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Article

Addressing Intolerance: Invoking Vivekananda's Ideology

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Pankaj Srivastava

Abstract

Intolerance refers to a mindset of a person or a group who does not accept others' opinions, worldviews and ideologies concerning religious, social, and political matters. It disturbs cultural harmony, democratic set-up, coordination and co-integration among members of an integrated society in the sense that it denies the possibility of dialogue, argumentation, deliberation and discussion with opponents (others) by creating an artificial threat to national security, integrity and unity.

In this regard, the paper, firstly, seeks to understand the socio-cultural context of India, highlighting issues of caste, patriarchy and religiosity. It explores - how different identities such as religious, social and political have been formed in a historical and cultural context and how a dominant group and its members often develop an attitude of intolerance towards others. Second, to explore – why in recent decades with free market capitalism, the growth of information- technology and the emergence of consumerist culture, the issue of intolerance has emerged as a

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noticeable phenomenon in every sphere of life. Third, by invoking the ideology of Swami Vivekananda, this study intends to explore the possibility of addressing the issue of intolerance.

Keywords: Intolerance, Patriarchy, Hegemony, Identity, Commodification

Problem Stated

In modern civilisation, human beings with the scientific approach, reasoning and critical thinking have begun to address issues and problems of life and society. They not only critique traditional religious belief systems, customs, rituals and superstitions but also attempt to explain natural and social phenomena, scientifically. On the other hand, with the emergence of capitalism and technology modern society has been organised and directed by a small group of people (the capitalists) who have control over the means of production. Economically powerful people joined hands with political authorities and began to rule and exploit economically weaker, marginalised and backward sections of society. At the same time, it is also pertinent to note that this exploitation by the newly arising section must obtain legal, political and social legitimacy from the very people they exploit. They offered hope to the people to get them relieved from the burden and subjugation of the *zamindari* system and the corresponding political system (*rajwarashahi*). The Modern idea of democracy offered competitive fair elections to the governments, due process of law for justice and protection of rights through the constitution. Nonetheless, the more than century-long process of achieving this democracy was marked by small, medium and large-scale communal clashes between religious groups and caste entities. Even after the long period of stabilisation of democracy in the West and a growing tide of democratisation in the so-called, third world, we have recently witnessed a fresh wave of incidents in India and abroad, wherein beliefs of persons have taken toll on their lives. Modern civilization, is once again witnessing massive

intolerance, chauvinism and hatred among people, groups, communities and countries which results in political, social and religious conflicts at local and global levels all over the world. Moreover, despite the most appealing promises of modernity with its constitutional and electoral democracies, the foundational and institutional checks and balances, and the discourses of rights and duties, the previous century has witnessed the two world wars, concentration camps, gas chambers, nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction, racist and xenophobic regimes, and then, the emergence of transnational terrorist organisations. Sen (2017: 2) elucidates:

> Intolerance does not merely imply religious dogmatism anymore. It indicates now the general unwillingness to endure any differing opinion, whether religious, social, political or otherwise. It impacts almost everyone in varied ways as it seeks to denounce all sorts of difference, deviation, divergence in the name of order, security and homogeneity. It can create havoc for the people on the margin in any system, particularly when it is backed by the organized forces of politics, economy and society. (Sen, 2017: 2)

Seemingly, some past studies in political psychology, (Siddanius & Pratto, 1993) concludes that the recent rise of intolerance in the present scenario is mainly due to Western modernity coupled with free market capitalism which gave rise to a consumerist culture where human beings competing for consumption, evade the possibility of human fraternity. Or as a byproduct of Globalisation, as discussed in the case of Islamic Extremism (Iqbal & Mabud, 2019). But, in this paper, I argue that sources of intolerance may be traced in deeper socio-cultural settings of Indian society, from where issues of identity pertaining to religion, caste and gender have emerged and further involved political as well as economic complexities.

Identities and Intolerance

India can be considered a communitarian society since Indians have been deeply rooted and emotionally associated with their families, kinships, clans and various religious and ethnic groups. One's identity is constituted in and through various identity markers such as family, gender, castes, class, languages, religions, regions etc. These markers are mostly ascribed to a person from his/her birth. One is brought up, trained and socialised within a cultural setting which is formed by these identity markers. Identity can be understood in terms of differences from others. Buddhist logician Dignaga[1] in his theory of signification maintains that meaning is constituted through differences. Identity is always relational. A person is not defined by inherent characteristics but rather understood as to how he/she differs from others. The same would be true of all collective identities. The terms 'identity and difference' are used to convey this sense of identity. Accordingly, a person gains his/her identity through a socio-cultural process of exclusion and inclusion within different groups. They act as markers of our identity conveying the sense of exclusion/ inclusion, insider/ outsider and us/them. That is to mean that one's identity is labelled not only separating her/him from one group but also associating (identifying) her/him with another group. In any case, identity is always relational. But in these socio-cultural processes, at times, a person develops an attitude of intolerance towards other identities. Most often people or groups are forced to live with their ascribed status concerning religion, caste, gender, class etc. in hegemonic social structures. There is always a threat to India's cultural pluralism when a group/ community having a mindset to homogenise society advocates national unity under the pretext of national security, order and uniformity. This group/community becomes intolerant towards other identities and opposes the very idea of cultural pluralism.[2]

India's Cultural Pluralism

India is a pluralistic, diverse and heterogeneous society as people belonging to different religions, regions, castes, classes, races, and languages have been living together and engaged with each other since the ancient period. Nehru coined the phrase "unity and diversity" to describe the spirit of India; he advocates that Indian unity is not something imposed from the outside but rather, 'It was something deeper and within its fold, the widest tolerance of belief and custom was practiced and every variety acknowledged and even encouraged.' (Nehru, 2004: 55) Accordingly, it is acknowledged that India had a tradition of interdependence which integrated them to co-habitat together through centuries. Khalid (2016:111) observe 'Indian civilisation is distinguished from other civilisations in respect of its continuity and heterogeneity, its accommodating history and its composite character'. As different sets of people such as the Aryans, the Mongoloid groups, the Kushans, the Sakas, the Greeks, the Huns, the Arabs, the Persians and the Turks who belonged to different religions, regions, races and ethnicity, migrated to and settled in India at different points of time. Since these groups came with their belief systems, rituals, customs, literature, arts, philosophies and worldviews and maintained their identities, Indian society grew and emerged as a pluralistic and composite culture. Indian culture has continued to be accommodative, cordial and tolerant which is why different groups maintained their distinctive identities in the larger fold of Indian civilisation.

The historical reality of India and the civilisational contours of Indian nation state are quite different from the Western forms of multicultural society. The idea of nation has emerged out of the conflict in the whole of the modern world whereas in India it has emerged as a result of pressure exerted by the socio-cultural reality of the society. This is a synergy of its diverse cultures, religions, traditions, languages, societies etc. The continuity and heterogeneity of Indian civilisation and its composite and syncretic culture make it a unique and distinct from the rest of the world. Therefore, the idea of multiculturalism in the case of India is

well synchronised with its historical-social evolution of the idea of nation. Vikram, (2017: 3) maintains:

> The historical reality of India and the civilisational contours of Indian nation state are quite different from the Western forms of multicultural society. The idea of nation has emerged out of the conflict in the whole of the modern world whereas in India it has emerged as a result of pressure exerted by the sociocultural reality of the society. This is a synergy of its diverse cultures, religions, traditions, languages, societies etc. The continuity and heterogeneity of Indian civilisation and its composite and syncretic culture make it a unique and distinct from the rest of the world. Therefore, the idea of multiculturalism in the case of India is well synchronised with its historical-social evolution of the idea of nation.

In this view, tolerance, acceptance and fraternity may be counted as the main features of Indian culture which unites and amalgamates different identities in Indian society. Cultural pluralism provides a space for individuals for enhancing and enriching their potentialities and capabilities as they get opportunities to interact with one another and expose themselves to different cultural specificities pertaining to religion, regions, languages etc. Parekh (2002: 167) points out:

> Cultural diversity is also an important constituent and condition of human freedom. Unless human beings are able to step out of their culture, they remain imprisoned within it and tend to absolutise it, imagining it to be the only natural or self-evident way to understand and organise human life. And they cannot step out of their culture unless they have access to others. Although human beings lack an Archimedean standpoint or a 'view from nowhere', they do have mini Archimedean standpoints in the form of other cultures that enable them to view their own from the outside, tease out its strengths and weaknesses, and deepen their self consciousness.

Cultural diversity provides an opportunity for an individual or a community to engage and interact with different cultures encompassing philosophy, religion, literature and language, art, music etc. This interaction/dialogue of different cultures not only strengthens the scope for critically engaging and seeing the strength and weaknesses of one's own culture but also creates spaces for the emergence of syncretic and composite culture. In this regard, one may appreciate the contributions of different reform movements in India such as Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Arya samaj, Satyashodhak Samaj, Ramkrishna Mission etc. Notably, these reform movements created an internal dialogue among different communities to address different social and religious issues and problems in India while critically engaging with foreign (western) culture.

Roots of Intolerance: Caste System, Patriarchy and Capitalism

The sources of intolerance can be traced in cultural settings of Indian society which give rise to various inequalities, discriminations and prejudices concerning castes, class and gender however, scholars have also sought to look for an explanation of co-existence and functional dependence in Indian society exemplifying a long period of the jajmani system as Gough (1960: 89) suggests that the jajmani system may have survived for 2500 years. The *jajmani* system was an appropriate example of the functional interdependence of castes where a food-producing family and the families that supported them with goods and services had lived together with traditional ties (*jajmani*). The village society was integrated by *jajmani* relationships in such a way that it regulated all affairs of one's life including religious, political, social and economic. Everyone was related to *jajmani* links. As Wiser observes:

> The barber, grain parcher, potter, and washerman exchange services. Their interrelationship is the most symmetrical relationship in the village. They each value the services of the other equally. They serve each other as they would serve other castes in the village, and expect no

> supplementary payments.... Their demands upon each other are fairly constant, whereas those upon other services are not so constant. (Wiser 1936: 61-62)

Hence according to Wiser's observation *jajmani* is one of the existent systems which interconnect the members of Hindu society economically and socially. Each caste receives and provides services in the network of the *jajmani* system.

Problematising Interdependency of Castes

Beidelman (1959: 6) defines *jajmani* system as 'a feudalistic system of prescribed, hereditary obligations of payment and occupational and ceremonial duties between two or more specific families of different castes in the same locality'. According to Beidelman, this system is primarily based on caste-related duties as well as land ownership. But the land tenure was a power determinant factor within *jajmani* system. In this system, upper castes tend to be *Jajmans* who were mostly landowners while lower castes are known as *Kamins* (landless labours providing services). Brahmins were economically powerful since they were religiously superior and politically well-connected to the ruling class. In fact, *jajmani* system was fundamentally based on the logic of purity and pollution which determined the hierarchical order of occupations. For instance, occupations such as haircutting, washing, leatherwork, scavenging etc. get a lower position since these jobs were associated with pollution whereas rituals, rites and religious activities performed by Brahmans were associated with purity and enjoyed a higher position in the hierarchical system of occupation (*jajmani*). Though in the *jajmani* system power determinant was land and *jajmans* retained influential and powerful positions since they owned land yet it is to be noted that temple priests, shopkeepers or traders who received grain payments might not have land but still have superior economic and political positions. They commanded and enjoyed the services of *Kamin* castes.

Social and political reforms had a profound impact on women, propelling them into previously unexplored domains of public

life. Notably, the nationalist movement spearheaded significant political transformations, including advocating for women's suffrage, thus encouraging their active involvement, particularly under the guidance of Gandhian leadership. As a result, women get equal right in the constitution of independent India. As Leonard (1976:118) maintains:

> Thus, legal system and the political and social goal of new nation provided a context in which some women could take advantage of new opportunities and Indian women have achieved higher rates of participation in several public and professional areas than women in the United States.

We witnessed the crude reality of caste stratification in which upper castes expressed their intolerance towards lower castes. Lower castes have been exploited, rejected and subjected to various physical and psychological atrocities. Ambedkar observed that the caste system is essentially an unequal mode of social interaction and relations based on purity and pollution. He argued that this system is structured on the foundations of metaphysical and religious (Hindu) belief systems and regulated through religious codes, symbols, rituals and rites (samskaras) that do not allow intermixing and fusion of castes. However, both Vivekananda and Gandhi did not repudiate the varna theory of four major groups, but they opposed and fight against the idea of a group below the varnas while interestingly they held all varnas to be equal. Vivekanand made a clear distinction between *Varna* and *Jati. Varnas* may be understood within the metaphysical framework of Samkhya as innate psychological traits or tendencies (*gunas*) of persons. One may choose one's work/ profession according to one's innate tendencies. Both Gandhi and Vivekananda justified the *varna* system for the organisation and regulation of social and economic transactions and interaction to integrate society. But seemingly, varna and caste (jati) both are interrelated on account of purity and pollution of jobs. That is why Ambedkar repudiated the entire caste system that evolved against the backdrop of the Varna system. Accordingly, one might argue against the idea of Sanskritization, which is the imitation of upper-

class customs by lower castes to raise their status. Notably, this idea of Sanskritization maintains the hegemonic structure of caste hierarchy. But Gandhi did not endorse for political or legal battle for the upliftment of the status of untouchables by giving legal rights rather he stresses raising the moral & spiritual consciousness of the upper caste to accept the lower caste. Ambedkar firmly believed that untouchables must fight for their legal rights which is the only solution to the problem of untouchability. Pointing out the clear-cut differences between the stands and strategies of Gandhi and Ambedkar in dealing with the problem of untouchability Guha points out:

> Gandhi wished to save Hinduism by abolishing untouchability, whereas Ambedkar saw a solution for his people outside the fold of the dominant religion of the Indian people. Gandhi was a rural romantic, who wished to make the self-governing village the bedrock of free India; Ambedkar an admirer of city life and modern technology who dismissed the Indian village as a den of iniquity. Gandhi was a crypto-anarchist who favoured non-violent protest while being suspicious of the state; Ambedkar a steadfast constitutionalist, who worked within the state and sought solutions to social problems with the aid of the state (Guha, 2010: 33)

Though Gandhi and Ambedkar have different ways to eradicate untouchability in Indian society yet their aims, aspirations and commitments were similar as they were primarily concerned with the emancipation of the depressed classes (Dalits). Recently, scholars such as Thomas Puntahm, Ramchandra Guha, Partha Chatterji and Akash Singh have made significant attempts to rethink the diversion and conversion of Gandhi and Ambedkar. More interestingly, they are visualising the possibilities of linkages, cleavages, dialogue and reconciliation between them to resolve the conflicts and tensions between the two camps of pro-Gandhi, and pro-Ambedkar as at times followers and admirers of Gandhi become anti-Ambedkar and Ambedkarits turn into anti-Gandhi. In this connection, Vivekananda's idea of

"Daridranarayan" is noteworthy in that he establishes that the main function of religion is service for those who are marginalized, miserable, subjugated and exploited. Being a reformist and modernist, Vivekanand was very critical of all wrongs, superstitions and immoral practices in the name of religion. Vivekananda's vision of social service is based on love as he used it as a powerful tool for social welfare programs by establishing Ramakrishna Mission. He says 'it is love and love alone that I preach, and I base my teachings on the great Vedantic truths of the sameness and omnipresence of the soul of this universe. (Vivekananda, 2005 Vol II: 97) Interestingly, when he defines man as a divine being, he pointed to God within each one of us. Alternately put, if sameness and omnipotence of the soul be taken as premises, then universal love appears as an operative conclusion. Accordingly, he asserts that poverty and the caste system are the curses which need to be eradicated. Hence, he sees God in the poor (*Daridranarayan*)[3] and his prime concerns are the eradication of poverty and restoring dignity to the untouchables. To my mind, both Gandhi and Ambedkar extend Vivekananda's idea of service to humanity in their specific ways. For Ambedkar, like Vivekananda, religion is not merely meant for individual salvation but rather for the social emancipation of the depressed classes. That is why Ambedkar renounced Hinduism and embraced Buddhism, the best-suited solution to the religious problems of the depressed classes. Ambedkar rejected Christianity, Islam, and Sikhism and preferred Buddhism on account of two reasons. Firstly, Buddhism had an Indian origin and past connections secondly, it is a religion primarily based on morality with a critical enquiry of metaphysical belief system. Hence, it gives no place to the caste system. It is based on two fundamental moral values namely equality and compassion. Gandhi also develops his religiosity on the foundation of moral conscience and experiments with truth for the realisation of swaraj (self-rule).

Patriarchy in Indian Society

Another harsh social reality of India is that it has been a patriarchal society. Patriarchy refers to, beliefs, values and a pattern of hegemonic relationships between men and women rooted in political, social, and economic systems. Qualities associated with women (feminine) are undervalued and underestimated whereas attributes pertaining to men (masculine) are always appreciated, honoured and privileged. Patriarchal relations prevail in both the private and public spheres, ensuring that men dominate in both. Since the ancient period, women have been deliberately exploited, subjugated and denied their basic rights for self-growth and self-expression through oppressive socio-cultural practices in the name of religion. Women still suffer at every juncture of their lives. Since childhood, they are denied their basic rights and participation in society concerning various matters such as health, education, religion, and political and social affairs. They still suffer and face many challenges, difficulties and hardships not only in public and professional lives but also in their homes and families as their selves are constituted and subjugated through such religious and socio-cultural indoctrination that they remain marginalised and get an unequal and inferior status. Indeed, religious tradition and social institutions play a significant role in shaping and establishing the position and status of women in society. Protest and reform movements within different religions like engaged Buddhism, Vaishnavism, Sufism, Sikhism and more specifically, in the 19th century, various social and religious reform movements such as Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, Prathana Samaj, Ramkrishna Mission etc. contributed to the improvement and enhancement of the status of women by criticising ill and immoral practices against women in name of religion, culture and tradition in India. These religious reform movements resist various wrongs and immoral practices and not only raised issues concerning patriarchy, and society but also prepared the religious and philosophical ground for abolition of them. Resultantly, it laid the constitutional and legal provisions such as eradication of the practice of Sati (burning a widow with her husband's body), raising the legal age of marriage and sexual intercourse, the sanctioning of widow remarriage and the education of women.

Social and political reforms had a profound impact on women, propelling them into previously unexplored domains of public life. Notably, the nationalist movement spearheaded significant political transformations, including advocating for women's suffrage, thus encouraging their active involvement, particularly under the guidance of Gandhian leadership. As a result, women get equal right in the constitution of independent India. As Leonard (1976:118) maintains:

> Thus, legal system and the political and social goal of new nation provided a context in which some women could take advantage of new opportunities and Indian women have achieved higher rates of participation in several public and professional areas than women in the United States.

We witness how members of a family and society, have always shown intolerance toward a female child. Sons are regarded as a means of social security while women remain under male domination. To my mind, however, due to social reform movements, it was possible to eradicate various social problems through legal and constitutional provisions but it is also a noticeable fact that even in these social reforms, women have been primarily regarded as sisters, mothers and wives, inferior to their male counterpart in the society. In this regard, it is mentioned that Vivekananda also glorifies motherhood since his master saw motherhood not only in Sarada Devi (his wife) but in all women. That is why Vivekananda declared that the Western idea of womanhood is wife while the eastern ideal is mother. He highlights the importance of the mother in the family as he declares:

> The mother is the God in our family. The idea is that the only real love that we see in the world the most unselfish love is in the mother always suffering and always loving. And what love can represent the love of God more than the love which we see in the mother? Thus the mother is the incarnation of God on earth to the Hindu. (Vivekananda 2005: Vol IX, 202)

Indeed, the patriarchal system involves a hegemonic structure[4] where gender stereotypes and biases at times operate subtly through various socio-cultural practices. These reforms were primarily led by men. In the post-independent period with the emergence of modernisation in Indian society, women faced new challenges where however they got new economic opportunities for employment They were also expected to look after and take care of children and family and house affairs.

Nevertheless, Indian women are currently confronted with a distinct set of challenges, intricately linked to the ongoing struggle for the modernization of society. These issues have emerged due to the continuous process of modernization, spanning a century and a half in Indian society. Consequently, the education of women has expanded significantly, leading to increased opportunities for independent employment, the acknowledgement of legal property rights, and a gradual liberation of marriage from age-old constraints. But according to Namboodiripad, 1975:4) 'These, however, are transforming Indian society in the direction of capitalist development which means, for women, that in place of old forms of subjection, new forms are rising; old chains are broken-that too partly-to be replaced by a new chain.'

Hence, at present women are trapped between professional and personal life and suffer in both spheres of life. Instead of economic stabilities, they are still a victim of the oppressed patriarchal system of Indian society. They are paid less for the same work and assignments in comparison to their male associates.

Commodification of Identities

With the rise of the capitalist economy in India, there has been a gradual shift from the established patterns of traditional society towards modernisation through Industrial growth and the development of modern technology, equipment and scientific knowledge. India witnessed processes of economic growth, industrialisation, urbanisation, and globalisation. Presently, India

experiences continuous change both culturally and structurally since capital penetrates and makes its impact on all identities including religion, caste and gender. The very nature of capital is that it commodifies different identities in the sense that a person's identity is defined in terms of material possession, outwardly external appearances, ownership and control over the resources. With modernisation, industrialisation and urbanisation, people have been attracted to cities and urban areas for comfortable lifestyles and better opportunities. They, in search of jobs and other opportunities, moved to urban areas where industries and factories were established. As a result, two important changes took place in their lives. Firstly, to some extent, the traditional (jajmani) relationship and bonds that prevailed, loosened, and came under interrogation. People gained new identities and raised their voices against the feudal system. Secondly, they developed a new relationship of competition and conflict with their fellow beings in their working spaces. The market-driven logic of what is saleable and profitable becomes a matter of paramount concern. The market does not give any weightage to one's moral virtues and the capacity to attain transcendence. Interestingly, religion deals with such qualities such as transcendence, morality, integrity and authenticity. But in the capitalist mode of production religion also takes new turns and becomes a product of consumption, a commodity. Especially on religious occasions, festivals and celebrations, a market is full of religious products, goods and commodities for consumption. Religion is thus converted into a commodity and is expected to lose its distinction in the ever-growing heap of commodities. Nonetheless, this is what capitalism did almost everywhere in the world, but specifically, in the Indian setup, it is the corresponding politics, where the devil of intolerance found its allies. The economy of religion plays a significant role in the making of one's religious identity. By controlling *the products* of this economy, religious identities may be regulated for achieving political goals. Recently, in India, the term 'social politics'[5] emerged as a pragmatic response to the decades of a growing disconnect between the needy masses and political experts. It rolled almost all possible issues around the essential

core of religious identity and faith. Hybrid religious products are designed in such a way that after consuming religious goods, products and services, often, one develops a false outlook towards both, religion as well as the question of development and governance. Narayan (2021: 176) notes:

> the political and social group inspired by the Hindutva of RSS and BJP are working on issues related with development ecology, environment and water. Keeping the river in the backdrop as a source of water linked with both sacred and profane meaning, these groups are working to evolve a new social politics around various local, regional and great rivers of India such as Ganga, Narmada Brahmaputra and Godavari.

By doing social politics against the backdrop of religion Sangh Parivar and BJP appealed to various interest groups (especially Dalits) at local and regional levels[6] and they would be incorporated/converted into the larger folds of Hindutva identity. Resultantly, Hindutva identity has begun to emerge as a majoritarian as well as dominant group since marginalised and other sections of society have also begun to take everything from the perspective of sacred as well as development. This identity politics based on pillars of religion and development may be easily mobilised and polarised electorally.

Conflict of Identities: Vivekananda's Religious Resolution

Vivekananda warned people of gaining a deceptive identity and inauthentic life by associating themselves with rituals, rites and symbolism which change the personality of people externally and separate them from their fellow beings. He strongly condemned this identification of externalities with religion. Unfortunately, the history of religions tells us that often religiosity based on externalities results in conflicts, riots and bloodshed. Religion, instead of being a blessing, becomes a curse. Referring to this dark side of religion, Vivekanand (2005: 360) points out:

> Though there is nothing that has brought to man more blessing than religion, yet at the same time there is nothing that has brought more horror than religion. Nothing has made more for peace and love than religion; nothing has engendered fiercer hatred than religion. Nothing has made the brotherhood of man more tangible than religion; nothing has bred more bitter enmity between men and man than religion. nothing has built more charitable institutions, more hospitals for men and even for animals than religion nothing has deluged the world with more blood than religion.

Vivekananda stresses the interconnectedness of religion and philosophy in case philosophy is understood as an enquiry of the reality of the self by raising the fundamental question -who am I? and What is the relationship between self and others (non-self) while religion brings immediate awareness of the true nature of the self. Exploring this relationship Vivekananda says 'religion without philosophy runs into superstition; philosophy without religion becoming dry atheism' (Vivekananda 2005, Vol VII: 36). On another occasion highlighting this relationship, he maintains:

> Concrete, generalise, abstract are three stages in the process of philosophy. the highest abstraction in which all things agree, is the One. In religion we have first symbols and forms, next mythology and the last philosophy. The first two are for the time being; philosophy is the underlying basis of all, and the others are only stepping stones in the struggle to reach the ultimate (Vivekananda 2005, Vol VII: 49).

Every religion has three aspects- cognitive, affective and conative. Cognitive means faith in transcendence; affective refers to emotional relation with transcendence while conative aspect refers to rituals and moral acts. Vivekanand (2005, Vol II: 377) also mentions the three aspects of religion:

> First there is the philosophy (contained in scriptures)

> which represents the whole scope of that religion, setting forth its basic principles, the goal and means of reaching it. Second part is methodology which is philosophy made concrete. It consists of legends relating to lives of men or of supernatural beings and so forth. The third part is ritual. This is still more concreate and is made of forms and ceremonies, various physical attitudes, flowers and incense, and many other things that appeal to senses. In these consists ritual. You will find that all recognised religions have these three elements. Some lay more stress on one, some on another.

To my mind, people generally ignore the first part of the religion which is abstract and more philosophical and provides meaning, significance, metaphysical and epistemological explanations for the belief system/ faith. It is much about self-inquiry and the journey towards the inner dynamics of self. For Vivekananda, religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. He develops his idea of universal religion against the backdrop of the Upanishadic and Vedantic Metaphysics that the Brahman- the supreme pure consciousness is the ultimate reality where all kinds of duality (of self and others) would cease to exist. Explaining the true nature of self, Vivekananda maintains that 'that soul which is behind each mind and each body is called *Pratyagatman*, the individual Atman and that Soul which is behind the universe as its guide, ruler and governor is God'. (Vivekananda 2005, Vol II: 425)

Interestingly, in the history of religion, we observe different kinds of relationships between the object of faith (Gods & Goddess) and a believer. A believer is a person who has got an image of God with some specific emotional relationship with it, such as a master-servant, father-child, mother-child, friends, lover-beloved etc. This image as an object of a specific sort of relation is ordinarily grafted in his mind in and through the tradition in which s/he is brought up. Due to the attributes such as omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience etc., the image of God is formed in the psyche of the believer as someone who can give him

miraculous security in crisis, unimagined success in his chosen aims, and reveals secrets of this world. All of these make the image of the object of faith. The emotional relationship with the image of God doesn't generally develop beyond an ordinary level and this emotional relationship is expressed through the believer's ritualistic worship and prayers. According to Vivekananda, as spiritual life progresses, the concept of God also changes. A weak person cannot grasp the concept of the transcendent God. For him an extra-cosmic God sitting away governing the happenings of the world is suitable. Gradually the idea of a personal God comes and devotion finds its fulfilment. This cannot be satisfying for advanced thinkers and the idea of an Impersonal God dawns upon them. God in Hinduism has both these aspects but the distinction does not make a difference.

Conclusion

The paper conceptualised the relationship between identity and intolerance and comprehended that when a group/community proclaims its identity propagating and imposing its cultural practices, ideology, and opinion on others and does not accept other's worldviews/cultural practices, it becomes intolerant towards other group/community. The study traced the roots of intolerance in the hegemonic structure pertaining to the caste system and patriarchy in Indian society.

Reflecting on contemporary human conditions the study observed that modernity coupled with capitalism and information technology expedited commodification where everything including goods, services, education, knowledge, ideas, nature etc. became objects of trade and commerce. A group having control over resources becomes intolerant towards those who are experiencing extreme poverty, homeless and hunger. Free market capitalism gives rise to a consumerist culture where a member (of the middle class) boosts up his/her ego by consuming and displaying commodities and maintains his/her identity, prestige and position. Certain sections of politics in India found this handy

as a tool of control. Resultantly, the individual is not only alienated but also made intolerant towards others specifically economically/socially marginalised sections of society.

To address the problem of intolerance I invoked Vivekananda's ideology of practical Vedanta which highlights the importance of the cognitive aspect of religious life where one develops a profound understanding of one's subjectivity and realises the true nature of self (atman). To develop such understanding, one needs to decipher the meaning and messages of religious narratives, stories, and tales of spiritual people like Buddha. Mahavir. Muhammad, Jesus, Kabir, Nanak etc. This shows how transcendence manifests in a historical context in specific and unique ways and spiritual persons lead a moral and authentic life. Lastly, by spiritual practice and detachment from the world of senses, one inculcates moral virtues in his life. The whole idea of Vivekananda's religiosity is the dissolution of the ego but more often people develop the ego by associating themselves with a particular faith/religion. It becomes a matter of conceit, superciliousness and false pride since religiosity is constructed and nurtured in emotional setups and circumstances. There are chances that a person remains captive of negative emotions. But with critical self-inquiry (philosophical engagements) what Vivekananda time and again emphasises one may channelize one's emotional energy in the right direction, and manifests positive emotions such as compassion, cheerfulness, friendliness and indifference.

Acknowledgements

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to Hema and Samarth for their affection and unwavering support throughout the writing process of this research paper.

