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Chief Editor
Dharam Vir

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Journal of National Development

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The Journal of National Development (JND) is an interdisciplinary bi-annual peer reviewed & refereed international journal committed to the ideals of a 'world community' and 'universal brotherhood'. The Journal is a joint effort of like-minded scholars in the field of social research. Its specific aims are to identify, to understand and to help the process of nation-building within the framework of a 'world community' and enhance research across the social sciences (Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science, Psychology, History, Geography, Education, Economics, Law, Communication, Linguistics) and related disciplines like all streams of Home Science, Management, Computer Science, Commerce as well as others like Food Technology, Agricultural Technology, Information Technology, Environmental Science, Dairy Science etc. having social focus/implications. It focuses on issues that are global and on local problems and policies that have international implications. By providing a forum for discussion on important issues with a global perspective, the *JND* is a part of unfolding world wide struggle for establishing a just and peaceful world order. Thus, the *JND* becomes a point of confluence for the rivulets from various disciplines to form a mighty mainstream gushing towards the formulation and propagation of a humanistic world-view.

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The Managing Editor

Journal of National Development

D-59, Shastri Nagar, Meerut-250 004 (India)

Tel : 91+121-2763765, 2770765; Mobile : 91+99997771669, 91+9412200765

<e-mail : managingeditor@jndmeerut.org>

Website : www.jndmeerut.org

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Digitalization of Education in India

Rangoli Chandra* and Shweta Yadav**

Development, expansion and acceptance of information technologies have digitalized every aspects of human life. Education sector is no exception to such transformations. These information technologies have revolutionized the whole teaching learning process. Digital learning denotes to learning through digital platforms with the help of electronic gadgets and modern technologies. Government of India has taken various initiatives for promoting digital education across India both for school education and higher education. As a result, E-learning platforms for digital literacy have been promoted and online learning has been adopted by the teachers and learners. These initiatives have significantly transformed the prevalent traditional Indian education system. This research paper aims to discuss various initiatives taken by the Indian government in promoting the digitalization of education and highlights the benefits of digital learning and various obstacles in the path of digital India.

[**Keywords** : Digital initiatives, E-learning platforms, Advantages, Disadvantages, Technologies, Digitalization]

1. Introduction

The 21st century is an age of technology, innovation, and digitalization. Innovation, expansion, and acceptance of new

* Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <rangoli.dr@gmail.com>

** Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Arya Kanya Degree College, Hardoi, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <shwetayadav1992@gmail.com>

technologies are making rapid changes in every sector of society. The Development of information and communication technologies has been helpful in emerging the process of digitalization that is influencing all spheres of society, economy, polity, information and education.

Technological revolutions have been dramatically altering the prevalent Indian education system. As a result, education system has been globally digitalized where virtual learning bounds no boundary of region, class and age. Now, learning is no longer an isolated learning but a virtual classroom based continuous ongoing learning which is easily accessible and shared among learners all over the world. E-learning is free from the predetermined boundaries of traditional educational system that was limited within the boundary of classrooms.

Digitalization refers to a process of conversion of text, picture, audio, video into a digital form that can be processed by a computer whereas digitalization of education refers to the use of digital technologies in the field of education to teach students therefore presenting a platform for e-learning.

Education refers to encompassing learning and skills through teaching by using a variety of methods and strategies in their instruction. Education is a lifelong process that aims to produce better citizens who could fit into this dynamic world and make a contribution to it.

Now a days, the use of technology is evident in every sector, therefore, promoting a wide platform for digitalization where computers, internet, and associated technologies are used to provide e-access or digital access to many things. The process of digitalization is the result of the Indian government's most aspiring initiative digital India : A programme to transform India into digital empowered society and knowledge economy. Digital India was launched on 1st July 2015 by our honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi with an aim to connect rural India with high-speed internet facilities and improving universal digital literacy. Various initiatives have been taken by the Indian government under digital India campaigns like digital empowerment of every citizen, availability of digital infrastructure, facilities of e-governance and e-services make available to every citizen.

2. Objectives of the Paper

This paper has following three objectives :

1. To discuss various initiatives taken by the government of India for the digitalization of school and higher education.
2. To analyze the advantages of digital learning in India.
3. To examine the barriers in the path of digital learning in India.

3. Research Methodology

This research paper is based on secondary data sources, collected from national and international journals, published government reports, newspapers, websites in order to make in-depth analysis. This study is descriptive in nature and make an attempt to understand digital initiatives taken by government for digitalization of education in India.

4. Initiatives taken by Government of India for the Digitalization of School Education

MHRD took the first initiative on 9th July 2017 by organizing a conference in reference to the digitalization of education with an objective to bring transformation in the education system. MHRD has launched various digital platforms for e-learning like SWAYAM (India's own MOOCs), Swayam Prabha, National Digital Library, and National Academic Depository.

These initiatives taken by Government of India are as following :

4.1 NROER (National Repository of Open Educational Resources)

NROER is a joint initiative of CIET (Central Institute of Educational Technology) and NCERT, launched in August 2013 in Collaboration with the Department of School Education and Literacy. NROER is an open resource platform for online learning. It has large number of educational resources in different educational domain and in different languages for primary, secondary and senior secondary schools. It has developed 19000+ e resources and contains 441 eBooks easily accessible to the users. Its online courses combined both online and blended.

4.2 DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing)

DIKSHA is an initiative of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Ministry of Education. It is

basically a learning portal developed for school education and hence promotes inclusive learning, especially during the crisis of COVID-19 that disrupted whole education process. DIKSHA is based on various core principles like open architecture, open access, open licensing diversity, choice and autonomy and was launched by Hon' Vice President of India on September 5th 2017.

The major benefit of this learning platform is that it supports 18+ languages across India and share e-content (text, video) regarding curriculum of NCERT, CBSE and SCERT. It has its own application named DIKSHA - (Platform for School Education) that has been downloaded by more than 10 million learners with the rating of 4.4. This learning platform has been adopted by 35 States/ UT's and millions of learners and teachers. Current data indicates that DIKSHA portal has been visited by 55,75,53,542 (550 million) times by the users.

DIKSHA platform is an open platform where learners can access quality content and teachers can contribute/ share their knowledge in the form of teaching videos, explanation videos, lesson plans, experiential learning videos and practice questions through the national platform known as Vidyadaan. Vidyadaan with its tag line "Share for your Care" asks individuals and organizations across the country to share their knowledge in order to enhance quality learning.

4.3 NISHTHA (National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement)

NISHTHA is a capacity building programme that aims to improve quality of school learning by integrated teacher training. This programme targets to train 42 lakhs teachers subsequently both at National and State level by National Resource Groups (NRGs) and State Resource Groups (SRGs). The objectives of the programme includes improving learning environment, outcomes and promoting experiential and joyful learning by training Principals and the teachers.

Training	Target	Achieved
State Resource Persons Leadership	5490	4011
Key Resource Persons	27452	19408
Teachers	3632100	1578214
Heads/ Principals	349385	171679

Table on preceding page clearly indicates the targets set under this programme and their achieved status. NISHTHA is an important step taken by Ministry of Education in building teachers' capacity and promoting integrated learning among teachers.

4.4 e-PATHSHALA : Learning on the Go

e-PATHSHALA is a joint initiative of MHRD, CIET and NCERT and was launched in November 2015. It has large number of e-books and e-contents in the form of text, audio-visual that are beneficial for teachers, students, parents, researcher and educators. These e-contents are easily accessible either through the portal or the application. This platform has total of 504 textbooks and 3886 e resources for learners. It has its own application with 4.5 rating and has been installed by 2.62 million people. EPATHSHALA facilitates online resources of learning for students- can access textbooks from class 1st to 12th and online material, participate in workshops, contests and exhibitions etc. Teachers can enrich learning process and educators can improve the quality of curriculum.

5. Initiatives taken by Government of India for the Digitalization of Higher Education

Main initiatives taken by Government of India for the digitalization of higher education include the following :

5.1 SWAYAM

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) is India's indigenous MOOCs. The concept of MOOCs deals with online delivery of lectures or e-learning content (audio, videos, and texts) to a large number of people simultaneously. SWAYAM was launched on August 15, 2016, and is based on three principles of education i.e. access, equity and quality. It aims to provide the best learning to all sections especially to the most disadvantages group and seeks to bridge the digital divide gap by bringing digital revolution and enhancing the e-learning platform. SWAYAM courses not only provide the platform for e-learning but also provide authentic certificates to all registered members after fulfilling certain eligibility criterion.

SWAYAM courses include videos tutorials of the lectures, e-content of the subject matter, self-assessment quizzes and assignments and discussion forum to ask queries. Total nice

coordinators (UGC, NIOS, NCERT, IGNOU, NITTTR, NPTEL, AICTE, CEC, IIMB) are currently associated with SWAYAM in order to provide effective online learning. SWAYAM has completed more than 2,748 courses in various disciplinary. Almost 12 million students have been enrolled and 6 lakhs have been awarded certificates.

5.2 NPTEL

NPTEL is a joint initiative of IITs and IISCs, funded by MHRD Government of India. It aims to provide e-learning through video-based courses in all major branches of engineering and physical sciences at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. NPTEL is the largest online repository in the technical field and has conducted almost 392 courses in various disciplines with almost 20 lakhs enrollment. It has its own YouTube channel with more than 1.5 million subscribers and 819 million viewers.

5.3 SWAYAM PRABHA - The 32 Educational DTH Channels

SWAYAM PRABHA is a 32 DTH channels programme on 24x7 bases that aims to telecast high-quality educational content by using the GSAT-15 satellite. This educational content will be of 4 hours in a single day that will be repeated 5 more times for the convenience of the students. These DTH channels cover various courses for undergraduate and postgraduate students in diverse disciplines such as science, commerce, humanities, medicine, engineering, law, agriculture etc. developed by NPTEL, IITs, UGC, IGNOU, NCERT, NIOS. These channels also include various modules prepared for 9-12 level students and teachers for their and learning and training respectively.

5.4 e-PG PATHSHALA

e-PG PATHSHALA is an MHRD sponsored project under NME-ICT (National Mission on Education through ICT). It covers almost 70 subjects and 22000+ modules provide (e-text/videos) and 3200+ experts' opinion.

5.5 e-Pathya

e-Pathya is an alternative of e-pathshala that can be accessed online. It is beneficial for those students who are pursuing higher education in distance mode.

5.6 e-Adhyayan

e-Adhyayan is a platform that provide e-books for under graduate and Post-graduate courses.

5.7 NDL (National Digital Library)

National Digital Library is an initiative of Ministry of Educations, Government of India sponsored project under NMEICT, and coordinated by IIT, Kharagpur. NDL aims to collect, preserve and disseminate e-books and provide easy access of books to students. It provides e-content in all disciplines in various Indian languages, and support all academic levels including researcher and life-long learner. There are more than 52899292+ learning resources available on NDL platform that covers all major disciplines (Science, Technology, Humanities, Agriculture and others) and academic levels (Primary to Post-graduate). NDL has its own learning app for android phones that won the award of mBillionth South Asia in 2017 in learning and education category.

5.8 NAD (National Academic Depository)

NAD is an initiative of Ministry of Education, Govt. of India to facilitate online storage of all academic documents provided by institutions. It is a trusted platform to keep our documents safe and get easy and quick access to all those documents. NAD secures all documents and provides easy access whenever needed, therefore avoids the problem faced after missing documents, damage of documents. NAD is one of significant efforts in the making the vision of digital India come into reality.

