is headed by Mahanta or Satradhikar. He is the spiritual guide possessing spiritual knowledge and holds his office for life. The process of imparting this spiritual knowledge to devotees under a Satradhikar is known as 'saran' (Sengupta, 1996). Sankardeva brought discipline and an element of spirituality amidst the material pursuits of people in Assam. Sankardeva's contribution to common people through classical songs, dances, dramas and philosophy is evident in the Satria culture.

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## **A Study on the Socio-Economic Conditions of Urban Street Vendors in Thiruvananthapuram District**

**Sunitha.L.F**

### **Abstract**

*Though street vending plays a vital role in assuring livelihood to a large underprivileged and marginalized section of the society, its contribution is seldom recognized by the city administration or urban planning agencies. Article 19 (1) (g) of the constitution of India promises the right to practice any profession, or to carry on any occupation, trade or business to all Indian citizens. Different sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Police Act empower police to remove obstructions on the streets. It is assumed that there are nearly 1 crore street vendors in India. They are mainly observed in Indian cities. It is an informal economy which is not regulated. Kerala is believed to be giving shelter to 4.5 lakh street vendors (Pradeep Kumar, 2016), which is still a vague and contradictory figure as per government officials. Despite its increasing importance in the total economy, polices, regulations, service, infrastructure facilities, etc. Are not available for the street vending and the environment under which the vendor operate a business are not suitable for their health and wellbeing.*

Key words: Street vendor, livelihood, informal sector, workforce, economic instability.

### **Introduction**

Street vending is a global phenomenon and the most visible aspect of the informal sector. Like other informal sector, street vending is characterized by low level of income, easy of entry, self-

employed and it involves large number of people. Street vendors are very important part of the informal sector in the country. It is estimated that around 80 per cent of the population are engaged in street vending jobs. Women form a large population of street vending in almost every city. Street vending is not only a source of self-employment to the poor in cities and towns, but also a means to provide affordable and convenient services to a majority of the urban population.

Street vendors are often those who are unable to get regular jobs in the remunerative formal sector due to their low level of education and skills. The importance of this sector cannot be undermined, especially considering that the government does not have the capacity to provide jobs to the millions of unemployed people in India. They contribute significant role in local economic growth and development of the urban economies. Public authorities considered street vendors as a nuisance and as disturbances of sidewalks and pavements and do not consider the services provided by street vendors to the general public. Street vendors provide services to the urban population with their limited resources and labors. Street vendors have been demanding protection from civic agencies and the state governments, so they can earn their livelihood without fear. Uncertainty and insecurity are the two main challenges faced by street vendors.

In developed countries also constitute a large number of street vendors. Lack of employment is the main reason for the increasing number of street vendors. Around the world, millions of people earn their livelihood as street vendors. In markets, on streets, at stalls, and on the go, street vendors sell anything from hot food to fresh produce, shoes to hair products, and electronics to everyday household goods.

### **Scope of the study**

The study is attempted to address the challenges and opportunities of street vending in Trivandrum city, in general. The result of the study provide a better understanding and awareness to policy maker, to design an effective and efficient strategy for the improvement of the livelihood of the street vendors and for the development of street vending. The study also serves as a steppingstone and makes the modest contribution for those who are interested to conduct research on street vending. In addition, the findings of the study provide information to make decision makers and responsible bodies make aware of the challenges and prospects of street vending in the city and alleviate or minimize the challenges. Moreover, it will help planners and

government bodies as a source point of information. In this context to understand the status, financial stability, social and economic impacts, occupational diseases, awareness about government act/schemes, etc. of street vendors in Trivandrum, this study is so fruitful. Based on the findings, conclusion, and suggestions, the government agencies can formulate the subsequent measures or programs to address adverse effects due to occupational problems and related things.

## **Review of literature**

A Literature review is a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge and methodological approaches on a particular topic. Literature reviews are secondary sources and such; do not report any new or original experimental work its ultimate aim is to bring the reader up to date with current literature on a topic and forms the basis for another goal, such as, future research that may be needed in the area. A well-structured literature review is characterized by a logical flow of ideas, current and relevant references with consistent, appropriate, referencing style, proper use of technology, and unbiased and comprehensive view of the previous research on the topic.

The National Classification of Occupation 1968 defines street vendors as hawker, peddler, and street vendor; sell articles of daily utility and general merchandise such as vegetables, sweets, cloth, utensils and toys, on footpaths. Normally purchases goods from wholesale market according to his needs and capital available. They load in basket or in pushcarts, wheel barrow or tricycle and moves in selected areas to effect sales. Many a times they announce loudly goods or articles on sale and their display goods or articles of sale on footpath and effect sales. For higher profit few purchase goods in lot, in auction or other sales. May prepare and sell his/her own products and may operate means of conveyance. Vendor may work on salary or commission basis or both.

According to the survey, conducted by Trivandrum Corporation, there are about 20000 vendors, which include both legal and illegal street vendors. There are many laws implemented by the Indian government for the development of street vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation Act, 2014) is an act enacted by the parliament of India to regulate street vendors in public areas and protect their rights. But most of them are illiterate to aware about the rights granted to them.

Street vending is an urban phenomenon both in the developing and developed countries. Street vending is not documented as a legal activity as per most of all the governments across the world, and government officers see these vending activities as inflammation in the development of the city. It has been found that the contribution of the informal sector to GDP is 29% in Latin America and 41% for Asia (Indira, 2014).

Kar and Marjit (2009) they states that street vendors in India explain the connection between informal trade and poverty. The finding shows that the growth of informal wage in the informal sector is capable of reducing the incidence of urban poverty. The study argues that, real informal wage increased with trade reform and transmitted favorable impact on urban poverty reduction.

Rina Agarwal (2009) - An economic sociology of informal work: the case of India. It provides an internationally comparative measure of India's informal workforce. It illustrates informal workers social conditions relative to those of formal workers. It highlights the expansion of the informal workforce since liberalization. It exposes political action strategies Indian Informal workers are launching against the state.

D.Saha (2011)'s study revealed that the vendors in Mumbai constitute one of the most vulnerable and miserable sections of the urban working poor. They earn their livelihood in hostile circumstances, and face daily impositions from all quarters: the civic authorities, the police, the citizens groups, the local leaders, and the money lenders. It is only through the joining of hands that they can exert themselves and realize their demands. The low rate of active union membership outlines the fact that awareness among vendors of their rights and responsibilities is generally lacking. Intermediaries take advantage of the looseness of associations among the vendors and exploit this to the maximum capacity.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The very general objective of this research is to describe the current Socio-economic status and problems faced by urban street vendors in Trivandrum city. The objectives include:

- a) To analyses socio-economic status of street vendors.