Notes

1 Dignaga logically develop his thesis that all discursive knowledge belongs to domain of conceptual and is constructed through the process of reasoning. The basis of conceptualisation is dialectical in nature which involves mental process of inclusion and exclusion for instance in formation of concept "cow' the whole universe of a concept is divided into two realms: 'cow' and 'non cow' to identify the object (real cow). The basic contention of Dignaga is that it is not the case that something essentially say – 'cow-ness' exists in the object through which we identify the object but rather through the process of differentiating the given object (cow) from its negation (non cow) we cognize the object (cow) and also form the concept of cow. see: (Hey, 1988:188-193)

2 Cultural pluralism refers to spaces in which minority groups participate and maintain their identities differences with majoritarian groups. Cultural pluralism aims at promoting and fostering an ideal that different communities/ groups may live together and practice their cultures in the public space, and learn from the positive qualities of other cultures. It is an open system that evolves as syncretic/composite culture in which individuals not merely tolerate but accept and appreciate other culture as equal and beneficial

3 The doctrine of 'Daridranarayan' advocated and publicized by Vivekananda, means that service to the poor is equivalent in importance and piety to service to God. By idea of 'daridranarayan' Vivekananda invokes a sense of spiritual/religious duty among people towards the poor in a society

4 Hegemony means the dominance of one group over another. The term 'hegemony' is used to describe the relatively dominant position of a particular set of ideas and their associated tendency to become common sensical and acceptable, thereby controlling and restraining the dissemination or even the articulation of alternative ideas. (see : https://www.britannica.com/topic/hegemony)

5 Social politics refers to 'lost tradition of politics as social work'. (Narayan, 2021:176-178)

6 'Now both the RSS and the BJP have started to co-opt these social groups, and the Sangh and its affiliates are already working in these social pockets under various names and banners. This appropriation is not merely a symbolic one of contesting identities, but is based on hard work on various development-related issues through social projects. Hindutva-centred mass organizations have launched these projects in the interior areas and among marginal communities in the recent past'. See (Narayan, 2021:ed these projects in the interior areas and among marginal communities in the recent past'. See (Narayan, 2021:56)

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Article

Dalit Discourse in Weblogs: An Overview

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Abstract

With the emergence of Digital Information Technology, the modes of writing and publication have undergone an epochal shift. The newly educated Dalits are using social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Blogger.com,* and *YouTube*. They are publishing personal and social tales via social media for larger public consumption. The paper, however, focuses on Dalit blogs. It tries to investigate Dalit blogs and discourse weaved through them which primarily focuses on raising Dalit consciousness among readers much like Dalit autobiographies and other genres of Dalit literature however in a much more polemical manner. The paper attempts to establish that writing narratives of caste through blogs is political and not merely an innocent act of recording their daily activities. While critically analysing the select Dalit blogs, it establishes that through their 'selective remembrances' the bloggers create a counter hegemonic public sphere to encounter dominant ideologies of hierarchy and graded inequality. The

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paper employs theories from New Media Studies to comprehend and analyse the poetics of Dalit blogs and critical insights from Dalit Studies to understand the caste-quotient of blogs. The blogs: *Voice for Reservation, MC Raj Author, Dalit Liberation Movement, Gujarati Dalit Literature, Loknath Yashwant*, *Time and Us,* and *Kherlanji Massacre* are selected for the purpose of content analysis.

Key words: Dalit, Blog, Autobiography, Identity, Self-Writing, Dalit Consciousness

Of late, the blogs based on identity such as caste, race, gender, and ethnicity, have emerged in the blogosphere. The primary reason for the emphasis on weblog discourse in academia is the use of blogs for political mobilization by Afro-Americans and feminist groups[1]. Besides, the political movement in Iraq, popularly known as the Arab Spring where thousands of activists and common people organised protests using social media to dethrone their political leader, also encouraged common people to register their dissent virtually[2]. In the case of Dalits, blogs are used to disseminate narratives of caste-based atrocities, to reject stereotypical images of Dalits, to re-write Dalit history, and also to counter dominant discourses of caste.

[1]The work Blogging the Political talks about the blogs written by Afro-Americans that are used to organize the community online so that they can be politically mobilized and be made aware of their rights. Similarly, many Feminist blogs have surfaced on the blogosphere addressing feminist issues.

[2]Though there are others reasons too for the popularity of new media amongst activists: for instance, initially, social media enthusiast cheered for digital media as it promised freedom of expression. This narrative of liberation through digital media was powered by McLuhanian proverb, "Medium is the Message". Moreover, the idea behind new media providing free access to create and disseminate information was popularized by the media corporation to sell their platforms. Whatever may be the reason behind the creation of digital media; people have adapted and used these networks according to their needs and requirements.

The sudden upsurge in the use of social media by Dalits has attracted the attention of media scholars and academicians from Dalit Studies, Cultural Studies and New Media Studies[3]. In addition to *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *YouTube*, Dalit digital presence is discernible in the blogosphere. However, despite their huge online presence, no systematic study of Dalit blogs has been conducted. Unlike racial or feminist blogs, Dalit blogging in India has not received much attention from critics. Pramod K. Nayar a literary and cultural theorist, testifies to this argument when he criticises the biased and indifferent attitude of critics towards Dalit blogs: "Studies of digital cultures in India have ignored the subaltern presence in cyberspace" (p. 2). So far three seminal works have been produced about Digital Culture in India but none of them studies Dalit Cyberspace adequately and systematically: Nalini Rajan's (2007) work *Digital Culture Unplugged: Probing the Native Cyborg's Multiple Locations* does not include any essays on Dalits in cyberspace. Similarly, *Global Primordialities: Virtual Identity Politics in Online Hindutva and Online Dalit Discourse* by Rohit Chopra (2006) fails to address Dalit discourse in cyberspace adequately. Even the latest work *Inhabiting Cyberspace in India: Theory, Perspectives, and Challenges* (2021) by Simi Malhotra, Kanika Sharma and Sakshi Dogra maintains silence on the Dalit presence in Cyberspace. Therefore, the present paper seeks to analyse Dalit discourse in weblogs to highlight the challenges and concerns expressed by Dalit bloggers.

[3]The term Dalit, the subaltern community of India, denotes the assertion of identity by the socially marginalized community. It is preferred by the community over other terms such as Harijan, downtrodden or other specific caste names. It is also used to describe the political movement of Dalits for equality, freedom and self-respect. Dalits since pre-independence times under the leadership of Periyar, Phule and B.R. Ambedkar have tried to do away with shackle of slavery. Dalit activists have articulated their pain and suffering both through political movements and through literature. However, the literature by Dalits became much popular after political manifesto by Dalit Panthers.

Dalit blogs have emerged as an alternative space for the contestation and negotiation of Dalit identity[4] in the absence of democratic spaces for articulation. The blogs run by Dalit NGOs are the most common, but recently an upsurge has been noticed in the blogs created by Dalit people such as students, teachers, activists, and government officials whose sole objective is to express their dissent against casteist narratives circulating in the mainstream media and society. The major concerns of these bloggers are: debunking myths about purity/impurity, contesting anti-reservation discourses, and criticising untouchability practices in Indian universities and other public institutions.

As the introductory section of blogs demonstrates, the primary motivation of Dalit bloggers is to spread awareness about Dalit identity; the experience of being a Dalit. The content on the blogs defies and challenges the popular narrative that caste does not exist anymore, as the blogs are laden with stories of caste-based discrimination ranging from humiliating, insulting, and boycotting, to lynching, raping, etc. The bloggers aim to mobilise

[4]Blogging is an interactive multimedia text in which it is necessary for the user to actively intervene, to comment or give feedback as well as view or read in order to produce meaning. It is a complete withdrawal from traditional print literature where there is one author and producer of a text for masses who have no immediate contribution in the development of a text. On the contrary, mass media were the products of the communication needs of the first half of the twentieth century, in the industrialized world and as such they had certain characteristics such as being centralized, content being produced in highly capitalized industrial locations, like newspaper print works or film studios. Consumption was characterized by 'uniformity.' Cinema audiences all over the world saw the same movie, all readers read the same text in national newspaper and all heard the same radio programme. And they did these things at the same scheduled times. The consumers had nothing to do with the process of creation or distribution of that work. But in the case of blogging, a reader has an important role to play as he/she contributes to the text by commenting on it or by collaborating as a co-author in a blog. The inputs by the readers become part of the text and can be made available to other users of the database. This many- to- many communication in the hypertext shifts the focus from traditional "threesome of author/sender, text/message, and reader/receiver to the cybernetic intercourse between the various participants in the textual machine" says Aarseth (Cybertext- Experiments in Ergodic Literature 22).

readers by exchanging arguments to end atrocities on Dalits. In this way, Dalit blogs deal with the harsh, social realities of Dalit lives and by doing so expose, highlight, and counter anti-Dalit policies and discourses. The bloggers instil the feeling of self-respect and dignity among Dalit readers by sharing stories of revolt, rebellion, and assertion of identity. Such content can find an appropriate expression on blogs because of the unfettered freedom it offers the writers.

To make the blogs more impactful and reachable to the audience, personal tone and autobiographical experience are used, which are also defining features of Dalit literature especially Dalit autobiographies. Similar to Dalit autobiography, blogging becomes a political act as it is an "assertion of the self" (Kumar, 2010, p. 3). It is also observed that like autobiographies, Dalit bloggers share stories of caste-based oppression in a non-literary, plain language[5]. The narratives of the pain and humiliation experienced by Dalits illustrate the caste-ridden mentality of the dominant castes. There is a consistent pattern that atrocities against Dalits only occur when they speak out against injustice. When they challenge the authority of the ruling castes, their voices are silenced. Force and violence restrict their sociopolitical and economic progress, and the "Khairlanji Massacre" blog may be used as an example of one such occurrence where a member of the Dalit community was punished for raising voice against injustice.

[5]The language used by the bloggers is subjective, conversational and informal as compared to academic or literary language used in the mainstream works. Dalit literature has invited unwanted criticism due to its language. Initially it had been rejected and became the subject of ridicule among the group of mainstream writers and critics who called Dalit literary writings as *aliterary*, plain and sub-standard. As a response to criticism, Dalit writers defend the language as well as the subject of their writing by saying that it is a realistic representation of their social and cultural life. Unlike literary texts, blogging is known for its subjective, conversational and informal style and language. Therefore, even naïve writer can start a blog and articulate his concern for his community in a language of his own. By doing this, Dalit bloggers discard and ignore the so-called standard literary jargon. They do not write high-flown, decorative linguistic phrases but stick to ordinary language.

Thus, the use of words like "suffering," "atrocities," or "discrimination" in blog titles by Dalit bloggers is not accidental. In addition, the history of the Dalit community reveals that they have been victims of lynchings, rapes, murders, and beatings, among others. In "Experience, Space and Justice," Gopal Guru (2012) explains how violence is used to regulate the behaviour of the victims:

> Space provides this necessary condition for the tormentor, who then uses this space for producing a particular kind of experience that can morally paralyse a victim. The tormentor reconfigures space accordingly, so as to seek the ultimate regulation of the victim into hegemony and domination of the former. (73)

As in the past, space has been used for producing an experience of confinement and control in the religious, social and political sphere, and the discourse in blogs indicates that in the present context tormentors are using rape and molestation as a systematic tool to enact unprecedented violence to produce an experience i.e. shame and fear in the socially backward and weak communities. In addition to crippling the Dalit community's moral and social development, these experiences damage the victims' self-respect and pride.

In this context, MC Raj, a Dalit blogger says that whenever Dalits attempt to demand their rights, they are taught a "fitting lesson" ("Anti-Shit Bill of 07 September 2013"). He further writes, "With education it must be recognized that Dalits are also getting the trickle down of education. They gather a little bit of courage to fight. The stereotype reaction of the educated class is to increase the tempo of atrocity only 'to teach Dalits a fitting lesson." Thus, violence is used as a tool to maintain the orthodox hierarchy of the caste system. A similar episode is documented by the blogger in *Kherlanji Massacre*, which took place on September 29, 2006, in the village of Kherlanji in the state of Maharashtra. In India, this is one of the gory incidents that illustrates the plight of Dalits who aspire for a dignified life. The blogger writes in his post titled, "Massacre

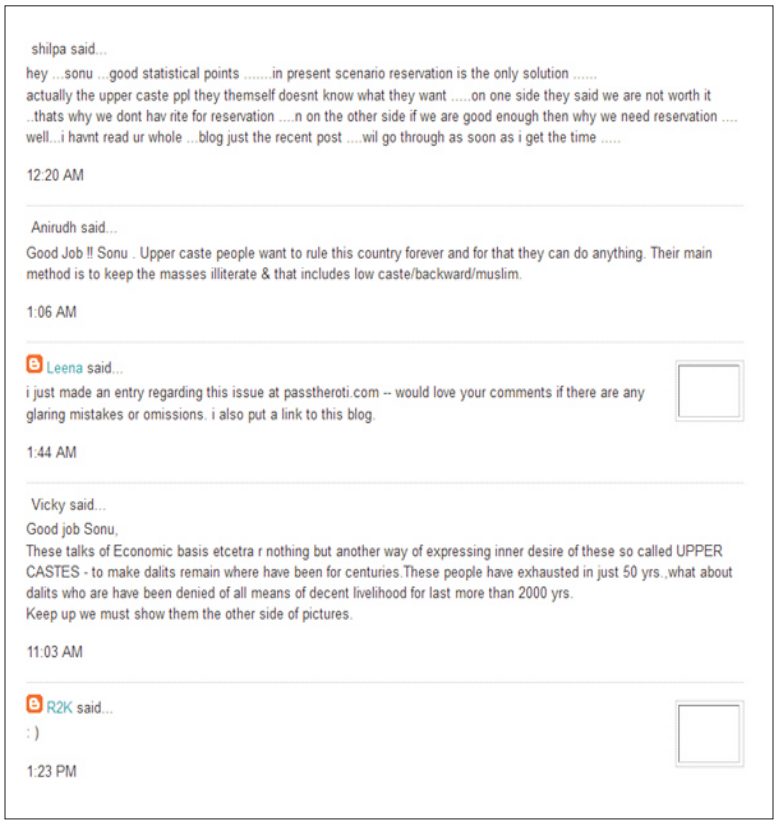
of Budhhist Family in India":

> Small village in Bhandara district in Maharashtra has been focus of attention when four members of the one Dalit family were slaughtered on 20th September, 2006. . . As per the fact finding report dispute of Dalit killing is a portion of land owned by Bhaiyyalal Bhutmange's wife.

The blogger quotes Bhaiyyalal, the sole survivor of the family who says, "Surekha's only fault was that she'd challenged the village upper castes, and that too the Land lords and she'd dared to crave for self-esteemed and dignity." Her fault was that she was born into a Dalit family and wanted to live with respect in her village for which she had to pay the price of her life and the molestation of her family. Economic benefits, and financial security through quotas and reservations have ensured self-esteem for Dalits but not self-respect says Gopal Guru (2012) referring to ceaseless atrocities on the community (204). They still have to struggle for it. The civil society has not accepted them as equals yet, contends Chandar Bhan Prasad (2014), an eminent Dalit thinker and blogger (31).

The bloggers analyse the significance of the reservation policy for Dalits by drawing on personal experience. The majority of blogs focus on it because it is the topic that is currently being discussed and contested the most. In *Voice for Reservation*, the blogger Sonu writers, "I being a Dalit and having a personal experience of discrimination, can say that reservation has really proved useful for Dalits." As the title of the blog indicates, reservation is the primary theme of the blog. It is not a surprise that it has attracted a large number of comments. The participants or readers of the blogs both favour and criticize the policy under which special status is accorded to SC/STs in the form of affirmative discrimination. In "Reality Check for Reservation Based on Economic Basis" the blogger states that he is a Dalit and has faced humiliation due to his caste. Therefore, he concludes that reservation has really improved socio-political and intellectual status of Dalits as it creates an opportunity for Dalits to study in good institutions that they could not even imagine to enter before

the reservation policy. The blogger asserts that caste-based reservation is more logical and appropriate than class-based division. Some readers support the blogger's perspective and some (apparently non-Dalit readers) blatantly criticise him



shilpa said...

hey ...sonu ...good statistical points .....in present scenario reservation is the only solution .....
actually the upper caste ppl they themself doesnt know what they want .....on one side they said we are not worth it ..thats why we dont hav rite for reservation ....n on the other side if we are good enough then why we need reservation .... well...i havnt read ur whole ...blog just the recent post ....wil go through as soon as i get the time .....

12:20 AM

Anirudh said...

Good Job !! Sonu . Upper caste people want to rule this country forever and for that they can do anything. Their main method is to keep the masses illiterate & that includes low caste/backward/muslim.

1:06 AM

Leena said...

i just made an entry regarding this issue at passtheroti.com -- would love your comments if there are any glaring mistakes or omissions. i also put a link to this blog.

1:44 AM

Vicky said...

Good job Sonu,
These talks of Economic basis etcetra r nothing but another way of expressing inner desire of these so called UPPER CASTES - to make dalits remain where have been for centuries.These people have exhausted in just 50 yrs..what about dalits who are have been denied of all means of decent livelihood for last more than 2000 yrs.
Keep up we must show them the other side of pictures.

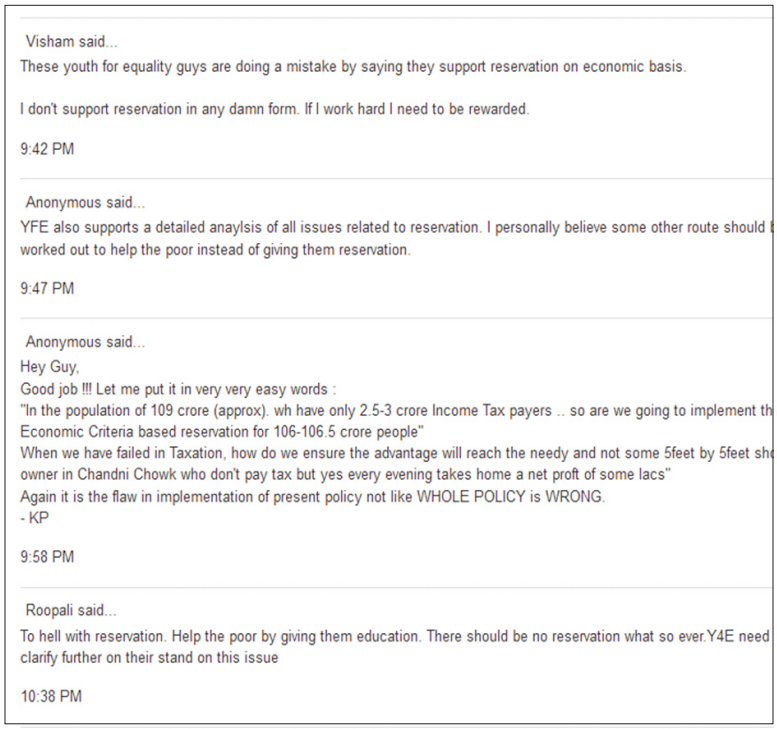
11:03 AM

R2K said...

:)

1:23 PM

Fig. 1 (Credit: Voice for Reservation, https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=28584506&postID=114880141740182911&bpli=1)



Visham said...
These youth for equality guys are doing a mistake by saying they support reservation on economic basis.

I don't support reservation in any damn form. If I work hard I need to be rewarded.

9:42 PM

Anonymous said...
YFE also supports a detailed anaylsis of all issues related to reservation. I personally believe some other route should
worked out to help the poor instead of giving them reservation.

9:47 PM

Anonymous said...
Hey Guy,
Good job !!! Let me put it in very very easy words :
"In the population of 109 crore (approx). wh have only 2.5-3 crore Income Tax payers .. so are we going to implement th
Economic Criteria based reservation for 106-106.5 crore people"
When we have failed in Taxation, how do we ensure the advantage will reach the needy and not some 5feet by 5feet sh
owner in Chandni Chowk who don't pay tax but yes every evening takes home a net proft of some lacs"
Again it is the flaw in implementation of present policy not like WHOLE POLICY is WRONG.
- KP

9:58 PM

Roopali said...
To hell with reservation. Help the poor by giving them education. There should be no reservation what so ever.Y4E need
clarify further on their stand on this issue

10:38 PM

Fig. 2 (Credit: Voice for Reservation, https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=28584506&postID=114880141740182911 &bpli=1)

The blogger cites his personal experience as a fact and basis of his argument and so is the case with majority of Dalit bloggers. The idea of lived experience and sympathetic stance or of the insider and outsider is well known and is often debated. Dalit writers and thinkers like Sharankumar Limbale, Om Prakash Valmiki and Daya Pawar argue that non-Dalits cannot infer what it is to be a Dalit. Due to immediate access to the first hand experience of atrocities on Dalits, the blogs written by Dalits are a more relevant and reliable platform to investigate Dalit atrocities and discrimination incidents in India.

Besides, Dalit blogs are intensely polemical. They do not usually try to explore the "Why" but they certainly target the political parties and anti-Dalit sections of society. In the blog Time and Us the blogger Amu Ramdas, ironically states that "Indian government should make killing Dalits legal" while referring to a number of cases like Mirchpur, Kherlanji etc. where Dalits are awaiting justice since years. She is of the view that the indifferent and cold attitude of the civil society as well as the government towards atrocities against Dalits has made the community more vulnerable and further encourages the tormentors. Similarly, in blog Kherlanji Massacre, the blogger explicitly expresses his displeasure about the lynching of a Dalit family and abuses the "Brahmanical forces" for allowing the murder of a "Buddhist" family. His tone and strong vocabulary make it clear that he has a deep-seated animosity for the dominant caste community. However, running such blogs is not always easy because Dalit bloggers are sometimes singled out by users from the higher castes who threaten and bully them for using offensive and derogatory words about their groups. For instance, in the Kherlanji Massacre when the blogger calls tormentors of the Dalit family "terrorists," one of the participants criticises the blogger for making insensitive remarks about the upper caste community. He also tries to correct the blogger by saying that it was not upper caste but OBC (other backward caste) people who murdered the Dalit family:

Sachin said...

"Kunbis" are not exactly "upper caste".

"Kunbis" are "lower castes" too and considered "Shudras".

Although "Kunbis" are not SCs, they do qualify as "backward castes" and are included in the OBC category.

July 5, 2011 at 5:56:00 PM GMT+5:30

MALHAR said...

Being A HINDU I feel very sorry abt khairlanji....but the headline the blogger have set... "Hindutva Terrorists" is full of nonsense. Blogger kept his personal intention and gave this kind lines openly for his blog.

Mr. Blogger I just meed to talk with you regarding your headline.

Mail me If you are not afraid of Discussion :- moraya212004@yahoo.com.

Waiting for your mail. I assure you we both will have good time.

July 22, 2011 at 8:12:00 AM GMT+5:30

Post a Comment

Fig. 3 (Credit: Kherlanji Massacre of Buddhist Dalits, http://kherlanji.blogspot.com/)

Such blogs uninhibitedly blame the upper caste groups for the atrocities committed against Dalits when certain cases are still pending in the court.

As the analysis indicates, Dalit blogs are narratives of contestations and are overtly political. However, the blogs are not only about Dalits but also about their relationship with their upper caste counterparts. A poem by Umesh Solanki "Modern Untouchability," foregrounds the new kind of relationship between Dalits and non-Dalits in which untouchability is practiced but subtly. He writes:

It was blatant and blunt
Now it is subdued and subtle
Moved deep down to the core to remain invisible
Stuck solid at the bottom of heart

In another poem by Pravin Gadhavi, "Brainwash," the Dalit poet attacks Brahmins for practicing hypocrisy and misinforming people about caste division. He refers to all the sacred ingredients used for *pooja* (worship) by them to cleanse the minds of dominant caste communities from caste prejudices:

> Give me some water from Ganges,
> and add waters of seven sacred rivers.
>
> I want to wash thoroughly the brain hanging from
> the broken skull of this Chittapavan Brahmin.

This is how Dalit bloggers tend to expose the hypocrisy of society, even in times when untouchability is considered to be legally non-existent. They reject the religious texts, on the basis of which Dalits have been persecuted for generations, and replace the religious symbols sanctioned by them with their own. For instance, in the blog *Gujarati Dalit Literature*, the blogger publishes poems that glorify and present Dr. Ambedkar as a God or messiah of Dalits. The poem "The Lullaby" refers to Ambedkar as a *Devta* and the constitutional provisions such as articles 14, 15, 17, 46, 330 and 335 of Indian penal code as the powers he bestows upon Dalits. In the blog *Loknath Yashwant* a poem "BhimraoRamji Ambedkar alias Babsaheb" highlights the contribution and achievements of the cherished leader of Dalits. The poem refers to the sad plight of Dalits despite constitutional provisions made by their leader. The speaker in the poem is angry because non-Dalits are disrespectful towards Ambedkar and are destroying his statues. Dalits, on the other hand, venerate him and attempt to emulate his characteristics, such as acquiring an education, leading a decent life, and wearing prim and proper clothing. The reference to the 'pointed finger' relates to Ambedkar's statue, which depicts him standing in that position while holding a book in one hand. The poet tries to imitate the posture of Ambedkar when writes: "Without much effort he plucked/ My beckoning finger/ That pointed index".

Dalit blogs contest the hegemonic representations and dominant discourses about the community. Nancy Fraser uses the

term 'subaltern counter-publics' also defined as 'parallel discursive arenas' for such spaces where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter-discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs" (Fraser 58). Similarly, Dalit blogs potentially challenge and critique the (mis)representations by the mainstream writers and also provide a counter-discourse to the dominant ideology instrumental in structuring the mainstream public sphere. Therefore, Dalit blogs provide stimulus to the Dalit activist agenda. In *Dalit Liberation Movement*, S.R. Darapuri reveals that untouchability, which is said to have ended, is still practised in certain parts of India. He questions the mainstream media's narrative that untouchability is a thing of the past. It is contested, particularly in the context of reservation, that casteism has ended and that special provisions should follow suit. However, the blogger expresses displeasure about the mainstream media's misleading and inadequate coverage of this most crucial subject.

In a blog post titled "The Police in India is both Casteist and Communal," Darapuri condemns the malpractice of making separate dining spaces and barracks for Dalits and non-Dalits police officials in Uttar Pradesh. He writes, "Although the commissioner for SCs and STs had pointed out this discriminatory practice decades ago, it is shocking that it continues even today. It was reported a while ago that the practice of segregated dining still continues, and that there are separate barracks for upper and lower caste men in Bihar Police." He describes his time as an IPS officer in a region where he observed Dalit officers' unspoken agreement to defer to their upper caste colleagues. He notes that officials from the Dalit group sat on the ground while those of other castes dined on seats. Nevertheless, he insisted and urged them to sit in chairs. He explains that he had to continually guide Dalit officials before the entire office could eliminate this age-old practice. In this way, the bloggers attempt to dispel the myths of equality and democracy propagated by the mass media.

Therefore, the discourse on Dalit blogs focuses on caste-centric narratives. The issues central to Dalit lives such as caste-based discrimination, atrocities, reservation policy, and demand for self-respect and dignity are the prominent subjects of Dalit blogs. The bloggers try to dismantle anti-Dalit hegemonic discourse by creating counter-narratives of purity, impurity and untouchability. By highlighting atrocities and discrimination meted out to Dalits, the bloggers seek to acquaint global audiences about the status of Dalits in India. The discourse on weblogs establishes that caste is not a thing of past, it exists in different forms though which is indicated through Dalit self-narratives. The readers are able to read Dalit perspective on various national and international issues; something that mainstream media hardly foregrounds. Besides, Dalit bloggers tend to glorify the culture and history of their community by re-writing their social history on a digital space. Through their self-narratives, they seek to challenge the established notions about Dalit lives and culture. The social, political and economic conditions of Dalits are the topic of deliberations by Dalit bloggers who criticize anti-Dalit policies of the government and the civil society and propose reformatory measures to change such pathetic conditions. For the prevalent misconceptions about the community, the bloggers blame ill-representations of Dalits in the media and the mainstream Indian literature. The blogger blame casteist structure of the society for many disadvantages that Dalits experience in the mainstream media. Therefore, Dalit centric concerns that are otherwise not discussed in the traditional media are addressed so that social and political mobilization of Dalits can be realized.

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Article

Status of Higher Education and Educational Migration of Youth: Evidence from Punjab, India

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Abstract

The development of higher education sector in the Punjab state has shaped up in a different manner in the post-economic reform period. The state witnessed a significant increase in the number of higher education institutions since last two- decades. Despite the huge expansion large gap exists between the expansion of educational institutions and the enrollment. Also, at present the state is facing a big challenge of brain drain from the state. Lack of employment opportunities and agricultural crisis in the state on the one hand and the poor quality of higher education on the other has been pressing the young minds to move toward other developed countries for better education along with employment opportunities. The brain drain through the migration of youth from the state encompasses serious socio- cultural, economic and educational repercussions. Also, the sustenance of higher

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education system in the state is under threat, as almost all universities and colleges including private institutions have been affected, with many of them claiming the fall in admission. The sustainable development of higher education and the retention of youth by nurturing their talent deserve to be a priority in the state policies. It needs a revamp in the policies and overhaul in the system of higher education.

Key words: Higher Education, Access, Educational Migration, Punjab

Introduction

Higher education plays an important role in achieving better employment opportunities, growth of productivity; strengthen the roots of democracy and civil society. It is viewed as a tool for the promotion of economic growth, cultural development, social cohesion, equity and justice. It contributes not only to the national development through dissemination of specialized knowledge and skills but also brings about attitudinal changes for modernization and social transformation leading to formation of strong nation-state and promotion of higher quality of individual and social life (CABE, 2005).Sustainable transformation and growth throughout the economy is not possible without the capacity building contributions of an innovative tertiary education system. In Indian context, the period of last three decades has been the period of huge expansion in higher education both in terms of institutions and enrolment. This expansion is a result of the policy shift that has taken place after the economic reforms of 1991 through which the state has promoted the participation of private players in higher education.