5.9 Shodhganga

Shodhganga is a reservoir of Indian thesis and dissertations, setup by the INFLIBNET Centre. It ensures online availability of e-theses and dissertations and facilitates its access to all academic levels. It also ensures quality and standards of research and avoids the problem of duplication of research. It has more than 283943+ theses and 7678+ synopsis.

5.10 e-ShodhSindhu

e-ShodhSindhu is an initiative of MHRD, Govt. of India, being executed by INFLIBNET. It facilitates access to more than 7,200 core and peer reviewed journals and full text e- resources, databases in

different disciplines at lower rate of subscription. It aims to promote usage of e- resources in Universities, Colleges and technical institutions in order to bridge digital divide and reach towards an information-based society. It has more than 164300+ e-books with 10000+ journals and 22 resources.

5.11 e-Yantra (Engineering a better tomorrow)

e-Yantra is a MHRD sponsored programme under National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NME-ICT). e-Yantra is a platform for developing robotics by using the talent of Indian youths. It organizes e-Yantra Robotics competition for engineering, science and polytechnic college's students and also provides internship opportunity at e-Yantra lab to them. e-Yantra lab setup initiative enables colleges to set up robotics lab to provide training to teachers and promote college students to show their innovative ideas about robotics. It organizes symposium, seminars and workshops for the teachers on induction to Robotics in order to enhance their skills.

5.12 Virtual Labs

Virtual Labs is an initiative of MHRD, under NMEICT to promote remote-experimentation for UG and PG students and researcher scholars of various disciplines of Engineering, science and technology. It facilitates easy sharing of costly and limited equipment's, resources among large number of students. It covers various disciplines like Electronics and Communications, Computer Science and Engineering, Electrical, Mechanical and Chemical Engineering, Biotechnology and Biomedical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Physical sciences and Chemical sciences.

According to the latest data released by MHRD, a total number of 113 new experiments have been developed and 35, 99784 students have availed the opportunity of usage. It has 707 nodal centers in India.

6. Advantages of Digital of Education

Advantages of digital of education are as follows :

- Digital education provides students flexibility in terms of time scheduled for learning.

- Digital education promotes a platform for globalized learning where both instructors and learners can be globally connected and befitted.
- Digital learning platform easily attract the attention and engagement of youths by making the teaching pedagogy more interesting.
- Digital education promotes inclusive education by addressing the issues of rural-urban divide and gender disparity in learning.
- Digital education is helpful in enhancing skills and specialization thus can increase employability quotient.
- Digital education is helpful in reducing illiteracy rate.
- Quality content by experts provided during e-learning helps the students to be specialized in particular domain of knowledge.
- Online education is not only economical but also save time by immediate, effective and advanced transfer of knowledge.
- Digital education can be availed to a large section of society without the constraint of time and space.

7. Disadvantages of Digital Education

Disadvantages of digital education are as follows :

- Lack of proper electricity, technology and internet facilities are major barriers in digitalization of education in India.
- Idea of digitalization of education can't be successfully implemented until we ensure to bridge the gap of digital divide (a large number of people still have no access to technology and proper internet connectivity) in India Especially in rural areas. NSS 75th Round survey on "Household Social Consumption on Education in India" conducted during July 2017 to June 2018, revealed a picture where only 4% of rural households and 23% of urban households had computers. A total of 24% of the households in country agreed to have internet facility. Out of which 15% were rural households and 42% were urban households.
- Not only problem of digital divide exists in India but issue of gender digital divide can also be observed where females have less or no access to technology in comparison to males especially in rural areas.

- One of the major barriers for digital education is incapability of peoples to use technologies properly. People may have access to technology but unawareness and unwillingness towards proper handling of that technology often block the path for digital education.
- Digital education is provided through a virtual platform where teachers and students are virtually connected that resulted in lack of control on the environment of the class and behavior management of students by teachers.
- Shortage of trained teachers for conducting e-learning classes is major barrier for digitalization of education.
- Cultural diversity of India in terms of language demands the e-learning content and pedagogy available in different languages but technology limitations makes it hard to be accomplished. (As India is a multi-linguistic country which demands medium of instruction in different languages but technology limitations make it hard to be accomplished).
- Effectiveness of class, pedagogy can hardly be evaluated through virtual based digital classrooms.
- Availability of technology along with proper functionality is mandatory for digital learning that excludes the participation of poor students.

8. Conclusion

Technology has become an integral part of our modern lives, and is helpful in emerging the process of digitalization in all spheres of life. Digital initiatives taken by Government of India are transforming the traditional education system as well. These e-learning platforms are very effective in terms of availability of diverse range of courses and their significance in building one's skills and capabilities. It has bridged the gap between schools and homes as it is easily accessible and brought the transparency that can be easily monitored and hence making it reliable. The major question arises here is that are these digital initiatives are really accessible to different people belonging to different background or backward regions? Because availability of infra-structural facilities differs across whole India. Problem of digital divide and as well as of gender digital divide exist at a large scale. Therefore, not only access to electronic gadgets and technology should be ensured but also there is

need to train people to operate these technologies. Only complete digital literacy can reform digital learning process. Hence digitalization of education can't be successful until we ensure equal access to technology, electronic gadgets and proper training to operate these technologies.

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Incidence of Poverty in Nepal : Thought, Trend and Challenges

Bhaba Datta Sapkota*

The purpose of this paper is to review the poverty scenario talking about the trend, challenging factors and provincial comparative analysis of poverty in Nepal. This paper is mainly based on a literature survey. This paper uses quantitative data for the study purpose. To answer the research, two different sources-Nepal Living Standard Survey report (2010/11) and Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index Report (2017/18) are reviewed. Descriptive cum comparative research design is followed. Simple descriptive tools : frequency, percentage and trend line, bar-diagram are used for data analysis. The official statistics shows that the trend of poverty in Nepal is in decreasing order. Distribution of poverty across the country varies with high severity in rural and low in urban areas. Karnali Province and Province 2 have the highest rate of multidimensional poverty index than that of other provinces. Policy level corruption, political apathy, dishonesty, dependency, pandemic diseases, lack of meritocracy, nepotism and dogmatism, crony capitalism, inequality and unemployment, low level of agriculture productivity etc. are the leading factors of poverty in Nepal. There are various measures to analyze the poverty. However, this paper considers only cost based basic needs approach as a measure to examine the incidence of poverty. This paper provides the guidelines to

* Lecturer, Department of Rural Development, Tribhuvan University, Patan Multiple Campus, Patandhoka, Lalitpur (Nepal) E-mail: <bdsapkota78@gmail.com>

the decision makers, planners and academicians, especially for the developing countries to understand the important lessons regarding the investing in anti-poverty programmes. Examining the trend and incidence of poverty in developing countries like Nepal is the foundation of best planning and policy making to add value for the process of theoretical foundation as well as human development.

[**Keywords** : Poverty, Alleviation, Incidence, Consolidates, Well-being, Exclusion]

1. Introduction

Poverty is itself a complex, dynamic and multidimensional phenomenon. Still millions of people are struggling for their hand to mouth problem all over the world (UNSD, 2005). Internationally, since 1960 the notion of poverty alleviation became so popular. In 1960, Robert McNamara, President of World Bank (WB) argued that economic growth is necessary but not sufficient to human well-being, for it development programmes must attack over the intensity of poverty. In 1970, WB published a report entitled 'redistribution with growth' the report consolidates deep concentration of developed society on the issues and incidence of poverty. In 1970, International Labour Organization (ILO) defined poverty in relation to basic needs. After 1980, the concept of poverty jumped from economic factors to non-economic (Hunger, 1994). Robert Chamber's (1983) study on 'powerlessness and exclusion' brought new horizon in development discourse, particularly in understanding the concept of poverty. As same Amartya Sen's (1981) study added new gravity to understand the concept of poverty, focusing on the direct access of mass people on food but not only production. Further, he asserts that people's purchasing power must be so strong. The growth rate of people's income must be greater than that of market price growth rate of food. For instance, in 1942 many people were suffered by famine and starvation in West Bengal of India. It was not by shortage of food supply but by low purchasing power of people (Sen, 1981).

Poverty is a cross-cutting issue in development discourse. It can be defined in a number of ways. The most common is the cost-of basic-needs approach which mainly uses basic caloric threshold. Nepal has measured poverty in absolute terms-using a poverty line indicated by the cost of a predetermined basket of goods (Bhusal, 2013). Nepal uses an absolute poverty line, based on the food expenditure needed to fulfill per-capita 2,220 calories per day including a non-food allowance (CBS, 2011). Living Standard Survey (2010/11) measures poverty line based on income and calories. It

does not concern on how the people maintain their basic living standard. Poverty index is a tool to measure the development. Poverty index includes common poverty gap indices like human poverty, Foster Greer-Thorbecke P2, and multi-dimensional poverty. This paper deals with not all the indices explained here but uses head count and multidimensional indices. This paper can logically be worth well to the stakeholders, local level policy makers, academicians and concerns authorities to examine the current scenario of poverty for making the future plan as well.

2. Objective of the Study

Government of Nepal (GoN) has been spending a huge amount of budget on poverty alleviation over the past six decades, although the intensity of poverty still persists. The changing scenario in international development assistance has compelled the GoN to re-orient its development focus. Much emphasis is being paid towards the development of poor classes. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to review the poverty scenario with regards to the trend, challenging factors and provincial comparative study of poverty in Nepal.

3. Method and Materials

This paper is mainly focused on a literature survey to answer the research queries. Four different sources are Nepal Living Standard Survey report (2010/11), Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index Report (2017/18), Current Fifteenth Five Year Plan (2019/20-2023/24) and Economic Survey of Nepal (2019/20). This paper uses two analytical approaches, descriptive cum comparative, in which the descriptive approach describes the current status and trend of poverty while comparative approach makes relevant comparison based on provincial and residential (Rural and Urban) classification. Basic statistical tools: tabulation, percentage analysis, time series and bar diagrams are used for data analysis and presentation.

4. Results

4.1 Thoughts of Poverty

Poverty is a large and multifaceted set of explanations that focus on the individual as responsible for their poverty situation. Bill Gates remarkably said, "...if you born in poverty, it is not your

mistake, and if you die in poverty, it is your mistake.” Individual thought of poverty, thus, ascribes poverty to lack the genetic qualities such as intelligence that are not so easily reversed by individual behaviour, attitude and discipline.

Poverty is created by the transmission over generations of a set of beliefs, values, and skills that are socially generated but individually held. Individuals are not necessarily to blame because they are victims of their dysfunctional cultural practices. The cultural thought of poverty root causes in the culture of poverty. If local culture is regressive in nature, the intensity of poverty becomes more chronic (Bradshaw, 2006).

Causes of poverty are so long existing socio-economic, political, institutional and cultural discriminations. This thought does not believe on individual as a source of poverty, but it believes on the existing system which causes people to have limited opportunities and resources with which to achieve income and well-being (Bradshaw, 2006). In nineteenth century social thinkers reviewed on individual thought of poverty by exploring the existing uneven socio-economic beliefs. For instant, Karl Marx shows how the economic system of capitalism created the ‘reserve army of the unemployed’ as a conscientious strategy to keep low wages. Thus, existing discriminated socio-economic and cultural systems are the roots of poverty in society.

