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About the Journal

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Contents

Articles

Review Article

Book Review

Composite Culture, Censusoperations And Communal Consciousness in The Colonial Punjab

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Abstract

Pre-colonial Punjab had been an abode of composite culture where diverse religious and cultural traditions co-existed and flourished for centuries together. The people of the region were living in a highly diffused world where the religious exclusiveness was hardly practised. It was a folk civilisation which manifested itself through the shared cultural practices and social fluidity. The British after annexing the province in 1849 began to define and document the differences of the native society. It was as per the larger colonial project of understanding the oriental world. The enumerative practices became the most important tool in identifying and glaring up the difference within a highly diffused world of the people of the Punjab. In the process, the colonial enumerators failed to understand the eclectic nature of the religious practices in the Punjab and provided neat and clean boundaries to the overlapping identities. They ignored the tribal

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religious affiliations and defined the Punjabi society in a highly atomized fashion. The knowledge of numbers became a tool in the hands of new urban elite which was championing the cause of socio-religious reform. Numerical strength was also equated with the potentialities to control the employment opportunities and political power. This created a strong sense of competition among the prominent communities of the Punjab which tore asunder the social fabric of the Punjab and resulted in the cataclysmic partition of 1947.

Keywords: Punjab, composite culture, syncretism, census operations, communal consciousness

I

Pre-colonial Punjab was a region thriving with traditions of composite culture and syncretic traditions. There were overlapping identities without any clear boundaries in the social world of the people of the Punjab. The religious exclusiveness of the ineluctable conflict between the self and the other was hardly witnessed in the pre-modern past of the Punjab. The situation in the Punjab quite clearly reflected social fluidity, where the boundaries that defined both caste and religion were much fuzzier than what our common sense understanding of these terms suggests today (Malhotra, 2009[2002]: 23,24).The people had a common social world deeply rooted in shared language, folklore, customs, and food habits etc. which were unique to inhabitants of the region. Thus, the cultural matrix of Punjab is a "historically evolved habitat and has a particular pattern of life, reflecting in specific social, religious, cultural and linguistic signifiers, creations and artifacts" (Gaur, 2016: 8) Social moorings of the people were conditioned by the local element without having much influence of race or religion. The growth of communal consciousness can be seen emerging out of cultural diversity and pluralism to the

accelerating obsession with communal boundaries, which resulted in the surgical division of the province in 1947 (Singh and Kaur 2013: 122). Prior to 1860, there was perhaps no identifiable Hindu, Muslim or Sikh identity(Bayly, 1985: 202). People were closely related ethnically and at the same time they were at a level of culture which was fairly uniform and, in a way, it was a folk civilization which was devoid of self-consciousness (Chaudhary, 2006[1964]: 568). The experience of life was sufficiently secure and rooted to enable the society as a whole to evolve mechanism for containing tensions. So that even if there was vile outrage, the rich heterogeneity of life conducted dialogically was never dangerously threatened (Bhalla, 1999: 3121).

Jawaharlal Nehru, in his seminal work, observed: "Though outwardly there was diversity and infinite variety among our people, everywhere there was that tremendous impress of oneness, which had held all of us together for ages past, whatever political fate or misfortune had befallen us.... The essential unity had been so powerful that no political division, no disaster or catastrophe, had been able to overcome it.... A country with long cultural background and common outlook of life develops a spirit that is peculiar to it and that is impressed on all its children, however much they may differ among themselves" (Nehru, 2010[1946]: 51,52). For him, India was like an "ancient palimpsest on which each layer upon layer thought and reverie has been inscribed, and yet no succeeding layer has completely hidden or erased what had been written previously" (Ibid: 51). It was pertinent about the north-western parts of the country.Malcolm Darling, a keen observer and a top colonial mandarin, commented during his tour of the Punjab in 1946: "If only propaganda had not poisoned the air with hatred and distrust, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs could have continued to live happily together in the village, as they had done for over a hundred years" (Darling, 1949: 302,303).

Syncretism and shared veneration formed the bedrock of Punjabi social life. The veneration of Sufi saints was among the

myriad aspects of popular religion (Mir, 2012: 245).The terms like shared, composite, popular and syncretic culture describe a culture or a set of practices that transcend community boundaries (Meeto 2007: 27). Punjab was the land of religious syncretism and cultural fusion. Syncretism involves blending, synthesizing and harmonizing. It is deployed as an analytical space standing in opposition to religious orthopraxy on one hand, and religious communalism on the other (Mir, 2012: 226,227). Denzil Ibbetson, Superintendent of first census operation in the Punjab, talked about the 'strange blend' and intermingling of various faiths: "On the border lands where these great faiths meet…. the various observances and beliefs which distinguish the followers of several faiths in their purity are strangely blended and intermingled, that it is often almost impossible to say that one prevails rather than another, or to decide in what category the people shall be classed (Ibbetson, 1883: 101). For Ibbetson, people were bound by social and tribal customs far more than by any rules of religion(Ibbetson 1916: 14).It was observed that the sacerdotal despotism had altogether over- shadowed the religious element; and the caste system had thrust its roots so deep into whole social fabric that its sanction was found to be social rather than religious (Rose, 1919: 117; Ibbetson, 1883: 112). Even the careful analysis of Hir-Waris marks the *zat* as a critical determinant of self and community, not the religious community (Mir, 2010:25). Thus, tribal customs and social relations were more prominent as compared to any religious affiliation and tradition. Ibbetson recorded that the available texts "fail utterly and entirely in conveying to the reader the faintest idea of the religions which they describe, as actually practiced by their million followers in the villages of the country" ('Inhabitants', 1884: 361; Ibbetson, 1883: 100).

Shared piety was important indicator of cultural syncretism. There was a relationship between individual, community and territory that emphasized the local, and there flourished a notion of religious identity that could accommodate multiplicity in such a way that individuals could participate in shared notions of piety without distancing themselves from being Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or

Christian (Mir, 2010:25). Popular religion in the Punjab was passionately involved with saints and their sacred shrines. "All three major communities of the Punjab- the Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims- had a ubiquitous repertoire of living and dead saints, each with its own myths, attributes and miraculous powers and these saints were revered without religious distinction" (Oberoi,1987:31). This shared veneration was a hallmark of Punjabi social life as it is depicted even in Punjabi folk songs:

> *Devi di main karankarrahi, Pir Fakir dhiawan.*
>
> *Haidar Sheikh da Dewan bakra, Nange pairin javan.*
>
> *Hanuman di devan Manni, Ratti farak na lavan.*
>
> *Ni Mata Bhagwatiye, main tere jas gavan.*

(Randhawa, 2015 [Reprint]: 161).

In the words of Anna Bigelow "Shared sites are important to understand in the context of peace building because of the everyday interactions that occur there and the implications of such relations for the daily workings of microlevel communal relations." (Bigelow, 2010: 21). The village shrine was actually important facet of the eclectic and diffused religious life of the rural folk (Eaton, 2000:198). "Common beliefs concerning benign and malevolent spirits, witchcraft, divine intercession, the ability of saints long dead to work miracles, the need to heed omens, the merit to be acquired through a pilgrimage, permeated a wide spectrum of Punjabi society. Standards of behaviour, categories of thought, conception of time, notions of purity and impurity and of sacred and profane, and understanding of illness and misfortune were not marked by great differences at all levels" (Oberoi, 1987: 42).

The local Sufi shrines had following cutting across religious lines. Shrines of Sakhi Sarvar and Sheikh Farid at Pakpattan were the most important shrines visited by Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Even the colonial official reports confirm this aspect: "The pilgrimage to the shrine (of Sakhi Sarvar) from the centre of the province are a special feature of the cult of Sultan, which are worth

mentioning, and in the early months of the year, there are continual streams of pilgrims of all creeds – Hindu, Muslim and Sikhs – pouring towards Nigaha"(Rose, 1919: 569. For more details see, 566-73). The Sufis provided a vital link between Hindus and Muslims, and to some extent mitigated the harshness of Muslim military conquest of the subcontinent (Eaton 1974: 117). Sufis had tremendous regard for their respective vernacular cultural soil and they created not the conflict and confrontation but creative relationship between Islam/Sufism on one hand and diverse cultural spaces on the other hand (Gaur, 2019[2016]): 29).It was the people on the fringes of the society and non-elite members of the rural folk who were the core group of the followers of the *Pirs* and participated fervently in the ceremonies of the *Dargahs.* (Dutta 2001: 209). These shrines which provided spiritual inspiration to the local communities were both a symbol of eclectic culture and a conduit for the local community, to the vaster universal culture(Eaton, 2000:199). "The cultural space of the shrine, its architectural fusion, and the icons it enshrined contained elements from great religious traditions of Punjab, enabling it to generate popular devotion" (Oberoi,1994:151).

The worship of *Panj-Pir* was another facet of cultural fusion and shared piety. Who these five saints were, was a matter of choice to be decided by the worshipper. Thus, the notion of *PanjPir* varied in the various regions of the province. Sometimes these included five Pandavas, sometimes five personages of Shias, sometimes five Sufi saints. In the centre and west of the province there was queer admixture of Hindu and Muslim objects of worship e.g Khwaja Khizar, Durga Devi,Vishnu, Sakhi Sarvar and Guru Gobind Singh (Rose 1919: 572; For a fascinating detail on the notion of Panj Pir and Khwaja Khizar, See, Nain Sukh, 2020). Ibbetson stated that the Hindu of plains worshipped the saint of his Muslim neighbour and called his original gods by Mohamdan names (Ibbetson, 1883: 111). E.D Maclagan, noted that in some parts of the country Hindus were fond of representing themselves as followers of PanjPirs (Maclagan, 1892: 137). So was true about the Sikhs. In 1911, 79085 Sikhs registered themselves as the

followers of Sakhi Sarvar (Kaul, 1912: 39).Thus, the region was the abode of composite culture and nourished cultural solidarity where the religion did not impinge upon the self-consciousness of the people and they did not perceive the religious otherness. The communities were not monoliths. These were internally diverse and tended to think of themselves bearing multiple and overlapping religious identities. Even Khushwant Singh graphically portrays this aspect of Punjabi way of living in his famous novel Train to Pakistan: "Mano Majra is a tiny place-But there is one object that all Mano Majrans venerate. This is a three-foot slab of sand-stone that stands upright under a *keekar* tree beside the pond. It is the local deity, the *deo* which all the villagers-Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims or pseudo-Christians repair secretly whenever they are in a special need of blessing" (Singh, 2001[1956]: 10-11).Even the great religious traditions in the Punjab – Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism – found it an uphill task to dislodge the cultural solidarity of the Punjabi countryside expressed through village dances, seasonal festivals and fairs, common beliefs concerning deities, saints etc (Oberoi, 1987: 43).

The creative literature written on the theme of the partition of the Punjab bears a powerful testimony to the shared religious and cultural practices. These textsabout the partition do not imagine that India before 1947 was made up of exemplary or utopian communities but these writings invariably suggest that people were living in mutual harmony and peace. All the fictional writings interpret the Punjabi society from basic point of view of brotherhood and secularism and assume the existence of a communally shared history and invariably suggest through the fictionalized life worlds of villages and towns that there was an essential feeling of relatedness between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs not merely as passive acceptance of different customs and beliefs. (Bhalla, 1999: 3120).Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent formed a single people, sharing a culture in which linguistic, regional and fraternal bonds crossing religious communities were socially foundational, and indeed, in which folk religious worship was frequently a fusion of Hindu and Muslim

practice (Francisco, 2002: 381). These creative writings readily acknowledge that there were times when the conflicts between the people could lead to murder and arson. But they also record that such moments of communal nastiness were rare and transient. The experience of life was sufficiently secure and rooted to enable the society as a whole to evolve mechanism for containing tensions. So that even if there was vile outrage, the rich heterogeneity of life conducted dialogically was never dangerously threatened (Bhalla, 1999: 3120,21). In the contact of diverse cultures, the absence of self – consciousness always favoured assimilation and absorption. This was the case with the common heritage of the Hindu and Muslim masses of India. As long as Hindu masses of India remained the adherents of a primitive kind of Hinduism created by the breakup of the ancient Indian civilization, and the Muslim masses remained a horde of semi – Islamised converts, all was likely to go well with the common heritage (Chaudhary, 2006[1964]: 568).

II

Identity consciousness and identity formation is a process which takes place in a particular historical context. The colonial rule created such conditions in which identities began to crystallize. The colonial state, for its own survival and convenience documented the 'difference' among the people. Since their arrival and establishment of political control in India, the British viewed the Indian society as highly divided on religious lines and British scholarship viewed the religion as totally homogenising and ignored the cultural diversity within the religion. The division of Indian society on the basis of religion, attribution of salient features to each religion and providing theoretical legitimacy to their ideological positions was the general tendency among the British intelligentsia and academia. Thus, the Victorians set out to order and classify India's difference in accordance with scientific systems of knowing (Meeto, 2007: 43). The study of India was made part of larger scholarly enterprise in which the Victorians

sought rational principles that would provide a comprehensive and comprehensible way of fitting everything they saw in world around them into ordered hierarchies (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:67). Thomas Twining, a proprietor of the east India Company, while writing about the dangers of interfering with the religious opinions of the natives of India observed: "There are not, in the world, a people more jealous and tenacious of their religious opinions and ceremonies than the native inhabitants of the East…. The people of India are not political but religious people.   They think as much of their religion, as we of our constitution. They venerate their Shastah and Koran with as much enthusiasm as we our Magna Carta" (Marshal, 1968: 189, 190). This was a general feature of the British knowledge production about India. Talking about Orientalism, Edward Said saysthat Orientalism was absolutely anatomical and enumerative, to use its vocabulary was to engage in the particularising and dividing of things oriental into manageable parts (Said, 2001[1978]: 72). This notion distilled down to the colonial administrators who furthered the difference by the apparatus of their governance. In post 1857 period, there was a rethinking on the part of the British and it resulted in "a concept of empire which was grounded more firmly in the notions of Indian difference" (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:67). To strengthen the knowledge base of the Raj, there was a process of classifying the Indian difference.

It was under the colonial regime that the fuzzy social world was transformed into atomised communities. The new governmental practices, or to use Foucault's expression, 'governmentality', beginning with the colonial period pressed for the identity concerns of the communities for new forms of mobilization (Jayal and Mehta, 2011: 221). Enumerative process and census data collection was most important colonial practice to glare up the difference. The colonial census rather being a passive instrument of data gathering created by its practical logic and forms a new sense of category identity in India(Cohn, 2012 [1987: 240). Census officials first created the categories and then defined them (Meeto, 2007: 65). To know India in this scientific sense was to

subjugate it; to name, class and number its castes was to fragment a complex and dynamic society, and to draw strategic gains from its atomised constituent elements(Bayly, 2011[1995]:165,66). There is no doubt that colonial state for its own survival exploited the existing ascriptive divisions and through this process reified their existence in Indian society(Jayal and Mehta, 2011: 225).

The census was the most powerful tool in the hands of colonial administrators who began to know, count and classify. After consolidating their position, the English started the project of knowing the people whom they were going to govern. In order to simplify what the colonial administrators saw in India (which was full of complexities, dense pluralities), it had to be put in their familiar grids of mapping, measuring and counting (Jayal and Mehta, 2011: 225). The census created an archive being the primary site of state monumentality which turned out to be the very institution that canonized, crystallized, and classified the knowledge required by the state even as it made this knowledge available to subsequent generations in the cultural form of a neutral repository of the pastbut this was not a neutral repository because the "colonial conquest was about the production of an archive of (and for) rule" (Dirks, 2014[2001]: 107).Enumeration through census not only offered legitimacy to the colonial epistemology that viewed Indian society as congeries of communities, it also became an integral part of its govern-mentality (Jayal and Mehta, 2011: 226). This was an ideological project under which the British began to identify and demarcate the opposing categories of religion and ethnicity; and homogenised previously disparate identities. Consequently, the common populace was affected by the process which altered the self-definitions and self-projections of diverse groups.

The census was started in European countries to gauge the extent of poverty, growth of population and the poor relief work necessitated by it. In Britain, first census was taken in 1801 and every ten years thereafter(Bhagat, 2001: 4352). This was done to provide a correct knowledge of increasing demands of subsistence (Glass, 1973: 91).Thus, economic issues were predominant in the

census of Great Britain(Bhagat, 2001: 4352). When census was introduced in India in late nineteenth century, it was done with altogether different concerns and pedagogy. Indian census was a tool not only constructing self-identity but that self-identification occurred in response to the colonial government's objectification of identities. British officials and anthropologists perceived India as pre-modern society and their initial task was to classify groups and communities in order to rule over them(Cohn, 2012 [1987]: 240).What the British conceived of as India's enduring difference was given shape in administrative practice and India was known through the categories that made it fundamentally different from Europe (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:113).

Therefore, the difference was glared up and categories such as religion, caste, ethnicity meant as signifiers were placed at the heart of census operation in colonial India. In the colonial census, the question on religion, caste and race was used as fundamental category in census tabulation and data on this was published without any restraint. It seems that the projection of cleavages within the native society was essential for sustaining colonial rule(Bhagat, 2001: 4352).In contrast to this, the census operation in Britain was a secular institution in the collection ad presentation of data. The census exercise in Britain exhibited either disinterest in religion or extreme reluctance to explore this field. In several censuses, there was no question on religion and whenever any question on religion was included, it was done with great care (Bhagat, 2001: 4352). In mid-nineteenth century many British officials believed that the caste and religion were sociological keys to understand the people of India and if they were to be governed well then it was natural that information should be systematically collected about caste and religion (Cohn, 2012 [1987]: 242). In contrast to censuses in England, religion was used as a fundamental category in Indian census. The centrality of religious community along with that of caste, for the British marked out India's distinctive status as a fundamentally differed land (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:134).

III

The census operation in India was a vast enterprise and the process of enumeration and categorisation of Indian society was to refashion self-images and religious identities so that these became embedded within more modern and larger political solidarities. Categories necessitate definition and definitions impose order. The categories and their definitions used in colonial census in India were deeply rooted in British perception of Indian society (Bhagat, 2001: 4352). For the British,"the adherence to one or the other religion was not merely a matter of belief, but defined membership more generally in larger community, and to be a Hindu or Muslim by itself explained much of the way Indians acted" (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:133). The census reports provided a new conceptualization of religion as a community, an aggregate of individuals united by a formal definition and given characteristics based on qualified data. Religions became mapped, counted and above all compared with other religious communities (Jones, 1981: 80). Census project through enumerative modality, objectified social, cultural and linguistic difference among the people of India (Cohn, 1996: 8). The practice of census left diverse strata of Indian society to the mercy of enumerators and colonial ethnographers who sought to map the notion of caste, race, tribe, and religious identities in India, replicated the demographic tools invented in the West. This project was an important part of colonial discourse of homogenization and systematization where identities were sought to be refined and fixed within the frames often ascribed with religious identity (Snehi, 2015: 20).

The idea of communal identities rests primarily on the premise that "people can be uniquely categorised, according to some singular and overarching system of partitioning" (Sen, 2006: xii). This intellectual practice of categorization and characterization of the communities formed the basis of census enumeration wherein census officials looked at adherents of the different faiths according to pre-assigned grids: "The bulk of vast population of India may be conveniently divided into Hindus and Mohammadans....The typical Hindoo is quite industrious and

tolerant in religious matters unless provoked to an excitement. The Mohammadan on his part is by nature restless, fanatical and ready for any adventure" (Chaudhary, 2009:60). It is clear from this observation: "Socially, the characteristic of the Hindu is quiet, contented thrift. The Sikhs are more independent, brave, and manly than the Hindus. The Punjab villager, converted to Mahomedanism, is invariably filled with false pride and conceit, and tends to become extravagant, unthrifty, and discontented" ('Inhabitants', 1884: 361).

This was in full consonance with the British scholarly enterprise which viewed these two Indian religions in this paradigm. Alexander Doe and Robert Orme had set the tone for this stereotype understanding of Indian religions in the second half of eighteenth century (Metcalf, 2005[1998]: 7,9). In the colonial understanding, India was a bounded entity inhabited by two religiously defined communities. (Metcalf, 1995: 953)**.** Though the varied British histories of India might be inconsistent with each other, together they shaped the way the British constructed the difference they ascribed to India (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:67). In colonial history, religion in general was treated as a fundamental tool in defining the main properties of non-European cultures-societies andit was typically taken as the central or only force in contrast to Europe where religion was one force among many others.(Metcalf. 1995:956). They had defined the basic differences demarcating the two religious' groupings: Muslims were violent, despotic, and masculine; Hindus were indolent, passive, and effeminate. One fought by sword; the other by cunning and litigation (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:133). Central to the colonial interpretation of history was a religious communitarian view of Indian society (Panikkar, 2013:108). Even Sir William Jones and James Mill despite their fundamental differences agreed to the divisions of Indian people. Thus, by early nineteenth century authoritative conceptions of the two faiths and the character of their adherents had been set firmly in place (Metcalf, 2005[1998]:133). The census operations further buttressed these assumptions as these were based on empirical data collection and

religious affiliation was marked as shaping the basic traits of character.

British historians imagined Hindus as the original inhabitants and Muslims as foreign rulers, who arrived as successful conquerors. Furthermore, Muslims were defined as oppressive, incompetent, lascivious etc (Metcalf. 1995:953). This ideological framework was furthered by the colonial ethnographers in the project of census when they began to define and classify the religions of the Punjab as totally antagonistic to each other: "Primarily and historically Hinduism is the anti-thesis of Islam. In Hinduism, the binding element is only educed by active opposition on the part of some other form of faith, such as Islam"(Baines, 1893: 159).Ibbetson, in the Census of 1881, spoke of Hindus as characteristically quiet, contended and thrifty: "He tills his fields, he feed his Brahmin, he let his womenfolk worship their gods and accompanies them to yearly festival at local shrine, and his chief ambition is to build a brick house, and to waste more money than his neighbour at his daughter's wedding" (Ibbetson, 1883: 103). Budhists were considered to be more decent. According to Ibbetson, murder, theft and violent assault were almost unknown among them, and they seemed to be fair and often kind in their dealing with others. In regard to veracity, they (Budhists) were reported to be superior to Hindus" (Ibbetson, 1883: 103)

Islam was depicted as a foreign faith whereas it had a long - chequered history on north-Indian soil (Meeto, 2007: 51). Islam was considered to be a foreign religion and it was projected through references lying outside India (Baines, 1893: 174-75).At the same time, Muslims were imputed to certain qualities they admired, like qualities of masculinity and vigour, in contrast to the allegedly effeminate Hindus. Such stereotypes shaped policy and legitimated British presence to themselves and, for a considerable period of time, to many of those they ruled as well (Metcalf, 1995: 953,954).According to Ibbetson the effect of Islam on a man was that it invariably filled him with false pride and conceit, disinclined him from honest toil and rendered him more extravagant, less thrifty, less contended and less well to do than his

Hindu neighbour (Thorburn, 1886:16; Ibbetson, 1883: 103). The Muslim seemed to think that "his duty is completely performed when he has proclaimed his belief God, and that it is the business of the Providence to see the rest; and when he finds his stomach empty, he has a strong tendency to blame the Government, and to be exceedingly discontented with everybody but himself" (Ibbetson, 1883: 104).

A Sikh, according to Ibbetson, was more independent, braver, and manly than the Hindu and no whitless than industrious and thrifty; while he was less conceited than the Muslimand not devoured by that carking discontent which so often seemed to oppress the latter (Ibbetson, 1883: 103; Malhotra, 2009[2002]: 27).Sikhs were considered to be more tolerant in one respect that the would eat from the hands of a Muslim (Ibbetson, 1883: 137). Jat Sikhs were termed as 'finest peasantry'. The martial conduct of the Sikh was also glorified. In 1853, Sir Richard temple wrote about them: "The staunch foot soldier had become sturdy cultivator and the brave officer was now village elder and their children now grasped the plough with the same strong hand with which the fathers wielded the sword (Ibbetson, 1883: 103).

The character of the followers of the major religions was coloured in different behavioural attitudes. Explanation to any kind of rioting activity (which raised its monstrous head in late 19th century in colonial north India) was given in terms of 'enduring antagonism between opposed and self-contained communities (See, Pandey, 1989: 132-168). This was absurd because all these people almost belonged to the same racial stock and hence this kind of behavioural difference among them was not plausible. Moreover, their social exchange also influenced their day-to-day life and public behaviour. These kinds of assumptions also did not auger well in the cultural syntax in which religious affiliation mattered least as compared to the local bindings such as *zat, biradari* or *bhaichara.*

Colonialism was an all-encompassing pervasive force and "there was no sphere of culture, inner or outer, which remained

beyond colonial reach" (Panikkar, 2002:536). The colonial state through the tool of census was trying to re-configure the contours of the fuzzy social world of the people of the Punjab. At the second level the shared piety was being reduced as deviation from the respective path of the religions. The British ethnographers failed to understand the diffused, fluid and eclectic nature of religious communities in the Punjab. This emerged out of the 'infinite diversity of the material' and officials' 'infinite ignorance of the material' (Ibbetson, 1916: iv).Colonial apparatus looked at the Punjabi society through the binaries and tried to institutionalize the difference by assigning monolithic religious identities to the social world of the Punjabis. Thus, the census officials failed to understand this diversified nature of religious beliefs and practices as these categories did not fit in broad recognised religious groupings. But going by their own perceptions, the British ethnographers pushed the people in identifiable religious identities because the rubrics under which they were classed automatically yielded a range of meanings to the colonial masters(Malhotra, 2009[2002]: 27).

In administrative terms, such local religions did not count for much and they made census tables unmanageable. Each district, each village would return such a vast number of religions that the entire project of simplification and classification would be squandered. The purpose of census was to simplify, to make discordant landscape knowable (Prasad, 1995:293). Hence for the administrative and other reasons these local sects were classed under broad religious categories depending upon the arbitration of the census officials. A census official remarked: "The census is not concerned with personal religion but is an attempt to record religion in its communal aspect, merely distinguishing those who lay claim to one or the other of the recognized sectional labels without looking too closely into the validity of their claims" (Prasad1995:292). The recognized sectional labels told the British something about the land they governed, something which did not require the subtle distinctions in everyday worship, distinctions which were not so subtle in the lives of the untouchables(Prasad,

1995:293).

There were many local tribes or sects who practiced doctrines of multiple religions or declared themselves to be followers of local saints like Lal Beg or Baba Bale Shah. They presented a fine picture of religious synthesis and composite culture. Sansis and Chuhras of the Punjab were the most important example in this regard. They did not live outside their caste Hindu and Muslim masters. They were much governed by the cult of the people in the midst of whom they lived. Among a Hindu population they burnt and among Muslims they buried their dead (Prasad, 1995:295).Talking about the religion of scavenger castes, Richard Temple stated that their religion might be "best styled hagiolatry pure and simple, as it consists of merely a confused veneration of anything and everything it's followers, or rather their teachers, may have found to be considered sacred by their neighbours, whatever be its origin. Thus, we find in the Punjab that in the religion of scavenger castes, the tenets of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are thrown together in most hopeless confusion, and that the monotheism taught by the medieval reformers underlies all their superstitions" (Temple, 1988[1884]: 529). This stratum posed a great challenge before colonial ethnographers for the purpose of classification. Denzil Ibbetson reported: "It is so difficult in many cases to draw a line between one creed and another; for the distinction of faith, being based upon and attended by no deep spiritual conviction, are marked by a laxity and catholicity of practice which would be impossible to bigot or enthusiast"(Ibbetson, 1883: 101; Meeto, 2007: 52). According to Ibbetson, "Every native of India was presumed to be Hindu unless he belonged to some other recognized faith. (Ibbetson, 1883: 101). According to census rules, "In case of depressed classes such as *Sansis* and *Churas* etc., it was laid down that they should be returned as Hindus if they did not profess in belonging to any recognised religion, and their claims to be registered as belonging to a separate religion were not allowed to override these instructions" (Prasad, 1995:292).

By the time of 1921 census, new instructions urged the enumerators to record people unambiguously as Hindus,

Muslims, Sikhs and so on(Malhotra, 2009[2002]: 25). In census of 1891, 90 percent of lower classes people who were returned as Hindus, had actually registered themselves as Bala Shahis, Lal Begis etc. (Ibid: 25,26). Again during 1921 census, the *Chuhras* in the Punjab were not allowed to register themselves as belonging to any separate religion outside the recognized religions(Ibid: 26).This was done despite the strong opposition by the members of these sects. For example, the Ad Dharmis of the Punjab declared, "We are not Hindus. We strongly request the government not to list us as such in the census. Our faith is not Hindu but Ad Dharam, we are not a part of Hinduism, and Hindus are not part of us"(Jurgensmeyer, 1988: 74). But the British census officials did not pay heed to these demands and acted as per their own rules. If the*person* in question professed faith in Islam(as Musallis), in Sikhism (as Mazhabi) then he/ she was returned as such. If the *person* wished to be returned as professing faith in the tribal religion as Bala Shahi or Lal Begi, that was not permitted (Prasad, 1995: 293). In the census tabulations, all such persons were treated as Hindus if they belonged to a recognized Hindu caste however low it might be(Bhagat, 2001: 4355). These *groups* consistently disturbed the categorization project, for they were the chief disturbing element in the return of religion (Prasad, 1995: 293).

Census operation and information circulated by it eliminated the fuzzy character of the communities. New religious elite, who were championing the religious reform in late nineteenth and early twentieth century attacked the very foundations of popular culture and definedthe boundaries of their respective communities. The popular culture which provided the space to the people for their socio-cultural moorings began to be seen as a distraction from the doctrinal beliefs and practices. Subsequently, Hindus would become more Hinduized and Muslims more Islamic. Thus, the nineteenth centurywitnessed the progressive de-Islamization of the non-Muslims of India (Chaudhary, 2006[1964]: 568,569).Arya Samaj leaders set out to 'purify' the Hindu religion. They propagated to convince their 'Hindu brethren' that it was repugnant to their religious doctrines and

authorities and it is a sin to pay homage at tombs and shrines (Jones, 1976:127). In redefining the sacred, the Samaj reformulated the cultural matrix of the Punjab (Oberoi, 1987: 53). The census focused greater attention on religious competition as it was heightened through proselytising activities by Christians, Sikhs and the Muslims, plus the development of reconversion (*shuddhi*) by aggressive Hindu movements. By the twentieth century there were extensive descriptive and statistical accounts of both conversion and reconversion (Jones, 1981:81).Perhaps most importantly, the militant Hinduism of the Arya Samaj radically differentiated its followers from the Muslim rural population (Fox, 1984: 470). In 1891, the number of Hindus who acknowledged themselves as followers of Sakhi Sarvar stood at 680,772 but Fifty years later this number had plummeted to 5,635 (Oberoi, 1987: 53).

This sense of competitiveness also placed the Sikhs and Hindus on the opposite sides. There were was an unending debate over the question of separate Sikh identity independent from the Hindu faith. The decisive break came in 1888 when the Arya 'fire-brands' mounted a thoughtless attack on the Sikh gurus and Sikhs pleaded the Government that Sikhs should not be confounded with the Hindus but treated in all respects as a separate community (Grewal, 2002[1994]:146). The Sikh intelligentsia in the late nineteenth century alsolaunched its project of recasting Sikh tradition and the Sikh participation in popular religion was a major target which was disturbing reminder to this new intelligentsia of "a universe replete with miracle saints, cult practices, spirit possession and magic – all the elements that once made Max Weber speak of an 'enchanted' universe in which modern rationality had not taken hold" (Oberoi,1994: 141). Thus, the wide spread practice of worshipping popular saints like Sakhi Sarvar and Gugga Pir,as a cultural convention, came under fire from Sikh reformers (Oberoi,1994: 307). By 1911, the Singh Sabha Movement after actively campaigning to wean Sikhs away from the *Pir* worship, was highly successful and the entire Sikh villages, which had earlier worshipped Sakhi Sarvar stopped doing so (Oberoi,

1994: 148). These were the efforts on the part of reform movement to bring back the people to their 'original faith'. To disseminate their newly acquired values, beliefs and ideologies, the Punjabi elite utilised printing press, newspapers and new literary genres like novel(Oberoi, 1987: 53). GianiDitt Singh wrote tirelessly to condemn the popular religious practices as superstitions and Bhai Vir Singh condemned the Sikhs for turning away from the 'True Gurus' and their teachings (Meeto, 2007:30,31).The census carried tables which examined conversion by religion and caste and descriptions of the methods underlying successful proselytising (Jones. 1981: 81). Whereas there was a general population decline in the Punjab due to plague and influenza, interestingly there was 37 percent increase in the Sikh population between 1901 and 1911 and their proportion rose to 12.42 percent from 7.9 percent of the previous decade (Judge and Bal, 2008: 10; Grewal, 2002[1994]:137).The Sikh following of Sakhi Sarvar declined by 83 percent between 1911 and 1931 which was a phenomenal decline (Oberoi, 1987: 53).

The rivalries between the religious groups increased and self-appointed representatives of the religions fought the polemical war of words (Meeto, 2007: 59) The Muslim elite also responded vehemently. They continuously attempted to complete the Islamization of Muslims of India both qualitatively and quantitatively and the "proselytising zeal of Muslim order was not satisfied with the existing state of affairs and aimed at reclamation of the semi-Islamised converts who had remained lax and latitudinarian in their religious tenets" (Chaudhary, 2006[1964]: 569). The attempts to organize Muslim community resulted in the making of building block of Muslim nationalism in the Punjab (Pathak. 2018: 28). Muslim associations named Anjuman-i- Islamia and Anjuman-i-Himayat-i- Islam were established over the entire province (Grewal, 2002[1994]). This was an attempt to counter the opponents of Islam and tried to "ward off the adverse effects on Muslim boys and girls of the teachings of other religions" (Gandhi, 2013: 247). The Arya Muslim confrontation led towards the foundation of Jamat-i-Tanzim, and Tabligh movement was an

attempt to counter the *Shudhi* (Pathak. 2018: 28). It crystalised the division among the Hindus and Muslims of the province.

In the late nineteenth century, the educated Indians became interestingly aware of the census as an official view of their own world, a view which supported many of their hopes and fears(Jones, 1981:85).For the first time in Indian history problematic categories of majority and minority communities were determined (Snehi, 2015: 21,22). The census also brought to the light the numerical strength of the various communities which in turn affected the inter-community relations and started a sense of competitiveness after the introduction of electoral politics. Every successive census counted and published the data on numbers which was eagerly received by 'the representatives of the communities. According to the census of 1881, the number of Hindus stood at 40.74 percent, Muslims at 51.35 percent and the Sikhs at 7.56 percent(Ibbetson, 1883a: 101). In 1891, these numbers were 41, 51 and 8 percent respectively(Maclagan, 1892: 88). In 1931 these numbers were 30.2, 52.4 and 14.3 percent respectively(Khan, 1931: 290,91). Religion not only continued as fundamental category but was further elaborated throughout a number of statistical tables and discursive sections of the reports. Under religion the census discussed the size of each community, its percentage of the total population, relative and absolute growth or decline, and geographical distribution (Jones, 1981: 80).

The decennial census made the numbers crucial markers of community strength (Pathak, 2018: 26). Since numbers were generally equated with strength, particularly for government jobs, change in numbers was viewed with concern (Grewal, 2002[1994]: 131). In the region, there was an emergence of the groups who competed for political access and economic opportunity (Brass, 1974: 31. Census officials applied their initial concern for increase or decrease of population census to religion. They carefully studied the changes in the size of all religions as well as shifts in relative strength between different religions. Religious communities were mapped and compared with others thus

indicating their majority or minority status (Jones, 1981: 80).Thus, the British provided political opportunities to religiously defined groups-Hindus Muslims and Sikhs. (Brass, 2011[2009]: 184). Any decline in the numerical strength of a particular community panicked the communal leaders respectively because it was seen as having political consequences in the period of growing democratisation (Meeto, 2007: 59).Even the adherence of 'other' religious practices was perceived as a plausible threat because religious existence relied on tangibility. Thus, religious reformers appealed the people to adhere to their 'original' and 'unpolluted' faiths. Sloganeering and massive appeals were executed. Worrying about the diminishing number of Hindus,Lala Lajpat Rai observed that "The chief hope of the British seemed to have so far been on the chance of thinning the number of the Hindus with a view eventually to make them politically impotent" (Dutta,1993: 1305). By the time of 1931 census, this consciousness reached up to a level where "Indians were not merely content to petition and to write books: some groups set out to influence the answers which the people would give in the census" (Cohn, 2012 [1987]: 249,50). In Lahore, Arya Samaj distributed a handbill titled, "Remember! Census Operations Have Begun" which asked the Hindus to register their religions as 'Vedic Dharam', sect as 'Arya Samajist', caste as 'Nil', race as 'Aryan' and language as 'Arya Bhasha'(Ibid: 50).

The introduction of competition for employment and political alignments created artificial ethno-religious solidarities. Reformers co-opted colonial ethnographic discourse and fiercely propagated fixed notion of religious identities (Snehi, 2015: 21,22). Apart from governmental compulsions, the census also catered the imperial strategy as "it recorded an Indian's caste, sub-caste and religion, and numbers from each category, thereby supplying competing Indians with ammunition for mutual political warfare" (Gandhi, 2013: 239,40). Thus, the contestations over the identity question and its implied repercussions in the official and non-official arenas had entered into the public discourse as never before (Gilmartin, 1998: 417). For Bernard S. Cohn, census project "which

may have started as intellectual concerns of few British officials or the administrative necessity of 'knowing the natives', had become an object to be used in the political, cultural and religious battles at the heart of Punjabi politics which have been crucial down to the present" (Cohn, 2012 [1987]: 250).

The three major communities – Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – entered into an arena of competition and tried to over-run each other. It exacerbated the communal divisions and fostered the spirit of political exclusiveness (Bhagat, 2001:4353). All communities started pressing for special safeguards and concessions according to their numerical strength. There were contestations on the question of representation and reservation in government jobs, educational institutions and representative bodies. In 1887, Muslim elite members met the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab and asked for their share in government jobs in proportion to their population. Even official instructions were issued in this regard (Kumar, 2010: 75,76). The question of access to government jobs and positions of power emerged as the potential factor for community assertion and demonising the 'other' on the one hand and a key handle in the control of colonial stateon the other hand to drive the wedge between different communities (Pathak, 2018: 98). Actually, the fear of rule of the other community translated the competition for jobs in a new language in the religious nationalist imagination and demands for jobs were put through preferential treatment (Ibid: 99).The creation of separate electorates for Muslims in 1909 only formalised a process that the colonial state had already put in place (Farina Mir, 2010: 18). The Government of India Act of 1919 popularly known as Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, extended the separate electorates and came out with division of seats into communal, rural and urban categories and thus further bolstered the division that already existed in a manifested manner in the Punjabi Society (Tanwar, 1999: 29). This created a direct, formal link between political power, a religious community and the census (Jones. 1981: 89,90). The rise of collective demands from various religions and caste groups in the early part of twentieth

century fitted quite well with the British perception of Indian society as a country of discrete religious, caste and other groups (Jayal and Mehta, 2011: 226).

Michel Foucault has rightly remarked that power and knowledge are closely interconnected. Categorisation of the people and the information generated about such categories in a country play an important interconnecting and supporting role between power and knowledge (Gill, 2007: 241). Though colonialism did not invent the communal cleavages but through its interventions it changed their trajectories and political potentialities. Armed with numbers and relevant information, people began to compare the status of their groups with that of others(Jayal and Mehta, 2011: 226). Before congealing into mutually hostile communities, the various groups did not know how far they extended and what was their strength in numbers. Therefore, they had less accurate and less aggressive self –awareness (Das, 1994: 8,9). Sudipta Kaviraj has aptly stated that fuzzy and un-enumerated pre-colonial communities "did not ask how many they were in the world, they could not consider what they could wreak upon the world for their collective benefit – through their collective action. They were, thus, incapable of a type of large action, with great potential of doing harm as well as good, which is a feature of modern condition. Living in an unmapped and un-enumerated world may have allowed them to live ordinarily in non-aggressive proximity (though one should not underestimate the ability of older societies to do surprisingly large-scale harm). Their sense of community being multiple and layered and fuzzy, no single community could make demands of pre-emptive belonging as comprehensive as that made by modern nation state" (Kaviraj, 2010, 194). But the census statistics on identities became significant as communities demanded entitlements on the basis of numbers, in a politics which conflated representation (standing on behalf of) representativeness, coming from a particular community (Sundar, 2000: 113).

IV

Thus, census as modernity project, gave new and more potent lease to the communal identities and new political identifications around religion and caste were fashioned. It set into motion the complex process whereby different sections entered into movements of self-assertion and wider definitions to claim and enhance their status into the fabric of changing colonial society. The census affected the communal consciousness in a myriad way. The census defined the principle Indian religions as always 'at odds' or in a permanent juxtaposed position. Moreover, these were termed as 'native' and foreign. Therefore, the census operation redefined the categories and imposed newer meanings to them. The census officials did not recognize the local tribal religious affiliations rather those professing faith in these religions were not returned as such. Instead, they were pushed under labelled religious categories. By applying the above mentioned two processes, the colonial census eroded the basis of fuzzy and eclectic notion of the religions. Census operations also impinged upon the mind of religious elite of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century which attacked the contours of composite culture vehemently because, for them, it was a pollution and deviation from the given religious tradition. The fear of the domination by the 'other' led towards contestation and competition which was total anti-thesis to the local traditions of adjustment and accommodation. The census by providing the numerical strength initiated a process of new political affiliations and political mobilization, and communities' energies were channelized in this new politics which ultimately resulted in surgical amputation of the province into two halves in 1947.

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Livelihoods as a Lifeline: Vulnerable Geography of Salmora, Majuli

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Abstract

For the rest of the world, the geography of Assam is portrayed either from the advertisement of tea or oil. However, the unique geography of Assam which is located in the North-Eastern region of India has also suffered from natural disasters especially flood and riverbank erosion. These two natural disasters make riverine rural people vulnerable in terms of land and livelihoods. Salmora region in Majuli district of Assam is consistently facing disaster risk due to flood and riverbank erosion. The people of Salmora traditionally deals with pottery making for which they depend on the Brahmaputra river. The primary objective of this paper is to analyze the sustainability of the rural livelihoods of the *Kumar* community at Salmora. The research shows that the *Kumars* of Salmora collect the glutinous clay required for pottery making by digging the nearby areas of the *Bornodi* which is the local name of the Brahmaputra in this region. Due to severe riverbank erosion shifting from one area to another is a seasonal challenge for the

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people of Salmora. Ensuring secure and decent livelihood for the rural population is one of the key themes of Sustainable Development Goals which is facing challenges in the flood and river bank erosion affected areas of the state. The research of this paper comprises several phases during 2018 and 2019 through in-depth interviews of the *kumar* families.

Keywords: sustainable livelihoods, vulnerability, disaster risk

Introduction

The Brahmaputra is at the center of different geographies, ranging from the *pahars* (hills) to *bhoiyum* (plains). Indeed, the Brahmaputra cannot be seen in isolation from its tributaries; all of them composed the entire river basin. Along with the tributaries, the highlands, foothills, and flood plains are closely linked with this entire river basin. Ecologically this river basin is so feasible that any minor human-induced environmental change will have both long-term and short-term impacts that affect the social and economic settings of the communities living in the river valley. The exclusive geography of the region makes *Assam* in general and the Brahmaputra valley in particular very prone to natural disasters especially floods and riverbank erosion. Though disasters were considered purely natural phenomena, by 2012 it was recognized that significant causes of disasters are anthropogenic (IPCC 2012). For instance, floods are not just natural hydrological events but can be indirectly caused by anthropogenic activities such as large-scale deforestation, resulting in changes, and eventually floods (Singh et al. 2018:7).

Disaster is not also isolated and single events; rather, they are slow-onset, extended, and complex crises (Ball and Glantz 1977:70). Indeed, they are termed, 'the extreme situation which is implicit in the everyday condition of the population' (O'Keefe et al. 1975:128) that requires 'creating ways of analyzing the vulnerability implicit in daily life' (Wisner et al. 2003: 128). The

question of land and livelihood in the Brahmaputra valleyis, therefore, a major concern in terms of disaster and vulnerability.