State of Higher Education in Punjab

The state of Punjab is generally viewed as one of the economically

prosperous states of India with significant economic and human development. Out of total population of Punjab, 37.48 percent people live in urban areas and 62.52 percent people live in villages. Average literacy rate in Punjab for rural areas is 71.42 percent and for urban areas it is 83.18 percent reflecting that rural population lags behind the urban area population in terms of literacy.[i] In spite of the fact that Punjab is a small and prosperous state and has relatively better physical infrastructure, there exists a large rural-urban gap in terms of education and health delivery system. Being a part of Indian union, the state of Punjab would not left behind from the impact of the liberalization of Indian economy and its implications for the state of Punjab have created a watershed as far as the development of higher education in the state. As far as the state of higher education in Punjab is concerned, the state has witnessed a significant increase in the number of universities and colleges since last two- decades.

The Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) reforms, has pronounced a decline in the role of the government and public spending across the board, and increased the role of profit-pursuing private actors in every domain. In fact, there was no policy on private higher education. This laissez faire, that is, non-intervention by the state and the absence of any policy, which had been the characteristic feature of the couple of decades beginning with the 1990s (Tilak 2004), helped in the rapid growth of private higher education and the emergence of large-scale markets in higher education. On the other hand, another development that is worth noting is the 'financial privatisation' of public universities (Tilak 2008). As a result of cut in the funds to the public institutions, they are forced to adopt models of part-privatisation by introducing self-financing courses. These courses, like the unaided private higher education, are not open for the socially deprived sections of the population and are mainly guided by the principle of affordability. That means, the very process of privatisation subverts the inclusive nature of higher education expansion and therefore, it excludes those who are disadvantaged in terms of caste, religion, gender and class. This period was

followed by clear pro-private approaches. The share of development expenditure in the total expenditure of the states declined drastically in the aftermath of the reforms and out of that, the share of education along with health declined (Kumar *et al.,* 2005).

Iniquitous and unsustainable Expansion in Higher Education

The development of higher education sector in the Punjab state has shaped up in a different manner in the post-economic reform period. The state witnessed a significant increase in the number of universities and colleges since last two- decades. If one looks the nature of expansion in higher education institutions, it will be clear how the state has deliberately facilitated the entry of private players in the sector of higher education. Till 1996, there were only four universities in the state but with the entry of private players in education field, this number increased from 4 to 26 within a time span of ten years i.e. from 2006 to 2017. Amongst these new universities, only three universities were in public sector while other 15 universities were established in the private sector. In order to encourage private participation in higher education, the Government of Punjab notified The Punjab Private Universities Policy, in June, 2010 which has led to the rapid growth of private universities in the state. Same is the case of expansion in the number of degree colleges; there are 417 degree colleges in Punjab which are imparting higher education in the fields of science, commerce and arts. Surprisingly, among these colleges, mere 44 are the government colleges, 35 constituent colleges of three state universities, 120 private aided colleges and 218 privately managed self-financing colleges.[ii] As far as the growth of professional colleges in Punjab is concerned, the number of Engineering/Technology and Architecture colleges increased from 2 in 1970-71 to 3 in the period of 1990-91 adding only one college. This number has increased to 16 in 2000-01, to 84 in the period of 2010-11 and then to 103 during the year of 2015-16.

Table 1

Growth of Higher Education Institutions in Punjab

Year	Univer-sities	Arts/Science/ Commerce/ Home Science Colleges	Engineering/ Technology and Architecture Colleges	Medical Colleges (Allopathic Only)	Education Colleges
1970-71	4	122	2	4	17
1980-81	4	162	3	5	17
1990-91	4	171	3	5	18
2000-01	6	204	16	6	22
2010-2011	14	234	84	8	185
2015-16	23	238	103	9	186
2018-19	276	103	9	186	574

Source: Statistical Abstracts of Punjab (Various Years)

The phenomenal growth in the number of teacher training colleges has been witnessed with the increase in their number over the last two decades. The number of teacher training colleges increased from 18 in 1990-91 to 122 in the year of 2005-06. In the year 2015-16, this number has reached up to 186 and at present more than 215 teacher training colleges are working in the state. The unprecedented growth of professional colleges particularly in the private sector without a doubt has increased the opportunities for getting professional education but at the same time it has also led to commercialization of professional education. Instead of increase in access to higher education to the masses, this move of commodifying educational institutions opted the policy of educational exclusion by keeping the low-income group of students out of reach due to their inability to afford self-financed

courses. The low-income group students' take has remained on the public sector educational institutions which have already been facing multiple challenges.

In fact as a result of dwindling government grants and state's apathy towards its own institutions, most of the government colleges in Punjab are having a multiple constraints to function. Since 1996, the state government has not recruited regular teachers in the government colleges. Majority of the teaching staff works on adhoc basis or as a guest faculty. Due to lack of good infrastructure and teachers, many out of the rural government colleges are at the verge of closure.[iii] The CAG audit (2017) has, from inspection of private colleges affiliated with Punjabi University, Patiala, found that a large number of them charged fee much in excess of the prescribed fees, violating UGC regulations. Similar is the scenario of the other private colleges. Several deficiencies in the process of establishment of private universities and colleges have also been reported. The CAG audit (2017), on checking the records in the office of the Principal Secretary, Higher Education, Punjab, found that though the sub-committee did not recommend the establishment of certain private universities after their physical inspection, the universities have been established in violation of the rules. The issue of establishment of private universities/ colleges without obtaining approval of change of land use (CLU), etc has also been observed. Certain parochial tendencies like the involvement of politicians in managing private colleges and universities, private – political nexus, the affiliation of owners of private institutions with the political parties and the privileges of dominant caste/ status in the state has made the domain of higher education system into adverse position. Consequently, the growth of higher educational institutions in the private sector and neglect of the public institutions both resulted into the birth of iniquitous and unsustainable system of higher education in the state.

Accessibility and Caste -Class Dynamics

The higher education crisis in Punjab state is by now a visible to all and has been a subject of all discussions and news on every second day. Despite the huge expansion, the sector has been facing the issues of access and equity. The irony of the state policies in higher education is that when the system was publicly funded, the higher education sector was small with limited access and only the privileged took advantage of the system. When the system expanded and the less privileged starting getting access to higher education, many governments started reducing subsidies in higher education and introduced cost recovery measures resulting in widening of inequalities (Varghese, et. al., 2018).This reflection can be easily viewed from the state of Punjab. Even though the in Punjab, the GER in higher education during the year of 2018-19 was 29.5 percent in which the male students covered 25.5 percent and female students 34.3 percent but this accessibility to higher education by various groups in terms of caste and gender also shows a big gap(AISHE 2018-19). The GER for Scheduled Castes is 21.1 in which the male students covered 17.8 percent and female students' 25.2 percent.

TABLE 2

Gross Enrolment Ratio in India and Punjab

Year	India			Punjab					
	All			All			Scheduled Caste		
	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
2011-12	20.8	22.1	19.4	23.0	22.4	23.6	8.4	8.0	8.4
2015-16	24.5	25.4	23.5	27.0	25.8	28.5	18.0	17.7	18.4
2018-19	26.3	26.3	26.4	29.5	25.5	34.3	21.1	17.8	25.2
2019-20	27.1	26.9	27.3	28.2	25.1	32.1	18.8	15.8	22.4

Source: All India Survey of Higher Education Report (Various Years) MHRD, New Delhi

A number of studies have highlighted the patterns of exclusion of rural students, students belonging to marginalized sections and those coming from poor economic background from professional education. Ghuman et. al (2006) found through their study in Punjab that the rural students, passed-out from the typically rurally located schools, constituted only 4.07 percent of the total students in all the universities of the state. The share of rural boys and rural girls was 4.96 percent and 3.06 percent respectively and further they pointed out that the educational attainments and performance of rural students had great deal of sensitivity to their socio-economic backgrounds, as proportion of rural scheduled caste students in the total identified rural students was 14.60 percent and they concluded that the very high fees and funds charged by the private institutions has certainly accelerated the 'exclusion process' of students belonging to weaker sections of the society. Even this access of marginalized youth in higher education does not always imply that they are getting empowered, as access does not always translate into influence in hierarchical social structures.

The affordability of the private cost of education by the students is largely determined by the income of the parents, their past savings and their credit worthiness. The per student private cost of education on the NSSO household expenditure data of Punjab, it has been worked out that nearly 40 percent of the rural household in Punjab cannot afford to bear the private cost of general education (B.A./B.Sc. etc.) even for a one child. In the urban household, about 31 percent parents cannot afford to pay the cost of general education, even for a single child (Ghuman, Singh and Brar, 2005). It is significant to note that no household can afford to spend its entire income on education of their children. In view of the rising cost of education and increasing cost of living, the affordability question is becoming all the more serious. It is, thus, clear that existing cost structure of higher education and the existing structure of income distribution would tantamount to exclude a very larger section of Punjab's population from the higher education. This would mean two things: one, exclusion of

merit out of education and thus, create a mediocre society; two, serious drag on the development of the state. These two things would become a serious constraint on the potential development of Punjab. Since the social issue of caste- class is structurally intact, the narrow policies of the state towards commodification and privatization of higher education would further reproduce the culture of domination on the basis of caste and class character.

The challenge of Educational Migration

India in particular has grown into a leading player in the international students' market and is the second most important sending country after China. Indian student flows to the world have grown considerably as their share doubled from 3 percent in 2000 to over 6 percent in 2009 (UNESCO, 2009). India is both a regional host country as well as a leading sending country with regard to international student migration. The international students from India crossed the 350,000 mark in 2015. What's more significant is that the growth is getting stronger. The Top 5 Destination countries for international students are US, Australia, Canada, UK and New Zealand grew in 2014 by 12.6 percent and in 2015, and they grew faster at 17.8 percent. Except for UK, where the numbers continue to decline, India sent more students to all destination countries. And India's numbers to all these countries grew at a faster rate than the overall international student growth (except UK again) (MMA, 2016). The number of students seeking higher education in foreign countries has been growing consistently over the years. It increased by nine times between 1963 and 2006 this increase being particularly significant in the last decade (Varghese, 2008). The phenomenon of Educational migration and brain drain from Punjab has emerged as significant and has reached to an irreversible proportion in recent years. As per the record of bureau of immigration, 2.62 lakh students from Punjab migrated abroad from January 2016 to February 2021. On an average, 140 students flew from the state daily and in the year of 2019, the daily average of students left the country was 201 and the

state has become the number one in sending the students abroad. The young child of every 20th household on an average has been leaving the country since 2016 and it has also drained a large chunk of wealth from the state (that is estimated as 3930 crore rupees with an average Rs. 15 lakh per student).

Here the question arises, what caused for such a huge brain drain from the state? We can witness the challenge of educational migration from the state on the two fronts which leads to different challenges. The one is related with the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the state which further connects with unemployment. The second one is related with the higher education system itself. The lack of employment opportunities and agricultural crisis in the state on the one hand (Saha, 2012; Gill, 2016; Singh & Kahlon, 2016) and the poor quality of higher education (Saha, 2009 ;Wickramasekara,2013) on another are pressing the young minds to move toward other developed countries for better employment opportunities. Due to failure of the state to nurture the potential of youth and provide employment, the talented young students have taken the path to move out of the state with a dream of better possibilities.

Unemployment and Hopelessness among the Youth

Being an agricultural state, most of the people in the state depend upon the agriculture sector for their livelihood. The Green Revolution has put great positive impact on the productivity and the income of the people at a very early stage, but with the passage of time this development has become a crisis. The unhappy downward turn of Punjab economy can be traced to 1984-85, when it became a 'revenue deficit state' from the status of 'revenue surplus one'. The crisis-ridden agrarian economy and decelerating industrial sector in Punjab offers only small number of employment opportunities. As per the census 2011, in Punjab 61.79 lakh workers which are 62.43 per cent of the total workforce are rural workers. The share of agricultural workers in the total number of workers in Punjab has been decreased from 62 per cent

in 1971 to 36 per cent in 2011. This sharp decline is not due to their absorption entirely in non- farm sectors, rather the fact is that the pushed workforce from agriculture sector is going to be unemployed as the non agricultural sector has not been developed enough to absorb them (Ghuman, 2016). Along with agrarian crisis, Punjab economy has also been facing serious challenges on industrial front. Several political and economic factors have been responsible for such a state of affairs. As a result of adoption of neoliberal economic reforms, there has been closing down of a large number of small and medium industrial units in Punjab. The number of industrial units declined from 2171 in the year of 2000 to 1382 in the year of 2009 which further declined year by year and in the year of 2012, it has dropped to 456 only. Consequently, the number of working people in the sector declined. The number of people employed in the sector in the year of 2000 was 130322 which have declined to 57884 in 2012 (Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2016). With such industrial downturn, the economic growth of the state has adversely impacted as well as the employment opportunities have squeezed in the states. In the post-liberalization era, there is a sharp decline in the organised manufacturing sector employment and an increase in unorganised manufacturing sector employment (Aggarwal, 2004). The unemployed rural educated youth constitute approximately 54 per cent of the aggregate rural unemployed in the state. They are normally reluctant to take up employment opportunities that involve physical labour instead of this they prefer to sell their small holdings and explore employment options in urban areas (Chadha, 2015). The unemployment rate among Punjabi youth between the age of 18 to 29 is 16.6 percent while the Indian average is 10.2 percent. Punjab's rural youth joblessness rate in 2015-16 was 16.5 percent more than rural India's 9.2 percent (Handoo, 2017). Moreover, expenditures of the state on social services that include education, health, family welfare, housing, labour, welfare of the Scheduled Castes, and food and nutrition has declined in the past 25 years. Thus, state has been withdrawing from its welfare function and has shown little concern in creating long-term assets for development (Sood, 2010).

Along with diminishing employment opportunities, the deteriorating quality of available employment in Punjab has been a cause of unrest and concern. Various recruitments under the state government are based on the contract policy. Even the regular appointments are being made with a provision of working on mere basic pay for three years. Such a state of limited employment opportunities and quality of employment being offered without doubt constitute the push factor for migration. Even the employment opportunities are not same for the rural and urban youth, the rural youth has been lacking behind the education and skills required for the professional jobs. The rural youth who is not much interested in agriculture due to the high input cost and meagre income and also not suitably educated to get employment in the highly skill oriented companies. The traces of hopelessness and frustration among youth can be located from the overwhelming participation of rural youth in the farmer protests which they perceive as the only hope to get justice for their hopelessness and also to get justice in the form of agricultural revival in the state.

An Outcome of Unsustainable Higher Education in the State

The data related with the expansion of higher education shows only the number of students which are enrolled in higher education, what about those ones who have been silently excluded from the system? Those who got enrolled have been getting the education of a meagre quality because the colleges have paucity of teachers, good infrastructural and teaching learning facilities. The cost of higher education in the private institutions is out of the reach of majority particularly when chance to get employment after education stands bleak. The major issue is related with the employability of those who have graduated and post-graduated within the state, as the neo-liberal agenda of privatization followed by the state has largely led to the jobless growth. Consequently, the young minds are leaving the state for the purpose of getting higher education in abroad along with employment. The exclusionary

nature of the expansion and the affordability issue in the private institutions has resulted into being the strong factor behind the migration choice of the youth (Kaur & Kaur, 2021).The sustenance of higher education system in the state is also under threat, as almost all universities including private institutions have been getting affected, with many of them claiming the fall in admission up to 20 percent. Even colleges which have been most sought, till the last few years, are seeing the drop-in admissions (Kaur, 2018). The educational migration has generally affected the admissions in professional courses such as engineering, management etc. and not the general higher education courses because a large number of aspirants of educational migration are coming from the aspirational middle class of the society which was earlier the stakeholder in the professional education. The changed nature of state from welfare state to neo- liberal one has put the state back and pushed the private players in higher education which has led to the privatization of higher education. Due to poor quality and commoditization, higher education in the state has lost its credibility.

The market for educational migration has been flourished in the state with the opening of numerous IELTS centers at every corner of the cities. Nowadays, more and more students after passing their secondary education are joining these English training institutions, rather than higher education courses in Punjab. This policy shift has not only changed the internal system of higher education, but in the context of the provisions of GATS, the state legitimate the way of emigration through educational migration of the students. This phenomenon of inter-nationalization of education on the one hand has helping the foreign developed countries to deal with the challenge of demographic deficit through promoting the inflow of foreign students as Rizvi (2006), argued that facing a shortage of the highly skilled workers needed to sustain their own economic growth in knowledge-based economies and on the other side led to the brain drain from the state. Developed countries like Australia and Canada, view international education as a major avenue for

recruiting highly skilled migrants and it is also noticeable that the students from Punjab state are preferably migrating to these countries.

Socio-Cultural Impact of Youth Migration

The brain drain from the state encompasses serious socio- cultural repercussions. What does the future of the state have when the state is losing its youth on such an alarming pace? The phenomenon of migration of the youth is mainly due to two reasons; first, the agricultural crisis in the state coupled with the lack of suitable employment opportunities and the second is rising aspiration for better socio-economic development (Singh and Kaur, 2018). A large chunk of the desperate youth from the humble background systematically going out of the higher education as well as from the state. Even the middle class with limited resources is managing hard to finance wards' education in the abroad with a dream for better job opportunities. In clear terms it indicates the state of despondency, despair and decay of the education system. So, along with the socio-economic reason, the injudicious state policies towards higher education have major hand in this brain drain.The phenomenon of youth migration will have very adverse social, political and economic consequences in the future but both the Central and Punjab government seem oblivious to this emerging crisis. Since education is widely regarded as a major determinant of long-term economic growth, it is argued that the migration of people with high levels of human capital is highly detrimental to the societies from which they emigrate.

Concluding Remarks

The higher education sector of Punjab is in the crisis, which is primarily an outcome of the injudicious policies of the state government embraced during the economic reforms period. At present, the future of the state, its strength, its cultural capital,

social cohesion all is at stake. In fact recycling the statistical figures in terms of number of institutions, enrollment ratios, figures and facts cannot conceal the actual poor status of higher education in the state. The neo- liberal policies of development are seen to be drastically failed in the state because the state could not retain its youth manpower within the state. Such an exclusionary model of development has impacted the students of poor and the disadvantaged section of the society the most who neither afford the abroad migration nor getting the higher education opportunities within the state. Improving education and skill sets of the youth, meeting aspirations for employment, mainstreaming marginalized through support for social sector schemes are some of the areas where efforts are required of the policy. The retention of youth and nurturing of their talent deserve priority on the state policies. It needs a revamp in the policies and overhaul in the system of higher education.

Declaration

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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Article

Effect of Intentional intelligence intervention program on Cognitive flexibility among adolescents with internal and external Locus of control

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Abstract

This experimental study was undertaken to examine the effect of Intentional intelligence intervention program (IIIP) on Cognitive flexibility among adolescents in relation to their Locus of control. For this pre-test post-test control group design was employed. Self prepared Intentional intelligence intervention modules were administered to a sample of 160 adolescents. Self prepared scale to measure Cognitive flexibility among adolescents was used and through 2X2 factorial design, gains on Cognitive flexibility were studied. Pre-test Post-test results revealed that the ninth graders in the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility when compared to the control group, though no significant differences were found between groups with internal and external Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility. Moreover, no significant interaction was found between Intentional intelligence intervention and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility of adolescents.

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Key words: Adolescents, Intentional intelligence intervention, Cognitive flexibility, Locus of control

Introduction

Research studies in the field of Neurosciences, over the last few decades, have yielded many theories about how the brain gives rise to human intelligence. Some neuroscientists are of the view that the origin of general intelligence can be attributed to a single region or neural network. Others argue that "metabolism or the efficiency with which brain cells make use of essential resources is the key. Emerging neuroscience evidence suggests that intelligence reflects the ability to flexibly transit between network states (Barbey, 2017). Intentional intelligence relies on the domain of psychology which deals with cognitive flexibility (Moore; Malinowsky, 2009). Steingard (2008) states 'Intentional Intelligence bridges the gap between "conscious awareness" and the "practical applications" of how the mind manifests successful or unsuccessful actions'. While Intentional intelligence talks primarily about the machinations of the mind and not "a silent, unbounded, timeless inner domain" the mind is actually anchored in and supported by spiritual source. Intentional intelligence can be operationalized as a dynamic cognitive process. A snapshot of one's mental interiority is categorized into positive, negative, and neutral thoughts. At any given time, we are capable of both identifying and evaluating being mindful of particular thoughts. While we maintain untold number of thoughts in our mind and memory, only a certain subset of these can enter our awareness at a particular moment. Of the universe of possible thoughts, we can choose particular thoughts upon which to focus our attention (Steingard, 2008). Intentional intelligence is defined as one's ability to (a) identify one's current thoughts and (b) choose positive thoughts in one's mind (Steingard and Dufrene, 2011). Cognitive flexibility refers to a person's (a) awareness that in any given situation there are options and alternatives available, and one can exercise that choice and decide how to behave; (b) willingness to be

flexible and adapt to the situation;. (c) Capacity to shift or switch his thinking and attention between different tasks typically in response to change in rules or demands. In simple words it is the ability to restructure knowledge in multiple ways depending on the changing situational demands (i.e. difficulty or complexity of the situation). Cognitive flexibility is here understood as the human ability to adapt cognitive processing strategies to face new and unexpected conditions and is intrinsically linked to attention processes (Cañas, Quesada, Antolí, and Fajardo, 2003).

The meditation mindfulness and yoga based practices are primarily concerned with cognitive emotional and neuro physiological changes resulting from extensive meditation practice where meditation is often conceptualised in terms of mental or cognitive training (Cahn and Polich, 2006; Carter et al 2005; Slagter et al. 2007). Intentional intelligence is dependent on a moment by moment basis, so intentional intelligence training should lead to increased Cognitive flexibility and an increased ability to respond in a non- habitual fashion (Canas, Quesada, Antoli and Fajardo, 2003). With Intentional training, one becomes increasingly able to take interest in each experience as it arises and also allow what is being experienced to pass away (i.e., not be held on to). Through intentionally bringing the attitudes of patience, compassion and non-striving to the attentional practice, one develops the capacity not to continually strive for pleasant experiences, or to push aversive experiences away. In fact, attending without bringing the heart qualities into the practice may result in practice that is condemning or judgmental of inner experience. Such an approach may well have consequences contrary to the intentions of the practice; for example cultivating the patterns of judgment and striving instead of equanimity and acceptance. Cahn and Polich (2006) define meditation mindfulness based practices as practices that self-regulate the body and mind, thereby affecting mental events by engaging a specific attentional set. Cahn and Polich (2006) also indicate that training of attentional functions is an essential aspect of any form of meditation practice. In a similar way traditional Buddhist texts describe the practice of

bare attention, the attending 'to the bare facts of perception without reacting to them by deed, speech or mental comment, as a corner stone of the mindfulness meditation training (Thera, 2005). People who have undergone extensive meditation training have shown improvements on cognitive performance (Cahn and Polich, 2006). For example, Jha et al. found differences among naıve participants who underwent an 8-week mindfulness meditation course and a similar control group with no meditation training in a conflict monitoring task which measures aspects of attention and cognitive control (Van Veen et al., 2007). Brefczynski-Lewis, Lutz, Schaefer, Levinson and Davidson (2007); Slagter et al; So and Orme Johnson (2007) revealed that several meditation studies have reported enhanced performance on various cognitive tasks measuring sustained attention and cognitive flexibility. Another study demonstrated the effectiveness of two different meditation-based programs for improving performance on tests of cognitive tasks, cognitive flexibility, systolic blood pressure, and ratings of behavioral flexibility in a group of 73 nursing home residents (Alexander, Langer, Newman, Chandler and Davies, 1989).

Procedural objectives:

1. To develop and standardize Cognitive flexibility scale.
2. To develop intentional intelligence intervention modules for adolescents
3. To identify children with internal and external Locus of control.
4. To administer Intentional intelligence intervention program on adolescents.

Testing objectives

4(a). To study whether experimental and control groups differ in mean gain scores on variable of Cognitive flexibility.

4(b). To study whether internal and external Locus of control groups differ in mean gain scores on variable of Cognitive flexibility.

4(c). To study whether there is any interaction between Intentional intelligence intervention program and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility.

Hypotheses

1.(a) There exists no significant difference between control and experimental groups in mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility

1.(b) There exists no significant difference between internal and external Locus of control groups of adolescents in mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility

1.(c) There exists no significant interaction between Intentional intelligence intervention program and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility

Delimitations

- The study was delimited to Government schools of Chandigarh affiliated to CBSE.
- The Intentional intelligence intervention was delimited to 56 working days.
- The study was confined to 160 students of IX grade studying in three CBSE affiliated schools of Chandigarh.
- The data collected for the present study was mainly quantitative in nature. Only structured tests (Quantitative data) are involved to measure Cognitive flexibility.

Method

Pre- test post-test control group design was used for random allocation of 160 adolescents in experimental and control groups comprising 80 adolescents (40 with internal and 40 external locus of control) in control group and 80 adolescents (40 with internal and 40 external) in experimental group. Random sampling technique was used to select three schools of Chandigarh. 2X2 factorial design was computed by ANOVA for the mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility.

Procedure

The present study was conducted on ninth graders of three CBSE affiliated Government schools of Chandigarh. From the initial sample of 350 ninth graders studying in Government schools of Chandigarh, a sample of 184 adolescents (82 exhibiting internal and 102 exhibiting external locus of control) was chosen for the study. From this sample randomly 40 students each with internal and external locus of control were allotted to experimental and control groups. The final sample of 160 was randomly selected to make experimental and control groups with 80 students each, in such a manner that both the groups will have 40 adolescents with internal and 40 with external locus of control. Pre test on Cognitive flexibility was administered on experimental and control groups. And then 56 days intentional intelligence intervention was given to the experimental group and the control group was debarred from any kind of intervention. After the experiment Cognitive flexibility was again measured on both the groups.

Measures

1. Intentional intelligence intervention modules (developed by the investigator).
2. Scale to measure Cognitive flexibility of adolescents (developed by the researcher).

3. Locus of control scale for children by Nowicki and Strickland (1973) (adapted by the investigator).

Results and discussions

Table 1. Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis values of Cognitive flexibility of students in experimental and control groups at the pre-test stage

Variable	Gp.	N	Mean	Std. Error. of n mean	Media	SD	Skew error of sk.	St.	Kurt. Error of Ku.	Std.
Cognitive	EG	80	20.15	.6299	20.50	5.634	-.119	.269	.825	.532
flexibility	CG	80	18.66	.6151	18.00	5.502	.599	.269	.348	.532

Table 1 shows that the mean scores on Cognitive flexibility at the pre-test stage for experimental group is 20.15 and for control group is 18.66 respectively. As the two values are nearly equal, it shows that the data is distributed normally. Further the value of kurtosis was found to be 0.825 for the experimental group and 0.348 for the control group. The value of kurtosis shows that the curve is slightly leptokurtic for both the groups. The value of skewness of experimental group was-.119 and that of control group was 0.599. It shows that the values of skewness and Kurtosis all lies within the acceptable limits (-2 to +2) of normality of distribution (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2014). Thus, the distribution of measure can be considered as normal within the acceptable limits of normality of distribution.

Moreover, the test of homogeneity of variance was not found to be significant as Levene's value came to be 0.038, p=0.846 (p is greater than 0.05), this implies that experimental and control groups were homogeneous at the pre test stage of assessment on the variable of Cognitive flexibility. Also the sampling within the groups was random.

As the assumptions of normality, random sampling and homogeneity were found to be satisfied for the data. So 2X2 ANOVA was computed through SPSS package to meet the desired objectives and to test the hypotheses

Table 2.
Descriptive statistics for mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility

Dependent variable: Dim II- Cognitive flexibility mean gain scores

group	Locus of control	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
experimental	Internal	5.0000	5.49592	40
	External	2.6000	3.46262	40
	Total	3.8000	4.72108	80
control	Internal	.2000	4.18912	40
	External	.0250	3.85299	40
	Total	.1125	3.99998	80
Total	Internal	2.6000	5.42288	80
	External	1.3125	3.86347	80
	Total	1.9563	4.73757	160

Table 3. Summary of 2X2 ANOVA for mean gain scores

Dependent variable: Dim II- Cognitive flexibility mean gain scores

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	659.719[a]	3	219.906	11.793	.000
Intercept	612.306	1	612.306	32.836	.000
group	543.906	1	543.906	29.168	.000
Locus of control	66.306	1	66.306	3.556	.061
group * Locus of control	49.506	1	49.506	2.655	.105
Error	2908.975	156	18.647		
Total	4181.000	160			
Corrected Total	3568.694	159			

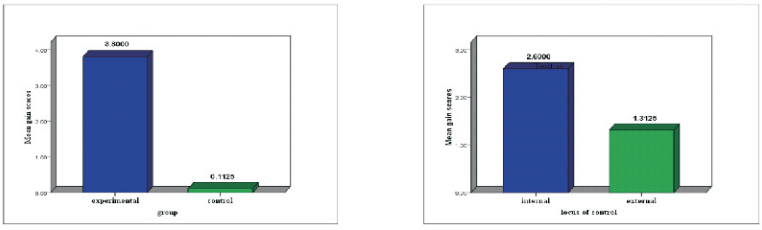
Main effect of Intentional intelligence intervention on Cognitive flexibility was reported to be significant with F value equals to 29.168 as depicted in table 3. This proves that there exists a significant difference between experimental and control groups. Hence hypothesis No. 1(a) - "There exists no significant difference between control and experimental groups in mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility" is rejected. Moreover to find which group did better, the mean gain scores of the experimental and control group were compared. Table 2 reveals that the mean gain score on Cognitive flexibility of experimental group is 3.8000 and of control group is 0.1125. So based on these values it can be safely concluded that experimental group improved much better than control group and can also be visualised graphically in figure 1(a).