Existing geographical difficulties are the sources of poverty. For example, Mountain Region of Nepal is relatively low in position and accessibility of modern facilities because of location rigidity. Cumulative thought described by various philosophers seem complex in terms of the sources of poverty. However, it has its origins in economics in the work of Gunnar Myrdal (1957) who developed a theory of “...interlocking, circular, and interdependence within a process of cumulative causation” that helps to explain economic underdevelopment and development status.

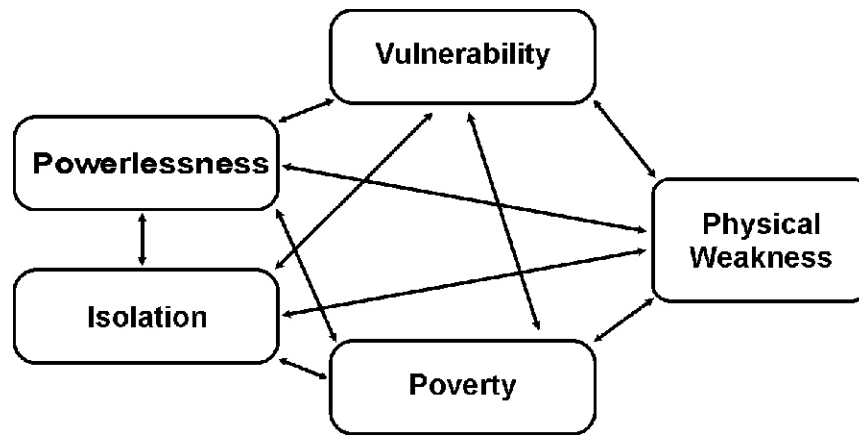
4.2 Understanding Poverty

Poor means a person or a group remained below the national or regional poverty line prescribed by Nepal Government or international agencies as per necessity from time to time under the set standard; remained backward on the basis of human development indicators such as education and health etc; and

excluded from the national development process on the grounds of particular gender or social group (Poverty Alleviation Act, 2006).

Poverty is a social phenomenon in which people cannot meet their basic necessities of life. It is a deprived condition namely lack of opportunities, low capabilities, low level of securities and empowerment. Basically, it is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity, insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means defenselessness to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation (UN, 2011). Poverty is multifaceted, manifested by conditions that include malnutrition, inadequate shelter, unsanitary living conditions, unsatisfactory and insufficient supplies of clean water, poor solid waste disposal, low educational achievement and the absence of quality schooling, chronic ill health, and widespread common crime (UNSD, 2005). Robert Chamber (1983) defined poverty in his well-known book entitled '*Rural Development : Putting the Last First*', as a deprived condition by multiple factors.

Figure-1 : The Deprivation Trap



Source : Chamber, 1983

Poverty as a discourse is conceptual thought that interrelated factors for example; depressed, hunger, voiceless, powerless, homelessness and ill-health, loses the human well-being and happiness. There are two remarkable facial manifestations of the conservative academic representation of poverty. First, poverty is considered as a tangible material condition and allowed the status of a dependent variable. Second, a list of independent variables (causal factors) they may be different from society to society to explain the incidence of poverty (WB, 1990).

4.3 Incidence of Poverty in Nepal

A method commonly used in developing countries is used to calculate a national poverty line. The poverty line or threshold is the minimum level of income estimate necessary to achieve an adequate standard of living in a given country. This minimum level is usually called the poverty line. The poverty line determines the threshold of income or expenditure, separating poor and non-poor people. Most countries use multiple poverty lines to capture monetary versus non-monetary measures of poverty, and how people and household incomes are distributed around the poverty line, hence the determination of relative poverty and absolute poverty. The official monetary poverty line at current market prices is NRs 19,261 (Central Bureau of Statistics [CBS], 2011) per person per year. This is approximately \$ 225 as of April, 2013 transaction rate. The poverty line for Nepal, in average 2010-11 prices, has been estimated at Rs. 19,261; the food poverty line is Rs. 11,929 and the non food poverty line Rs. 7,332. The poverty line establishes the distinction between who is poor and who is not. In particular, according to the 2010-11 poverty line, an individual in Nepal is considered poor if per-capita total annual consumption is below Rs. 19,261 (Table-1).

Table-1 : Food and Non-Food Consumption Line for Poverty Incidence

Survey	Total Income in NRs (%)	Food (%)	Non-food (%)
NLSS II (2003/04)	7,696 (100)	4,966 (65)	2,729 (35)
NLSS III (2010/11)	19,261 (100)	11,929 (62)	7,332 (38)

Source : CBS, 2011

Note : NLSS indicates the Nepal Living Standard Survey

Poverty incidence for a given area is defined as the proportion of individuals living in that area who are in households with an average per capita expenditure below the poverty line. Poverty gap is the average distance below the poverty line, being zero for those individuals above the line. It estimates how far below the poverty line the poor are on average as a proportion of that line. It thus represents the resources needed to bring all poor individuals up to a basic level. Poverty severity measures the average squared distance below the line, thereby giving more weight to the very poor. The

squared poverty gap takes into account not only the distance separating the poor from the poverty line, but also inequality among the poor, thereby giving more weight to the poorest people than the less poor (GoN, 2011).

Table-2 : Status of Poverty in Nepal

Area	Headcount Index (%)			Poverty Gap Index (%)			Squared Poverty Gap Index (%)		
	1995-96	2003-04	2010-11	1995-96	2003-04	2010-11	1995-96	2003-04	2010-11
Nepal	41.76	30.85	25.16	11.75	7.55	5.43	4.67	2.7	1.81
Urban	21.55	9.55	15.46	6.54	2.18	3.19	2.65	0.71	1.01
Rural	43.27	34.62	27.43	12.14	8.50	5.96	4.83	3.05	2.00

Source : CBS, 2011

Table-2 describes the overall incidence of poverty in Nepal. In 2010-11, 25 percent population was below the poverty line, compared to 42 percent in 1995-96 and 31 percent in 2003-04. Thus, the incidence of poverty in Nepal declined by about 16 percentage points (or 39 percent) over the course of fifteen years (1995/96 to 2010/11), a decline of 2.7 percent per year. The incidence of poverty in urban area is more than half (it declined from 22 to 10 percent, a change of 9.7 percent per year) during 1995-96 to 2003/04. Later on, the urban poverty is increased by 5.91 percent in between 2003/04 to 2010/11. While poverty in rural area also declined appreciably, at one percent point per year (1995/96 to 2003/04), its incidence remained higher than in urban area. According to the new poverty line, the poverty incidence (headcount rate) for Nepal in 2010-11 was 25.16 percent. The poverty rate was much lower in urban area (15.46 percent) than in rural area (27.43 percent). A simple comparison of poverty in 2010-11 (25.16%) with the estimate in the past for 1995-96 (41.76%) and 2003-04 (30.85 %) shows that poverty is in declining state. It is owing to the rapid rural-urban migration, inflow of remittance and transforming the farming. The decline is greater over the entire period close to 30 percentage point decline in the last 15 years.

Currently, the ratio of people living below the poverty line had dropped to 18.7 percent in Nepal, in part because investment in social sectors was increased dramatically and in part because employment and income-generation programmes were implemented (MoF,

2019/20). Despite this progress, around 5.5 million people are still living below the poverty line; poverty alleviation measures are fragmentary and uncoordinated; and policies and programmes have yet to be made result-oriented and effective.

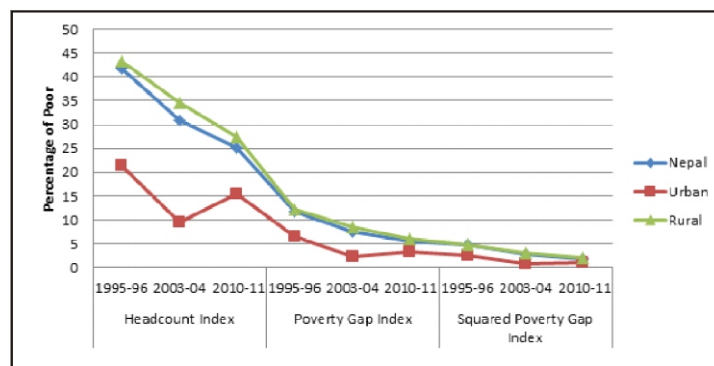


Figure-2 :Trends of poverty in Nepal (1995-2010)

4.4 Multidimensional Poverty Index

This section discusses on provincial distribution of poverty. The reason behind this is to identify the most disadvantaged areas having higher poverty concentration. Multidimensional Poverty Index looks at ten indicators, including child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, nutrition, cooking fuel, improved sanitation, improved drinking water, electricity, asset ownership and flooring and roofing. Poverty is measured with non-monetary variables and deprivation indicators, using breakdowns of these indicators to construct poverty measures. The status of Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of Nepal is presented below:

Table-3 : Status of Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of Nepal

Province	Population Share (%)	MPI	Head Count Ratio- H (%)
Province No. 1	17.6	0.085	19.7
Province No. 2	18.4	0.217	47.9
Bagmati	22.0	0.051	12.2
Gandaki	11.6	0.061	14.2
Lumbini	16.5	0.133	29.9
Karnali	5.4	0.230	51.2
Sudur Paschim	8.5	0.146	33.6
Nepal	100	0.127	28.62

Source : NPC, 2018

The headcount ratio of MPI in Karnali province, province 2, Sudur Paschim province, Bagmati province, Gandaki province, province 1 and Lumbini province are 51.2 %, 47.9%, 33.6%, 12.2%, 14.2% and 19.7% respectively. All provinces except province 1 have the headcount ratio above the national MPI of 0.127. And this head count ratio explains the population of province being multi-dimensionally poor.

Table-3 includes the analyses of the poverty rate and intensity of poverty for each province and its composition. In terms of population size Karnali Province is the smallest province in Nepal, with 5.4% of the population and having the highest MPI of all provinces in Nepal, at 0.230. Province 2 has the second highest MPI of any province in Nepal, at 0.217 which is more than the national MPI (0.127). Province 2 is the second largest province (in term of population size); with 18.4% of the population. The Sudur Paschim Province has the third highest MPI of all provinces in Nepal, at 0.146 and it is the second smallest province in Nepal, with 8.5% of the population.

In terms of population size Bagmati Province is the largest Province in Nepal, with 22% of the population. The Bagmati Province has the lowest MPI at 0.051 and this is below the national MPI of 0.127. The Gandaki Province has the second lowest MPI at 0.061. The Province 1 is the third largest province in Nepal, with 17.6% of the population. It is the third lowest position of MPI at 0.085. In terms of population size, the Lumbini Province is the fourth largest province in Nepal, with 16.5% of the population. The MPI of the Province has the median of all provinces in Nepal, at 0.133. This is slightly above the national MPI.