- b) To study the problems faced by urban street vendors in Trivandrum city.
- c) To evaluate the awareness level of urban street vendors about the various government schemes introduced to uplift them.

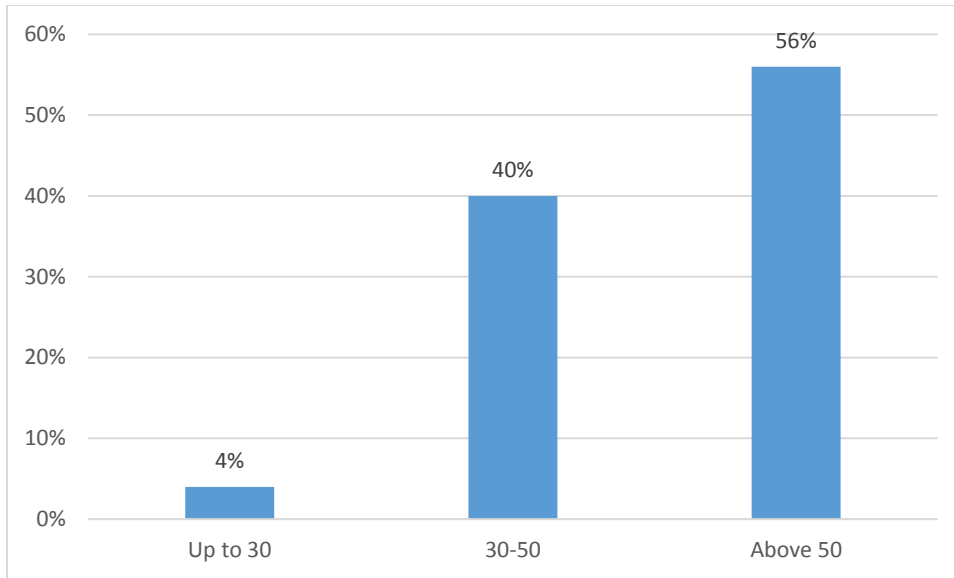
## **Research Methodology**

The study is conducted to understand the socio-economic status and the problems faced by the urban street vendors in Trivandrum city. This study uses both the primary and secondary sources of data for collecting information. Simple random sampling technique is used for selecting the sample. A total sample of 100 was selected. The primary data has been collected by using a well structured schedule which has been personally administrated and collected from a sample of respondents from Kerala were selected for the study . Purposive random sampling method has been adopted .The secondary data were collected from published and unpublished online sources, magazines, journals, books, etc. Simple statistical tools, charts, and graphs were used to analyze the data.

## **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The present Section is the analysis of urban street vending in various categories. An attempt has been made to access the factors of challenges faced by street vendors on their trade. Samples were selected from different places of Thiruvananthapuram City.

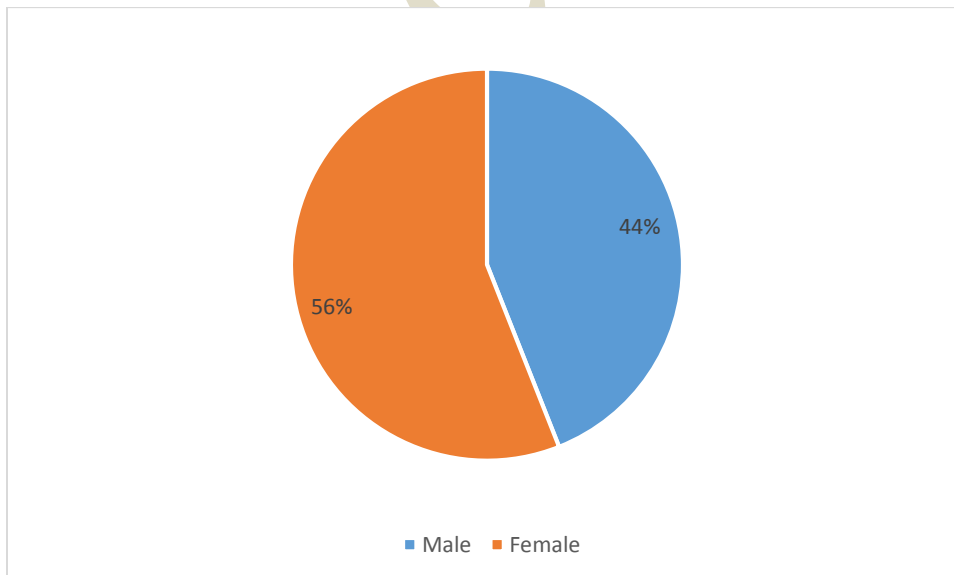
## **Age Composition**



Source :Primary Survey

Primary survey shows that 56% of the respondents belongs to the age group 50 and above and 40% falls under the age group 30-50, only 4 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group up to 30. This reveals that majority of the middle age and old aged people.

### Gender Composition



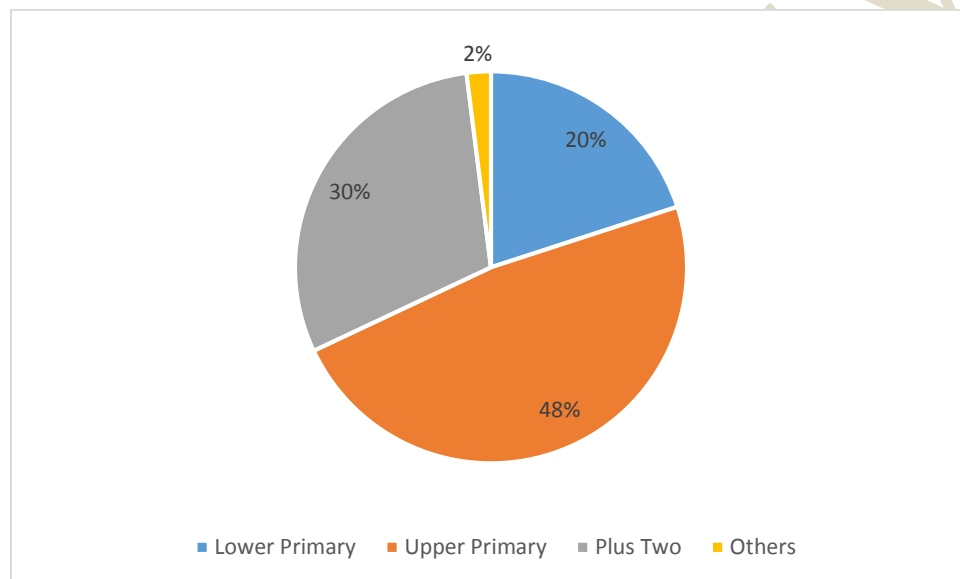
Source :Primary Survey



Primary data shows that 44 percent of the respondents are males and 56 percent people are females. This reveals the majority of the women employing in the street vending.