The main effect of Locus of control was found to be insignificant with F value 3.556 as shown in table 3. From table 2, it can be seen that the mean gain score of the group containing adolescents with internal Locus of control is 2.6000 where as with external Locus of control is 1.3125. This yields that there did not exist any significant difference between internal and external Locus of control groups. Hence hypothesis no.1 (b)-"There exists no significant difference between internal and external Locus of control groups of adolescents in mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility" is accepted. Figure 1(b) presents it graphically.

Figure 1: Showing mean gain scores corresponding to main effect of

(a) Intentional intelligence intervention and (b) Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility

(a) (b)



As shown in table 3, F value for the interaction effect of Intentional intelligence intervention and Locus of control was found to be 2.655 which indicates that the interaction between the two was not significant. This further implies that the intervention and two types of Locus of control did not interact to produce any significant effect on Cognitive flexibility. Hence the hypothesis no 1(c)- "There exists no significant interaction between Intentional intelligence intervention program and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility" is accepted. Further the next step was to check which groups differ significantly on Cognitive flexibility as a function of two factors; t ratios were calculated for all the possible combinations of experimental/ control group and internal/ external Locus of control on mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility. The t – ratios are presented in table 4, mean gain scores of main effect corresponding to Intentional intelligence intervention and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility are presented graphically in figure 2(a) and figure 2(b) indicates the graph of interaction.

Table 4: Showing t values for different combinations of groups and Locus of control (GXL) for mean gain scores on Cognitive flexibility

	G1L1	**G1L 2**	**G2L1**	**G2L2**
G1L1		2.337*	4.393*	4.688*
G1L 2			2.793*	3.144*
G2L1				0.194 NS
G2L2				

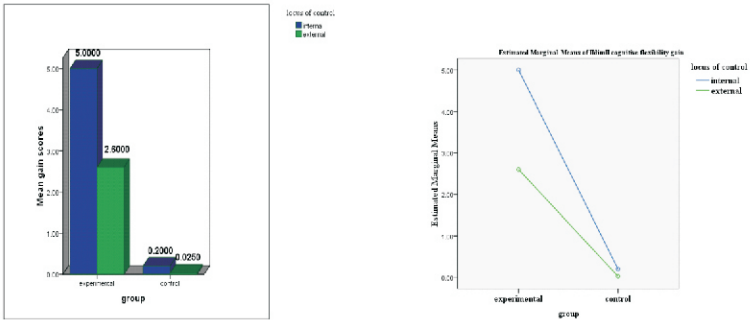
G1- experimental group
G2- control group
L1- internal Locus of control
L2- external ocus of control
*significant at 0.01 level
NS- not significant

From table 4, it can be inferred that:

- (Refer t- value=2.337) The sub group of adolescents with internal Locus of control of experimental group (M= 5.000) had significantly enhanced more Cognitive flexibility than the sub group of adolescents having external Locus of control of the same experimental group (M=2.600).
- (Refer t- value=4.393) The sub group of adolescents of internal Locus of control of experimental group (M=5.000) had significantly enhanced more Cognitive flexibility than the sub group of adolescents having internal Locus of control of the control group (M=0.2000).
- (Refer t- value=4.688) The sub group of adolescents of internal Locus of control of experimental group (M=5.000) had significantly developed more Cognitive flexibility than the sub group of adolescents having external Locus of control of the control group (0.0250).
- (Refer t- value=2.793) The sub group of adolescents of external Locus of control of experimental group (M=2.600) had significantly higher scores on Cognitive flexibility than the sub group of adolescents having internal Locus of control of the control group (M=0.200).
- (Refer t- value=3.144) The sub group of adolescents of external Locus of control of experimental group (M=2.600) had significantly higher scores on Cognitive flexibility than the sub group of adolescents having external Locus of control of the control group (M=0.250).
- (Refer t- value=0.194) Internal and external Locus of control sub groups of the control group did not differ significantly on Cognitive flexibility.

Figure 2: (a) Showing mean gain scores of main effect corresponding to Intentional intelligence intervention and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility (b) graph showing interaction effect of Intentional intelligence intervention and Locus of control on Cognitive flexibility

(a) (b)



Conclusion

Results of the present study revealed that the mean gain score of experimental group is more than the mean gain score of the control group. This result is also supported by various studies that implemented such type of intervention for examining its effectiveness on Cognitive flexibility of the participants. For example, Cognitive flexibility is positively related to meditation practice and level of mindfulness (Moore and Malinowski, 2009). Cahn & Polich (2006) revealed that people who have undergone extensive meditation training have shown improvements on cognitive performance. They also suggested that consistent and extensive meditation training promotes lasting changes in cognition and well-being. The findings of the present study and of earlier studies are on the same line in examining the effect of intervention on Cognitive flexibility. The mindfulness-based treatment improves psychological flexibility (Ciarrochi, Bilich, and Godsell, 2010). Moreover in the present study, it was also found that there did not exist any significant difference between

internal and external Locus of control groups on the variable of Cognitive flexibility. The present findings of positive significant effect of the Intentional intelligence intervention on Cognitive flexibility of adolescents is because participating in mindfulness and meditation based interventions directs a way through which a person gets a chance to explore and engage with his own experiences. The intervention used in the present study was based on various meditation, meditational, awareness enhancing and yoga based activities which worked on mind and makes it relaxed and functionally more effective hence enhancing the mind's ability to adapt different cognitive processing strategies in new, different and challenging situations.

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Article

Student Satisfaction and Perceived Effectiveness of Online Learning Among Undergraduate Students in the University of Delhi

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Abstract

One major impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education is the disruption it has caused to the traditional mode of education. Many colleges and universities have had to make significant changes to adapt to the new reality brought about by the pandemic and had to move online. In this post-pandemic period too, many students are opting for online courses while seeking higher quality learning that is individualized, flexible, and humanistic. As online learning becomes more prevalent in higher education, it is crucial to study student satisfaction as a key factor in assessing the long-term success of this mode of education. Identifying the qualities necessary for student satisfaction and achievement in an e-learning environment is also essential for maintaining the quality of online education as it expands. This article presents a comprehensive overview of the online learning landscape among undergraduate students at Delhi University. The findings of this study, based on a meticulous primary survey, revealed that

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student interaction with peers and instructors has a significant impact on their satisfaction levels. Overall, students expressed high satisfaction with instruction clarity, organization, and availability of educational resources online. The role of the instructor and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure also emerged as vital factors affecting student satisfaction. A summated scale was used to assess overall student satisfaction with online learning. The findings are supported by existing literature.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the higher education sector globally, affecting both students and institutions. Recent studies have explored the various ways in which the pandemic has impacted the higher education sector. One major impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education is the disruption it has caused to the traditional mode of education. Many colleges and universities have had to make significant changes to adapt to the new reality brought about by the pandemic and had to move online.

The pandemic has also led to changes in the nature of demand for higher education programs. Studies (e.g. Szopiński and Bachnik, 2022; Watermeyer et. al. 2022) have found that the pandemic has resulted in increased demand for online education, with many students indicating that they prefer online learning for its flexibility. In a study conducted by Fischer et. al. (2022), it was discovered that students who enrol in their required courses online were more likely to graduate within four years and experienced a slightly accelerated time-to-degree compared with students who studied completely on campus. These findings suggest that higher education institutions can potentially support more efficient college graduation by offering online courses.

As online learning becomes increasingly prevalent in higher education, providing college students with flexibility, accessibility, and convenience; it is important to study the extent of

student satisfaction with online learning. This is an important factor in assessing the long-term success of this mode of education.

Many researchers have suggested that the level of satisfaction that the students derive from any online educational program, can also be taken as a measure of the effectiveness of that program (e.g., Mohammed, et.al. 2022; Graham and Scarborough, 2001). Hence, assessment of student satisfaction is also critical for determining how an academic program or course can be improved.

Starting from the 1990s, as online education started emerging as an important part of the higher education system in the United States, many studies on different aspects of e-learning have been carried out there by government bodies as well as individual researchers. The Sloan Consortium, for example, has been conducting a nationwide survey in US from 2003 that has tracked the nature and growth of online learning (Allen and Seaman 2008). We find that there was already a sharp rise in student enrolment in online courses in United States in the first decade of the 21st century. While in 2003 about 10% of students took at least one online course, the number grew to 30% in 2009 (Christensen et. al. 2011). Whereas enrolment in traditional university courses increased at only a 1.2% per annum over this decade, online courses increased at a 12.9% rate (Allen and Seaman 2011).

Many years before the COVID19 pandemic, researchers (e.g., Christensen. 2008; Al-Qahtani and Higgins 2013) started exploring the effects of traditional, blended and e-learning on students' achievement in higher education and studied the factors that influence college student satisfaction with online learning. Some early studies (e.g., Lau 2008) found that students were, in general, were not as satisfied with online learning as they are with traditional classroom learning. The higher dropout rate reported of online students compared to that of campus students was a major concern for universities that offered online courses (Kreideweis 2005). Hart (2012) examined the factors associated with the ability of students to persist in an online course, that is, complete a course and continue to program completion and

highlighted the lack of persistence in online education and its consequence of attrition.

However, as per the Sloan Consortium survey of 2011, over two-thirds of all respondents rated online education as either the same or superior to face-to-face. This was up from fifty-seven percent in the first year of the study in 2003. The survey results also confirmed that nearly two-thirds of all academic leaders surveyed believed that the level of student satisfaction was "about the same" for both face-to-face and online courses. Since then, these figures have only gone up.

In a recent qualitative study conducted by Khan et al. (2022), focus group discussions revealed several advantages associated with remote learning. These included increased inclusivity, flexibility, availability of recorded sessions, and improved time efficiency. The study also found that remote learning had prompted faculty to enhance their technological skills. The study made recommendations for improving remote learning, such as incorporating class participation as a graded component, providing clear institutional guidelines on assessments, utilizing recordings, and improving methods of communication. Furthermore, the findings highlighted that students' preferences for remote learning varied depending on their courses and disciplines, with a preference for synchronous lessons. The study also found that culture influenced aspects such as interaction, assessments, acceptability, and accessibility of remote education.

As online education continues to expand, it is becoming increasingly important to determine and maintain the quality of online education. Therefore, it is also important to discern which qualities are necessary for student satisfaction and their success in an e-learning environment.

An early study by Huss and Eastep (2013) found that like any traditional course, for online programs too, immediacy of feedback, richness of content, strong interactions with fellow students and interaction with the instructors were critical to student satisfaction.

This is supported by more recent studies on different aspects related to student satisfaction with online learning. Rajabalee and Santally (2021), for example, found that the quality of course content significantly impacted college student satisfaction with online learning. The importance of interaction between students and instructors was also highlighted by a study by Kyei-Blankson et al. (2019) found that college students who had more such interaction in online courses experienced higher levels of satisfaction. Similarly, a study by Muzammil et. al. (2020) found that instructor responsiveness and engagement were key factors that influenced college student satisfaction in online courses.

The impact of the level of interaction between the students in online courses on student satisfaction has been reported by various studies. For example, Gray and DiLoreto (2016) and Basuony et. al. (2021) showed that college students who participated in online courses that included collaborative learning activities; reported higher levels of satisfaction than those who did not. This indicated that instructors should incorporate opportunities for peer interaction and group work into their online courses to enhance college student satisfaction.

Additionally, according to Venkatesh et al. (2013), their study revealed that the satisfaction of college students with online learning was significantly influenced by the ease of use and usefulness of the online learning platform. Therefore, it is important for instructors to prioritize creating a user-friendly online learning environment that equips college students with the necessary tools for success.

A study by Tsang et al. (2021) found that the overall quality of the online learning experience created by the course design, instructor support, and technical support significantly impacted college student satisfaction with online learning. Instructors should focus on designing courses that are engaging and easy to navigate and provide students with adequate support to maximize their satisfaction.

Apart from external factors, internal factors also play a crucial role. Zang et al. (2022) conducted a study which revealed that college students who possessed high levels of intrinsic motivation reported higher satisfaction with online courses. Hence, the study recommended that instructors should aim to cultivate a motivating environment for college students to enhance their satisfaction with online learning. Similarly, a study by Karadag et al. (2021) found that college students who had a positive attitude toward technology reported higher levels of satisfaction with online learning. This suggests that instructors should provide adequate training and support to help students become comfortable with using the online learning platform. Finally, a study by Younas et al. (2022) found that college students' expectations and perceived value of online learning significantly impacted their satisfaction. Instructors should communicate clear learning objectives and provide students with opportunities to apply what they learn to real-world situations to enhance their satisfaction.

Upon reviewing the existing literature, it becomes apparent that while there are numerous studies on different aspects of online teaching and learning, the specific factors that contribute to online success have not been comprehensively described.

Student satisfaction and their perception of learning outcomes is commonly recognized as a measure of the effectiveness of online education systems, as evidenced in studies that have been conducted over two decades (e.g., Alqurashi, 2019; Graham and Scarborough, 2001; Alavi et al., 1995). Additionally, existing research has consistently highlighted that user satisfaction is a significant predictor of learning outcomes in online learning. Studies have underscored the importance of prioritizing student needs and perceptions not only in delivering online courses, but also in designing and developing online programs (e.g., Stewart et. al., 2022; Sahin and Shelly, 2008;). In our study, we evaluated the satisfaction levels of students surveyed from undergraduate colleges in the University of Delhi with regards to online

instruction. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the perspectives of students in this context.

Research Objectives

Our research here is designed with the following objectives:

1. To study the satisfaction derived by the college students of Delhi University from their online learning experiences.
2. To determine the views of the students on support for e-learning in their college.
3. To study if the students rated their online learning experiences at par with traditional classroom learning.

Research Methodology

Students' studying in various undergraduate colleges of the University of Delhi, New Delhi, India were surveyed online to understand their experiences with virtual instruction and online learning. The methodology used in this study is based on a non-experimental quantitative research approach. For the purposes of this survey, we have used the terms virtual instruction, e-learning and online learning interchangeably to refer to any technology (hardware or software) used by students for online learning purposes.

Using the survey instrument, we gathered data on the use of e-learning technologies by the students at Delhi University colleges and the satisfaction that they have derived from the virtual learning experiences that they have had.

Online surveys clearly have some advantages over face-to-face interviews and paper-based survey as they save researchers time and expenses and overcome geographic distance. The disadvantage of online surveys is that the response rate is often lower. This was borne out in our survey too when the response to our initial email was very poor. After two weeks, a follow-up email

was sent to the students to participate in the research. The response to the follow-up email was much better. In the open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire, many participants showed keenness to know the findings of the survey once they were compiled and analysed.

Majority of the questions in the survey instrument took the form of Likert-type items. Respondents addressed each statement using a five-point Likert-type response set: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided (neither disagree nor agree), 4=agree, 5=strongly agree.

In analysing survey data that is in the form of Likert scale, an important distinction needs to be made between Likert-type and Likert scale data. Likert scale is composed of a series of four or more Likert-type items that are combined into a single composite score/variable. While Individual responses are treated as ordinal data, Likert scale data are analysed at the interval measurement scale. The descriptive statistics recommended for Likert-type items include mode or median for central tendency and frequencies for variability. Descriptive statistics recommended for variables measured on interval scale items include the mean for central tendency and standard deviations for variability. Additional data analysis procedures appropriate for Likert scale data measured on interval scale items would include the Pearson's r, t-test, ANOVA, and regression procedures.

Data Collection and Analysis

The survey of the students in Delhi University colleges was carried out online using the website Survey Monkey. The survey covered different aspects of e-learning. A link to the questionnaire was emailed to students at various colleges. The survey was carried out over 2 months (Nov-Dec 2021). The purpose of the study was described on the introductory page of the survey for the benefit of the students. The students were free to complete the questionnaire at a time of their choosing. All testing was anonymous, and the names of the students were not asked.

The students had already experienced online learning during the pandemic and at the time of the survey the students were back at their physical classes. Since the students already had exposure to e-learning, we could assess the preparedness and satisfaction levels of college students and also relate it to their attitudes and characteristics.

Initially, the sample size in this study was 142 participants. In 11 questionnaires, the information given was found to be incomplete. Such data was not taken for data analysis and was deleted. Several other cases contained some missing data. These cases were estimated by the mean substitution method using SPSS. An assumption of factor analysis is that there are no outliers but a visual examination of the scatter plots of the data revealed 6 potential outliers. The outliers that were beyond the range of $z \pm 3.00$ were deleted from the data set. The final sample size was 131.

The students at various colleges in the University of Delhi were asked to rate 17 factors that impacted their e-learning experiences on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). These factors had been developed based on literature review and a pilot survey.

The age range of participating students was 18–23 years. The details of the information collected on the demographic variables of 131 students who participated in the survey is given in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Students

Variables	**Frequency (n)**	**Percentage (%)**
Age		
15-17	1	1.0
18-20	102	78.0
21-23	26	19.8
24-26	2	1.2
Gender		
Male	68	51.9
Female	63	48.1
Department / Class		
Commerce	34	29.6
Economics	20	12.3
Computer Science	40	37
Business Administration	7	8.6
Others	10	12.3
Year of Study		
1st Year	29	23.5
2nd Year	46	44.4
3rd Year	36	32.1

STUDENT SATISFACTION AND ONLINE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

We assessed the satisfaction levels derived by the students surveyed in our study from online instruction. Table 2 gives the list of 17 Likert scale items that were used to assess students' satisfaction.

The row percentages show the proportion of students who ranked, on a 5-point Likert scale, different items related to satisfaction with online learning that they had experienced.

Table 2

Elements of Students Satisfaction with Online Learning Experience (%)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The instructors are enthusiastic about teaching the online classes	0.0	3.7	14.8	64.2	17.3
The instructors' style of presentation holds interest for me	0.0	2.5	8.6	69.1	19.8
The instructors are friendly towards individual students	1.2	4.9	13.6	61.7	18.5
The instructors are genuinely keen that the students learn the subject well	0.0	6.2	12.3	66.7	14.8
Students are encouraged to seek advice/help	0.0	4.9	12.3	63.0	19.8
The instructors encourage student interaction	0.0	2.5	11.1	66.7	19.8
The instructors handle the online class effectively	0.0	1.2	16.0	63.0	19.8
The instructors explain how to use the e - learning components	0.0	4.9	11.1	67.9	16.0
The internet browsing speed is satisfactory	4.9	11.1	7.4	59.3	17.3
Overall, the online tools and resources were easy to use	2.5	6.2	8.6	63.0	19.8
Information was well structured and presented	2.5	4.9	8.6	64.2	19.8
I found the onscreen experience pleasant	1.2	4.9	18.5	60.5	14.8
I could properly interact with my classmates online	3.7	3.7	16.0	58.0	18.5
I could easily contact the instructors	4.9	3.7	11.1	64.2	16.0
I can comfortably use my device (laptop/ smartphone) at the university	4.9	6.2	9.9	64.2	14.8
I can use the computer labs which are adequately equipped for practicing	4.9	9.9	8.6	55.6	21.0
I can rely on the college internet network	3.7	8.6	9.9	61.7	16.0

From the table above we see that *the role of the instructor and ICT infrastructure are the two main factors affecting students' satisfaction.* This is also supported by our review of literature.

We created a summated scale from the ranking of these Likert scale items to assess the overall satisfaction of the students with online learning. Called SWE (Satisfaction with E-learning), the descriptives are given in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Student Satisfaction with E-learning (SWE Scale)

Mean	3.6725
Std. Deviation	.53960

This shows that overall, the students were satisfied with their online learning experiences. We carried out one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to check if the positive perception of e-learning was affected by student characteristics like gender, their age reflected by their year of study, and their subject of specialization. ANOVA is a technique that can be used to compare means of samples (using the F distribution) and to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of two or more independent (unrelated) groups. The null hypothesis is that all group means are equal. For this statistical process the dependent variable should be measured on the interval scale. In this case the dependent variable is the Likert scale SWE (Satisfaction With E-learning) We first considered the independent variable of gender and then year of study, and subject of specialization of the students.

ANOVA were carried out using the statistical package SPSS. We found that there was no statistically significant difference in the value that the SWE scale takes between students belonging to different genders, year of study, and subject of specialization of the students.

Do the students learn in the online environment to the same extent as in a traditional classroom?

Numerous studies like the one by Neuwirth et. al. (2021) has attempted to answer this question. The researchers studied student perception of the quality of classroom-based learning compared to online learning for graduate courses at a university. The study found that a majority of the students who were surveyed perceived their online learning experience to be the same or significantly better than the traditional classroom courses.

The responses to the five Likert scale items related to the availability of support for IT and e-learning in the colleges of the respondents are collated in Table 4.

Table 4

Students' Views on Support for IT and E-learning in college

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I can access the central library website online and search for materials	6.2	21.0	11.1	51.9	9.9
I can get technical support from technicians	3.7	17.3	13.6	58.0	7.4
I think that the college e - learning support is good	4.9	19.8	17.3	51.9	6.2
There are enough computers to use and practice	6.2	22.2	8.6	53.1	9.9
I can print my assignments and materials easily	6.2	19.8	7.4	53.1	13.6

From the table, we can see that about 60% of the students have a positive view about the support for IT and e-learning in their colleges. By summing the scores from these Likert scale items, we derived a scale for e-learning support called, EL_SUP. The descriptives are given in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Support for E-learning in their College (Scale EL_SUP)

Mean	3.7333
Std. Deviation	.87579

Table 5 shows that overall, the students have a positive view of the IT and e-learning support in their colleges online learning experiences. In the last question of our survey, we also asked the students about the parity or disparity between face-to-face learning and online learning. The response to the question is given in Table 6.

Table 6

Students Views on Parity between Face-to-face and Online Learning

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Do you feel that your learning experience from the online environment was at par with or better than what you learnt in a traditional classroom?	64%	22%	14%

Thus, we see that majority of the students (64%) out of the sample size of 131 felt that their learning experience from the online environment was at par with or better than what they learnt in a traditional classroom. At the same time, 36% of the students either said that they did not find the learning experience at par or said that they were not sure.

Findings and Discussion

The survey of the students in Delhi University colleges that was carried out in Nov-Dec 2021 after the physical classes resumed in the University of Delhi after the COVID19 pandemic. The online

survey was conducted using the website Survey Monkey. The 18–23 years old students participating in the research were enrolled in courses in Commerce, Economics, Computer Science - and Business Administration in various Delhi University colleges. There were slightly more male respondents (51.9%) than female respondents (48.1%).

In order to assess the satisfaction levels derived by the students from online instruction, a list of 17 Likert scale items (listed in Table 2) was finalised on the basis of literature review. The responses to these Likert scale items give interesting insights on students' views related to e-learning.

1. Findings from the study indicated that *interaction, between students and with the instructor has a major impact on their satisfaction.* Students were highly satisfied with the clarity and organization of instruction using sufficient resources. The instructor's role was identified as being vitally important to students' satisfaction.
2. We found that *the role of the instructor and ICT infrastructure were the two main factors affecting students' satisfaction*. This is also supported by our review of literature.
3. We created a summated scale from the ranking of these Likert scale items to assess the overall satisfaction of the students with online learning. Called SWE (Satisfaction with E-learning), the variable took a mean value of 3.7 which shows that overall, the students were satisfied with their online learning experiences.
4. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to check if the positive perception of e-learning was affected by student characteristics like gender, their age reflected by their year of study, and their subject of specialization. We found that there was *no statistically significant difference in the value that the SWE scale takes between students belonging to different genders, year of study, and subject of specialization of the students.* This is similar to

the finding of no statistically significant difference in the positive perception of e-learning between students belonging to different genders, subject of specialization and year of study.

5. About 60% of the students were found to have a positive view about IT support in their colleges as shown by the scale for e-learning support called, EL_SUP that took a mean value of 3.7 indicates overall the students felt that they had adequate support from their colleges during their online learning experiences.

6. Majority of the students (64%) felt that their learning experience from the online environment was at par with or better than what they learnt in a traditional classroom. At the same time, 36% of the students either said that they did not find the learning experience at par or said that they were not sure.

One of the main advantages of e-learning is that it allows students to access course materials and complete assignments from anywhere with an internet connection. In addition, e-learning tools such as learning management systems, virtual classroom software, video-conferencing tools and online collaboration tools provide opportunities for students to engage in active and interactive learning. As a result, the forced online teaching-learning experience during the pandemic has apparently brought in a lasting integration of e-learning tools in college education. Vast investment is already being made by both government and private institutions for the creation and implementation of online courses and for the development of online learning materials.

The findings of our study give valuable inputs for the designing and implementation of online programs to ensure high levels of student satisfaction thereby also ensuring high learning outcomes in online learning.

The positive findings of our study show that e-learning can be incorporated in distance education and therefore make it

accessible to a vast number of India's young population who aspire for higher education to enhance their skills and to achieve a more productive life. To understand the long-term viability and the extent of use of online education we must combine the findings of student surveys like ours with the cost aspects of e-learning.

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Article

Geographical and Historical Perspective on Female Feticide and Infanticide in India

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Abstract

Declining trend in Child Sex Ratio in India as revealed in 2011 census is a serious concern. It clearly reflects the status of girl child in the society. At the National level, the Child Sex Ratio has declined from 927 in 2001 to 914 in 2011. At the state level, out of 35 states and UTs, the CSR has declined in 27 and improved in only 8 as per 2011 census data. There have been many studies to identify the causes of these declining sex ratios. Preference for son due to social and cultural factor has been identified as a major factor. Rapid development, abuse and affordability of modern technology to identify the sex in fetus and resultant sex selective abortions are the major factors. The present study tries to evaluate the geographical and historical aspect of preference for son in our society.

Keywords: Child Sex Ratio, Female Infanticide, PC & PNDT Act 2003, Sex Selective Abortion, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP)

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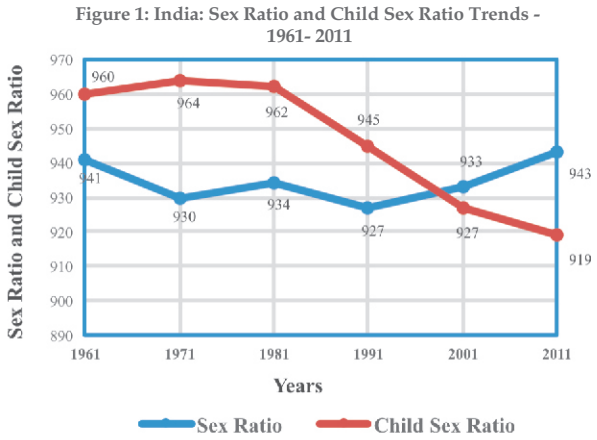
Discrimination against females has been prevalent in Indian society since ancient times. It can be seen at every stage through her life. With developments in new medical technologies, it now begins even before her birth. In this paper, I have reviewed the problem from geographical and historical perspective. A historical review of female child discrimination is presented in the first section. Second section deals with the practice of female feticide, the PNDT Act 2003, problems in its implementation, recent policies and programs implemented by Central and state governments to save the girl child and lastly the conclusion section highlights suggestions for improving status of female child in society

2011 census data shows improvement in overall sex ratios but the child sex ratios show declining trend again since 2001. 2011 census results show declining trend in child sex ratios at national level (Fig 1). The child sex ratios in country have been consistently declining since 1971.

Figure 1: India: Sex Ratio and Child Sex Ratio Trends - 1961- 2011



Source: Primary Census Abstract, 2011, Census of India

Out of total 35 states and Union Territories, CSR has shown decline in 27. Only 8 states and UTs have shown improvement in 2011 from 2001. States which have shown improvement in CSR are Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Mizoram, Tamil Nādu, Chandigarh and Andaman and Nicobar Islands. CSR has declined in 461 districts of the country which is more than two third of the districts of country. In 178 districts decline has been between 20-49 points. In 38 districts decline is of more than 50 points. (*http://www.censusindia.gov.in*)

Table 1.

Change in Child Sex Ratio 2001-2011

Status of Child Sex Ratio in 2011			
Decline in CSR in points	**Number of Districts**	**Increase in CSR in points**	**Number of Districts**
More Than 100	07	Up to10	74
50 - 99	31	11 - 20	34
20 - 49	178	21 - 30	17
1 - 19	245	31 - 49	19
Total Districts	**461**	More Than 50	15
Districts with No Change	20	Total district	**159**

Source: *http://www.censusindia.gov.in*

Historical review of sex discrimination in India

The beginning: Ancient period

Indian society is largely patriarchal, where men have always held the position of authority. Women have been excluded from public life and were left at home to take care of home and children. Roots of this discrimination go to the customs and laws written in ancient texts (Sahni, 2003). During the Vedic Period (2500-1500 B.C) women were given equal status. Although it was a patriarchal society with all powers vested in the hands of men; women were still equal participants in rituals. They were educated in Hindu scriptures and freely mixed with men in discussions on the religion (Madhok, 2004). Later, during Aryan period, domination by

Brahmins, led to the growth of caste system and other social transformation leading to social neglect of women and introduction of evils like child marriage, desertion, and condemnation of widows and barren women.

Maturation: Early medieval period

Later, during the Islamic period, the women also became victims of insult, humiliation and sexual assault. There have been numerous instances when Hindu women performed self-immolation rather than yield to indignities inflicted by the aggressors. As a result, Hindu society became more protective about its women. The freedom of women was curtailed. To protect themselves women started to cover their faces with veils. Other social practices were started that confined women and young girls within their home. Their movement outside the home and participation in social events was greatly restricted, thus girls started leading a sheltered and protected life. They were taught at home and preferably only the religious scriptures. Safety of girls and their protection became important social responsibility for the family. They were now treated as an economic burden and were considered as a liability. This led to beginning of practices such as child marriage and female infanticide. Several other social practices, like *purdah, sati*, dowry and bride burning, further led to deterioration of women's status.

Emergence of complicated caste system in later years made marrying a daughter difficult. Marriages out of castes were not allowed and search for suitable bridegroom became difficult. Increasing complexity in society raised expectation for high moral standards from women and restraints were imposed on their freedom. Therefore, a young girl became burden and liability for her parents. Social and cultural practices discriminating girls \women thus emerged during this period (Panigrahi, 1972).