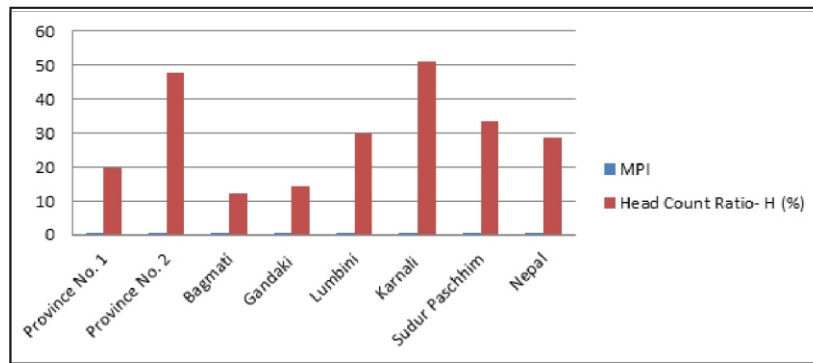


Figure-3 : Status of Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of Nepal

Table-4 : Population Share and Multidimensional Poverty Index by Residential Areas (Rural and Urban)

Areas	Population Share (%)	MPI	Head Count Ratio- H (%)
Rural	78.5	0.147	33.20
Urban	21.5	0.031	7.0
Nepal	100	0.127	28.62

Source : NPC, 2018

Table-4 shows the population share, MPI and headcount ratio of poverty in urban and rural areas of Nepal. The rural poverty headcount ratio (33.2%) is much higher than for urban areas (7.0%). It means 7% of the urban population and 33.2% of the rural population are multi-dimensionally poor in Nepal.

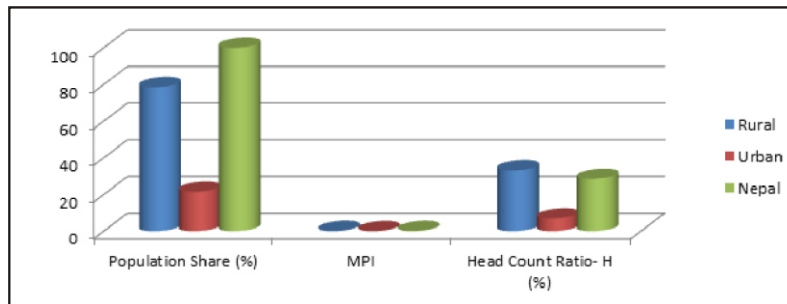


Figure-4 : Population Share and Multidimensional Poverty Index by Areas (Rural and Urban)

The overall development goal of the Government of Nepal (GoN) is to attain poverty reduction through sustainable, inclusive and equitable growth. The current fifteenth five year periodic plan is running as a game changer. The plan has a long-term vision of “Prosperous Nepal Happy Nepali”. The 15th plan has taken poverty alleviation and socio-economic equality as a leading strategy to achieve long term vision of the nation. The 15th plan aims to reduce absolute poverty and multi-dimensional poverty to 11 and 13 percent, respectively.

4.5 Challenging Factors of Poverty

Poverty itself is a problem of both developing and underdeveloped countries, but the level of poverty with its magnitude is different. Causes of poverty in Nepal are multiple. Poverty is the major challenges to development and principal

obstacle for prosperous human life. The factors of poverty in many developing countries are mostly common in nature. As a matter of fact, geography, politics, culture and a range of other factors are responsible for perpetuating poverty in Nepal. The feudalistic land ownership system has also played a major role in accelerating poverty in Nepal. Policy level corruption, political apathy, dishonesty, dependency, pandemic diseases, ignorance, insecurity, dis-empowerment, lack of meritocracy, nepotism and dogmatism, practice of crony capitalism, excluded locations, inadequate infrastructure, inequality and unemployment, insecure livelihoods, adverse geographical condition, taking agriculture as an inferior job/occupation, low level of agriculture productivity etc. are the leading factors of poverty in Nepal. Measuring poverty in absolute term gives some significant statistical insights, but the practice has various shortcomings even though incidence of absolute poverty seems to be falling rapidly in Nepal.

5. Discussion

Poverty is not only an issue of developed countries now but it is a serious issue of developing countries, too. Poverty incidence has implications for economic and other areas of development policy. Country-wise social realities are fictional: the UNDP measurements point to achievements in poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and India which are totally at odds with country-level data and poverty estimates (Chossudovsky, 2003). High poverty levels are synonymous with poor quality of life, deprivation, malnutrition, illiteracy and low human development (Rao, 2005). The problem of poverty has continued to remain the central challenge of development at the global level (Ibid). But in the context of Nepal, incidence of poverty is still rampant in both rural and urban areas. Measuring tools are not uniform that represent diversity in the incidence of poverty. The determination of a poverty line cannot be based on an arbitrary selection of a low level of income. Only scientific criteria independent of income can justify where the poverty line should be drawn (UNDP, 2005).

There are number of studies made by the Government as well as individuals researcher on incidence of poverty and find quantitatively it difficult to agree on the amount of income that will ensure the minimum consumption standard at a given time frame (Chand, et.al., 2005). As same, Nepal's poverty line is practically

insufficient to meet the minimum requirement as compare to current market price, thus the poverty threshold must be updated accordingly. The result of earlier research and empirical evidence show that poverty reduction can be feasible even in low income countries like Nepal, if political will and well designed anti-poverty programmes are lunched properly. For instance, micro finance scheme of Bangladesh (Yunush, 2008) successfully reduced the incidence of poverty as well as followed the idea of 'leave no one behind' and alternative to development model. Thus, the Government of Nepal should monitor and upgrade the poverty line and anti-poverty policies regularly.

6. Conclusion

Both poverty and inequality have been the concern not only of Nepal, but of the world as a whole. A progressive government and society aim for a just and prosperous society. Thus, rising poverty and inequality should be subject of concern. In the past thirty years Nepal has dramatically reduced the incidence of poverty. This is supported by the official statistics published by different national level surveys and so on. Unfortunately, during this time frame inequality has been rising and falling. The Gini Coefficient that measures income inequality stood at 0.34 in 1996 and rose to 0.41 in 2004 and again fell to 0.33 in 2011 and 0.31 in 2019. The incidence of multidimensional poverty has also gone down. The intensity of poverty can be corrected through investment, growth, job creation, and quality education and political will. To reduce poverty, Nepal needs to enhance the inclusiveness in its economic growth. Capacity building and providing opportunities to utilize their capacity would be the policy suggestions for the government of Nepal and development partners. Expertise should be developed in the area of comparative advantages. Thus, not by providing but promoting the vulnerable groups in terms of security, opportunity, empowerment, participation, representation and mainstreaming will be the best alternative to alleviate the intensity of poverty in reality.

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Women Participation and Empowerment in Panchayati Raj Institutions : A Sociological Study of Kila Parikshitgarh, District Meerut

Amarjeet Singh Malik* and Shaily Chaudhary**

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are considered as solution to every problems of rural development and is linked to empowerment of the marginalized section of society, especially women. Various Panchayati Raj Institutions theories generate competing hypothesis regarding the underlying various aspects of women and Gram Panchayat. To unravel some of these claims, data from a survey involving 200 women those are selected for Panchayat Pradhan in Gram Panchayat election, Parikshitgarh, Meerut, U.P. were used to assess the role of women in Gram Panchayat and to evaluate the performance of the women representation in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The study adopted a quantitative approach to research involving simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was an interview schedule, made-up closed ended questions. The results have shown that participation of women

* Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Meerut College, Meerut (India)
E-mail: <amarjeetmaliksocio@gmail.com>

** Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Meerut College, Meerut (India)
E-mail: <shailychaudhary923@yahoo.com>

representatives including members from weaker section appears to have increased substantially over the years less free from decision making and consider women's preference to improve overall government policies. According to studies have also found that women representatives are literate; depend on husband and other family member, especially in taking decisions for the betterment of village and women empowerment. Women representative are not free to work at the gram panchayats due to dominance of their husbands and their male family members. In addition to, it was found their husband spend more time on political activities, while, women spend time in carrying out household activities. Overall, positive action through 73rd amendment has given women and marginalized communities a sense of empowerment though they are yet to reach an equilibrium level. Many researcher assumed that women and deprived class are bound to make further progress in their social status, leadership role, economic position and political awareness.

[**Keywords** : Panchayati Raj Institutions, Political Participation, Women Empowerment.

1. Panchayati Raj Institutions

In India, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) now functions as a system of governance in which Gram Panchayats are the basic units of local self government of villages in rural India. This system was implemented by a constitutional 73rd amendment in 1992 by the recommendation of L. M. Singhvi Committee (1986). This Panchayat Raj System was formalized in 1992, following a study conducted by a number of Indian Committees on various ways of implementing more decentralized administration. The system has three phases: Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Panchayat. Currently, the Panchayat Raj System exists in all states except Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram and in all Union Territories except Delhi.

After Independence : After the Constitution came into force, Article 40 made a mention of panchayats and Article 246 empowers the state legislature to legislate with respect to any subject relating to local self-government.

However, this inclusion of Panchayats into the Constitution was not unanimously agreed by the decision-makers, with the major opposition having come from the framer of the Constitution himself *i.e.* B. R. Ambedkar.

It was after much discussion among the supporters and opponents of the village Panchayat that the Panchayats finally got a place for themselves in the Constitution as Article 40 of the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Since the Directive Principles are not binding principles, the result was the absence of a uniform structure of these bodies throughout the country. After independence, as a development initiative, India had implemented the Community Development Programmes (CDP) on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti, the 2nd October, 1952 under the major influence of the Etawah Project undertaken by the American expert, Albert Mayer.

It encompassed almost all activities of rural development which were to be implemented with the help of village panchayats along with the participation of people.

In 1953, the National Extension Service was also introduced as a prologue to CDP. But the programme did not yield much result.

There were various reasons for the failure of CDP like bureaucracy and excessive politics, lack of people participation, lack of trained and qualified staff, and lack of local bodies interest in implementing the CDP especially the village Panchayats.

In 1957, the National Development Council constituted a committee headed by Balwant Rai Mehta to look into the working of community development programme. The team observed that the major reason for the failure of the CDP was the lack of people's participation.

The committee suggested a three-tier PRIs, namely, Gram Panchayats (GPs) at the village level, Panchayat Samiti (PSs) at the block level, and Zilla Parishad (ZPs) at the district level.

As a result of this scheme of democratic decentralization was launched in Rajasthan on October 2, 1959.

In Andhra Pradesh, the scheme was introduced on 1st November, 1959. The necessary legislation had also been passed and implemented in Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, and Punjab etc.

The appointment of the Ashok Mehta Committee in 1977 did bring new thinking in the concepts and practice of the Panchayati Raj.

The committee recommended a two-tier Panchayati Raj institutional structure consisting of Zilla Parishad and Mandal Panchayat. In order to use planning expertise and to secure administrative support, the district was suggested as the first point of decentralization below the state level.

Based on its recommendation, some of the states like Karnataka incorporated them effectively. In subsequent years in order to revive and give a new lease of life to the panchayats, the Government of India had appointed various committees.

The most important among them are the Hanumantha Rao Committee (1983), G. V. K. Rao Committee (1985), L. M. Singhvi Committee (1986) and the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations (1988), P. K. Thungan Committee (1989) and Harlal Singh Kharra Committee (1990).

The G. V. K. Rao Committee (1985) recommended making the 'district' as the basic unit of planning and also holding regular elections while the L. M. Singhvi committee recommended providing more financial resources and constitutional status to the Panchayats to strengthen them.

The Amendment phase began with the 64th Amendment Bill (1989) which was introduced by Rajiv Gandhi seeking to strengthen the PRIs but the Bill was not passed in the Rajya Sabha.

The Constitution (74th Amendment) Bill (a combined bill for the PRIs and municipalities) was introduced in 1990, but was never taken up for discussion.

It was during the Prime Ministership of P. V. Narasimha Rao that a comprehensive amendment was introduced in the form of the Constitution 72nd Amendment Bill in September 1991.