Geomorphologically Majuli[2] is marked by an array of alluvial features including natural levees, crevasses, and sedimentary deposits (Singh and Goswami2011:5562). Historian Edward Gait (1906) explained that at least in the 1660s, the Brahmaputra 'flowed down the north of the Majuli island.[3] The tectonic activity of the late seventeenth century and a series of floods in the eighteenth century reshaped the physical dimensions of the channels, leading to the current position of the island. In the mid-nineteenth century, the island was found to be about 1,200 sq km in the area but within the next 150 years, it had reduced to a mere 400 sqkm (Saikia 2019:28).Sarma and Phukan (2004:2) explained that the island remains susceptible to heavy erosion due to fluvial action. Moreover, tectonic activities upstream of the main Brahmaputra, significantly influence the regime of the river, which induces changes in the shape of the landform. According to the reports of the twentieth century, the island is losing landmass at a gradually increasing rate.[4] Recent studies also reflect that the island is slowly becoming integrated with the northern floodplain (Lahri and Sinha 2014:101).

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[2]The word 'Majuli' is derived from 'Majali' through a sequence of linguini-phonetic transformation with time. During 1622 AD, the Brahmaputra river was flowing along the present channel of Lohit in the northern part of Majuli, while the Dihing was flowing along the present channel of the Brahmaputra, south of the island. See Gait, "A History of Assam," 46.

[3]Several massive floods were reported in the eighteenth century, in 1735, 1750, and 1780. Mahanta, "*Majuli*," 30.

[4]Between 1917 and 1972 the average annual rate of erosion was 1.77 sq. km and till 1996 the rate had increased moderately to 1.84 sq. km, but since then till the end of the century, it rose rapidly at a rate of 6.42 sq km. see Sarma and Phukan, "Origin and some Geomorphological Changes," 1-19.

Source: Sarma, J.N., and S.K. Phukan(2004)

In Majuli, the *Kumar* (potter) population is concentrated in the southern corner of the island, adjacent to the main channel of the Brahmaputra. Pottery was a craft exclusive to the *Kumar* community in Salmora. Depending upon location, the soil properties in Majuli changed vastly that also influenced the soil productivity, and hence the livelihoods security. The materiality of soil has particular relevance to pottery, the mainstay of livelihoods for a large Kumar community on the island. Pottery is an old-age craft in Assam, dating back to the fifteen to sixteen century AD.[5] *Kumars* are one of the significant traditional communities in Assam (Barua 1951:12) with a population of about 15 lakhs spreading all the districts of the state.[6] As a tradition, the villagers used to carry their pottery products in boats to faraway places for selling the items. This paper deals with the major research question that how *Kumar*s in Salmora are facing challenges in terms of their age-old pottery-making practice which depends mainly on the river.

[5]Government of Assam, "Assam State Gazetteer," 438.

[6]Kumarjyoti, "A Souvenir of the All Assam Kumar Conference," 24.
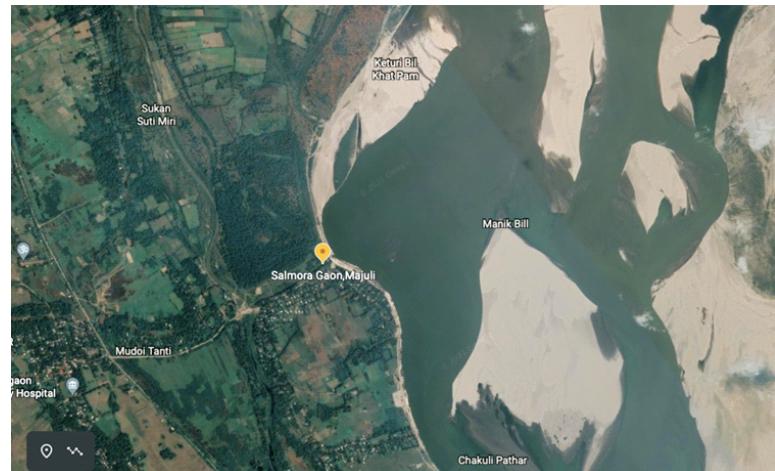
Source: Google Earth (accessed on 17 July, 2021)

Methodology

This study is primarily based on exploratory research where ethnographic methods are used by conducting in-depth interviews of the villagers in Salmora. One of the key focuses of ethnography is upon the writing and reporting of experiences from the field (Flick 2009:81). However, in-depth interviewing "does not use fixed questions, but aims to engage the interviewee in conversation to elicit their understandings and interpretations" (Liamputtong and Ezzy 2005:332). "These interviews are characterized by active involvement in engaging the participant to converse about a particular topic of discussion relevant to the research questions or topic being explored" (Reeves et al. 2013:1369). In this particular study, field notes are maintained to collect data, analyzed through iterative reporting, and interpreted the findings based on observations and descriptions. The data are analysed through three steps such as description, analysis, and interpretation. The ethical concern is one of the major concerns of this study to maintain "the avoidance of harm, fully informed consent and the need for privacy and confidentiality" (Punch

1994:89). Indeed, the names of the respondents in this study are changed to keep confidentiality and privacy of their identity.

Traditional Livelihoods of Salmora: the home of *Kumars*

Discourses of livelihoods define how people live in particular places. The way of living also makes people dependent on the resources which are locally available in that region and it becomes a source of their livelihoods. Carney (1998:6) defined,

> "a livelihood comprises of capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base."

This definition covered a broader outlook of livelihood which was later helpful in the emergence of the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework by DfID[7]. In the later phase, livelihood approaches develop from 'village studies, household economics, and gender analyses, farming system research, agroecosystem analysis, rapid and participatory appraisal, studies of socio-environmental change, political ecology, sustainability science and resilience studies' (Scoones2009:174).

Scoones (2009) also defined that 'sustainability' is a boundary term, linking environment and economic development concerns while Escober (1995) stated it as the bottom-up development which involves wider community participation and local initiatives in the development process. For the holistic and integrated explanation of sustainable development, it is important to differentiate the "western" and "eastern" perspectives of development. The World Commission on Environment and Development, 1998 (WCED) defined that compromising means

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[7]DfID or the Department of International Development is the UK equivalent of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

lessen the needs of all parties. Escobar (1995) described a more clear statement on 'development' where he concentrates on the need for more research on the language of development at the ground level so that it may be beneficial for the grassroots.

The traditional livelihood crisis of the riverine communities in the Brahmaputra valley is multi-faceted that is rooted predominantly in the consistent loss of land. Land is a core element in the complex social relations of production and reproduction (Vignon and Lecomte2004:26). At the same time, ancestral land impacts people's identity- on the ways they are bound to the land and relate to their natural surroundings, as well as to fundamental feelings of 'belongingness' with the social and cultural environment in its entirety (Morre 2006:34). Indeed, it is important to understand the role of land as a site and source of conflict, especially about the scarcity of and competition for land, monopolization of natural resources, crisis management, and policy development.

The biggest challenge facing the *kumar* population on the island is the increasing loss of the clayey soil, locally known as *kumar-maati*. The glutinous clay required for pottery is collected from clay pits at twenty to thirty feet depth. But sources for this clay are minimal, located only along the riverbanks, which are constantly eroding. After the building of spurs, in recent years, the state administration has been trying to ban the digging of *kumar-maati* along the river banks in Majuli. According to the administration, this act of removing the clay from the depth of the riverbanks aggravates erosion activities (Rahman 2015). Indeed, the potters are forced to use the inferior quality soil, locally known as *lodha-maati*; because of which the finishing of the pots becomes inferior and hence renders them much more breakable. Consequently, because of the poor quality of the pots, the price becomes reduced.

Bikash Hazarika, one of the senior most villagers claimed:

> "Salmora is the worst victim of erosion in Majuli. The village experienced significant erosion of its landmass over the years, resulting in a repeated displacement of most of its families and seasonal migration of many. The village is now located at least two/three kilometers away from its current location which is now under the water of the Brahmaputra. Usually, we become conscious about the '*bhumuk*' (local name of the flow of water under the embankments) and locate the embankment which will be going to be eroded. People also try to barricade these '*bhumuks*' by using bamboos and sandbags that blocked the water flow inside the embankments for two to three days only."

However, the political and ecological understanding of livelihoods gives a holistic way of moving away from the economic factor of describing the traditional livelihood. Carr (2013:80) points out that the more importance on capital makes 'livelihoods principally about the maintenance and improvements of the material conditions of life.' Carr (2015:332) also termed political ecology and livelihood studies as 'natural partners' because of their relationship to the broader political-economic processes in terms of governmentality. The dominance of governmentality thus pointed towards the role of the state in fulfilling livelihood security. Everyday material practices of life cannot be read without governmentality that connects with relational thinking in vulnerable geography (Boggs and Rantisi 2003:109).Indeed, the practice of government about scope and policy especially for the poor and vulnerable is significant so that these can boost their capabilities and recover the shocks. Sustainability is in this context is a multi-level, people-centerd response which closely connected with livelihood outcomes such as income, well-being, and food security (Serrat 2017:21-26).

Bikash Hazarika also implied,

> "Fifteen to thirty years ago by observing the nature of the river our grandparents immediately can define the intensity of flood. But we are not able to read the river now, and consequently, there are several phases of floods in one year which make us vulnerable in front of the river. We have to shift more than three/four places once a year due to floods without any preparation. So, the risk of floods are increasing each year and flood becomes a disaster for us."

Furthermore, livelihoods become a crisis in the Brahmaputra valley because of its decreasing 'capabilities.' While explaining about capabilities Bebbington (1999) stated that livelihood is much more than the material conditions for survival. It helps us to understand that assets are not merely means for living for people; they also give meaning to people's life. Along with the livelihoods security, 'capabilities' also pointed towards the resilience capacity and coping of people which is locally termed as 'living with floods' (D'Souza 2010: 356).

Living with floods allows understanding modern river engineering and technology about governmentality. D'Souza (2010:358) has pointed out the need to understand and recover knowledge about rivers through the experience of 'riverine communities'; their history of resilience; livelihood strategies; and cultural embeddedness with flows. Indeed, there is a strong need to explore the internal/external, nature/culture interfaces of the river and riverine communities and how they cope with the fluvial geographies (Kuntala and Samanta 2007:327). South Asian environmental geography suggested that the Indian subcontinent's flood and deltaic plains were organized by communities as 'flood-dependent' agrarian regimes rather than being portrayed as 'flood-vulnerable' landscapes (Weil 2006:3).

Livelihood approaches, moreover, are significant to acknowledge that those who are not poor may not have cash or other savings; on the contrary, they have other material or non-

material assets. For instance, health, labour, knowledge, skills, friends, and family, as well as the natural resources around them. Indeed, livelihoods methodologies involve a convincing support of these belongings to categorize what prospects they may deal, or where limitations might lie.

A livelihoods approach, thus, is a primary requirement to draw the analysis of the difficulty of livelihoods, permitting complementarities between alternative supporting activities and providing a basis for detecting policy purposes and involvements (Carney 1998:25-47). Carney (1998) also recommends that a livelihood framework is a device that can serve to define the possibility of and provide the investigative basis for livelihoods consideration. Indeed, identifying the main factors affecting livelihoods and the associations between them is significant to save peoples' relation with the ancestral place and its resources.

Prabhat Hazarika, a villager from Salmora implied,

> Our ancestors carry the stories when they would go up to as far as Sadiya and Namsai to sell the *tekelis* (earthen pots). Some of them also went as far as Tezpur, and get down at various river ports (*ghats*) and sell the pots. They would go out on the boat voyage for pottery trade generally three times in a year, from September to November, February to April, and from May to July. All these transactions follow the barter trade system. In exchange for earthen pots, our people get food materials such as rice, vegetable, mustard instead of money.

Thus, understanding vulnerability requires taking into account people's experiences and perceptions. Understanding vulnerability also involves more than simply understanding societies' past and present relations concerning disasters and development. In this process, vulnerability is more about people, their observations, and their resilience. Observations, though directly do not portray resilience, it helps to circulate a certain kind of peoples' behaviours. Moser and Mcllwaine (1997: 2) defines vulnerability as:

> …the insecurity of the well-being of individuals, households, or communities in the face of a changing environment. Environmental changes threatening welfare can be ecological, economic, social, or political…With these changes often come increasing risk and uncertainty and declining self-respect. Because people move into and out of poverty, the concept of vulnerability better captures processes of change than more static measures of poverty.

One of the peculiar characteristics of pottery making in Salmora is that no wheel is used in the process and, indeed, the making of pottery depends on traditional practices of beating the clay by hand to give it a proper shape. The few tools that they use in the process are also made out of clay at home. This part of pottery making mostly depends on women. The raw earthen pots are then used to dry in sunlight for 5 to 7 days. The dry pots are used to burn in balanced heat and this process is mainly conducted by men. After burning the pots become reddish and smooth. Though the potters of Salmora make a variety of utility items, the main products that they make a profit from are the earthen pots that are used by many people in Assam for storing water, crop, food grain, and traditional wine. The pots are usually preferred for making and saving *Apong*, a local rice beer made by the Mising community. Another significant utility of the potteries is to preserve local curd, especially in areas like Sadiya (Tinsukia) and Bogidal (Sivasagar) which are mainly dominated by livelihoods based on cow milk.

Why Pottery making is significant?

Pottery making is based on family labour, supported further by the informal arrangement of the community. Women play a major role in pottery making by giving the shape of pot along with drying and baking at the household level while men help by digging the clay, collecting the firewood, and selling the pots. Humthira Saikia

shifted to the spur of Salmora with her family after the flood in 2004. She explained:

> "We did not get time to carry the *pakikhuta* (concrete pillar) of the house, all flowed in the flood. Shifting to spur is sometimes feel safe though we know that we are not a permanent resident of it. The primary problem we are facing here is the difficulty to continue pottery making. We do not have so much space to make pottery and dry it. *Buwari* (daughter-in-law) goes to her home to make pottery. So, we can only prepare the *kesatekeli* (kachha pottery), not the dried ones. The income from those is only 100-200 rupees."

The process that generates vulnerability is countered by people's capacities to resist, avoid those processes, and use their abilities for creating securities, either before a disaster occurs or during its aftermath (Wisner et al. 2003:14). Humthira Saikia explained these while filtering water directly collected from the river in her homemade filter outside the house. Most of the villagers who stay in the spur do not have the basic amenities like safe drinking water which shows how disasters make them suffer to poverty. International Decade for Disaster Reduction (1999) report defined:

> "The people most vulnerable to disasters are the poor, who have very limited resources to avoid losses. Environmental degradation resulting from poverty exacerbates disaster impacts…Innovative approaches are needed; the emphasises should be given to programs to promote community-level approaches."

Indeed, though poverty cannot be equated with vulnerability to disasters, poverty and resourcelessness drive many to live on increasingly high-risk and vulnerable zones such as eroded riverbanks, causing them to be repeatedly displaced and vulnerable (Jolly 2017: 45). Poverty is also a feature of underdevelopment (Mohanty, as cited in Escobar 1995). Poverty is determined by historical processes that deprive people of access to

resources, while the vulnerability is signified by historical processes that deprive people of the means of coping with hazards without incurring damaging losses that leave them physically weak, economically impoverished, socially dependent, humiliated, and physiologically harmed (Chambers 1989:1).

The environment of the Third World, is largely a 'livelihood issue' (Bryant and Bailey, 1997: 159), and indeed, any change to that environment will certainly modify the capacity to secure a livelihood. O'Keefe *et al.* (1976) suggest long ago, disasters are unnatural for another reason relating to the spatial impact on human settlements of episodic changes. Indeed, the distribution of costs involved in most episodic changes is not random. To a certain extent, it is the poor and otherwise marginalized members of society who are disproportionately affected by flooding, riverbank erosion, or drought. The 'disaster-proneness' of these actors is much greater than is the case with wealthier or traditionally more powerful actors (Blaikie *et al.*1994).

Quarantelli (1998:12) defined that vulnerabilities and consequences of disasters are potentially unevenly distributed across social groups and have found that similar disasters affected people with varied backgrounds differently. While discussing vulnerability we cannot ignore gendered vulnerability which is not derived from one single factor such as household headship or poverty. It is connected historically and culturally specific patterns of relations in social institutions, culture, and personal lives (Enarson 1998:159). Intersecting with economic, racial, and other inequalities, these relationships create hazardous social conditions placing different groups of women differently at risk when disastrous events unfold (Blaikie et al.1994).

Deepali Hazarika is a single mother of two sons. She commented:

> "to *paag* (the process of drying the clay potteries in a homemade oven) we need at least one male member. For this process, I have to depend on other community members who have a large number of potteries. We usually receive a good profit if we go directly to the market

> and sell the potteries. But carrying potteries is also too risky by road and that is why we used to sell these to the middle man in the village only. For *ekkua* (bunches of fifty) pottery we receive only 200 rupees."

However, the cost of production increases when the potter family with a limited workforce is forced to purchase clay from other families within the village. Consequently, the loss of clay threatened their livelihoods directly (Baruah2016:88). On the one hand, for the *Kumars*, *maati* is not the ultimate requirement; they needed *kumar-maati* to sustain their livelihood and tradition. On the other hand, they are losing the *maati* and *kumar-maati* simultaneously. The traditional land systems, where uncertainties regarding land and land rights increase when unclear or multiple rights exist in the same geographical area (Odgaard 2005:120). On the same lands, different actors might have specific rights, possibility for different activities and at different times. Consequently, there arise various uncertainties regarding theland regulation systems. Competition for land then becomes more conflictual, with tensions appearing at various levels of social organization; such as between family members, between villages, between social categories, and between ethnic groups.

The communities of Salmora are facing the threat of constant relocation. This implies high costs since a displaced family has to not only buy a new plot of land and rebuild their home, a family often has to find a new livelihood since it is separated from the resource base supporting its traditional livelihood. Vulnerability tends to be less for those with power and access to resources, as they either do not live in the zones of high risk or have access to technology (Jones and Murphy 2009:28). In this context, Foucault's (1978:95) formulation 'where there is power, there is resistance' is no longer sufficient. The critical argument given by Abu-Lughod's (1990) is significant in the case of Third World disaster vulnerability: 'where there is resistance, there is power', and here resistance is understood as a 'diagnostic' of changing relations of power.

As seen, after having been displaced, they are either at the embankments, or in helplessly occupied forest lands. Li (2014:589) argues that land is a 'strange subject' since it 'stays in place' and cannot be removed. The 'material emplacement' of land, as said by Li, shapes people's association with rights over land in distinct ways. However, Li's argument is not enough to explain the question on land in Salmora where instead of *staying in place,* in reality, land is eroded and disappears continuously (Baruah2016:17). The struggle here is to protect land to continue the livelihood of pottery making and to not be displaced.

BhulaKalita, a villager in Salmora said:

> "my family shifted more than eleven times in different locations of Salmora. But we know after shifting from Salmora we cannot continue pottery making because of the scarcity of *kumar-maati.* We do not have any other skill rather than pottery making and indeed we do not want to shift from Salmora though it is uncertain for us."

As a family continually moves from one place to another, away from its neighbours and kinfolk, it loses its social support system, which is often a key to survival especially for families living in poverty (Hutton and Haque 2004:41). Dogar Chuk Adarsha village is a small village near Jorhat town, that was settled by the families displaced from Salmora. In 2004, the Assam government rehabilitated a small group of 53 families in this village. The people of Dogar Chuk explained that the resettlement was not an easy process. It was a result of two years of struggle by the displaced families in Salmora, involving relentless protest and follow-up with the local and the district administration. However, Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) started to organize these people when the government of Assam came to evict them in early 2000. Bharat Chandra Gogoi, a member of KMSS in Rangali village said that the construction of the embankments to protect the property like tea plantations and oil rigs in Upper Assam is the main cause of changing the ecosystem of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries. Later, the embankments are a major source of income for the

contractors. Due to this corruption increase and eventually it impact the construction of embankments. Harvey suggests (2001), the built environment in which we live is a material instantiation of our social relations. In the same way, Chirs de Wet (2006) described that in the reconstruction process especially in the case of displacement and resettlement, there are several interrelated factors of different orders such as cultural, social, environmental, economic, institutional, and political.

During the process of reconstruction, these factors are influenced by and respond to external sources of power as well as the goals of local actors. The flood-affected and erosion lead migrated people are consequently become a part of the vote bank for different political parties who raised the issue of resettlement in their election manifesto while the problem becomes less relevant in the post-election scenario.

Parimal Hazarika one of the residents of Salmora said:

> *"Bornadieamarghar (*Brahmaputra is our home). Leaving the river means losing our lifeline. We have no choice to go away from the river even though it makes us and our livelihoods more vulnerable. The government departments think that we, the local people are illiterate and indeed we do not have knowledge about the river. In reality, we know each current of it as well as their change of direction. We can thus quickly decide which embankment will be useful for us or which spur will be lasting for five/six years."

Uphoff (1985) defined the importance of participation of the grassroots people in evaluation, benefit as well as in decision-making in various developmental projects which are linked with the sustainable development goals. The process of participation of the grassroots people in the policy-making creates an inclusive space for the vulnerable and economically marginalized section. The vulnerability has various layers of perception, knowledge, and power. As it is an outcome of different socio-economic processes, we cannot ignore the idea of social capital while

explaining the vulnerability of disasters. Social capital is defined as 'the rules, norms, obligations, reciprocity, and trust embedded in social relations, social structures, and society's institutional arrangements, which enable its members to achieve their individual and community objectives' (Narayana 1997:50). Closely linked to social capital is the political capital, based on access to the political process and decision-making, and seen as 'a gatekeeper asset, permitting or preventing the accumulation of other assets' (Booth and Bayer 1998: 79). Both of these two capitals are contextualized as 'social justice' by Harvey (2001) from the point of view of the oppressed which is also known as the 'bottom-up' approach.

Conclusion: lessons and directions

A livelihood approach is a primary requirement to identify the causes of vulnerability for the survival of a community. In the processes of mitigation of vulnerability, the state must recommend the connection between the policy purpose and involvements (Carney 1998:25).Indeed, it is important to continue a 'bottom-up' framework to appreciate the struggles of the vulnerable groups and to provide a basis for recognizing appropriate reasons to remain traditional livelihoods. The 'bottom-up' approach shows how politically and economically, the traditional livelihoods in the Brahmaputra valley become vulnerable due to the disappearing of land in the riverine areas. It also points to the anti-erosion movement which forms a considerable part of Assam's politics. Parimal Hazarika mentioned that this had started in 1990 under an organization called *Seuji Sangha* (Green Club) in Majuli. 'Many of the embankments in Majuli are built not for the safety of the people, but to collect votes during the election,' Hazarika commented. His comment is significant to evaluate the process of river engineering not only as a discursive exercise of a natural resource; but also how these exercises shape and reshape the structural forms of inequality regarding the 'availability' and 'accessibility' of land. The flooding and erosion in the Brahmaputra

valley, in this way, helps to study the connection between sustainable development which requires a political system that secures effective grassroots participation in decision making and implementing of the policies. The linkage of sustainability and development seeks to occupy new spaces, to create new geographies, to take its place on the map. The vulnerable geographies of the Brahmaputra valley thus raise questions on the definition of sustainability and the livelihoods security it may ensure. Notwithstanding, the epistemological definitions of sustainability verifies that 'no one will be left behind' (United Nations 2015:1), and that 'no goal or target be considered met unless met for all social and economic groups' (United Nations 2014:19). These also provide a way forward to justify that a river cannot be read without its specific geographical location, land, people, and social justice. Sustainability thus must secure the traditional livelihoods of the riverine communities so that the comment of Parimol Hazarika '*Bornadieamarghar'* (Brahmaputra is our home) can hold a promise and lifeline for the future generation.

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Declaration

I hereby declared that my article on 'Livelihoods as a Lifeline: Vulnerable Geography of Salmora, Majuli' has not been previously published nor is being considered for publication elsewhere.

Alternative Techniques for Ethnic Conflict Resolution: The Need to Think Out of the Box

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Abstract

Ethnic Conflict Resolution has become one of the challenges faced by the State in recent times, especially in the post-cold war period. Ethnic groups are making different kinds of demands ranging from a redistribution of resources to a demand for autonomy within the State to a final call for secession from the State. The phenomenon of ethnic conflicts needs to be understood to facilitate the process of conflict resolution. This paper tries to understand this phenomenon and devise certain different conflict resolution techniques. A more sustainable plan of action for conflict resolution needs to be given a thought. The need to think out of the box is necessary. Consociationalism is suggested as an alternative to traditional techniques to resolve conflicts where power sharing occurs to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned. The case of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict resolution effort is analysed. The paper draws the conclusion that most conflicts are only managed and the process of resolution is not initiated at all since it involves a

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loss for the elite in the conflict. However, it states that power sharing through federalism and consociationalism can be a viable option if the conflict resolution process has to succeed.

Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Consociationalism, Genocide, Secession, Assimilation, Federalism.

Introduction

Ethnicity as a tool of interest articulation has assumed significance in the post-cold war world. During the cold war, there was an overlay cast by the superpowers. Competition for global supremacy converted all conflicts in the world into East-West conflicts. All conflicts eventually got transformed and became a part of the ideological struggle between the eastern and the western bloc. With the end of the cold war, issues of ethnicity hitherto hidden came to the fore.

Most states sought to find their rightful place on the global map. Newly independent states of Asia and Africa did not get a chance to assert themselves after the end of the second world war. The looming shadow of the cold war and the super power politics in these regions compelled them to accept policies that were more statist than communitarian. The compulsions of domestic politics coupled' with the demand of the indigenous communities claiming their fair share in the political and economic resources made conflict inevitable.

The process of conflict resolution has assumed significance due to this. Conflict resolution is a process that is primarily initiated by the State. However, ethnic groups also devise their own means for eliminating differences that are more extreme in nature. This paper seeks to study the various techniques used by ethnic groups as well as the State to tackle incompatibilities and resolve conflicts. The paper also tries to arrive at certain reasonable solutions that can be given a thought. If traditional methods fail, then alternative ideas have to be thought about so that interests of

groups can be accommodated.

After a careful understanding about the different strategies available for conflict resolution, the paper also tries to arrive at an answer to the question about how best can conflicts be resolved-especially ethnic conflicts. Certain hitherto untested techniques are carefully studied to understand their relevance. This paper carries out a careful study of the phenomenon keeping the above objective in mind.

Keeping in view the significant role of the elite in ethnic conflict, any effort at resolving these conflicts must also involve the elite to a large extent. An elitist model of conflict resolution along with certain democratic features would be a reasonable solution. Consociationalism or the power sharing approach provides us with this alternative solution.

The paper is structured into four parts that deal with the significance of the conflict resolution strategy especially with regard to ethnic conflicts, the various techniques used for conflict resolution including the extreme and moderate measures, the best possible technique that can be seen as an alternative, cross checking their applicability to the case of Sri Lanka, and the conclusion that can be drawn with regard to the entire process of conflict resolution. The methodology used for this is descriptive and analytical.

Significance of Conflict Resolution

The imminent nature that conflict has now assumed has necessitated the development of various perspectives on it. An increasing number of insights on the possible reasons for the emergence of conflicts are available. Still there is a lot to be achieved in the field of conflict resolution (Boulding, 1978). The world has witnessed a lot of bloodshed and loss of life in the name of class, race and ethnicity. Power structures are shaped and reshaped according to the changing nature of conflicts and their outcome.

In all of this, what is sacrificed is human dignity and self-respect. The society now is a multi-cultural society. Scarcity of resources and an aspiration for power directs these multicultural societies towards violence against one another. Communities are pitted against each other with the 'us' against 'them' syndrome creating a feeling of insecurity and dilemma in the minds of the people. This confusion and hesitancy in human attitudes and behaviour intensifies conflict.

World peace and security can be ensured only if communities are at peace with one another. This makes the whole discourse of conflict resolution very important. Efforts to develop different mechanisms for conflict resolution have to be made. The multiplicity of conflicts based on a multiplicity of demands makes this task a very difficult one. There can never be a permanent universal solution to ethnic conflicts. However, certain mechanisms can be discussed broadly and their efficacy tested. It must be stated however, that a case wise method will eventually have to be evolved.

This paper studies the various measures used to resolve conflicts and seeks to arrive at certain broad mechanisms and techniques that will lead societies and state towards power sharing through democratic means. The study is significant since it provides all of this on a common platform.

Ethnic Conflict: A Conceptual Background

Ethnicity is the politicization of the identity of the individual. It is the feeling of belonging to an ethnic group. Ethnic groups are constituted on the basis of criteria like language, religion, race, kinship and so on. They are symbolic in character and determine the identity of the group. Every ethnic group has a distinctive identity. The ethnic identity of the group determines its interests. The distinctiveness of the 'self' vis a vis the 'other' is emphasized. Ethnic consciousness needs to be created for it to be used as a tool for mobilization (Bangura, 1994).

Interest articulation based on ethnic lines has become a very important phenomenon in recent times. There has been a profusion of ethnic groups who are vocal about their demands. This has led to a rise in ethnic conflicts. Most societies are fractured societies especially after the end of the cold war when the shadow of the super powers was lifted and communities sought to find their rightful place within the social canvas.

Ethnicities and ethnic identities have come to the fore and are expressing themselves on a wide range of issues. The biggest challenge to the territorial state is the growing aspiration of these ethnic groups. Most ethnic groups over a period of time assume a violent role. Interests can be acquired only through violence because if discontent is stifled then violence is inevitable.

Ethnic groups can be categorised on the basis of the demands that they make upon the state. The separatists demand is the most common. They demand either secession or autonomy. Secession means the creation of a new State by withdrawing from the territory and people of an existing State (Pavkovic, 2015). Secession implies that the ethnic group no longer wishes to be a part of the state and wants to break away. The demand for secession always begins with autonomy. Autonomy refers to the granting of some degree of independence to the ethnic group within the territory of the state. It is a category of power and hence very different from freedom (Samaddar, 2006). The demand for autonomy, if ignored, may however, become more aggressive and secession from the state will be desired. Claims over the territory are, therefore, of significance in these types of demands.

Ethnic groups usually try and make demands within the state. They seek to get a share in the resources of the state. These types of demands can be categorised as redistributionist demands. They seek to accommodate themselves within the existing socio-political structure of the state. Improvement of their position within the state is their primary aim. Denial or a negation of this demand may raise the demand for secession and autonomy.

Struggle of indigenous peoples for just and equal rights is also a significant type of an ethnic demand. Indigenous people are defined as groups that have a distinct culture and a strong territorial bonding. They are groups who have occupied the territory prior to all other groups who live there and therefore, believe in having a first claim to the land (Clay, 1989). The main interest of these ethnic groups is the protection of their lands or the reacquisition of the territory that once belonged to them but was conquered or taken control of by others.

The minority group within the state also claim their rights. Minorities are referred to as any identifiable group that does not constitute a majority within the state. They may have any type of an affiliation or basis either of a sentimental or unemotional type. These groups focus on the protection of the rights of the minorities in a society governed by the majority. The nature of recognition of these ethnic groups either marginalises them or brings them into the mainstream of power structures in democratic systems (Crowley, 2001). This determines the extent of competition and conflict. There are two types of minority groups within the society. One created during the formation of nation-states and the redrawing of boundaries and the other created due to immigration.

Ethnic politics has emerged out of the claims of certain individuals that they are left out of the positions of ascendancy and are even denied basic human rights due to their race, religion, language and so on. It is politics to claim the human rights back that are denied to their group members. Violence leads to counter violence. Incompatible interests have to be tackled if conflict resolution has to succeed.

The dilemma between which strategies to use for tackling conflicts, is a big challenge for parties seeking to end the conflict. There are two strategies for tackling conflicts. The conflict resolution strategy that seeks to strike at the root of the problem and thus uses a microscopic approach and the conflict management strategy that seeks to remove visual traces of the conflict.

The conflict resolution strategy has a more positive orientation towards tackling conflicts. The conflict management strategy can be looked as a limited approach that is not long lasting. The peacekeeping, peacemaking and peace building measures are an attempt to balance the two strategies and reach a consensus acceptable to all the parties.

Levels of Conflict Formation

There are several levels at which an ethnic conflict is played out. The most important being the mobilisation level. Mobilisation involves the activity of drawing support of the ethnic group members by uniting them over a particular cause. It is chiefly governed by elite competition. The cause that they are claiming is projected as just. They wish to have a share in the power structures to ensure the wellbeing of the community. Their projected intention is to articulate the grievances of the ethnic group. The state is considered for ensuring wellbeing of the people within their borders. Therefore the state is regarded as responsible for their plight.

In any ethnic conflict, the state is a major party. The institutions of the state are the first to be challenged. The existing patterns are sought to be reversed in their favour. At this level the maximum use of ethnic rhetoric is made. Ethnic identity is imposed upon the people of the group and that identity is sought to be granted a rigid character. However identities can be reshaped and new identities highlighted if the situation so demands. Thus, ethnicity is situational or contextual where the context is defined by the elite.

The extent of mass support that the elite get, however, cannot be denied. This happens when the elite succeeds in transferring the competition and conflict amongst them at the top level to the masses below. The masses are emotionally involved. They grant political and tactical support to the elite. However, political manipulation alone cannot be a reason for granting support. The

social, political and economic structure also possesses certain causes for grievances. The elite seek to justify an ethnic conflict in terms of the existing or anticipated oppression by a rival group (Brass, 1991).

Most often, the rival group who is in an advantageous position is also the holder of state power. In cases where one ethnic group enjoys majority in the state apparatus, it seeks to impose its policies upon the others within the boundaries. This imposition is recognised and challenged by the other groups who are in a disadvantaged position. Factors like relative deprivation, nature of government response to the demands of the ethnic groups as also an uneven distribution of the ethnic groups in the urban and the rural areas contribute to this end.

New elites from hitherto disadvantaged groups come up and challenge the established elite. If they are compromising and adjust the new elite and their demands within their fold, conflict is avoided. However if they are not willing to accommodate the newly emerging elites then conflict becomes inevitable. The new elite must represent or at least seem to represent the interests of all its members. If at the elite and the mass levels, interests are accommodated then conflict is avoided. This, however, rarely happens.

Techniques of Conflict Resolution

For any kind of a technique of conflict resolution to work we need to understand the necessary condition in which the conflict takes place. Conflict primarily occurs due to a scarcity of resources. How this scarcity is projected will determine the intensity of the conflict situation. There are essentially three important things that conflict resolution strategists have to consider; the actors involved in the conflict, the issues and the actual action (Wallensteen, 1988). A strategy for conflict resolution would mean changing the point of focus from incompatibilities to compatibilities. This might lead to the incompatibilities receding into the background for the conflict

to become non salient (Galtung, 1976). There are several instruments or techniques used that encompass three stakeholders in conflict. The elite who give set goals and targets to achieve through the conflict, the militia who actually carries out the conflict and the masses who are largely affected by the conflict. The Peace making, Peace keeping and Peace building strategy aims to tackle conflict at all the three levels.

The peace keeping level concentrates on building a bridge between warring parties. During the peace keeping phase, facilitation and mediation are the instruments used. Facilitation implies making easy the task of negotiations between the conflicting parties. Most often, however, providing the good offices is not enough. In many cases, facilitation gets converted to mediation.

Mediation, however, has a limited role to play in internal conflicts. Mediation is often looked upon as meddling or interfering in the internal affairs of the state. The mediator has to be careful to avoid overstepping the boundary. The mediator has to be a neutral party to the conflict. He should either provide a solution acceptable to the parties or should be able to induce the parties to end the conflict through several attractive incentives. He should also be on good terms with all the parties so as to win their trust. The most important task of a mediator is to provide good offices to the parties where they can meet in a neutral environment. Despite its importance in a conflict, mediation rarely provides a permanent solution to the conflict.

Negotiations between conflicting parties themselves, serve the ground for a solution. During the peace-making phase negotiations become important. Negotiation is the best policy for all parties in a conflict. Negotiations provide a voluntary character to the entire resolution process that is lacking in mediation. Mediation has an element of force or pressure. Since it is more prevalent in the conflict management process it has a negative undertone and a limited objective. Negotiations are more positive in character. The conflicting parties are brought on a common

platform to end their differences.

Sometimes, there is the feeling among the elite and through them among the masses, that they have already invested so much in the conflict, that any kind of an acceptance of the other's position would not be justified. In most cases, the cost in terms of human lives is also too great. Therefore, despite heavy losses the parties continue with the conflict. Negotiations allow them a way out of this dilemma. The parties have the opportunity to get certain rewards for their efforts. One caution to be followed however, in the entire process of negotiation is that it should not compromise any party too much. This increases the possibility of the resumption of the conflict.

The process of arriving at a compromise occurs with the consent of the parties. Negotiation is an extension of 'normal politics' that is sought to be re-established (Zartman, 1990). A well-functioning polity needs to carry out its tasks through the normal channels of interest articulation, aggregation and communication. Negotiation is the symbol of such a well-functioning polity and acts as an important indicator of the nature of the conflict.

The ability of the government to handle grievances is also another indicator of normal politics. A conflict occurs when the government can no longer handle these grievances. Thus, a conflict begins when normal politics breaks down. The question that arises then is at what point of time in the entire conflict cycle negotiations should be initiated? It is difficult to tell when the negotiation process should be introduced in the conflict.

Every conflict passes through several stages. In the first stage grievances are aired and discontent is projected within the borders of the state. They are addressed to the government. If the government does not give an adequate response to the demands then the conflict moves on to a higher stage. The government, in most cases, is regarded as biased and discriminatory and becomes a major party to the conflict. The policy of opposing the government is adopted. But for opposing the government the elite needs to mobilise the group. This is the consolidation phase. It is

difficult to tell when the conflict has moved from one phase to another.

As the conflict intensifies, the demand of the rebels also increases. Demands become more and more extreme in character. Negotiations during the consolidation phase cannot succeed. The elite during this phase are more concerned about how to carry out the conflict rather than about how to end it. Negotiations can succeed, therefore, at the beginning of the conflict. This is possible if the government shows a certain restraint and is responsive to the grievances of the group. A conflict is best resolved at this phase when demands are limited and within reach. As the conflict progresses there are several other moments 'ripe for resolution'. These moments are characterised by a mutually 'hurting stalemate' reached by the conflicting parties (Zartman, 1990).

Usually, once the first opportunity during the grievance stage of the conflict is lost, negotiations again have a chance of succeeding when both the parties believe that their chances of winning have dimmed. They arrive at a no-win situation. This lies between total annihilation and total victory. They have to accept something less than victory and something better than defeat. That is all they are able to achieve.

When the cost incurred in the conflict far exceeds the gains that are perceived to be derived from it, a stalemate is reached and the moment is ripe for resolution since the parties willingly accept a solution out of the present dilemma. This moment does not last long since a stalemate is only perceived. Once the perception of the parties to the conflict changes with a shift in the environment, the moment is gone and if not exploited an opportunity for resolution is lost with it. Able and capable leaders are necessary to recognise them and take advantage of them. Once negotiations are initiated good leadership is also required to broker an agreement that will not push the parties back to violence. Only after negotiations succeed and peace building process is initiated the conflict has a chance of resolution.

The negotiating process once initiated has to consider what it will negotiate. What kind of a settlement will it reach? There are several structural and institutional changes that can be introduced to accommodate the interests of the parties and ensure the return of 'normal politics' within the system.

Measures to Resolve Conflict

Since the entire conflict is created by the political ethnic elite, the outcome of the conflict to a large extent depends upon them. In certain cases, there are greater rewards to the political leaders to pursue the conflict than to end it. This is a challenge faced by resolvers. The resolution machinery has to take into consideration the various demands upon the state that challenge its sovereignty and take appropriate measures. Reconstitution or re-composition of the state to a large extent fulfils the need for recognition of the ethnic group by conferring recognition to their ethnic status.

The methods for resolving ethnic differences can vary from the extreme method to the moderate method. Extreme measures usually initiated by ethnic groups include genocide, forced migration, secessions-partition and integration- assimilation whereas the moderate measures initiated generally by the State include constitutional, structural, institutional, and cultural measures. It involves a reconstruction of the political, social and economic process to accommodate interests of every group. They involve certain structural techniques like federalism, electoral reforms, consociationalism or power sharing (Zartman, 1990).

Extreme Measures: Temporary and Unilateral

Genocide

The 1948 U.N. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defined genocide as 'acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group' (UN Convention, 1948). Genocide literally means the killing of a 'genos' or a kind. Genocide can be defined as the

systematic mass killing of an ethnic community. Genocide terminates ethnic conflicts. They resolve them permanently since once the ethnic group is wiped out, there cannot be a resurgence. A necessary condition for genocide is, therefore, the existence of an ethnic group propagating extremist ethnic ideology. Examples of ethnic genocide are evident not just in developing societies but developed societies as well. The ethnic genocide that occurred in Bosnia and Rwanda made everyone aware of the dangers of ethnic mobilisation and consolidation of demands on ethnic lines within State territories. Genocide occurred not for power sharing but for power grabbing. The total annihilation of the other was sought in these cases. In these circumstances, the State becomes a party to the conflict and hence the resolution process becomes more challenging.

Forced Migrations

Forced mass transfers occur when one ethnic group is compelled to leave the place they are residing in and live elsewhere. They leave their homeland. Forced transfers have to be distinguished from population exchanges. Population exchanges take place with the agreement of all parties usually during partition or secession. There is nothing voluntary in forced migrations.

It is difficult to conceive of forced migration as a solution to an ethnic conflict. It does not end ethnic conflict. It merely shifts the theatre of the conflict. Forced migrations lead to displacement and the migrants might at a future date wish to claim their homeland. It also increases the possibility of external actors aiding and abetting the conflict to suit their interests. This naturally complicates the resolution process since the external actor too becomes a party to the conflict.

Both genocide and forced transfers are unilateral solutions to the conflict. They shift the conflict to another place and time and do not offer a permanent solution. Moreover, as already stated, resolution is possible only through negotiations and accommodation with complete respect for human rights. Thus,

genocide and forced transfers are unacceptable methods for resolving ethnic conflict.

Secession

Partition or secession is also seen by many as a solution to an ethnic conflict. The principle underlying partition or secession is self-determination, which respects the rights of ethnic communities. On the surface, the principle of self-determination appears to be very reasonable. It allows the people to decide their fate. Self-determination is a movement for sponsoring the power to do as your own will dictates (McGarry and Brendan, 1993). Secession on the principle of self-determination is easily possible. When a majority residing in one particular territory of a region wishes to leave and there is no substantial opposition to the idea within that region, secession takes place.

Geographical concentration becomes a critical factor that facilitates the entire process. Such geographical concentration is rarely available. If the principle is accepted then every group within the seceding area should also be allowed to secede if they so wish. This creates a domino effect that leads to fragmentation into smaller and smaller states. This, inevitably, leads to violence. Due to the fear of the domino effect, very few people accept self-determination as a solution to a conflict. It is possible that once secession or partition is allowed intrastate conflict will get converted into an interstate one having international significance. This becomes a threat to world peace and security. Every effort should be made to resolve these differences and avoid the dominoes effect that follows.

Assimilation

Assimilation also seeks to attain the same objective as genocide but it does it by less violent means. Assimilation creates a homogenous common identity by integrating the ethnic group into a common culture. It is not the same as integration. Though, both assimilation

and integration create a common identity, integration seeks to create a civil identity based on civic secular values whereas assimilation accepts a common religious and cultural identity. Thus, it goes one step further than integration. It eliminates multi-ethnic groups within the society. All groups once assimilated adhere to one established identity. This is based on the 'melting pot' thesis where all cultures are melted to form one mass.

This objective is not easy to attain. Assimilation is viewed by many as a threat to their culture. Moreover, even in a melting pot the ingredients of one culture will be more than the other. Indirectly and in a less visible form it still leads to the domination of one over the other. Assimilation to some degree involves coercion that creates further problems. Assimilation does not provide a viable solution to an ethnic conflict. Unless assimilation projects are aimed at people who wish to acquire a new identity like immigrants it produces conflict rather than reduces it.

Extreme measures for resolving conflicts might lead to more extremism in carrying out the conflict. The conflict instead of abetting might intensify and become more violent. Since in most ethnic conflicts power lies at the root of all incompatibilities, a more moderate restructuring of the polity to accommodate the interests of the group might prove to be more fruitful and long lasting. Too much of appeasement can also lead to an escalation of demands.

Moderate Measures: Sustainable and Multilateral

Federalism

Federalism provides such a moderate solution. One of the main reasons for accepting a federal model is the availability of channels to maintain ethnic, linguistic and racial diversity. This type of a tiered structure is suitable if ethnic divisions are geographically demarcated as well. This ensures that the ethnic group enjoys political autonomy. For a federation to be politically effective it must be socially prevalent.