The Curse: Medieval period

The practice of female infanticide did not arise from any religious motive rather it was influenced by prevailing peculiar economic and political conditions. It arose out of social institutions and customs of people – caste and marriage (Panigrahi, 1972). Female infanticide was resorted to for preservation of family honour, pride and dignity (Miller, 1981). This was true especially among Rajputs who were placed under strenuous political and economic circumstances because of constant attacks on Rajputana by Muslims of Baluchistan. Protection and seclusion of women became important. Rajputs were driven away from fertile Ganga –Yamuna plains to the deserts of Rajasthan. They suffered economically by frequent invasions and natural calamities. Socially, they were cut off from their own people\community and hence, intermixture of castes began (Panigrahi, 1972).

Still, there was no documentary evidence of female infanticide practices. Only few folk writings of Punjab mention female infanticide practiced by Gakkers, Khokars and Jats (Panigrahi, 1972). According to Alexander Walker, Emperor Jehangir issued proclamation prohibiting female infanticide. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of Sikhs, in his writings in "*Nasihat Nama*" condemns the person who kills his daughter (Visaria, 1971). All these writings point out to the fact that female infanticide was in practice at that time.

It was in medieval period that Sir Jonathan Duncan for the first time in 1789 brought into public the practice of female infanticide being practiced by Rajkumar clan of Rajputs of Jaunpur, Gujarat (Pakrasi, 1970). He also traces the incidence of female infanticide among majority of wealthy and powerful tribes of North and Northwest India. For example, these included the Gakkers in Punjab, Rajkumar\Rajvanshi tribes of Banaras district, Jats and Rathore Rajputs of Jaipur and Jodhpur district. The practice was also prevalent in Northwest province of Oudh, Cutch and west of Indus in Baluchistan. Female infanticide was also prevalent in some distant and isolated pockets of south like Todas of Nilgiri and

in the northeast by Nagas of Assam (Pakrasi, 1970).

Beginning of Change: British period

By the end of 18th century, it was clear that the practice of female infanticide was widespread in North and Northwest India. After the crime was detected in 1789, it was in 1794 that the then Governor General of India John Shore, who was also the President of Asiatic Society, brought the crime to notice among public. In 1795 Regulation XXI was passed in which female infanticide was declared as murder\crime and in 1804 Regulation III ordered magistrate to issue proclamations prohibiting the practice in territories under Bengal Government (Panigrahi, 1972). After this, the East India Company took no strict action. It was in April 1870 that Lord Mayo gave his ascent to the Female Infanticide Act of 1870, which became a law preventing the practice of female infanticide. It was only after the East India Company left that the British resorted to variety of measures to encourage people to keep their daughters alive (Miller, 1981). Rajputs were powerful martial people and formed bulk of Indian Army of East Indian Company. Therefore, little efforts were made by them to suppress female infanticide (Panigrahi, 1972).

British Government introduced various measures like holding conferences on evils of infanticide, establishment of dowry funds to help families in marriage of their daughter, threat of imprisonment and friendly cajoling (Miller, 1981). The 1881 Northwest Provinces Special Census Report on sex statistics showed scarcity of females in Northwest Provinces and Oudh (Pakrasi, 1970). The report named seven major caste groups, which practiced female infanticide – Jats, Gujars, Tagas, Ahirs, Rajputs, Minas and Ahars. Most of these are middle\upper level castes that had landed property and were rich. (Vishwanath, 1998). The Act was thus withdrawn in the year 1906.

Spatial and social patterning and winds of change

Three most important aspects, which come out of the above

analysis on historical evidences, are: the geographical spread of the problem; major social and economic groups practicing it; and reasons behind the problem.

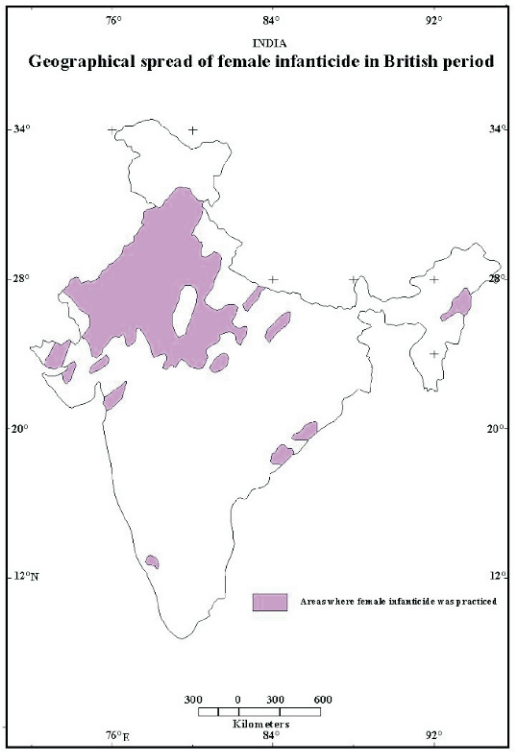
Miller (1981) and Panigrahi (1972) have in their study identified the regions where female infanticide was being practiced in India along with the major caste groups who practiced it. Panigrahi in her book writes in detail the discovery of the social evil chronologically in the then Northwestern Provinces, Punjab, Rajputana and Central India. She also mentioned the castes, which practiced it and the name of British Officer who discovered it.

Similarly, Miller (1981) has also mapped the areas where female infanticide was practiced. The geographical spread of the problem was concentrated in the Northern and Northwest India (Fig.2). The area extended from Gujarat in the west to eastern border of Uttar Pradesh. All the seven caste groups mentioned in the Northwest Provinces Special Census Report – 1881, which were suspected of indulging in this crime, resided in this area. The northwest and central Indian states of present time also have high rates of sex differentials in child mortality and low sex ratios (Vishwanath, 1998).

With respect to examined associated causes behind such practices the following dimensions are worth considering: ritualistic\social\cultural; economic and; ecological.

Ritualistic causes are basically related to the age-old beliefs and traditions related to strong preference for sons to attain *moksha* (salvation) and for inheritance to pass on from one generation to next.

Figure 2: Female infanticide In British India



Source: Miller, Barbara D (1981): The Endangered Sex: Neglect of Female Children in Rural North India. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

According to Hindu religion, it is the son who performs the last funeral rites of the parents to attain *moksha.* Daughters, according to the religious texts, were burden and liability and had no place or existence so they were killed at birth or neglected. Economic reasons were also in fact related to social traditions like dowry, which in turn is directly related to the economic status of the family. Along with it were the factors like pride and honor of the family. In order to marry their daughters in economically well off

and higher castes, parents had to pay large amounts in dowry. This made girls a liability, burden and unwanted in the family (Vishwanath, 1998).

The ecological factors like occurrence of epidemics and famines due to periodic droughts and floods also influenced the survival of the girl child. During the time of epidemics, the death rate among girls was high because of their low nutritional status. During the time of famines girls were considered as having low economic value for the household and were fed last and least thus increasing their mortality.

Spread of education among the middle class brought changes in attitude towards women. Role of British and Indian social reformers and organizations also helped in spreading the message of equality and abolition of social evils like *sati*, female infanticide and child marriage. With the active role of social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, *Sati* was abolished in 1829. Sir Ishwer Chandra Vidyasagar fought for the rights of widows, and in 1856 Widows Remarriage Act was passed. An act abolishing female infanticide was passed in 1870 and Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed in 1891 specifying 14 years as the mean age of marriage for girls (Madhok 2004).

All India Women's Education conference was held in 1927 in Pune and it advocated a movement for social change in the society by advocating for education of girls through formal schooling. Women played important role in the freedom struggle. Political leaders like Gandhi gave equal status to women by inviting them to participate in the freedom movement. In 1917, an-all women delegation met the Secretary of the state to demand women's political right.

Continuation of change: After Independence

In 1949, Independent India gave women equal rights through the constitution. In 1955, Hindu Code Bill was passed and it gave the widows the right for inheritance, prohibition of polygamy and

inter-caste marriage was legalized. Later in 1961, Prohibition of dowry Act was passed (Madhok 2004).

At present, women enjoy equal status and they are active in all spheres of development of the country be it political, social, economic, scientific and educational. They can be observed working with men and achieving success in every sphere and in some aspects, they are more successful than men.

The status of women in the contemporary context is reflected in the state of their health, education and their standard of well-being in the society. Present status of Indian women in the society can be assessed with the help of various demographic, economic and social indicators amongst others. While demographic Indicators include sex ratio, child sex ratio, age at marriage, M/F differentials in infant mortality, M/F differentials in child mortality, and preference for son, social indicators like dowry deaths and rape, literacy level, school dropout rate, crime against women would help in gauging the status of women. Economic indicators like work force participation rate, M/F differential in wages also play a crucial role in shaping the overall status of women. Additionally, an overview of health and political indicators in terms of nutritional status, maternal mortality, health care during pregnancy, place of birth on the one hand, and the share of women members in Parliament and State legislatures and their percentage as ministers in governments both at the national ansd state levels, on the other also portray a very dismal picture of the widening gender gaps at all levels. Despite the rapid pace of development since last one and a half decade, in most of the above indicators, we find that the male female gaps at various levels still exist. This shows that the gender issues have been ignored at various policy formulation levels in almost all the sectors including agricultural, non-agricultural and service sectors. The declining child sex ratios present a very grim picture of survival of the girl child in our society.

Sex Determination Test and Abuse of Modern Technology – Contemporary Period

In order to get rid of the unwanted female child modern Indian society has now adopted more scientific methods. In 1975 Amniocentesis, the test for detecting fetal abnormalities/genetic deformities was developed at All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. The purpose of the test was that if the pre-birth deformities are present, then fetus could be aborted in time. The test could also reveal the sex of the fetus (Sudha & Rajan 1999). The facility that started in few big cities in early 80's mushroomed into various small towns of Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra and Gujarat. Diagnostic centers that provided the facility came up even in the rural areas. They provided sex determination facility and if the fetus was girl, it also provided abortion facility for the convenience of the family. Government of India legalized abortion in 1971. Thus, female infanticide was being replaced by female feticide making it easier for those who hesitated to kill the girl child. Later development of Ultrasound further increased the spread of availability of this sex determination facility at cheaper rate and made it even more convenient because it was being provided at the doorstep.

Doctors and other medical staff fitted the equipment in mobile vans so that it could be driven to villages along with advertising the technology with slogans *"Spend Rs. 500 now and save 5 lakhs tomorrow"* They were able to play with sentiments of the illiterate farmers. Prosperous farmers of Punjab and Haryana were ready to spend the amount for test and later for the abortion (Sudha and Rajan, 1999).

In the early 1980's, groups of women and health organizations in Mumbai started a campaign against medical practitioners offering sex detection and abortion facility in rural areas. They formed "Forum Against Sex Determination and Sex Pre-Selection". The aim was to discourage the use of sex selection and press the government for a legislation to restrict the use of prenatal diagnostic technique.

Thus, Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act was passed in Maharashtra in 1988 and by the central government in 1994 and is applicable since 1996. The law however, had many loopholes and tests were still performed by the doctors. Doctors were making lot of money daily by performing the tests by giving various reasons for the necessity of the test. Only change that occurred was that the fees for the tests increased making it more profitable for the doctors (Duggal et al. 2003).

In 2000, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) was forced to restraint the doctors performing such tests. In 2001, the Indian Medical Council (IMC) wrote to the Government of India to amend the code of ethics so that doctors can be prosecuted under the IMC Act of 1956.

On the other hand, there are some social scientists who give arguments in favor of the sex determination and abortion of female fetus and argue that the test helps the families to cope with dowry demands and other dowry related evils in later life, aborting the girl child now is better than the lifelong abuse, it will help in population control, less number of females will increase the status of women in society and that there is great demand for it and so, doctors are catering to the demand of the people (Malik 2003)

The 2001 census results show declining trend in child sex ratios again for nearly all states and total sex ratios declining in Northern Indian states confirming that the tests were still being performed. Sex selective abortions were also being done at alarming rates even after the passing of legislation. Therefore, in 2001, Sabu George a health activist and Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsh Mandel (MASUM) filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in Supreme Court regarding alarming drop in sex ratios due to practices of determination of fetal sex and abortion of female fetuses (Duggal et al (2003). They cited various reasons like Prenatal Diagnostic Technique Act which was operational since 1996 is not being enforced properly, there is disinterest on part of various governing bodies to implement the act, small family norm advocated under Family

Planning program and lastly strong bias towards preference of son among the families

In May 2001, the Supreme Court of India asked the state government to sincerely implement the PNDT Act of 1994. Under its directions, the Central Supervisory Board was formed which was to issue directions to all the states and union territories. The Board was to furnish quarterly report on Act's implementation and recommend for possible amendments (Duggal et al 2003).

In December 2001, the Supreme Court again reviewed the situation and issued another note demanding the state government's performance regarding the implementation of PNDT Act. In 2003 the act was modified and now also includes determination of sex of child before conception. The modified Act is now known as Pre Conception & Pre Natal Diagnostic Test Act 2003 (PC & PNDT ACT 2003).

The passing and improper implementation of PC & PNDT Act has further deteriorated the condition of women. Doctors have taken the advantages of several loopholes in the Act. On the other hand, in rural areas the law enforcing agencies have victimized illiterate women. After the passing of the Act, the price of the test has increased. It is now being performed illegally and under unhygienic conditions and there is no written evidence or documentation of the test being performed. Shortage of women has further led to increase in many crimes against them. Decline in number of girls in the population has resulted in marriage crises for the youth in Punjab and Haryana. There are newspaper reports of "importing "of brides from other states. (Bajwa 2019, Mukherjee 2013, Singh 2019)

Frequent abortions based on sex determination have also an impact on the reproductive health and general health conditions of women in later life. This is another aspect to be investigated in detail. So far, the stress has been only on the impact of the new medical technology on the sex ratios and status of the girl child. Precious little is known about the impact of this technology on the health of women which is also important. Majority of women go

for the test under the pressure of family elders without the reference of doctor thus inviting risk to their health.

"The Way Forward : Proper implementation of PC & PNDT Act 2003 and creating public awareness.

There are several measures which can be adopted to ensure effective implementation of the 2003 Act. These range from plugging the legal loopholes to creating public awareness against the female feticide, making medical practitioners more responsible for the tests being performed by them. Some of the suggestions are:

Proper implementation of Act is very important. There are instances where women who have gone for abortions have been harassed by the doctor who performed the test. Doctors, who are more influential than the rural folks, manage to escape because they get informed beforehand by the concerned persons (Murthy, 2003).

Equal rights to women in inheritance and ownership of land through proper implementation of the law. There is urgent need to remove the practical and structural difficulties faced by women even if they get their share in father's property.

Registration of all ultrasound clinics and proper maintenance and scrutiny of records maintained by the clinics regarding tests done by them, the names and kinds of patients visiting such clinics along with the actual reasons for conducting the tests. Role of doctors who perform the test is also important

Planning policies

Planning process should tackle the gender inequalities existing in the society by providing greater opportunity to women. This can be done by spreading female literacy and linking their education to economic independence. Especially in the affluent areas of Punjab and Haryana, there is need to develop new skills for women and

encourage them to have new jobs, which match their economic status.

Public awareness regarding ill effects of SDT and its impact on population composition is very important. Role of government and non-government institutions becomes very important to spread this message. Social disapproval of the test can be done only with the help of these institutions. There is need to develop the network of dedicated social workers who spread the message of ill effects of female feticide in each identified problematic village and bring awareness regarding equal status of male and female child. Religious institutions can also play very important role in creating awareness

In April 2001, Akal Takht the highest seat of Sikhs, issued *Hukumnama* prohibiting PNDT test and for social boycott of the families getting the test done (Dutt, 2001). There is need for all social and religious bodies to come together and educate the people against these tests. The initiative taken by the religious institutions is appreciable and should have widespread impact. If other religious institutions can also take the similar stand and socially boycott the families performing feticide, the issue can be tackled. This type of stand by other social organizations can also give boost to government's efforts and help in mitigating the problem.

Recent policies and programs

The problem of declining Child Sex Ratio in our country is multidimensional, necessitating the need for interventions at various levels. It requires coordination of multiple stakeholders ranging from Ministries and Departments at National and State levels to implement and monitor the schemes, District, Block and Panchayats at village level to check and keep record and monitor the proper implementation of scheme. NGOs, civil society groups and volunteers must undertake concerted efforts to create awareness among the society.

To improve the number of girls and their survival, the Indian Government has implemented laws like PC & PNDT Act 2003. The Central Government has implemented many schemes like Save The Girl Child, Balika Samridhi Yojana 1997, Dhan Laxmi Yojana (2008) etc. Celebrating 24th January every year since 2009 as Girl Child Day is the right decision not only in disseminating the message of the critical need to save the girl child, but also in spreading awareness amongst the general public at large. State governments have also launched schemes to improve the survival of girl child. State Governments have implemented scheme like, Ladli Lakshmi Yojana (M.P), Kanya Jagriti Jyoti Scheme (Punjab), Bhagya Laxmi Scheme (Karnataka), Mukhya Mantri Kanya Suraksha Yojana (Bihar), and Indra Gandhi Ballika Suraksha Yojana (H.P) (Sadh and Kapoor, 2012). State level awareness campaigns like, selfie with daughters, celebrations of festivals and birth of daughters, awareness campaigns through rallies and Nukad Natak by NGOs. Positive impact of these schemes is reflected in improvement in Child Sex Ratios only in eight states like Haryana and Pumjab for 2011 census. In rest of 27 states and UT's CSR continued to decline.

The Central Government launched Beti Bachhao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme in 2015 at the National Level. The main aim of the BBBP scheme was to curb and prevent the decline in CSR in the country and to address the problem of gender discrimination. It was started initially in 100 districts in phase I (2014-2015). However, with positive results and successful implementation, the scheme was extended to additional 61 districts in phase II (2015-20116). Currently, the BBBP scheme extends to all 640 districts of the country (www.wcd.nic.in). It is now almost eight years ever since the scheme was launched. It calls for undertaking a systematic study of the impact of this scheme in order to ascertain the nature and extent of benefits accruing from the scheme in all the districts.

Conclusion

Improving the CSR status of the girl child and her survival in the Indian society is a multidimensional problem. Positive results can be achieved only with better coordination of all the agencies and stakeholders involved not only in making and implementation of the policies and programs/schemes at national, state, district and village level, but also at the level of various agencies as well as civil society groups which can help in generating awareness among the people. Studies have shown that it is not merely an economic problem wherein the girl child is considered as burden, but also a social problem of pride among social groups where female feticide is practiced. It is not only the result of population policy where two child norm is advocated but also the result of nuclear families, high cost of educating the children, both spouses working and non-availability of child care facilities

Creating awareness among masses. Media campaigns against the practice of female feticide and infanticide is very important. Encouraging girl child, her achievements and rewarding them, making girl achievers face of these campaigns and rewarding them are some of the steps that can be taken whereby the status of girl child can be improved in society. Declining CSR is not merely a demographic problem, but more crucially a social problem. All this makes it incumbent upon the governmental and non-governmental civil society groups to spread awareness, effect change in old beliefs and attitudes towards the girls within a family. This must be accompanied by stricter implementation of Government policies and laws by enforcement agencies at all levels which can help in improving the overall status and survival of the girl child. Such steps will also help in creating conducive and safer environment for the girl child in society.

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Article

Presidential Satisfaction & Constitutional Democracy Vis-À-Vis The State of Exception During Emergencies in India

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Abstract

The exceptional situations of state emergencies have in the past inevitably undermined democracy through valid constitutionality. The emergency is legitimized by the orders of an executive head's 'satisfaction', where unverifiable subjective judgement is imposed to curtail fundamental rights of citizens of a nation. Who decides if the decision is not a political obligation for the ruling government or is morally evaluated in the interest of the nation? The judiciary has traditionally been reluctant to judge or review the 'subjectivity' of this political affect that carries serious undemocratic implications for a polity. Basic democratic freedoms of all individuals in a state of siege are undermined in the face of the state executive and martial forces, with leaders acting with a supra-sovereign ability to decide the rights and wrongs in his/her paranoiac subjectivity whilst successfully controlling, limiting and manipulating the state apparatuses in favor of their popular leadership. Such abuses of constitutional provisions that do not

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specify the procedural or rational parameters of decision making threaten the very spirit of democracy that constitutionality intends to safeguard. This paper uses an interpretive method, as it focuses theoretically on exceptional cases of state under emergencies, undermining constitutional democracy by virtue of an executive decision based on an 'affect' or 'feelings'/'satisfaction'.

Keywords: Affect, Paranoia, Body without Organs, Exception, Emergency, Subjectivity, Review Power, Morality, Presidential Determination, Desire, Terrorism, etc.

The Historical Premises of the State of An Emergency

"Si propter necessitatem aliquid fit, illud licit fit: quia quod non est licitum in lege, necessitas facit licitum. Item necessitas legem non habet..." – Gratian, *Decretum*[1]

The first part of this paper discusses the historicity of state of emergencies in modern democracies. The second part is further divided in four segments which schematically inquire the impact of semantic indicators constitutionally giving power to President in the Indian context to impose emergencies; the dilemma of the courts to review the efficacy of a subjective decision; the constitutional assembly debates regarding exceptionality and the ignorance towards procedural quality of decision making on the part of judiciary. In the third part, the paper shows how such political decisions cause political paranoia hence allowing the state to take radical methods to oppress the democratic liberties of citizens and looks at an American example to understand it further. In its last segment while concluding, the paper draws upon the inferences of exceptional power to nullify all individual freedoms, questioning the true identity of the state muffled with the power of an executive head being either independent or being subdued by populist heads of legislatures.

[1]Translated as: *"If something is done out of necessity, it is done licitly, since what is not licit in law necessity makes licit"*. Agamben, *State of Exception,* 24.

When a state is needed to protect the individual, the necessity of protecting the state itself becomes inevitable for most lawmakers. This protective measure may supersede the true values of a democratic state while generating a legally identified (mostly authorized in Democratic or rather a Post-Democratic[2] structure) abyss where democratic ethics are abandoned. The 'State of Emergency' is one such provision that constitutionally legalizes in most modern states the extreme, concentrated control of the Executive over all *apparatuses* of functioning political institutions. Semantically 'Emergency' suggests the heightened need of a total clampdown over auxiliary parts of any state apparatus when and wherever the executive head deems it to be necessary.

Agamben in his philosophico-legal oeuvre '*State of Exception*' discusses in different variations on the question of the requirement, existence and nature of a condition that is exceptional, urgent, indispensable for a state or a sovereign. The term is comparable to the German word '*Notstand*' equivalent to 'state of necessity', the French '*État de siège*' and the English '*Martial Law*'/'*Emergency Powers*', to further explain the phenomenon. The constitutional historicity of such laws according to Agamben dates back to the July 8 decree of 1791 that further developed as Article 92 of the French constitution of 22 Frimaire Year 8 (1799) imposed later by Bonaparte in France. The present French constitution legalizes emergency powers under *Article 16*[3], which was previously used by president De Gaulle to mitigate the Algerian Question of 1961. In Germany, the installation of a 'legal' *state of exception* was seen through the implementation of Article 48 of Weimar Constitution which helped stage the Nazi *coup d'état,* itself

[2]According to Colin Crouch, Post-Democracy can be defined as a phenomenon where "powerful minority interests have become far more active than the mass of ordinary people in making the political system work for them; where political elites have learned to manage and manipulate popular demands; where people have to be persuaded to vote by top-down publicity campaigns." *Post-Democracy,* 19.

[3] Constitution du 4 Octobre 1958 (*Titre II : Le Président de la République*)

having roots in the 48th article of Bismarckian Constitution. As per the English provisions, the Defence of Realm Act of 1914, (also called DORA) was a 20th century legal right of the state to maintain its security in times of war, giving exceptional powers to the Monarch through Proclamation (which can be now seen through acts like the *Civil Contingencies Act of 2004.)* Similarly, the American Constitution has also seen use of such emergency provisions in history, although within the absence of any formal word 'emergency' (e.g., through Article 1, *Section 9*[4]) which helped President Lincoln to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* as per 'his satisfaction' to crush any rebellion or unfaithful practices.

In the Indian Constitution, the 18th Part corresponds to the '*Emergency Provisions*'[5] which includes articles from 352-360. The source of the 18th part has origins in the Government of India Act, 1935, of which, Section 93 legitimized the proclamation of the Governor of a Province when the government 'cannot be carried on in accordance with provisions of the Act' and through which, 'he may, by proclamation assume to himself all or any of the powers vested in or exercisable by a Provincial body or authority, including the Ministry and the Legislature, and to discharge the functions thus assumed in his discretion' where however the High Court couldn't be encroached upon for its powers[6]. The relevant articles deal with the proclamation of an emergency if the President of the republic is '*satisfied*' of '*threats of armed rebellion*[7]*, external war, external aggression*[8]'or even in regards of the *"financial instability"*[9]*.* The National Emergency under Article 352 must be

[4]The Constitution of the United States of America.

[5] The Constitution of India (as on 9th December, 2020).

[6]The Sarkaria Commission Report, Chapter VI: Emergency Provisions, 6.2.01.

[7]India Const., art. 352, amended by Constitution (Forty-fourth Amendment) Act, 1978, substituting 'internal disturbance' (w.e.f. 20-6-1979)

[8]India Const., art. 352, *Part XVIII*

[9] India Const., art.360

enacted through *"proclamation"* through "*communications in writing"* of the Council of Ministers (inclusive of the Prime Minister, as appointed under Article 75), and the Presidential Emergency through Article 356*"on receipt of report from the Governor"* of a state or *"otherwise"* if although quite rhetorically, he *"is satisfied"* that the State under the government cannot function constitutionally. The emergency provisions allow the Centre to make laws or enact provisions to ensure the working of the state to mitigate these threats under which the provisions are levied, while also suspending the fundamental rights like in Article 19 while a Proclamation is declared, through Article 358, and suspension of rights of Part 3 of the Constitution except articles 20 and 21. The emergency provision only superficially protects the constitutional democracy by forceful suspension of basic rights of any empowered citizen, only rhetorically acting upon democratic morality avoiding immediacy to condemn a person to death or punishment without any grounds of proof. It is a separate question to pose, whether this really means to ensure constitutional democracy in the first place, or not!

The Problematic of Such *Exception*- The Case of Presidential Satisfaction In Indian Constitutional System

Agamben in his book referred above highlights several issues with such a '*Paradigm of Government*', which functions in accordance with the '*Force of Law*' wherein the latter represents *"the state of law in which the law is applied, but is not formally in force…"*[10]. The questions on right to resistance, detentions, suspension of law, legitimizing a coup d'état via an emergency decree, a constant chaos on the control of power amongst the sovereign or the parliament, the inconsistency of the judicial realm in the state, are only a few to inquire about the nature of an exceptional state in its initial few chapters. In the context of the Indian Emergency

[10]Agamben, *State of Exception,* Chapter 2, para 2.5, 36.

Provisions, these can be juxtaposed to not only question the 'need' of such laws, but also to bring back attention to the debates of the lawmakers who were weary of this function of the Indian constitution.

The *Iustitium*[11] or the "standstill/ suspension of law" as Agamben explains, is the key feature of his theory. Suspension of law may not be officiated only through dictatorship, since most dictators in modern history have been in fact democratically elected. The *state of exception* is not necessarily a "*fullness of powers, a pleromatic state of law, as in the dictatorial model, but as a kenomatic state, an emptiness and standstill of law*[12]." There is an ambiguous human praxis within the juridical void. The law is there, yet it is not there. Here sustains an articulation in paradox, where something must be in the law, is exterior to it which is the suspension of juridical order itself. The judiciary cannot question or negate the constitution itself, which mandates the sovereign to take these actions. Agamben says while quoting directly Carl Schmitt, that this power which is not 'constituted in virtue of a constitution, is nevertheless connected to every existing constitution in such a way that it appears as the founding power… and for this reason it cannot be negated even if the existing constitution might negate it"[13]. Agamben calls it 'minimum constitution', which establishes the relation between the *state of exception* and the judiciary. To apply a norm, one must suspend its application to produce an exception.

[11] Agamben, *State of Exception,* Chapter 4 '*Iustitium*', 41.

[12] Agamben, *S.O.E.,* 48.

[13] *S.O.E.,* 34.

A. Desire'/ 'Satisfaction'/ 'Pleasure': subjectivity of this 'Affect' and its semantic overbearings

Certain 'exceptional' clauses of the emergency articles in the Indian constitutional provisions have certain loopholes in relation to the constitutional democracy that the Indian state has apparently strived to provide to its citizens. The affect basis of '*Satisfaction of the President*' is one such provision. What is the affect in question here - the factor which interplays with the satisfaction of a sovereign to necessitate the *state of exception*? In his book, *Politics of Affect,* Brian Massumi briefly defines it in a Spinozian perspective, of capacity to extend an impact of a sensation, to one's self and the other individual. Here, emotion is not the only essential factor, but the potential of this affect to co-exist[14]. This affect can intensify depending on not just personal, but also related to the 'larger field of life'. Anger for instance, he explains, is not just a sentiment, but is related to attention over an issue that is otherwise interruptive in nature for an event, leading to the use of certain gestures (however, sentiment's role in cognition to identify threats or peace cannot be totally ignored, as his critics point out). It reinstates affect for the receiver, where the judgement of the other decides on the ability retorting back with a gesture, or simply refraining to do so, which is itself a gesture. Ethically, there might not be a positive or negative connotation to it, but in a moralizing aspect[15], there can be. The maximizations of an impact's potential can change the affect for any individual. It is relative, and cannot be fixed in systems of good/bad. Language, for instance, is what can communicate a meaning which produces a potential or virtual impact for the listener, according to Massumi. The affect is subjective and always different in a given situation.