### **Educational Status**

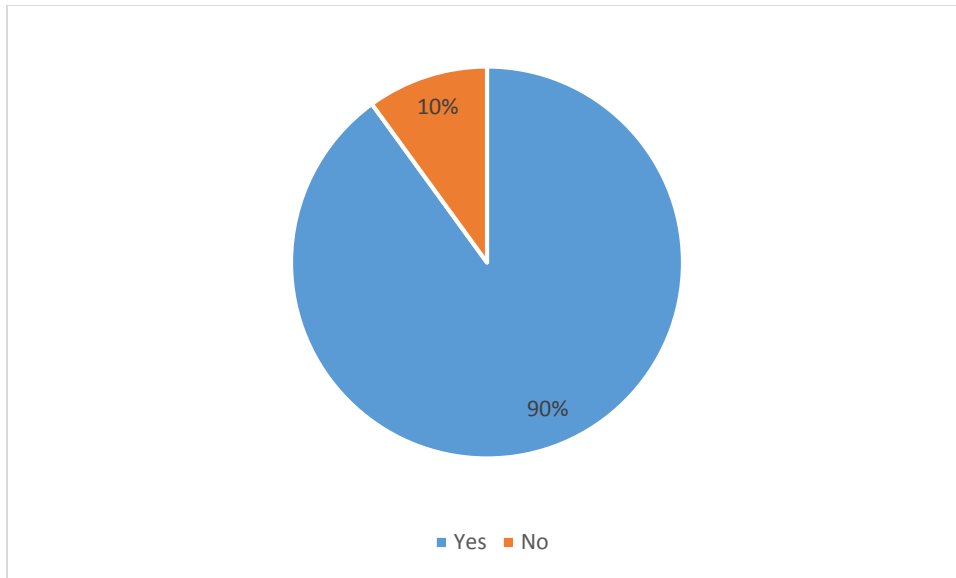
Education plays an important role in any sector. As per the table 3.4, 24 of the respondents have Upper Primary level of education, 10 of the respondents have Lower Primary level education, 15 of the respondents belongs to plus two, and 1 respondent belongs to other qualification. It is clear that the majority of the respondents are belongs to the Upper Primary level of educational qualification.



Source: Primary Survey

As per the primary data, 48 Percent of the respondents belong to the Upper Primary level of education and 2 percent belongs to other category. This emphasizes that majority of the sample street vendors have UP level of education.

### **Primary Occupation**

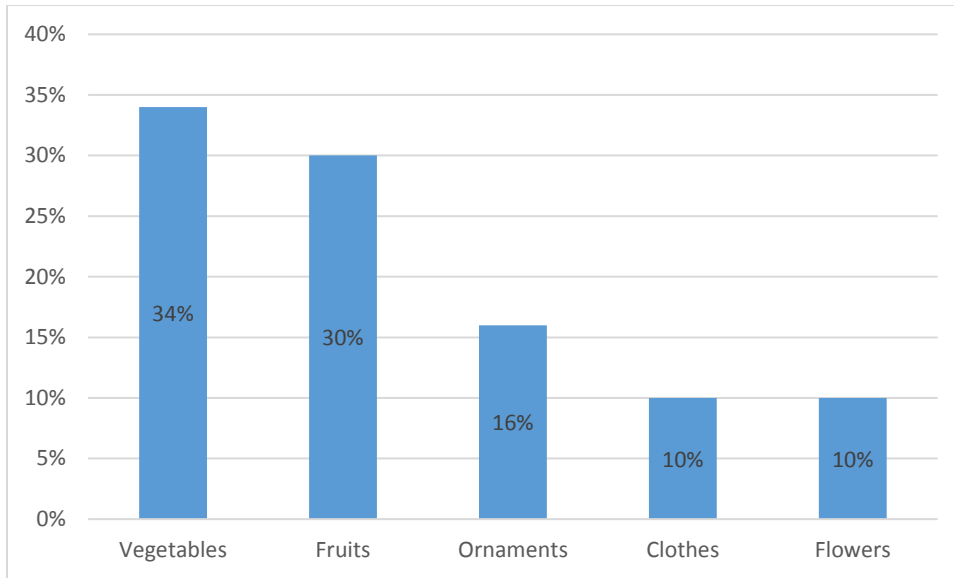


Source: Primary Survey

Primary data shows that 90 percent of the respondents considered street vending as their primary occupation and 10 percent of the respondents have other jobs besides street vending. It reveals that majority of the respondents belongs to yes category and considers street vending as their primary occupation.

### **Vending Product**

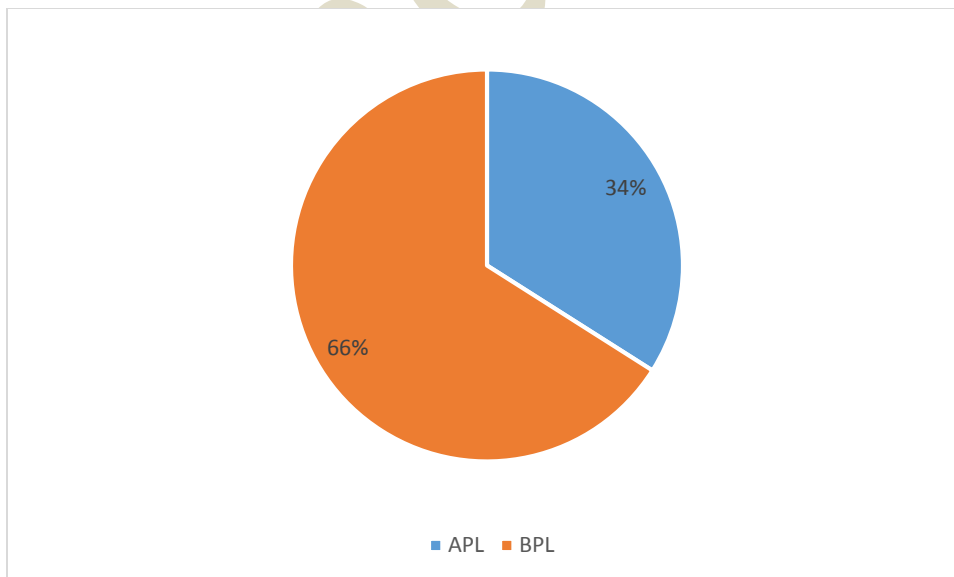
Level of profit and income of street vendors will always base on the type of products they sell.