In a genuine federation, the central and provincial governments enjoy co terminus powers granted by a written and codified constitution. This implies power sharing based on territorial divisions. Federalism comes with its own problems. Coupled with the autonomy that it grants, States can use it as a tool for demanding secession. Since territorial demarcations already exist demands for secession can be easily made especially if a federal society also exists. A federal society lends more strength to the federal model. A federal society is the existence of a social system that is demarcated clearly on ethnic lines. Not only is the polity granted autonomy but the society also enjoys autonomous powers in certain spheres. A geographically scattered minority ethnic community will in all probability be a minority in all units save a few. This means that they will never have an opportunity to share power, which might lead to more conflicts in the future.

Democratisation along with electoral reforms is suggested as an alternative. Democracy, traditionally, has been defined as the power that ultimately belongs to the people. Since the people are sovereign, justice is ensured. It upholds the values of human rights, justice, equality, and universality. It is seen as the best possible method for resolving differences. Every individual is allowed to articulate his ideas. Every group can mobilise their masses and contest elections. They enjoy all civil and political liberties. Though, normatively speaking, this works in practice, democracy creates certain problems as well.

Democracy, in its most primitive sense, stands for majority rule. When political majority fluctuates, this system works since people change their views on political issues. Where there are already entrenched ethnic differences between communities voting takes place on ethnic lines. The minority does not stand a chance of gaining power and remain subjugated. This intensifies ethnic conflicts. Electoral politics is viewed as a 'zero-sum' conflict.

Democracy should therefore come with certain electoral reforms. The electoral system should be based on proportional representation where every group gets a share according to its size and strength. Moreover, multi-ethnic coalitions based on vote sharing can also be a solution (Horowitz, 1991). It is possible to create a multipolar balance where ethnic groups enjoy fluidity and cross-cultural contacts are the maximum.

Consociationalism: An Alternative Method

An alternative solution to resolve ethnic conflicts is consociationalism or power sharing. Political relations between ethnic communities can be reorganized best through the principle of Consociationalism. Consociational principle accepts the reality of ethnic pluralism since almost all the states are multiethnic in character to a lesser or greater degree. This is because the full assimilation of an ethnic group requires between 300-700 years (Deutsch, 1973). Therefore, a coalition that combines the interests of all the ethnic groups should be a viable solution. The word Consociationalism is derived from the Latin word 'consociatio'. This word was used and popularized by Arend Lijphart who uses the two terms Consociation and Power sharing interchangeably.

Consociationalism is a method of power sharing between ethnic communities so that none feels discriminated against and the interests of all are protected. Power sharing / consociationalism can be defined with the help of four characteristics: (Lijphart, 1991).

a) A coalition government that has the participation of all groups, thus representing the interests of all segments in the society.

b) A high degree of autonomy to be enjoyed by the ethnic communities especially over matters which concern them directly.

c) The entire governmental system to be based on proportional representation.

    d)   Minorities to enjoy a constitutional veto.

The two principles of coalition of diverse politico ethnic parties and autonomy to be exercised by these parties may at first glance seem to be contradictory. But this is not the case. Although a coalition seems to suggest joint rule it does not contradict the principle of autonomy. Consociationalism works on the assumption that on all matters of common interest joint decisions will be taken through consultations and discussions. In matters that do not affect parties uniformly, decisions should be made by a separate group.

Proportionality includes proportionality in the entire public sector and not just in the organization of the government. Minority veto is an important feature in Consociationalism. A veto helps the group in protecting its interests. Within a coalition a minority group may not be able to assert itself or it is outvoted or overruled by the majority. To avoid this and ensure that minorities do not feel that their interests are threatened minority veto is allowed.

This type of a democratic process will survive only if certain conditions are fulfilled. These conditions are not rigid or fixed. One of the most important factors is the absence of any majority ethnic group. Any overwhelming majority might undermine the importance of other minorities. Majority groups should also not have any mono nationalistic assimilationist strategies or objectives.

There should also not be too many ethnic groups since negotiations would become a cumbersome task. The existence of any external threat might lead to the coalition partners working together. Moreover successive generations of leaders must also have a desire to sustain the Consociational system. They should also enjoy certain amount of flexibility in their functioning, so that they can adopt policies that suit the changing realities (McGarry and Brendan, 1993). However, what happens in situations that do not fit these conditions. Can the Consociational system not be applied there?

The Consociational system works best in systems that have clearly demarcated ethnic groups since then it is not difficult to identify their interests and also determine their strength. In cases where the ethnic dividing lines are diffuse and fluid ethnic groups cannot be easily identified. Here, the system of proportional representation comes to the aid. Proportional representation allows the ethnic group to manifest itself. The members make themselves clear and in fact proportional representation tests the fluidity of ethnic groups as well. Ethnic groups are identified from time to time.

The flexibility of ethnic identities can also manifest themselves. Individuals can decide to be a part of any group that they wish. No individual is forced to join them. A power sharing agreement should include all four characteristics. What makes Consociationalism a good system for multiethnic societies ridden with conflict is its elite base. Since ethnic conflicts are more a result of manipulation, by incorporating the elite and assigning them a prominent role in the structures of power they may be induced to end the conflict. The distinguishing feature of a Consociational system is that it relies on the capacity of the leaders to avoid conflict and work in co-operation. Since elite are promised a share in power, they would not be eager to lose that status and pursue conflict. Not only, therefore, is the system good for states that are conflict ridden but also for those that are conflict prone.

Consociationalism believes in the capacity of the elite to appreciate the dangers of fragmentation and hence end hostility. Elite are sufficiently motivated to compromise on political issues (McRae, 1991). They are assigned a role in the decision making process. They are, therefore, equipped with the capacity to secure their interests. Not only are they a part of the coalition but they also enjoy autonomy in certain respects especially those issues that affect their group and consequently they enjoy the ability to determine their status within the group.

The instrument of the minority veto also ensures that any threat to their interest is fended off. They no longer have to use

violence as a means of securing or to a lesser extent highlighting their interests. The usual grievance against the government is that it ignores the interests of a particular group. The elite mobilize group support on this issue. All strength is required to fight the might of the government. However, Consociationalism ensures that this excuse is no longer available to the elite. Since the elite are the part of the government any attempt at calling the government discriminatory is indirectly accusing themselves.

Consociationalism, therefore, entirely revolves around the capacity and will of the leaders to cooperate and devise appropriate solutions by negotiations. Since in ethnic conflicts the elite entirely determines the course of the conflict and the masses are merely manipulated the criticism of the Consociational model is that it is entirely elite based and works against democratic values. It is also felt that Consociationalism cannot succeed in countries, which do not have a strong democratic tradition. However, Consociationalism works in any system. It is recognized as one of the most workable democratic system in conflict-ridden regions. Elite skills and motivation determine its success and failure. Elite leadership plays a pivotal role in this model.

Therefore, Consociationalism can be regarded as the best solution though not the only one for resolving ethnic conflicts. This is so because Consociationalism represents a power sharing arrangement between the communities in such a way that every community feels that it has a stake in the decision making process and hence can protect its own interests. It strikes a balance between coalition and autonomy. The feature of proportionality also ensures a fair distribution of the scarce resources. A minority veto guarantees that the interests of the minorities are well protected from any threat from the other groups. Minorities cannot be overruled or outvoted.

Several critics of Consociationalism have suggested that as a means for resolving ethnic conflicts, it proves to be inadequate. It is believed that the formation of coalitions on ethnic lines leads to a sharper polarization of interests between groups that are

detrimental for the establishment of a civil society. A civil society is one where no religion is enforced or endorsed. This concept emerged in the eighteenth century with the advent of capitalism (Ignatieff, 1995). It is also regarded as an elitist solution and hence anti-democratic in character.

However, clearly demarcated ethnic groups help in identifying interest and also fulfilling them. All dissatisfactions and discontent are brought to the fore. Moreover, all democracies are elitist to a certain extent. The elite base of Consociationalism makes it a sensible solution to ethnic conflicts. Once elite interests are accommodated the fear that they spread among the masses automatically is reduced. It is based on the assumption that if leaders make conflicts they should be the ones involved in ending them as well. Since elite are granted a role in the decision making process they can protect their interests. The autonomy that they enjoy within the coalition provides them with flexibility of action.

However, consociationalism by itself is not enough. Consociationalism along with certain other techniques like federalism and proportional representation is essential. If consociationalism stands for power sharing at the national level, federalism stands for power sharing on the basis of territorial divisions in which each federating unit enjoys autonomy within its own sphere. States are also proportionally represented at the center and do have a voice where their interests are concerned. An ethnically divided society must also have a system of proportional representation. This ensures that every group gets a share in accordance with its size and strength. This helps in developing a corporate personality of the citizens who are bound together with a common interest thus, ensuring the wellbeing the polity (Young, 1994).

The Case of Sri Lanka

The case of Sri Lanka proves this point. In Sri Lanka, too, the clash

of interests among the elites of the two ethnic groups- the Tamils and the Sinhalese- and within the ethnic groups ultimately took the form of a conflict which has become protracted and violent.

Elite rivalry in Sri Lanka began with the colonial period. The two ethnic groups were polarized on the basis of their interests. During the colonial period, when the Tamils started securing administrative and governmental positions and also doing well in the professional areas, the Sinhalese elite realized that they were being left out of the development process. They started creating a fear among the Sinhalese that the Tamils were eating at the profits that rightfully belonged to the Sinhalese.

Since it is at the level of the government where all the decision making regarding the distribution of resources takes place, the Tamil and Sinhalese elite started competing for a greater degree of representation in the government. Political parties having an ethnic basis started emerging in Sri Lanka. The Sinhalese were not ready to grant concessions to the Tamils. Meanwhile, the Tamil elite developed the fear that with independence they would lose all the privileges that they enjoyed during the colonial period. To protect their own interests, they too started demanding more and more benefits on ethnic lines.

Their fears were more or less justified when Sri Lanka attained independence and a Sinhalese dominant government came to power. The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka was created by the chauvinistic policies of the party in power- be it the UNP or the SLFP. The 'Sinhala Only' policy made language an important issue in Sri Lanka. The conflict therefore began as a linguistic conflict. It had its base in electoral politics played out by the two political parties- UNP and SLFP. The SLFP for electoral gains fanned the ethnic sentiments of the Sinhalese in 1956. It was also a weapon used by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to become the Prime Minister. Bandaranaike had left the UNP because he felt that as a member of the UNP his political ambitions would never be fulfilled.

They were greatly influenced by the Buddhist elite who wished to regain their lost glory and prestige during the British

period. The influence of the report of the Buddhist Committee of Enquiry cannot be ignored. The mobilization of the Sinhalese on ethnic lines created a fear among the UNP that they may lose their chances of retaining power if they maintained a secular stand. They, too, started voicing the ethnic rhetoric.

The emergence of the SLFP in government in 1956 changed the course of Sri Lankan politics. The discriminatory policies introduced by the SLFP with regard to education and employment as also the land resettlement projects made the Tamils move towards extremist demands. The Tamils were losing out in this race for power. They created their own political parties voicing specifically ethnic demands. The demands too, got converted from a moderate one for autonomy to an extremist one for a separate state. This happened due to the inept and insensitive attitude of the Sinhalese government. The State played a vital role throughout the Sri Lankan conflict and continues to do so.

In this entire process, the Sinhalese were portrayed as superior to the Tamils. The attitude of 'rightfully belonging to the land' was developed and perpetuated. The issues considered as sacred by the people were exploited. The portrayal of Sri Lanka as the land of Buddhism and the Buddhist race implied that the Tamils were the 'alien other' who did not belong to the island and therefore had no rightful claim to it. The Tamils too, had their own myths and symbols. Efforts to popularize Tamil literature and art are continuously made and the Tamil race is projected as superior to the Sinhalese. The elite on the basis of these myths create a sense of pride among the Tamils.

Though several efforts were made to resolve the conflict in Sri Lanka right since the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1956, none of the packages offered a federal solution to the conflict. The government always fell one step short of the Tamil demand. All the packages merely offered autonomy at the district levels, keeping intact the unitary form of the Sri Lankan polity. It was only the devolution package announced by President Kumaratunga that accepted a federal solution to the conflict. However, the

devolution package itself suffered from several lacunae, which gave the impression that the government was still holding back.

Though President Kumaratunga's package announced a federal solution, it did not speak about representation of the federating unit at the central level. The national decision making still remained a centralist one. President Kumaratunga's package did not speak about power sharing at the center. A coalition of all diverse political parties including the LTTE along with other Tamil moderate parties would remove the autocracy of the majority that the Tamils fear.

Moreover, in their own demarcated sphere of influence, they would still enjoy autonomy of functioning that would ensure that their support base is not eroded. A minority veto also would guarantee a peaceful method of voicing dissent. Violence that has been rampant in Sri Lanka since 1983 would give way to peace.

Sri Lanka already possessed a system of proportional representation introduced in 1978. They have adopted a list system where every political party gives a list of candidates on the nomination paper in order of priority and the voting is for the list and not for any particular candidate (Phadnis, 1989). A system of proportional representation allowed the ethnic group to manifest itself. If the devolution package offered a sharing of power at the center through Consociationalism along with a federal model that it had already proposed, it would become more comprehensive. This combined with the proportional representation system that already existed; it would provide a workable solution to the conflict. This would mean a consolidation of democracy by granting the Tamils enough political space to function within the Sri Lankan system. This can be considered as a missed opportunity in the entire Sri Lankan conflict resolution effort.

In this entire process, it must not be forgotten that negotiations between the government and the LTTE had to be an almost ongoing phenomena. The Tamils were controlled by the LTTE, which still propagated a separate 'Eelam'. The difficult task,

therefore, was to convince the LTTE that there was a place for it in the Sri Lankan post war politics. The LTTE was a permanent feature of Sri Lankan polity and therefore, could be excluded from any political settlement. However, only a change in the leadership of the LTTE could mean a shift in the political discourse from an extreme to a more moderate position. However, the Sri Lankan government's reluctance to declare the LTTE as a terrorist group showed the significant role that the LTTE enjoyed in Sri Lankan politics. A conflict resolution rather than a conflict management strategy in Sri Lanka could have avoided a military solution to the ethnic conflict.

As far as the peace building efforts were concerned special mention has to be made of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Ariyaratne, 1980). Since Buddhism plays an important role in the Sri Lankan society, the efforts of the Sarvodaya members to use it as a base and try to build a new and better Sri Lankan society was commendable. Though the government was involved in the war with the LTTE several non-governmental organizations were taking the lead in finding solutions and bridging the gap between parties. Their contribution to the peace building process cannot be ignored. They can be used as a channel to reestablish civic norms in the way politics is played out between communities.

Conclusion

The path of conflict resolution is not so easy. The whole phenomenon of conflict in recent times revolves aroupnd ethnic affiliations and ethnic loyalty in most cases. This makes it very difficult to arrive at certain acceptable solutions to the parties concerned since ethnic mobilisation involves an emotional appeal that is very hard to negate. The elites play along the insecurities faced by an individual and try to use these insecurities for their own political gains. Therefore, any conflict resolution process has to involve the elite to a large extent. Just like elite competition and conflict lead to ethnic competition and conflict. Similarly, elite accommodation and compromise will lead to ethnic

accommodation and compromise, thus finally bringing resolution on the horizon.

We see that the process of conflict resolution is not easy. The path is heaped with obstacles and challenges. To overcome these challenges, several techniques and instruments are available. The basic premise however, has to be clear- about whether conflict management is the approach to be used or conflict resolution. In most cases, we find that parties aim at a very narrow gain of conflict management where temporary relief is provided for the parties to regroup and rejuvenate themselves for further action. Conflict management strategies therefore are not long term and sustainable.

Conflict resolution strategy hopes for a permanent solution to the conflict. There are many extreme and moderate measures that are used by the parties. Conflict resolution process does not seek to establish a homogenous society. On the contrary, it seeks to encourage ethnic pluralism. Ethnic groups are taught to coexist and respect one another. Diversity is accepted and considered indispensable. Considering all this therefore federalism leading to a power sharing approach of consociationalism can be regarded as an alternative technique to resolve ethnic conflicts. They can ensure a long lasting permanent solution to ethnic conflicts.

In Sri Lanka although the devolution package announced by the government showed a power sharing approach, it lacked the effectiveness of a federal model. Federalism was never considered sincerely as an option in Sri Lanka which leads to the breakdown of the peace process and finally culminated in a military solution to the conflict. A devolution package along with the already well-established proportional representation system in Sri Lanka, provided the necessary support for the Consociational model to work. However, despite having sharp ethnic differences the Consociational model was not given a chance in Sri Lanka.

What is important and equally vital for a long lasting solution to the conflict are confidence building measures that can be achieved through the recognition of certain civic values. These

civic values give dignity and stature to the citizen. It develops among them a common interest that provides stability to the polity. This implies the establishment of a civil society, where the identity of a citizen is stressed and encouraged. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka hoped to achieve this objective.

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Exit polls in 2020 Bihar assembly elections: Evaluation of credibility in poll predictions

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Abstract

Exit polls are a predominant method through which political analysts predict election outcomes. In India, there are deliberations on regulating exit polls. However, over the years exit polls have become an important phenomenon for news organizations to predict public attitude and voter participation. Globally, the year 2020 saw difficult times with Covid-19 pandemic. India witnessed its first assembly election in Bihar in the same period. Return of migrant workers back to the state, shrinking employment opportunities, and stiff competition among political parties made Bihar elections unique and exclusive. Covid-19 pandemic gave the biggest challenge for election campaign. Thus, the main objective of the study was to analyze the credibility of poll predictions by

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prime research agencies and Indian news media. It was observed that the final election result and poll projections were different. Findings of the study analyzed the estimates and prediction error of exit polls across media.

Keywords: Exit Polls, Bihar Elections, Media , Campaign

Introduction

Elections in India are event-driven involving mobilization, organization and extensive electoral campaign. India, being the largest democracy in the world gives its voters a choice to elect its representatives. Generally, Indian elections (state and central) are scrutinized by research agencies or media organizations before the final election results are declared. This process is called *exit polls*. They are conducted on election day soon after the voter comes out of polling booth. According to Holtz- Bacha (2012)'Exit polls have become a staple for reporting election campaigns' and 'poll reporting has become part of election history'(Asha 2014). However, exit polls are condemned for their credibility and methodology in data collection procedures.

Amidst Covid-19 outbreak and its associated repercussions, Election Commission of India (ECI) announced Bihar assembly elections for the year 2020. Surprising the entire India, this was the *first state assembly election that the country witnessed during the pandemic and post-national lockdown*. A 243-seat assembly, Bihar election was conducted in three phases in the month of October 2020 – First, on October 28 covering 71 assembly constituencies; second, on November 3 covering 94 constituencies, and third phase on November 7 covering 78 constituencies.

Major political players of Bihar assembly elections that participated in the elections are - National Democratic Alliance (NDA), Grand Alliance (GA) and other independent parties. NDA consists of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Janata Dal-United JD(U), Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP) and Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM). Grand Alliance or popularly called Ghatbhandan (GA)

consist of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), Congress, Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)(Liberation) CPI-ML, Communist Party of India (Marxist) CPI (M) and Communist Party of India. **Others** political parties are namely Lok Jan shakti Party, All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen AIMIM and Bahujan Samajwadi Party BSP.

Literature Overview

Election studies are an intriguing area of academic research. Holtz-Bacha (2012) stated that poll reporting helps to understand political environment, strength of political parties and evaluate possible coalitions. Levy mentioned that poll data is used for two reasons(Levy 1883). One as raw material for reporting analytical stories which has become an integral part of election reportage. And second as pseudo-projection or early analysis / early reading of final election outcome by media organizations. However, Patnam (2013) pointed that exit polls and media platforms can increase uncertainty among less informed agents.

Much before introduction of digital voting in exit polls, ballet box and face-to-face interviews without pre-programmed questionnaires were used. This method invited interpretation bias and staggered methodological process by research agencies. 'Misreporting votes, risks in interviews of politically sensitive topics and socially undesirable responses could be seen', said Traugott and Price (1992). Suggesting remedies to this, the authors mentioned exit poll, survey sampling, mode of administration and weighting requires higher precision. Bishop and Fisher (1995) explained that controlled exit-poll on election day lowers voter's resistance to answers all the expected survey questions. And mode of data collection plays an important role in exit polls. Self-administrated secret ballot and face-to-face interviews vary extensively in procuring reliable answers.

Discussing the accuracy of poll reporting for 2014 Lok Sabha elections in India, Asha (2014) mentioned that the credibility of poll

predictions is increasing. Though pollsters are yet to expertise in predictions, no controversies were observed in final election outcome. BBC Report (2019) mentioned that exit poll results become accurate when methodology improves. Pavia (2010) explained that nonresponse bias is the main reason for inaccuracy in exit polls results.

Significance of research

The study has analyzed exit polls of 2020 Bihar assembly elections. This study is important because it the first assembly election in India to be conducted in Covid-19 pandemic. Imposing severe challenges with migrant laborer's returning back to Bihar from across the country, the situation added woes to an already fragile employment opportunities and economic distress in Bihar. Beyond this, strategic political alliances, tactful caste appeal and capturing youth attention invited academic evaluation. The study delves deeper into analyzing exit polls and its comparison with final election results to investigate their credibility, scientific data collection, methodology adopted and potential bias (if any).

Research Objectives

- To analyze exit poll predictions of 2020 Bihar assembly elections by prime research agencies
- To analyze prediction error and make comparative analysis of exit poll predictions and final election outcome.

Research Methodology

Researchers adopted *quantitative and qualitative secondary data methods* for data collection. Research reports of poll agencies, government and newspapers were analyzed for collecting poll data. The present study was confined to the results given by the poll agencies. Thus, the sources of secondary data are pollsters

who conducted exit polls in order to predict the pattern of voting and behavior of voters. Pollsters collected data to analyze the likes and dislikes of voters with regard to political parties and their political leaders. It helps in mapping the voting pattern in a particular election involving heterogeneous and highly complex demographic population.

Based on this, secondary data from five research agencies were selected, namely, Today's Chanakya, Times Now- C Voter, India Today Axis, Republic Jan ki Baat and Dainik Bhaskar.

Analysis and Discussion

Methodology adopted by agencies to conduct exit polls

Analyzing the methodology adopted by research agencies and media organisations in conducting exit polls, the study observed that the methods were *scientific, objective and fact based*. Exit polls were conducted on election days. As voters came out from voting they were interviewed. Voters were given electronic tablet devices that included simulated EVM - Tablet screen looked like EVM machine, and voters had to choose their political party preference. Voter's choice could not be seen by the interviewer. Exit polls were conducted in 243 constituencies of Bihar. Each booth was given 3-4 hour time and 2 interviewers to collect data. In order to maintain data quality, computer aided personal interviews (CAPI) was used. Also, pre-programmed questionnaire was included in the tablet giving no scope for any manipulation by the interviewer.

Exit poll analysis

**Analysis of Exit poll Final result of Today's Chanakya showing
Difference in seat share and Prediction Error Percentage**

Political Party	Exit Polls	% of Exit Polls	Final Election Result	% of Final Election Result	Difference in seat prediction	Prediction error in %
NDA	55	22.63	125	51.44	+70	127.27
GA	180	74.07	110	45.27	-70	38.88
Others	8	3.29	8	3.29	0	0
Total	**243**		**243**			

As per Table 1, Today's Chanakya, prediction error for NDA is 127.27% and GA is 38.88%.

According to pollster Today's Chanakya, the huge mandate for GA was because of Tejashwi Yadav - the Chief Ministerial face of the alliance. Representing RJD, he campaigned on job generation among youth. During his speeches, Tejashwi Yadav made a promise of 10 lakh government jobs creation on the first day of his taking oath as CM of Bihar. As per Economic Census Data (2009-2010), unemployment in urban Bihar is 73% and rural Bihar is 20%, as compared to 34% and 16% across India, as mentioned in Economic Census Data (2009-10).

Analyzing the motives given By the Pollster, it stated that anti-incumbency is one of the biggest reasons for chief minister Nitish Kumar to lose votes. His performance in Bihar was '*poor*' and voters needed change in the government. NDA had little chance of coming to power in 2020 assembly elections. The survey explained that even though BJP campaigned relentlessly using innovative technologies, yet RJD would win looking at Tejashwi's *visibility* in field among voters canvassing across the state.

Today's Chanakya's forecast also showed that votes from Extremely Backward Class (EBC), SCs, OBCs votes supported GA. These votes which in earlier elections were behind JD(U)'s Nitish Kumar were getting dispersed among RJD+, AIMIM and other independent parties for 2020 elections.

Evaluating the credibility of Today's Chanakya poll prediction in comparison to final election results, as per Table 1, it can be stated that *Today's Chanakya's accuracy for 2020 Bihar elections is poor*. News 18 in collaboration with Today's Chanakya *fails to provide credible information* on two big political alliances (NDA and GA) in Bihar assembly elections, 2020.

TABLE - 2

Analysis of Exit poll Final result of Times Now - C Voter showing Difference in seat share and Prediction Error Percentage

Political Party	Exit Polls	% of Exit Polls	Final Election Result	% of Final Election Result	Difference in seat prediction	Prediction error in %
NDA	116	47.74	125	51.44	+9	7.75
GA	120	49.38	110	45.27	-10	8.34
Others	7	2.88	8	3.29	+1	14.25
Total	243		243		20	

As per Table 2, Times Now- C Voter prediction error for NDA is 7.75%, GA is 8.34% and Others is 14.25%.. The pollster survey stated that GA would win but with a minor lead, and NDA will be expected to compete strongly but lose election in minor vote percentage. This was because BJP has not performed well in other states that have faced anti-incumbency.   However, it has to be noted that C-Voter poll prediction is relatively accurate as compared to other pollsters taken for the study. This is because poll predictions are always considered +/- 10-15% to final election results. But it has to be mentioned that even Times Now – C Voter pollster didn't forecast NDA win in 2020 Bihar assembly elections.

TABLE - 3

**Analysis of Exit poll Final result of India Today Axis showing
Difference in seat share and Prediction Error Percentage**

Political Party	Exit Polls	% of Exit Polls	Final Election Result	% of Final Election Result	Difference in seat prediction	Prediction error in %
NDA	80	32.92	125	51.44	+45	56.25
GA	150	61.73	110	45.27	-40	26.66
Others	13	5.35	8	3.29	-5	38.46
Total	**243**		**243**		**90**	

As per Table 3, India Today Axis prediction error for NDA is 56.25%, GA is 26.66% and Others is 38.46%. According to India Today Axis prediction, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav had to storm to power with 139-161 seats. GA had to win comfortably with 150 seats. Tejashwi Yadav's growth from 2015 Bihar elections would be added with 50 more seats in 2020. Anti-incumbency was the main reason stated by the pollster survey. Also, it was reasoned that Tejashwi Yadav has captured youth support extensively and older voters preferred to support NDA for caste equation. Positively, pollster prediction stated that migrant workers issue and Covid-19 pandemic were addressed considerably well by GA marking 10% rise in vote share for the alliance.

However, analyzing the credibility of India Today Axis, yet again, forecast is not accurate. There was a hype in projecting GA and Tejashwi Yadav, and under estimating NDA and its allies. But it should also be noted that India Today Axis had addressed ongoing issues of Bihar in a better detail through its justification of unemployment, migrant workers issue, covid-19 pandemic, age divide voters etc.

TABLE - 4

**Analysis of Exit poll Final result of Republic Jan Ki Baat showing
Difference in seat share and Prediction Error Percentage**

Political Party	Exit Polls	% of Exit Polls	Final Election Result	% of Final Election Result	Difference in seat prediction	Prediction error in %
NDA	104	42.08	125	51.44	+21	20.19
GA	128	52.67	110	45.27	-18	14.06
Others	11	4.53	8	3.29	-3	27.27
Total	**243**		**243**		**42**	

As per Table 4, Republic Jan ki Baat prediction error for NDA is 20.19%, GA is 14.06% and Others is 27.27%. Republic Jan ki Baat predicted power slipping from JD(U)'s Nitish Kumar. Survey observed that GA will comfortably *end* Nitish Kumar's 14-year long stint as Chief Minister of Bihar. It stated that JD(U) will be hit the hardest with victories in 2020 Bihar assembly elections. Also, it was mentioned that Tejashwi Yadav's leadership was questioned by GA in terms of handling tactful coalition partners who were extremely reluctant to consider him as CM face representing the alliance – but – this election will prove them wrong and make Tejashwi Yadav as a capable leader.

According to pollster, JD(U) win will be based on Nitish Kumar's campaign surrounding development in the state, women policies and initiatives, jungle raaj or mishandling power that was witnessed by Lalu Prasad Yadav during his tenure as Chief Minister of Bihar. However, looking at Table 4, even Republic Jan Ki Baat *failed to accurately assess* the magnitude of NDA and their ally on their demonstrated energy, commitment and skillful electoral campaign. The pollster was swayed by the aggressive personality of Tejashwi Yadav and envisaged GA wave across the state.

TABLE - 5

**Analysis of Exit poll Final result of Dainik Bhaskar showing
Difference in seat share and Prediction Error Percentage**

Political Party	Exit Polls	% of Exit Polls	Final Election Result	Difference in seat prediction	Prediction error in %
NDA	127	52.26	125	2	1.57
GA	105	43.21	110	5	4.76
Others	11	4.53	8	3	27.27
Total	**243**		**243**	**10**	

As per Table 5, Dainik Bhaskar was the only exit poll that predicted NDA win in 2020 Bihar assembly elections. Also, the exit poll predicted that difference between two alliances (NDA and GA) will be minor, yet it was the only exit poll prediction to retain accuracy in election outcome.

Dainik Bhaskar poll survey also mentioned that if Congress performs poorly, then RJD's Tejashwi Yadav will not win 2020 Bihar assembly elections. It analyzed that BJP would win highest number of votes. However, the final election result showed that RJD's Tejashwi Yadav won with 75 seats while BJP won with 74 seats. Positively, here exit polls inaccuracy was with *only* 1 seat difference. Thus, it can be stated that Dainik Bhaskar has retained its credibility in exit poll projection.
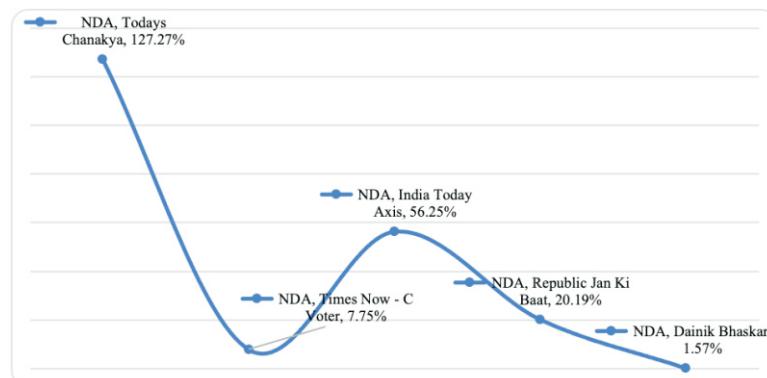
FIG 1: Prediction error percentage (%) by pollsters for NDA
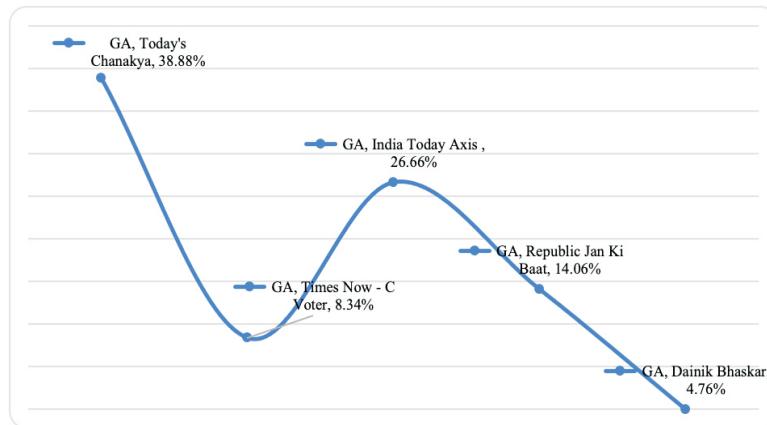
FIG 2: Prediction error percentage (%) by pollsters for GA
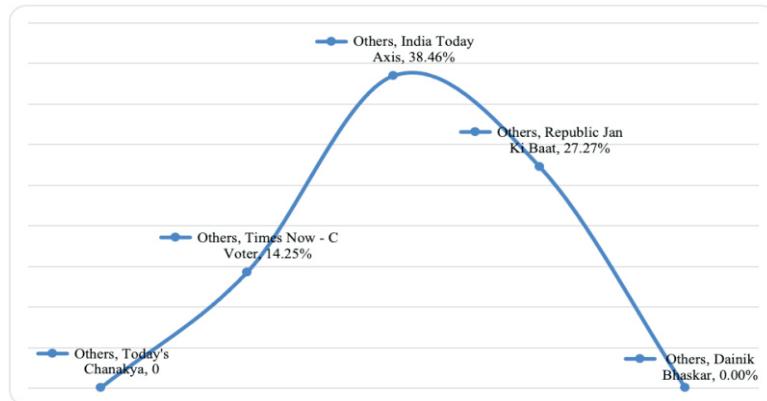
FIG 3: Prediction error percentage (%) by pollsters for Others

According to Fig 1 and Fig 2, Today's Chanakya has got highest percentage of prediction error for both NDA and GA. And, the lowest prediction error with complete accuracy is seen in Dainik Bhasker poll prediction. With this, it can be stated that Today's Chanakya is the most inaccurate pollster while Dainik Bhaskar is the most trusted/credible pollster in Bihar state assembly elections

held in 2020. However, in predicting 'Others', all pollsters have shown accuracy.

Conclusion

The exit polls of four research agencies (Today's Chanakya, Times Now C-Voter, India Today Axis and Republic Jan ki Baat) predicted that GA would win 2020 Bihar assembly elections. But it was *only* Dainik Bhaskar's poll prediction that assessed NDA win. With this, it can be concluded that *pollsters should expertise in exit poll forecast* of assembly elections. Often, credibility of exit polls is questioned, and this study proves inaccuracy in exit poll projections. Over estimation of GA competencies and justifying poll results based on short-term moods were blatantly seen in the study. Pollsters ignored Modi-Magic for 2020 Bihar assembly elections. When RJD's Tejashwi Yadav promised 10 lakh government job creation if he becomes Chief Minister, pollsters were swayed by the exhilarating response of Bihar's youth leaving behind objective enquiry.

Study investigated that research techniques used by pollsters in conducting exit polls were scientific. They were fact based and valid. Every pollster addressed developmental problems in the state while interpreting poll predictions. Some of these problems were unemployment, Covid-19 pandemic, women welfare, migrant workers, anti-incumbency etc.

It has to be mentioned that polling science in India needs deliberation. Inaccurate predictions will deteriorate media's political news management. Public attitude, voter participation and methodological improvement need attention by pollsters in improving exit poll accuracy. Academically, India has a very few studies on exit polls.

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Changing Contours of Federal Grievances and State Response in India: A Critical Appraisal

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Abstract

India is a gigantic country, where grievances at operational level of federal system are indispensable which appeared in different forms to oppose the hegemony of centre in matters related to the exclusive jurisdiction of states or having jurisdiction of both the centre and the states. The trajectory of federal grievances in India after independence appeared in different phases with distinct intensity. The Congress dominance phase was relatively amicable and remained cooperative, wherein federal discontents were largely dormant. Subsequently, federal conflicts gained prominence when political opposition surfaced in the form of autonomy and secessionist movements. The phase witnessed serious challenges that compelled the centre to revisit the centre-state relations afresh, followed by regional parties' growth in deciding the fate of central government that marked the beginning of an era of federalization of the party system. This phase indicates federal cooperation because the formation of central government

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becomes challenging without the support of regional parties and subsequently, in the binodal system, federal cooperation has continued. After2014 Lok Sabha elections, the centralization has gained currency because the BJP obtained a majority after three decades by reducing considerable dependence on regional parties and further continued after 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Therefore, in this paper, an attempt has been made for critically examining the federal discontents in different phases by comparing their intensity and response of the centre over the growing contestation by using historical, descriptive, and analytical methods by consulting both primary and secondary sources.

Keywords: Federal Grievances, Congress Clout, Regionalization, Federalization, Demonetization, State Autonomy

Introduction

K. C. Wheare rightly describes Indian federalism as 'quasi-federation', a kind of federalism where the centre dominates the prevailing strong centralizing tendencies. Indian federal system is not based on any particular theory of federalism and even the word federalism is nowhere mentioned in the constitution. However, the nature of the Indian constitution is the amalgamation of both the unitary and federal characteristics applicable according to the requirement of time and circumstances. Post-independence experience in Indian federalism has shown that structural and functional equilibrium is in favour of the centre for various reasons such as the constitutional provision for the imposition of President's rule under Article 356, the role of governor, financial dependence of the state on centre, the role of centralized Planning Commission, the central forces deployed in the states without the consent of the states and All India Services in the states. The prevailing strong centralizing tendencies have undermined the autonomy of the states. The varied challenges surfaced in Indian federalism since

independence; among them, the most prominent was the language reorganization besides certain faults and weaknesses inherent in the system that surfaced with its operationalization. In nine states, the electoral defeat of the Congress party in the 1967 assembly elections marked the emergence of a new phase in Indian federalism that reflected the democratic culture.

The Indian constitution signifies contradiction at the structural and operational levels like the structure was designed as highly centralized and still, it sought to justify its claim that federalism is essential for mitigating India's diversity and plurality. Its structure was largely designed based on the Government of India Act of 1935, and it was challenging for makers of the Indian constitution to create such kind of political structure for India that would be most suitable for accommodating large sized India's territory into unity. However, the Congress party continued the strong centre legacy of Britishers in spirit after independence, besides the demands raised by different socio-political groups radically transformed the nature of federalism. This paper is broadly divided into four major phases–– i) The Congress clout and federal discontents (1947-1967), ii) Era of political opposition (1967-1989), iii) Regionalization of party politics, and federal contest (1989-2014) and iv) Political alternative and federalism since 2014.

The Congress Clout and Federal Discontents (1947-1967)

The Indian government under Nehru defended the centralized governance model on the ground of national integrity and during his whole tenure, the Congress continued to be a dominant political party that faced the least political opposition. The federal relations, by and large, remained amicable and there were minimum levels of opposition and contestation from the states because the powers in the states were in the hands of a state-level cadre of the Congress party (Chakrabarty, 2003: 111-112). To a large extent, federal relations during the period of Congress dominance have functioned under political homogeneity. The political homogeneity was due to the same political force

representing both the level of government. The issue of federal relations was relatively dormant during Congress dominance. The single-party dominance at both the level supported the patronage of strong-centre enthusiastically followed by wars with Pakistan in 1948 and 1965 and with China in 1962 which created a favourable response to the idea of strong centre (Ramasubramaniam, 1992: 112).

The structural design of the Indian constitution envisaged the dominant position of the union government and the existence of states, their autonomy and their existence under Indian federalism depend upon the will of the central government and the states work under the directions given by the central government. Rajashekara described Indian federalism as 'prefectorial federalism' during the Nehru period, and its working was largely cooperative, democratic, and constructive rather than hostile and confrontational (1994: 137). Nehru's centralization policy was rarely challenged because it was confined mostly to the economic sphere of the federal system and the political sphere of the federal system largely remained autonomous. Nehru did not want to impose a centralized system of political governance; instead, he preferred collaboration with independent-minded chief ministers of different states for implementing the economic policies without intervening in their political sphere (Brass, 2012: 344). Nehru period largely indicated an era of powerful central and regional elites where both the levels of leaders performed their function with autonomy, though the Congress high command often played mediating and arbitrary role among different factions within the Congress party at the state level. Therefore, during the Nehru period, a strong central government worked at the centre and the strong and powerful state leaders also co-existed with mutual bargaining process where the ultimate authority existed with the centre (Brass, 2012: 37).

The federal relations during the Nehru period were not hostile because he did not adopt a confrontational approach towards opposition parties and did not use President's rule in states for establishing personalization of political powers and his tenure

witnessed President's rule only six times. Nehru applied a consensus and compromise method for mitigating differences within the Congress organization and mostly relied on Congress high command to accommodate the differences and deal with state politics. He kept vigilant but distant supervision. During his tenure, the Congress high command failed to resolve intra-party differences at the state level resulted in the imposition of the President's rule in Punjab in 1951 and Kerala in 1964 (Dua, 1979: 620). The first instance of the President's rule appeared in 1951 when it was imposed in Punjab. This act of Nehru disturbed the federal fabric of the country when the Congress Parliamentary Board compelled the Chief Minister of Punjab for resignation even though he had the required number of majority in the house. Nehru's experiment with Article 356 turns out to be controversial and later, he became cautious about taking such actions in the future.

In the second general elections in 1957, another controversy erupted when President's rule was imposed in Kerala. For this, Nehru was not only responsible, but the then Congress Party president Indira Gandhi was also equally responsible for the imposition of the President's rule. In 1957, the Communist government was elected in Kerala through free and fair democratic elections that the Congress Party viewed as an embarrassment for the central government and the Congress party. Every moment the Congress was in search of an opportunity to topple the Communist government. The opportunity came when the Communist government passed two controversial bills- first to protect the rights of tenants under the Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957 and second to eradicate the malpractices in the private educational institutions and regulate them under the Kerala Educational Bill of 1957, followed by mass movement and public outcry to remove the Communist government. In response to that, Nehru maintained democratic values and argued that the centre must not use unconstitutional means against the popularly elected state government. He talked to the then Kerala Chief Minister E. M. S. Namboodiripad to modify the controversial Bills and put them

before the fresh vote of the people. Namboodiripad refused Nehru's advice and Indira Gandhi took the opportunity to convince Nehru for dismissing the Communist government in Kerala (Malhotra, 2006:25-26).

Nehru was reluctant to dismiss the Namboodiripad government and the party high command persuaded him for this act. After that, Kamaraj initiated a proposal for strengthening the Congress Party's position in his Kamaraj Plan of 1963. The plan aimed to strengthen party organization in all the states and the idea of the plan was to revert back senior leaders of the party from their ministerial positions to the party positions. Nehru supported the idea of Kamaraj but did not implement it on himself. Morarji Desai, the senior colleague, opposed the plan by stating that Nehru appreciated the plan because of his personal interest in removing all possible contenders from Indira Gandhi's path.

During the Nehru period, the Congress Party did not face any serious electoral threats and opposition from different states to its dominant position due to consensus politics. Some factors made Congress a dominant political force; the first such factor was a lack of organized opposition parties and the Congress Party allowed open competition within the party. Secondly, the Congress Party maintained flexible ideological boundaries that made it a consensus-based party. Thirdly, there was an open system of competition,wherethe central government exercised authority under the united team and the authority was well established under the command of Nehru. The Congress Working Committee was an important actor within Congress and played a significant role in coordinating federal relations. The conflicts and tensions between federal relations were resolved at the party level rather than any established agencies.

The political convergence during the last years of Nehru diluted and a trend towards greater regionalism started with important changes that have taken place at the regional level. The state politics shaped a new trend that appeared in Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, where without the wishes of Nehru, ministerial

changes took place. The Congress Party's high command was unable to intervene in the states and bring them under the direction of central leadership. The process of regionalism further strengthened after the death of Nehru (Ray, 1987: 152). Nehru did not misuse Article 356 of the constitution and argued that President's ruleshould be imposed until and unless all other avenues have been explored; therefore, he imposed it only selectively. Nehru was an ardent supporter of federalism and aimed to promote cooperation between the centre and states. He practically operationalized Indian federalism to promote cooperative federalism by balancing national cohesion and regional autonomy (Rajashekara, 1994: 145). He tried to provide flesh and blood to the constitutional principles adopted by the Constituent Assembly. For the federal system, his approach appeared somewhat mixed. On the one hand, he favoured Congress Party rule at both levels, and on the other hand, central and state politics mostly remained autonomous. This period experienced a sort of federal bargaining between the strong central government and several states ruled by strong Chief Ministers from within the Congress Party (Thakur, 1995: 82).