Article 352 (clause 1) states the provision of a declaration of an Emergency, "*If the President is satisfied that a grave emergency exists… he may by Proclamation, make a declaration to that effect…*" There are,

[14]Massumi, *Politics of Affect,* 5.

[15]*P.O.A.,* 11.

however, no constitutional parameters to precisely explain what 'satisfies' the President to make a proclamation. However, subjective satisfaction is conditional upon clause 3 of the same article, which states that the President "*shall not issue a Proclamation under clause (1) or Proclamation varying such Proclamation*" until the Council of Ministers, binding him by Article 74 of the constitution. It is this freedom to proclaim an emergency on a subjective basis which has historically proved to be problematic. Firstly, it had come into full play during Indira Gandhi's regime in 1975 wherein she had unilaterally decided to convince the then President, Fakhrudin Ali Ahmed to proclaim emergency, bypassing the Council of Ministers in the process. The council of ministers did huddle together only in the morning at 6 A.M. as an afterthought to maintain the modicum of constitutionality.[16], the Prime Minister single handedly 'convinced' the then President, Fakhraudin Ali Ahmed to proclaim the emergency. Her subjective reason was based on a '*slew of reports indicating the country was going deep in crisis*'[17], heading towards a condition of '*internal disturbance*'. Since the President had already consented to his 'satisfaction' even in the absence of any strong evidence as the basis of the emergency, this only amounted to dodging perceived fears of a threat to Mrs. Gandhi's political career. This had invited sharp criticism from the Shah Commission subsequently on grounds of "*arbitrariness and reckless disregard of the right of others and the consequent misery… terrorised the citizens resulting in a complete loss of faith of the people in the fairness and objectivity of the Administration generally."*[18].

Secondly, in article 356, satisfaction of the President "*on reports of Governor… or otherwise"* allows him/her to declare the President's Rule, wherein under its 1st clause, part (c) the President is empowered to "*make such incidental and consequential provisions as appear to the President..."* Here again, the President either acts on a 'report' of the Governor, or can 'otherwise' delegate the powers of

[16]Guha, *India after Gandhi,* 342.

[17] Mukherjee, "The Midnight Drama: Declaration of the Emergency" (Book Extract)

[18] The Shah Commission Report, *Chapter XXIV- General Observations,* 24.1.

the State legislature to the Parliament to ensure security. Particular words in clause (c) like 'appear' and 'desirable' are really controversial and ambiguous. Afterall, how can one ensure this affect of the President's judgement? By what means can it be rationally examined? For instance, the Presidential rule in Jammu and Kashmir not only allowed to pass an ordinance to issue changes to Article 370, but also helped to maintain and crossover via Governor the discussions with the State legislature, who were put behind house arrests while he continued to work under the strong influence of the Government headed by the Council of Ministers. What were his reasons – real threats to the state on the security fronts? Or was it to force through a political monopoly even after the democratic coalition alliance ceased to maintain its government[19] and enforcing the desirable issuance of the ordinance to prepare grounds to abrogate article 370? The nature of this unverified quality of 'desire' to issue the ordinance is itself based on the way it is promulgated, depending whether the 'President' or rather, the Central executive is *satisfied* to take decision that make an ordinance inevitable to be the immediate action[20]. A similar vocabulary can be seen in article 354's first clause, wherein provisions of articles 268 and 279 in such cases cease to operate to "*have effect subject to such exceptions or modifications as he thinks fit.*" Either this makes the President a rubber stamp or overly influential**.**

B. When 'satisfaction' converts malafide intentions to 'just' constitutionality: the dilemma of the judicial reviews

The '*satisfaction*' of the President has been subject to to judicial reviews.[21] In cases like, *Bank Nationalisation case*[22], ordinances were

[19]PTI, "After Governor's rule, President's rule comes into force in Jammu and Kashmir" *Economic Times,* 2018.

[20] Jain, *Indian Constitutional Law,* 2018, 240.

[21] Jain, I.C.L., 241

[22] RC Cooper v. Union of India, AIR SC 564 (1970)

juridically discussed to comprehend the judicial viability of the term. In the *Bank Nationalisation case*, the Supreme Court ruled that "*the satisfaction of the President is subjective"* may be abused by political manoeuvres by which legislative power can be challenged by establishing "*bad faith or mala fide and corrupt motives"*. The use of emergency provisions of article 356 to dissolve the Karnataka legislative assembly of 1989, through the *Bommai Case*[23] was analysed susceptible to mala fide intentions by the central government by the state High Court:

> *We must, however, hasten to add that this does not mean that the Central Government has a free licence to pass any arbitrary or despotic order or to clothe it with a blanket power to do anything it likes against the well established legal norms or principles of political ethics. Such an arbitrary or naked action in a suitable case may amount to a fraud on the Constitution and destroy the very roots of the power exercised....* [24]

In 1994, the judgement quotes a previous observation made during the *State of Rajasthan v. Union of India,*

> *Of course by reason of Cl. (5) of Art. 356 the satisfaction of the President is final and conclusive and cannot be assailed on any ground, …the challenge is not that the satisfaction is improper or unjustified, but that there is no satisfaction at all. In such a case it is not the satisfaction arrived at by the President which is challenged, but the existence of the satisfaction itself*[25].

The matter of doubt was whether the '*satisfaction*' of the president can be challenged or not, which was discussed in other cases as well – in *A. Sreeramulu vs Unknown*[26] where the subjectivity was deemed to be a political issue and not judicial one, or in *State of Rajasthan vs. Union of India,* where it was brought to light how the 5th

[23] SR Bommai v Union of India, AIR Kant 5 (1990)

[24] Supra_, Fazal. J , 13

[25] SR Bommai v Union of India, AIR SC 1918, (1994). Pp 741, Pt. 12

[26] A Sreeramulu v Unknown, AIR AP 106 (1974)

clause of the article 356 did not allow any judicial contestation of the President's 'satisfaction on any grounds' wherein Justice Bhagwati argued against the courts dealing with the facts' adequacy since it would be a rather dangerous exercise. Scrutinising political decisions of the governor's report on which the president relied, or analysing the justiciability of satisfaction is termed as a temptation and *"To do so would be entering the political thicket and questioning the political wisdom which the courts of law must avoid… Therefore, in my view, the court cannot interdict the use of the constitutional power conferred on the President under Article 356 unless the same is shown to be mala fide.*[27]*"* The debate over the *mala fide* nature of the Presidential Satisfaction under the 5th clause of Article 356 brought it the finality of no judicial review over it, considering it to be totally a political matter, as the 5th clause of Article 356 was removed with the 44th Amendment of 1978 which repealed along with it the 38th Amendment as well.

C. The constituent assembly debate on 'otherwise':

Like in the Rajasthan Case in 1977, debates on the usage of the word 'otherwise' (Point 14) can suggest the crossover of a Governor's report on the President's side, based on "other materials". This was hugely debated in the Constituent assembly discussions. B.R. Ambedkar argued that the word itself would allow the President to act when the Governor of a state may not make a report[28]. To this, the same day, H.V. Kamath, raised doubts on the usage of this word, "*What that 'otherwise' is, God only knows.*". He goes a bit further to discuss why the President can just not act on the basis of the information provided by the Governor, who is himself appointed by the President, on the basis of 'trust and confidence', while arguing,

[27] S.R Bommai v Union of India 1 SCR (1994). Pandian, J. Pp 996.

[28] Constituent Assembly Of India Debates (Proceedings)- *Volume IX,* (3rd August, 1949). On articles 188, 277-A, 278, 278-A.

> *Do you mean to say that the President… can intervene solely on the strength of his own judgement, perhaps buttressed or reinforced by the advice of his Council of Ministers at the Centre but without a report from the State Governor…?... This is a foul transaction, setting at naught the scheme of even the limited provincial autonomy …in this Constitution… and I shall pray to God 'that he may grant sufficient wisdom to this House to see the folly, the stupidity, the criminal nature of this transaction.*

He believed it to be criminal on the basis of the ambiguity of the word which he termed "*diabolical*", seeking to "*destroy the foundations of democracy*" where the "*whole Constitution will be in danger not so much from those who are agitating in the streets as from those who are in power…*" His caution did turn true when the Bommai Government which had its MLA's defecting almost by mistake or by misinterpretation was toppled down with a Presidential rule, on the advice of a Governor, in 1989. The abuse of the article and its powers, that Ambedkar only thought to be a "*dead letter*", was the reality of which the critics of the constituent assembly were weary of, and was in similar respect conveyed by Justice S.R. Pandian's opening arguments of his judgement on the 1994 verdict of the S.R. Bommai case.

D. Basis of reviews over actions, not the process of the law:

The *Bommai Case* of 1994 dealt with a prominent question on the grounds of extending the scope of the judicial review power of the court to a rational understanding of the basic premises of the emergency provisions, especially under 356, in a legal framework. Justice Soli Sorabjee confirms, *"The real safeguard will be full judicial review extending to an inquiry into the truth and correctness of the basic facts relied upon in support of the action under Article 356 as indicated by*

[29] SJ Sorabjee, "Decision of the Supreme Court in S.R. Bommai v. Union Of India: A Critique."

Justices Sawant and Kuldip Singh.[29]" While Justice Sawant argued for the case, he did mention the fact that the subjectivity of President's satisfaction is although a question of judicial review, but only in a limited fashion,

> *These parameters of the condition precedent to the issuance of the Proclamation indicate both the extent of and the limitations on the power of the judicial review of the Proclamation issued. It is not disputed before us that the Proclamation issued under Article 356(1) is open to judicial review. All that is contended is that the scope of the review is limited.*[30]

As per Justice Ramaswamy, "*Judicial review is a basic feature of the Constitution"* It is, however, "*…not concerned with the merits of the decision, but the manner in which the decision was taken.*[31]" And again, to add to this, "*Justiciability is not a legal concept with a fixed content, nor is it susceptible to scientific verification… Judicial review may be avoided on questions of purely political nature, though pure legal questions camouflaged with political questions are always justiciable.*[32]" Hence to measure the subjectivity, there must exist a mechanism. Selected arguments were introduced while quoting the Barium Chemicals Ltd. Case of 1966 which had laid down specific measures to understand such subjectivity.

However, Justice Sawant does then later conclude an inference of the nature of material/ information in existence that satisfies the President to shape the argument of the very basis of a judicial review. He quotes several legal scholars and precedents, including some Pakistani judgements on the issue of the President's power[33]

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[30]S.R. Bommai v. Union of India, J Sawant, 719, Pt.2.

[31]Supra_, Ramaswamy, J. 698, 6.4.

[32] Supra_, Ramaswamy, J. 699, 6.6.

[33] *Muhammad Sharif v. Federation of Pakistan 17* (In regards to Article 58 of the Pakistani Constitution)

and what satisfies him[34]. Somehow this ignores the very questionable condition of democratic ethos suffering from an abuse of this affect of satisfaction which is kept outside the rationale of legal logic which would seem constitutionally ethical in nature whilst the semantic reasoning remains to be flawed at several instances. Justice Sawant presented his case saying,

> *…one of the conclusions… is that the exercise of power by the President under Article 356(1) to issue Proclamation is subject to the judicial review…whether the conditions precedent to issuance of the Proclamation have been satisfied or not.* [35]

The judicial review influences an executive decision and as per his argument cannot be any ordinary source of information *"...but material which would lead to the conclusion that the Government of the State cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution which is relevant for the purpose."* It ought to be reasonable, and hence, while quoting the semantic definition[36] of the word 'satisfaction' from the dictionary, Justice Sawant reiterated further,

> *…it is not the personal whim, wish, view or opinion or the ipse dixit of the President dehors the materials but a legitimate inference drawn from the material… the President has to be convinced of or has to have sufficient proof of information with regard to, or has to be free of doubt or uncertainty about the state*

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[34] As quoted by Justice Sawant, the argument of Justice Salam in the Pakistani case, "Whether it is 'subjective' or 'objective' satisfaction of the President or it is his 'discretion' or 'opinion', this much is quite that the President cannot exercise this power under the Constitution on wish or whim… His action must appear to be called for and justifiable under the Constitution if challenged in a Court of Law. No doubt, the Courts will be chary to interfere in his 'discretion' or formation of the 'opinion' about the 'situation' but if there be no basis or justification for the order under the Constitution, the Courts will have to perform their duty, cast on them under the constitution. While doing so, they will not be entering in the political arena for which appeal to electorate is provided for." pp. 724-725.

[35] S.R. Bommai v. Union of India (1994) Sawant, J.,730-731, Pt. 5

[36] Supra _, J Sawant, 731-732, Pt. 6

> *of things…* (However, the) *...sufficiency or otherwise of the material cannot be questioned, the legitimacy or inference drawn from such material is certainly open to judicial review.*

When only the outcome of such decisions is subjectively considered to be reviewable under judicial interrogation, the interpretation of the idea of judicial review tries to escape perhaps the idea of true justice, to link itself to stringent textuality, empiricism, while proving to the public that it still serves the purpose of holding accountable the various organs of the government. This is where it introduces a contradiction to its ruling in procedure – to explain the limits of examining the basis of an individual's rights in control via Article 72 vested with the President – the grant of pardons, reprieves, respites, etc. can be the basis of reviewing the decision making of the President. It can be questioned whether power is channelised which are *"wholly irrelevant, irrational, discriminatory or mala fide.*[37]*"* Who again, decides the nature of this decision, and what is the guarantee that this decision under review, would not be subject to errors? This is not '*proportionality*' Justice Sawant suggested, where *"doctrine of proportionality or unreasonableness has no play in constitutional law and the executive action and legislation cannot be examined and interfered with on the anvil of the said doctrine.*[38]*"* Surely, the powers which could be mala fide are also a part of the Council of Ministers who advises the President, under Article 74's provisions, and the court can scrutinize them. However, the debate whether under the quasi-federal structure of the constitution or otherwise the 'exceptional' overriding powers of the Centre not restrictive of a President's decision- it is after all, *"not the theoretical label given to the Constitution, but the practical implications of the provisions of Constitution…"* The question that remains, is by what democratic means should an analysis is to be done? Is it justifiable to limit the

[37]Supra _, J Sawant, 730, Pt. 5

[38]Supra _, J Sawant, 720, Pt. 4

scope of the logicality of the material, the necessity of such a decision?

Affect And Paranoia of This '*Body Without Organs*' via The Lens of A *State of Exception*

Analysing a prominent example of ambiguous subjectivity of political affect, one can refer to the paranoiac decision making of the American government regarding the 9/11 attacks. For Massumi, "*the legitimization of political power, of state power, no longer goes through the reason of state and the correct application of governmental judgement. It goes through affective channels.*[39]" This allowed the Bush Administration to bring in power the 'Authorization for use of Military Force against Iraq Resolution of 2002'. The draft legalizes the President's authority in Section 3's part (a), to deploy US military forces "*as he determines to be necessary and appropriate…*[40]" The act continues to legitimize the 'Presidential Determination' as the basis of taking necessary actions in tandem with partner nations against 'anybody' (nation or organization) who planned/ attacked/ committed/ aided the 9/11 attacks. Interestingly, such a statutory power of the President has been generally excluded out of the Judicial Review system, also called the '*reviewability doctrine*'[41]. Such powers are automatically derived from the Congress to the President in the form of the power of '*contingency*' *or* '*conditional form delegations*', rooted in documents like the Militia Act of 1795.

In its archaic text, this act provided the President powers to exercise as a reasonable executive when and '*as he shall think proper*' to suppress or counteract against insurgencies or attacks by law offenders or foreign nations or any Native American

[39] *P.O.A.*, 31.

[40] Public Law 107-243- October 16, 2002 (Joint Resolution).

[41] Stack, Kevin M. "The Reviewability of the President's Statutory Power.", 2009.

tribes.[42] Its generational passover to modern constitutionalism sees the act's reflection via the legitimation of the USA PATRIOT Act of 2001. The act having the power to generate various political affects was legalized to *"deter and punish terrorist acts in the United States and around the world, to enhance law enforcement investigatory tools, and for other purposes"*[43]. The evasive nature of the law allowed the government to intercept wire, oral electronic communications, allowing mandatory detention of 'suspected' terrorists and indulging in 'extraterritorial jurisdiction' permitting the 'expansion of biological weapons statute' among other provisions. The heightened paranoia of the American government was critiqued by Senator Russ Feingold on the Senate floor a day prior to the passing of the Anti-Terrorism bill while belonging to the meagre minority of 2 nays in chamber. Senator Feingold made his case on the floor[44] condemning the intrusive nature of the bill which not only condoned racism but allowed the state to exercise the *state of exception* beyond its national frontiers. He mentioned the case of a San Antonio radiologist Al-Hazmi, who only happened to share the name with one of the hijackers complicit in the attacks. Al-Hazmi could not get access to his lawyer for 6 days which should otherwise be a fundamental right of any citizen in the country. For Feingold, the bill was not only passed "*too quickly"* in the house, but was also problematic since no one complained about the radical timing of the bill nor the authority of the bill which the *"Justice department ha(d) wanted…for years"*. The law stood testimony to the intensification of paranoia post 9/11 to the extent of legalising the government's abrasiveness allowing arbitrary surveillance and searching of residential spaces,

[42]An Act to Provide for Calling Forth the Militia, 28 February 1795 (Amendment of the Militia Act of 1792)

[43]Public Law 107-56-October 26, 2001. (Uniting and Strengthening America By Providing Appropriate Tools Required To Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism of 2001- later renewed in 2015 as USA FREEDOM ACT of 2015)

[44]Statement of U.S. Senator Russ Feingold On The Anti-Terrorism Bill, From the Senate Floor, October 25, 2001.

computer servers without it being called a computer hijack. Feingold termed it as the "*breathtaking expansion of police power.*" The images of war from Abu Ghraib crystallized the phenomenon of the semantics of political paranoia, the images that can be called pornographic violence, like Baudrillard in one of his essays indicates[45]. Approximately 800 detentions have been made till date at the Guantanamo Bay in Cuba and other black sites of the US security services[46], several being in custody without facing any trials, on the basis of state and its leader's confirmed suspicion.

In India, the 'shock treatment'[47] that Mrs. Gandhi wanted to affect the nation with, led to the suspension of the basic fundamental rights of the citizens during the emergency. The political affect desired to justify the requirement to acquire centralized national power to herself, while its modus operandi was legally rooted in the collective 'satisfaction' of the centre. Similarly, the necessity to put Jammu and Kashmir under President's rule was an affect felt by the centre compelling it to introduce an ordinance via the medium of the President to alter Article 370. The desire to homogenize a subservient public by this desire of centralization nurtures sentimentality around notions carrying political affect like for 'nation building' or 'unification' of masses, countering terrorism, allowing to make such decisions that encroach civil liberties and freedom. Can one political affect be justified as good, and the other be negated? Can democratic values not be impacted and still stand legitimate in a *state of exception*? This debate is what the courts indulge in, avoiding indulging in paradoxes or constitutional ethics. The Courts may want to refrain from moralizing the executive but as the interpreters and the guardians of constitutional democracy, they

[45]Baudrillard, J. *Pornographie de la guerre.*

[46] "The Guantánamo Docket." The New York Times.

[47]Mukherjee, Pranab. "The Midnight Drama: Declaration of the Emergency" (Book Extract)

cannot turn a blind eye to injustices and atrocities to which citizens are subjected to.[48]

If the facts are incorrect or albeit simulated on the basis of truth that does not exist, rooted in the ideology that 'moralizes' or forces the individuals of a state to let their rights be infringed, it does put the authenticity of constitutionality in doubt. When the legal black letter is enforced and starts to promulgate its affect, the idea of democracy gets jeopardized while it attempts to synthesize the dialectics of 'the good and the bad law'. The more logical constitutionalism sounds, the more it becomes entangled in the question of democratic good and bad which it is unable to rationalize on ethical lines. This legal ambiguity provides a breeding ground to the audacity of political actors attempting to cohere political culture through radicalization by giving unaccountable freedom to individuals holding executive power. They decide on the basis of their subjective decision what is 'good' for the state, while propagandising the simulated necessity to coerce the force of law of the *state of exception.* The stakeholders of a working system of government use and control, political actors instrumentalise the political affect, yearning to uphold their political interests. It can be derived from such examples that it is 'desired' to call upon such emergencies. A medium of desire, is a *desiring machine* according to Guattari and Deleuze, in their popular work, *The Anti-Oedipus.* A *desiring machine* desires to control, to produce and reproduce a certain type of power while itself abides by law. It interrupts a certain flow of mediums – this could be in the Indian case, the idea of freedom and democracy. The desire causes a current to flow, becomes a part of this process and itself breaks its continuity. Here, the *state of exception* is the desire, where a law is created in the system, to break other laws that also limit the sovereign's power to limit the 'affect of freedom'. The power that is derived from the emergency powers is the centralized authority in a constitutionally democratic state. This power is inserted in a process of producing and magnifying its

[48] Agamben, *What is an Apparatus?,* 14.

potential influence which is capable of ameliorating centralizing tendencies by dismissing rivals, maintaining superiority by populist hegemony and hijacking all institutions of the working system that might revolt against it. This *desiring machine* births paranoia. All this takes place via an *apparatus* that Agamben defines as anything *"that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, or discourses of living beings."*

The body without organs is the concept which Deleuze and Guattari use to explain a state which runs in pure freedom of non-compliance, as it allows a flow of unrestricted medium through its surface. The emergency power, like Deleuze and Guattari's *capital*[49] is the body without organs, which is related to lawlessness, by creating a law of exceptionalism, the rule of a strong centre (just like anti-production is related to production by the virtue to negate it) in an *assemblage*. Paranoia – a condition where the body of organs tries to expel the desiring body as a result of its intolerance[50] is a by-product. The law, via *state of exception,* dismantles the democratic virtues of the state and its existence, threatening and conflicting with its ethics. The desiring machine must function on the premise of satisfaction of 'continually producing production' i.e. in our context, the production of such exceptions which may carry the affect of a potential threat to the security of a nation. The identification of this desire to satisfy becomes equally important[51]. This chaos is a prime symptom of any *state of exception* – whether it is in formal function or not.

[49]Deleuze & Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus, The Desiring Machines, 22. "The capital is indeed the body without organs of the capitalist, or rather of the capitalist being."*

[50] *T.A.O., The Desiring Machines,* 20

[51]*T.A.O.,* Psycho-analysis and Familialism: The Holy Family, 155

Conclusion

The question of 'Presidential Satisfaction' in relation to constitutional democracy in a *state of exception* is undoubtedly inexhaustive. One may ask why the Presidential Satisfaction does not hold itself accountable to the nature of its duty to protect the nation or its territories, when they really need an exceptional law to control violence or security of citizens in terms of his apathy or *affective* judgement, as would be needed according to Article 355 and whether or not it violates his/her oath to '*preserve, protect and defend the Constitution*'[52]?

The problem of judgements also sustains, where even the court cannot deny its indulgence in 'temptations' of getting into to the core of this subjectivity of the affect for it very conveniently contours the nature of this notion by engendering it to be devoid of any vagueness. This is also the point, where we must question, if constitutional democracy is not subject to irrationality, chaos while not being the confirmed entity to ensure by its rule of law, the basic rights of the individual and his good intentions in the state. In fact, this is where the question of a legal authoritarianism through suspension and using law as a tool to inscribe violence on its citizens by the state, gives a firm ground to logical totalitarian practices. Should constitutional democracy be the end of the quest in itself to ensure good governance? Or must we permeate our search beyond this structure which is too flawed and fractured being recurrently bolstered to palpably persuade the citizens of a hyper-real normalcy that flows through the systems of judiciary especially when it itself struggles to avoid legal culpability in a paranoiac chaos, trying or perhaps desiring to find no ambiguity in its structures?

Moreover, one must peruse over in this debate further – 'who' is ultimately the state? Is it the man on the chair of the '*affect*' of the satisfaction and the potentiality of this executive decision, the real state that makes one act on their directions, or permits to declare an

[52]India Const. art. 60

emergency, or on his behalf of the Nation itself? Is the satisfaction on the basis of his caretaking, or his own subjective analysis? What can significantly create a difference between these two is a very essential question. Here the need to control the state or being threatened off is the locus of such decision making. It is the satisfaction of the state, the legitimate law through its force, that affects the entire functioning of the system, the administration, the economy. It is only if he thinks 'it to be fit' to take such an action, after all.

The satisfaction of the sovereign alters and changes the lives of all citizens of the state. When Delhi riots in 2020 shook the capital, no emergency was installed in place because the subjectivity of the President denied him from ordering one. Hence the Centre received a clean chit to not let the Army to take over the security in Delhi[53]. The high court only later questioned and condemned the mismanagement of the Delhi police which is under direct control of the Union and absence of the armed forces commanded by the Indian President on ground for not subverting any violence or rioting. It called in its tenacity the riots to be 'pre-planned'[54]. Why did the President not find it to be necessary to cordon off under the emergency provisions in Delhi, when things were so politically fragile? In case of Kashmir, the Courts have not addressed[55] several writ petitions, some of which refer to the mandate to have the *Habeus Corpus*, *mandamus*, *certiorari,* etc. In fact, even after the emergency is over, the individuals who are deemed to be opposed to the state are arrested, implying some type of individual emergency that prolongs. Their affect is that of someone who feels cheated, who is scared[56]. All this is under immense surveillance,

[53]Jayaprakash, N.D., "Delhi Riots 2020: There Was a Conspiracy, But Not the One the Police Alleges", *The Wire.*

[54]Bhargava, Ghosh, "Delhi Riots 'Didn't Take Place In Spur Of The Moment, Pre-Planned': Court" *N.D.T.V.*

[55]Sengupta, "J&K anniversary question: What is SC's view? Constitutional democracy needs apex court to fast examine nullification of Art 370" *Times Of India.*

[56]"Kashmir Caged: Fact Finding Report", Counter Currents.org.

like during the 70's emergency, Punjab militancy period until Beant Singh's government was installed in the state, or under provisions of TADA act, where the laws are created to cancel out the basic liberties of the citizen. This is where the *state of exception* flourishes. It is a very palpable and culpable condition indeed. In this affect, lies the destiny of the democratic ethos, all subject to principles of intentionality and honesty.

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Article

Impact of Health-related Problems on Job Satisfaction among Police Officials in the Union Territory of Chandigarh

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to analyze the impact of health-related problems on job satisfaction among Police officials. The study was carried out at eleven Police Stations at Chandigarh. A prospective analysis was completed on 329 police officials which consisted of 11 Inspectors, 76 Sub-Inspectors, 51 Assistant Sub-Inspectors, and 191 Head Constables. Results found that stress related health problems are significantly related to job dissatisfaction. Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) were used to collect information. The findings of the study make a strong recommendation for paying special attention to the physical as well as psychological needs of the police officials in order to improve the overall level of job satisfaction amongst them.

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Keywords: Chandigarh, health, influence, problem, stress, satisfaction, job

Introduction

India as a developing nation is faced with various challenges in the present era. Of the many institutions put in place to provide safety and security to the society, police department is one such important institution that is endowed with the task of maintenance of law and order in the society. Sociologists have for long looked at the police force as a tool of social control. They have traditionally looked at the role of the police from the perspective of conflict and consensus. Reports regarding increasing instances of police' brutality, inhumanity, and corruption are common occurrences in everyday newspapers. This helps explain the much higher ratio of suspension among police officials in comparison to other professions. On the other hand, given the nature of the job requirements, police personnel follow a very tedious work routine of ten performing their duty 24x7. They have to work even on government holidays and during various religious festivities. The need for provisions of rest and recreational activities to help rejuvenate them and lift up their spirit has long been emphasised in the existing literature **(**Violanti, J, Marshall, J, Howe, G., 1985**).** There are studies which point out that a police personal can compromise with rest and holidays if he or sheis provided with adequate paid perks and promotions **(**Terry, D.J., Nielsen, M., & Perchard, L., 1993). In the absence of such benefits, an employee feels deprived, exploited, and dissatisfied from his work (Malach-Pines, A. and G. Keinan, 2007).

It is against such a backdrop that the present study seeks to analyse the level of job satisfaction amongst the police officials of Chandigarh by deploying a sociological perspective. The term 'Police' is used to denote a body of people organized to maintain civil order and to investigate branches of the laws (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1973). It is derived from the Latin word "Politia" which

stands for the condition of a "Polis" or state. It connotes a system of administration, although in modern parlance, it is generally used to indicate an organized body of civil officers whose particular duties are the prevention and detection of crime and the enforcement of laws. (Sharma, 1977).

Police have existed since time immemorial. It can be traced back to the times when human beings began to organize themselves into groups. Police is the agency through which societies seek to regulate the behaviour of their members. Even in the most primitive forms of society or community life, the need to maintain social order among its members was felt. Hence, all societies evolved certain rules and regulations of conduct to control the behaviour of the members. After evolving the requisite sets of rules, it was inevitable to create the agency which would enforce those rules and regulations. As societies grew, this agency also grew and the concept of police was born. Police emerged as the most important protective arm of the society. It not only functioned as breakwaters against the forces of lawlessness and destabilisation, but also created a sense of safety and confidence among the members of the society. The police thus became responsible for the prevention and repression of criminal activities, the protection of life and property, the preservation of peace, and public compliance with countless laws.

The Indian Police Act, 1861 is the basic foundation of the present day Indian Police. Police in India basically belong to the State List of the Constitution, therefore, police and various police matters basically fall into the jurisdiction of the State governments. Police organizations are identified by the name of the State to which they belong, and even their nomenclatures are given after the names of the respective States, i.e. Rajasthan Police, Assam Police, Bihar Police, Kerala Police etc. The police are organized, maintained and directed by the States and Union Territories of the Indian Union. The Indian Police System is horizontally stratified like military forces and is organized into various cadres.