73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments were passed by Parliament in December, 1992. Through these amendments local self-governance was introduced in rural and urban India.

The Acts came into force as the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 on April 24, 1993 and the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992 on June 1, 1993.

2. Salient Features of the Constitution 73rd and 74th Amendments

These amendments added two new parts to the Constitution, namely, added Part IX titled "The Panchayats" (added by 73rd Amendment) and Part IXA titled "The Municipalities" (added by 74th Amendment). Basic units of democratic system-Gram Sabhas (villages) and Ward Committees (Municipalities) comprising all the adult members registered as voters. Three-tier system of panchayats

at village, intermediate block/taluk/mandal and district levels except in States with population is below 20 lakhs (Article 243B). Seats at all levels to be filled by direct elections Article 243C (2).

Seats reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) and the chairpersons of the Panchayats at all levels also shall be reserved for SCs and STs in proportion to their population. One-third of the total number of seats to be reserved for women. One third of the seats reserved for SCs and STs also reserved for women. One-third offices of chairpersons at all levels reserved for women (Article 243D).

Uniform five year term and elections to constitute new bodies to be completed before the expiry of the term. In the event of dissolution, elections compulsorily within six months (Article 243E).

Independent Election Commission in each State for superintendence, direction and control of the electoral rolls (Article 243K). Panchayats to prepare plans for economic development and social justice in respect of subjects as devolved by law to the various levels of Panchayats including the subjects as illustrated in Eleventh Schedule (Article 243G).

74th Amendment provides for a District Planning Committee to consolidate the plans prepared by Panchayats and Municipalities (Article 243ZD). Budgetary allocation from State Governments, share of revenue of certain taxes, collection and retention of the revenue it raises, Central Government programmes and grants, Union Finance Commission grants (Article 243H).

Establish a Finance Commission in each State to determine the principles on the basis of which adequate financial resources would be ensured for panchayats and municipalities (Article 243I).

The Eleventh Scheduled of the Constitution places as many as 29 functions within the purview of the Panchayati Raj bodies. The following areas have been exempted from the operation of the Act because of the socio-cultural and administrative considerations :

- Scheduled areas listed under the V Schedule in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan.
- The states of Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram.
- The hill areas of district of Darjeeling in the state of West Bengal for which Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council exists.

- In conformity with provisions in the Constitution Amendment Act, an Act called the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 passed by the Government of India.

3. Political Participation

Political participation provides the citizens with “channels of direct access to the sources of authority.” Therefore, healthy, free and fair political participation are regarded as the life-belt of genuine representative government, serving important functions for both the citizens and the political system. It also relates to shaping and reshaping of power, authority or influence (Prasad, 2002).

Political participation provides the citizens with “channels of direct access to the sources of authority.” Therefore, healthy, free and fair political participation are regarded as the life-belt of genuine representative government, serving important functions for both the citizens and the political system. It also relates to shaping and reshaping of power, authority or influence (Prasad, 2002). According to the National Perspective Plan for Women 1988-2000 (N.P.P), a document of the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India, “Political participation includes an involvement in any form or activity that Introduction 9 affects or seeks to affect, these power relationships.” Political participation is an “activity that is intended to or has the consequence of affecting, either directly or indirectly, government action” (Verba et al., 1985 : 9) Women’s equal participation in the decision-making process, policy making, planning and administration is extremely important to ensure their equality while participating in the developmental process. Equality of participation means involving the women of the community in decision-making and involving them in the same proportion in decision-making as they are proposed in the community at large (Prasad, 2002). A study done in South India indicated that women were compelled by their male kin to contest the election. Women’s interest in politics did not matter and they were used as puppets by their husband, father, and brothers to carry out their mandates. There are many such instances in India (Jena, 2009)

4. Women Empowerment

The first step for the political empowerment of women has been initiated with 33 per cent of seats being reserved for women in the

Panchayati Raj institutions under the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act for Panchayati Raj institutions. Already over a million women are now functioning as elected members in the councils of Panchayati Raj institutions and municipal bodies. One-third of these institutions are headed by women as Sarpanchs, Chairpersons, Mayors, etc. (Rao, 1992). Interestingly the 73rd Constitutional Amendment and the policy and implementation of the 33 per cent reservation for women in Panchayats received strong support and impetus due to Rajiv Gandhi's interest and advocacy in the matter (Kattimani, 2011). The Indian Institute of Social Science (2000) in a study of the Panchayati Raj in Haryana has reviewed the progress of some hundred elected women in four districts; majority of the elected women panchas including younger women were illiterate when elected to office. After two years in office, they demanded literacy skills and generally felt the need of education for their daughters too. Panda (1996) in her study of a village Panchayat in Orissa found that women entered into politics due to the mandatory provision of reservation. Most of the women were from non-political background and had entered politics due to coercion by their family members or pressure from the village community. The important aspect of her study is that the women who reluctantly entered into politics showed great maturity in outlook, enthusiasm, increasing political consciousness, and increasing perception of their role and responsibility.

Empowerment of women is the process of strengthening the economic, social and political status of women in their social life or society by which they have dignified and regarded life. One of the major interventions used by women empowerment promoters is to empower women through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) thereby to ensure their participation in the process of political decision making. The 73rd constitutional amendment is a milestone mainly for two reasons: a, it facilitated local empowerment and b. it ensured women's empowerment. It provides 33% reservation in Panchayat for women.

Same proportions (one third) of the offices of chair persons of Panchayats have been reserved for women. Currently the reservation for women is set at 50% at Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) level.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to present a thematic review on women participation and empowerment through light on

the levels of their awareness about the capacity to take self-decision, participation in community activities, their socio-economic conditions, decision making power of women at Panchayat level.

5. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the role of women participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)
2. To evaluate the women empowerment through the women participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

6. Area of the Study

Geographically, the Kila Parikshitgarh is Nagar Panchayat in Meerut district in the state of Uttar Pradesh. There are many villages near it. There are main crop like sugarcane, wheat, etc. Kila Parikshitgarh area is covered by Gurjars, Bania, Prajapati, Pandits, Jat, Tyagi, Goswami, Muslims. It is situated in north western Uttar Pradesh, in a close proximity to the Ganga river. It lies between latitude 28°59' North longitude 77°56' East.

It is near to the village Hastinapur, situated in Mawana tehsil itself. Kila Parikshitgarh was selected for the study.

7. Data and Methods

A survey involving 200 women respondents those are selected for Panchayat Pradhan through the use of an interview schedule. An interview schedule was found suitable for the data collection because it afforded the researcher the opportunity to interpret the questions in the local languages understood by respondents which otherwise would have been next to impossible using questionnaire. First objective examined women participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions of the respondents. Second objective analyzed women empowerment level of the respondents. Further, the questionnaire was structured closed ended. The actual data was collected by researcher herself between March and April 2018. The total number of the respondents was 200. This aim was to generate a sampling frame for the study. All 200 respondents were randomly selected for the study using the simple random sampling technique. The unit of analysis for the study were women respondents that participated in the Panchayati Raj Institution who were aged 18 years and above. The rationale for interviewing respondents aged 18 years and above

was that is Kila Parikshitgarh 18 years is the age of maturity and ability to give consent.

In research, both primary and secondary material have been used to collect data. After collecting the data, the data was analyzed by statistical method. The data was also tabulated. Statistical assistance has also been taken for data analysis. One main challenge encountered in the study was that there was no database (sampling frame) on women participation and empowerment in the Kila Parikshitgarh, Panchayati Raj institution.

8. Discussion and Conclusion

Panchayati Raj System was established by lighting the lamp in Nagaur by then prime minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on 2 October, 1959. In the beginning, the Panchayati Raj System started getting relaxed in socio-economic and cultural development of the village and in its last phase it became dead.

In order to fulfil the objective of reform, the constitution amendment bill was introduced in Parliament which was passed as 73rd Constitution Amendment Act 1992. This amendment act came into force throughout India from 24 April 1993. Several effective steps have been taken in the act towards strengthening and empowering the status of women, but its most important features was to ensure the participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Through this amendment, seats were reserved for women and scheduled caste in Panchayats and municipalities. The following are the findings from the data related to political participation and empowerment of women playing a role in Panchayati Raj System.

From the research presented, it is concluded that women are financially dependent on husband on family. This dependency does not allow them to work independently in Gram Panchayats and if women work independently then they have to face many social and family problems.

After the 73rd constitutional amendment, women are choosing to hold, reserved positions in Gram Panchayats, but their election is based on the consent of their husband and family. For this reason, the work of women selected in the post is done by their husband of family.

The degree to work independently has arisen in women, which has led to the renunciation of the mentality of boys and girls is their children. Women are paying more attention to the education of girls so that illiteracy does not become an obstacle in their lives later.

Through women empowerment and political participation, women have taken steps towards the elimination of social evils like *parda partha*, dowry system, gender discrimination, female feticide murder etc.

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Consciousness of Rural Development Programmes among Scheduled Castes : A Case Study

Rakesh Kumar* and Nidhi Sharma**

The Scheduled Castes constitute as one of the most disadvantaged groups in Indian society. They are not only stigmatized people and, on this account, suffer from numerous disabilities which are regulated through religious beliefs and practices, but they have also suffered from various types of socio-economic problems. The rural development generally refers to the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. These development programmes are playing an important role in the upliftment of all weaker sections in rural areas, including the SCs and STs. This paper aims to analyze consciousness of rural development programmes among Scheduled Castes based on case studies. It has been shown that there are some changes in the occupation, life style, increase in income, increase in interaction with other castes, participation in local politics and slight change in status of Scheduled Castes due to utilization of different rural development programmes in both the rural settings.

[**Keywords** : Consciousness, Rural Development Programmes, Scheduled Castes, Beneficiaries]

* Assistant Professor, Rajesh Pilot Mahavidyalaya, Loni, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <rakesh2011jan@gmail.com>

** Assistant Professor, Chanderkanta Mahavidyalaya, Sikandrabad, Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <nidrakesh13@gmail.com>

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1. Introduction

Scheduled Castes have remained socially, economically and educationally backward since the beginning of caste stratification of Indian society. Most of Scheduled Castes live in villages. They have lower status, lower confidence and lack of guidance, lack of educational development. So these conditions of their lowerness have obstructed their social development and social mobility. The condition of Scheduled Castes in term of residence, housing, health and standard of living is precarious. B. S. Cohn (1955) observed that the Jatavas occupied a subordinate place in all the economic and political affairs of the village under the provisions of the constitutions. The government has initiated many programmes related to awareness, development and implementing these under both rural and urban development policies. In addition to the government, there are many groups such as Social Scientist, Economists, Politicians and NGOs which are providing helping hand to the government for eliminating the problems of Scheduled Castes. Various programmes have already been implemented of which some are fruitful while others are not.

2. Perspective/Approach to the Study

The programmes are received by the beneficiaries who are placed in a rural social structure. How the process of taking the benefit is related to the other units of this social structure involves a structural functional perspective.

Beneficiaries in two rural social structures (two villages) have been selected for intensive study, one village (where the scheduled castes are numerically preponderant (45%) and in the other village, they are not numerically preponderant. The comparison of the beneficiaries of the two villages involves a comparative perspective to an extent.