After Nehru's death, the appointment of leader for the position of Prime Minister was dominated by the lobby of states' Chief Ministers and they supported the candidature of Lal Bahadur Shastri in the meeting of Congress Working Committee. The manifest support for Shastri as the next Prime Minister by the majority of Chief Ministers made Morarji Desai withdraw his candidature for the position of Prime Minister. Therefore, the effective role played by the Chief Ministers of the states after the death of Nehru in choosing Shastri as Prime Ministerial candidate indicates the significance of regional leaders in national politics. Unlike Nehru, Shastri's role while dealing with the states was dominated by the syndicate and the style of working and decision-making underwent significant change from imposition to compromise. It has been perceived that the structure of power which the centre largely dominated witnessed considerable change where the new trend of interdependence occurred between

centre and states in which the regional leadership of state politics gradually becomes aware of their role in national politics.

The sudden demise of Shastri in Tashkent further created the issue of succession for the prime minister's office, which was again resolved with the involvement of states and, in fact, strengthened the position of the states in participating in the selection of a candidate for the position of Prime Minister. The then Congress President Kamaraj ensured Indira Gandhi for the position of Prime Minister with the massive support of Chief Ministers from different states. Chief Ministers of different states initiated the support by asking Kamaraj to ensure Indira Gandhi for the position of Prime Minister. After Nehru's death, the developments gave a major push towards the decentralization of the Congress Party structure. State-level politics has become more focused and a shift perceived from national to state-level politics (Ray, 1979: 20-22).

In this phase, the federal conflicts were not severe because any conflict that came out could be successfully managed and resolved by Congress at the party level. It is undeniable that during that time, the regional parties were not ideologically different from the Congress Party; in fact, most of the regional parties came out of the Congress.

Era of Political Opposition (1967-1989)

The defeat of the Congress Party in the elections of nine State Assemblies in 1967 and decreased numbers of seats in the Lok Sabha elections indicated that the consequences of the consolidation of regional parties with strong anti-Congress propaganda posed a serious challenge to the Congress Party. The consolidation of anti-Congress sentiments among the masses brought regional parties to power in the form of a coalition at the state level. The elections of 1967 brought twofold outcomes in Indian political system- first, the base of the dominant political party that is the Congress, had been weakened by regional parties

at the regional level, and secondly, the cohesion of regional parties on their regional interests which the Congress Party did not adequately represent became the cause of weakening of Congress Party and in some states it was uprooted by a coalition of regional parties. There was no other instrument in the hands of regional parties other than anti-Congress sentiments that united the regional parties, resulting in forming a coalition of different regional parties. However, the coalitions of regional parties were not formed on the programmatic or ideological basis but based on keeping the Congress Party out of power; thus, it appears an unstable coalition (Chakrabarty, 2008: 110-112).

In the late 1960s, the Congress Party faced challenges from different states where non-Congress parties came to power in a coalition that brought temporary instability within the Congress Party. The declining position of the Congress Party resulted in internal party conflicts between the senior Congress leaders (Syndicate) and Indira Gandhi, whose dictatorial leadership was consistently questioned by the Syndicates. The Syndicates were controlling the party organization and they initiated a radical step to expel Indira Gandhi from the party; as a result, in 1969, the Congress Party split into two wings –the organizational wing (Congress –Organization) headed by the party president Nijalingappa and represented by the Syndicates and the other wing called government wing (Congress –Requisitionists) led by Indira Gandhi (Das, 1997: 3271). This split in the Congress Party reduced Indira Gandhi's government into a minority, but her government still survive with the support of DMK and Left Parties. The internal conflict and later split of Congress Party in 1969 turned out to be blessings for Indira Gandhi that strengthened her position and from that point, she became a more dominant leader within the Congress Party (Malhotra, 2006: 67).

Since 1967 there have been demands from different regions for restructuring and redefining federal relations. The fundamental intention of states was to reduce the intensity of centralization through the insertion of autonomy demands. Since then, the federal conflicts acquired the character of inter-party conflicts and

confrontations with the political diversification and the emergence of multiple power centres where opposition parties came into power in various states. After two decades of India's independence, the political development experienced a visible shift from the politics of consensus to politics of confrontation and the frequent imposition of President's rule in non-Congress ruled states seen as a major confrontation and tension in the working of federalism. There were demands from within the Congress Party that influenced the central government for strengthening its position in the states where it lost its power. Therefore, the central government's attitude towards non-Congress ruled states got changed and the major reason behind this was intra-party demands for the imposition of the President's rule in the states (Das & Choudhary, 1989: 15).

After two decades of independence, regional parties made a permanent niche in the political system because they started identifying themselves more closely with the masses and working for them. The emergence of regional parties has strengthened competitive politics by demanding state autonomy and the most prominent regional parties that emerged were Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), and Assam Gana Parishad (AGP). The growth of regional parties gave rise to a new sort of power struggle within the Indian political system. In reaction to the increasing power of the central government, the opposition-ruled states started a strong claim for regional autonomy (Raju, 1988: 6-8). With the coming of regional parties to power in different states, the issue of autonomy systematically surfaced in the articulated demands of these parties, such as the DMK government in Tamil Nadu appointed Rajamannar Committee in 1969 when serious concerns and debates were going on centre-states relations. In its report (1971), it opined that the constitution of India is federal in structure, but some provisions are contrary to the principles of federalism. There are some of the unitary trends in the constitution that favour a strong biasness towards the centre. The Committee identified certain reasons for prevailing unitary trends in Indian federalism like the centre had

given special powers under the constitution, the dominance of Congress Party at both the level, the dependence of states on centre on fiscal resources, and centralized body of the planning commission.

Further, the Committee criticized the concept of a strong centre and strongly advocated state autonomy. It recommended that the centre should handover some of the responsibilities to the states like other federations of the world. The committee demanded to include legislative responsibilities through redistribution of various entries in the Seventh Schedule of the constitution. The committee further recommended that the states should be authorized amend the laws made by the parliament on their own legislative competence and the decisions made by the centre affecting the interest of the states required mandatory consultations from the states. The Rajamannar Committee came with a certain purpose to suggest suitable amendments to the constitution for securing the maximum autonomy for the state in the Indian federal system. It tried to abolish the law-making supremacy of the parliament and recommended maximum autonomy to the states. It tried its best to redesign Indian federalism on the US model without considering India's peculiar problems that India was facing before and after independence (Government of India, 2010: 73-74). The Rajamannar recommendations for autonomy were completely rejected by the central government which were meant for restructuring the federal relations.

Similarly, the 1972 assembly elections of Punjab were not favourable for Akali Dal which was uprooted from the power and moved a resolution called Anandpur Sahib Resolution in 1973 where certain demands were incorporated based on religious and political issues. The religious issue was that Sikhism as a separate religion and not part of Hinduism and the political issue as more state autonomy by devolving powers from central government to the state governments. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution consists of three versions- the first was adopted by Akali Dal under the presidency of Jagdev Singh Talwandi, the second was by Kapur

Singh, and the third was Giani Ajmer Singh. The Akali Dal's resolution under Jagdev Singh stated that in 1950, India imposed constitutional arrangements which were not favourable to the Sikh political identity that eroded their identity and recognized them with Hinduism. Therefore, they demanded an autonomous region wherein the interest of the Sikh community should be constitutionally recognized. Secondly, they demanded the Sikh Autonomous region to be conceded for framing their own constitution and allowing all the powers except defence, foreign affairs, currency, railways, and communications to remain with the federal government (Singh, 1995: 134, and Tillin, 2019: 88). The Akali Dal contested for recasting federal relations in India by ensuring equal representation at the centre from all the states. The resolution adopted by the Akali Dal committed itself and declared its objective for establishing an independent political status for their community. The resolution also included the economic and cultural principles that Akali Dal later followed from time to time (Singh, 2009: 65). The Anandpur Sahib Resolution laid primarily emphasis on state autonomy which is the basis of the true spirit of federalism.

On the contrary, it was argued that this resolution was the only way to safeguard the country from disintegration. The Akali leaders adopted a defensive posture in the wake of criticism that erupted after adopting this resolution, followed by the phase of internal emergency that Indira Gandhi imposed under Article 352 of the constitution leading to the suspension of a democratic spirit. The opposition parties started agitation against this authoritarian act of Indira Gandhi which was also joined and supported by the Akali Dal for restoring democratic setup;thus, democracy was restored, marking the beginning of a new phase in Indian politics (Singh, 2009: 66).

After the revocation of emergency in 1977, elections were held for both the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assembly in which Akali Dal contested in collaboration with the Janata Party where an ideological turn of Akali Dal has been observed by keeping itself completely silent over on the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and

majority threat to Sikhism. There saw a shift in Akali's ideology from the preservation of Sikh identity to state autonomy. Therefore, in 1978 Akali Dal revised the Anandpur Sahib Resolution by accentuating state autonomy and federal structure (Nayar and Singh, 1984: 34). In the original resolution, Akali Dal mentioned discriminatory tactics against the Sikh community and the 1978 modified resolution negated these tactics of the separateness of the Sikh community. They relinquished the separatist demand and adopted a secular position for making strong bonds and relations with the non-Congress parties. Gurcharan Singh Tohra, the then President of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), emphasized the devolution of power and autonomy, considered vital for safeguarding the rights of minorities and identity of the nation. He denounced the concept that strong states are a threat to national cohesion and integrity and argued that providing autonomy to the state is in no way against the idea of a strong centre. Therefore, in his opinion, the centre and states should move and grow in mutual coordination (Singh, 2009: 67).

When Akali Dal was in power in alliance with the Janata Party in Punjab, they again raised their demand for the merger of the Punjabi speaking area with Punjab in the revised version of the resolution. Both the Janata Dal and Akali Dal did not fulfil their policy programmes as devised in their commitment to decentralization. The central government was unwilling to grant them autonomy and Akali Dal also did not show much interest in raising their issue as contained in the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. Morarji Desai turned down their demands for seeking minority status for Sikhs and plea for more financial resources as the equal distribution in the constitution has been made. The Akali Dal leaders realized their secular image which they had miscalculated with the demands of Sikhs, and subsequently tried their level best in asserting that the Anandpur Sahib Resolution and secession from India are altogether different. Their demand was for separate identity amounted to religious identity, not political identity outside India. Therefore, the Akali Dal in the subsequent Lok

Sabha and State Legislative Assembly elections of 1980 realized the support of Sikhs when it was rooted out from the power in the state. In 1981 the 54th All India Sikh Educational Conference was held in which the right to self-determination for the Sikh community was included. In this conference, a resolution was passed asking for a status on a similar pattern of Palestine Liberation Organization recognized by the UN on Ganga Singh Dhillon's persuasion. In 1981 this resolution was repealed by Chief Khalsa Diwan (Sikh Organization) and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) described in a resolution that Sikhs as a separate nation. On July 26, 1981, Akali Dal under Harchand Singh Longowal convened a World Sikh Convention to deliberate and consider the demands of the Sikh community. Subsequently, they presented their memorandum to the central government, in which the charter included the acceptance of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. They claimed that their charter aimed to make India a truly federal nation, followed by Akali leaders' meetings with the Prime Minister of India on the unresolved issues (Singh, 2009: 68). Subsequently, some of the leaders turned extremists by adopting violent militant techniques and made the Golden Temple the holy shrine of Sikhs as their armed fortress. In June 1984 central government carried out Operation Blue Star to counter the militancy in Punjab that damaged the temple which annoyed the Sikh community worldwide. The situation turned complicated and in the same year, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards in response to Operation Blue Star. To counter the violent situation, Rajiv Gandhi, after taking over the charge of Prime Minister, initiated a peaceful dialogue with the moderate leaders of Akali Dal.

Consequently, an accord was signed between Rajiv Gandhi and Harchand Singh Longowal in 1985 called 'the Punjab Accord', which was a step towards bringing peace and stability in Punjab (Chandra et al., 2000: 434-437). However, this accord did not bring immediate peace and the violence and political instability continued for a decade. As a result, Akali Dal got fragmented which led to the imposition of the President's rule in 1987 due to the

breakdown of law and order and insurgency (Dhavan, 1989: 521-522).

During this phase, centralization of power was concentrated not only at the party level but also at the government level. At the party level, the Congress president was made of only Indira Gandhi's choice and at the government level, the cabinet was not allowed to take decisions but only involved in a discussion on the decision taken by her. This position was prevalent during and after the proclamation of internal emergency and during that time, Chief Ministers worked as mere appendages of the centre. Some of the powerful and influential Chief Ministers, such as Bansi Lal of Haryana and H. N. Bahuguna of Uttar Pradesh, were important leaders, but they also worked under the influence of Indira Gandhi. During the emergency, Indira Gandhi had faced resistance from Nandini Satpathy, the Chief Minister of Orissa, who resigned in 1976, and H. N. Bahuguna also forced by Indira Gandhi to resignation in 1975. Under her tenure, the increased centralisation took a more radical form that placed the country in a unitary administration and the federal relations during her tenure reduced near to non-existence (Sarita, 2009: 138-141). When Jyoti Basu of the Communist Party of India (M) assumed the charge of Chief Minister of West Bengal on June 21, 1977, he passed a resolution on centre-state relations in December 1977. In the memorandum, centralized policies were highlighted and the recommendations of the memorandum state that the residuary powers should be in the hands of the states. Further, the recommendations were made in the memorandum that union powers have to be reduced and the word 'federal' should be inserted in the preamble of the constitution (Tillin, 2019: 88).

The memorandum led by the Communists on federal relations suggested that the jurisdiction of the centre should be restricted to certain subjects such as defence, foreign affairs, communication, economic coordination, and currency and all other subjects including the residuary powers, should be vested in the states. In the memorandum, a strong claim was made favouring the reorganization of states or creating new states from the existing

states only on the recommendation of the state or the consent of the state should be made obligatory. The Communist Party in this memorandum also opposed the President's rule (Article 356 and 357) and Financial Emergency (Article 360) of the constitution. Emphasis was also given on equal powers of the Rajya Sabha with that of the Lok Sabha and the strong claim was made for the abolition of All India Services. In addition to this, the demand was also made to raise the revenue for states and allocated 75 percent. However, the union government outrightly rejected these demands.

The Janata Party government in Karnataka issued 'White Papers' in 1983 on centre-state relations which were a conclave of Chief Ministers of different Southern states- Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Pondicherry asserted their demands for just and equitable distribution of financial resources between centre and states. The forum of Southern Chief Ministers demanded more autonomy for the states, which was outrightly rejected by the Indira Gandhi government. For the restructuring of centre-state relations, various non-Congress and regional parties raised their issues and convened conclaves and the first initiative in this context was taken by N. T. Rama Rao, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on May 31 and June 1, 1983, at Vijayawada which was joined by different non-Congress and regional parties. In the conclave, the leaders of fourteen parties including two communists, raised the issue of Assam and Punjab which were a national problem. The second conclave was held at Delhi on June 30, 1983, which was attended by different parties, excluding the BJP, the AIADMK, and the Rashtriya Sanjay Manch who were the participant in the first conclave but not joined the second conclave. In this conclave, a collective stand was projected by different parties on the issue of Punjab and conceded their demand for a political solution (Rao and Ram, 1990: 545-546). In the same year, the non-Congress parties also met in Srinagar, where the third conclave concluded on October 5, 1983, and passed a thirty-one point resolution for making politico-administrative and economic changes in the federal relations. In this conclave, it

was recommended that the powers of the centre should be restricted to certain subjects such as defence, foreign affairs, communication, and currency. This conclave was significant because regional parties emphasized on strengthening the autonomy demand of the states for maintaining a proper balance between centre-state relations (Rao and Ram, 1990: 545-546). In this conclave, the Chief Ministers of non-Congress parties made certain suggestions in the prevailing financial arrangement: first, there should be shareable proceeds of the corporation tax with the states. Secondly, the abolition of surcharge on income tax and its proceeds be shared with the states. Thirdly, discontinuation of additional excise duties. Fourthly, the financial powers of the states should be enlarged and the encroachments made by the centre from time to time since the inception of the constitution on the financial powers of the states should be made null and void (Jha and Mishra, 1993: 222).

On January 13 and 14, 1984, the fourth conclave was held in Calcutta which was attended by seventy-five delegates from sixteen political parties. In this conclave, a proposal for a total restructuring of centre-state economic relations was adopted and proposed an alternative programme for the empowerment and upliftment of poor and middle classes. However, before these conclaves, the central government under Indira Gandhi appointed Sarkaria Commission to examine the demands of the states and the restructuring of federal relations on March 24, 1983, formally established on June 9, 1983. Indira Gandhi's government felt that in Indian federalism, state autonomy demands pose threats to the country's unity. In fact, it was the most extensive effort made by the Indira Gandhi government to analyze the Indian federal system and to recommend practical measures in the field of the legislative, administrative, and financial sphere to eliminate possible irritants. The rationale behind the Sarkaria Commission's appointing was the voices raised by different regions for more decentralization, particularly from non-Congress ruled states such as Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and West Bengal. The growing regional demands for more federalization forced Indira

Gandhi to establish such a commission that examines India's federal relations (Saez, 1999: 41-42).

The Commission was instituted to examine the working arrangements between the centre and the states and recommend changes in federal arrangements within the constitutional framework (Saez, 1999: 42). Stanley Kochanek and Robert Hardgrave argued that Indira Gandhi wanted to defuse the regional assertion and demand for state autonomy particularly Akali Dal's demand for state autonomy by appointing the Sarkaria Commission to investigate centre-state relations. They argued that her strategy was to accommodate the Sikh leadership by making the appointment of a Sikh (Ranjit Singh Sarkaria) as head of the Commission for investigation (1986: 140). The Commission was appointed as a response to the growing demands of different non-Congress ruled states for the devolution of powers particularly the Akali Dal's demand in the form of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution (Mukerji and Matthew, 1992: 281). The Commission was appointed in the words of H. A. Gani as a response to the growing regional demands made by the leaders of various opposition parties, but this argument was nullified by Indira Gandhi when she asserted that the motive behind the establishment of the Commission was neither linked with the Akali Dal's demands nor Bangalore conclave of opposition parties (Saez, 1999: 43). It was decided much long ago for revisiting federal relations in India since different states favoured restructuring federal relations. The decision taken to establishthe Sarkaria Commission could not be linked with any particular demand or agitation posed by any particular region or party. The Commission submitted its report in 1988 which recommended establishing Inter-State Councils (Saez, 2000: 110-111).

The Commission investigated various matters such as the role of governor, the role of a centre in the appointment of High Court judges, the relationship between state administrations and the all India Services, President's veto over bills passed by the state legislatures and its implications on centre-state relations, and financial dependence of states on the centre. The Commission's

report suggested various remedies for smooth federal governance by creating a series of independent federal bodies under the constitution by assigning advisory functions. It recommended the National Economic and Development Council and an Inter-Governmental Council, Finance Commission, and the Planning Commission should be given the constitutional status. The Commission suggested a more equitable revenue distribution between the centre and states. Further, it sought to reduce the centre's attitude against the dismissal of state governments. Although the Commission's report spoke in favour of establishing cooperative federalism, the thrust remained tilted towards strong centralization that would be the best possible answer for preserving the unity and integrity of India (Thakur, 1995: 84). Since there were demands from different states for curtailing the powers of the centre, the Commission rejected this demand by arguing that a strong centre is necessary for preserving the national unity and integrity of the nation. Therefore, the Commission did not find any need for radical changes in the constitution for federal relations (Kabbur, 2004: 180).

The opposition ruled states demanded that the State List should have more subjects and the centre has to transfer some subjects from the Concurrent List to the State List and the states have the power to make laws in the residuary items. The Commission has not accepted this demand, but it has recommended that the residuary powers should the in the Concurrent List except taxation (Government of India, 1988: 89). This demand of the states before the Commission was meaningless because in the constitution there is clearly mentioned that in case of any disagreement between the centre and the states on making legislation on the subjects included in the Concurrent List, the laws made by the centre will prevail over the legislations of the state. Articles 246 and 254 of the constitution that provides supremacy to the parliament will not be amended and it shall continue as it were (Government of India, 1988: 27-28).

It recommended autonomous status for Planning Commission and making it more vibrant by involving all the states in every

stage as an equal participant in the formulation of plans (Government of India, 1988: 385-387). Further, it has not suggested any change in the organization and composition of the Rajya Sabha, as some of the states asserted their demands for making necessary changes in the Rajya Sabha too. In terms of the reorganization of the states and changing their names and boundaries, the dominance of the centre will be continued. From the observation, it is found that the Commission has not fulfilled the autonomy demand of the states which was espoused by different states from time to time. It did not deny all the states' demands altogether; however, it has recommended changes in the federal system in some areas. In matters of regional languages, it suggested that the regional languages should be the administrative language of the concerned states and supported the three-language formula (Kabbur, 2004: 181).

The Commission recommended that the institution of the governor of the state shall be continued and suggested criteria for the appointment of the governor that he/she should be an eminent person in some walk of life, should not be from the same state, should not be connected with the local politics of the state, and a person has not taken part in politics. Following the criteria, the Commission suggested that persons belonging to the minority groups should be preferred and continued as a Governor of the state. A person should not be a politician from the ruling party of the centre. The consultation of the Chief Minister of the concerned state is required and the Vice President and Speaker of Lok Sabha should be consulted by the Prime Minister while recommending a person for the appointment of the governor, which is not a constitutional obligation and should be confidential (Government of India, 1988: 135).

The Sarkaria Commission examined the legislative relations between the centre and states. In the Indian constitution, there is aclear cut demarcation of legislative powers between the centre and states. However, there are various provisions in the constitution by which the centre is empowered to legislate over the

jurisdiction of the state. For instance, under Article 248 of the constitution centre is allowed to make laws on State List and similarly, Article 249 of the constitution permits the centre to make laws on matters included in the Concurrent List. The Commission reviewed the demands of some of the states for autonomy and the West Bengal and Tamil Nadu state governments expressed grievances over the supremacy enjoyed by the union and asserted that it should be reversed.

Further, the West Bengal government asserted that the Concurrent List should be abolished. In case of conflict between the central legislation and state legislation, the central laws will prevail and further in case of conflict over the items mentioned in the Concurrent List are subject to the ultimate jurisdiction of the union government (Saez, 2000: 78-79). The Commission also investigated West Bengal's demand for transferring the items of Concurrent List into State List. It should be obligatory for the centre to consult states for making laws under Article 3 of the constitution responded by the Karnataka government. In addition to that, some state governments argued that the control of the union government over the legislation of the state should be overturned. The West Bengal government argued that Articles 248, 249, 252, and 254 should be omitted from the constitution. The government also argued that where instances of national security came to the union can legislate in State List which should be limited to six months, but the Karnataka government asserted forcefully that why the state legislature should not have the power as the parliament in matters of legislation (Saez, 2000: 78-79).

The Commission is significant because its recommendations came when the Indian political system witnessed gradual political realignment at the state level in the mid-1980s. It proposed a practical proposal of federal institutional design for strengthening inter-governmental cooperation. The Commission has served as one of the only links for unifying multiparty coalitions at the centre. Despite that, the possible failure of the Commission is that the different political stakeholders diverge in their definition of federalism. Some political analysts argue that true federalism

represents inter-governmental interdependence, overlapping jurisdiction, and shared governance. For others, the parameters of true federalism are different that represent the autonomy of inter-governmental institutions, independence of intergovernmental actors, separation of jurisdiction and distinctiveness. Finally, for others, true federalism means interdependence of intergovernmental institutions, overlapping jurisdictions, and distinctiveness of policy functions. These three different perspectives of federalism have prevented the implementation of the Sarkaria Commission's recommendations. The changing nature of the state through the impact of liberalization also impacted the working of the federal system which becomes a daunting challenge for the revival of the Sarkaria Commission. The central government exercised a great degree of impact in matters of public policy and financial decisions over the state governments at the time of the release of the Commission's report. In the later period, the reliance of the state governments on the central government started diminishing and some of the coastal states initiated bold developmental policy initiatives that require many financial resources (Saez, 2000: 94-95). Lastly, the fragile nature of multiparty coalition governments at the centre and political instability in the 1990s unable to implement the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission.

Regionalization and Federalization of Party Politics and Federal Contest (1989-2014)

In the 1990s, the two most notable changes have been noticed in the Indian federal system: the growing federalization of the polity and reforms in the economy, emphasizing liberalization, marketization, and globalization (Singh, 2003: 187). The federalization of political parties in the period has challenged the Congress Party; for instance, in the 1980s, the creation of the Telugu Desam Party and AsomGana Parishad quickly challenged the Congress in respective states. Lawrence Saez argued that the regional parties had not influenced national politics in the 1980s

though their impact has been more localized in nature. The analysis shows that the vote share of regional parties has become widespread in India's assembly elections. In Sikkim, for instance, the share of votes by regional parties during the 1992-1996 elections was 77.2 percent and in Tamil Nadu where the vote share was 67 percent. This did not happen in Bihar, where the regional parties experienced a decrease in the vote share in state politics. An important development took place with the emergence of regional parties that these parties have restricted the place of the Congress and in states where the presence of regional parties is weak or non-existent, the BJP has been most competitive in those states assemblies. The regional parties along with the fragmentation of dominance of Congress, provided an opportunity for identity-based parties to succeed (2000: 54-58).

In the 1990s, there experienced a steady representation of regional parties in Lok Sabha. In the 1991 Lok Sabha elections, Telugu Desam Party (TDP) won 13 seats and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) got 11 seats and in the 1996 elections, TDP secured 17 seats, Asom Gana Parishad gained five seats, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) obtained eight seats and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) attained 17 seats. The regional parties explicitly played a significant role in the formation of a coalition government since 1989. Different regional parties supported the separate national governments as in 1989, and the V. P. Singh government was a coalition of five parties; among them, three were national parties (Janata Dal, CPI (M) and CPI) and two were regional parties (TDP and DMK). In 1991, the Narasimha Rao government was also supported by five parties- the AIADMK, Sikkim Sangram Parishad, Muslim League, Kerala Congress and Janata Dal (G). Now here the question arises why regional parties in the 1990s were able to win public support; their role in national politics became explicit because of the role of many established leaders who were already successful politicians in establishing regional parties. These politicians had track records of winning popular support easily defeated national parties of which once they were the members of these parties which they left and

established their own regional parties like Laloo Prasad Yadav formed RJD and Naveen Patnaik formed BJD (Hussain, 2010: 87). The same leaders have been successful members of national parties earlier and they continued their success even after establishing new regional parties. Understanding the trajectory of what prompted these leaders to establish new regional parties in India is the only coalition government and coalition trend that was the predominant feature of Indian politics in the 1990s (Ziegfeld, 2012: 71).

Another dimension in the 1990s was globalization that has been created certain issues in the flow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the subnational jurisdiction which led to the asymmetrical development of different states in Indian federalism. As a result, it has impacted Indian federalism and observed convergence and divergence of interest among states. In the 1990s, the coastal states of the Indian union (Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal) recorded impressive growth rates because they had direct access resulting in clustering FDI inflows seen in these states. In the early part of globalization in the 1990s, the concentration of FDI in India was highest and in the later phase of the same decade, its concentration spread out to other parts of the country but the primary concentration of FDI remained focused in some regions (Saez, 2003: 370-372).

The internal mapping of states on a linguistic basis has become less justifiable and other claims become more prominent for the contemporary demands of separate statehood such as uneven economic development, regional deprivation, and ethno-cultural basis (Lacina, 2017: 54). In 2000, the union government fulfilled the demand for new states' creation by carving out Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand from Bihar and Uttarakhand form Uttar Pradesh. All parties supported this new demand for reorganization. The creation of these three states generated hope among different regions for their old and new demands for statehood, and in 2009 centre agreed to consider the demand for the creation of Telangana separate state in the Indian union. This

demand was fulfilled in 2014 when Telangana was separated from Andhra Pradesh and became a full-fledged state. The other regions of the Indian union have also asserted with increased intensity including Saurashtra in Gujarat, Gorkhaland and Kamtapur in West Bengal, Coorg in Karnataka, Mithilanchal in Bihar, Awadh, Harit Pradesh, Braj Pradesh and Purvanchal in Uttar Pradesh, Vidarbha in Maharashtra, Maru Pradesh in Rajasthan, Bhojpur comprising areas of eastern UP, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh, a Greater Cooch Behar state out of the parts of West Bengal and Assam, and Bundelkhand is comprising areas of UP and MP (Kumar, 2010: 15-16).

In 2000, the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC) was constituted for studying the federal relations in Indian union which submitted a report in 2002 recommended that the centre and the states should make proper utilization of inter-state council a forum for resolving problems which the Sarkaria Commission earlier recommended. The Commission was assigned the task of examining how to tackle the changing dynamics of federal governance and what would be the possible response to the socio-economic development of Indian society within the framework of the constitution (Singh, 2003: 202)**.** The inter-state council will enhance the spirit of cooperative federalism. It also recommended that the powers of the President for appointing governor should be diluted and a person should be appointed as governor of the state only after consultation with the Chief Minister of that state. The governor's term should also be fixed for five years and a similar procedure should be followed for the transfer or removal of the governor.

Regarding Article 356, the Commission recommended that it should not be deleted; however, it must be used cautiously and only as a last resort. Before imposing Article 356, the concerned state should be given a chance to explicate its position and redress the situation. The question of floor test or confidence of the legislative assembly should be decided only on the floor of the concerned assembly and nowhere else. The governor should not

be allowed to dismiss the government in the state as long as it enjoys confidence in the assembly. Further, the governor should explore all the possibilities of having a government that fully enjoys majority support and if the conditions are not favourable then, in that case, the governor asked the outgoing ministry to act as a caretaker government provide that the government should not be defeated on the allegations of maladministration or corruption. Therefore, in that case, the governor can dissolve the assembly (Government of India, 2002: 927-946). The Commission also recommended that there should be a time limit of six months within which the governor should give his assent to a Bill or reserve it for consideration of the President. In case of reservation of Bill for the assent of President, the time limit should be of three months within the prescribed period of time the President should take his decision (Government of India, 2002).

In the 1999 elections, BJP led NDA-I alliance came into power under Atal Behari Vajpayee as Prime Minister. During his tenure, the NDA-I alliance partner and the then Chief Minister of J&K state Farooq Abdullah drafted the State Autonomy Committee Report that the state legislature endorsed in June 2000 was rejected by the union government. Under Vajpayee, the central government remained watchful but less intervening in making and unmaking the state governments except in certain cases where the interest of the party was at stake. In context to the autonomy of the states, Vajpayee asserted that his government firmly believes in federalism and further argued that regional parties should have a say in the management of national affairs of the state (Sarita, 2009: 158). The BJP led NDA-I government successfully completed a full term and in 2004 Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government came and survived for two full terms (2004-14). Until 2014, both the centrist parties- the BJP and the Congress made unsuccessful efforts for gaining a majority but continued their stable coalition government under the bi-nodal alliance until 2014.

In the 1990s and 2000s, the liberalization process and the regionalization of the party system accelerated the process of federalization in which the units of the Indian federal system gained autonomy in the political and economic sphere. The coalition trend in Indian politics in the 1990s brought both the regional and national parties together in the central government (Saxena, 2021). Louise Tillin observed that with the rise of regionalization of the party system in Indian politics, the Hindu majoritarianism at the pan India level indirectly faced certain checks. It became rather challenging to mobilize Hindus as a national community when the power of the states vis-a-vis centre was enhanced and the states emerged as the centre of the political landscape. In the 2010s, the BJP makes its presence in Indian politics and worked in state politics. At that time, the Congress party was under decline because of scandals and a leadership vacuum; on the other hand, the BJP had strengthened its pan India political presence (2018:51-52).

In Indian politics, the beginning of the phase of coalition governments at the union level (1989-2014) was significant not only from a power-sharing perspective between states of the Indian federal system but also for the changes that have been taken place in India's federalization of parliamentary regime that provided sufficient space for developing intergovernmental coordination in the form of interaction that has been taken between the prime minister and the chief ministers, governors, and cabinet ministers, and interactions at the bureaucratic level for policy-making and policy implementation (Mishra, 2015: 62-63). In this period, the balance of power shifted in favour of regional parties and the share of regional parties became substantial in the central government that labelled the ambience of federalism. The role of the prime minister has also been reduced in relation to the coalition partners.

Federal Discontent Since 2014

The 2014 parliamentary elections witnessed disarray of the ruling UPA coalition under the Congress as the nodal party. In this election, the most significant party that ruled India for most of its post-independence period was decimated, while the party that emerged in the 1980s (although its presence was there at the time of independence) secured an absolute majority. The BJP under Narendra Modi made governance a key issue that played a major role in obtaining overwhelming victory for the first time in its history. The UPA-II was re-elected in 2009, steadily become unpopular, and the reasons for the decline of its popularity were outlined by various reasons like corruption, a leadership vacuum, and general dissatisfaction over governance (Kotwal and Chaudhuri, 2015: 43-44).

In 2014 with the coming of BJP as a single dominant party at the centre for the first time after three decades, again highlighted the importance of politics for determining the fabric of federalism in India that changed the nature of the progression of coalition governments and replaced it with a one-party majority. Since 2014 with the return of the BJP, the discourse of nationalism has changed which is connected with the Hindutva ideology and Hindu nation. The Modi government's vision of development is associated with the consolidation of national political power. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, the BJP gained a majority of about 31 percent of vote share on the broad majoritarian notion of a Hindu nation. The party seeks to unite the people on that basis and envisaged the idea of cooperative federalism as a basis of governance (Sharma and Swenden, 2017: 2). When the BJP came to power in 2014, there occurred policy shift and institutional change in the federal system and at the level of functioning of multi-level polity, both centralizing and decentralizing tendencies appeared in political and economic sphere respectively.

Since 2014, the institutional innovation by the BJP government, such as the replacement of the Planning Commission with the NITI Aayog and the implementation of Goods and

Services Tax (GST) through an institution of Goods and Services Tax Council has increased nationalizing tendencies in policy-making processes (Saxena, 2021). Ajay Kumar Singh has argued that with the coming of BJP in power since 2014, a new phase of Indian federalism that is 'national federalism', came into being where the locus of authority has shifted from state capitals to the national capital. In this shift, choices are hardly politically discussed and negotiated but rather decided through the monopoly of resources of the centre. Adeney and Bhattacharyya described that the conception of the multinational fabric of federalism in India which has evolved with the passage of time to accommodate diversities based on cultural and linguistic lines might also be challenged by the dominance of the majority conception of nationhood. The BJPin the 2014 elections, attempted to nationalize political debate and demote state-specific factors of political contestation by linking the national identity with development (Tillin, 2018: 52). Since the 2014 elections, the BJP occupied a hegemonic position and after that, it has shown its dominance in the subsequent assembly elections of various states. It has been observed that in the coalition phase or even in a stable coalition period under bi-nodal party system the national governments remained dependent on the regional parties but since 2014, the BJP which came to power without remained dependent on regional parties in the government formation at union level reinforces the case for political centralization. Before that, the importance of regional parties or state-based parties in government formation was evident and these parties join the alliance on the bases of political bargaining for ministerial positions (Sharma and Swenden, 2018: 53-54).

James Manor argued that the BJP is ideologically committed to cultural nationalism and Modi's approach is highly centralized in nature, as evidence from Gujarat between 2001 and 2004 when he was Chief Minister; therefore, the centralized approach of governance and cultural nationalism would reduce the union's willingness to accommodate the Muslim dominated Jammu and Kashmir state and ethnically distinct region of North East (2011:

438-439). The election manifesto of the BJP in the 2014 elections contained a pledge to place stable centre-state relations through the process of consultation where the BJP claimed that the development of the nation would be driven by the states. It was envisaged to create a 'Regional Council of States' for restructuring the intergovernmental relations and revival of moribund forums such as the National Development Council (NDC) and Inter-State Council (ISC) (Saxena, 2021). The centre-state relations under the BJP government became centralized and that centralization has not been uniform in the fiscal, political, and administrative sphere.

It has been observed that where shared-rule becomes common, federalism works in a cooperative manner and where it is replaced by the centre with independent and unilateral action, and federalism moves into a centralizing direction. Although the Modi government has succeeded in installing the BJP governments in 19 out of 29 states, its performance remained considerably weaker against some major state-based parties especially Delhi, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Bihar. In the 2018 and 2019 assembly elections, in some states where the BJP has faced strong competition due to anti-incumbency sentiments particularly in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Jharkhand.

Since the 2014 elections, federal relations in India are influenced by the intra-party centralization, exemplified by the centre's role in announcing the chief ministerial candidates. For example, in the case of Delhi, the announcement of Kiran Bedi as the chief ministerial candidate a couple of weeks before elections held and in 2017, Yogi Adityanath was announced after the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections. Froma broader perspective, intra-party centralization does not necessarily account for political centralization within the wider polity (Sharma and Swenden, 2018: 58-59). The centralization in the Indian federal system since the 2014 elections reflect through four different ways-

The imposition of President's Rule

The dismissal of Governor in Indian politics is not a new trend; it was there since the 1970s and 1980s when the opposition appointed governors were dismissed by the subsequent governments; similarly, after the 2014 elections, the BJP ousted nine governors of various states which was appointed by the Congress-led UPA government. In the case of Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, President's rule were imposed in 2016 for political gain where in Arunachal Pradesh, there was intra-party conflicts within the ruling Congress and the BJP appointed governor convened a session of the assembly one month earlier in which the ruling Congress failed in the floor test resulting into the imposition of President's rule in the state. Similarly, in Uttarakhand President's rulewas imposed where nine Congress MLA defected from the party and subsequently, the governor asked the Chief Minister to prove the majority in the floor test. However, unlike the Arunachal Pradesh central government instructed the President to suspend the state government a day before conducting the floor test. In both cases, the Supreme Court intervened and dismissed the President's rule and reinstated Congress government in both the states marked the prodigious role performed by the judiciary which acted as a potential safeguard of federalism.

Union decision on Demonetization

The union government took the unilateral decision on November 8, 2016, when the Prime Minister announced the withdrawal of 500 and 1000 rupee notes from the legal tender which immediately impacted the economy and depleted the revenue of the state government. The decision taken by the centre violated the spirit of cooperative federalism. Some of the political analysts argued that it was intended to inflict short and medium-term pain to achieve long term gains, that is, to curb black money and others argued that it was a move not to curb back money but to destroy the political rivals. The demonetization move was outrightly criticized by

various Chief Ministers especially the then Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister stated that the decision was politically motivated by keeping in mind the upcoming assembly elections.

Abrogation of Article 370 and Reorganization of Jammu and Kashmir

With the return of the BJP in power at the centre in 2014 and the state assembly elections also held in the same year produced hung assembly and after prolonged negotiation BJP-PDP coalition government was formed in the state based on'Agenda of Alliance' to reinstate the Vajpayee's principle of *Insaniya t*(humanity)*, Kashmiriyat* (composite culture) and *Jamooriyat* (democracy). However, both the parties are radically different in their ideology-the BJP believes in greater integration of J&K with the Indian Union by abrogating asymmetry granted under Article 370 of the constitution and the PDP, on the other hand, demanded full autonomy. In March 2015, both the BJP and the PDP joined hand to form government in the state and after the demise of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, instability broke out. However, there was a repeated political deadlock in the state and again after negotiation, the BJP and the PDP formed a coalition government that was short-lived due to withdrawal of support by the BJP and the state placed under Governor's Rule (Sharma and Swenden, 2018: 61-63). The BJP in its *Sankalp Patra* 2019, clearly mentioned that their position on Article 370 remained the same as of the Jana Sangh and further argued that Article 35A is an obstacle or a clog in the path of development of the state (Bharatiya Janata Party, 2019: 12). The BJP claims that Article 35A is discriminatory against non-permanent residents of the state and women marrying outside the state.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019

Another federal tension erupted when the Union government passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 which excluded Muslims from three neighbouring states of Afghanistan, Pakistan,

and Bangladesh. The central government's decision to provide citizenship to the persecuted minorities or the minorities having a fear of religious persecution in these countries were made eligible for attaining citizenship by shortening the eligibility criteria from twelve years to six years. This Act allows the migrants who entered India by December 31, 2014, and they had been the victim of religious persecution in their country of origin. This amendment act flare-up federal tensions where the non-BJP ruling states take up the issue of religion by condemning the BJP stand of amending the constitution.

Conclusion

The 1967 elections brought far-reaching challenges to Indian federal polity which can be observed in various ways. During the period of Congress dominance, the Indian federal system did not face any severe threats in its working. The federal relations were observed as amicable without serious oppositional forces that directly challenged the Congress system. The polity worked under political homogeneity and issues of centre-states relations were mainly dormant where strong patronage of the centre was followed. Nehru's centralization policies were mostly confined to the economic aspects and the political aspect largely remained autonomous which is evident from his accommodative spirit when he preferred collaboration with independent-minded chief ministers. Nehru did not receive any kind of electoral threat because he preferred consensus building. During his time, four factors observed that were responsible for Congress dominance are- 1) absence of structured opposition, 2) ideologically flexible boundaries made Congress a consensus-based party, 3) Nehru's high command exercised authority under a united team that promoted open competition and 4) centre-state conflicts were resolved by Congress party itself rather than any established agencies. Nehru adopted a mixed approach on two fronts- 1) favoured Congress party rule at both the levels, and 2) centre and state polity remained autonomous during his tenure. After the

death of Nehru, chief ministers played a significant role in choosing Shastri as the next Prime Minister signifies the importance of regional leaders in national politics. With the coming of Shastri, a shift has been experienced from imposition to compromise, and interdependence occurred between centre and states. Further, the participation of state leaderships got strengthened after Shastri's death for the selection of Prime Ministerial candidate.

The 1967 assembly elections epitomized a clear break with the past opposing the mono-centric rule of a single party and in that place, states installed coalition governments. The 1967 elections brought three-fold outcomes- 1) the base of Congress has been weakened at the state level, 2) cohesion of regional parties on regional interest, and 3) the coming together of parties has enhanced democratic process which has a broader impact on future political articulation.

However, after 1967 the controversy of centre-state relations had acquired a definite shape and form and the demand for autonomy from the different states became more vocal. The Congress party faced a split in 1969 and after that, Indira Gandhi tried to bring the party and the state governments under her personal control. In her new style of functioning, all the Chief Ministers were her nominees owing full allegiance to her and it appeared that the candidate for Chief Ministership must satisfy two conditions- he must be the personal nominee of Indira Gandhi and he should not have an independent political base. Indira Gandhi emerged as the chief spokesperson of the superior claims of unitarism over federalism and endorsed that strong centre was the need of the hour and her proclamation of national emergency in 1975 is marked as the climax stage of centralization. The 42nd amendment act adversely affected the autonomy of the states. By this amendment act Article 257A was inserted by which centre could deploy armed forces in any state for dealing with law and order subject to the control of the union and besides this education, forest, and protection of wildlife were shifted from the State List to

the Concurrent List causing a further curtailment of powers of the states. During this phase, the demands for autonomy from different states were rejected by the centre and redress their grievances centre appointed the Sarkaria Commission, producing a pro centre report.

Moreover, the centre most of the time used Article 356 of the constitution which is detrimental for the federal spirit. It is observed that there is a symbolic relationship between centralization and regionalization in Indian politics because with the growing tendencies of centralization of federal structure, there emerged a resurgence of regional consciousness and forces. The second-generation strains (post-1967) in Indian federalism are partly the result of India's cultural pluralism and more due to changes in political culture and the working of the institutions. After four decades of independence, the federal developments diluted the federal structure of the Indian Constitution in letter and spirit.

Since 1989 with the dawn of regional parties and coalition politics at the national level has enhanced the negotiating capacity of States and representation of their voice in the decision-making process at the union level and reduced the centre's ability to overlook the opinions of States. The coalition politics enhanced the scope for negotiation of policies formulated on the subjects that did not fall in the domain of the union or the states, which happened during the coalition era. In this phase, a significant development came out in the form of increased allegations of states towards the centre that the centrepractiseda partial approach towards alliance partners in financial matters. Another significant outcome observed in this period was that the regional parties had questioned the arbitrary application of Article 356 of the constitution in the states. In the 1990s, a move towards cooperative federalism was initiated with the establishment of the Inter-State Council under Article 263 of the constitution.

Since the 1999 elections, Indian experienced a stable coalition government at the centre with the support of regional parties. The

central governments in the stable coalition phase also faced opposition from the states and the central government made its effort to redress centre-state grievances by appointing different commissions like the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, and Punchhi Commission. The bi-nodal party system during the stable coalition phase worked in collaboration with regional parties.