Source : Primary Survey

The primary data reveals that 34 percent of the respondents are engaged in selling vegetables and 10% are selling flowers and clothes. This shows that majority of the vendors are selling vegetables more than any other things.

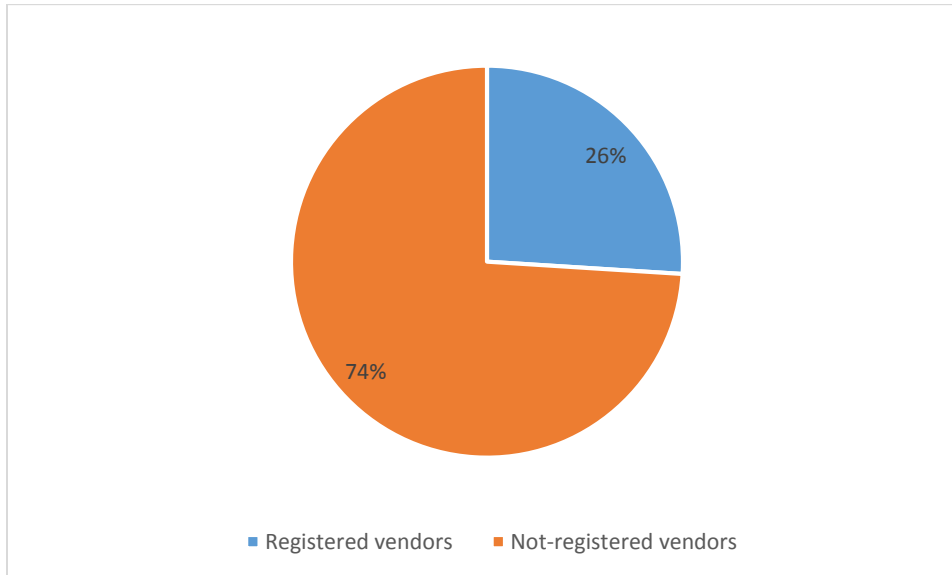
### Ration card Status



Source :Primary Survey

Primary data shows that 34 percent of the respondent are APL card holders and rest of the 66 percent are BPL card holders. This reveals that majority of the street vendors are BPL card holders.

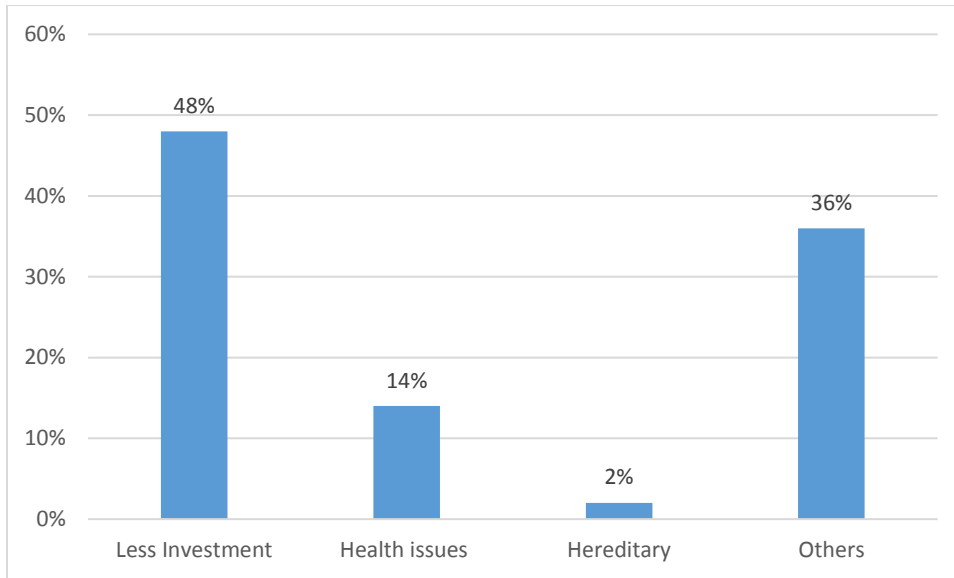
### Registered Vendors



Source :Primary Survey

Primary data shows that 26 percent of the respondent are registered vendors and the rest of the 74 percent are not-registered vendors. This disclosed that majority of the respondents are not-registered urban street vendors.

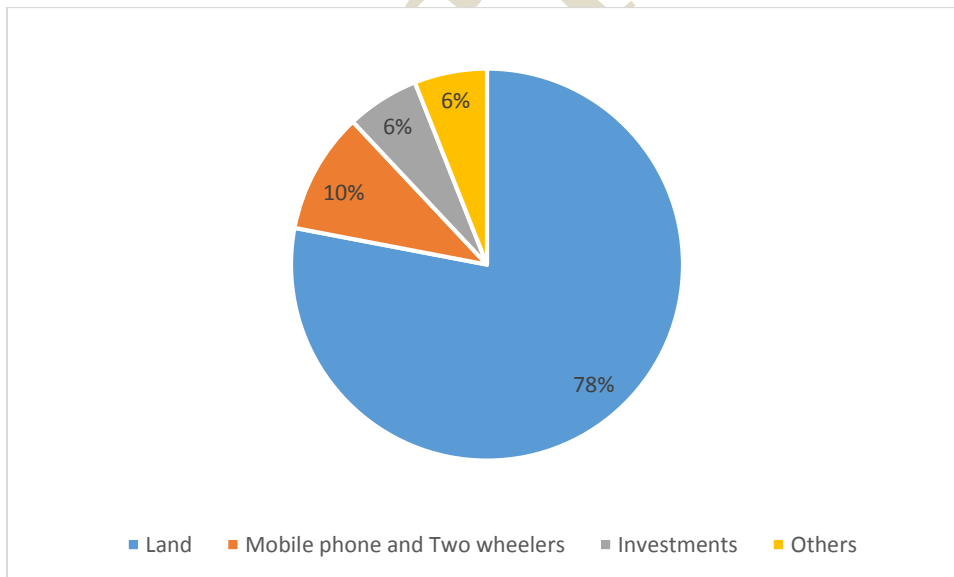
### Reason for Vending



Source: Primary Survey

Primary data shows that 48 percent of the respondents belongs to less investment category, and 2 percent falls under hereditary category. This reveals that majority of the sample chooses less investment as a major reason for the street vending.