Police performs a wide range of tasks and do their work in long hours shifts, with no time for recreation with the family members, which more often than not takes a toll on the health of the officials both physically as well as psychologically. Stress among policemen would manifest in the form of tiredness, gloominess, inability to concentrate, irritability, and impulsive behaviour. These danger signals are quite common among the policemen. Policemen are often viewed as 'impolite' and 'highhanded'. What adds to their woes is the inability of those outside the Policing system to appreciate the extreme conditions under which Police officials lead their lives**(**Golembiewski, Robert T., and Byong-Seob Kim, 1990**).**

Research on cardiovascular disease has found increased risk of heart disease among police officials (Reviere and Young, 1994). other studies disclose that in comparison to the general population in the same age group, male police officials do not (are you sure it is do not here? have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease (Frankeet al. 1997; 2002; Ramey, 2003). According to Pandey (2016) nature of the duty creates stress and physical and mental exhaustion among police personnel.

Fatigue is another problem faced by police officials that relates to the peculiar nature of their job. Vila et al. (2002) argue that police officials on patrol duties suffer from high level of fatigue. The patrol work is not only challenging physically and emotionally, but unbearably boring (Vila, 1996). Other causes of fatigue are shift rotation, excessive overtime, and frequent court appearances (Vila et al. 2002). The major effects that fatigue can have on officials include high level stress, deterioration of alertness, defective performance (Vila, 1996).Studies have also shown that fatigue weakens a person's ability to make decisions, to control his or her emotions, and to perform complex tasks. Researchers conclude that drained people are both physically and mentally more accident prone because they are less attentive, slower to react upon incidence and more likely to respond erroneously (Vila, 1996).

Terry, Nielson and Perchard (1993) argue that high level of stress is the prime factor of low level of job satisfaction. Policing has been categorized as a high stress occupation, with up to 47% of officials in self-report studies citing stress as a consequence of the job (Crank et. al, 1993). Fair Brother and Warn (2003) confirm that occupational stress is related to job dissatisfaction. Abdulla et al., (2011) recognized communications and job stress as a significant factor of job dissatisfaction or satisfaction (Please check). Calisir et al. (2011) identified a very strong influence of job satisfaction on organizational commitment whereas job stress indirectly influences the willingness of employees to leave their jobs. Job stress is conversely related to job satisfaction (Noblet and Rodwell, 2009).Stress associated with traumatic situations during murder investigations in general and also in the aftermath of issuance of death notification, in particular, wherein the likelihood of facing violent behavior from the people is unusually high (Miller, 2006). The stressful condition of the Police emanates from the nature of the work(Anshel, 2000). Job stress indicates "a situation where job-related factors interact with a worker to change his or her psychological or physiological condition so greatly that the person is forced to deviate from normal functioning" (Beehr and Newman, 1978). Policing has thus been classified as a high stress job (Crank et. Al, 1993).

A number of studies have been conducted in different parts of the world for understanding the nature of health-related problems among Police officials. The reasons for stress are negative working environment, long working hours, lack of time for family, irregular eating habits, sleepless nights, poor living conditions, torture by seniors, disturbed personal life and lack of public confidence in the Police (Malach-Pines and Kienan, 2007). Police officers are exposed to stress in the line of duty including violent incidents (e.g., shootings, hostage crises, injured victims, child victims, corpses). In spite of these often-life-threatening incidents, there are a variety of incidents which lead to stress that are specific to the police

profession. Territo &Vetter (1981) have pointed out that stress is also known to lead to alcoholism and broken marriages, problems which are very often encountered in the private lives of the police officers. Stress can lead to a series of negative effects upon police officials (Golembiewski and Kim, 1990). One such negative impact of stress on police official is often experienced in the area of marriage related problems (Golembiewski and Kim, 1990). Other effects of stress upon police officials are suicide and drug/alcohol use. Alcoholism and drug use are often considered major stress-related consequences for officials (Golembiewski and Kim, 1990, Kohan and O'Connor, 2002). Much of the research completed on alcohol and drug use of officers indicate that there is an alcohol and non-medical drug use problem among police personnel (Dietrich and Smith, 1986). Another study has cited anxiety, depression and burnout, and alcohol abuse as common occurrences amongst police officers that are under stress (Robinson et. al, 1997). Violanti, et. al (1985) studied 500 police officials in New York State, looking at the relationships between stress, alcohol use and occupational demands. They have found stress and occupational demands to be related to increased alcohol use.

Methodology

Unit of Analysis:

The unit of analysis consisted of Police officials including Inspector, Sub-Inspector, Assistant Sub-Inspector and Head Constable in eleven police stations of union territory of Chandigarh. All these officials are involved in direct public dealing.

For the present study 11 Inspectors, 76 Sub-Inspectors, 51 Assistant Sub-Inspectors and 191 Head Constables were included in the sample. In all, 329 police officials were studied.

Techniques of Data Collection

Keeping in mind the nature of study, a structured interview schedule was used to collect information. The structured part of interview schedule included questions related to socio-cultural profile of the police officials, reasons for opting for this profession, work place environment and relations with colleagues, subordinates, super-ordinates. Additionally, Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was used to collect information. Both these scales were modified keeping in mind the purpose of the study.

Job Descriptive Index (JDI) was developed by Smith et.al (1969) and it has become the most popular facet scale among organizational researchers. It contains 72 items, which assess five facets of job satisfaction, namely, work, supervision, pay, co-workers, and promotional opportunities.

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was developed by Weiss et.al (1967) to measure the employee's satisfaction with 20 different facets or aspects of the work environment. These are activity, independence, variety, social status, supervision (human relations), supervision (technical), moral values, security, social service, authority, ability utilization, company policies and practices, compensation, advancement, responsibility, creativity, working conditions, co-workers, recognition, and achievement. Each of the MSQ items consists of statements about various facets of the job and the respondents are asked to indicate their level of satisfaction. The questions were rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

Tabulation of Data After collecting the data, use of code design cross tables was made. Collected data was coded and analysed using statistical package for social sciences.

Main objectives of the study

- To study the socio-economic profile of the police officials in U.T Chandigarh.
- To examine the health-related problem and its influence upon the level of job satisfaction among the police officials.

Socio- economic profile of the respondents

This table highlights the socio-economic profile of the respondents by analyzing their social, economic, religious and family background. Through these variables, it is easy to know the attitude, behavioural pattern, socialization, life style, life opportunities and how an individual perceives the society. Socio-economic variables help an individual in forming his/her belief towards the life. Therefore, these socio-economic variables should be adequately studied before analysing the data. The present study has been carried out to know the job satisfaction level of the Police officials in Chandigarh. The level of job satisfaction is influenced by various variables such as age, education, marital status etc. Therefore, it is pertinent to get acquainted with the respondents socially and economically.

Table No. I

Category wise distribution of the respondents on the basis of socio-economic profile

Age (Yrs)	Designation									
	Head Constable		ASI		Sub Inspector		Inspector		Total	
30-35	2	(1.00%)	-		1	(1.30%)	-		3	(0.90%)
35-40	14	(7.30%)	-		-		-		14	(4.30%)
Above 40	175	(91.6%)	51	(100%)	75	(98.7%)	11	(100%)	312	(94.80%)
Marital status										
Never Married	2	(1%)	1	(2%)	-		-		3	(0.90%)
Married	189	(99%)	50	(98%)	76	(100%)	11	(100%)	326	(99.10%)
Religious background										
Hindu	139	(72.8%)	39	(76.5%)	53	(697%)	7	(63.6%)	238	(72.3%)
Muslim	15	(7.9%)	5	(9.8%)	7	(9.2%)	_		27	(8.2%)
Sikh	36	(18.8%)	7	(13.7%)	15	(19.7%)	4	(36.4%)	62	(18.8%)
Christian	1	(0.5%)	_		1	(1.3%)	_		2	(0.6%)
Caste										
Reserved	38	(19.9%)	10	(19.6%)	15	(19.7%)	2	(18.2%)	65	(19.8%)
General	153	(80.1%)	41	(80.4%)	61	(80.3%)	9	(81.8%)	264	(80.2%)
Educational qualification										
Matriculation	30	(15.7%)	_		1	(1.3%)	_		31	(9.4%)
Senior Secondary	68	(35.6%)	20	(39.2%)	16	(21.1%)	_		104	(31.6%)
Graduation &above	93	(48.7%)	31	(60.8%)	59	(77.6%)	11	(100%)	194	(59%)

Results reveal that most of the respondents age is above 40 years and most of the respondents are married. It shows that a majority of the respondents follow the Indian standard of marriage. Further, results reveal that majority of the respondents are Hindus followed by Sikh. Hindu religion is the most dominant religion in Chandigarh followed by Sikhism.Minority groups include Buddhist, Christian, Jains and Muslims. The preponderance of the Police officials adhering to the Hindu and the Sikh religious communities could beattributed to their higher representation in the population of the Union Territory of Chandigarh. Results also indicate that most of the respondents belong to general category with a majority of the respondents being graduates and post-graduates.

Health-related problems and level of job satisfaction among the police officials

The second objective is to analyse thehealth-related problems and the level of job satisfaction amongst the police officials**.** According to Terry et al. (1993) high level of stress is the prime factor of low level of job satisfaction. Fair Brother and Warn (2003) confirm that occupational stress is conversely related to job satisfaction. Therefore, table no. II depicts the health-related problems and its influence upon the level of job satisfaction of the respondents.

Table No. II

Distribution of the respondents showing association between types of health-related problems and levels of job satisfaction

Types of health problem	Level of job satisfaction						Total	
	Lowly satisfied		Moderately satisfied		Highly satisfied			
NA	168	(79.6%)	69	(81.2%)	29	(87.9%)	266	(80.9%)
Physical ailments	7	(3.3%)	4	(4.7%)	2	(6.1%)	13	(4%)
Mental ailments	36	(17.1%)	12	(14.1%)	2	(6.1%)	50	(15.2%)
Total	211	(100%)	85	(100%)	33	(100%)	329	(100%)

χ^2=3.311, df-4, P>.05

Data reveals that out of the total,15.2 percent respondents were suffering from mental ailments related problem such as stress, hyper tension etc. The reasons could be long working hours and lack of government holidays, lack of time for the family, no promotion opportunities, uncongenial relation with superordinates and colleagues, lack of congenial working environment. Among those respondents who were lowly satisfied,17.1 percent have mental ailment related problem, while 3.3 percent suffer from physical ailment. Data also indicates that 4 percent respondents suffer from physical ailments such as back pain, legs related problems. The reasons could be long working hours, night shifts, VIPs security etc. behind physical ailments of the respondent. The value of Chi Square came out to be not significant. Results depicted that more respondents who were affected from stress related healthproblems were lowly satisfied. This could be due to long working hours which does not allow time for recreation and becomes a reason of lowly satisfaction with their

job.Similar findings were reported by Terry et al. (1993), Fairbrother and Warn (2003).

Conclusion

This extensive study on Police officials in Chandigarh reveals that majority of the Police officials are lowly satisfied and mental ailment such as stress is the one of the causes of the job dissatisfaction. The study strongly recommends the need for instituting mechanisms which will be helpful in stress management and enhancing the level of job satisfaction, while the police officials are executing their assigned tasks.It isalso vital to pay attention to the psychological needs of the officials to improve their job satisfaction when assigning tasks to them. Long working hours shift at a stretch, lack of promotion and uncongenial relation with colleagues and superordinates are some of the main impediments in the stress management.

To mitigate the health-related problems among police officials,the police department can play an important role and improve the satisfaction of the officials by using interventions of the best practices that can develop a general framework to reduce health related problems for the welfare of the officials.Varied strategiesranging from creation of congenial working environment to provisionsfor improved facilities to recreational activities such as quality time withfamily to government holidays especially during the festivals could be path breaking steps in the stress management of police officials. Another major impeding factor is the persistence of the archaic Police Act,1861 which is woefully out of sync with the changed realities of the 21st century and hence be amended to be more responsive to the current concerns of the police officials.

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Article

Scio-political mobilization of Single Women: A study of Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan in Himachal Pradesh

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'There's really no such thing as the voiceless. There are only the deliberately silenced or the preferably unheard' ***- Arundhati Roy***

Abstract

The social ostracism of 'Single Women' takes place in various forms such as constant stereotyping, taunting, harassment, restrictions, cultural codes, lack of family and government support. Himachal Pradesh, despite being a progressive state is no exception when it comes to treating single women. The article seeks to explain the exclusionary role of state and its agencies with regard to single women in India. It also draws our attention towards *Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan* (ENSS): a collective organisation of single women in Himachal Pradesh working for the socio-political and economic empowerment of single women. Interestingly, ENSS provided special emphasis on the emerging new categories of single women such as abandoned, culturally separated, women whose husbands are in jails, women with missing husbands, and disabled single

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women. Unlike state and other institutions, ENSS treats women as extremely heterogenous category having diverse socio-cultural and economic experiences. For this purpose, the present article is divided into two parts. The first section explains the role of the State, it's institutions and the society at large in the perception, categorization and exclusion of single women in India.The second section looks at Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan (ENSS) as a site of new social movement.

Keywords: Single Women, State, Mobilization, Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan, Empowerment

Introduction

The recent initiative of announcing 'Mukhyamantri Vidhwa Evam Ekal Nari Awas Yojna 2023' by the newly elected CM of Himachal Pradesh, Mr. Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, is a result of long-drawnstruggle for recognition waged by the Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan (hereafter ENSS) in Himachal Pradesh. If we go by the National state rankings and various data on gender equality, the hill state of Himachal Pradesh is considered as a progressive one. It ranks high in Female Literacy Rate and National Development Index. But the ENSS believes that these parameters are Euro or West-centric. There are certain aspects of an Indian woman's identity which are culture and region specific, hence the West-centric parameters of measuring women empowerment cannot be universally applicable. The institutions of caste, religion, region and culture play an important role in the identity construction of an Indian women. Hence, any attempt at glossing over the role that these institutions play in a woman's life cannot provide an accurate picture. The indicators to measure development in our society should also take into consideration the 'social values' that are specific to our society. In a study on rural single women of Himachal Pradesh, Kim Berry observes that "the dynamics of

marginalization vary, not only by differences of caste, ethnicity, class, education, personality and the density of networks with family and friends, but also by the circumstances through which women come to live without husbands. (Kim Berry 2014: p.44) The experiences of a widow are different from that of a divorced or an abandoned woman. The upper caste women face certain kinds of barriers that vary from what a lower-caste or a tribal women face. They are all treated differently but what is common in the treatment is their marginalization and exclusion from the society.Kristie Collinsargues that "singlehood is more damaging to women than to men as there is constant stereotyping, marginalization and discrimination against them."(Collins 2013: p.221).

One such institution that is distinct to Himachal Pradesh is that of 'Devta Culture.' (Thakur and Chhetri :2019) elaborate on how the Devta culture or Devi (local deity) along with religious sphere regulates the socio-economic, cultural and political spheres of people's lives. They also believe that the Devta culture reinforces the social biases to a certain extend. The centuries old practice where the lower castes and women are often forbidden entry to deity's temple premises is still prevalent. Surinder S. Jodhka (2015) while writing about Devata culture in Himachal Pradesh mentions that those who violate the traditional social norms is believed to be punished by the Devatas. Devata culture often reinforces hierarchy and inequality. In a report published by SUTRA '*Situational Analysis of Single Women in Himachal Pradesh*' *(2006),* it is mentioned that a woman is not even permitted to choose her own God or Goddess. At her parents' home, she follows the religious practices of her father's clan and after marriage that of her in-laws, and even in some other places, she is not permitted to worship until she produces a son. The same report further talks about the variation in cultural practices in different regions within the state. For example, at some places there is a practice of '*Reet System*' of remarriage where the second husband pays some

price as a compensation to the first husband of a woman for his loss of labor. Caste is another such institution. As Jotirao Phule talked of "dual marginalities" wherein women faced gender as well as caste discriminations at the same time. Upper caste single women face strict codes and restrictions on social mobility whereas Dalit single women do not face this, as labour is a crucial aspect of their life and hence social mobility is permitted. However, Dalit women do face caste-based discriminations (Deshpande 2002).

1

The State and exclusion of Single Women in India: An Overview

India is a country, where on the one side, a woman is perceived to be a Devi (Goddess) – an epitome of power, whereas on the other side, she is considered to be a marginal, voiceless, subaltern and a disadvantaged person. She belongs to a category which needs to be uplifted and empowered, a category which is under-represented and oppressed(Bhattacharya 1996, Guha 1988 and Spivak 1985). The Dalits and the minorities are the victims of caste and religious inequalities, but the women in general are victims of caste, religious as well as gender inequalities. And even while belonging to the same gender, they are not treated likewise. One's experiences as a woman differs based on her a scriptive identity (caste, religion, kingship, age, gender) as well as achieved identity (education, job, marital status). Women in India have always been seen as a subject of 'welfare'. It is only as late as in 21st century that this has changed from welfare to the subject of 'empowerment' (Paranan Konwar 2019: p.64).

Most of the available literature on single women talk of widows and divorcees (Chen 2001, Singh 2013 and Lamb 2001). Even the civil society organizations have failed to club all the categories of single women together. Here I am not talking about treating all the single women as a homogenous category, but

merely insisting upon the need to bring all the categories within the ambit or definition of 'single women'. We often hear of civil society groups working exclusively for widows or divorces. Since widows and divorcees are the numerically dominant and visible categories as compared to other categories of single women, the government tends to frame policies and laws only for them. It was only as late as in 2016 that the National Draft Policy laid out an agenda for protecting and promoting the rights of single women through interventions in six broad areas: i) stigma and discrimination; ii) sexual and gender-based violence; iii) access to basic services, including education and health; iv) access to livelihoods and social security; v) access and control over property and other resources; and vi) participation in governance and decision-making. There was a need of an organization that would be flexible enough to accommodate all the categories of single women which have so far been intentionally or ignorantly neglected by the state.

As a result of socialization, single women very often internalise the norms and stereotypes attached to singlism. Many women are not even conscious about their marginalization. And for those who are, it becomes difficult to challenge or change such norms due to wide acceptability of these norms. Such people thus have no option than seeking state intervention in the area. To make a wide range of claims such as equal rights as citizens, social entitlements such as economic security or welfare policies, legal protection against discriminations one must be conscious about his/her position in society.

Barring a few, there is dearth of schemes specifically for single women. Most of the government schemes are for all women in general. Such blanket coverage of women fails to treat 'single women' as a separate subject. Vidhwa pension scheme, One Stop Centre (OSC), Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK), Swadhar Greh – a temporary shelter scheme for homeless and deserted women is run by the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Homeless

women are provided a shelter only up to a maximum period of 5years. Schemes like Working Women Hostel, which provides accommodation to working women including single, widowed, divorced, and separated women, are some of the women-centric schemes which have some provisions for single women, but again excludes certain categories of single women.

It is only through the advocacy and lobbying by the Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan in Himachal Pradesh that the state government has initiated various schemes for single women. Most of the women in the Sangathan are engaged in low-income jobs such as Anganwadi or Asha's workers or are employed under MNREGA schemes or work as farmers on their small landholdings. Single women have benefited from several schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Kisan Yojana, HIMCARE, MGNREGA, Mother Teresa Scheme (educational grant for children of single women which has been enhanced from Rs 5,000- to Rs 6,000), Social Security Pensions under which the Ekal Mahila pension of Rs.1000 is given to single women, Mukhyamantri Kanyadan Yojana – the amount under this scheme has been enhanced to Rs 51,000 from Rs 40,000, Atal Awaas Yojana and Health cards, sewing machines and Mandir Trust donations. Apart from mobilising economic contributions, ENSS has also been able to inculcate a sense of dignity and self-respect in the minds of single women by making them conscious of their position and aware about their rights. This has been discussed in detail in the following section.

II

Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan in Himachal Pradesh: A site of socio-political mobilization of single women in Himachal

Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan (hereafter ENSS), also known as the National Forum for Single Women's Rights was founded in the state of Rajasthan in the year 2000. Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan was formed on the same lines in Himachal Pradesh in 2005 with the support of a local NGO named SUTRA (Social Upliftment through Rural Action). Nationally, there has been an increase of around 39% in the total number of single women from the year 2001 to 2011. Single women reportedly constitute 21% of India's female population. These include unmarried, separated, divorced and widowed women. There are 44.4 million single women in rural areas, almost 62% of single women in India. There are 3,04,980 single women in Himachal Pradesh which constitutes almost 5% of the total population of the state (Census of India Report 2011). ENSS is empowering single women in 435 Panchayats spread across 22 development blocks in 8 districts of Himachal Pradesh. From 105 members in 2005, ENSS has now nearly a membership base of 16,000 single women.

ENSS is first such organization that has unified single women from across categories. Significantly, it also looks at single women as constituting a heterogenous category. Unlike the dominant approach followed by the government which defines single women largely in terms of women 'without a husband' (widowed, divorced, and unmarried) at the cost of exclusion of certain other categories, the ENSS has broadened the definition of the term 'single' by including other categories along with widows and divorcees, such as unmarried women (45 years of age and above), abandoned women, Muslim single women, HIV positive women, women whose husbands are in jails, women whose husbands are absconding, half-widows (women whose husbands are missing), customarily separated women (without official/legal

separations), women whose husband have run into a second marriage (without divorce or separation from the first wife) and transgenders. The latest category to find a place is that of women who are working as sex-workers. The struggle is still on to get these categories recognized by the State because without this it becomes difficult for these women to claim for entitlements and to avail benefits of several government schemes.

ENSS works to achieve two broader aims:

1. To seek recognition by the State mainly in order to avail various economic and political benefits, and
2. To earn respect and acceptance within the society with a view to ensuring socio-cultural upliftment of single women.

Clearly, these are inter-related aspects. If the State recognizes the rights of all categories of single women, then the same acceptance will reflect in the society as well. The women in that case can strongly raise their voice against the injustices and social exclusions because there would be sufficient laws to protect them. And if a strong demand for equal respect and justice emerges from the society then it automatically builds up pressure on the government to listen to them. Single women in India not only desire for freedom, but also for recognition and social acceptance. She along with independence desires belongingness in order to feel socially connected with others (Traiser:2016). The change and acceptance in the society that the single women wish for is depicted in this beautiful song sang by them during a quarterly meeting at SUTRA[1]:

Tu khud ko badal tab hi to zamanabadlega
Tu chup reh kr jo sehti rahi to kya ye zamana badlega

[1]Based on fieldwork observation during ENSS Himachal quarterly meeting at Jagjit Nagar, Solan on 6 February 2022)

Tu bolegi muhkholegi tab hi to zamana badlega
Dariya ki kasam, maujo ki kasam, ye taanabana badlega
Dastur purane sadiyo k ye aaye kahan se ye kyu aaye
Kuch to socho kuch to samjho ye kyu tumne hai apnaye

(First you change yourself, only then the times will change)

(How will this world change if you continue to silently tolerate everything)

(It's only when you speak and raise your voice that this world will change)

(I swear by the river, I swear by the pleasures, this social fabric will change)

(From where did the old customs come from and why did they come)

(You need to think about these customs, why did you adopt them)

(I swear by the river, I swear by the pleasures, this social fabric will change)

It is first such civil society organization that has addressed not only the economic marginalisation, but also the social marginalisation of single women. When we talk of economic marginalization, we just focus on the economic disparities among single women, but when we address social marginalisation as well then, we come to know how single women are marginalised on the basis of their caste, kinship, religion, ethnicity and many other aspects of their identity. ENSS is the first such movement where single women can re-imagine themselves collectively. Aa a famous quote by the American anthropologist Margaret Meadsays, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has". The ENSS can thus be seen to clearly fall under the category of new social movements.Although new social movements are not separate

from class, but they are usually centred around issues that go beyond class.

According to Habermas (1981) new social movements are about quality of life, human rights and self-actualization, whereas the old ones focused on economic and political issues. They do not aim to capture state power. Lotika Sarkarargues that "Gender, like class, does not have an emancipatory potential that is 'natural' or 'innate'. Gender power grows from a sense of solidarity to being a force for itself only through intervention, contestation, and an exercise of and struggle over choices" (Sarkar and Butalia1995: pp.210-11).Sharing her experience, Brijabala, Ekal Nari member said that she decided to join Ekal Nari Shakti Sangathan in 2008 because after leaving her husband she used to curse her life. But after joining ENSS, she felt a change in the way she perceives herself. From feeling alone and helpless, she now is a woman of great strength. She now thinks that she alone is responsible for how she feels about herself. As she puts it, "I do what I feel like. It is not my job to keep others happy, and not theirs to keep me happy. I wear bangles and bindi because I love to. These are not symbolic of being married, but of being myself. Let people judge me. I do not put sindoor (vermilion) even if my husband is alive because I donot want to pray for a person like him."[2]

Social movements are a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others. social movements are a major vehicle for ordinary people's participation in public politics (Charles Tilly:1978). Interestingly, Ekal women are now themselves contesting elections. As the National Convener of ENSS Ms. Nirmal Chandel observed, "Our political representation is important because those who have husbands can put their

[2]The information is based on a long conversation with an ENSS member Brijbala held on 9 January 2022, during my fieldwork at SUTRA NGO in Jagjit Nagar, Solan.

grievances to the government through them, but the voices of single women remain unheard. Ekal (single) women want to contest elections and come to power because it is a sign of dignity. People would come to us with their grievances and we will be having a say in the decision-making power."[3]

Resistance is certainly an expression of protest, but as long as it remains at an individual level and desists from confrontation involving collective action, it is not a movement (Scott 1985; Guha 1989). Gail Omvedt (1978) classifies women's movements into two types: (1) women's equality movements; and (2) women's liberation movements. The former may not directly challenge the existing economic or political or family structure, but rather aim at attaining an equal place for women in it, and at abolishing the most open remnants of feudal patriarchy; whereas women's liberation movements directly challenge the sexual division of labour itself. In this context, Meena Sharma, from Mandi District, shared her experiences particularly about severe social restrictions imposed on her when she got widowed at the age of thirty. As she observed rather poignantly,"I was not allowed to wear colourful clothes and was prohibited from using any accessories that are associated with married women. But now after joining the Sangathan, I got courage to challenge the stereotypes and social norms around single women".[4]

Kanchan Gandhi (2016) argues that single women often find themselves alone in their struggle, but if organised under some collectives that enable them to recognise their oppression and offer them the acceptance, encouragement and motivation they were otherwise denied, they can develop positive coping mechanisms.

[3]The information is based on an interview with ENSS Himachal Pradesh state coordinator- Ms. Nirmal Chandel held on 9 January 2022, during my fieldwork at SUTRA NGO in Jagjit Nagar,Solan.

[4]This interview was conducted with an ENSS member- Ms. Meena Kumari during my fieldwork on 8 January 2022 at Jagjit Nagar, Solan.

Interestingly, members of Ekal Mahila also celebrate '*Behnadooj*' which they think is an alternative to '*Bhaiyadooj*'. One of the members of the organization explained why they celebrate 'BehnaDooj'. According to them, it is a mark of their togetherness further signifying a common bond of 'sisterhood'. It gives us a sense of "collective self". Such discourse of collectiveness is missing in the life of single women in urban areas. The convener of the ENSS, Nirmal Chandel informed that "there are more suicides among urban single women than the rural ones in Himachal."[5] Women in urban areas usually remain isolated in their struggles due to certain reasons such as busy routines, jobs, individual level strategies such as legal means. Their struggles are more often individualized. Grassroot movements have been successfully able to mobilize and organize rural women. They are not aware about their rights and entitlement claims, hence they look on to such organizations, NGO's and collectives to guide the path of their struggles. Moreover, women from rural areas have easy access to SAMPARK and ASHA centers or local self-help groups. This shows that there are differences in their experiences not only on the basis of diverse cultures but also on the basis of the region.

ENSS has also re-envisioned a concept of 'nayaparivar' (new family) in which a younger single women would live with an older single woman to form a household in which the former will engage in a job outside the home and the latter will take the responsibility of the house. It might be interesting to see how women from different socio-economic, cultural, and economic backgrounds go about forming an alternate family together.

[5]The information is based on an interview with ENSS Himachal Pradesh state coordinator- Ms. Nirmal Chandel held on 9 January 2022, during my fieldwork at SUTRA NGO in Jagjit Nagar, Solan.

Conclusion

ENSS has provided its single women with a sense of dignity and self-respect.Through the methods of resistance, advocacy, and lobbying, it has provided a ray of hope to all the single women whose grievances remained unheard till now. Ekal Mahila with the support of ENSS carry out campaigns for claiming entitlements and equal rights as any other citizen of India. But all such struggles come with certain challenges. Financial constraints always remain a challenge. During lockdown, many single women lost their jobs and the worst hit were MNREGA workers. Especially in the post-Covid lockdown period, it has become more difficult for them to work in factories because even if they go on leave for more than a day, they are thrown out of the jobs. These women are engaged in low-income jobs which too are insecure. Under the dominance of the neoliberal state, the public sector spending on welfare schemes have drastically decreased. Moreover, due to the hilly topography of Himachal Pradesh, it becomes difficult for the organisation to reach out to far-off and remote places such as Lahaul-Spiti and Ladakh. All this necessitates the need for proactive engagements on the part of the state as well as civil society with a view to placing single women at an equal pedestal.

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Article

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Practices in selected villages of District Ajmer, Rajasthan: A Cross Sectional Study

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Abstract

This paper examines the status of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices in Ajmer District, Rajasthan. It assesses the knowledge and practices of WASH among households in three selected villages. The findings reveal that despite progress made under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and the Jal Jeevan Mission, significant challenges remain in ensuring adequate sanitation facilities and access to safe drinking water. The majority of households still lack proper sanitation facilities, leading to open defecation and unsanitary conditions. Moreover, a significant number of households do not have government tap connections, relying on alternative water sources. This paper highlights the need for addressing these issues to achieve a sustainable and equitable access to WASH services in rural Rajasthan

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Keywords: WASH, Solid Waste disposal, Rural Rajasthan, Swachh Bharat Mission, JalJeevan Mission, Open Defecation.