The 2014 elections have falsified the prediction of political analysts where one party came with the majority after three decades that has also changed the political discourse altogether. Since then, Indian federalism is working in both ways- in cooperative and centralized manners. It is observed change with continuity in its functioning and the cooperation can be observed at the level of replacement of Planning Commission by NITI Aayog and the centralization can be observed by different ways when Modi government unilaterally demonetized currency, union decision to abrogate Article 370 on August 5, 2019, in a very innovative manner and the BJP's proposal for simultaneous elections. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 spread communal tension where opposition parties played a crucial role in strengthening anti-BJP sentiment on the issue of the majoritarian nature of BJP by highlighting the community-specific discrimination for granting citizenship on fast track basis.

At the beginning of 2020, Indian federalism by and large experienced *litmus* test during the COVID-19 pandemic where the centre issued powerful guidelines and unprecedented lockdown to contain the spread of novel coronavirus pandemic. Most of the states obeyed the directions of the centre and suggested for extension of lockdown in a phased manner after consultation of the chief ministers through video conferencing. The only controversy arises between the centre and the states over the evacuation of stranded labourers or the migrant workers, where opposition ruled states constantly blamed the ruling party over the spontaneous announcement of lockdown in March.

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China's Policy Towards South Asia: Economic And Strategic Engagement

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Abstract

China is rising as a global power in the 21st century. Its remarkable economic growth, phenomenal allocation of resources to improvise infrastructure, huge investment in human resource development as well as modernization of its armed forces has contributed in the progression of China's national power and confidence. In order to sustain its economic momentum and to secure national interests abroad, it came out of the traditional policy of hide and bide to hyper global engagements. Beijing actually intends to act as an alternative to the global hegemony of the US. South Asia has emerged as a power multiplier for China. The latter eyes over the region in order to minimize its internal and external vulnerabilities on the one hand and for global outreach on the other. A reliable ally, Pakistan has emerged as an upright

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partner of Chinese endeavor in South Asia and beyond. Common animosity with India is, however, a driving force of Sino-Pak partnership. This bonhomie has manifested unrelenting efforts to undermine New Delhi's power position in the region. These developments have far reaching implications for India's national security.

Keywords: South Asia, Sino-Pak partnership, CPEC, Indian Ocean, India's national security.

Rise of China as a powerful country is the unprecedented global development of 21st century. There will be hardly any country in the world, where China's presence is not felt by one way or the other. The remarkable economic development that took place in China during the last few decades actually triggered China's global outreach. Subsequently, China earmarked vast sums of resources to develop its physical and human capital in the country, including modernisation of its armed forces. This resulted into exceptional surge in China's national power and confidence. This was clearly "visible in policy, articulation and political choreography" (Jaishankar, 2020: p. 145). In fact, China came out of the policy of hiding your capacities to an aspiring global power. Of particular note, guided by history and especially after China's failure in Vietnam War, Deng Xiaoping followed the policy to keep low profile and focused more on domestic development. It was Xi Jinping among his successors, who actually reversed this policy and projected China as a potential global contender(Vanaik, 2020: p.28). The slowdown triggered by 2008 global financial crisis, change in the US administration early next year and the consequences of Iraq war provided enough space to China for maneuvering. This may be evident as Beijing hardened its stance over the South China Sea disregarding concerns of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), signalling a change in China's attitude towards regional structures. Similar tough stance is also seen in China's policy towards Japan on territorial disputes,

and with the US on economic and security issues. Relations with Russia however turned in favor of China. The crisis in the Eurozone assisted China's entry into their market. With India, China's policy generated bilateral disputes ranging from stapled visa to border incursions, though both cooperated on many global issues. It is argued, China do not consider India an equal power. Instead, it expects India to show utmost sensitivity towards China's concerns. Since China is conscious for the US presence in and around the region, the growing Indo-US proximity bothers it. Beijing invariably shows its displeasures with New Delhi by intimidating especially on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in one way or the other. The 2017 Doklam border standoff and the recent brawls at Galwan Valley in June 2020 are the instances that largely driven with the aim to remind India for aligning the US. The bottom line is that China's influence over different countries has not been the same(Jaishankar, 2020:p.145), but its accommodation in the existing world order seems to be less possible without a reshuffle. It is worth mentioning here, though evolving world order in 21st century is not yet clear but would be more multilateral in nature. This will primarily rest upon several regional and global organisations, where cooperation based on interests instead of ideological underpinnings would be sought. Thus, the new order is totally contrast to one that emerged in 1950's. In fact, global security system based on alliances was the bedrock of then order as the whole world was divided into two blocs during the cold war(Pathak, 2017:p.249). In short, China's rise has unleashed economic and political contestations around the globe, the trade war between the US and China is one among many such drifts that reinforce this fact. Meanwhile, scholars do not see absolute decline of the US in near future, though China's total gross domestic product (GDP) may exceeds the US in a couple of years. Nor China can match the US in building alliance structures in terms of range and depth, even if its ties with Russia deepen to the highest level. China's ties with South East Asian Countries bears the testimony of this fact. Though it has deeper economic integration with these countries but the latter intend to see the US in the region. It is not

because of any fears of military assault or blackmail by China. Instead, the asymmetry between China and these countries in terms of size and power drove them to the US. Nevertheless, the presence of the US in South China Sea characterise China's behaviour in the region(Vanaik,2020:p.27).

Since rapid transformation in China has made it a reckoning power, its interests now spread across the globe. China has devised a well plan strategy to safeguard these interests. A close look at China's external engagements bears the testimony of policy orientations in this regard. As China's global outreach is triggered by remarkable economic development at home, an emphasis would naturally be to keep the economy on track. Equally significant fact is that robust economic growth also provides legitimacy to Communist Party of China's (CPC) centralised rule in the country. Although China is an engine of global economic growth, yet its economy is not immune to external disruptions given its deeper integration with outside world. The global slowdown even prior to the outbreak of pandemic in December 2019 that exacerbated thereby itself illustrate how economic activities in China are prone to external pulls and pressures. This implies that sound economic growth is inevitable for internal stability in China and its global power projections. Hence, China's is conscious to lessen its vulnerabilities that may disrupt domestic growth. One such area where Beijing feels insecure is the inbound supply of energy resources as well as trading routes for import and export. China emerged as a largest importer of foreign oil in 2017, surpassing the US. It is estimated, China imported 70 percent of its oil requirements from abroad in 2018 that will reach to 80 percent in 2040. Since majority of oil imports originate from the Middle East and Angola that reach China by passing through the Strait of Malacca, a narrow stretch of water between the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula(Khan,2021). It is worth mentioning here that the Middle East alone constitutes 40 percent of China's total oil import that traverses through these waters(Singh,2021:p.7) This route may anytime be choked by the adversary as China believes, pointing finger at the US which has a

significant military presence in the region. This is called China's Malacca Dilemma, the term coined in 2003 by then-President of China, Hu Jintao in the wake of his country's over dependence on foreign oil and possible risks involved therein, posing threats to national economic security. This prompted the government to explore the alternative arrangements restricting over reliance on the Strait of Malacca. Prominent among these include the Kazakhstan-China Pipeline that links the country to the oil-rich Caspian region and Myanmar-Yunnan Pipelines that will supply oil and gas from the Bay of Bengal to the Kunming region of China (Khan, 2021). However, energy resources supplied by these routes are far less in comparison transported through Strait of Malacca. The turning point in this regard was ensued in 2013, with the announcement of One Belt One Road (OBOR), later changed to be widely accepted as BRI. It is an ambitious project that not only aimed to eliminate China's external vulnerabilities but also proposed as a part of go global strategy. Under this initiative, China intends to connect itself with Europe, Asia and Africa through maritime and land based routes. It is worth mentioning here, China considers the US as a threat not only in or around the Strait of Malacca but well beyond to include China's overall stretching around the world. This mega initiative thus provides an opportunity to elbow the US as a global hegemon. However, there is wide-ranging acceptance that China cannot win a war with the US at this stage, the only way is left to dent the enemy economically. Since the US's hegemony largely thrives on the revenues earned through the shipping business, where the US led Western countries have an edge. BRI thus is a linchpin to erode the US's economic and political influence globally(Bhardwaj, 2016:p.13). However, this requires a lot of work on the part of China. Given the US's adamant position as a global player will further add the woes of China. Otherwise also it is said, the US will remain economically and politically an influential country for long time to come. This may be attributed to the assets the US holds. To begin with, the US is the largest advanced capitalist country in the world. The per capita GDP level in the US or in any prosperous

Western European country is much higher to that of China. There is no denying fact, China, including Russia grew in capitalist mode of productions yet incongruities prevalent in these countries further mar their competitiveness vis-a-vis the US. Coupled with it, the relationships of forces between capital and labour are deeply weighted in favour of the former in the US. This kind of essentials backing capitalist economy is unevenly available in authoritarian China. Likewise, the absence of internal politico-territorial challenges in the US supplements its supremacy unlike China and Russia, where ethno-nationalism poses a credible threat to their respective national security. Not only this, the huge defence allocations in the US will further keep power differentials with China for a long time. The last but not the least is worldwide presence of American modern mass culture that serves the US interests both in expanding and retaining its dominant global position. In short, the US is still a formidable power that has the capability to meet any challenge posed by China. This is visible in South China itself. The US along with its allies has been stood to check China's unilateral moves in privatising of what should be 'the common heritage of human kind'(Vanaik, 2020:.27-28). Hence, China has been forced to explore an alternative of the US supremacy. Chinese President Xi Jinping who stormed to office in 2013 envisaged a plan in this regard. He displayed more assertive nationalism and projected China as an ancient and civilisation country. He appealed the neighbours to recognise China both as a great Asian power and a key player in shaping the region, not for the sake of China's development but all others in the region. The overall objective is to establish an "Asian Security System". China will take the Asian countries into confidence and, this will pave the way for the US exclusion from the region. In September 2015, a tentative effort was made in this direction. Xi Jinping himself signaled to work jointly with the countries of ASEAN to guard mutual interest over the South China Sea and beyond, declared that China will no longer further militarise the islands/reefs that are currently under its control in the region. However, nothing concrete happened thereafter. The US enhanced its patrolling in

response to these dynamics reflective in China's policies. What these developments suggest is that the US and China may not be able to work in tandem given the stark differences in their global ambitions. Nor their mutual competition will tag any of them as an eventual victor or loser unlike in the older era. Chances of third world war are bleak, though possibility cannot be ruled out. Nevertheless, the evolving global order is set to be chaotic and unmanageable. The environment devastation, poverty, economic inequalities, fast erosion of political-democratic forms of governance and the possibility of nuclear flashpoint will further compound the odds of the new order(Vanaik, 2020:27-28). South Asia will largely be pressed to these developments.

Since China's global outreach is subjective to the US positioning in the world, South Asia has emerged as a power multiplier for it. Earlier its interests in the region were primarily confined to the security related issues. In the contemporary times, it has widely been enlarged well beyond the security matters to economic and strategic doles. Beijing even tied this region with domestic insecurities. Actually, its western part adjoining South Asia has been lagged behind in terms of economic development with rest of country. Moreover, this area is ridden with ethnic issues. Since people have conflict with Chinese state belong to Muslim faith in Xinjiang province, this makes China even over cautious in the wake of Islamic extremism prevalent in its neighbourhood especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Shahnawaz,2011:.65).The BRI is thus a linchpin in this regard, if implemented effectively will placate Chinese apprehensions. Pakistan, an old friend of China in the subcontinent once again emerged as a front runner in China's scheme of things. Actually, China Pakistan economic Corridor (CPEC), which is a subsidiary of the BRI links Xinjiang province of China with Arabian Sea through the ports of Gwadar in Balochistan and Karachi in Sindh. Pakistan thus provides both land and maritime routes under BRI. China has announced approximately US$ 62 billion in Pakistan, a huge solace to capital starved and economically fragile country. It is worth mentioning here, this amount may be exacerbated as

Pakistan's economy is not capable to absorb such huge capitals in near future, the annual limit US$ 2billion has been suggested by the CPEC draft master plan from China's planning agency(Krishnan, 2020:207-208). If China succeeds to transform CPEC as an asset in the region, this model will be applied elsewhere in the world. Meanwhile, China did not pay any attentions to Indian sensitivities while making inroad into South Asia. It partnered with Pakistan in specific areas, less to genuinely assist and more to positioning the latter against India. This may be amply clear if one goes throw the nuclear and missile collaboration between the two countries. Since the launch of CPEC, China has extensively enlarged its sphere of influence in Pakistan's overall economic and political edifices, unleashing complex web of ramifications for the region. The same is true in case of other South Asian countries, including Indian Ocean, where China has made its presence felt to India in one way or the other. To strengthen its hold in the region, it has extensively been using its influence and economic diplomacy in furthering its interests, with an eye to play as a balancer in the region. India which presumes South Asia as an area of its influence will not accept China's unilateral, strategic and self-serving penetration in the region. As a matter of fact, India is the only country in South Asia which has vehemently opposed the BRI, declaring the same more as a Chinese national rather than a multilateral initiative. Not only this, this initiative has also impinged upon India's sovereignty. This corridor traverses through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, a territory India considers an integral part(Pathak, 2017:350). It is against this background, a modest attempt has been made in this article to understand Chinese moves towards South Asia. This necessitates to examine the Chinese foreign policy in general and its policy towards South Asia particularly. For convenience, this paper has further been sub-divided into two parts. In the first part, rigorous analysis pertaining to the historical developments of Chinese Foreign Policy will be undertaken. Since China is an ancient country where political values have emerged in a period of time will assist and provide insights to decode the present moves of China. In the

second part, Chinese economic and strategic interests in Indian subcontinent will be explored.

Historical Evaluation of Chinese Foreign Policy. A Brief Explanation

Peoples Republic of China (PRC) came into existence on October 02, 1949. This instilled a ray of hope among the Chinese people, who were dejected in the face of chronic political instability, intensive social strife, widespread violence, financial mess as well as external intervention in the country. During this period the international community was witnessing brewing up of cold war which followed one of the deadliest wars in the history of mankind that engulfed almost the entire world. As US and Soviet Union were engaged in ideological conflict, they endeavoured to expand their respective spheres of influence globally. In this backdrop China's establishment as a communist country further provided a fillip to the conflict between the two superpowers. For the US, the communist victory in China was a major cause of concern as it raised apprehensions of communist expansion in Asia and strengthening of the Soviet Bloc vis-a-vis American Bloc. These fears were further heightened by Korean War. Washington appealed its allies not to recognise China rather form a common front against it. This made the situation very peculiar for China that has daunting tasks of unifying the country into a cohesive nation state. Equally significant was to shield the national sovereignty from any external encroachment(Brown, 2017: 14). Mao Zedong who spearheaded the communist revolution in the country to its logical conclusion avoided direct involvement at the international level and focused more on to consolidate its power. In formulating domestic as well as foreign policy, Mao depended upon the rich historical legacy of his nation.

Given the socio-economic and political situation within and outside the country in 1949, Mao Zedong followed a path guided by the historical experiences and current dynamics of international politics. He knew the country is in dire need to have self-

confidence and a conducive environment laden with unity, political stability and zero external intervention. As a matter of fact, stability and social order in Chinese mind matters higher than civil and political freedom(Jacques, 2021: 264).If one throws light on the Chinese history, it unmasks how violence, instability and economic deprivation by external invaders in various times has cost them dearer in terms of moral and material loss, hence social order and country's sovereignty is most sought in China. Mao for security and ideological imperatives remained inclined towards Moscow in the initial years. But the trajectory of his policies reflects how he wisely enabled modernity to take root in the country with strategic autonomy at the international level. China's involvement in Korean war and other such skirmishes though brought the country in direct conflict with the US, but successive national governments, including led by Mao gave utmost stress to safeguard their national interests, instead of making permanent alliances. Chinese alignment with the Soviet lasted till 1960, thereby it followed an independent path, and in early 1970's China inclined towards US till the end of cold war. In fact, Moscow remained a security concerns for China. This necessitates to have a comprehensive look at Chinese past to know the nature and evolution of its political discourse and effect on the present structures (Kornberg and Faust, 2007:15).

China's remarkable development in various fields has labelled it as a potential global power. This instilled a new confidence in Chinese state that will be more visible in the political discourse Beijing follows in the time to come. Many believe that the recent claims by China over the entire South China and the continuance of assertive neighbourhood policy is a clear departure in China's viewpoint of global politics. Equally significant development is the fact that the rise in China's stature as global power goes well beyond the economic sphere. China's history, politics, culture and traditions evolved with the passage of time will also spread its tentacles around the globe. Takeovers of various global film studios, including establishing Confucian institutes across the world are few among such steps taken in order to turn itself into a

global cultural superpower. Even the western countries followed the similar route for maximising its influence. Several institutions with global stature have been evolved in the west and implanted to the various parts of the globe with the aim to serve the interests of parent countries. Neither these institutions were made by the international community nor caters most to the interests of all countries. Truth is that only dominant power makes the rule and others have to follow. Time has come when China may use its vast power and resources to establish institutions identified with its line of thinking and ideology. This further makes imperative to examine the historical past of China as a part to understand Chinese political world.

Chinese civilisation is one of the oldest in the world. Though it has witnessed several disruptions but the lines of continuity remained stubborn that continue till date. This has made Chinese political world distinct in many respects. For example, the relationship between China's state and its people can be traced back to the fact that bond between the two has grown in confidence and utility. This is in contrast to the state system erected on the lines of western philosophy. Though it continue to hold its eminence across the globe yet its operations are subject to various limitations. This reveals how people in the west hesitate to entrust the concentration of power in the hands of the state, hence the best state in their eyes is one that rules minimum and conform to restraints. However, China offers an exclusive account, where civilisation and state not only coincided for a long period but also the state had been regarded as steadfast partner to uphold the inviolability of Chinese civilisation. Its society never envisaged the state as an outsider or a suspicious institution. Instead, Chinese people viewed their state as patriarch. Of particular note, the role of the government and family in China is pivotal with regard to operation of society and its bond with state(Kornberg and Faust, 2007:261). To strengthen these influences and to enlighten the people, the government emphasised on education. In order to fulfil this purpose of the government, the family system in the country has done endless welfare activities which strengthened the

people's faith in the state. Hence, education and family not only played significant role carrying forward Chinese traditions to the next generation but also trained the kids about the nature of state. This social harmony and close ties between the state and society helped China and other East Asian countries to cope up with the pitfalls of globalisation and modernisation in the contemporary times(Kornberg and Faust, 2007:.275-276). This in turn amassed massive authority to the state that still continue as an essential trait of governance in China. It is difficult to think such exceptional example anywhere in the world, hence one may refer China not as a civilisation, but as a civilisational state. In such an arrangement, national sovereignty is highly preferred, but unlike the west, it is not linked to popular sovereignty. In fact, state sovereignty has replaced popular sovereignty in China. Even the civil society does not constitute any relevance in China(Kornberg and Faust, 2007:275).Meanwhile, the Chinese leaders do not derive their powers either from the social contract or on the basis of constitutional relationship with other political entities as in case of west. Instead, the emperors could rule the country until they have mandate of heaven, a natural force that binds the ruler to follow ethical values in deliverance to the people. In the eventuality of any annoyance to this mandate through immoral actions, corruption or any such act will lead to natural calamities in the country, they come to know that change in dynasty is sure (Kornberg and Faust, 2007:p.9).Though such customs do not constitute as a feature in today's system in China yet leaders often apply values centres around the concept of mandate to mobilise the people. Nevertheless, all these distinctions that characterise Chinese political system bears the testimony of unprecedented faith in the Chinese state to take the country into better arrangement. It is worth mentioning here that whenever stability disturbed in China either by the internal failures or external intervention the people have suffered the most. If one goes through the tenure of Mao Zedong's entire rule, his emphasis remained on the creation of power and wealth with maximum strategic autonomy at the international level, to keep stability and social order in China.

Scholars argue that China has a pathological fear of division and instability(Jacques, 2012:264).

However, defeat of China by western powers in mid of 19th century though a big jolt but this humiliation forced their leaders to see out of the box. They learnt from European nationalism and Japanese experiences to build a powerful country, say for instance, it "initiated the process of defining its borders in the same kind of precision as other states" At the same they could retain the distinctiveness of their political world that not only secured them from western influences but also enabled China to adopt modernisation with Chinese character. At the end of 19th Century, China turned to be a nation state. This was done as few elites in China were impressed by European nationalism, who thought to project national sovereignty as the supreme virtue, including China was obliged by its weakness to join the international system on the terms of the dominant European powers. This enabled China to pursue double identity, a civilisational state and a nation state. Several aged old traditions and values that evolved with the passage of time in China also successfully passed on to the present day statecraft. These include the ideographic language, ancestor's worship and idea of single rule, including Confucian values that range from moral virtue to supreme importance of government in human affairs, political stability and unity(Jacques, 2012:247). However, Mao Zedong rejected Confucian values and replaced by "Marxist (or more accurately, Maoist) canons, together with iconic heroes of the Long March and socialist labour" (Jacques, 2012:262) as he found them short to cope up with internal and external challenges. Equally, he assessed the inferior scientific orientation and knowledge led to its China's defeat in the hands of western power in the mid of 19th century. However, Japan under the Meiji restoration in 1868 paid due attention in this regard to develop national power on the basis of scientific norms and knowledge. The state was key agent of modernisation in Japan. When everything failed, China turned to the communism. Mao in the post October revolution enabled the modernity to take root in China, though Confucianism implicitly continue to shape policy

programmes. Of particular note, Mao did not have to face much difficulty in the spread of modernity as Chinese civilisation which provided consistency in huge population otherwise fragmented by a dialect, customs, ethnic differences and geography. Such benevolence in the society kept the spirits of Chinese people very high, though they could not forget their humiliation in the hands of foreign powers. The modernisation process in case of developing countries however was not smooth, as it was accompanied by identity crisis and a sense of inferiority that ultimately derailed the entire project of building a cohesive nation state on scientific and rational basis(Jacques, 2012:p.251).

Longevity is one of the features of Chinese civilisation that makes it distinctive. Many beliefs, customs and values evolved during the years not only made the state and society compatible but also facilitated the transfer of socio-politico traits and knowledge accumulated in one generation to the next. This instilled a sense of confidence among the people that sharpened the racial and cultural superiority syndrome in the society. This line of thinking among the people was most visible when China expanded largely during the Qing dynasty (Kornberg and Faust, 2007: 9). Of particular note, China was known as the Middle Kingdom for centuries from the pre-history until 1911. Chinese people described it as the centre of natural order and the world order. Chinese influence was extended well beyond its frontiers to the adjacent states during this period. This resulted into tributary system where adjacent states accepted suzerainty of Chinese state in the hope to continue liberal policies towards them. Chinese people views tributary system as the testimony of their racial superiority.

Western powers defeated China in the mid of 19th century, obviously China was comparatively weak, where state power was not consolidated on the lines of western state system. Actually, rulers in China were more concerned to pursue the moral and ethical persuasions. Neither they anticipated external threats nor had any interest unlike the west to expand liberally. So much so, their understanding of western state system and its possible

challenges to China was very limited. Foreigners were welcome in China provided they mould themselves akin to local culture and faith. Ironically, the west also could not understand Chinese's political system shaped by natural forces. When China repeatedly denied free access and free trade as demanded by the western powers, confrontations erupted that culminated into war. China was forced to sign unequal treaties with the foreign powers that restricted Qing's sovereignty. The control of the coastal areas and foreign trade also fell into the hands of the west (Kornberg and Faust, 2007:p.10) However, subjugation did not deter China. Rather humiliation of China stimulated a movement for reform aimed at modernising the country. A new wave of nationalism aroused that intended to make country powerful much beyound what Confucian values have advocated. The Boxer Uprisings of 1900 may be attributed to the grudge against the foreign intervention, where a secret society having some criminal background joined hands with the rural gentry and the anti-west officials in the country was formed to check exploitation of China. Though the government with the assistance of foreign troops crushed the defiance but it lasted a deep impact over the movement for reformation and anti-foreign sentiments. The urban intelligentsia and merchant classes did not remain unaffected by these activities, who sent their sons to Japan as a part of the strategy to study how an Asian country had beaten the west at its own game. Later in 1905, the Chinese reformers formed a secret revolutionary league in Tokyo that proved as antecedent to the Kuomingtang (Nationalist) Party. China however realised the creation of wealth and power as the viable route to restore the lost glory, rejecting an idea to build the country through the traditional context of the Middle Kingdom. Western ideas especially science and democracy impressed the few elites in China. This led to the rigorous inquiry into the ideas of liberalism, pragmatism, nationalism, anarchism, socialism and Marxist, probably in all sections of Chinese intelligentsia, searching a basis to criticise traditional paradigm of Chinese political world based on Confucian values. The deplorable position of Qing regime with

regard to governance and overall socio-economic and political situation in the country caused disaffection and disillusionment in the society. This resulted into 1911 revolution and Qing rule was replaced by the republican government of Sun Yat-sen. However, the new government remained short to find respectable place for China but patriotic feelings and zeal for reforms continued to take roots. On 4th May, 1919, a defining movement in Chinese nationalism witnessed when thousands of students held demonstrations in Beijing against the decision of Versailles Peace Conference to handover the German enclaves in China to Japan. The protests against the west and Japan spread like the jungle fire in the country. Its intensity was so severe that it spurred the reorganisation of the Nationalist party (Kuomintang) and stimulated the birth of Chinese Communist Party as well (Britannica, 2019) Meanwhile, focus remained to provide unity and stability in the country on the one hand and securing the "recovery of foreign rights" on the other (Kornberg and Faust, 2007:p.12). Between 1928 and 1937 China was relatively united under the Chiang Kai-shek but internal divisions continued to haunt collective fight against the foreigners. When Japanese involvement in China increased in terms of territorial expansion followed by the killing of Chinese during Nanjing Massacre of December 1937, Chiang Kai-shek was forced to stop civil war with the communists to fight against Japan collectively. However, the Nationalists commenced their offensives against the communists when Japan surrendered in 1945, but this dented Chiang's nationalists' credential(Kornberg and Faust, 2007:13). In any case, the Communists emerged victorious in the civil war, many factors contributed in their triumph.

Mao initially tilted towards Moscow primarily because of security and ideological semblance, but he concentrated more on domestic front. He empowered the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to act as an agent of social-economic and political change in the country. Equally he convinced the people regarding the competency of CCP, which will restore China's glory by making it a great power. Though he discouraged the Confucian values as a

basis of national power but values of order, stability and effective rule continued to influence his policies. The economic and social rights extended in the country were also in tune with the cultural ethos in the country. The high living standards, right to work, education and the provision of life's essentials such as food, health care, shelter and clothing constituted an agenda of the modernisation process initiated under tutelage of the CCP. It was thus conveyed that the CCP is capable enough to maintain the Mandate of Heaven. Though Mao did not embraced the totalitarianism as a principle of governance but he denied his people the political and civil rights available to American citizens as enshrined in latter's constitution under the Bill of Rights. Say for instance, the freedoms of speech, assembling, religion, press, an independent judiciary and unusual punishments, what most the citizens consider to be essential components of a representative democracy. Chinese Leaders have eliminated most of the totalitarianism of the Leninism, while retaining authoritarian control (Kornberg and Faust, 2007:21).

Regarding economic miracle in China, it is believed, the centralised rule was key factor for its success. However, one must not forget Chinese investments on the education and skill development during the initial years that paid rich dividends in the post-reform period. This fact is very much known to the people, who themselves agree with it and extend all kind of supports to the Chinese state to regulate the whole lot in the hope for their better future. Otherwise, there is no pressure for democracy in China, though trend is growing for accountability at local, provincial and national levels. The values like sincerity, loyalty, reliability and steadfastness, which are associated with Confucianism are facilitating the state to emerge as invincible. The weak civil society in China reinforces this fact that nothing is above the state. In fact, power resides overwhelming in the state. In other words, state and society in China have lived together for many centuries, where centralised and unitary State is projected as custodian of unity, stability and prosperity in the country(Jacques, 2012:270).

Finally Adam Smith won over the Karl Marx inside China. This happened in the wake of opening of China to the outside world in 1978. New weightage is being given to market place in investment, production and distribution of goods with continuation of many social values and practices, as well as the preservation of Chinese traditions. When questions raised regarding the political freedom in China, their leaders clearly contested the fact that though mere declaration of independence does not guarantee a descent life, as many of these countries lack political freedoms and individual rights, including pathetic performance in safety and security of the people, human decency and essential economic and social needs as meaningful work and adequate health care. It is this reason, China does not follow and endorse western policies, as the later created more problems and inadequacies. In order to keep the communist party strong and relevant, leaders in China mobilized the people through the values of the Chinese traditions, the Mandate of Heaven and Middle Kingdom. The party also appealed to the popular aspirations by focusing on Chinese nationalism, removal of foreign influence, security and stability and order, and four modernisation; agriculture, industry, science and technology and military capability.

What historical developments in China suggest is that internal upheavals and external intervention have played havoc with China's journey as a sovereign country, before and after October 1949 period. On the one hand, this spurred a feeling of national humiliation among the people and enthused the leadership to bring back China's honour and a sense of worth on the other. Once Chinese people have taken control of state power in October 1949, a course correction was undertaken where bearings of the country's past reflected visibly. Beijing disregarded feudalism and old thinking among other malpractices and evolved a vibrant policy to deal with external exigencies. To what extent Chinese have been mindful to their unpleasant past becomes clear if one throws light on the use of several quotes in contemporary times, either to get public support or for mobilisation of people for any

cause. Prominent among these include national humiliation, struggle, liberation, rebirth, improving people's standards and economic wellbeing. Chinese foreign policy and its regional role thus operates within this emotional framework. Even China's relations with Japan and its attitude towards the US, including the stand on the South and East China Seas have been guided by the historical past. This in turn incited the desire to build monolithic state with enormous wealth and power along with long term strategic planning(Kornberg and Faust, 2007:12-13).

Thus may be discerned that Chinese Foreign Policy is always guided by country's historical traditions, including the contemporary realities. Mao though undertaken several measures at the domestic level to tight its control over the people but followed the successful foreign policy that served its country the most. He no doubt strived to ensure the strategic autonomy, but also kept alive high hopes to influence beyond the borders. He added emotional aspect to country's foreign policy and, these traditions with modifications were further continued by his successor, Deng Xiaoping. He ushered the country into new world by adopting two systems, political China remained communist and economically it embraced capitalism in 1978. He also observed Mao's tactics in foreign policy. He never allowed the ideological underpinnings in the way to make China prosperous country. At the same time, he observed utmost secrecy in wrapping his country's real motives, including the objectives of the Communist Party of China (CPC). This may be attributed to his pragmatist tendencies, who worked on the lines of famous Chinese phrase, "it does not matter if a cat is black or white, as long as it catches the mice." This was clearly reflective in his foreign policy. He gave preference to peace and tranquillity in the national behaviour, this will provide time and stability to China which were indispensable for the continuous economic growth and transformation. The internal challenges and citizen's aspirations actually forced him to stress economic rejuvenation at home turf, as fast growth under capitalism also eroded the legitimacy of communism among the people (Kornberg and Faust, 2007:p.19). Among his successors

Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao also stressed the peaceful rise of China and their policies to deal with the outside world remained concentrated on peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation. But tremendous economic growth at home provided confidence to Chinese state that began reflecting in 2009 itself. For the first time, it set out country's core interests. These include to maintain its fundamental system and state security a prominent priority, including to ensure state sovereignty and territorial integrity besides continuing stable development of its economy and society. Nevertheless, it was Xi Jinping who assumed the office of President in 2013, ended the traditional policy to remain low profile at the international level. His single dream project, BRI clearly reflects Chinese world and its ambitions to emerge as a global power. It is worth mentioning here, China remained in-word looking country till the end of Mao era in 1976(Kornberg and Faust, 2007:.4).

Chinese South Asia Policy: Economic and Strategic Moves

China's South Asia policy is thus driven by strategic and economic interests. Though China has witnessed remarkable economic growth and laid down world class infrastructure under the tight nose of centralised state, yet its national integration exercise is not without pitfalls. As a matter of fact, there are 55 recognised minority nationalities in China that constitutes 8.4 percent of country's total population. However, these minorities irrespective their share in the population occupy up to 60 percent of China's total landmass. Such minorities share borders with Pakistan and Afghanistan that further make China worried, as most of disturbances in the mainland originate from these two countries(Kumar, 2019:139). Actually, China's western part has a plethora of problems that are linked with these minorities. To begin with, this region is comparatively underdeveloped and ridden with intrinsic problems. Especially in Xinjiang and Tibet, Chinese state is confronting with the issues of separatism, religious extremism and terrorism (Shahnawaz, 2011:p. 65).Take an

example of Uighur people and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang province, where China has acted swiftly to deal with these issues. It has coercively brought the Uighur people into 're-education centres' that bears the testimony of this fact. However, Beijing describes these institutions as a part of the initiative aiming to educate and reform the locals, so they may reap economic benefits and reject violence. Meanwhile, the locals and the international community call this exercise a calculative attempt that aims to indoctrinate and assimilate these culturally distinct people into larger Chinese identity. Since Uighur people are Muslims, this further multiplies anxieties of China, as the latter is under deep suspicions of their possible linkage with extremist outfits in neighbouring Muslim countries. On several occasions, Beijing has blamed and linked the violent attacks in the country as a consequence of nexus between local extremist forces and Jihadists outfits from across the borders. East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) is one such outfit of Uighurs that has been declared by Beijing a potential threat to its national security. These anxieties thus continue to characterise China's South Asia. Beijing's distance from the Taliban regime in Afghanistan may be attributed to this fact. Even China was not comfortable with Soviet forces in Afghanistan during cold war, as external exigencies may fuel internal strife in the country. Its attitude towards the US presence in Afghanistan is also not very favourable. (Shahnawaz, 2011:66-68). These apprehensions also loom large over the Sino-Pakistan ties, as the former has sought latter's intervention to check any possible support from across the border to its extremist forces. Though Pakistan did a commendable job in this regard, yet its efforts are short of Chinese expectations. It is worth mentioning here, extremist elements have widespread presence in Pakistan's various institutions, including its army. Islamabad thus cannot go beyond to a particular limit in the wake of internal backlash. This in turn may pose a credible threat to Sino-Pak partnership, experts opine(Small, 2016:108-110).On the other hand, China strongly believes that economic prosperity in the region will eliminate resistance from below, CPEC has thus been designed with this

objective. At the same time, Beijing has also approached Central Asia for transforming its western part into trading hub. As this region is engulfed with challenges similar to China, Beijing enhanced its engagements with the countries of the region. The formation of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2001 was also guided by akin objectives. However, the groupings like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organisation) has overshadowed all these efforts, including SCO's activities. This in turn pushed China to include India and Pakistan in SCO, with the hope to boost economic cooperation between Central and South Asia. It is worth mentioning here, China has strongly expressed its will to join SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). Other than economic gains, China believes the combine efforts of member countries of SCO and SAARC can also thwart challenges ranging from ethnic separatism, extremism and terrorism. This will further lessen the dependence of these countries on the US and NATO (Shahnawaz, 2011:66-68).

At the same time, China is deeply concerned with its complexities in Tibet. This is clearly visible in the wake of China's actions to strengthen its hold on the people. Reports are coming out revealing the highhandedness on the part of Chinese state to deal with dissenting voices. Several programs are underway aiming to dilute the distinct identities. Since Tibet has remained a point of clash between India and China, the latter is very suspicious towards the latter. The working of exile government of Tibet in India and the common border between Tibet and India, including the British colonial legacies and Tibet further make Beijing worried. This is all against the fact, New Delhi has advocated 'One China Policy' from the day one. Though Sino-Indian ties in the post-1962 war period slowly caught momentum in late 1980's but mutual antagonism and distrust continued to haunt their relationships. The way China has erected infrastructure along the LAC, including defence installations bears the testimony of this fact. The recent violent clash between the armed forces in June 2020 that shocked the bedrocks of Sino-Indian ties further reveal how

Beijing has opted to convey New Delhi its displeasures over latter's moves. Any disregard to Chinese interests thus will cost India dearer, signaling a visible shift in China's South Asia policy. It is these Chinese anxieties and its rise as a reckoning power has further encouraged Beijing to expand its footprints in the subcontinent. It is worth mentioning here, South Asia has been viewed as power multiplier strategically and economically. India in any of Chinese engagements in the region has either been interpreted as adversary or insignificant. Meanwhile, Beijing has emerged as a new security provider and balancer in the region and, its presence in various small countries of the region is going up with each passing day. Especially, it has applied economic diplomacy for making inroads, as it has swiftly enhanced its involvement in infrastructural development and trade. Actually, these countries have been viewed as pillars of strength in its BRI project besides other goals.

China's South Asia policy has also been guided by its ambitions to establish itself as a power in Indian Ocean. On several times, it has conveyed that Indian Ocean does not belong to India only. At the same time, it has enhanced its surveillance and operations in the India Ocean. China has constructed two corridors, one each through Pakistan and Myanmar respectively that provide an access to the India Ocean. The way China has enhanced its stakes in Pakistan can declare Gwadar and Karachi ports for naval purposes anytime. Speculations are also ripe for similar facilities in Myanmar, though Beijing has to cover a long way to go here in the wake of widespread oppositions in this regard. Meanwhile, China has undertaken secret missions under the pretext of various names for surveillance and positioning itself in these waters. It is worth mentioning, it is the US that informed New Delhi regarding the movements of Chinese submarines under the beneath of water. In fact, India's Prime Minister P.C. Narasimha Rao visited the US in 1995 where he was informed regarding China's clandestine activities in Indian Ocean. This resulted into the establishment of India's first Tri Services Command at Nicobar in 2001. Of particular note, Indonesia's

Sumatra Island and Myanmar's Coco Island is just 160km and 45 km respectively away from India's Andaman and Nicobar island. Actually, India was deeply worried that China may reach to Coco Island, if happens, it would be much easier for China to spy India through hitch gadgets (Linter, 2019:66-67). In short, China in the wake of its rise as a global power intends to utilise Indian Ocean for its petty interests. On the one hand, these waters provide secure trading and energy supply routes, as China perceives itself under constant threat in the wake of trade through Malacca Strait, where the US has visible military presence that may choke trading points anytime. Indian Ocean is also indispensable for the success of its BRI project. It is through these waters, China wants to reach far-flung places in Africa and beyond. Not only trade and energy sectors but China also intended to utilise Indian Ocean as power multiplier. It has made several pacts with the littoral states ranging from economic to military ones, indicating the use of these countries in its global outreach mission. Securing Djibouti as its first military base in November 2015 is also a step taken guided by such ambitions, western media termed this initiative as a visible sign of Beijing's go-global strategy (Brown,2017:1). Given China's increased presence in the Indian Ocean, scholars have already projected the fear of confrontations, even more than the South China Sea (SCS). They argued that in SCS, countries have clear role to play, whereas in the Indian Ocean, ambiguity continues to eclipse individual or united response against Chinese moves, except India. Actually, stake holding countries fear the backlash from China if any of them declare China as adversary, as many of these country are economically well integrated with the latter. Many countries thus declare to ensure rule based laws to defend the freedom of navigation, but in practice, the lack of any cohesive, coordinative policy and reluctance to highlight China's aggressiveness have made the situation in Indian Ocean far more unpredictable. This makes Indian Ocean more volatile as compare to other maritime regions, where the interests of superpower have also clashed, as in South China Sea, East China Sea and the Pacific Ocean (Linter, 2019:218-219).

As prosperity in the country had been viewed economically and politically indispensable, hence China's South Asia policy is also driven by these domestic compulsions. Xi's stress to forge and strengthen ties with the neighbourhood has been resulted undue attention to the adjacent regions, including South Asia. (Pazo, 2015:166).The fact is that economic development constitutes to be the core pillars of legitimacy in China in post-Mao era(Brown, 2017:2).In the subcontinent, its trade with India constitutes to be the highest. Yet statics and trends show the trade is highly in favour of China. It is believed, one may blame India's weakness vis-à-vis China's vibrant economy but Beijing's strategy not to provide level playing field to New Delhi is worth mentioning that has resulted into economic imbalances. In fact, China looks India as a market for its manufactured industrial and consumer goods. It offers no partnership. Instead its present pattern creates dependency. On the other hand, it has also attempted to undermine India's economic influence around the neighbourhood, most dramatically in the Maldives, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Its involvements in the port facilities of these countries reflects these trends. Say for instance, China is largest overseas investor in Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Chinese penetration is the highest in the economy of Pakistan. Mostly, economic diplomacy has facilitated Chinese economic penetration in the economies of these countries. It also include quick execution of the projects besides promises of liberal ending as Chinese models. Beijing also compel to buy its equipment by discouraging to issue tender as per international standards.

China's policy towards South Asia became clearer only in 2012. President Xi Jinping proclaimed that the Middle Kingdom was committed to realising the China's Dream by mid-century. Since then, Beijing has attempted to globalise its own "internal arrangement" for organising societies based on the mix of political authoritarianism and state-led capitalism. However, the ground work in this regard was commenced much earlier. Say for instance, President Xi in 2007 itself viewed his country's model as "socialism with Chinese character for a new era". He appealed the world to

embrace it as an alternative model of development. Global crisis of 2007-8 and the outbreak of Covid-19 has further provided an opportunity to China to fill the gap vacated by the shrinking role of the US led Western countries at the global level. All these developments thus clearly marks the substantial change in China's regional policy where it has expressed its desire to dictate the political, economic and security architecture of the continent. Meanwhile, it has been found that China had little respect for existing sub-regional groups and balance of power arrangements such as those in South Asia, South East Asia and extending the right up to the European Union. The BRI, which seeks to alter extant political geographies and economic models is China's most potent tool in this regard. However, India opposed China's geopolitical ambitions and is in constant touch with other countries to manage the violent rise of China. Since China has openly challenged the US in several ways, the latter has also taken steps to counter China. It conveyed diplomatically and otherwise to China not to take any step that endanger the US interests and stability in the region. As a part of this strategy, the US enhanced the collaboration with countries in the region to manage the rise of China. As India has already faced wrath of Chinese might in 1962 and its strategic location has placed New Delhi as a better choice for the US to counter China. As a symbolic gesture, the US renamed its Asia Pacific Command to Indo-Pacific Command on 30 May 2018, signaling the rising importance of India to the US military amid heightened tensions with China. The US has also signed several bilateral agreements with India, China is very cautious India's tile towards the US. These developments however reflect that political forces at work in Asia are rapidly changing. However, these moves clearly refute the conceptualisation of 21st century belong to Asia. Instead, contest, conflict and competition is the hallmark of Sino-India relations in the contemporary times that will further grow. India's opposition to BRI bears the testimony of this fact, as the former was not consulted before launching this mega project, unlike Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank where both countries worked together in chalking out the plans of this

multilateral bank and, New Delhi is actively involved besides its financial contribution. Meanwhile, China is co-opting states in the Indo-pacific region into broader BRI network to serve its export and national security interests, disregarding India's territorial integrity, national priorities and vision for Asia. This is all against the fact that both countries have expressed understanding to work on global issues as both pledge to see the world multipolar. Sino-India cooperation in Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is worth mention here, where both countries are adamant to find and apply Asian solutions to political, economic and security imperatives, a response to the US protectionism. However, China's ambiguity in its foreign behaviour and its continuous coercive approach towards Indian pushed the latter to manage this challenge. This time New Delhi is seeking cooperation from the like-minded countries. India's active participation in QUAD is worth mentioning here. It is a group of four countries that include India, the US, Japan and Australia and, China has termed QUAD as Asia's NATO. Like the SCO, Quad's cooperation is multifaceted and encompasses infrastructure investment, cyber norms and maritime security cooperation. It seeks to preserve a democratic and rule based order in the region. In short, this may be concluded that the interests of both countries often overlap that restricts their cooperation(Samir, 2019:19-20). The standoff at Doklamin 2017 and Galwan Valley in June 2019 clearly reminds the inevitability of clash of interests. These disputes were essentially a part of struggle between the two to define and then manage Asia. India's tilt towards the US has further added to this competition that resulted into intensification of China's maneuvering in South Asia (Ahman and Singh, 2017:134).