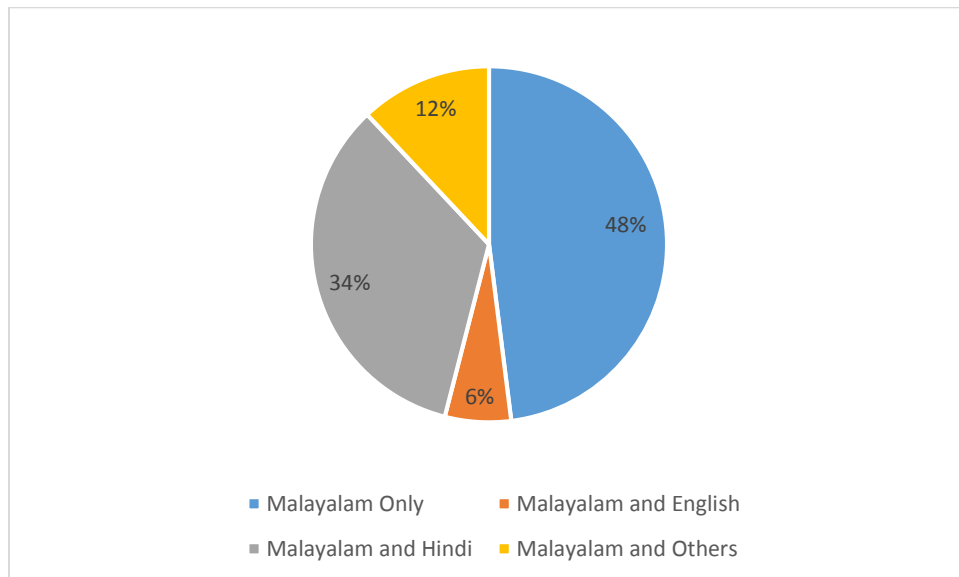
### Ownership of the Vendor



Source: Primary Survey

As per the primary data 39 of the respondents own their land, 5 respondents owns mobile phones and two wheelers, 3 respondents belongs Investments and 3 respondents falls under others. It is clear that majority of the respondents owns land.

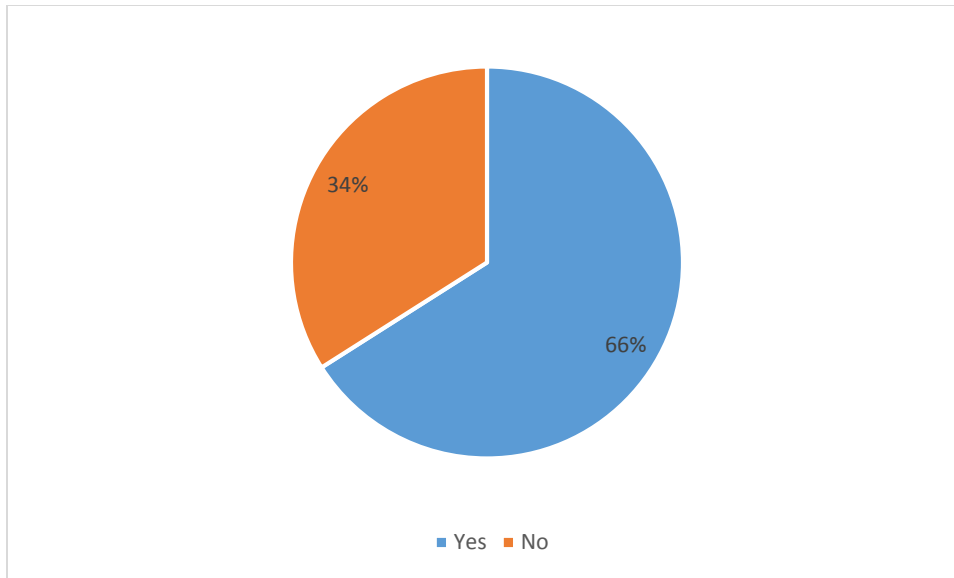
### Languages Known



Source :Primary Survey

As per the primary data almost all respondents knew their mother tongue, which is Malayalam language. 24 respondents belongs to only Malayalam category, 3 respondents belongs to Malayalam and English category, 17 respondents belongs to Malayalam and Hindi category, 6 respondents falls under Malayalam and others category. It is clear that most of the respondents falls under the Malayalam only category.

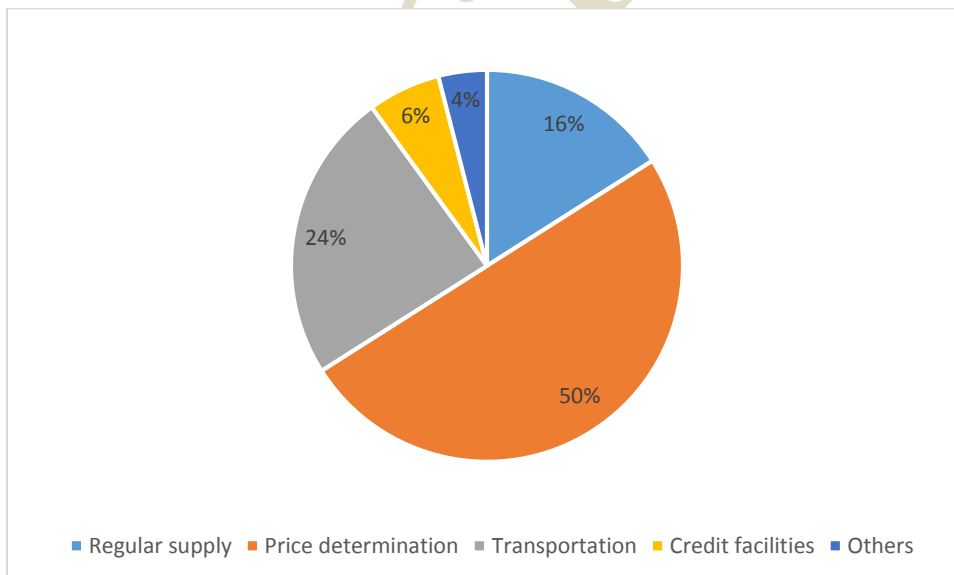
### Registered Vendor



Source: Primary Survey

As per this survey, there are nearly 37 percent vendors not registered under Town Vending Committee. This is due to lack of awareness about registration among street vendors or due to inability to fulfill the conditions for registering in it.