Introduction

In the quaint village of Tilonia, located in the heart of Ajmer, the daily lives of its residents were marred by a bittersweet reality. Caste-based discrimination, a deep-rooted affliction, divided the community and hindered progress. Resham Singh's words resonated with the Master of Social Work students when he stated, "There is a significant amount of caste-based discrimination in our area. However, you will witness tomorrow that the pipeline being laid for water supply will provide water to everyone, regardless of their caste."[1] Another villager named Ram Singh from Sinodiya Village shared his concerns, saying, "Our village only receives water from public taps twice a week and we frequently face water scarcity." Adding to that, someone else expressed, "Due to the irregular water supply, we are dependent on water tankers and handpumps."[2] Teerath Ram from Roopangarh highlighted another issue, stating, "We have very poor sanitation facilities, evident from the overflowing drains ('nallis') that you must have observed yourselves. Moreover, there are still a few houses without toilets."[3]

The narratives and study findings on the WASH situation in selected villages of Ajmer district, along with the discussion on the status of the JalJeevan Mission (JJM) and Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) in India, provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and impact of these initiatives. The narratives shared by the local community offer real-life experiences and perspectives on the

[1]Resham Singh , Tilonia Village, District Ajmer, Rajasthan (March 17th, 2023)

[2]Ram Singh, Sinodiya Village, District Ajmer, Rajasthan(March 18th, 2023)

[3]Teerath Ram, Roopangarh, District Ajmer, Rajasthan (March 18th, 2023)

availability and quality of water and sanitation facilities in the villages. These first-hand accounts shed light on the challenges faced by the community and highlight the urgent need for strengthening WASH services. Additionally, the study conducted in selected villages of Ajmer district provides systematic research findings on the state of WASH facilities. This study assesses the availability and accessibility of clean water sources, sanitation infrastructure and hygiene practices. Moreover, the discussion on the status of the JalJeevan Mission and Swachh Bharat Mission in India provides an overview of the progress and impact of these national initiatives. The discussion includes an assessment of the implementation of these missions in India, including Rajasthan, and highlights the achievements, challenges, and areas requiring further attention.

JalJeevan Mission

JalJeevan Mission which aims to provide safe and adequate drinking water to every household in the country by the year 2024. When the mission was launched in the year 2019 roughly around 17% of the households in rural India had access to household tap connection and only 10% of the households in Rajasthan had access to household tap connection. Talking about the current scenario of household tap connection, about 39.89% of household have such connections, while 60% of the households in Rajasthan still lack access to tap connection(JJM Dashboard, July 2023). The target of providing tap connection to every household by the year 2024 remains a grave challenge for the state of Rajasthan where water is a luxury. Much like the situation in the Ajmer district, the situation is same in the rest of Rajasthan where 60% of the household do not have water connection(JJM Dashboard, July 2023). The absence of water supply hampers basic hygiene practices, sanitation and daily activities. People, particularly those in water-stressed regions, often have to travel long distances to fetch water, leading to significant time and physical burden. This burden falls

disproportionately on women and girls who are traditionally responsible for water collection in many societies. As a result, they are forced to spend hours each day walking to distant water sources, carrying heavy containers and waiting in long queues, leaving them with less time for education, income-generating activities, or personal well-being. Furthermore, the lack of water supply jeopardizes health, as people may resort to using unsafe water sources, leading to waterborne diseases and a decline in overall quality of life. Adequate access to clean water is essential for promoting health, education, gender equality, and sustainable development.

The lack of water supply also has a significant impact on toilet use and sanitation practices. Insufficient access to clean water hampers the functionality and usability of toilets, contributing to unsanitary conditions and decreased toilet usage. Without an adequate water supply for flushing and cleaning, toilets become unclean, odorous and unhygienic, discouraging people from using them. This can lead to a higher prevalence of open defecation and improper waste disposal, posing risks to public health and the environment. Inadequate water supply also limits the effectiveness of certain toilet technologies, which rely on water for proper operation. Additionally, the lack of water for handwashing further compounds the hygiene challenge, increasing the potential for the spread of diseases.

Swachh Bharat Mission

To accelerate the provision of sanitation to all, the Government of India launched "Swachh Bharat Mission". The Swachh Bharat Mission was launched on 2nd October 2014 on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi to commemorate his vision for clean India. The Swachh Bharat Mission replaced Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan to accelerate Sanitation coverage, make India Open Defecation Free and ensure cleanliness. Over 100 million latrines

have been built as of the end of the first phase of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) as on October 2, 2019 and all villages across the districts of India have been declared Open Defecation Free as claimed by the Government of India on its Clean India Mission Dashboard (named as "Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)" for rural India) which boost that the sanitation coverage in rural India has increased from 39% to 100% of households from 2014 to 2019.Yet open defecation continues in India in large numbers as found in several surveys. National Family Health Survey conducted in 2019-2021 found that 19% of the households in India do not use any toilet facility. According to a recent Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene by the World Health Organization and UNICEF, released on July 1, 2021, it was reported that at least 15 percent of the total population in India still practices open defecation. This indicates that a significant proportion of the population in India continues to lack access to proper sanitation facilities and engages in the unsanitary practice of defecating in the open. According to the Multiple Indicator Survey conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation 2021, over 21% of rural households in India lack access to any form of toilet facility, including exclusive household latrines, community facilities, or community toilets. The survey further highlighted the state-wise distribution of households without toilet access.

The highest state-wise distribution of households without toilet access

S. No.	State	Percentage of Households without toilet access (%)
1	Jharkhand	41.3
2	Odisha	36.4
3	Bihar	33.4
4	Madhya Pradesh	28.3
5	Rajasthan	28.1

These findings emphasize the persistent challenge of inadequate sanitation infrastructure in rural areas of India, which contributes to open defecation practices and poses risks to public health and hygiene.

Objectives of the study

To assess knowledge and practices of water, sanitation and hygiene among people living in three selected villages situated in District Ajmer, Rajasthan.

Purpose and significance of research

The study sheds light on the current state of sanitation facilities, particularly toilets, in Rajasthan, five years after the state was declared Open Defecation Free. Despite the construction of toilets, a significant number of households still lack proper sanitation facilities. This not only exposes women to various risks such as violence, sanitation-related problems and poor menstrual health, but also raises concerns about the effectiveness of the government's claims. However, this situation presents an opportunity to improve sanitation services and address the gaps left by the first phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). The success of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) Phase 2 depends on effectively addressing these gaps and ensuring adequate sanitation coverage nationwide. In addition to the sanitation issue, the study also focuses on the water supply situation in the villages of Ajmer District. It specifically addresses the lack of tap connections in households, which leads to a heavy reliance on alternative water sources. Based on the primary data, the majority of households do not have access to tap connections and even among those that do, water is primarily supplied from underground tanks within each house. These tanks require refilling once or twice a month. For households unable to afford underground tanks, alternative sources such as hand pumps or

government-supplied water are relied upon. The research conducted in the area aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the water availability issues and associated costs in the villages of Ajmer District. By examining factors such as water availability and affordability, the study seeks to highlight the challenges faced by communities in accessing this vital resource. The urgency of the situation is further emphasized by the Jal Jeevan Mission's deadline of 2024, a national initiative that aims to provide tap connections to all rural households in India. However, given the current water scarcity and the significant percentage of households lacking access, achieving this goal presents a considerable challenge. This research can contribute to the formulation of effective strategies and policies that address water scarcity, improve water infrastructure and ensure sustainable and equitable access to clean water for all households in the region.

Methodology

To collect the necessary information, a predesigned structured interview schedule was used as the study tool. The schedule included socio-demographic information about the study participants as well as questions about their knowledge and practises regarding water and sanitation, hygiene and household solid waste disposal.

The Primary data was collected in three villages in Ajmer District of Rajasthan namely Roopangarh, Tyod and Seengla. A total of 128 respondents were interviewed using purposive sampling method.

Limitations of the study

The research was conducted by students who were pursuing their Masters of Social Work degree at Panjab University, Chandigarh, during their rural camp at Barefoot College, Tilonia, Ajmer. The

data collection process spanned over three days. It is important to note that the observations made by the students might be influenced by biases related to factors such as caste, religion, sex and region. Furthermore, due to time constraints, the students were unable to cover a larger number of houses, limiting the scope of the study.

Area Profile

Ajmer District, located in the state of Rajasthan, India is a beautiful and culturally significant region in North Western India. Covering an area of approximately 8,481 square kilometers, this district is situated in the central part of Rajasthan. The city of Ajmer serves as the district headquarters and is known for its historical and religious significance.Ajmer District is bordered by several other districts, including Nagaur to the north, Jaipur and Tonk to the east, Bhilwara to the south and Pali to the west.The region experiences a dry climate with hot summers and cold winters.With a population of 2,583,052 (as per the 2011 census), Ajmer District is home to a diverse mix of communities. The majority of the population consists of Hindus, followed by Muslims and Jains. The district is known for its cultural heritage, which is reflected in its vibrant festivals, folk music and traditional art forms.Ajmer District comprises twelve sub-divisions. Each sub-division contributes to the rich tapestry of the district, offering unique cultural and historical experiences.The district is renowned for its historical landmarks, including the famous Ajmer Sharif Dargah, a revered Sufi shrine attracting devotees from various faiths. The Ana Sagar Lake, Taragarh Fort, Adhai Din KaJhonpraand,the Akbari Fort and Museum are among the other notable attractions in the region

In the Ajmer district of Rajasthan, three villages were surveyed: Tyod, Roopangarhand Seengla. Each village had its own distinct demographic composition and occupational patterns.

Tyod village had a population distribution of 18.67% belonging to the Scheduled Caste, 0.09% belonging to the Scheduled Tribe and the majority, 81.21%, representing the General population. Seengla village had a higher percentage of Scheduled Caste population at 38.8% and the remaining 61.2% being from the General population. Roopangarh, the largest of the three villages, had 14.1% of the population belonging to the Scheduled Caste, 0.8% belonging to the Scheduled Tribe and the remaining 85% consisting of the General Caste population. The main occupations of the people in these villages were predominantly odd jobs or participation in government-sponsored schemes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). This suggests that the communities heavily relied on casual labour or public welfare programs for their livelihoods. During the survey, interaction was conducted with various communities, including the Banjara and Kalbelia tribes and the Mal Pehlwan community.

Findings

The findings indicate the status of water supply and quality situation within the villages undertaken for the study. Among those surveyed, a significant majority of 63% relied on government handpumps as their primary source of drinking water. Additionally, 11% of the respondents had their own water sources.In terms of water procurement, 21% of the population depended on private water tankers, suggesting a reliance on commercial providers to fulfil their water requirements. However, access to tap water was limited, with only 5% of households having a functioning tap connection. Water quality is another significant aspect addressed in the survey. Approximately 42% of the respondents reported poor water quality in terms of smell, taste, or clarity. This raises concerns about the overall quality and safety of the available water sources. However, it is noteworthy that 54% of

the respondents did not report any water quality issues, suggesting that a considerable portion of the population have relatively satisfactory water quality. A small percentage (4%) did not provide an answer regarding water quality. While coming to the sanitation aspect of the study, of the total household surveyed 41% of the households did not have toilet facility available at home and practiced open defecation whereas 59% of the population had toilets built at home. The majority of the households who did not have toilets belonged to Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe. Another major finding was lack of proper drainage facilities, as 42% of the population reported that there is no proper drainage system and the waste water and garbage gets collected in low lying area of the village. The data shows that 58% of households belonging to the general caste in the three villages reported having a drainage system. Additionally, these households are situated in high-lying areas of the village. However, it is worth noting that none of the three villages have a liquid waste management plant in place. This implies that while a significant portion of the general caste households have access to drainage systems, the villages as a whole lack proper facilities for managing liquid waste. The majority of the households reported the issue of water stagnation and subsequent problem of mosquitoes and bad odour. The village of Tyod had recently initiated Solid Waste Management plant with help from Barefoot College, Tilonia, Ajmer and CSR funding whereas village of Seengla and Roopangarh did not have any such project in the pipeline. This study also shows that 72% of the women used Sanitary pads during their menstruation cycle and 19% of the women used old washed cloth while 1% used new cloth every time. About 57% of the females reported that they burned the menstrual waste, 23% of the females disposed of the menstrual waste in routine waste, 20% buried menstrual waste and 3 % females of Village Tyod disposed menstrual waste through waste collector. Out of the total women interviewed only 22% of the women attended lecture on Menstrual Hygiene Management.

Coming to the hygiene scenario, majority of the population surveyed washed their hands before eating, food preparation and household cleaning, while 32% of the people reported that sometimes they did not wash their hands properly after going to the toilet due to non-availability of toilet facilitiesin their homes.

Discussion

The survey results shed light on the water supply, sanitation and hygiene situation in the surveyed villages. The findings reveal several areas that require attention and improvement to ensure the well-being and health of the community. Firstly, the reliance on government handpumps as the primary source of drinking water for 63% of the population highlights the importance of public infrastructure in meeting basic needs. The dependency of majority of the population on governments hand pumps poses a risk to the health of the people. The Central Ground Water Board assessment report of 2022puts the Kishangarh area of Ajmer District in over-exploited category of groundwater. Access to tap water remains limited, with only 5% of households having functional tap connections. This indicates the need for expanded water supply networks and improved infrastructure to provide safe and reliable drinking water to all residents. However, the villagers remain hopeful that the Bisalpur Water project will alleviate their drinking water woes and provide a more sustainable solution. Furthermore, the presence of poor water quality reported by 42% of respondents raises concerns about the safety and adequacy of available water sources. Addressing water quality issues should be a priority to safeguard the health of the population. Additionally, the lack of proper drainage facilities, reported by 42%of the surveyed population, results in water stagnation, mosquito breeding and unpleasant odours. Implementing effective drainage systems to prevent waterlogging and improve sanitation conditions is crucial

for the overall well-being of the community. Regarding sanitation, the survey findings indicate that 41% of households do not have access to toilet facilities, leading to open defecation practices. This issue disproportionately affects Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe households, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to ensure equitable access to sanitation facilities for all. Lack of proper waste management systems is another concern, with none of the surveyed villages having a liquid waste management plant. Establishing such facilities is essential to address the issue of waste accumulation, water contamination and associated health hazards. The study also sheds light on menstrual hygiene practices and the need for increased awareness and education. While a significant percentage of women (72%) use sanitary pads, there is still a large proportion (19%) which relies on washed cloth, posing serious health risks. Proper disposal of menstrual waste is crucial and the findings reveal a variety of practices, indicating the need for standardized and environmentally friendly approaches. The survey results indicate that the majority of the population surveyed demonstrate good handwashing habits, particularly before eating, food preparation and household cleaning. This is a positive sign as proper handwashing is crucial for preventing the spread of germs and diseases. However, there is a concerning finding that 32% of the people reported not washing their hands properly after going to the toilet. The main reason cited for this behavior is the non-availability of toilet facilities in their homes. This is a significant hygiene issue, as failing to wash hands after using the toilet can lead to the transmission of harmful pathogens and increase the risk of various infections.

Conclusion

The study conducted in three villages of District Ajmer sheds light on the enduring and interrelated issues related to water supply, sanitation facilities, waste management, and hygiene practices. These challenges are closely connected and need to be addressed

collectively to improve the overall living conditions and public health in the region. The alarming discovery of inadequate access to toilets and the prevalence of open defecation highlight the urgent need for immediate action in the face of the official claims that India is an Open Defecation Free country. It is evident that collaborative efforts involving local authorities, organizations and the community are crucial to effectively address these challenges. To tackle the identified issues, it is imperative for government agencies and non-governmental organizations to work together and actively engage with the community and elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions. A primary focus should be on providing sanitation facilities, particularly toilets, to every household. This endeavour requires addressing underlying problems such as limited funds, lack of transparency and low awareness levels among the community members. The Non-Governmental Organisations can play a pivotal role in engaging and creating awareness in the community. It can also help in strengthening and sustaining the developmental projects being carried out in the case of WASH. Moreover, the implementation of comprehensive solid and liquid waste management systems holds paramount importance in creating a clean and healthy environment. Prioritizing and expediting the establishment of such systems will contribute to effective waste disposal and minimize environmental pollution. For proper implementation of waste disposal system, comprehensive community participation will be imperative for proper management. Capacity building from time to time in case of solid waste disposal and menstrual hygiene management is necessary. Another critical aspect that must be addressed is raising awareness about menstrual hygiene management. Targeted initiatives should be designed to educate and empower women with help from local self-help groups and NGOs. Local women needs can be identified which will closely work with community and health officials including ASHA and ANM'S to bridge the gap in awareness and management and

promoting proper menstrual hygiene practices and ensuring their overall health and well-being.

Ensuring sufficient access to water is a crucial element in providing proper sanitation facilities. A reliable water supply can significantly alleviate the burden on women and enable them to effectively manage personal and familial hygiene. Therefore, achieving universal access to adequate water resources is pivotal for the success of sanitation initiatives. Improved water availability has the potential to greatly enhance the health and hygiene of entire communities. By addressing the water needs of individuals and households, substantial progress can be made towards achieving comprehensive sanitation and promoting overall well-being.

To make tangible advancements, policymakers and stakeholders need to collaborate and strengthen existing and future sanitation initiatives at the grassroots level. It is essential to adapt water and sanitation policies to the ever evolving social environment and adopt a comprehensive approach that combines infrastructure development, community participation and policy reforms. By collectively addressing these complex and interconnected issues, the well-being and health of the community can be significantly enhanced. Access to safe drinking water, improved sanitation facilities, sustainable waste management systems and hygienic practices are fundamental rights that should be prioritized not only for the surveyed villages, but also for broader development and prosperity. It is vital to recognize the importance of these aspects and work towards their realization in order to create a healthier and more sustainable future.

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Mick Conefrey, *The Last Great Mountain: The First Ascent of Kangchenjunga,* Michael Conefrey: the United Kingdom, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-8380396-0-8, pp. 324

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Mount Everest gained world-wide notoriety after it was ascended in 1953, thirty-two years after it was first attempted by a team of British climbers in 1921. This brought wide popularity for Nepal, a small landlocked country sandwiched between India and China, which opened itself to the outside world in 1951 and granted permission to various reconnaissance and expedition teams to attempt its 8000-meter peaks. The historiography on mountaineering is replete with valuable literature on the Alps and the Himalaya with an exaggerated emphasis on Everest, however, to this day much of the 'the greatest' mountain lying on the border of Sikkim (now in Northeast India) and Nepal is lesser known. With five separate summits on its flanks guarding the crest of what is the third highest mountain, Kangchenjunga until the 1950s made for excruciatingly arduous climbs and a number of unfortunate accidents resulting in many deaths and disappearances. It drew copious publicity in the early 1930s, a period in which Kangchenjunga was recognized as the most famous mountain. It all began with Douglas W. Freshfield's 'Great Himalayan Tour' as he went round the circuit of Kangchenjunga exploring the glacier with his photographer Vittorio Sella, who made for some very compelling photographs of the mountain that were later to be studied by a generation of pioneer mountaineers.

The book under review very meticulously puts Kangchenjunga back into full glare amidst the unending Everest hullabaloo. Mick Conefrey's "The Last Great Mountain: The First Ascent of Kangchenjunga" foregrounds the different intervals wherein Kangchenjunga was attempted by all sorts of people, including a maniac, Aleister Crowley, who was dubbed "beast" by his mother; Paul Bauer, a German nationalist who was a Nazi official; Gunter Dyhrenfurth of Jewish ancestry who moved to Switzerland with his wife, Hettie, in the wake of increasing anti-Semitic wave in Germany; George Band, who represented the elite class of Britain, and Joe Brown, a commoner from working class selected by Charles Evans for the final summit push.

The book opens with an account of Jules Jacot-Guillarmod's persuasion to Aleister Crowley to join him on an expedition to Kangchenjunga in 1905. There was everything uncommon between the two individuals except for their mutual love of mountaineering. Even though Crowley began climbing small cliffs as a teenager, he was vastly despised by a lot many English owing to his bizarre pastimes of occult practice and debauchery. Conefrey provides a broad overview of the first Kangchenjunga attempt, highlighting the haplessness of the Lepcha porters at the hands of their leader. However, the first chapter lays an overly emphasis on Crowley's eccentricities, which somewhat eclipses Jacot-Guillarmod and other team members' role, until the two men are finally embroiled in a fiasco over the treatment of porters who would repeatedly seek refuge in Jacot-Guillarmod's leadership, and complain of being maltreated and abused by Crowley. Moreover, the climbing route on the mountain was often seen as too dangerous by the porters, most of whom belonged to the Lepcha community of Sikkim, so much so that even Nanga, the head porter, along with others fled the mountain. Owing to porter strikes and Crowley's imperious leadership, a face-off between him and the rest of the team occurred that brought a disastrous end to the first Kangchenjunga expedition.

Twenty-four years later, German nationalist and a Nazi supporter Paul Bauer returns to the mountain in 1929 in a bid to restore the lost pride of his country post World War I. Unlike the lavish British Himalayan expeditions, Bauer's was cautiously frugal as they could get only a part of their expedition funded by the Alpenverein. The author examines more instances albeit less intense, leaving the expedition team parting on bitter terms. Frank Smythe and Gunter Dyhrenfurth, both of whom made for very talented climbers had a contrasting approach to mountaineering. Smythe was not happy with Dyhenrenfurth's choice of equipment and heavy clothing, and openly raised questions on his leadership after the unfortunate death of Chettan, a fine Himalayan porter, who despite being wary of the route considered it his duty to carry on if the *sahibs* wished to attempt it.

In the following chapters, Mick Conefrey focuses more on the ascent of Kangchenjunga to further exposit how the different attempts were routinely planned, as well as the dangers that the rest evaded and some succumbed to. The distinction between Sherpas and porters is prompted by Conefrey when veteran Sherpas stage a protest and demand a higher pay than the 'coolies.' Likewise, the Sherpas volunteered for an all-high-altitude work on the 1922 Everest expedition in order to catch the attention of *sahibs* as more hardworking and disciplined than their Tibetan counterparts. In another slightly different incident, Sherpas complained of dingy toilet facilities and insufficient food on the 1933 Everest expedition (Ortner 1999). Knowing that the success of the expedition depended on Sherpas and porters, Bauer remained cognizant of their needs. The predicament of experienced Sherpas unfolds further on the 1931 expedition when they complain of not having been paid properly on the previous expedition. They were particularly disturbed when they found that they were paid less than the Bhotia porters, and so insisted that only Sherpas be recruited in the team. The author carefully accentuates the disharmony resulting from the porter crisis, and the increasingly crucial role of Sherpas throughout the book, even though discreetly.

The author eventually indulges in intricate details such as the time spent on the mountain that were vastly missing in the preceding chapter when he reveals how the German team thrust their way ahead digging tunnels through the ice and "excavating small ice caves to sleep in" in spite of appalling weather, violent blizzards and avalanches big enough to wipe out any human trace. It is here that one wishes the author had provided a deeper insight into the struggle against the dangers "the demon of Kangchenjunga" threw its way. To give an idea of how serious an undertaking Kangchenjunga was, Conefrey brings in one of F. Smythe's accounts to reveal the extent of precarity on Kangchenjunga: "I have experienced fear many times on many mountains…but Kangchenjunga is more than unfriendly, it is imbued with a blind unreasoning hatred towards the mountaineer." Even Francis Younghusband and John Hunt were to admit that Kangchenjunga was a lot more difficult than Everest.

The following chapters delineate the various route maps charted out to reach the top of Kangchenjunga, apart from official formalities and permissions that the teams had to seek from the Sikkim government and the kingdom of Nepal to access the mountain. After four sensational attempts on Kangchenjunga, it is finally climbed by an unconventional pair, Joe Brown and George Band, that marks the first ascent exactly fifty years later in 1955. However, the pair never sets foot on the highest point of the crest as a part of an agreement between Charles Evans and the Sikkimese who consider it holy and have deep veneration for it. They believe that the God of Kangchenjunga resides on the top of the summit, and hence, must not be disturbed. The tradition of not climbing the last five-foot-high snow cone has remained intact since. All the members of the team led different lives post the ascent, but one is left wondering about most Sherpas who took part in the expedition. Conefrey argues that the Indian press looked at the expedition in an entirely different way where they would accuse the British of not allowing Sherpas to be in the main summit party;

in doing so, he raises significant questions about Sherpa identity. Charles Evans had decided to attempt for the summit with his *sirdar*Dawa Tenzing should the two pairs fail to reach the top. Later, he invited Dawa and Changjup to visit London on an all-expense trip. The author does a brilliant job by chroniclingthe attempts in as detailed a manner as one possibly could, however, he remains neutral when addressing debates that question the positionality of Sherpa climbers. Instances where a mention of a Sherpani porter who joined an expedition pregnant has been made in the passing; at other times, Conefrey aptly raises matters where Sherpas endangered their lives, and also when they were rewarded for their courage and climbing skills. Throughout the text, one gets a hint of Eurocentric approach even though the author tries his best to induct Sherpas and porters in every chapter. When Paul Bauer writes an obituary for Hermann Schaller, one wonders why he missed out on Pasang in the same note who fell down to his death along with Schaller. Aside from minor editorial errors, Mick Conefrey must be appreciated for adding substantial knowledge to the body of mountaineering literature on Kangchenjunga, the "Great Five Peaked Fortress."

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Panjab- Journeys Through Fault Lines

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In Panjab: Journeys Through Fault Lines, Bangalore-based journalist Amandeep Sandhu provides us with an extensive view of Punjab, taking us along in his journey of piecing together the land Ibn Batuta had named 'Panj Ab' - the land of five rivers. Born and brought up away from Punjab, but always connected to its ethos and spirit through his family, Sandhu confesses that he felt an "emptiness about matters Panjab".

In 2015, Amandeep Sandhu began his journey, an investigation that lasted for three years. What he claims to have discovered at the end of this journey is the realization that Panjab was far from what he had imagined. He describes his observations through the use of this non-fiction verse with a Punjabi couplet, '*Jeho ji tu samjhemahiya, oho ji main hainnahin*' (What you know of me, my dear, I am not that)' by Aman Rozi.

Sandhu chooses to start with his analysis of the farming sector, something that Punjab is popularly known for. Starting with the problems of farmers in rural Punjab, the author gradually unravels the repeated institutional setbacks the state has suffered over the years in addressing some of its most fundamental problems. His

data is drawn primarily from rural Punjab and involves contemporary case studies in contrast with historical facts. The descriptive account of village visits by the author broadens the reader's understanding of contemporary rural Punjab. Thus, Sandhu's account of Punjab is an auto-ethnographic one, focusing on a rural perspective. It is an emotional journey through which he explores his roots. Hedivides his research into sixteen chapters based on sentiments and concepts that presumably reflect the condition of Punjab. Therefore, he chose punjabi terms as chapter titles which would let any Punjabi person relate with his work. The titles are 'Satt' (wound), 'berukhi' (apathy) 'rosh' (anger), 'rog' (illness) 'astha' (faith), 'mardangi' (masculinity) and 'dawa' (medicine) followed by 'paani' (water), 'zameen' (land), 'karza' (loan), 'jaat' (caste), 'patit' (apostate), 'bardr' (border), 'sikhya' (education), 'lashaan' (corpses), and 'janamdin' (birthday). These chapters can also be read individually and are independent from one another. Gradually, it becomes apparent that the more he explores Punjab, the more he comes across the 'faultlines' that had damaged the social fabric of the state and society.

Popularimagination about Punjab is usually replete with endless fields of mustard, a bountiful food provider, wealthy Sikhs with opulent homes and fancy cars. The soldier and the farmer are the stereotypes when one thinks of Punjab. Sandhu explores the personal and the political make-up of Punjab and its psyche through a series of anecdotes as he travels the State. He concludes that what we take for granted in Punjab is an illusion and that the reality is often too cruel.

His analysis of the long usage of drugs, in the past and present, or the rise of the deras or so-called religious societies or groups adds much to our understanding of the discourse on present day Punjab. In a detailed analysis of those aspects of Punjabiyat that the community holds as central to its existence, such as astha (faith),

jaat (caste), mardangi (masculinity), zameen (land), Sandhu captures a community in turmoil. He is not convinced that the political leadership can find solutions and frankly rejects those who have been in power so far.

The very same state that was known as the wheat basket of the country post Green (mis) revolution is facing serious environmental crisis, solutions to which, argues Sandhu, are not in neo-liberal policies of the state. Another (mis) revolution that marred the state was the Khalistan movement that erupted due to centre and state's combined failure to resolve the issues of Yamuna-Satluj Link canal. The 'panjdareyava di dharti' (land of five rivers) is thus looking at an 'unending cycle of water scarcity' that threatens to leach its soil of nutrients and increase desertification.

The Sikh identity politics of the state too has left the state with scars of Operation Blue star, the attack on Darbar Sahib, Amritsar in 1984 and its painful legacy, argues Sandhu, which persists even now. The years of militancy and right-wing rhetoric, and alternate power-politics between Akali Dal and the Congress have left the state in shambles. Far from popular imaginations, with one generation lost to militancy, the next to drugs and the present to exodus, Punjab is struggling for new directions. Amidst this crisis, the advent of Aam Admi Party gave some hope to the people of Punjab. However, it being rooted in Delhi, too has proved its inability to understand the complexity of problems the state faces.

Most of the books published on Punjab revolve around the theme of Sikh identity politics. Thus, Sandhu's attempt to understand Punjab in its entirety provides a refreshing take on the problems of the state. Butit is also what makes the task even more challenging. However, Sandhu has been successful in providing a wider picture of the current challenges of the state without

compromising the identity and historical aspect of it. Overall, his personal journey transports the readers to the state and one is compelled to make one's own interpretations of the anecdotes he provides along with it. His observations might not resonate with many, but overall his honest and critical engagement with Punjab makes it an interesting read.

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Book Review

Mick Conefrey, *The Last Great Mountain: The First Ascent of Kangchenjunga,* Michael Conefrey: the United Kingdom, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-8380396-0-8, pp. 324 180-184
Medhavi Gulati

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