What may be concluded is that China has emerged as a global power. This success may be attributed partially to the rich traditions of the country and partially to the vision of its political leadership. Its foreign policy bears the testimony of these underpinnings. Despite the hostile external environment and daunting internal tasks since its inception as a communist country in October 1949, it not only overwhelmed these contests but also

ensured China is second to none economically and otherwise. Since its global ambitions are subject to the US position, it has started to strengthen its control in the adjacent regions. Especially, it has sought to establish its influence over the Asia. Its South Asia Policy is also driven by its national priorities. As a matter of fact, it has linked this region with its domestic challenges and as a power multiplier. Stability in South Asia and a full vigil over the extremist forces in the region thus characterise its South Asia policy. Beijing also looks the region in economic terms that is clearly visible from its economic engagements in the region. As India is witnessing remarkable economic growth on the one hand and New Delhi's growing proximity with the US on the other also shape China's South policy.

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Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis: "How Did Civil War Influence the Mahinda Rajapaksa's Foreign Policy in Sri Lanka During 2005- 2015"

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Abstract

Mahinda Rajapaksa elected as a fifth executive president of Sri Lanka on 19[th]November 2005. Rajapaksa government terminated thirty years-long civil war in Sri Lanka under the pressure of various internal and external dynamics. Mainly, the military concerns of the country directed Rajapaksa regime to formulate a strategic foreign policy to maintain the foreign relations. The government subjected to many foreign accusations including war crimes and human rights violations. Rajapaksa government exercised several foreign policy tactics to reach the world including the western world. This sporadic feature of the foreign policy shaped by the civil war influence of Sri Lanka. Rajapaksa foreign policy since 2005 to 2015 was a critical juncture of Sri Lanka's foreign policy decision-makingprocess. With these concerns, the research paper opens the flow of analysis on

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Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign and the civil war influence to Rajapaksa foreign policy formulations.

Keywords: Peace, foreign policy, strategy, civil war, political power

Introduction

President Mahinda Rajapaksa sealed the presidential victory in 2005 with the massive promise over the political arena. During the election campaign, Mahinda Rajapaksa had being assurance that he will terminate the Peace Agreement which signedby, Ranil Wickramasinghe government with the LTTE in 2002. Though he promised to abolish the peace agreement, during the Geneva summit in 2006 President Mahinda Rajapaksa provided a written assurance to the international community to ensure the commitments of the regime to continue the peace process in Sri Lanka. The Rajapaksa government signed a memorandum of understanding with United National Party (UNP) to ensure the infallible commitments to pursue a political solution, according to Peace agreement of 2002.

With concern of all these primary factors, President Mahinda Rajapaksa instantly decided to terminate from the Peace agreement. (National Peace Council, 2010: 721)

The decision of the government directly influenced to the foreign policy behaviour of the country and highlighted that how domestic political factors and the personality of the leadership shaped the foreign policy decision-making process. The sudden shift of the foreign policy was able to gain the world attention toward Sri Lanka and it was scratch the critical juncture in Sri Lankan foreign policy roadmap. Expressly, civil war stimulus the foreign policy in Sri Lanka since the establishment of executive

presidentship. Thus, the researcher identified the civil war or else the protracted internal conflict as a primary and necessary concern of the foreign policy process since 1978 to 2009.

The forth Elam war started after the oath of Mahinda Rajapaksa as the 5th executive president in Sri Lanka. This war alongside LTTE was taking place on 21st July 2006 as a consequence of the LTTE decision to out an embargo over the Mavil Aru Dam.(Mahindapala, 2006) Mahinda Rajapaksa ordered directly to initiate the forth Elam war against the LTTE as an immediate humanitarian war to secure the water supply to civil needs in particular area. This presidential decision changed the dimension of the military surface of Sri Lanka. The war mentality influenced to the policymakers of the country to re-evaluate the national interests in terms of state security, national integration and national survival. The LTTE organization had been violated the peace agreement several times since 2005 and threatened to the national integration. To encounter these aggressive actions and to secure the national interests, the government of Sri Lanka decided to withdraw the participation from the peace agreement.

This decision challenged to the prime standards of the foreign policy decision-making process of Sri Lanka. Though the pre-assessments and the decision-making ethics tested by this unilateral decision, it indicated the propensity of the civil war in term of foreign policy concern.

The mass support to Mahinda Rajapaksa government tested in 2015 and with the result of the presidential election on 2015 citizens of Sri Lanka choose a new president to lead the country. Former President Mahinda Rajapaksa still powerful character in the domestic political procedure. Thus, the researcher found a demanding situation to gather information to evaluate Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy and the civil war influence over the decision-making process.

Many scholarly documents dogmatic and depict the partial reality of the war. Some of the government officials reluctant to discourse freely without any political pressure. The researcher found difficulties to gather empirical and substantial details over the research area. Therefore the researcher conducted discussions with academicians, civil servants and government officers to verify the information to avoid unnecessary domestic interests. With the collaboration of primary and secondary data, the researcher was competent to provide an empirical and substantial conclusion to this paper.

This paper addresses the Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy with the concern of two particular time periods. The researcher discusses major concerns of the foreign military relations during the civil war period and the second part of the paper discusses the post-civil war foreign relations. The researcher is attempting to identify the basic principles, common doctrines, weaknesses, harmonic and strategic concerns of Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy with the concern of the civil war behaviour. Sri Lankan foreign relations with neighbouring countries, regions, a Western and Eastern world sustained during Mahinda Rajapaksa time period based on the military factor. The researcher investigates these relationships and rationale of these relations through this academic paper.

Comparative Foreign Policy Decision Making And Civil War Factor: 2005-2015

For the academic purposes, the researcher ascertains two communication periodization on Mahinda administrative period with the concern of three foreign ministers. Nevertheless, the researcher counted peace rounds which took place under the Rajapaksa regime before the outbreak of forth Elam war in 21st July

2006. The following figure illustrates the time frames of the Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy since 2005.
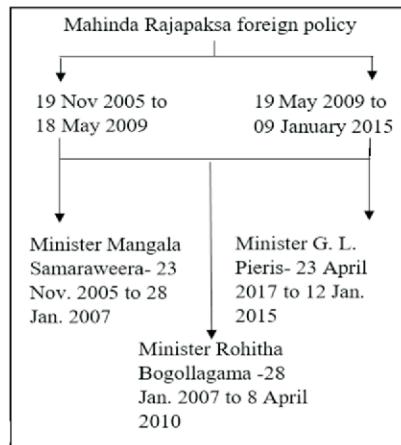
Figure: 2.1: Ministerial Structure and Time Frame of the foreign policy decision-making process under the Mahinda Rajapaksa administration (Cooke, 2016)

Since 1987 civil war behaviour, concerns over the LTTE propaganda gained the attention of the foreign policy decision makers. Particularly Rajapaksa government was able to overcome the Indianhypocrisy. With the geopolitical realities and Indian supremacy over the region directly influenced to the foreign policy in Sri Lanka. The historical factors highlighted the Indian authoritarian foreign policy during the 1987 and how it influenced the Sri Lankan foreign policy and the civil war. Geopolitical locations and Indian military concerns violated the sovereignty rights of Sri Lanka during the J. R. Jayawardene regime. Indian military forcibly entered to the Jaffa peninsula, some controversial political activities related to Indo Sri Lanka Agreement and the presence of Indian Peace Keeping Forces- IPKF in Sri Lankan soil

highlighted the power exercised by the Indian government over Sri Lanka with the concern of civil war.

Rajapaksa regime secured the strategic composition with the Indian government. These strategic foreign relations with India abetted to end the civil war with the blessing of the Indian central government. Rajapaksa regime addressed the geopolitical realities in the South Asian region with the special concern over the Indian power interests within the regional politics. Therefore Rajapaksa government appreciated positive intervention and advocates of Indian government which related to the civil war and other regional issues. Sri Lankan government officials had regular visits to India and these visits strengthen Indo- Sri Lanka relations to endure the civil war with the consecration of Indian government. Indian central government appreciated peace dialogue between the government of Sri Lanka and LTTE with the mediation of Norwegian government during the Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe's administration. With the assassination of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by the LTTE, Indian government dramatically transformed their position related to Civil War in Sri Lanka. This transformation and strategic utility of foreign policy by Mahinda Rajapaksa regime won the blessings of the Indian government to continue the military policy of Sri Lankan army.

Mahinda Rajapaksa stressed the protagonist role of India and regional intervention to eradicate terrorism from Sri Lanka; throughout the peace dialogues as well as in the forth Elam war. Sri Lankan foreign relations was polished Indian centric power relations throughout Rajapaksa government adroitly. For instance, during the 5th Hindustan time's Leadership, Summit President Mahinda Rajapaksa expressed,

> Indian leadership and the regional support is a necessary factor to eradicate terrorism from Sri Lanka. India should need to take the prompt position to sustain the regional peace and harmony. Mainly the behaviour of LTTE influenced to the sovereignty of Sri Lanka and India, thus Indian government provision to terminate terrorism in Sri Lanka highly appreciated by the government of Sri Lanka. Territorial integrity is essential for any country. Thus, India as a regional power supreme needs to lead the South Asian region toward peace and prosperity.

Sri Lanka ready to negligence the political and ethnic disputes between two neighbour nations. The common trust over the democracy, religion bounds, historical affiliations and strong economic connections between India and Sri Lanka decorated the bound of two countries. Therefore, Sri Lanka ready to accept the dominant role of India, in the Indian Ocean. Sri Lankan government is expecting Indian support and advice to eradicate terrorism from Sri Lanka. (sl2kassa, 2007)

Mahinda Rajapaksa strategically deployed summit diplomacy and forum diplomacy to win the political support of India. Sri Lankan government recognized that with the geopolitical authenticities they should need to win the political and military support of India. The civil war concerns directly backed this political behaviour of Mahinda Rajapaksa regime to preserve strategic relations with India.

Tamilnadu factor frolicked important positions in Indo- Sri Lanka relations under Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy. The strong networks amid Tamilnadu and LTTE directly influenced to the bilateral relations between two countries. Therefore, Mahinda Rajapaksa government heldsolid connections with the central government of India to deter the Tamilnadu factor and balanced the comparative foreign policy process. To accomplish this strategic concern Rajapaksa presidency appointed special diplomatic officials to sustain Inda- Sri Lanka relations.

President Rajapaksa controlled the bilateral relations along with special personalities appointed by himself, including Secretary of Defence Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, Minister of Economic Development Basil Rajapaksa, President's Secretary Lalith Weerathunga, Douglas Dewananda, and Arumugam Thondaman. (Chandraprema, 2012: 295) This elite team specially appointed by the President to sustain the diplomatic relations amid two neighbour countries. Before the outbreak of fouth Elam war, President Mahinda Rajapaksa made his 1st official visit to India as a newly elected executive president of Sri Lanka. This visit formulated by the escalation of civil war influence to the foreign policy decision-making process. The visit of the president to India provided fruitful results to the early success of government military activities against LTTE.

The government of India offered military assistance to Sri Lankan government including, new compact radar system, rak rak military weapons, MI 17 air fighter helicopters and new two military vessels to protect the coastal area. During the visit, political leaders of two countries agreed to initiate joint military exercises and coastal security patrol services.(Cooke, 2016)

This agreements and concerns shaped by the civil war and escalation of terrorist activities of LTTE in Sri Lanka. The relations between India and Sri Lanka counted the internal political struggles and power-political behaviour of both countries. Sri Lankan government agreed to launch deliberate and steady military missions against LTTE until the central government of India acquire the political power from the national election with the support of Tamilnadu. The central government recognized that popular support of Tamilnadu was compulsory to seal the victory of the national election. Therefore two governments agreed to win the internal political struggles with mutual support. During the visit, President Rajapaksa discussed political, military, terrorism activities of Sri Lanka. Sri Lankan government used this opportunity to highlight the Indian supremacy in Sri Lankan foreign policy concerns.

For instance, Sri Lankan government agreed to reduce the tendency of military exercises until Indian government seal the political victory from 2006 general election. Sri Lankan government calculated the civil war influence to the foreign policy accurately. Therefore, Mahinda Rajapaksa handled Indian factor advantageously to end the civil war in Sri Lanka. (Epa, 2011:18-19) President Rajapaksa exercised personal diplomatic dimensions to achieve the military support from India. Mainly, to overcome the civil war influence which shaped the national policy-making process. The president of Sri Lanka used the personal diplomatic affiliations with India aptly.

On 23 April 2009, two Indian Diplomats: Shivashankar Menon and Narayan visited Sri Lanka. These officials had a special meeting with President of Sri Lanka in the Temple Treese. During the visit, Sri Lankan government were able to clear the doubts of Indian officials and questions related to war crimes. Especially during the time, Tamilnadu politician declared that Sri Lankan military subjects to genocide and war crimes. (Chandraprema, 2012:478). Therefore during the meeting, both parties agreed to end the war with the blessings of Indian government and reduce the tendency of the heavy artillery use. These factors emphasized the comparative use of foreign policy in Mahinda Rajapaksa regime with the influence of civil war.

Foreign Policy Towards SAARC Region

President Mahinda Rajapaksa continued exceptional foreign relations with the Indian government to ensure the political support of the supreme power of the region to Sri Lanka. Similarly, Sri Lanka formulated comparative foreign policy with SAARC countries as well. The government of Rajapaksa purposefully operated forum and summit diplomacy to reach SAARC countries. Mahinda Rajapaksa appointed as a chairperson in SAARC 2008 and Colombo hosted to the 15th SAARC summit. President Rajapaksa used the international state to highlight the humanitarian side of the military actions of Sri Lankan army.

Especially during the SAARC summit in Sri Lanka and presence of the other regional summits, Rajapaksa shared the dark sides of terrorism with related to other countries. Government highlighted the collective commitments to eradicate terrorism from earth.

President Rajapaksa in his welcome speech at the 15th SAARC summit in Sri Lanka stressed that 'the duty to protect our people and societies from brutalities of terrorism. I have no doubts that together we can make a common endeavour to fight against terrorism. This partnership succeeds for the benefits of all our people.' (Weerakoon,2016) During the summit president, Rajapaksa expressed sympathy to people who subjected to terrorist attack in Indian High Commission in Kabul on 7th July 2008 and highlighted the necessity of combat against global terrorist networks.

Through these actions, Rajapaksa government managed to maintain productive and fruitful foreign policy with SAARC countries in the comparative foreign policy-making process. Particularly, Rajapaksa regime used summit diplomacy and forum diplomacy to establish a strong propaganda over SAARC nations to gain political and military support to end the civil war in Sri Lanka. The civil war and the role of LTTE provided a robust reason to conduct tactical foreign policy initiatives with SAARC nations. These relations provided alternative military and economic assistance to Sri Lanka. For instance, Pakistan provided military support to Sri Lanka counting military-technical assistance, military equipment and military donations.

Sri Lanka extended their partnership towards BIMSTEC, IOR-RAC establishments. The Government vigorously contributed to the success of Asian Cooperation Dialogues and managed to yield military and economic assistance to Sri Lanka.(Epa,2011:21-23)Since the government of Rajapaksa apprehended that external support necessary to seal the military triumph over terrorism. Mainly, the United Nations General Assembly licensed a resolution against Sri Lankan government based on war crimes which led by Sri Lankan military forces. Therefore, Rajapaksa

regime employed these regional connections to create an international voters base in favour of Sri Lanka. It was a deterrence mechanism to avoid the international pressure.

Rajapaksa regime started rapid infrastructure development projects in North and North East areas. "North Spring" and "Eastern Revival" two major development projects started by Sri Lankan government in post-war Sri Lanka to reduce international compression under the assistance of major SAARC nations. 'India released US$ 425 million, Pakistan called US$ 1 million technical and development assistance to Sri Lankan developments projects.' (Jayathilake,2016) These affiliations served as a regional protection network to deter the western world led UN resolutions against the government of Sri Lanka. Mainly, Mahinda Rajapaksa drafted post-war foreign policy in Sri Lanka to address the external treats including the UN resolution which led by the western world. The SL government exercised foreign relations with SAARC nations ancillary to deter the UN resolution. Through regional foreign policy decision-making process of Sri Lankan government, they expected to have a military, technical support, financial assistance to the post-war development projects and the regional deterrence umbrella to count the war crime accusations.

The behaviour of regional powers in the UN assembly and their voting patterns on the UN resolution against Sri Lanka provided a solid picture of the validity of Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy in the comparative policy-making process. Through these diplomatic relations, Mahinda government were able to win the comparative advantage in foreign relations during his president period. The government had to maintain smooth, flexible, tactical and utilitarian foreign policy since the influence of the civil war.The regional foreign policy of Sri Lanka depicts a different picture from the concern of Sri Lanka's foreign relations with the Western and Eastern world.

Foreign Policy Toward The Western And Eastern World

The tsunami devastated coastal areas of the island nation of Sri Lanka in 2004. Many western countries including the USA provided a large number of humanitarian aids to Sri Lankan government. The early period of Mahinda regime managed to sustain positive relations with the USA and western countries, overall relations with the western world was not positive. Mahinda Rajapaksa found several difficulties to develop vigorous relations with west through the presidency. "Mahinda Chinthanaya" political manifesto of Mahinda Rajapaksa evidently declared that non-alignment policy followed by his government with the appreciation of free and progressive movements.

However, practically president Rajapaksa government reluctant to coordinate strong relations with the western world. Under Mangala Samaraweera, Minister of Foreign Affairs, government twisted positive and considerable relations with the western world and Minister of Foreign Affairs Rohitha Bogollagama continued that relations notable way. These ministers continued friendly relations with the west and Europe including Eastern Europe. The researcher identified two leading reasons for formulating these fragile relations with the western and eastern world.

1. The western economic and military concerns towards Sri Lanka with the consideration of the geo-strategic location of Sri Lanka.

2. The elite influence of the Tamil diaspora to the mainstream political decision-making process in western and europian world including USA, Canada and many of the western world.

With the consequence of the internal war situation Mahinda government under the Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera competent to reach the western world. Through that motivation, British government called for Stalin Pound 41 million worth concessionary loan and Stalin Pound 13.5 humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka. (Epa,2011:53) However, President Mahinda

Rajapaksa did not fascinate to make any official visits to Britain during his time in office. It was a massive failure of Rajapaksa foreign policy. Mainly, president squandered unique opportunity to respond to the propaganda war of the LTTE friendly Tamil diaspora in Europe legitimately. LTTE friendly Tamil diaspora had a powerful network in Britain. They managed to collect funds to enrich the power of LTTE. Student and youth groups which affiliated with LTTE had successful campaigns to gain public support for Tamil Tigers against the Sri Lankan military. Mahinda regime had a feebler foreign policy to count these activities in Europe. Similarly, Mahinda Rajapaksa relucted to have a head to head meetings with the government and many of the Europe countries. These miscalculations on foreign policy decision- making process created a negative picture of Sri Lanka. Many of the western media networks created documentaries and made accusations to Sri Lankan government regarding the war crimes.

Giving fewer concerns to the western world by Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy clog the opportunities to respond to these accusations. At this point, the researcher did not consider the actual position of the government regarding war crimes or the military behaviour in the field during the fourth Eelam war. However, the researcher highlighted the unbalance and the miscalculations of Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy towards a western world in comparative foreign policy decision-making process with the impact of civil war.

In 2008 Sri Lankan government officially announced their exit from the peace agreement. (National Peace Council,2010:740)This action led a political shock in all around the western world. Switzerland, Norway, USA and Great Britain declared official statements and critically condemned the actions of Mahinda Rajapaksa government. Norwegian Peace Observation Committee condemned the government decision. They mentioned that 'Sri Lankan government deliberately abortive the peace process towards the political solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka.'(Salter,2015:301-312) The collapse of the foreign relations

with the Western world directly shaped by the civil war situation of Sri Lanka.

The military tactics and the escalation of the government military activities in the northern area during the last few months of the war provided a solid reason to backdrop of the foreign relations with the west. For instance, during the last few months of the civil war, in April 2009 Foreign Minister of Great Britain Devid Miliband, Foreign Minister of France Bernard Kirchner visited Sri Lanka. Conversely, Sri Lankan government denied issuing a valid visa to the president of the Europe Union and the Foreign Minister of Sweden Carl Bildt to continue his official visit to Sri Lanka during the April 2009. They considered as a core element of the Europe Union and they maintain reciprocal political connections with Europe. Thus, the decision to deny issuing a visa to the president of Europe Union depicted distorted nature of the foreign policy decision-making process of Sri Lankan government. This incident highlighted the imprudent behaviour of Sri Lankan foreign policy with the western world.

Mahinda Rajapaksa government had a strong feeling that presence of these three Europian leaders shaped a negative impact on the war measures of the military. The former governments of Sri Lanka subjected to notable foreign influences during the military exercises against LTTE. Thus, Rajapaksa government attempted to avoid the western pressure, and the space to influence to halt military measurements of Sri Lankan government through this visa caveat. The dialectical composition of this decision opened two paths of the discussion.

In political dimension, the decision of Sri Lanka helped to continue the war without any external influence. Mahinda Rajapaksa was able to build considerable public support to back up his decision since the majority of the Sinhala Buddhist society wanted to end the war through a military solution. The decision helped him to protect the political power and vested charisma over his personality. During the visit of Foreign Ministers of Britain and France, they had few official visits to northern and North East areas

in Sri Lanka. Political supporters of Mahinda Rajapaksa and some of the civil groups which backed by Mahinda Rajapaksa regime prearranged protests against the visit of these foreign diplomats. Those civil and Buddhist political groups interrupted to their visits and created ardent situations. Most of these protested sponsored by ministers of Mahinda Rajapaksa cabinet. Through these activities, they were able to attach patriarchic labels on their shoulders. Even during the visit of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navanethem "Navi" Pillathese groups campaign against her duty call.

The report prepared by Navi Pilla stated 'some members of the government were described her as the Tamil Tigress of the UN. Some of the ministers of Rajapaksa regime have been making false about her including one of the brothers of president Rajapaksa.' (Al Jazeera, 2013) These activities highlighted the civil war influence to the domestic and international political behaviour of Sri Lanka during 2005-2015. In domestic politics, Mahinda regime turned these political junctures to advance his political power over the society. However, the problem was how these political behaviour prejudiced to the foreign policy of Sri Lanka; mainly to foreign relations with the western world.

The second dimension of these controversial domestic political activities was the impact of the external politics or the behaviour of foreign relations. The internal political situation provided a negative impression to Sri Lanka. Especially, foreign relations with the western world failed to recover these damages. Europe decided to stop the GSP+ package of Sri Lanka. The European market placed an embargo on Sri Lankan fishery products. The domestic political policies of Mahinda Rajapaksa regime damaged the image of Sri Lanka in front of the western world. Fever relations with the western world and the diplomatic backdrop of Sri Lanka in western oriented foreign policy failed to recover the imaged which destroyed by the domestic policy of the government. Sri Lankan government presented comparatively truncated foreign policy priorities to the western relations. They failed to handle the foreign policy smoothly and prudently. The

civil war influenced the western relations of Sri Lanka. Thus, the government had a juvenile foreign policy which failed to address the realities of diplomacy. Sri Lankan government offered unscrupulous diplomatic agenda to the western world.

Sri Lanka government questioned the official visit of Ban Ki-moon several occasions. President Rajapaksa censured the unilateral intercession of western world including America to the military activities of Sri Lanka army.(Srichannelitn,2011)World leaders were free to disapprove the political behaviour of exterior powers. However, Mahinda Rajapaksa regime extended the principles of foreign policy formulations and the virtues of diplomacy. This situation highlighted the infeasible use of the foreign policy by Sri Lankan government in comparative foreign policy formulations. For instance, during the 63rd UN general assembly president, Mahinda Rajapaksa disparaged the US influence to Sri Lankan government and the role of Norwegian peace actions in Sri Lanka.

President described 'the role of Norwegian peacekeepers in Sri Lanka as a so-called and double standard play.' (Rajapaksa, 2013) The researcher examined this foreign policy behaviour including the government decision to declined the visa to Sweden Foreign Minister, the domestic political campaigned supported by government ministers and the infeasible foreign policy of Sri Lanka facilitated to shape an antagonistic western attitude towards Sri Lanka. The Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy and dynamic behaviour of a policy-making process more parallel to the domestic policy of Sri Lanka. The Rajapaksa regime formulated a foreign policy to justify the military solution for the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka rather addressing external world diplomatically.

Rajapaksa regime strengthens associations with the Commonwealth countries and the government strategically consumed the world stage of Commonwealth Heads of the Government Meetings and Non- Alignment Movement to defeat the propaganda war of Tamil diaspora which affiliated to the LTTE. In 2013, the Tamil diaspora in the UK launched a notable

complained to hassled the British government to boycott the Commonwealth Heads of the Government Meeting which held in Sri Lanka. However, Sri Lankan government succeeded to welcome the British delegation to the Commonwealth meeting in 2013. This accomplishment was a diplomatic victory of Sri Lankan government which they gained under the influence of civil war. Rajapaksa regime took the maximum advantage of this meeting to address the international community with the reference of post-war infrastructure development programmes, resettlement provisions, government effort on reconciliation and peace building process.(Wijesinghe,2015)Through this meeting, Sri Lankan government strategically endeavoured to formulate friendly relations with Commonwealth nations as a protective umbrella to deter the accusations of human right violations against Sri Lankan government.

In a comparative analysis, the researcher argued that Mahinda Rajapaksa regime confronted certain challenges to formulate American friendly foreign policy rather than the policy towards Commonwealth. Mahinda Rajapaksa stated that 'the USA cultivated a personal diplomatic antipathetic feeling within the diplomatic relations with Sri Lanka. Small island nation defeated the world most brutal terrorist network. Even Americans failed to do that. Thus, American control the world power politics against Sri Lanka based on their egoism.'(newsfirst,2013)

The researcher did not construct the arguments based on this statement. However, Mahinda Rajapaksa government subjected to the negative attitude of the US government in many ways. First, traditionally US leaders had a negative approach towards Freedom Party led governments in Sri Lanka. Mainly the US government strongly consider the doctrines of Hickenlooper; which fabricated a negative picture of Freedom party governments. With these pre-assumptions, the US controlledstrick foreign policy towards Sri Lanka during Mahinda Rajapaksa government.

Secondly, Mahinda Rajapaksa administration accentuated the military solution to the civil conflict rather than the political and peaceful solution. The militant political agenda, human rights issues, the rise of the criminal world, nullification of alternative social movements including revisionist media under Mahinda Rajapaksa regime fabricated a negative picture of Sri Lankan political behaviour. These problems with the problematic foreign policy decision-making process were able to make a distance between Sri Lanka and the USA. These factors provided valid reasons to justified the USA political decisions and accusation towards Rajapaksa government.

Finally, Mahinda Rajapaksa failed to position himself inside the common global leader's collection. For Instance, Leaders like Ranil Wickramasinghe, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, Sirimawo Bandaranaike preserved energetic relations with the world leaders. Those leaders accepted by international society due to vigorous experiences they achieved. Though Mahinda Rajapaksa had long political history, he did not expose to the international diplomatic world. Lack of the experiences, the absence of international recognition as a conspicuous leader created a negative picture of Mahinda Rajapaksa in front of the USA and western world. The researcher identified these three reasons as pillars of the negative attitude of the USA towards Sri Lanka. Similarly, these three reasons formulated a comparatively fragile foreign policy towards USA and Sri Lankan foreign policy decision-makers failed to address these problems fruitful ways.

The complex foreign policy decision-making process with the western world thrust Sri Lanka to strengthen the foreign relations with alternative nations. Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy strengthen the foreign affairs with Australia and New Zeland considerably during the terms of foreign ministers Rohitha Bogollagama and G. L. Peiris. The relationship with these nations was not a moral or political success of the Sri Lankan decision makers. Essentially, Sri Lankan foreign relations with New

Zealand and Australia mostly shaped by the market economy. Australia and New Zealand based companies influenced to preserve positive foreign relations with Sri Lanka to secure the market surface of Sri Lanka. For instance, Sri Lanka was the largest and leading consumer market of Anchor productions. Thus, those companies attempted to protect the market economy concerns of them. Therefore the companies like Anchor influenced to the foreign policy of respective countries which they located.

The second factor was the notable behaviour of Sri Lankan community in Australia. Sri Lankan community in Australia was a dominant factor in foreign policy concerns in both countries. Mainly, Sri Lanka employed this community to strengthen the relations with the Australian government to deter the western influence including accusations of war crimes. Similarly, the Australian government sustained decent relationships with Sri Lankan government to encounter the illegal immigration issues.

Rajapaksa regime strategically turned these commercial interests to achieve the political concerns of Sri Lankan government. Through these channels government of Sri Lanka produced a counter mechanism to deter the western influence. The civil war factor directly influenced to foreign relations with Australia. Based on the Sri Lankan military agenda many of the western countries had controversial foreign affairs under the Mahinda regime. Sri Lankan government found limited access to international society. Therefore, Mahinda Rajapaksa government strengthen the relations with Australia to address the international community. Australian government shared optimistic affairs with the USA. Thus, Rohitha Bogollagama and G. L Peiris foreign ministers conducted the foreign policy with Australia to take the reflective protection from Australia by using Australian affiliations with West.

Civil war devastated Sri Lankan society in many aspects. Mahinda Rajapaksa regime and their foreign policy behaviour subjected to several crises with the influence of civil war and Rajapaksa's countermeasure war plans. Rajapaksa foreign policy

questioned by international society along with the UN general assembly. The domestic political calamities reflected through Sri Lankan foreign policy. In post-civil war, foreign policy had to address the international behaviour including the UN resolutions against Sri Lanka. The fever relations with western world compelled Rajapaksa regime to pursue different foreign policy dimensions. To deter the UN resolution Rajapaksa government tactically approached countries which belong to the old Soviet Union. Sri Lankan government reached to these countries to secure their votes in favour of Rajapaksa regime through the UN resolution against Sri Lanka. Latvia, Lituania, Check Republic and a notable number of former soviet union countries' reinforced foreign relations with Sri Lanka. Through these diplomatic relations, Mahinda regime collected a cluster of states which had fever relations with the USA. Mainly, these countries shared powerful connections with Russia. Though the connections in particular region benefited to Sri Lanka to gather the voters in UN General Assembly, it questioned the Sri Lankan relations with Europe and the USA.

The relations with Bolkan and former soviets union facilitated to expand the Sri Lankan ideological perspective towards these countries.

'Latvian President Valdis Zatlers expressed his strong interest to develop bilateral cooperation through enhanced political and economic relations with Sri Lanka. He also briefed the Latvian leader on the present political developments in Sri Lanka and said steps are being taken by the Government to develop democratic institutions in the Eastern Province after two decades, with the driving out of the LTTE from the Province. The same policy would hold for the Northern Province as well. Ambassador Jayasooriya said that LTTE terrorists will continue to be countered militarily and innocent civilians in the North will be liberated from the clutches of the terrorists.'(The Island, 2008)

The strategic transfer of foreign policy carried blend consequences to Sri Lanka. Though these nations Sri Lanka

attempted to reach Russia and strengthen the bilateral relations with respective countries. For instance, through diplomatic relations with Latvia, both counties agreed to gear up economic relations and to undertake a possible study on a potential area of trade, tourism, taxations and investments.

According to the Latvian Chamber of Commerce,'there would be many prospects for Sri Lankan as well as Latvian investors in the fields of garments, pharmaceuticals and textiles. Discussions were also held on the areas of promoting skilled Sri Lankan employment opportunities in Latvia.'(The Island, 2008) President Mahinda Rajapaksa visited Russia in February 2010 to meet President of Russian Federation. These relations highlighted the influence of civil war to foreign policy decision-making process and with that dynamics Rajapaksa regime had to create an innovative foreign policy to reach to the world. However, they failed to approach the western world effectively and efficiently.

Foreign Policy Toward China

President Rajapaksa visited China in August 2011 to search for support against an aggressive Western push for an investigation into war crimes and tighter economic relations with a stormy financial world. With the influence of civil war and LTTE affiliated Tamil diaspora western world strongly supported to probes against Sri Lanka. Rajapaksa foreign policy failed to address these western pressure effectively. Hence Mahinda government looked at China-oriented foreign policy. Officially China is a legitimate member of the UN Security Council with the power of Veto. Afterwards communist revolution, China performed revisionist political role against the USA dominance in global politics. Mahinda regime wanted to shelter the Chinese financial flow to Sri Lanka in times of post-war society and closed with China for gain the political support against Western-led resolutions in UN general assembly. Political manifesto of president Rajapaksa stressed the foreign policy stance of the regime towards China.

'My government will follow the non-alignment principles with respect to free and progressive foreign policy formulations. Political, defence, security, economic, trade and cultural aspects will be higher priories of my government. To achieve these priories, Sri Lanka will preserve handy foreign affairs with Asian nations comprising China, Japan and Pakistan.'(Epa, 2016: 4)

Rajapaksa foreign policy towards China sustained by several internal and external factors. Freedom Party governments were able to develop prosperous and healthy relations with Chinese government since Bandaranaike era. Mahinda regime exercised this unique conditions to advance the foreign relations with China to achieve the military requirements of the government. During the civil war, Chinese government offered military and economic assistance to Sri Lanka. In post-civil war society, Mahinda regime managed to yield development loans from China. Similarly, government preserve China as a security policy to counter the western power. In 2007 Mahinda Rajapaksa visit China to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Chinese- Sri Lanka diplomatic relations. Mahinda Rajapaksa discussed the military actions against LTTE with the President Hu Jintao and Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. The diplomatic relations with China strengthen by the visit of Mahinda Rajapaksa to China and Rajapaksa regime won the ideological victory through this visit. Chinese government signed bilateral agreements on counterterrorism assistance programs. The Chinese administration called US$ 455 million worth technical assistance to Sri Lanka to defeat terrorism and developed the country. (Senevirathne, 2009: 387-395)

Rajapaksa foreign policy towards China was a tactical and pragmatic foreign policy unlike the Sri Lankan foreign policy towards western world. In 2008, Rajapaksa visited China again to secure the active enrolment in IISS Shangri-la Dialogue and Shanghai Cooperation Organization summits. These relations with China spotted a moral and strategic foreign policy victory of Sri Lankan policy-making process during Mahinda era with the influence of civil war. With the escalation of civil war and

government deprived foreign policy practice with west generated a loop in foreign military assistance to Sri Lanka. Particularly, Americanscancelled the military assistance to Sri Lanka. The foreign policy towards China was able to bring Chinese military aids to Sri Lanka instead Americans.

The Chinese government released US$ 1.2 billion annual military aids to Sri Lanka including, donations to two F 7 fighter air jets to Sri Lankan air force, military training and facilitation assistance under the consent of 2008 bilateral relations. (Epa, 2011: 4)The Chinese military aid programmes influenced to Pakistan to increase their military assistance to Sri Lanka. That was a foreign policy victory of Rajapaksa regime in comparative foreign policy decision-making process. The civil war of Sri Lanka directly prejudiced to the foreign policy and its dynamic fluctuations. During the war period, Sri Lanka shaped foreign policy towards China to secure the military and development aids. However, in post-civil war society, Rajapaksa government closed to China to seek the veto power protections against UN resolution on Sri Lanka.

Chinese government acknowledged the legitimacy of Sri Lankan military activities against LTTE terrorism. Mainly, They offered positive and progressive support to Rajapaksa government to count the war crime accusations.

Chinese government along with Russia supported to the government actions against LTTE since both China and Russia oppose foreign interventions in domestic conflicts. The two nations held off the U.S-British attempts at the UN security council to approved the ceasefire at the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka. Rajapaksa regime recited the similarities among Sri Lanka, Russia and China accurately. For instance, 'China faces ethnic unrest in its western regions, where Tibetans and Uighurs have resisted Beijing's control, and Russia has battled Chechen separatists. Both conflicts on the surface mirror Sri Lanka's civil war with ethnic minority Tamils.'(Hull, 2011) Rajapaksa foreign policy read the domestic socio, political situations of particular nations and

delivered a tactical foreign policy to secure the military interests of Sri Lanka.

Rajapaksa government strongly connected with China through forum diplomacy. Mainly, Asian B.O.A.O annual conference provided space for Rajapaksa regime to address the international community. Sri Lankan government explained their post-war development agenda to international community including China. The forum diplomacy sheltered Chinese development assistance including their involvement in railway development, A-9 road rebuilding process, expansion of civil aviation and harbour projects and North spring development agenda.(Epa, 2011: 31) With the Rajapaksa, a foreign policy China became a larget doner nation in Sri Lankan development projects and with that Sri Lanka unbeatably close to China instead of Western powers.

The Rajapaksa strategically secure the flow of foreign relations with Japan. Japanese – Sri Lankan relations marked it highest trust in 2002 with the effect of peace talks with the LTTE. Though President Rajapaksa visited Japan in 2007, he failed to avoid the diplomatic fraction which occurred in 2008 as a result of Rajapaksa decision to withdraw the commitments from a peace agreement. The special peace agent of Japan Yasushi Akashi visited Sri Lanka as a response to a government decision on a peace agreement.

On 15 January 2008, he highlighted that 'Japanese government continually observe the human rights conditions of Sri Lanka. Japanese government stressed the necessity of political solution, power devolution and government commitments to bring the definite solution to civil war.'(National Peace Council, 2010: 755) However, Rajapaksa foreign policy managed to maintain a moderate foreign policy with Japan during his term in office.

Foreign Policy Toward The Middle East And African Region

Sri Lankan foreign policy decision-making process significantly shifted towards the Middle East and African region with the

influence of civil war. Considerably, the shift of foreign policy to the respective regions highly visible in post-war society. This transference was core consequence of Rajapaksa rummage of UN members to defend the US-led resolutions against Sri Lanka in UN General Assembly.

Though, Mahinda Rajapaksa failed to touch the globally documented political leaders circle like S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, Sirimawo Bandaranaike, Chandrika Kumaratunga and Ranil Wickramasinghe he managed to strengthen close affiliations with the Middle East and African regions since 1994. He was the minister of labour and employment in president Chandrika Bandaranaike's government. This position assisted Rajapaksa to uphold close relations with respective regions including countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan. President Rajapaksa won the popular support of the Arab world through his position on the Palestine issue. Rajapaksa addressed the UN general assembly since its 61st meeting to 69th meeting. In every speech, he addresses the Palestine issue and stressed the necessity of establishing Palestine as an official state. Rajapaksa's position and commitment to these issues strengthen the foreign relations of Sri Lanka with the Arab world. With the civil war influence, Rajapaksa regime controls these relations in favour of his political interests.

Civil war changed the foreign policy directions of Sri Lanka since 1987. The beginning of forth Ealam war influenced to Mahinda Rajapaksa to win the hearts of small nations to seal their support in UNGA to encounter the UN resolutions against SL government. Therefore, Rajapaksa visited Libya, Iran, and he was the highest government official visited these countries. The primary motivation of these relations was the civil war of Sri Lanka. In 2009, American government and IMF rejected the financial aid requests of Rajapaksa government with consideration of domestic human rights situations and war crimes accusations against SL government. This conditions coerced Rajapaksa foreign policy to pursue alternative foreign relations. Therefore, the government went to traditional non-alignment friends and

personal diplomatic relations with Rajapaksa to secure the flow of foreign aids to the country. 'Mahinda Rajapaksa loomed to his old friendship with Muammar Gaddafi for assuring US$ 500 million military aids.'(Chandraprema, 2012: 464)

Rajapaksa partook with Gaddafi to celebrate the 40ᵗʰ anniversary of the Libyan revolution and strengthen close connections with persuasive leaders in the region to secure the UN vote in favour of Sri Lanka.(Jayathilake, 2016) The war measurements against LTTE influenced to Rajapaksa government to formulated premeditated foreign policy with Arab world and Israel. Sri Lanka secured the military affairs with Israel besides same time Sri Lanka was the president nation of Palestine- Sri Lanka solidarity association. The dual moralities of foreign policy highlighted by these relations. It was an indicator of the influence of civil war to foreign policy decision making process in Sri Lanka as well.

The dual moralistic foreign policy formulations towards Middles East secured the military assistance from Israel and solidarity of Arab world with Sri Lanka. Israel delivered Kfir air fighter jets, anti-air missiles, automatic and semi-automatic weapons to Sri Lanka during the Eelam war period.(Cooke, 2016) However, Sri Lankan government shifted to the Arab world in post-civil war period to secure Arab support to Sri Lanka in UN general assembly.

End of the civil war brought external threats to Sri Lanka including UN resolutions, accusations of human rights violations and war crimes. With this international behaviour, Rajapaksa regime had to bring these issues into their higher priorities of the national interests. Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy under the minister of foreign affairs G. L. Peiris closed to Africa to secure the post-civil war national interests of the country. The role of the Tamil diaspora, loose connections with western powers and act against the UN resolutions directly facilitated to Rajapaksa foreign relations with African nations. Mahinda Rajapaksa used emotional

diplomacy to deal with the African nations. Rajapaksa government censured terrorist activities in Africa including Boko Haram group and bomb blasting in Kenya 2013.(Rajapaksa, 2013)The sympathy towards Africa gained the foreign policy victory to Sri Lanka by securing their support in favour of Rajapaksa. The strong affiliations with the African region was a novel stage of foreign policy history of Sri Lanka. It was a direct result of civil war experience of the country.

Sri Lanka initiated direct diplomatic relations with Kenya as a result of Rajapaksa visit to Kenya in 2013. Rajapaksa had strategic diplomatic visits to Lesotho, Tanzania, Belarus, Seychelles and Swaziland.(newsfirst, 2016) These countries did not carry a superlative influential power to the world political calendar. However, all the UN members have a legitimate vote in UN general assembly. Thus, Rajapaksa regime reinforced the bilateral relations with these countries to gain the popular support to defeat the UN resolutions against Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

Rajapaksa foreign policy achieved mix result with the influence of Civil war. Rajapaksa reached to all the regions with dynamic foreign policy initiatives. Similarly, Rajapaksa exercised international organs to affirm the brutality of global terrorism. Mahinda Rajapaksa attempted to vindicate his political actions through the foreign policy initiatives. Rajapaksa highlighted the necessity of military actions to eradicate the global terrorism. Rajapaksa attempted to portrait the inherent obligation of humans to fight against terrorism.

'Terrorism is terrorism. All the terrorist attacks in a world challenged to the values of human life. No matter it's happening in New York, Mumbai, Kairo, Landon, Colombo or elsewhere. Thus, all the nations have a responsibility to fight against terrorism. If one states fight against the terrorism, all the countries have a moral

duty to support to that country to win their fight against terrorism.'(Rajapaksa, 2013)

The most noteworthy feature of Mahinda Rajapaksa foreign policy was the similarities of policies with the foreign policy of Sirimawo Bandaranaike. Sarath Wijesinghe highlighted that 'Rajapaksa foreign policy was a clone copy of Sirimo foreign policy' (Wijesinghe, 2015) Rajapaksa foreign policy appreciated the non-alignment movement along with free and progressive foreign policy principles. Similarly, Rajapaksa regime managed to approach the western powers, Eastern powers, Asian powers, non-alignment movement and regional powers to achieve the national interests of the country with some fluctuations.

The researcher focused on the dynamic features of Rajapaksa foreign policy with the influence of the civil war. With that concerns, Mahinda Rajapaksa preserved fragile foreign policy with western powers. Comparatively, Rajapaksa achieved strategic advantages with the relations of other nations rather than the foreign affiliations with the Western world. The miscalculations of western-oriented relations questioned Rajapaksa foreign policy decision-making process. However, Rajapaksa regime managed to address the national interests of the country through applied and pragmatic foreign policy. Rajapaksa regime placed the national security concerns as highest national interests of the country with the influence of Civil war. President Rajapaksa closed to countries like India, Australia, China to shield the national security concerns of the country. Expressly, Rajapaksa appointed distinctive diplomatic lineup to lobby the British government and other interests groups. Through that Rajapaksa regime attempted to recover the foreign relations with the British government. It was the strategic passage of Rajapaksa foreign policy to accomplish the national security under the compression of civil war.

Finally, Rajapaksa foreign policy depicted that he was able to collect core foreign policy features of former presidents to fabric the foreign policy. Rajapaksa regime had to absorb diverse

circumstances which appeared as a result of civil war. Many internal, external dynamics prejudiced to Rajapaksa foreign policy including the civil war. The tendency of the civil war reflected through the foreign policy decisions and Rajapaksa regime had to position extra weight to maintain the foreign policy on the comparative surface. Exclusively, Rajapaksa regime avoided the states which carried different policy concerns which not tally with the Sri Lankan government. Rajapaksa government dodged the countries which not supported to the military policy of the government against LTTE and strategically closed to the supportive nations. Rajapaksa government attempted to produce a foreign policy which reflects the public opinion of the majority and indirectly government created a mythical public option to secure their needs. However, Rajapaksa foreign policy was significant critical juncture of Sri Lanka foreign policy history and civil war frolicked a crucial preface to highlight the foreign policy dynamics of Rajapaksa regime.