### Difficulties While Purchasing Goods

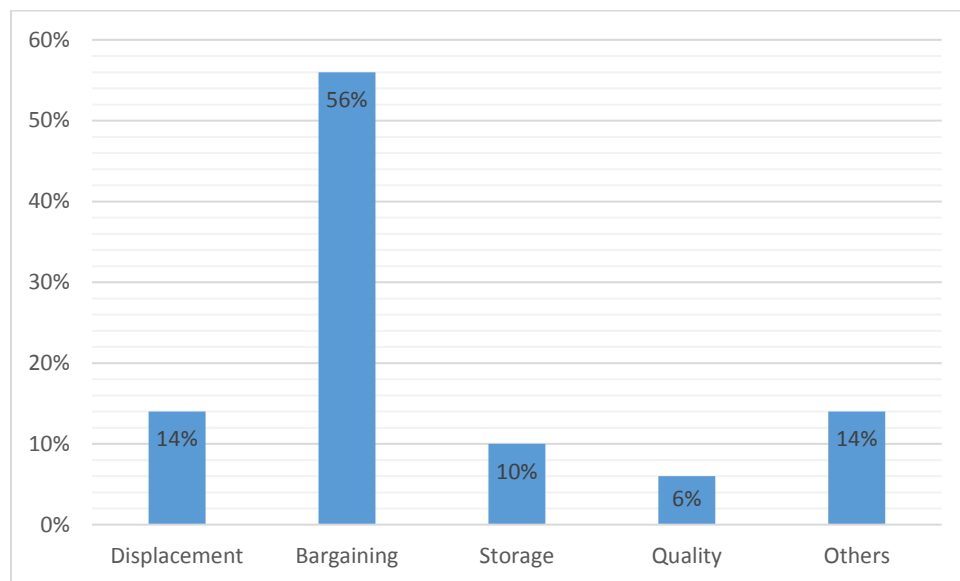


Source: Primary Survey



As per the primary data 25 of the respondents considers price determination as the difficulties while purchasing goods and 2 of the respondents considers other factors as the difficulties while purchasing goods. It is clear that majority of the respondents considers price determination as the major difficulty while purchasing goods.

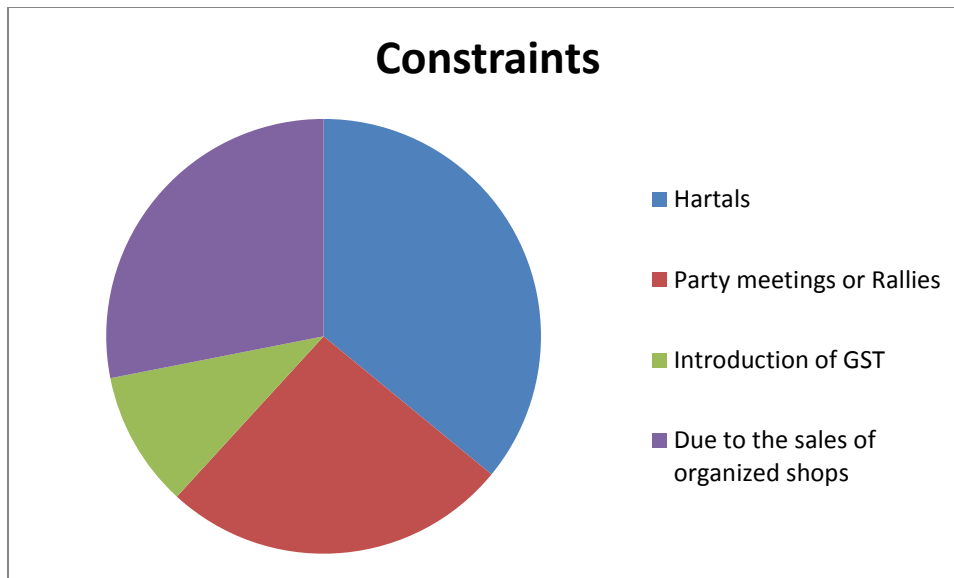
### **Difficulties While Selling Goods**



Source: Primary Survey

As per the primary data, 7 of the respondents belongs to the displacement category, 28 of the respondents belongs to the bargaining category, 5 of the respondents belongs to the storage category, 3 of the respondents belongs to the quality and 7 respondents belongs to the others category. It is clear that majority of the respondents have the difficulty of bargaining while selling goods.

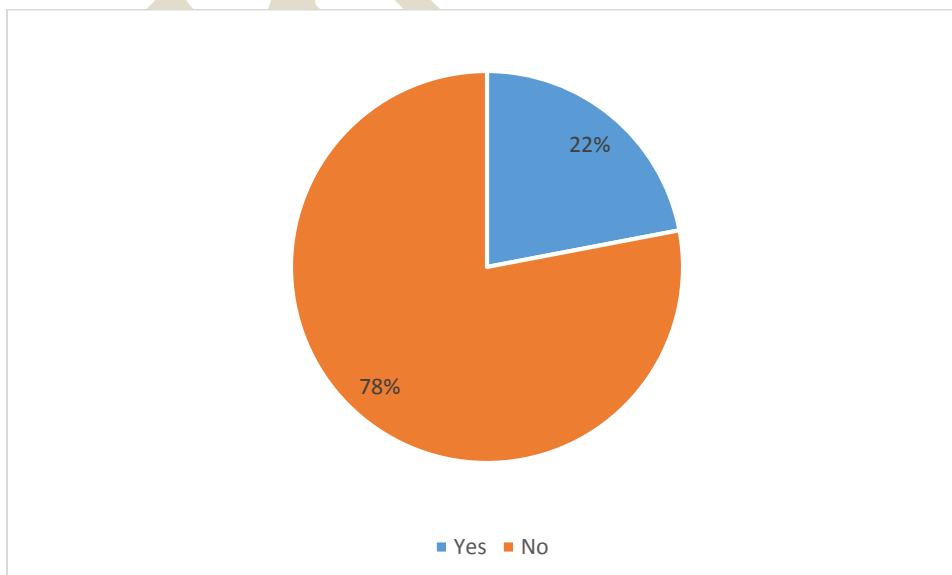
### **Constraints faced by Street Vendors**



Source: Primary Survey

As per the primary data most of the respondents are affected by hartals which results in the losses in their business. Party meetings/ rallies, Introduction of GST, Due to the sales of organized shops are some of the other constraints faced by the street vendors. From the survey it is clear that majority of the respondents are affected by hartals.