3. Methodology

As we initially proposed two villages *i.e.* Wair Badshahpur and Bhohra be selected for the study. All the Scheduled Caste people of both the villages have constituted the universe of study. In order to draw a representative sample, a list of households belonging to SCs and categorization of these households in both the villages have been done/prepared. All the recipients/beneficiaries of SCs of rural

development programmes in both the villages have been chosen/selected for study. This number was expected somewhere around 72 in each village. In addition to beneficiaries a set of non-beneficiaries belong to SCs have been also taken up for study.

Thus approximately 200 respondents have constituted the size of sampled households for collection of data/facts from two villages. A small set of respondents of both the villages have been selected for the case studies for exploration of maximum possible aspects. 5 respondents of each village who lies in the group of different Scheduled Castes have been selected for intensive case studies.

The data have been collected with the help of specific research techniques like observation, interview, personal records and other secondary records etc. Secondary records have been collected from the local, block and district headquarter. We proposed two stages for the collection of data. At the first stage, data have been collected through general observation and case study method. Later, at other stage, after conducting the case studies, a survey of 200 households/respondents was carried out with the help of an interview, which became feasible after exploring the process of development programmes, its awareness and its effects through case studies.

The data have been analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Data collected through case studies and observation about the nature process and effect of development programmes on Scheduled Castes have been analyzed qualitatively. Quantitative analysis has been done of the data collected through interview from 200 respondents. Through univariate and bivariate analysis of the various aspects by constructing single variable and bivariate tables.

4. Selected Case Studies of Beneficiaries

According to P. V. Young (1975 : 247), case study may be defined as “a comprehensive study of a social unit-be that unit a person, a group, a social institution or a community is called a case study”. A case study is an intensive study of a social unit which may be an individual, an institution, a system, a community, an organization, or even the entire culture. It is a kind of research design which usually involves the qualitative method of selecting the source of data. It presents the holistic account that offers insights into the case under study. Case study is not a method of data collection rather

it is a research strategy or an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon by using multiple sources of evidence.

Three types of case studies are attempted in this section - the recipients of different rural development programmes, the non-recipients from the same socio-economic strata and agents (guarantor/intervener/mediators). These have been done in order to understand how and why the select few respondents could get the benefits of the development programmes and some others could not get. Thus to find out maximum possible aspects of the process of utilizing the benefits of rural development programmes eleven case studies have been selected out of 200 respondents in both the villages. All case studies have been selected on the basis of their caste, education, sources of awareness, connection with other caste persons and degree of utilization of the rural development programmes. The case studies are based on quasi participant observation. The field work in both the villages have been done in 2014.

4.1 Case Study-1

The ego is a 65 years old man. He belongs to the Jatav Caste. He is educated upto 12th standard. He goes to He was a computer operator in Ghaziabad. He joined on Rs. 65/- per month salary in the company. When he retired from this factory he was drawing salary of Rs. 6000/- per month. He lived in a *Kuchcha* house with his parents. Now he lives in pukka house with his children. His father runs a dairy in the village. His family life was running smoothly. After few years his father died. His father ran that dairy for 32 years in the village before his death. Then the ego ran that dairy with a partner of his own caste. He stopped this occupation due to lack of time and continued his job till retirement. He has two sons. His elder son is working as operator in Mall. He gets salary of Rs. 8,000/- per month. He is married man. His wife is house wife and live in the village Faridpur. He has five children i.e. (three sons and a daughter). Among the children, his elder son goes to school. His another son is working as labourer in factory. He runs a buffalo cart (Bhaisa n Buggi) in the factory. He carries waste material from the factory and he earns Rs. 200 per day. He lives in the village with his family. He lives in pukka house with his five children (three sons and two daughters). All the children go to school. One of them goes to a intermediate college out Sikandrabad. The 'Ego' has got bigha of agricultural land. He grows maize, wheat as main crops iii his land.

During his job, he interacted with many persons. So he knows very well about various rural development programmes. At first, time he took a loan of Rs. 24,000/- from the Gramin Bank, Bulandshahr. He spent this money to buy a buffalo. He sold milk and earned money to pay back paid to the bank. He got Rs. 40,000/- on his Kissan Credit Card from the Cooperative Society. He paid this money with interest and renewed his credit card every year; He takes fertilizer from the Cooperative Society. After some years he tried to get the benefits under Indira Awas Yojana. The Pradhan did not help him. When the present Pradhan became the village Pradhan for the first time, then ego took the benefits from development programmes. The ego took benefits under Indira Awas Yojana in the name of his younger son. His son got of Rs. 20,000/- under this scheme.

Beside this, the ego availed the benefit from free boring scheme. Under this scheme he took loan of Rs. 12,500/- for an engine. He bought an engine and rents it for irrigation. After three years, he had returned this loan with 50% subsidy back. Now he has television, one bike, an electric motor two buffalos, cow and two kids of buffalos in his house.

Now his elder son bought a plot of 100 yards in Dankaur. His son constructed a house on this plot set and rent it to a family. His son earns Rs. 1,000 per month from this house. He knows very well about V.D.O., B.D.O. and Tehsildar also. So he does not suffer in every department. He is healthy relation with each and every village pradhan in the village.

Now he knows all the functions of village Pradhan's position and complexities of taking benefits from rural development programmes. He is a beneficiary-cum-agent in the village. He got benefits to many persons of development programs in the village during his tenure as up-Pradhan. For this, he took commission from the recipient. He has many sources of earnings. His economic condition is better in comparison to other fellow men. He has good thinking about himself for serving as an agent. He says that many persons of his village have been benefitted from development programmes due to his cooperative nature. He wants to get more and more benefits in favour of his villager in general and his caste fellows in particular, He has a positive attitude towards taking benefits of development programmes. All the villager calls him Pradhanji in the village. He feels good about himself.

4.2 Case Study-2

'Ego' is a young man of about 35 years in age. He is a Jatav by caste. In the childhood, he went to the village school and passed class 8 from there. He used to live in nuclear family. There are five member in his family. His father is illiterate and is working as agricultural labourer. His father has got 4 bigha of agricultural land. He has two brothers. One of them is younger and other is elder brother than him. The youngest, then unmarried lived with him and other elder brother married lived separately along with his wife and two children. He worked as labour on daily wages and his mother & sister had to keep a buffalo at home for livelihood. They used to sell milk and worked as wage labourers. His mother and sister used to work for buffaloes in the fields of farmers for collecting the fodder for animals. In the meantime, Ego got his sister married with a literate man. Ego also got married with a literate women. After sometime, Ego became father of two sons and two daughters. Now he lives separately along with his wife and four children. One son and a daughter, go to primary school, which is run by the government in the village Wair Badshahpur. Both the children of Ego get scholarship from the school. Both the children also get wheat and rice on control rate monthly from the school. Ego's younger brother and his parents live separately along with his wife and a child. His brother works as labourer in the village and nearby villages also. They live in pukka house. There are two rooms, veranda and a small *Chauk* (Courtyard) in the house In 1985, when the scheme of loans for weaker sections was being implemented in the area through the lead bank (OBC Bank, Wair). He was not much aware of the scheme as such, However by keeping in touch with higher caste persons he came to know that a loan can be taken for raising the quantity of milk, number of buffalos, piggery and for opening shops. He was also in touch with other fellows of his own caste like Rajwati and Kamal, who were an active members of his caste in the village. Then after he met the field officer to get more information about the various loan schemes. The information got from the bank was verified by him through Rakesh (who was working as mediator between the bank and needy persons). The next day, he applied for loan for a buffalo. He gave four photos to the agent (Rakesh). Rakesh found a guarantor, got income certificate from the tehshil and filled the application form. After one week, he opened an account for loan of Rs. 50,000. Ego got this money in two installments. In the first

installment he got 20,000 rupees. Ego spent this money to open a *Kirana* shop in the village. His *Kirana* shop is running very well because his shop is situated at a crossing which connects the main streets of the village.

The veterinary doctor however came to check the buffalo for which loan was taken for insurance. Then Nobat presented his old buffalo to veterinary doctor for medical inspection. The doctor did not recommend the buffalo for insurance. Then the agent helped him, because the agent had got Rs. 3,500 as bribe for completing the whole process i.e. documentation and lasing for any hindrance in loan disbursement. So Ego got the insurance of his old buffalo due to giving bribe. Then after six months he got 2nd installment of the loan for buffalo. The maximum time limit of the loan scheme recovery was five years. The amount (Rs 1,000/-) was fixed to return in the form of recovery. As far as the repayment/recovery of loan was concerned, he repaid the first two-three installments regularly. After that he could not repay the loan, because the agent told him that the government is discussing about such debt. Hence he did not repay the remaining money. This matter about loan debts reconsideration would start from the coming year. In the meantime Ego was depositing Rs. 300/500) every month in the loan account. One day when Ego went in the Bank (OBC Bank Wair) to ask about the remaining amount of loan. There, a person of higher caste told him "*Tum bekar ke Chakkar mai pad rahe ho ye to maph hona hi hai*" (You are unnecessarily worried about it. This is going to be written off without doubt). After hearing these words he went never to the Syndicate Bank again. However he saw that the amount of loan would not be written off. Ego met to the field officer about this matter, then field officer told him, your loan will not be written off because your account was not continued till the year 2009. So he regrets on his thinking of not repaying the loan and said in few words "If I had deposited the loan in regular installments, I would have come in the category of written off (Liquidation). His network of social relations was also limited to the leading persons of the village, agent and his own caste persons. He considered his acquaintance of scheduled caste persons, most of whom were taking necessary loans, as a negative reference group, particularly a lady Rajwati. Now he thinks that he was not able to take more benefits due to lack of awareness and mis-communication of higher castes and his own caste fellows. Now he expects to get a subsidy for repaying this loan amount.

4.3 Case Study-3

Ego belongs to Jatav caste. She is 45 years old illiterate lady. She lives in a nuclear family including her husband and three children. Her husband works as mason (Raj Mistri) in the village and other places also like Dadri, Dankaur and other cities. He also engages in agriculture labour work. When he goes outside his village for constructing work, his son engages in motor mechanic work in the village. He earns of this work 300 per day approximately. He is educated upto 8th standard. His elder son goes to school and other two sons are still infants. Ego is a house wife. She is a landless labourer. As and when she finds agricultural wage labour. When the programme of Indira Awas Yojana for poor persons in general and scheduled caste in particular was being implemented in the block through the government. She was not much aware of the programme as such. She knew about the scheme as a Sarkari Yojana. Through her husband contacts his caste fellows she came to know very well about the programmes. One day when the panchayat secretary was moving in the village then her husband met with secretary to know about such schemes. The Panchayat Secretary told her husband if he is interested in constructing his house, he has to co-operate with him (Panchayat Secretary) and give some kharcha pani (expenses). After hearing these words said by panchayat secretary, he discussed the situation with his wife and decided to give some part of the benefits, coming form Indira Awas Yojana to the secretary. Her husband gave Rs. 4,000 to the Panchayat Secretary. Next day, she went to bank to open an account. The Panchayat Secretary helped her in opening the account in the bank. All the entries of application were fulfilled by the Panchayat Secretary except photo of applicant, signature and no-dues of other banks.