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Creative Commons Licenses: Benefits and Implications in Teaching and Research

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Abstract

Educational resources, both published and unpublished, are an integral part of teaching and research. Copyright of such resources, whether published or unpublished, belongs to the creator or author. And the acquisition and use of copyrighted materials depend on payment to and permission from the author or creator. In comparison, the educational resources released under creative commons licenses are free of cost and available online. Anyone with an internet connection can access the resources released with creative commons licenses and use them in many ways. Against this backdrop, the present paper discusses the philosophy of copyrighted and open access educational resources and details about different creative commons licenses. Afterward, the paper details the four popular by-products of creative commons licenses, i.e., OpenEducational Resources (OER), Open Access Publications (OAP), Open Access Journals (OAJ), and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). In the end, the paper specifies several benefits and implications of using educational

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resources released under creative commons for teaching and research purposes.

Keywords: Creative Commons, Creative Commons Licenses, Open Access, *Open Educational Resources (OER),* Open Access Publications (OAP), Open Access Journals (OAJ), *Massive Open Online Courses (*MOOCs), Teaching, Research

Background

The term 'copyright' is an integral part of the day-to-day lives of teachers and researchers. When ever they use any work from an author or researcher, the first question arises in their mind that whether they are authorized to use and share it or not. By default, creative works like literary, dramatic, musical, or artistic work, a cinematograph film, or a sound recording are copyrighted works. Copyright is a legal concept that gives creators the right to assert ownership over their creative works. Copyright applies to any "creative" work and prevents other people from taking and using it without their permission (McNulty, 2016). As defined by the Copyright Act, 1957 of India,

> Copyright is a right given by the law to creators of literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works and producers of cinematograph films and sound recordings. In fact, it is a bundle of rights including, inter alia, rights of reproduction, communication to the public, adaptation and translation of the work(Ministry of Commerce and Industry, n.d., para1).

Similarly, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, n.d.) clarifies that 'Copyright (or author's right) is a legal term used to describe the rights that creators have over their literary and artistic works. Works covered by copyright range from books, music, paintings, sculpture, and films, to computer programs, databases, advertisements, maps, and technical drawings.'According to the Berne Convention, copyright protection is obtained automatically without any registration or other formalities. This provision

means, once a person creates or authors any work, it is copyrighted automatically. And as a copyright holder of the work, one has the sole rights of its reproduction, distribution, rental and importation, public performance, broadcasting, communication to the public, and making available to the public (WIPO, 2016).

One can use any copyrighted work either with the proper consent of the author/creator or after paying the specified amount to the author/creator.As a fact, a copyright ensures certain minimum safeguards of the rights of authors over their creations. Although, there are few exceptions to copyright protection like it can be used for 'a fair deal for research, study, criticism, review and news reporting, as well as use of works in library and schools and in the legislatures, without specific permission of the copyright owners (Ministry of Commerce and Industry, n.d., para5).'

Usually, every author/creator feels happy to have a copyright of the work and say about its use by others. At the same time, every author/creator does not want to restrict the use of the work or want money from users. Many authors/creators only want that users must attribute them to their work and nothing else. Generally, many authors/creators want to retain the copyright of their work but do not want to restrict its use by granting permissions or charging money. For such authors/creators, a viable alternative is a licensing framework offered by Creative Commons, a self-defined "non-profit organization that enables the sharing and use of creativity and knowledge through free legal tools" (McNulty, 2016, para 4). The website of Creative Commons (2021) details that,

> The Creative Commons copyright licenses and tools forge a balance inside the traditional "all rights reserved" setting that copyright law creates. Our tools give everyone from individual creators to large companies and institutions a simple, standardized way to grant copyright permissions to their creative work. The combination of our tools and our users is a vast and growing digital commons,

a pool of content that can be copied, distributed, edited, remixed, and built upon, all within the boundaries of copyright law (para 1).

Creative common (CC) licenses are a mechanism for authors/creatorsto decide that what other users can do with their works available in the public domain. In copyright works,users need to ask permission from the copyright owner (author/publisher) regarding the use of the work. Whereas, in the case of resources released under CC licenses, the author/publisher grants permission in advance regarding modalities of use of the work. Table-1 presents a comparison of copyright works and works released under creative commons.

Table 1
A Comparison of Copyright andCC Licensed Works

CopyrightWorks	CC Licensed Works
• Restrictive in nature	• Open in nature
• Based on the philosophy that any creation is a by-product of individuals knowledge or skills	• Based on the philosophy that any creation is a by-product of collective knowledge or skills
• Supported by the argument that the authors/creators needs reward in monetary terms for their efforts	• Supported by the argument that helping others for free is itself a reward for any author/creator
• The authors/creators arerewarded in terms of royalties/payments for their works	• The authors/creatorsare rewarded in terms of the mass-circulationof their works
• The permission for use of the work has to be obtained from the author/creator	• All the permissionsrelated to the use of works are given in advance
• Only the author/publisher is authorized to distribute or share the work	• Everyone is authorized to share, distribute, and store the work
• The users have to pay money to access the work	• The users can access the work free of cost
• The usersare not authorized to edit or make any changes	• The users are allowed to make changes and remix under specific provisions
• Authors/creators face difficulties to change the usage rights of their works	• Authors/creators can anytime change the nature of usage rights of their works
• The copyright works may have or may not have any visible identification	• The workshave visible identification in form of text or image licenses

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others, and use them by attributing the author. Most importantly,
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any one license, from six different types of CC licenses, as per their
philosophy and liking.

The use of these licenses is easy. Those who would like to
release their works under CC have to visit the 'share your work'
section of the creative commons site. On this page, authors are
shown different options to choose the appropriate license.
Afterward, the chosen license is made visible in image and text
form. For example, an authoropts for Attribution-
NonCommercial-ShareAlike (CC BY-NC-SA) license, it will
appear on the webpage of creative commons in the form of an
image and a write-up:

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The author/creator can copy this image or text or both.
Afterward, the author has to paste it on the front page or content
description page of the resource. Putting one of these licenses
means the work is available under CC. The authors can use CC
licenses in any work like text, video, animation, etc. Regarding

audio resources, the producers have to declare in the beginning that the program is released under a CC license.

Initiatives based on CC Licenses: OER, OAP, OAJ, and MOOCs

CC licenses greatly supported the open access moment and brought a paradigm shift in the world of teaching and research. Since the advent of the term 'open access' at a meeting in Budapest in 2002 (Budapest Open Access Initiative, 2002),many individuals, institutions, and organizationsare offering free unrestricted access to their educational resources and scientific publications. And the CC licenses helped immensely in this cause. The educationists, researchers, and organizations have used CC licenses to take many initiatives for freely sharing and disseminating their works. Among these, four initiatives that have significantly contributed to the world of teaching and research are Open Educational Resources (OER), Open Access Publications (OAP), Open Access Journals (OAJ), and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). An understanding of these four initiatives will be helpful to make further deliberations.

Open Educational Resources (OER)

The Open Educational Resources (OER for both singular and plural use of the phrase) movement has gone from a small, grass-roots effort to a global mission supported by powerful educational, non-profit, and non-governmental organizations around the world (Wiley & Gurrell, 2009). Nowadays, organizations (UNESCO, OECD, European Union, COL, etc.), institutions (Universities, Colleges, etc.), and individuals are engaged in promotion, dissemination, and use of OER (Misra, 2013; Misra, 2014). OER has emerged as one of the most innovative teaching and learning practices and a cost-effective mechanism to improve the quality of educational offerings by optimizing the use of available resources (Mishra & Singh, 2017). The vision behind the

OER is that making educational resources freely available to all is a fundamental right (Conole, 2012).

Philosophically, OER is an extension of the open access initiative, as explained by Andersen and Ponti (2014),'Open access often refers to research articles that are freely accessible online, available for reuse as long as the source is accredited. OER, on the other hand, are teaching and learning materials, such as curriculum and course materials, released under open access license' (p. 235).According to Geser (2007, p. 12), 'OER are understood to comprise content for teaching and learning, software-based tools and services, and licenses that allow for open development and re-use of content, tools and services' (p.12). Whereas, 2012 Paris OER declaration defines OER as, 'Teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions' (UNESCO, 2012, p. 1).

While Clements and Pawlowski (2012) see OER as resources for learning, education, and training that are freely accessible. These include literature and scientific resources (open access for education), technologies, and systems (open source for education), and open content (actual learning materials/contents) as well as related artifacts (such as didactical materials or lesson plans). Therefore, conceptually we can say that the distinguishing feature of OER, when compared to other resources, is the freedom regarding use, reuse, and repurposing (Camilleri, Ehlers & Pawlowski, 2014).

Open Access Publications (OAP)

Open Access Publications (OAP) have emerged as one of the major sources of knowledge for those pursuing any research. These publications provide researchers easy and free access to a variety of research literature like journal articles, research reports from different organizations, project reports, etc. Often, OAP is seen as a

solution to the crisis where many libraries are unable to prescribe enough journals due to financial constraints. Talking about the significance of OAP to change this scenario, McVeigh (2004) observes,

> The recent move to provide scientific and scholarly materials free through "open access" is one of the most exciting and radical events in publishing in recent years. Electronic publishing changed the way most scholars access literature in their field. Now Open Access is changing the way electronic materials are distributed (p.16).

Another significant benefit is that researchers can easily access OAP via the internet on their computers or smartphones. Gone are the days when libraries were the only source of research literature, now open access publications offer anytime, anywhere, and 24x7 access to update research literature (Misra, 2015). Researchers, particularly of emerging countries, can take benefit of OAP for improving their research outputs as suggested by Lathrop and Rost (2014), 'Access to knowledge is access to the power to solve new problems and make informed decisions. Free, open, public, online access to the archival scientific and technical research literature will empower citizens and scientists to solve more problems and make better, more informed decisions.'

Open Access Journals (OAJ)

Open Access Journals (OAJ) are available online to the reader without any financial, legal, or technical barriers (Suber, 2012). OAJ refers to electronic journals, which give access to all users and are subscription-free. Peer reviewing is undertaken in OAJ, and the accepted articles are made freely available to users (Zainab, 2010). Highlighting the notable characteristics of OAJ, McVeigh (2004) states,

> Open Access journals are not necessarily new publications. Open Access at the journal level comprises a

complex picture of availability. Many established journals make only a few recent years of content available online, while the majority of their content is accessible only through traditional access paths. Other established journals, having moved to OA distribution, offer access to many years of older content as well (p.1).

• **OAJ** uses a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access. Some OAJ are financed by academic institutions, learned societies, or a government information center. And some are financed by payment of article processing charges by submitting authors. The distinguishing characteristic is that OAJ also performs peer review. The peer-review process allows articles published in OAJ to retain a quality similar to traditional journals (Misra, 2015). The advantages of OAJ include free access to scientific papers regardless of affiliation with a subscribing library, lower costs for research in academia and industry, improved access for the general public, and higher citation rates for the author (Eysenbach, 2006). According to Swan and Chan (2010), OAJ offers several benefits to academia like:

- Providing access to the world's research output, free of financial and other restrictions;

- Incorporating local research into an interoperable network of global knowledge;

- Increasing impact of local research, providing new contacts and research partnerships for authors;

- Removing professional isolation of researchers; and

- Strengthening economies through developing a strong and independent national science base.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)

MOOCs are generally defined as open-ended education programs broadcasted through the Internet to thousands of learners (Misra, 2018, p. 69). MOOCs owe the "massive" part of their name as they

reach a large number of users (up to 100 000 or more) residing in different parts of all continents. There are both unpaid or free MOOCS and paid MOOCs. MOOCs fall under two main categories: 'xMOOCs' (connective Massive Open Online Courses) and 'cMOOCs' (extended Massive Open Online Courses). Kurt (2021) explains both these types in the following words:

> xMOOCs are based on traditional course structures and make use of established teaching approaches and materials. Students will watch pre-recorded lectures, complete required readings, and participate in discussions as produced and curated by the course instructor or an instructional team from a higher education institution. xMOOCs are typically self-contained and rarely if ever utilize content external to the main content delivery and learning platform (para 5).

> cMOOCs are based on connectivist learning models that privilege collaboration as a form of active learning. Students in a cMOOC will work together to locate, evaluate, and contribute course content, uploading materials (tweets, blog posts, blogs, wikis, etc.) to the course using the learning platform. A cMOOC instructor or instructional team facilitates learning by finalizing, aggregating, and assessing the students' contributions to the course (para 6).

A Commission appointed by the Norwegian Government (2013, p. 26) observes that the MOOC term is used as a catch-all for courses with the following characteristics-

- Online courses
- Massive courses, i.e., scalable concerning the number of participants
- Open courses, i.e., anyone can sign up for them

According to Yousef, Chatti, Schroeder, Wosnitza and Jakobs (2014),

> Massive open online courses (MOOCs) have drastically changed the way we learn as well as how we teach. The main aim of MOOCs is to provide new opportunities to a massive number of learners to attend free online courses from anywhere all over the world. MOOCs have unique features that make it an effective technology-enhanced learning (TEL) model in higher education and beyond (p. 9).

While Schultz (2014) argues that,

> Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are digital teaching formats which offer stimuli for developing the concepts of e-learning, Web 2.0 and open educational resources. They can be used before, during and after completion of a degree course and can also be integrated at course, module or degree programme level in academic teaching (p. 7).

MOOCs offer an exclusive advantage when compared to other educational resources. Most of the MOOCs allow extensive use of the resources free of charge and offer in exchange greater openness in access to education, increased quality, and innovation and creativity on the part of learners. Banking on these characteristics, it is appropriate to claim that MOOCs presents numerous opportunities and may be used in different ways and formats to promote teaching and research.

Benefits and Implications of OER, OAP, OAJ, and MOOCs in Teaching and Research

As discussed earlier, educationists and researchers across the globe are using CC licenses in many ways. In their quest to support the educational fraternity,they come up with initiatives like OER, OAP, OAJ, and MOOCs. Therefore, understanding the benefits andimplications of CC license-based resources, courses, and publications (available as OER, OAP, OAJ, and MOOCs) will be useful forteachers and researchers to better their teaching and research outcomes.

1. Don't depend on few resources for teaching, select from a variety of resources

Educationist across the globe has released thousands of useful OER related to different discipline and subjects at school and higher education level. These OER are available in various forms like full courses, course modules, syllabi, lectures, homework assignments, quizzes, lab and classroom activities, pedagogical materials, games, simulations, and many more as OER. The majority of these OER are available online and can be accessed easily by individual search, search engines, or various OER repositories. Teachers of any subject and teaching at any level of education can easily access different types of OER. The most notable aspect about OER is that these are released under CC licenses and contained in digital media collections, and easily accessible via search engines and OER repositories. In a way, these OER offers many opportunities and possibilities for teachers to make their teaching more meaningful and promote learning outcomes.

2. Don't create content always, plenty of content is already available

Teachers have to perform three major roles regarding teaching-learning resources. They have to suggest, use, and develop resources. Usually, teachers tend to develop their resources for teaching (for example, lecture notes, presentations, assignments, classroom activities, etc.). OER offers them an alternative at this account. Instead of creating content first, teachers can initially search for relevant content released as OER. And if available, then they can use that content instead of creating a new resource. This measure is supposed to save their precious time and energy. This practice is also helpful for teachers to utilize their time and energy in more meaningful tasks like having discussions and organizing collaborative learning activities. Besides, teachers can also create a pool of relevant OER for different teaching-learning purposes, as OER released under CC authorizes the users to store OER for individual and collective uses.

3. Don't use only one type of content, mix contents to create multi-media content

In classrooms, teachers have learners with varying learning styles. It is not easy for teachers to teach them by using only one type of resource. For example, every student in a class will not be happy to read a book, and not all students will be interested to watch an educational video. Whereas, in traditional teaching, teachers mainly rely on textbooks for teaching and learning purposes. As a fact, textbooks, the prime sources of learning, often appear monotonous and boring to the students. OER presents a new opportunity for teachers on this account. OER allows teachers to createmulti-media reading materials containing text, audio, video, animation, exercises, and many more. The reason is that OER released under the appropriate CC licenses allows users to modify and mix different resources and create anew resource to fulfill teaching-learning needs. This mixing of resources is quite helpful for teachers to develop need-based resources to make their teaching more meaningful.

4. Don't depend on contents from a particular language, translate them in your language

The language of the majority of teaching-learningresources, available online and offline, is English. On another note, in countries like India where there are22 major languages, students usually prefer that teaching and learning must be in their regional language or mother tongue. Often, teachers deliver lectures in local languages but recommend resources in English. OER offers a solution to this problem. Teachers can first search the relevant OER related to their subjects. Afterward, they can easily translate identified OER into the preferred languages of their students. This measure is significantly helpful for teachers to overcome the lack of quality material for teaching and learning in local languages. In another way, teachers can also translate the quality OER available in different languages into the English language for dissemination and use at the global level. Overall, OER offers many possibilities

for teachers to overcome language barriers regarding learning materials.

5.   Don't only suggest resources, use them for flipped learning

Teachers are supposed to suggest relevant resources related to different topics to the students. OER and OAP made this task very easy for teachers. Teachers can search and recommend useful OER and OAP to their students. These resources are also helpful to practice flipped learning in the classrooms. The flipped learning works on the principle that instead of providing information during classroom time, teachers must provide information to the learners before coming to the class and must use the class time for more meaningful discussions. The success of flipped learning very much depends on the availability of quality learning resources. And the OER and OAP present numerous opportunities for teachers on this account (Misra, 2016). Teachers can search useful OER and OAP related to their topics and send them to the learners for reading in advance. Afterward, teachers can utilize the classroom time for more meaningful discussions and activities.

6.   Don't keep your resources to yourself, publish them for global use

Teachers create different resources for teaching their students. They mainly keep these resources to themselves. Teachers fear that if they share their resources with others, they will lose control over it, or someone else will use their ideas. CC licenses help them to overcome this fear. CC licenses allow one to declare two things at a time. First, this idea or creation belongs to me, which means I have a copyright of the work. Second, I allow others to use my work freely for teaching and learning purposes, but they have to adhere to the terms and conditions of the user license. Teachers must realize that once they put a CC license on their resources and release or upload them on their institutional websites or OER

repositories, people across different countries will use the resources and know them. And the users will not steal their ideas but attribute them to their works. In other words, the use of CC licenses will make a local teacher a global teacher.

7. Don't offer courses to only your students, develop MOOCs for global learners

Teachers offer different courses to their students. But CC licenses allow teachers to offer these courses to global learners and become a teacher at the international level. Teachers can easily convert their courses as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). The creation of MOOCs mainly requires text and video to explain the content, assignments, and assessment activities. Teachers can easily create all these by using online tools and assemble and offer them online as MOOCs. Besides, another choice for teachers is to select texts, videos, assignments, and learning assessment activities from already available OER and mix them to offer as MOOCs for learners. In simple terms, by using CC licenses, teachers can teach both at the local and global levels.

8. Don't worry about the review of related literature, access researches published in OAJ

Scholarly periodicals are one of the most significant sources of up-to-date information and research literature in different disciplines. But due to increasing costs, libraries are reducing the number of subscribed periodicals. Institutional libraries, particularly in emerging countries, are facing this situation more. If libraries can no longer afford to pay the annual subscription cost, researchers have no retrospective access to quality researches published in different parts of the world. This situation is impacting researchers in two ways. First, researchers are bound to consult and rely on out-of-date research materials. Second, they are bound to mostly cite papers produced by their research groups or look mainly at the literature produced in one country or continent. And

from this perspective, OAJ are of great support for the researchers. OAJ provide thousands of research articles free of cost for researchers. There are many directories where researchers can search open access journals related to their field of study. Further, they can explore the current and archived issues of these journals for accessing literature related to their topic of study. In a way, the open access journals released under different CC licenses offer great support to review the literature on a click and without any payment.

9. Don't limit your research to payers only, make them available for every researcher

After completing the research, researchers want to publish the findings of their studies for dissemination and use by other researchers. For this purpose, the most popular option among researchers is to submit their articles to research journals. And the majority of research journals charge a fee for reading the published research articles. The author gets due credit for publication in these journals. But, the majority cannot access articles published in such journals. The reason is that those interested to read the complete articles have to pay a specific amount or access it through their institutional library. Particularly in emerging countries, not many institutional libraries have enough budgets to subscribe to such journals. Besides, every researcher can't pay the required money to access the articles. The OAJ offer a solution to these problems. The articles published in any OAJ get the same credit as any copyrighted journal. In addition, the research articles are available for access for free and download to researchers across the globe. In a nutshell, publishing in OAJ makes once research freely accessible to all.

Conclusion

We have entered an era of knowledge explosion. More and more people are nowadays creating different works that are helpful for

teaching, learning, and research in many ways. And many of such materials are available online. But there is a caveat regarding the use of such resources. By default, all such resources come under copyright work, and one cannot use them without the prior consent and permission of the author/creator or making the prescribed payment. Due to these reasons, users, particularly from emerging countries, find it difficult to maximize the benefit of these resources for teaching and research. Fortunately, CC licenses offer several opportunities on this account. The by-products of CC licenses like OER, OAP, OAJ, and MOOCs are helpful in many ways for teaching and research. This article dealt with the promises and possibilities of using CC licenses in detail. And, now it is up to the teachers and researchers across different countries to use CC-licensed resources to better teaching-learning and promote research activities.

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Digital Storytelling and Digital Social Reading in Social Media: A Case Study of Instagram And Wattpad

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Abstract

With social media's introduction as an incredible technological advancement, digital storytelling and dgital social reading practices have scaled new heights with their access to millions of people across the globe and far reaching impact on new studies in Humanities and culture studies while Instagram and Twitter are the popular form of social media for storytelling and micro narratives, Wattpad has emerged as a potent platform for analysis of the reading preferences of an individual, thus making it user-friendly. Readers take on Social Media to convey the stories because it is easier, has more reach, and give room for more creativity. Ideas are promoted, explored, and rewarded, which turnout to stimulate the readers to discover new talents and space. Digital social Reading promotes interactive literature as young readers make extensive use of these digital platforms to read, comment, respond, and react to texts and stories. The present

Social Media and New discourse

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study seeks to critically engage with digital storytelling and digital social reading practices in social media by using Instagram and Wattpad as a case study. This paper further shows how these digital practices affect readers' minds and initiate readers to explore beyond what they can imagine and achieve.

Keywords: Microfiction, Social Media, Digital Storytelling, Digital Social Reading, Transmedia

With the advent of social media as a model for storytelling, short literary fiction or microfictions have taken a pace because literary representations of feelings may have more impact than what is encountered in real life. This, in return, has the power to enrich the individuals affect their empathy because the shorter the stories, the more impact it gives.

Wikipedia describes Social Media as "An umbrella term that defines the various activities that integrate technology social interaction and the construction of words, pictures, videos, and audio. This interaction and how information is presented depend on various perspectives and building of shared meaning as people communicate and share their stories and understandings." Social media comes in the guise of various terms like *Web 2.0,* as Tim O'Reilly (2005) said. Other terms described include 'age of engagement' (Cary and Jeffery, 2006), 'Authorship society' (Rushkoff, 2005). These Web 2.0 services, like microblogging, photo sharing, blogging, are now referred to as social media. Social media user audio, images, videos, and location-based services facilitate social interaction and user participation.

Social media has attracted millions of users all over the world. Evolving from the late 1990s and early 2000s, social media takes everyone's time and leisure as they are a real distraction from the real world and work. Social media is attracting people from all walks of life at an alarming rate as they are intrigued by its affordability and reach. Since it is easy to use, they provide a powerful information-sharing collaboration and community

engagement. People access social media in both the academic and cultural heritage context. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others use this network positively and negatively for community building and knowledge. Social media engages in microblogging and crowdsourcing through different kinds of applicators like conference backchannels, crowdsourcing, and co-curation between research communities and the public. The primary purposes of these social media sites are to publish and share content. Johnson et al. (2010, 13) agree, stating that 'collectively, social media are above all the audience's voice endlessly expressive and creative. The present prominent use of digital videos, pictures, audios, and text and their influence across social media gave rise to new consumption behaviour and the speed of new interactive narrative forms. New technologies and their effects on how we live gave inspiration for writers in social media. This digital age introduced technology that has deeply rooted in our inner lives. They easily become a part of us whilst the social media profile stays rigid.

Micro-Narration in Social Media

Micro-narratives are personal in nature as they emerge from one-on-one interactions with users or express actual experiences. Using micro-narratives in social media has made it far easier to spread. Storytelling practices provide more of a spontaneous way for producing and sharing content and designing field. Storytelling contains psychological powers like emotion, value, action, and memory. Social media networks like Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter enable this service of user interaction.

The design process includes three main steps to create digital interactive stories on social media, which begins from digital archives in personal mobile services. The steps are:

1. Collecting fragments such as ad photos, videos, texts, notes.

2. Crafting stories: Here, fragments are developed into structured stories for the storyline called Fabula.

3. Reframing fragments: these involve the creation and distribution of digital content in social media. They have different genres and narrative formats.

Micro storytelling uses status updates, short videos, hashtags, and photos to convey messages that take the least time of user time. This is because users now prefer content to be delivered in easily digestible formats. The popular trend of short messages delivered through Twitter and visually content appalling format like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. While all posts which are published are short, they give a larger picture with theme and flow.

Users are sharing their personal life experiences in public and semi-public environments. These users either express themselves as anonymous or reveal who they are according to their comfortability. Sometimes stories are conveyed through euphemisms, and creating stories is often done through prompts by different community users. These practices enable micro-narratives to create and induce identity and interaction.

Story Telling in Social Media and Instagram

The art of storytelling shouldn't be viewed as a source of entertainment but as an important factor for identity formation. This can be either individual or collective. These approaches are seen as an organised way for sharing knowledge and personal experience. According to Jerome Burner (1991) narratives operate a mediation between the cultural world and any idiosyncratic world which include beliefs, desires and hope.

Social media though it's a fast-emerging category in media it comes up with its own affordances and limitations. There are various purposes which enables them to produce and consume the content. Narratives in social media are usually directed to specific audiences- mostly to the people who share common interest. This

isn't necessary that all communities must hold same interest as their innumerable variety for different audiences. Designing narratives as a part of storytelling on social media means they engage with users and let them be part of the storytelling process. Often micronarratives do not rely on one big idea. They give space for communication and feed into broader range of subjects than a rigid them. Sometimes small and frequent narratives will provide deeper connections and help us to create bonds with people. These micronarratives help in making every word count reducing the usage of modifiers and using short and single words make the narrative even more effective. The present technologies enable consumers not only to access the information but they also help to contribute content. This introduces a new dimension on showing effect on social, political and cultural aspects.

Social media networks give new connections, connections and media format. This helps users to interact and spread digital content. These platforms help people to create their profiles, publishing personal information. Digital storytelling in social media, the content is fed into the computer into different forms of zero and one. In digital story, it is often interactive where it involves communication between content designer and audience. This introduced to a new facet known as New Media where we can see various digital consoles in phones, tablets and laptops etc. the convenience of storing the content making it more reliable thus helping it to access quickly and transferred efficiently.

Now storytelling has up their game in the forms of digital stories which are conveyed on social media. These are seen as a practice of telling stories using digital tools. They also include texts, videos, sounds. Social media though is a fast-emerging category in media it comes with its own affordances and limitations. There are various purposes which enables them to produce and consume the content.

Social media comes up with special characteristics with their own setbacks. Briefly, social media puts up with a particular model where there is series of elements which allows users to come up

with different activities where they produce and consume at the same time. Its very similar as to when a reader experience a narrative while reading s book unfolding the story, so does the model of the social media keep the users at bay keeping them posted which shows a great deal of interaction and different perspective. In terms of affordability social medias give a great deal of interaction in terms of comments, likes, shares, and retweets etc. this helps in not only user interaction but these elements help in influencing the narrative which further helps in development of the plot. These user interaction expresses reactions and opinion making the user profile reach out far.

Social medias are often multi-modal. They post single content – maybe like an image and other a text as different post or sometimes combined. We often see this type of modal in Facebook. The other type includes where posts are composed more than single content- two different modes in same profile. For example, Twitter uses both textual tweets and visual tweets. Interactions are often not only a physical activity of just posting comments or likes but these interactions tend to give a mental impact. Messages are perceived at cognitive level where users are able to think, relate and act which can give both negative and positive reactions. Hence its more of a mental process first then the physical process of reacting to a narrative.

Designing narrative requires careful ideas, planning and execution. To design a narrative, selective storyline, narrative technique, themes, genres, adding visual and audio elements

Micro-Narratives in social media in social media are entirely different from traditional forms of narratives such as novels, dramas or films. In social media there is a fragment of narratives-small narratives or *proto-narratives* (Turner, 1996). Proto-narratives gives single event. These single narratives attain full meaning when they are part of story world where there is a series of multiple inter related proto-narratives. Not necessary that it should contain multiple narratives, sometimes a single proto-narrative makes the story complete and sound. They are built and

developed between audience and authors. Stories are often built from characters desires and insights. These micronarratives do not often comply to Unity of time, place and action and sometimes take a non-linear mode of storytelling.

Instagram

Instagram is a social networking site commonly known as IG or Insta which allows people to share photos and videos. Currently owned by Facebook, Instagram has gained popularity where users allow and upload media which can be edited in 1:1 aspect ratio with different filters making them look aesthetically pleasing. By doing this it allows to organise their feed by hashtags and geographical tagging which keeps a tab as memories and can be accessed at any point of time.

Instagram's digital storytelling is done through videos, images, gifs, and face filters. The idea of whole storytelling is that these stories are posted as memories and can also be saved which helps the audience to retrieve it at any point of time. Stories helps to feature what the users are doing and thinking in a particular time frame.

Storytelling has always been part of expressing any motive or idea or feeling for good reason. Users feel connected to stories because they are relatable, diverse and has surprise element. Storytelling often takes a complex idea to simplify it hence making it more reader-response material. While writing a story, our contents should be guided by motives, values and non-pictures. Each profile should be unique and optimised. The tone of writing a story should reflect writer's style and mindset and must be able to

visualise it while reading them. While posting pictures we must ensure that pictures are in line with the writer's personality. The captions and picture must sync with the setting. Instagram also allows to insert audio visual elements to convey stories which further enhances the overall image of the story and therefore readers are well connected to the story when they read them so that maximum response and reaction is possibly attained.

The wrapping up a tale into an image makes it visually appealing and easy to obtain and easy to digest. These tales are touches the soul and are hard hitting which eventually became the voice of various writers of both anonymous and public where they pen down stories ranging from different themes and genres such as unrequited love, freedom , abuse, horror, gore , erotica etc.
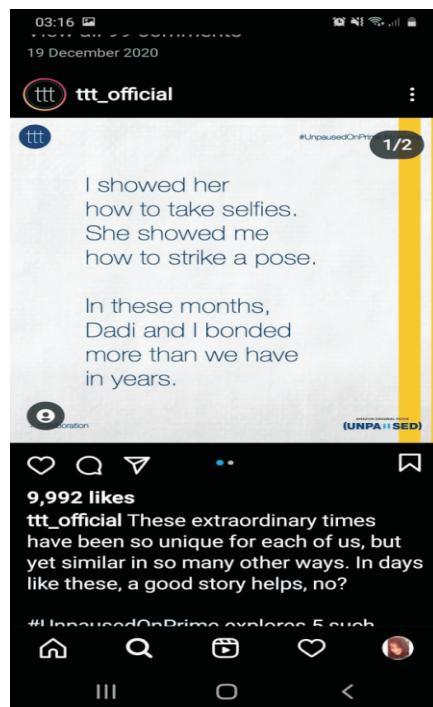
For instance, this story finishes in four lines which is complete in itself. Said through the eyes of a granddaughter, it describes the bond between her and the grandmother which has escalated to new heights due to pandemic giving an insight and message that how pandemic has taken toll on relationships.

This kind of stories has taken a new trend in fiction in Web 2.0. These stories are easy to read, under stand and connect to readers in personal @scri-bbledstories, @surprise-shortstories carry out the mushroom wave of

microfiction and it is an excellent opportunity for Web 2.0 to collaborate.

Another type of storytelling in Instagram is how they do promotions for blogs and movies , series , preferably in audience's taste and analyse their plot and characters. By doing this they tend to relate with the audience at maximum level. These are not only done for movies or series but people analyse songs also . all these characters, songs and plot are cultural canon which had made an impact on society on larger level.

Some historical canonical figures include "F.R.I.E.N.D.S", "How I Met Your Mother", "Game of Thrones" where certain figures such as Joey, Ted Mosby , Jon Snow has definitely created an impact among the readers.

Instagram is a visual inspirational platform for audience who wants inspire others by their storytelling. all the stories have their values, mission and purpose stuck onto them to give out the meaning as their personality. As they say a compelling story can grab people's attention

Digital Social Reading in Social Media

The reading habit of the current 21st century has changed rapidly which introduces us to digital social reading. Digital social reading gives a face to e-literature in the form if interactive literature. At this present digital age, studies show that there is supposedly a lack of "deep reading" posed by young readers. They are more inclined towards visual communication where stories are told through images, videos, gifs and actual narration are quick bites which is easy to read, understand and receive. With the advent development of social reading there is shift towards how readers read and respond to narrative literature. Before "social reading" readers couldn't respond or react in real time to literature and its authors. But now with digital social reading, authors offer immediate feedback regarding their stories keeping the readers hooked and feel important. With current progress, there will be more books in digital racks rather than a book shelf or a library.

As reader-oriented approach to digital social reading, it looks on the process, experience and impact of reading. In reading oriented approach, the focus is entirely on the act of reading itself. The response and interactive process is not taken into account.

Due to variety of genres, there was progress in the degree of interaction between users. People who read popular themes such as teen fiction responded with positive cognitive interaction than people who read classics. They helped them form strong social bonds and help them with to analyse and interpret works .

Research on reader response has inclined towards the online reading community and book clubs which discusses new books and its reviews to test theoretical hypothesis. They also look into stylistics of a work and analyse them to look into spatial influence of a writer.

Wattpad

Wattpad is an active social site and is considered to be the biggest

under the radar community on Web 2.0. Wattpad has its base at Toronto which initially began as a startup. It is a free publishing and reading user interface. They allow users to publish, share and collaborate on stories of different genres, themes. Here writes(users) upload their work, develop followers, receive suggestions, appreciations and feedback and improve accordingly. This user interface allows readers and writers to comment and interact and keep a track on further development in the story. This application is a huge melting pot of different activities in relation with e-literature. Users can create new stories and subsequent chapters or sometimes even do spin-off from an original text in their own perspectives. It is popularly known as fan-fiction.

Readers are constantly informed through notifications where there are new updates in the stories. This application customises itself according to the readers' tastes and preference and gives its own suggestions and recommendations. It keeps a tab on all our activities in the application making it more user friendly. It has set itself as a storytelling and consumption platform of users who expects a deeper interaction.

Wattpad has around 30million books and steadily growing with its collection of short stories, novels and poems. Wattpad allows readers to share access thoughts and reactions to specific parts of a story like reviews. This ultimately enables reader's response making it more appealing and useful.

Wattpad provides a distinct opportunity to bring interest in computational literary studies among the readers and also help in develop in the area of cultural analytics which can be a great support construction of reception of books. This application is an ideal example of how literature has started to perceive and circulated due to digital technology forming a dynamic literary landscape where stories are transmitted and shared through sociotechnical digital networks. There aren't enough studies to explore the dynamics of authors and readers on Wattpad and even fewer for response study
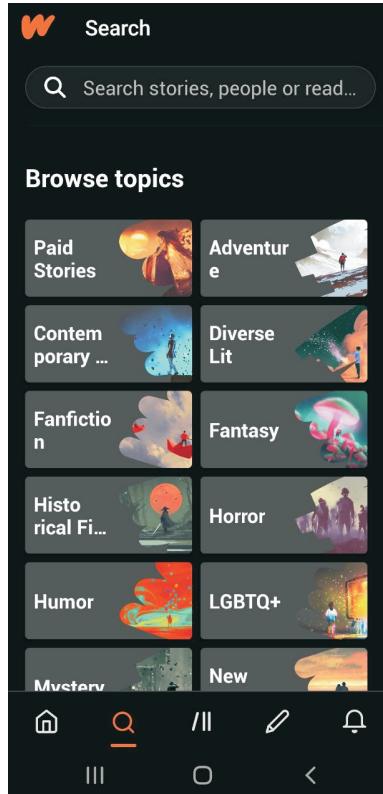
image 3.1   image 3.2

The above images show glimpse of Wattpad application in mobile. These images clearly shows the various genres of books which are available for a the readers to read. As clearly visible, Wattpad provides an innumerable amount of choices for the readers to chose from keeping the readers at bay.

In Wattpad, texts are usually grouped into popular literature than a classical literary canon. For instance, teen fiction is widely preferred by young adults where they are extensively and commented than classical works. Studies have shown that readers

stop reading classics after few chapters because of its longer telling of plot than the captivating teen fiction.

The image 3.3 shows the visual output of how Wattpad's story will look like in the mobile application. As we can see it. This a sci-fi genre story named "Outsystem: A Military Science Fiction Space Opera." Totally around 8440 people have read this story and 388 readers have read this story. This story has four parts on total.

Image 3.4 shows the structure of the story. The "Prologue" has been read and viewed by 3710 users and 130 people have liked this Prologue. Over 24 comments have been shared among the readers and two comments specifically for introduction.

Image 3.3

PROLOGUE

👁 3.71K   ⭐ 130   💬 24

**STELLAR DATE: 3226929 /
12.07.4122 (Adjusted
Gregorian)
LOCATION: Edge of the Grey
Sea, Pluto
REGION: Jovian Combine,
Sol Space Federation**

A young sapling exploded
beside Tanis and she dove
for cover, scampering away
as splinters flew in every
direction. She slipped into a
depression, flattening herself

Image 3.4

In this picture we can see how different users have commented about the story. This feature shows how interactive Wattpad is as it allows people to review, react and be responsive hence encourages the authors to improve for betterment.

This is what Digital Social Reading is all about. It helps people to interact on various levels. As we can see people who have similar preferences in sci-fi genre have critiqued and reviewed their views about the story.
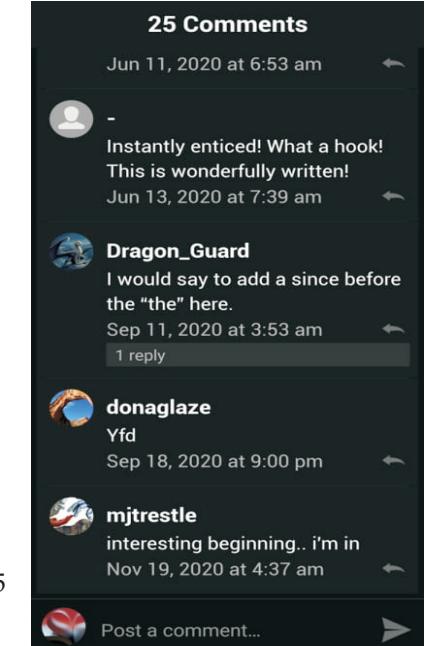
25 Comments

Jun 11, 2020 at 6:53 am

-
Instantly enticed! What a hook!
This is wonderfully written!
Jun 13, 2020 at 7:39 am

Dragon_Guard
I would say to add a since before
the "the" here.
Sep 11, 2020 at 3:53 am
1 reply

donaglaze
Yfd
Sep 18, 2020 at 9:00 pm

mjtrestle
interesting beginning.. i'm in
Nov 19, 2020 at 4:37 am

Post a comment...

Image 3.5

Image 3.6 shows how Wattpad works in Trans-media model where it allows to share its story to different platforms such as Gmail, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter etc. this feature enables writers to share their story for more public view and response as well as the readers to share their status on what they are reading in return will create enthusiasm among non-users and hence create participation and dis-cussion.

Wattpad is particularly for a community of reader and amateur authors who can read and publish and has basic digital skills to texts via desktop or mobile app. Though Wattpad creates a variety of editorial forms and genres , there is one characteristic which stands out among the
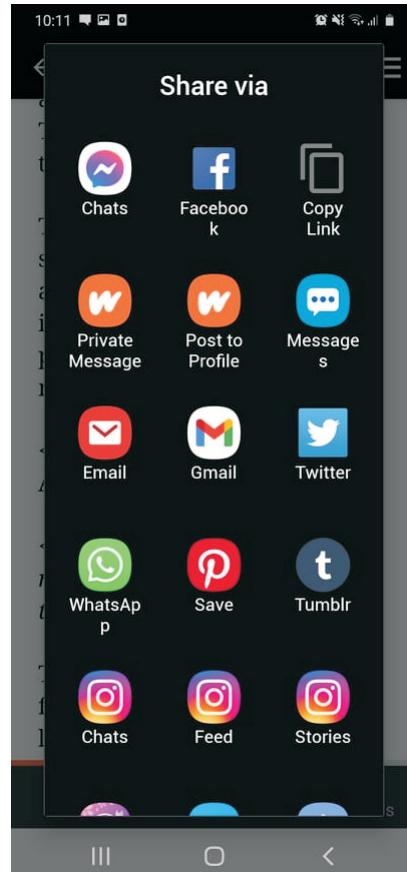
Image 3.6

literary scholars; most of the stories which are published in Wattpad are born digital and they are not confined to traditional methods of storytelling. However Wattpad provides a good amount of literary classics which are imported from Project Guttenberg or published by Wattpad directly.

Textual elements such story events, style, or else are more effective in inducing readers' response and what kind of responses

they emit or react. Inorder to understand the link between readers' emotional response and textual features, sentiment analysis can be used to find for patterns in the relation between comments and text.

Wattpad's vision and aim is to entertain and connect the global audience through stories and providing a space and opportunities to all the budding authors and writers and watch their stories take into new formats.

Conclusion

With the advent of social media as a platform for storytelling and social Interaction, the applications Instagram and Twitter and Watttpad have taken the world by storm. The impact of storytelling has taken a significant toll, both emotionally and intellectually, an essential feature of our evolution. Ideas and imagination were spun off as stories from where myths and oral storytelling took their form. Gradually these stories were recorded and took the print and visual forms. All digital stories are a personal, and audio-visual record of an individual story which leave an imprint of personal space in the public world.

With transmedia storytelling, stories can be told across multiple platforms allowing audience participation. Stories are told to entertain, persuade, and to think, and they are told in multiple forms because one platform doesn't perform our lifestyle. When stories are told on multiple platforms, it helps the context to reach the target at the right time and place. This ensures a rewarding experience. Stories focus on integrating, which includes characters- the base for the story, convenience- right content to the right people, community- building a social of the audience and making them heard. Digital storytelling allows users to tell their own stories; it also helps them learn digital media skills, which contribute to a person's personal development by building self-confidence and self-esteem.

Digital Social Reading promotes interactive literature as young readers make extensive use of these digital platforms to read, comment, respond, and react to texts and stories. This promotes social reading where they read other people's works analyzed them, enforced a response theory, and sometimes wrote their own literature. Applications such as Wattpad analyses the reading preferences of an individual, thus making it user-friendly. It also foresaw readers' emotional and intellectual intensity on how they respond to comments about books, thus maintaining networking between readers and their potential education involvement and impact.

These two social media platforms play a very instrumental and pivotal role in setting new trends and literary and culture studies by bringing digital media as an inevitable part of it. It has necessitated the need for and emphasis on integrating digital media, technologies and literature for making scholarly interventions in a new and emerging field called Digital Humanities.

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Feminism as a counter-public sphere and debates on Intersectionality in India: Raising a few normative and epistemological concerns

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Abstract

This paper critically engages with counter-public sphere as a critical normative resource to critique the existing liberal democracies, as it has been articulated by feminist political philosopher: Nancy Fraser. It also looks at feminism as counter-public sphere to critique the inbuilt limitations of Indian liberal democracy in the context of social justice from the discourse of Dalit feminism on the one hand and debates on the intersectionality on the other. Feminism as counter public sphere and its normative and epistemological strengths and weaknesses has been critically mapped in the light of recent debates on feminism and social epistemology.