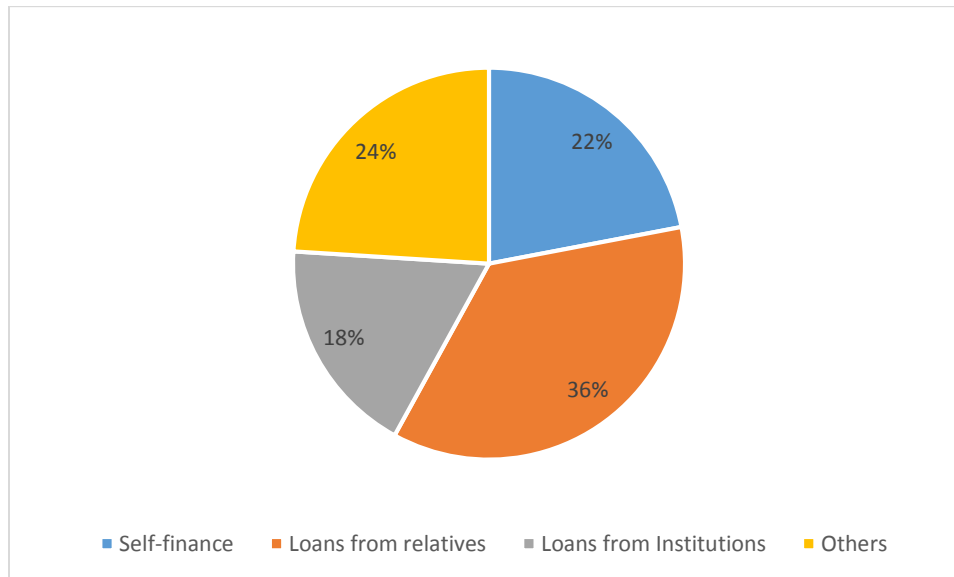
### Life Insurance Policy



Source: Primary Survey

According to the study conducted, 39 of the respondents do not have life insurance policy and rest of the 11 respondents have life insurance policy. It is clear that majority of the respondent do not have life insurance policy.

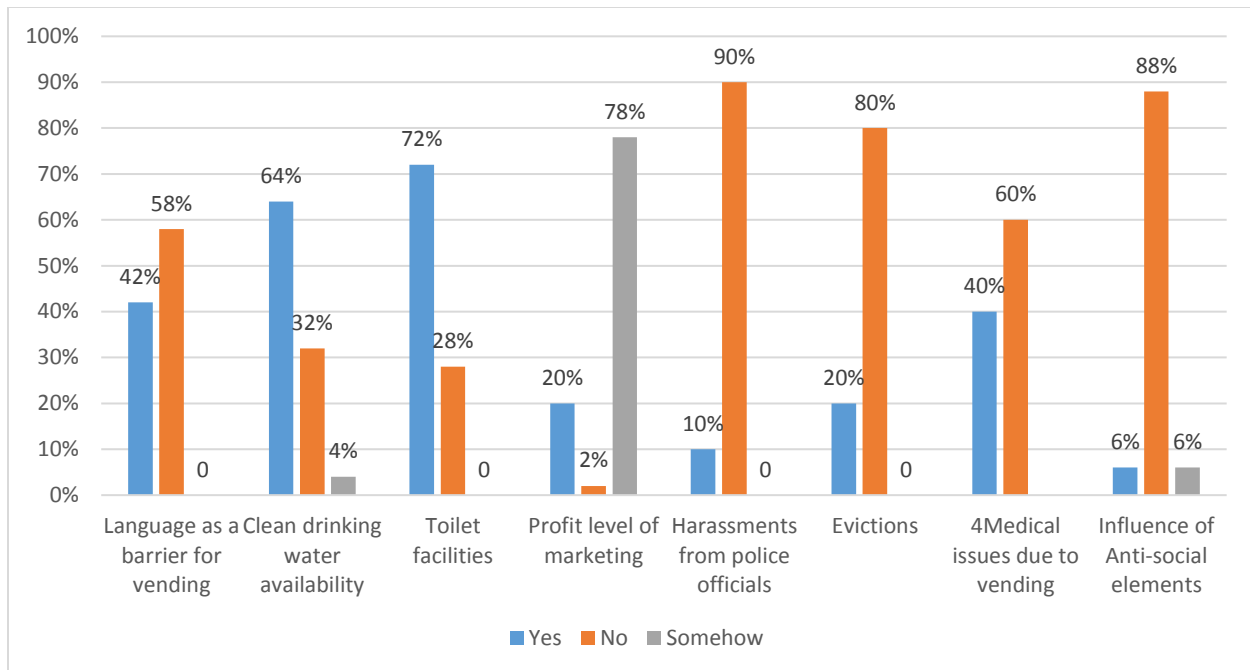
### Sources of Finance



Source: Primary Survey

As per the primary data, 18 of the respondents took loans from the relatives as the source of finance and 9 of the respondents uses loans from institutions to run their business. It is clear that majority of the respondents took loans from their relatives to run the vending.

### Challenges Faced by Street Vendors



Source: Primary Survey

The main challenges of street vendors are insecurity and uncertainty. The primary data reveals that the challenges faced by street vendors includes clean drinking water availability facilities, toilet facilities, language as a barrier for vending, profit level marketing, harassments from police officials, evictions, medical issues due to vending, influence of anti-social elements, etc.

## Conclusion

Street vendors can be stationary and occupy space on the pavements or other public/private areas, or could be mobile, and move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts or in cycles or baskets on their heads, or could sell their wares in moving buses.

The study clearly revealed the current status of urban street vendors in Trivandrum, in terms of their current needs & problems. Since the state of Kerala has achieved a very high literacy rate, the so called street vendors are trying to survive in the society with available basic living standards. The vending history is clearly showing that, the Kerala street vendors are dominant in Kerala Street for last 25years. Most of them survived along with their nuclear family through this primary occupation. Most of them have basic education. Even though the central government has

come out with Street Vendors Act, (Protection of Livelihood & Regulation of Street Vending), 2014 and state government with Kerala Street Vendors Scheme (Protection of Livelihood & Regulation of Street Vending), 2016, the registration through Town Vending Committees (TVCs) are not up to the mark. Kudumbashree is supposed to be act as the Nodal Agency for this registration & certification process. Their licensing process is still under discussions. Strict & controlled programmes are to be implemented to convert BPL category of street vendors to APL. Mobility of street vendors is the real difficulty to track & study their current living & trading standards. This creates an ambiguity to identify the actual population of this community. Since they have got a long trading track, they are not at all willing to relocate from their current location. The promising factor is that a majority of them have election ID, ration card and Aadhar card. Few of them are yet to enter into the circle of banking activities. Health issues, having only low capital for investment and family occupation are the major reasons for being in this. Women and differently abled people are also engaged in street vending. Since the daily income is so meager, they have to work continuously more than the normal (more than 8hours). The recent trend shows that the evening & night street trading is increasing phenomenally. The leading vending style is stationary mode, at least for that day.