After three months she got Rs. 20,000/- in two installments under Indira Awas Yojana from the bank. She went to get money from the bank with her husband every time. She utilized money properly for the said purpose coming from Indira Awas Yojana. Her husband constructed her house. She had some money saved before constructing her house, That money was saved by herself and her husband. She spent this money for establishing a shop of book binding. Her elder son runs this shop in the left corner of his house. Her family income has increased due this shop and her husband earnings. She is happy now a day. She says her experience about

development programmes if she would not have utilized money properly for the said purpose then her family would not be so happy. Now a day she is eager to take more and more benefits through various rural development programmes. She has positive attitude towards the utilization of development programmes.

4.4 Case Study-4

The 'Ego' is Female. She belongs to Jatav Caste. She is 60 years illiterate lady. She had 06 bigha agriculture land. She has a son who is 37 years old and married for 9 years. He is a 8th passed. he is a working as a shopkeeper for last 12 years. He gets Rs. 6000 a month from the shop. His mother (ego) gets a lot of respect from village people and is respected by the people of every caste of the village. She used to visit at her field daily. But now she visits her field once a week. Her farm is at a distance of 2.5 kms. from the village. She lives in a joint family. She lives in a pukka house in which there are three rooms with *baranda*, a separate small kitchen and a latrine-bathroom. Her nephew and grandson are running a shop of electronics repair and tailoring etc.

She is aware of development programmes in the form of Sarkari yojana being run by the government. She has awareness about these programmes through village Pradhan and her son also. Her husband borrowed money from OBC bank under the scheme of Kissan Credit Card (K.C.C.) and she is still keeping the K.C.C. Besides it, she borrowed loan on shop under the scheme of I.R.D.P. Village Pradhan helped her getting money easily from the bank. While the village pradhan belongs to Thakur Caste, She invested the money coming from development programmes on her grandson's shop. For getting money under I.R.D.P. she had to pay Rs. 3,500 as a bribe to the agent for him and the bank manager. She got only 16500 rupees from the bank. She has 3 borings including two at field and one is in her 'gher' She got pipes with valve for tubewell boring under the free boring scheme.

She and her son grow the crops of sugarcane, wheat, peddy, juar, Barsim, urd and others. The main crop of her farm is sugarcane. Her son fetches/carries the sugarcane to the sugarcane factory. Her family income may be about Rs. 90,000 per annum.

Now she is able to send her grandsons and grand daughter to school because she has knowledge of the role of education in the

processing of development programmes. She says that we had passed our life without education but at this time it has become a natural requirement to rise in life.

After benefitted by the development programmes her life style has changed upto some extent and her economic status has improved slightly. She used to take grains, Bajara's rote, bajara khichri and pulse of pea in the whole day. It means all the food was made of bajara in place of wheat. She used to work at the home of higher caste people like sweeping, cleaning and at their farms also. But now she does not work at the houses of higher castes and their farms also. Now she has got a television, radio, bike and bicycle. She says that one who has money, everyone wants to join them and talk to them also. She also says one who cleans his/her house and oneself, everyone likes to take food at that home. But the children do not follow her views and they take non-veg food also occasionally.

The amount she got from government through different development programmes only partly responsible for improving her socio-economic

Status but some other sources like agriculture on her land, shop and employment of her son are all responsibly. At last he says that all the development programmes are useful for us. She feels that she could not use more de to lack of education. She says, "If I had been educated, I would have used more of it." After benefitted through development programmes she further says, "The process of getting money in the form of loan and subsidy is not so easy."

4.5 Case Study-5

Ego belongs to Dhobi caste. He is a 57 years old illiterate man. He has five children. Children are two daughter and three sons. First daughter is 15 years old and second is 10 years old. First son is 8 years old, second son is 5 years old and third son is 2 year old. He has 8 bigha of agricultural land. He grows jawar and wheat in his field as main crops. He and his wife visit their field daily. His first looks after the house. She works on every task in the house perfectly. She keeps her house neat and clean. She lives in pukka house. There are two halls, one veranda and a kitchen in the house. The house has a separate tin shade for their animals/catties. He has three buffalos. He has got an engine machine to cut the fodder (*chara*) for animals.

He is aware about development programme in the forms of Sarkari yojana being run by the government. He has become aware

about development programmes through local middle men (agents) and his community members. He got pipes with valve for tubewell boring under the free boring scheme. For this he has a diesel engine. He used to irrigate his agricultural land from the water of private tubewell and pay Rs. 20/- per hour. Forgetting this materials a village person named Nem Pal (who is working as an agent) of Thakur caste helped him without any personal interest. Reason behind it was that Nem Pal knew him very well and used to take drink with him daily at that time.

Besides it, he had borrowed money in the form of loan from the OBC Bank Wair under the scheme of home loan. For this, a village person named Rakesh (who is working as an agent) advised him, The agent new about the whole procedure of getting loan. For getting loan from the OBC Bank all the formalities except signature of beneficiary are completed by the agent like guarantor, photos, land record and no-dues from other institutions/bank. All the paper work is completed by the agent. After completing all formalities, the agent with him (ego) got the money in the form of first installment. He got Rs. 80,000 in the form of first installment from the bank.

After six month, agent with him got Rs. 70,000 in the form of second installment. But the agent borrowed Rs. 50,000 from the recipient at the same day of withdrawal. After six month when the ego went to the house of agent to get his borrowed money back, then the agent replied that the some money had been spent in the process of getting loan and rest he charged for material bought by ego (i.e. Rs. 7,000/- on khal, Rs. 3,000/- on daily uses item and rest on dealing). Ego spent the loan money to buy 4 buffalos and to construct a house. He sells milk. His family income is about Rs. 90,000/- per annum. Now he wants to send his children specially boys for higher education. He accepts that he could not benefit from development programmes due to lack of education. After being benefitted by the development programmes his life Style has changed upto some extent. His economic status has also improved slightly. He used to work with his wife in his fields as well as field of others also. Now they engage in their own field whole year, except during harvesting period and in winter season for getting fodder for animals. Now he has got a television, radio and bicycle. His family eats/takes non-vegetarian food also. He has utilized the loan money for different purposes.

We can say that the money he got from bank through different development programmes is responsible for improving his socio-economic status. The money coming from other source i.e. agriculture is also responsible for his development. He actively participates in the village level politics.

4.6 Case Study-6

Ego is 50 years old lady. She belongs to Valmimi Caste. She is illiterate. She lives in a pukka house with her children. She has three children i.e. (two sons and one daughter). All the children are married. Her sons wives are house wives. Their wife engage in agriculture work. Their husband work as wage labourer in a company at Ghaziabad. They carry waste material from the factory to other place. They earn Rs. 200/- per person daily. When they find agricultural work or road construction work in nearby village they do it, otherwise they are continuously engaged in the factory. Ego's husband has died. He was a labourer. She has no agricultural land. She engages in her traditional occupation (sweeping) in the houses of select persons of higher caste in the village. She has goats and pigs at her home. She also cleans all the Kharanja and Nali (Sever) in the village. As an when she finds agricultural wage lab our she does it otherwise she is engaged in her sweeping work in the village.

She did not know about the development programmes as such. She knew about Indira Yojana in the form of Free home Yojana. She was in touch with higher caste persons and some other fellow of Jatav Caste like Sanjay and Babita. She came to know that the government benefits/facilities can be taken for construction a house. Next day she met an gent with her younger son for getting the benefits under development programmes like Indira Awas Yojana.

He gave him (ego) all the information about the Indira Awas Yojana and also the procedure of getting benefits from Indira Awas Yojana. She requests him to her help. The agent asked her to give Rs. 2500/- if she wants to get benefits from Indira Awas Yojana. He then met the Panchayat Secretary and village Pradhan about her matter/problem. The village Pradhan gave her name for construction of house under Indira Awas Yojana. The Panchayat Secretary verified her house and decided to give the facility under this scheme. He asked her (ego) to open an account in the bank. She went with agent to bank in Wair for opening the account. The next day her application

was filled in by the field officer in the presence of intervener (agent), including her guarantor. For opening the account in the bank she needed to go to town for photographs along with her younger son. The photos were necessary for creating the account in the bank. After two weeks she could get Rs. 25,000 under Indira Awas Yojana. She constructed a house with two rooms and veranda. It means she has utilized the money coming from Indira Awas Yojana properly for the said purpose. In the whole process of getting benefits from Indira Awas Yojana she has helped by the agent. She said that she had to give some *Kharcha pani* (expenses) to the agent and then she got a new house. She said that she herself and her children had been educated, she would have not give bribe (*Kharcha pani*) to any person. Thus she decides to send her grand children to school at any cost. Now she knows about the importance of education. Education is necessary for living better life.

4.7 Case Study-7

The ego is 36 years old. He is just literate. He belongs to Valmiki caste. He lives in Pukka house along with his wife and children. There are 5 members in his family. In previous/past time he used to live in a joint family along with his parents and his three brothers. When he got married then he was living in a *kuchcha kotha* in the joint family. His father is working as sweeper in Noida and his mother is also working as dai in Ghaziabad. She was very popular in the village Wair Badshahpur also because she used and to go and attend every pregnant lady of every caste, at any time. For the delivery of male child she got many gifts and money also however on the delivery of a female child. She would accept and remuneration given by the family. Every person of her own caste and other higher caste knew about her being a trained dai. Both the younger brothers of 'Ego' are working in Noida. One works in tele-communication office as a peon and other is working as a sweeper. Both the brothers are married. The younger two brothers of Ego are collecting garbage in Dhobi. He lives in pukka house separately along with his wife and children. There are two rooms with veranda and a small chouk (courtyard) in this house. This house is constructed under the scheme of Indira Awas Yojana . For getting this money he has to open an account in the OBC bank, Wair. He received Rs. 25,000 from the bank. The village pradhan and a educated young boy who helped him at different steps to get the money under Indira Awas Yojana (from

giving information about the scheme to actually getting/receiving the benefits). The money coming from Indira Awas Yojana is totally free from recovery.

He is a landless sweeper and labourer. When he finds agricultural wage labour he does it otherwise he is engaged in his sweeping work of a few lower caste and, other higher caste like Thakur and Brahmins of the village. He keeps goats and pigs which are the additional source of earning/income in the family. He has two, children i.e, one son and one daughter. Both the child go to school till 5th standard in the village. When he went to Noida to do something. All the members of his family got engaged in their traditional work (sweeping) in the village. She takes/gets 2 quintal wheat, 3 basket (*Tokara*), 5 sarees, 30 kg gur or sakker and many other items per Jajman family in a year in the village. Except it, all the Valmiki come at the gate of higher caste like Thakur, Brahmins get some items/material on the occasion of marriage and some ritual ceremonies and, at the time of lunar eclipses and solar eclipses also. His son is also engaged in trade of pigeons. After finishing the sweeping work his son used to move whole day from one place to other place in the village without any piece of work. He earns Rs. 5000 in Noida through his job. He came to village once a month. He spends/gives some money to his family. This family wanted to go to Noida but when he has got his new house under the Indira Awas/Yojana in the village then his wife does not want to go to Noida and remains engaged in her traditional work with her children. The children, (especially her son) does not engage in this occupation. Ego says that all person of his caste (Who are poor or homeless) want to get the same facility from the government. He got such benefits under the Indira Awas Yojana of rural development programmes due to his higher caste connection in the village. So his jajman and other scheduled caste recipients acted as his positive reference group. Now his economic status/condition in comparison to his own caste fellows and other scheduled caste (Dhobi and Jatav) has become slightly better. His son goes to Noida and other city frequently. Due to this tendency and his own caste connection, his son does not want to engage in his traditional occupation. Now 'Ego' is very desirous to gain benefits coming from rural development programmes for scheduled castes in the form of loan-cum-subsidy.