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Introduction

While problematising the contemporary discourses on feminism, one is bewildered, how feminism as a discourse on equality, justice and emancipation has come to non-western and postcolonial countries like India to counter the patriarchal structures of domination and subordination of women and other socially excluded communities and subsequently these categories of social and political experiences, which are primarily, derivative in nature. So, can we really move away or free ourselves from western dominant discourses of representation and create our own non-western conceptual and theoretical resources to understand our own specific and historically nuanced context of patriarchal domination. Keeping in mind, this backdrop, in this paper an attempt has been made to critique the western understanding of feminism on the one hand and how feminism becomes a counter-hegemonic project in western as well as non-western world to create a language of emancipation and liberation for women as a socially constructed category, on the other. Though, through historical understanding of feminism as a political project, one notices that the journey of feminism as a movement and as a philosophical critical engagement has not been ever homogeneous rather it offers a critique of homogeneity of women's representation in liberal democracy and subsequently it has become a heterogeneous movement through various trajectories of feminisms and the agency, subject-hood, and subjugation of women has been articulated and explained in realms of liberal democracies. In the similar section of this paper, we will be critiquing the received understanding of feminism from the perspective of the counter-public sphere (Nancy Fraser, 1990[1] and Sharmila Rege[2]).

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2   Nancy Fraser, Rethinking the Public Sphere: A contribution to the Critique of Actually existing democracy, Social Text, 1990 25-26, pp.56-80, Duke University Press, 1990.

Feminism as a Counter-Public Sphere : Epistemological and Normative Aspects

Nancy Fraser, in one of her important essays 'rethinking the public sphere: a contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy[3]', has demonstrated how the public sphere has been articulated by Habermas in his normative and political understanding of deliberative democracy on the one hand and the processes of exclusion created by bourgeois democracy on the other. Therefore Nancy Fraser has not only critiqued the Habermasian project of deliberative democracy but also offered a counter-public sphere of subaltern masses of a particular society, thus feminist understanding of subaltern is not only concerned with the agency of women rather this category also includes those marginal citizens who are having similar kind of experiences. She further demonstrates through her research that the bourgeois public sphere is conceptualized as a theatre in which political participation is enacted through multiple modes of communication and talk and it's a promise about openness and its accessibility that would lead to the formation of public opinion and ideal consensus about the common good. She has put lamentation against Habermas that the Habermasian project of the public sphere is not only revisionist rather builds the ideal project of Kantian modernity though in the garb of critical theory. Interestingly, the Rawlsian project of liberal democracy is being critiqued by Habermas but he has re-appropriated the Kantian abstract normative categories as alternative pathways of emancipation and freedom. Habermas; in his book portrays the portrayal of women as a homogenous community though from the experience of everyday life there cannot be any homogeneous understanding of women, women have always been represented through certain canons of representative democracy and there is a

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3   See, Nancy Fraser not only critiques public sphere but also draws attention towards Identity politics and politics of recognition in the context of distributive justice.

complexity of discourse and there is an inbuilt heterogeneity while conceptualising women as a community, similarly representation of peasants and working-class is also a heterogeneous project rather than building a consensus about ideal representation in the counter publics in the domain of different existing democracy[4]. Consequently, we can say that Nancy Fraser not only offered a critique of patriarchal understanding of liberal democracy but also created a counter-public sphere from the perspective of feminism. Can we really say that feminism is a counter-public sphere where the woman is not only an agent but also possesses subjectivity and this subjectivity cannot be represented by any homogeneous understanding of social contract theory on the one hand and deliberative democracy of the Habermasian public sphere on the other? How far Nancy Fraser's argument about counter-public is useful and it resonates a philosophical possibility of a radical departure from existing feminism as a social and political movement and its emancipatory promise in the context of South Asian realities concerning women experience, will be problematized in the next section of the paper while looking at the arguments represented by Indian feminist including Sharmila Rege[5], Nivedita Menon[6], and Mary E. John[7] in the pages of EPW.

The background note of the seminar has suggested to develop a conceptual and theoretical understanding of feminism from the perspective of Indian intellectual traditions or from the perspective of the global South, but the present author of the paper is not grounded enough to develop the theoretical framework and do academic justice with this suggestion, therefore, the author

4   Nancy Fraser….

5   Sharmila Rege, See pp. 43

6   Nivedita Menon, "Is Feminism about women? A critical view on Intersectionality from India", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.L, No.17, April 25, 2015, pp. 38.

7   Mary E. John, 'Intersectionality: Rejection or Critical Dialogue', Economic and Political weekly, Vol. L, No. 33, August, 15, 2015,pp.72-76.

would be looking forward to find philosophical possibility of theorizing the "Indian Feminism" from the perspective of a renowned sociologist Boaventura De Sousa Santos, where he has made a claim towards developing an epistemology of south, thus moving away from the derivative discourses of social sciences on the one hand and western feminism on the other. However, to what extent the social epistemology of feminism from the perspective of South Asian experience is able to counter and destabilize the existing understanding of western feminism is always a subject matter of debate within Indian feminist scholarships and social science scholarships particularly. Consequently, we find the debate on intersectionality from the perspective of Indian feminism is not only useful rather instructive in nature. We would like to connect the theoretical insights of the intersectionality debate from the perspective of Indian feminists academics because they are raising similar questions of caste, class, gender, race, ethnicity, and religion from the perspective of non-western societies. And one finds there is some kind of family resemblances between intersectionality debate and the argument provided by Nancy Fraser in her understanding of counter-public sphere as the new normative theory to explain the anxieties and concerns of feminisms from the perspective of redistributive justice on the one hand and politics of identity on the other in the times of neo-liberal democracy. Before we expand and explain the family resemblances between the intersectionality approach and redistributive justice from the perspective of Nancy Fraser and other feminists from India, let us develop the reasons and causes of articulating the social epistemology of feminisms and normative universality of gender justice from the other feminist.

The Idea of Intersectionality and Emancipation: Debate and its Context

The intersectionality approach has emerged as a response to the western Eurocentric understanding of feminism which is based on experiences of layered accounts of being women not only a

heterosexual community rather based on experiences of sexual minorities (LGBT) and Queer Politics and multilayered accounts of discriminations, deprivations, and disadvantageness from the perspective of caste, class, gender, race, ethnicity, and religion. Therefore intersectionality approach has primarily tried to deconstruct the discourse of feminism from the perspective of subaltern citizens particularly women and sexual minorities, thus this debate has two axes, the first one deals with the experiences of non-white women that is black feminism on the one hand and Islamic and African feminism on the other. But this paper would not be able to give comprehensive treatment to all strands of feminisms that have critiqued the claims of white feminism from the perspective of liberal democracies, rather it would try to critically engage and offer a few insights which are common but the important one and these include, (a) the death of epistemology, (b) the death of metaphysics, (c) the emergence of normative subjectivity. The second axis of the intersectionality approach has emerged from the perspective of Dalit feminism in Indian context from the writings of Sharmila Rege and Gopal Guru, to demonstrate that these feminisms from below are critiquing the top-down approach from the perspective of subaltern feminist epistemology. Both Rege and Guru's [8] approach can be located in the discourse of bottom-up approach as a critique of normative/ social justice but both differ in their philosophical articulation about Dalit feminism as a counter public sphere and its inbuilt strategies towards freedom and emancipation of Dalit public.

In order to articulate the above complexity of argument concerning intersectionality approach, we find interesting dialogues and conversation between four feminist philosophers including SelyaBenhabib, Judith Butler, Nancy Fraser and Drucilla Cornell on their collective book 'Feminist Contentions: A

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8   Gopal Guru, Indian feminism and Dalit Patriarchy, Dalit women talk Differently, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.30, No. 41/42 October 14, 1995.

Philosophical Exchange[9], in this dialogical writing there are two-fold arguments, the first one connects with impossibility of having a singular understanding of feminism thus it makes a case that there cannot be any epistemological claim about having one universality through which the experiences of violence of patriarchy can be represented through liberal democracy therefore there is a inbuilt creative tension as how to articulate the plural and multilayered experiences of being women in any discourse of society but the question arises, are these feminist making a claim towards relativism or multiple ways of articulating the women experiences thus the death of universality on the one hand and metaphysics on the other. However, SelyaBenhabib laments that there cannot be always particularity, there always need to have universal categories of being human, thus she has demonstrated through her body of knowledge and looked forward that women from the perspective of difference and violence, thus any language of emancipation about women's rights and justice has to be universal but in a plural sense. On the contrary to Selya's argument, Judith Butler has offered a critique of universality and offered a performative theory of agency through which any language of justice beyond liberal democracy needs to be articulated, thus we notice some striking similarities as well as dissimilarities between these two feminists, political philosophers who have offered two approaches to unpack the distinction between critical theory feminism and post-structuralist understanding of feminism. This is what the intersectionality approach has started with and therefore we can say, intersectionality approach has deconstructed the embedded understanding of the universality of feminism.

Though how far this approach can be a theoretical and normative resource to capture the experiences of Global South that is Indian women or from the perspective of South Asian

9   SelyaBenhabib and others, Feminist Contentions: Philosophical Exchange, Rutledge, New York, 1995, pp.53.

nationalities 'who' have been colonial subjects and subjected to plethora of violence from imperialistic colonial rule on the one hand and patriarchy on the other. This is something that has been a curious terrain within the Indian feminist scholarships. Interestingly India as a country has encountered different kinds of reforms concerning women's emancipation only in the 19th century through different world views including Vedantic as well as the subaltern (Vivekananda and Phule). But in a postcolonial encounter, we noticed two strands of feminism, one by Non-Dalit feminists and another by Dalit feminists, therefore there is no homogeneous understanding of feminism in Indian context rather there is a plurality of discourses through which feminism as a counter-hegemonic understanding through the language of justice and rights have been articulated.

To unpack the interesting concept of Indian feminism as a subversive non-patriarchal discourse, we find that the writings of Sharmila Rege and Gopal Guru are instructive and insightful both. According to Sharmila Rege, the feminist articulation of caste cannot be captured by the universal category of women experience thus we need to have a Dalit standpoint epistemology to counter the Brahmanic understanding of feminism which is always available in the multilayered form in our cultural unconscious thus how to free ourselves from the baggage of caste and gender which is embedded in our everyday life experiences. In a similar spirit though in a slightly divergent way, Gopal Guru has offered a critique of feminism from the perspective of Dalit political philosophy in his book, 'Cracked Mirror[10]'. According to Gopal Guru, there are empirical Shudras and theoretical Pundits but the ontology of social experience always needs theory and this theoretical frame cannot be equivalence to discourses on aesthetics thus he has articulated anxiety towards Dalit feminism on the one hand and the promise of emancipation and justice through Dalit political philosophy on the other.

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10   Gopal Guru and Sunder Sarukai, Cracked Mirror, Oxford University
          Press, New Delhi, 2012, pp.72

Counter-public as a critical public sphere

Feminism as a counter-public sphere though grounded in the understanding of western discourses of feminism as a subversive and counter-hegemonic political movement which traces its genealogical strengths in the writings of Nancy Fraser, Judith Butler, SelyaBenhabib, and Drucilla Cornell but it has also moved towards non-western feminism from the writings of Boaventura De Sousa Santos and Indian Feminists including Sharmila Rege and Mary E. John, through normative and epistemological concepts such as intersectionality approach but to what extent these approaches are able to construct a new discourse about distributive justice and identity politics is something yet to be sufficiently theorized in the light of South Asian discourses of patriarchal violence and injustices done to the women and sexual minorities in Indian context. However, the recent upsurge in the domain of Indian democracy towards substantive justice and affirmative action is an indicator towards these debates that Indian democracy needs to be deepened from the perspective of subaltern citizens which is also known as marginality discourse. One also needs to notice that we have yet to move beyond the derivative discourses of western hegemonic political philosophies and possibility to decolonize our 'own' theoretical and conceptual frames to understand Indian social and political realties from South Asian perspective[11].

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A Diasporic Perspective: Cultural Ambiguity in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*

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Abstract

Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* explores men and women relationships in a foreign country. When a person enters the new culture, he will be in dilemma in the process of accepting the new culture or adhere to the old culture. This causes a bitter conflict which results in the conflicting minds of protagonists in relation to their cultural, social, economical and religious backgrounds against the existing world of reality that too in a foreign land. *The Namesake* is a shift from cultural translation to hybridity and the 'third space' of transnationalism. At the initial stage house appears to be pivotal where Ashima Ganguli, a first-generation immigrant and the prime female character, aspires to preserve her Indianness and rebuild homeland traditions while bringing up the Indian-American children. But it slowly changes to a transnational space. After the demise of her husband, she desires to abandon any

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permanent residence and oscillates between her homeland and her immigrant country.

This article, A Diasporic Perspective: Cultural Ambiguity in Jhumpa Lahri's *The Namesake*, aims to explore the Diaspora perspectives in Jhumpa Lahiri Fiction. It exposes mainly the cross-cultural ambiguity and its reflections in her novel: *The Namesake*.

Keywords: Identity Crisis, Cultural Ambiguity, adjustment, Establishment of Roots, Alien Land.

Introduction

Jhumpa Lahiri is well known Diasporic writer and a notable contemporary literary champion, who writes about the condition of India Diaspora in USA and themes of sense of exile, alienation and cross cultural conflicts and identity crisis. In addition, she goes beyond the feelings and paves the new way of thinking as per the new environment.

Lahiri was born in London, England in 1967. She was born to the first generation Bengali immigrants who emigrated from India. It is clear that her family belongs to a class of a largely successful Indian Americans and it is this segment of society which Lahiri records in her fiction. Her sorties are the gateways into the large submerged territory of 'cross-culturalism', and her novels are symbols to share cultures as it is experienced by readers. She received many laurels including the Trans Atlantic "Award fromHenfiled Foundation (1993), the O Henry Award for the short story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). Her fictional world comprises *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), a short story collection, *The Namesake (*2003), *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008), and *The Lowland* (1913).

As a prolific writer with an Indian background, she is a

representative figure for non-immigrant Americans who do not fully understand what it means to straddle with life between two cultures. Lahiri is a successful writer because she writes for herself. She does not think of critics or peers when writing. The fiction of Lahiri portrays the expatriate experiences of women in her fiction which is replete with Indian women migrants, in particular, who create a mini Bengal in the USA. Though, men in Lahriri's fiction are well educated and professionally sound, they are cumbersome to toe in line with the chosen world and their attachment with the native. They are in dilemma which prevents them from cuddling the western life or even shaking hands with their western colleagues. The eccentricity of bold choices and non-native challenges are causes of discomfort for Jhumpa Lahiri's women characters. Her characters face the conflicts such as struggles with interpersonal relationships and stress of daily existence. Her narrator unfolds the complexity of the Diasporic life in terms of the variations and diversities as also the contrasts and contradictions of human experience. She portrays the uprootedness of her Diasporic characters from their homeland and their loneliness in a foreign geographical location and cultural milieu.

As a Diasporic writer, apart from the other themes, she attempts to deal with the cultural confusion of immigrants. Diasporas primarily experience the identity crisis, dislocation, and alienation. In case of Diasporas, it is not indispensable that the mother land should be real land. It can also be an imaginary land in many instances. It is real that the Diasporas need a land of their own; either it is real or imaginary land. In fact, it is very difficult to portray the Diaspora experiences in an easy way, as it is a complex experience because it explores not only the physical displacement of migrants from mother land, but also psychology of the dislocated persons. To say truly, Jhumpa Lahiri is considered to be the champion in negotiating the troubles faced by the immigrants. Her novels also mirror the reflections of the cross-cultural

problems plenty in number. Though the novel moves around the filial bond between father and son, it re-enacts the patriarchal and heteronormative tropes of the term diaspora.

This article aims to explore the Diaspora Perspectives in Jhumpa Lahiri's Fiction. It exposes mainly the cultural ambiguity and cross-cultural reflections in her novel, *The Namesake*. It also explores men and women relationships in a foreign country. When a person enters the new culture, he will be in dilemma in accepting the new culture or adhering to the old culture. This causes a bitter conflict which results in the conflicting minds of protagonists in relation to their cultural, social, economical and religious backgrounds against the existing world of reality that too in a foreign land.

The first novel, *The Namesake*, was published in as a novella in *The New Yorker* and later changed to a full length novel. The events in this fictional work oscillate between Calcutta, Boston and New York City. It also examines the differences involved in the native and alien cultures. It not only touches the hearts of immigrants of U.S, but also the original settlers in multi levels.

The Namesake (2003) explores many of the themes like cultural alienation and loss of identity tackled in her previous story collection *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999). According to Savita Singh:

> The novel sums up the theme of roots and wings where roots stand for the deep-rooted beliefs, tradition, customs, the identity one is born with one's beginnings, where as wings stand for freedom scaling new heights exposure for dreams and ambitions of, life. A man is always in pursuit of new wings trying to disentangle. This results in anguish and alienation. The characters in the novel attest to its reality. (The Theme of Roots... p. 4)

The themes are almost the same such as immigration, assimilation, family relations, travelling, and an abiding tension

because of habitation between Indian and American cultures leading to reduce the image and identity of individuals.

The Namesake mirrors Indian immigrants in the USA and the lives of first and second generations, and how the immigrants face the cultural dilemmas in a foreign land. Lahiri portrays the immigrants in their glee and inclination to cling to their own cultural belief and traditions, but gradually imbibe and adjust to the cultural ways of the host country too. Their offspring groomed to be 'bilingual' and 'bicultural' face cultural dilemmas and displacement more. In *The Namesake*, Lahiri portrays Gogol, the hero of the novel, who faces multiple problems only because of being an immigrant and who fails to live his life according to his desires. His mother wishes him to be considered an Indian-American, contrary to his desire to be a pure American in any way. Moreover, his marriage is also a failure due to unexpected reasons. He leads his life unwillingly and never lives the life as he desires. Lahiri, while examining the double status and thereby experiencing a hybrid identity, examines the social and psychosomatic stages that Ganguli goes through. In fact, each and every character in the novel takes dual nations' cultures to obtain a sense of recognition in a land which belongs to and strangely which doesn't belong to them.

The migrated couple, Ashima and Ashok, oscillates between India and the United States of America, motivated to be in touch with their Indian background and in a way insisting their children to do the same. Meanwhile, they work towards establishing a good career in the present place. The troubles begin with the place of birth and the cultural differences arise between the two generations. As Phutela Rohit aptly comments on the novel in his work "*Diasporic Trajectory in Anita Desai's Bye-Bye Blackbird and Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake*": "The novel is also about the second generation and the need to rediscover itself by rejecting the old and the bitter sweet comprised it makes in pursuit of the American Dream." (Diasporic Trajectory in . . . p. 10)

Therefore, the readers notice Gogol, the hero of the novel, from his mother's womb to the metaphorical womb of his room, into which he returns in the final scene of the novel and finds a link with his father and his Indian roots. The novel often gyrates in the form of pairs such as – two countries – India and America, two continents – Asia and Europe, two major cities – Calcutta and New York and also two cultures, two names, and two identities, everything dual.

In the first scene of the novel, *The Namesake*, Ashima is a symbol of confusion as an emigrant wife. She is married to a student pursuing a Doctoral degree in Electrical Engineering. She holds the hands of her husband and follows his footprints to the United States of America. She feels terribly nostalgic even after eighteen months of stay and hesitates to get adjusted to American ways. Throughout her pregnancy, she yearns for a different mixture of Rice Krispies, Planters peanuts, and chopped onion, to which she adds salt, lemon juice and green chilli pepper. Ashima feels that the life in America is burdensome and conflicting for women immigrants, and it is like a lifelong pregnancy: Lahriwrites, "Though no longer pregnant, she continues, at times, to mix Rice Krispies and peanuts and onions in a bowl. For being a foreigner, Ashima is beginning to realize, is a sort of lifelong pregnancy." (*The Namesake*, p. 49)

This 'concoction', in Lahiri's term, reminds Ashima of a snack she used to buy on Calcutta sidewalks, but it is a 'humble approximation' (*The Namesake,* p. 1), a replacement, because in the American version, "as usual, there's something missing." (*The Namesake*, p.1)

Although immigrants try to repeat parts of India in her kitchen(s) in America, they have to mix ingredients at hand her to prepare well-liked Indian dishes. Roman Alice Bran rightly observes: "These articulations are acts of subjectivity-making and self-assertion, expressions of desire and yearning which

participate in a literary tradition connecting the Asian American immigrant experience with a visceral, embodied experience of difference." (*Immigration: 'A Lifelong Pregnancy'* ... p. 78)

Ashima doesn't address her husband by his name, Ashoke, because the Bengali tradition demands a Benagali wife not to do that. In fact,

Ashima never thinks of her husband's name when she thinks of her husband, even though she knows perfectly well what it is. It's not the type of thing Bengali wives do. Like a kiss or caress in a Hindi movie, a husband's name is something intimate and therefore unspoken, cleverly patched over. And so, instead of saying Ashoke's name, she utters the interrogative that has come to replace it. (*The Namesake*, p. 2)

The American men utter their wives 'I love you'. She never heard such a kind of utterance, nor does she expect to hear from her own husband because "this is not how they are." (*The Namesake*, p. 3)

Ashima experiences cultural conflict on several occasions even after reaching America. One among the conflicts is christening her first born child. The compiler birth certificate in hospital urges to find a name for the baby to be entered in the birth certificate on the fourth day after delivery to discharge from the hospital. Ashima asks her husband to name the child hazily. As such, it is compulsory for the couple to come to an opinion and coin a name for the new born baby. In such a hazy and confused situation Ashok names his child after the Russian writer Nikolai Gogol because he is his fan. The child is neither an Indian nor an American but a Russian named after Russian author. Gagol Ganguli, the hero of the novel, encumbered himself with a pet name. The name appears to be hollow and somehow incomplete to Gogol. This kind of feeling doubles his dilemma and insecurity as an outsider caught in a cob web of two cultures: Indian homeland of parents and America. Lahiri has successfully

portrayed the ambivalence over her identity through the character Gogol, the protagonist of the novel.

The Namesake deals with the story of Gogol Ganguli, the American-born son of India immigrants from his birth to adulthood. For many reasons, he dislikes his name Gogol and to be compared to his namesake, Nikolai Gogol, a Russian writer. In the course of time, on one occasion, Gogol attends a panel discussion about Indian Novels Written in English. There he notices the distinctive definition of the cultural conflict he is facing. He comes to a clear idea about ABCD, 'American Born Confused Desi', and avoids ABCD friends. "For they remind him too much of the way his parents choose to live, befriending people not so much because they like them but because of a past they happen to share." (*The Namesake*, p. 119)

After joining the graduation, he desires to renounce his old name and rechristen as Nikhil. Therefore, he strives hard to out of his parents' way of thinking. When he has struggling time to become 'American', his parents coaxed him to remain Indian. World famous author Salman Rushdie too says in *Imaginary Homelands*: "Migrant straddle two cultures . . . fall between two stools and they suffer 'a triple disruption' comprising the loss of roots, the linguistic and the social dislocation." (*Imaginary Homelands*, p. 19)

Truly, the title of the novel *The Namesake* portrays the internal conflict of Gogol Ganguli who quest for his identity with his unusual names. He loses first his public name, his 'bhalonam' and then his private pet name, his 'daknam'. Thus he tries to tailor his identity after choosing to rename himself. Gogol wants to get rid of the Bengali culture, that he doesn't know, and live differently. He is immersed with confusion not only about his name, but also the cultural contradiction that he experiences constantly. He dislikes to be recognized with a confused identity, as an outsider. He develops a strong yearning to assimilate and to

be one among the American citizens. He strongly believes in that he is an American and wants to flee way himself from everything that is non-American. But, on the one hand, his mother, Ashima, tries to make him to cling to Bengali tradition and culture, and on the other hand she supports him to assimilate in the host tradition and culture for the sake of his career.

When the children are grown up in a foreign land, the cultural conflict takes its root. The question of identity crisis, adjustment, and establishment of their roots in an alien land become difficult. Gogol makes friendship with a girl who looks queer to his parents, but for Gogol it is very late to date with girls since many of his friends of his age have already dated with girls. His parents with Indian cultural background worry a lot to see Gogol growing in an unwanted way and they try to mend his bent of mind. Gogol observes disappointment of his parents when he brings Maxine, his girlfriend, to his house. It is true that at the age of sixteen, the children are not under the command of their parents in America, as the Americans give priority to an individual's liberty than Indians give. Gogol frequently gets into conflict between his 'American Indian' and Indianised American identity. He thinks that he is born and brought up in America. As such he has the fundamental right to be an American.

The multicultural conflict and ambiguity between first generation immigrants and their children's quest for finding their space in an alien country has been successfully portrayed by Lahiri in her fiction. Finding the children growing up in an unwanted way Gangulis try to inject and impart a few parts of Bengali culture in their children by creating a space to encounter with Bengali gatherings wherein Bengalis discuss the native place, language, the Bengali food and other related issues to Bengali. In such a way, Gangulis try to introduce Bengali culture to their offspring and make them know that their roots are not only here but also there. Lahiri writers: "Still, they do what they can. They

make a point of driving in to Cambridge with the children when the ApuTriology plays at the Orson wells, or when there is Kathakali dance performance or a sitar recital at memorial Hall. (*The Namesake*, p. 65)

On the contrary to Indian parents, Americans give importance to the privacy and individuality of their children. Hence Gogol without disapproval from the parents of Maxine enters into her life. On one occasion when Maxine invites him to dinner at her house, he thinks that her parents, Gerald and Lydia, would mind his arrival. But Gogol mind boggles to see Maxine's response in a typical American way: 'why on earth would they mind?' Taking such individual liberty, Gogol and Maxine move hand in hand, and go to movies and dinners as they wish. He sleeps with Maxine, Gerald and Lydia think nothing of their closeness. Simultaneously, Gogol falls in love with Maxine. "They go to darkened humble looking restaurants downtown where the tables are tiny, the bills huge." (*The Namesake*, p. 136). With Indian cultural ethos, Gogol comes out of the relationship with Maxine because his sense of responsibility ignites his cultural roots after the demise of his father. Maxine, as she hails from different culture, agrees that she can't tranquilize Gogol. The Cultural conflict and dilemma between Gogol and Maxine affect their relationship.

On one occasion, Gogol in his school days visits graveyard as a part of project work which horrifies Ashima and instantly she asks: "What type of field trip was this? Only in America are the children taken to cemeteries in the name of art . . . In Calcutta the burning Ghats are the most forbidden places. (*The Namesake*, p. 70)

The first generation immigrants know about their roots, but the second generation doesn't know it in a state of confusion about their identity. Growing up in an alien country they take in most of its traits but sill they are identified as Indians and not Americans. Though they are labelled as Indians, they don't have firsthand experience of India and this makes their situation even worse.

Sense of belongingness continuously haunts them. This quest puts them in a situation that they cannot run away from. Cultural embarrassment is revealed when Moushumi breaks with Graham. As Maxine is for Gogol, Graham is for Moushumi who finds a striking difference between two cultures and decides to get rid of the relationship because she comes to know that these two extreme ends cannot meet together and searching for such relation is futile. Gogol realizes his own need to incorporate both Bengali and American elements into his character. This realization comes to him after immersing himself into entirely Bengali-American relationship with his then-wife, Moushumi.

Cultural conflict plays a pivotal role in the novel *The Namesake*. As in the other novels of Lahiri, in this novel too the male being come to new land for their carrier growth and their wives also follow them and they give birth to the offspring and thus the chain goes on. Due to geographical shift of location, the woman who immigrates with her husband suffers the insecurity in the culture alien to her but also is caught between the two worlds which ignite a sort of suffocation because of the foreign atmosphere.

…our physical alienation from India almost inveritably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely those things they were lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible one, imaginary homelands, Indians of the mind (*Imaginary Homelands*, p. 10)

Ashima truly follows the conventional Indian mourning way of life, but she is no more a traditional Indian widow. She is not an Indian *sati* (a widow to be burntalong with corpse of her husband on funeral pyre), or a subaltern as per Spivak's definition. On the contrary, Ashima intentionally abandons any sort of permanent residence and oscillates between her homeland and her immigrant country, opposite to the myth of a redeeming homecoming. Therefore, she disposes the house to an American family and decides to split her year into two halves - to stay a half year in India

with her relative and another half year in the United States with her children. This is a plan she and Ashoke devised for retirement. "True to the meaning of her name, she will be without borders, without a home of her own, a resident everywhere and nowhere." (*The Namesake*, p. 276).

In this novel, Lahiri has portrayed the psychological and cultural ambiguity between first generation immigrants, Ashima and Ashoke, and second generation immigrants, Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi. The identity crisis and cultural ambiguity is pivotal for the second generation immigrants. As such the first generation immigrants become limbo between the two cultures. They are neither adhered to their cultural past nor find it easier to accept the alien American culture.

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RanabirChakravarti, *The Pull Towards the Coast and Other Essays: The Indian Ocean History and the Subcontinent before 1500 CE,* Primus Books: Delhi, 2020.
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Ashish Kumar*

Abstract

The book consists of ten chapters and two appendices, which have been written by the author, RanabirChakravarti either as articles or book reviews on different aspects of the Indian oceanic world over a period of about a decade (from 2006 to 2019). The expression 'pull towards the coast' in the title of this bookis particularly noticeable and it suggests the importance of the long coastlines of South Asian subcontinent in the Indian Oceanic trade and cultural interactions prior to the arrival of the European powers. The entry of the European powers, viz., the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English into the Indian Oceanic world, according to the author, inaugurated an era of violent naval conflicts; and this violence was not an unintentional outcome of their entry into the Indian Ocean's trading world. Rather, the author draws our attention to the 14th century Latin Crusade Tract (*Tractus qua modo Sarraceni sunt expugnadi*, translated into English as: *How to Defeat the Saracens*) by Bishop William of Adam. This tract suggested in detail to use 'a naval blockade to cut off the Indian commerce with Egypt via the

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Red Sea' to regain the Christian control over the Holy Land by weakening the Fatimid and the Mamluk realms in Egypt (pp. 261-262). Evidently the violent means had been made a part of the European strategy to disintegrate the authority of the Mamluks of Egypt much before their arrival into the Indian Ocean. The same is further attested by the violence unleashed in the Indian Ocean by the Portuguese, who have been the earliest European power to use naval blockade of the Red Sea against the Egypt in the early 16[th]century CE (pp. 264-265).

Before the arrival of the European powers, the Indian Ocean is argued in this book to have been mainly associated with the maritime trade and commerce, and it lacked dominance of any land-based polity either of Asian or African continents (pp. 52-53). Even the much-celebrated naval expeditions of the Cholas (i.e., Kadaram campaign, raiding of 12,000 islands and conquest of Sri-Lanka, from 993 to 1044 CE) and of the Chinese expeditions under the Ming rulers (from 1404 to 1433 CE) never intended to occupy the sea-space of the Indian ocean politically. Instead, it was the desire to gain maximum benefit out of the Indian oceanic trade that drew the Chola naval fleets to the Southeast Asia on a daring naval expedition, and the same appears to have been true for the Chinese naval expeditions (pp. 54-56). Precisely the lack of desire to occupy the sea-space on the part of the land-based polities, the author suggests that had transformed the 'coast' of South Asian subcontinent into an arena of political interest. It was not the sea-space, rather the coastline dotted with several revenue generating premier ports (for instance, Barabaricum, Barygaza, Hastakavapra, Somanatha, Muziris, Kaveripattinam, Naggapattinam, and Tamralipta to name a few) that pulled the rulers towards it, and this is well supported by the statement of Sultan Bahadur Shah (reign 1526-35, and again 1536-1537) of the Muzaffarid dynasty of Gujarat that termed the 'wars by the sea' as 'merchants' affairs and of no concern to the prestige of kings.' (p. 56). Because of their main interest in revenue-yielding potential of maritime trade, according to this book, the agrarian inland polities (for instance, the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Shilaharas, the Cholas and several others) of South Asia had

preferred to occupy the coasts than to establish sovereignty over the sea-space (Chapter 8), and this fact makes the expression the 'pull towards the coast' central to the theoretical framework of RanabirChakravarti's this book.

By shifting the focus from the landlocked Ganga valley to the coastline of South Asia, this book takes the readers into the culturally-plural and multi-dimensional world of the Indian ocean, where people of diverse cultures, ethnicities, linguistic backgrounds and faiths interacted with each-others primarily for material benefits. The author, through his meticulous probing of both primary and secondary evidences including the Classical texts, the Jewish geniza records and the epigraphic evidences including those found at Socotra island, successfully brings into discussion individuals (for instance, NuruddinFiruz) and trading communities (for instance, the Greeks, the Romans, the Jews, the Persians, the Arabs and others) to draw our attention to the complex world of the Indian Ocean comprising two vibrant subzones, viz., the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Studded with several ports, the long coastlines of the South Asian subcontinent attracted the sailors, merchants, pilgrims and pirates, and the monsoon winds, according to the author, had shaped the movement of their ships to and from the Indian coastline in the Arabian Sea (mentioned as bahr Larvi in Arabian texts: literally meaning the sea of Lar, derived from Lata referring to the southern part of Gujarat)from about the first-second century CE onwards (pp. 43, 66).

The coast (*vela*, *saikata* in Sanskrit and *neital* in Tamil) is defined in this book as a connected space that on the one side had the fluid oceanic space and on the other side, it had the extensive hinterland dominated by land-based agrarian polities; it makes the coast a mediating zone between the subcontinent and the ocean. Besides the commercial transactions, the coastal areas came to be occupied by religious establishments, and the author has cited, for instance, the Buddhists (in Samatata and Nagapattinam), the Ajivikas (in Samatata), Shaivites/Pashupatas (in Somanatha) and Muslims (in Somanatha) as some of the examples to underline the complex

cultural character of these areas (pp. 88-91). Two ports, Muziris (identified with Pattanam on the Periyar river) on the Malabar coast and Somanatha (also called, Somanathapattana, Devapattana and Prabhasa) at the confluence of the river Sarasvati with the Arabian Sea in Gujarat are discussed in detail to highlight their inland linkages with different regions of the South Asian subcontinent; likewise, this book underlines the commercial as well as cultural connections of these ports with the communities of the world of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Mediterranean Sea (Chapters 5, 6 and 9). The sailing from the Red Sea with the onset of the South-West Monsoon winds (also termed as the Hippalus in the Greco-Roman literature) enabled the ships to sail directly in open sea to Malabar coast, where Muziriswas situated as a major port in the early centuries of the Common Era. At Muziris traders including the Romans and the Jews among others visited to procure pepper, Gangetic nard, textiles, pearls, ivory items and several other products (pp. 124, 154-55). On the other hand, Somanatha that has been termed a 'maritime city' by the author, emerged as a major commercial as well as cultural coastal space in the late first millennium and the early second millennium CE. Here the Shaiva shrine associated with the Pashupatas was a major attraction for the pilgrims under the Chalukya rulers. Sometime in the 13th century CE, a mosque was built by a Muslim ship-owning merchant, NuruddinFiruz with the help of his local non-Muslim friends including a Pashupatacharya named Virabhadra and a leading merchant named Sri Abhyasimha (p. 244). Having emerged as a hub of commercial and religious activities, Somanathais rightly suggested by the author to have been like Muziris a vibrant coastal space prior to the 1500 CE.

The expression 'South Asia' and 'South Asian Subcontinent' instead of India or Indian subcontinent is used in the book by the author to 'negate the primacy of both the concepts of the nation-state and nationalism in the context of the moorings of South Asia with Indian Ocean in the pre-modern context'. (p. 3). Once the modern, particularly the European concept of nation-state is dropped from the theoretical perspective, the Indian Ocean, having the subcontinent strategically situated in its centre, is

suggested to have become from historical perspective 'a theatre of plurality and diversity in terms of socio-economic and cultural perspective and experiences'. (p. 3). This approach of the author further allows him to question the 'Eurocentric perspective' for the study of the Indian Ocean that have had witnessed an unbroken tradition of seafaring at least from the third millennium BCE. Based on this approach, the author appropriately characterizes the Indian Ocean 'as a shared space, cutting across socio-economic, political and religio-cultural diversities.' (p. 74). This book further strengthens the already well articulated arguments against the primacy of the Roman merchants and the absence of Indians due to orthodox Shastric injunctions in the Indian oceanic trade. The active participation of the Indians from different parts of the subcontinent in the overseas voyages is well highlighted by the author through an in-depth analysis of the literary, epigraphic and archaeological evidences. Rightly, the 'Indian Ocean, covering about 20 per cent of the maritime space of the planet Earth, and having the subcontinent – along with Sri Lanka- at the very central position,' is studied as 'a bridge – and not as a barrier- between the subcontinent and various other areas, neighbouring and far away alike' in this book. (p. 134).

This book even though deals with both the coastlines – western and eastern, of the South Asian subcontinent, the western coastline and the movement of goods and people in the Arabian Sea appear to have been focused upon more in discussion. If one leaves aside the chapter four, which is based on various paintings (but without including their actual photographs) for the study of the early modern Indo-Dutch cross-cultural exchanges, all the chapters of this book lay bare the plural and multi-layered character of the Indian oceanic trade in the pre-1500 CE epoch. Therefore, this book of RanabirChakravarti indeed allows its readers to experience the pull that the coastlines of the South Asian subcontinent exerted on the people, including rulers and others, of diverse regional and linguistic backgrounds in pre-modern times.

Rajesh Gill, *Gender, Culture and Honour: Gender Audit of Punjab and Haryana.*
Rawat Publications, 2019. 392 pages.

Malashri Lal*

Rajesh Gill has written a useful and innovative book on a subject –*Gender, Culture and Honour*--that provides deep cultural contexts to gender studies in India. Taking Punjab and Haryana as the field area, she and her team of mainly women researchers, capture valuable data, interviews and local information in order to formulate an impressive analytical study which can become a significant resource for policy planning and research.

Let me begin with one of the chilling stories that the book documents-- the case of a "purchased woman": The team interviewed Sahina, a 35 year old woman from Assam who was married to Ayub, a rickshaw puller in Mewat, Haryana. Sahina came to Mewat about 24 years go. According to her it was the second marriage of her husband, the first wife having died during child birth; subsequently the baby also died. This was her second marriage as well, she said, the first one happened when she was 10 years old and was brought to Haryana from Assam by a man. In

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her words, "*Mujhe bola tha ki chal tujhe Delhi ghuma ke lata hai*" ("I was told that I'm going on a tour of Delhi") . Once in the power of the *dalal*, whom she calls *mausa ji*/ uncle she was handed from one man to another for various lengths of time, and without marriage except once to a driver. This husband would stay away for a month on each of his trips and come home to only sexually exploit his wife and click indecent pictures. When Sahina complained to the *dalal-mausaji*, he brought her away and married her to Ayub in exchange for Rs. 70,000 as she found out later. (84)

Such stories about female trafficking reveal the consequences of a skewed male-female sex ratio. There aren't enough women in Punjab and Haryana and"brides" have to be purchased from poverty stricken districts elsewhere. My mind wanders back to India's census figures in 2011 in which Haryana had the most adverse sex ratio, and Punjab was the next worst. Has nothing changed in the last decade despite the many woman-centric policies, schemes and legislations in the country?

The main findings of this book are significant of which I wish to emphasise two: "cultural fixation", and "deterrents" through caste and religion.

According to Rajesh Gill "One thing that was common in the whole of study area was the 'Cultural Fixation', which oozed out of the language spoken, both in the villages as well as in the towns, idealization of 'girls', 'women,' on the one hand and (assumptions) about 'boys', men on the other..." Gender violence, perpetrated by notions of honour, function in a context where "the huge burden continues to be borne by the young girls, as well as old women..."(350). The author quotes Emile Durkheim's theory of the "conscious collective" (353) which means that culture is the first and foremost medium through which a collective entity presents itself and gains a sense of its own existence. The power of language to control female and male identity in Haryana and Punjab is illustrated effectively in the section of "masculinity and femininity" (48-53). The markers of masculinity are: alcoholism, drug abuse, bikes/ expensive mobile phones, a moustache,

abusive/aggressive body language, controlling women, television viewing, and body building. The markers of femininity are: lack of mobility, physical appearance, laugh/ speaking loudly not allowed, and early marriage.

Given such cultural conditions, do the activities of the *Khap* panchayat, infamous in Haryana come as a surprise? During field work it was found that upper caste, elderly men dominate the *Khap*, younger men made a token appearance only after the media drew attention to the restrictive nature of the *Khap* constitution. Women are certainly not allowed. The greatest fear of fathers is that a young daughter would elope with a man of another religion or caste and bring shame upon the family. The local code of honour will do anything to stop such an eventuality and that includes pulling girl children out of school on their attaining puberty and marrying them off young, below the legal age of 18 years. When there is errant behaviour by a young couple according to the Khap elders, the punishment is nothing short of death. Stories abound, sadly, of threats and violence being carried out by avenging defenders of caste based "honour"; even more sadly the murderers often escape punishment. There is abundant fear instilled among the young to keep them subservient to traditional, hierarchical norms of caste.

Rajesh Gill's interview team is sharp and are able to obtain answers from their respondents by asking questions obliquely. It seems the young women in the village had contempt for the elder men of the community—who sat around judgementally scrutinising every woman who passed by—for her looks, her clothes, her hair and her gait. The male gaze from the elders is so unnerving that the young women often change their route if they perceive such a group. In fact the women interviewers were themselves confronted with awkward queries and unsavoury remarks in Haryana when they were residents during their field visit.

Rajesh Gill's second unique contribution to gender based research is to demonstrate conclusively that "Caste and religion

acted as the most prominent deterrents to the effective implementation of state run schemes on education and women's health" (354). Here are some illustrations. As we know Haryana was carved out of Punjab in 1966. The chapter on "Media, Public Policy and Legislation: A Gender Audit" shows how the government's well meaning schemes for the uplift of women are often defeated by the mind-set of the people, both men and women. My footnote is that it is important to remember that the same people who make up society are also those who are given the task of implementing the governmental programmes. How can they overcome generations of gender conditioning? Take, for instance, the laws against female foeticide and the prohibitions on sex- selection tests. Would-be-parents and the system have found ways of bypassing the law — the same medical assistant who is to prevent foeticide may be guilty of indicating the sex of the foetus by a gesture or vocabulary like "*laddo bantna*".

Let us take another instance of media reporting on crimes against women. Rajesh Gill's research undertakes a tabulation of news items in *The Tribune* and *Dainik Bhaskar* for a four year period. Listing keywords on the database it is found "that the news headlines were sensationalised and spiced up to attract the reader" (266). Moreover, the analysis of visual items from these newspapers, one in Hindi and the other in English, "clearly shows the extensive use of negative words, objectifying the woman" (274).

So much for the media, but what about the government's good schemes such as widows' pension? Does it reach this most vulnerable category of women in Haryana and Punjab? Shockingly the answer is that the penetration of benefits is abysmally low. Such women cannot travel to a bank, cannot sign, and cannot function with online delivery systems. In some villages of Punjab the pension is as low as Rs. 250 per month. How is it supposed to meet a widow's personal needs even if she manages to access it? Would her family help with such little at stake? One could carry on listing the ameliorative schemes of the government, but this research shows that women's empowerment is a "mirage"

(354). More than the economics of financial aid for women, caste and religion interfere with the process of well meant schemes. "These two states are still gasping for gender justice and gender equality," says the concluding section.

The book however does not end on a pessimistic note; it looks to ways of resolving the problems found on the ground. Its list of 13 recommendations—"interventionist strategies"-- are worth heeding. I'll mention just two which in my work in Rajasthan and Bengal have showed up as important: the role of media and that of police stations. If these could be woman supportive, helpful, positive image creating—much could change. The worst enemy of change is the fear within an individual woman pitted against patriarchy whereas a woman within a collective of whatever nature finds the force of a pressure group striving towards desirable social change. In the end, let me join Rajesh Gill and her team in saying, "We shall overcome—some day/ *Hum hongey kamiyab ek din*".

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Edited Book

Shilliam, R., Anievas, A. and Manchanda, N. (eds) (2014). *Race and Racism in International Relations: Confronting the Global Colour Line,* London: Routledge.

Chapter in Edited Book

Mastanduno M. (2014) 'Realism and Asia' in Pekannen, S. M., Ravenhill, J. and Foot, R. (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the International Relations of Asia,* Oxford: Oxford University Press: 25-44.

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Thayer, B. A. (2006). 'In Defense of Primacy', *The National Interest*, available at http://nationalinterest.org/print/article/in-defense-of-primacy-1300 (accessed 19 August 2016).

Newspaper

Pradhan, B. (2006). 'India's Foreign Policy', *Hindu*, 26 June.

New York Times (2005). 'US-NATO Alliance', 5 April (for news items).

Report*s*

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