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Review of *Debating India: Essays on Indian Political Discourse* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015) by Bhikhu Parekh

Sudeepta Ghose

Literally, the old saying ‘don’t not judge a book by its cover’ is not true of Bhikhu Parekh’s *Debating India: Essays on Indian Political Discourse*. The front cover with the title and the back cover with the Sanskrit maxim vādevādejāyatetattvabodhah (‘Truth is discovered and assimilated or realized by debate and discussion’) capture the very essence of the book. The main text is divided into two sections. The first, ‘Public Debates’, having seven chapters focuses on the tradition of public debate in India and its influence on Indian democracy. The second, ‘Limits of Dialogue’, having five chapters elaborates primarily on Gandhi’s non-violence including its crucial function as a facilitator of rational discussions. Not being a mere chronicler, Parekh furnishes these chapters with deep insights and critical reflections. His masterly craftsmanship qualifies all the chapters as distinct essays and yet these remain congruous.

The immaculately written Introduction deserves special mention. Apart from initiating the reader about the different chapters that follow, Parekh takes the liberty to express some of his views and concerns including his reservations with Amartya Sen’s *Argumentative Indian*. Such a take makes the Introduction enthralling. Chapter 1, with its fascinating theme, is brilliantly written. Here, the author’s dexterity enables one to grasp the tradition of public debates in India from around 1000 BCE to those that took place in the Constituent Assembly. In the second chapter, Parekh takes up a much neglected subject of research. He brings the spotlight on national symbols of India and debates that took place while choosing those. Interestingly, though Parekh acknowledges ‘deliberate ambiguity’ was, at times, maintained while choosing some of those symbols, he argues that given the urgencies of the time such actions were judicious. In the following chapter, public debates that took place between Gandhi and Tagore are explored. Here, the author intends to drive a point home – instead of being adversaries, debaters can be excellent dialogical partners



having mutual respect and complementing each other's lacuna. Parekh showcases this by highlighting the mutual deference and understanding that existed between Gandhi and Tagore even when they differed sharply. The succeeding chapter focuses on Ambedkar. At this point, one observes the fabric of Gandhi-Ambedkar debates is much different from that of Gandhi-Tagore debates. Parekh attributes this to Ambedkar's overtly hostile stance towards Gandhi and also to the deep-rooted differences that existed between the two. However, he emphasises that even hostile dialogical partners like Gandhi and Ambedkar can end up playing complementary roles. Nehru's 'national philosophy', which Parekh suggests is the outcome of a lengthy debate, is the subject of scrutiny in Chapter 5. Here, seven basic components of the 'national philosophy' have been identified and the author painstakingly probes into each of these. The next chapter can be considered as a continuation of the preceding one. It discusses the debates that surfaced in context of the 'national philosophy' and how Nehru dealt with those by making modifications. Chapter 7 shifts to the current state of affairs in India. At this stage, Parekh makes a crucial intervention – he laments that the republican ethos enshrined in the Indian constitution have been shrouded over by the discourse of democracy. He then proceeds to undertake an in-depth study of the Indian polity and subsequently contemplates on the 2014 parliamentary elections. Concerned that he is, Parekh wonders whether the thumping victory of BJP in the 2014 elections would instil a sense of confidence in the Hindus and make them more tolerant or sanction them to undermine democratic values.

The second section begins with Chapter 8 where Einstein's perspective on Gandhi's non-violence is discussed. Parekh points out that Einstein was apprehensive of its effectiveness under certain circumstance. He also discusses other limitations of Gandhi's non-violence and what he calls its 'paradoxes'. This chapter enables one to develop a critical perspective on Gandhi's non-violence as a strategy. The subsequent chapter not only ventures into the philosophical basis of non-violence and conditions of its success but also has more to offer. Parekh uses his expertise to elaborate how the Mahatma would have responded to some contemporary issues

including the Babri Masjid dispute, which is resurfacing presently. Chapter 10 is distinct in style. Parekh conjures up an imaginary dialogue between Gandhi and Osama bin Laden through exchange of letters. He plays the role of a turncoat debater validating the use of violence when he purports as Osama and then furnishes Gandhi's likely responses. In this dialogue, across two moments and between two proponents of irreconcilable perspectives, limitations of rational discussions and Gandhi's non-violence are spotted. Nevertheless, Parekh remains optimistic that debates and dialogues, notwithstanding all these limitations, do have the potential of improving things. The following chapter takes up the vital theme of inter-religious dialogues. A need of the hour, Parekh meticulously identifies some of the difficulties facing such initiatives and calls for intra-religious dialogues as well. He then proceeds to examine Gandhi's perspective on religion and God. Gandhi considered, as religions suffered from inadequacies, religions can enrich themselves through dialogues between each other. In the last chapter, Parekh takes up a subject which initially seems distinct from the rest of the text. Delving into the classical Indian notion of friendship this chapter brings out its distinctiveness and its relevance today. Unlike the West, the author stresses that the classical Indian concept of friendship is 'cosmocentric' and entails the principles of non-violence. Though the main text concludes with this chapter one must turn the pages further since the elaborate Notes and References section is a storehouse of information.

Although a prolific work there are some major shortcomings in this book, which cannot be ignored. First, Parekh fails to take note of the intra-religious debates within Islam in India such as those initiated by the Mahdawis, Ismailis and other Muslim groups. Next, though there is a passing reference a more detailed documentation of the interactions with Zoroastrians in Akbar's court would have been valuable. Furthermore, the book gives an impression that only bilateral debates took place in India. Parekh overlooks the major tripartite debates like those amongst the Christian missionaries, Hindus and Muslims. Moreover, there is no mention of the important debates Gandhi had with the Hindutva ideologues like

Savarkar, et al. This is a striking omission given that Parekh is an expert in Gandhian thought and since this book, quite predictably, focuses on Gandhi. Again, though in the last chapter Parekh draws the reader's attention to Plato and Aristotle, reference to Derrida's influential *Politics of Friendship* with its focus on friendship and democracy would have been commendable. However, in the final analysis, the relevance of the book outweighs its deficiencies. It comes at a time when tolerance – the bedrock of democracy – has reached its lowest ebb and when spaces for dialogues and accommodation have shrunk significantly in India. The democratic ethos of India, today, is blemished by rising incidences of hate crimes and infringements upon personal liberties by self-appointed morality police. At this critical hour, Bhikhu Parekh's work inspires one to strive for restoring India's long tradition of debates and spreading the principles of non-violence – thus rejuvenating India's democratic spirit. The book also encourages to move beyond an anthropocentric world view, practice suhradāmsarvabhootānām ('good will to all living beings') and to establish a biocentric world order.

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