5. Selected Case Studies of Non-Beneficiaries

5.1 Case Study-1

The ego belongs to Valmiki caste. He is 35 years old. He is 5th class passed. He is engaged in Traditional work (Scavenging) in the village and outside village. He lives in a nuclear family. There are four members in his family. He has three children. Two are sons. He lives in a *Kuchcha Kotha* (room).

His wife works as labourer in the field of higher caste and her caste persons also. He can hardly earn his livelihood. He has limited sources of earnings for running his family. He is very poor in comparison to his caste fellows. Even he has no woolen cloths for the winter season. Sometimes, he engages as labour in the village or traditional work etc.

He knows about the rural development programmes in the form of Sarkari Yojana/Sarkari Chhoot. However he did not know how to apply and get the benefits from these programmes/yojanas. He met his caste fellows and discussed about these programmes with them. The Ex-Pradhan (who is Jatav) told him about the procedure of getting benefit of development programmes. After knowing the procedure he tried to get the benefits from Indira Awas Yojana. He requested the Ex-Pradhan to help him. For this, the Pradhan said him if you want to take the benefits from Indira Awas then you have to give *Kharcha Pani* (expenses) or a small part of the total amount. He demanded Rs. 2,000 at a time. After hearing these words, he (ego) was surprised and said to husband of ex-Pradhan “*Tum to hamari Biradari Ke ho phir bhi rispat (Kharcha Pani) mang rahe ho*” (You are one of my caste members and still you ask for bribe).

He was the supporter of ex-Pradhan. Then he (Pradhan) told ego that it is a requirement of *kagji karwahi* (documentation). So he has to give the required money. Ego refused to give the bribe and hence he could not take the advantages from the development programmes.

5.2 Case Study-2

Ego is a young man of about 35 years. He is a Dhobi by caste. He is educated upto 9th standard. He is a married man. He has got 5 children i.e. two sons and three daughters. There are 7 members in his family. His wife is a illiterate housewife. He lives in Kuchcha

(mud) house. He has 4 bigha agricultural land. He engages/works as a peddler. He sells daily use elements/items in his village and neighbouring villages. He earns about Rs. 300 per day through his profession. He works side by side as a labourer in the village. He does not have any cattle in his house. He can hardly runs/earns his livelihood from both the professions (travelling hawker and labourer). Her children used to go to school in the village but they do not go now because of his inability to pay Rs. 5/- as tuition fees. The other reason is the poor economic position of their father.

He knows about development programmes like Indira was yojana, land reforms and other loan schemes. Even after knowing about the development programmes, he opts for getting the benefits from development programmes. He instead borrowed Rs. 15000 from the higher caste person of the village. He used this money on his wife's illness. His wife was pregnant at that time and after operation she delivered a baby.

After 2 years, he returned this money with 5% interest to the higher caste person (Who was engaged in business of Bike selling and purchasing in the village. He belongs to Jatav caste). He used to think that the development programme were not actually helping the scheduled castes/poor but were, a medium of corruption in the society. If you take benefits from development programmes in the form of subsidy or loan then you have to pay some part of the benefits. When you give a part of the benefits to the officials, you can't utilize the amount properly.

He has no additional source of income except his traveling hawker and labour work. He does not fulfill his family's basic needs and he is always thinking if he should construct his house at first or should he fulfill his family's basic needs? Now a days this dilemma is always keep in his mind. Thus he contacted to the village pradhan for constructing his house under Indira was yojana last year but he did not get it. The village pradhan says him that we will take your mater next year. The reason behind it is that, ego did not give vote and support in favour of present village pradhan. He knows very well about this problem. Thus now he is opting to get the benefits of the rural development programmes by other source (agent). Till now he has not got any facility coming from rural development programmes while he wants to take advantage.

6. Selected Case Studies of Agents

6.1 Case Study-1

The ego is 65 years old man. He belongs to Jatav caste. He is educated 8th standard. He has four children. He lives in a pukka house. All these children are married. They work some where in Delhi as wage labourers. One of his son lives with him along with his wife and two children. His son works as an tailoring in the village. His wife also helps in his work. He gets Rs. 300 to 500 per day. Ego has 8 bigha agriculture land. He grows wheat and Paddy in his fields. His son helps in the agriculture work and he gets profit of Rs. 20000 every year. He knows very well about different rural development programmes. He knows the B.D.O, V.D.O and Tehsildar also. Every person of village knows about his behaviour and knowledge.

He always keeps in touch with several people of his own caste and other higher castes. All the time he keeps away from physical work. He could secure a plot of good cultivable land in his own name. it was a 4 bigha agriculture land. He got this putta land due to his own efforts. After this event, he is called Netaji by the villagers.

He tried to take loan under rural development programme from the bank. For this he opened an account in the bank. He met the bank manager for opening an account in the bank. The manager told him to fulfil all the requirements for opening the account in the, bank. He filled the application form and he got a guarantor, photos, no dues from other banks and institutions. After fulfilling all the requirement he became an account holder. Next day he tried to get loan under integrated rural development programme. After one week he got first installment or Rs. 15,000 under the I.R.D.P. scheme. He bought a buffalo out of this money. He got identification certificate, with insurance by the veterinary doctor from the block. He used to go to block and tehsil during time daily. So he came to know many persons in the block and tehsil also. In the mean time he also helped another castes person to get loan from the bank under I.R.D.P.).

After this event, he started working as an agent in the block and tehsil. He took some parts of benefits from the recipients. He says, if any person wants to get the benefits from the development programmes then he has to give some *kharcha pani* (expenses). It is a part or requirement of completing the procedure of getting benefits

in the form of loan or subsidy from the development programmes. So the beneficiary has to give the required bribe,

He is working as an agent. He has helped many persons to get money/facilities coming from the development programmes and he takes 5 to 10 percent parts of benefits from the recipients. He wants to provide more and more benefits in favour of his caste fellows, coming from rural development programmes. He has a positive attitude towards taking more and more benefits coming from the development programme. He says that neither the development programmes will stop nor his act of intervention stop.

6.2 Case Study-2

The Ego belongs to Thakur caste. He is a young man of 39 years. He is a post graduate. He has been married for the last 16 years. His wife who has studied up to 10th class, is a house wife. He has three children i.e. one son and two daughters. His younger son and daughter go to school in Village Wair. He lives in a joint family. His father is a retired teacher along with his farming activities. His father has got 8 bighas of agricultural land. His father grows Paddy, wheat, bajra as a main crops. His parents work with him in his field. They do every task by themselves related to agriculture during the whole year. His father has got 6 animals including 3 buffaloes. They give 20 liter milk per day. The rate of milk is Rs. 35 to 40 per liter in the village. His younger brother is B.B.A. His father is also running a kirana shop in the village. The youngest brother engages in mill selling along with his farming activities. The Ego has a sister. She is married. She is studying in B.A. IInd year. She is unmarried. She helps to clean the house with her Bhabhi. Sometimes she goes to farm with her parents. She helps to bathe the animals and sweep in the gher also.

First time when the ego went to OBC Bank. He wanted to open an account for getting grant under P.M.R.Y, (Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana). He met the bank manager directly without any hesitation. He told him about his problem. He had awareness about P.M.R.Y. very well. After long discussion, the bank manager was very happy with him and accepted that he has enough knowledge about these schemes. After this, ego told the bank manager that I will give you loan cases and you should provide loan from the bank. After one month ego gave a case of scheduled castes under animal husbandry

scheme. Under this scheme, there are two categories of buffalos. In the first category, the cost of one buffalo decided by bank is Rs. 1500/- and under second category, the cost of buffalo is Rs. 25,000/-. Under this scheme the maximum amount of loan is Rs. 50,000/-. For getting this loan, the bank manager demanded some necessary requirements like one photo of applicant, one guarantor (who has account in O.B.C Bank) identification certificate of buffaloes, insurance of buffaloes etc. For getting/ the identification certificate of buffalo the applicant had to go to veterinary doctor in the block. For getting the identification of the buffalo they had to pay Rs. 300/- per buffalo to the doctor as bribe. The insurance officer was always presents in the block. The recipient also had to; pay Rs. 500-600/- of per buffalo for insurance as bribe. There is collaboration between the and United Insurance Company. Under this scheme, the benefits are given in two phases. Two buffaloes are given to recipient in first installment. After verification of these given buffaloes, then other buffalo is bought. After this case the reputation of ego became very good in the sight of bank manager and he began working as an agent for the villagers. Till the bank manager was transferred he had already been doing this job for the four years.

After this case he decided to take (8-10) percent commission from the recipient. He has to pay 5% to the bank manager and rest of the amount he keeps for himself. This procedure had been running till last year when the new bank manager came here. He has no contact with any agent and does not take bribe. Now the programme of loan providing and recovering has become very slow. The needy persons then started approaching the local money lenders. Since loans from the bank became difficult. The money lenders take 3 to 5 percent interest per months from the borrower. This interest is more high than the banks interest. For paying his old debt he takes a large amount (large sum) from the bank but a major portion of this amount is paid to the money lender.

Recently he has joined a private firm as Finance Company named Raj Finance Service which was situated at Noida. His share in the company is Rs. 20,000/-. He works/engages in the capacity of agent in the company. He deals with the whole district of Bulandshahr. He searches and contacts the loanee or needy person. He provides the loan from the company on 7% interest rate and he gets 3% commission from the company.

7. Findings of Case Studies

7.1 Socio-Economic Background of the Cases

The case studies suggest that the respondents are both males and females. They belong to all age groups - young, middle aged and of old age. respondents belong to all the three Scheduled Castes - Jatav, Dhobi and Valmiki. They are illiterate, little literate, primary standard high school and graduate also. Respondents are landless, very small land owners and small land holders. They are engaged in agriculture labour in the fields of higher castes and work on their fields, work as wage labourers in nearby city and also do their traditional work (scavenging). Respondents come from low and middle income categories with the village standards, They live in nuclear and joint families, belong to middle size and big size families.

7.2 Awareness and Utilization of Rural Development Programmes

Largely respondents are aware about rural development programmes as such, some know as 'Sarkari Yojana' (government programmes) and some others have no awareness about rural development programmes. Some have awareness about different development programmes. The respondents have different degrees of awareness about various rural development programmes. They are aware about different development programmes through various sources like village Pradhan, government officials, local middle men available in the village and by themselves. Some respondents have been benefitted and others have not. Beneficiaries have utilized money/facility coming from different development programmes, for the said purpose and also for social events (marriage and repaying old debts).

7.3 Role of Key Persons

The recipients have been benefitted by the help/intervention of village Pradhan, local local middle men and also by self efforts, The role of key persons - village pradhan, local local middle men and by self efforts has remained important in channelizing the benefits of the rural developments programmes.

Those who could not take any benefits/facility from the development programmes lack literacy, awareness, contacts with the key persons - village pradhan, local local middle men of the village

and government officials outside the village, are poor and could not participate in the corruption that usually takes place in the process of getting benefits.

8. Conclusion

There are some changes in the occupation, life style, increase in income, increase in interaction with other castes, participation in local politics and slight change in status of Scheduled Castes due to utilization of different rural development programmes in both the rural settings.

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Increasing incidence of Celiac Disease in North India : A Review

Kamal Jeet Kaur Mann*

Once perceived as a western autoimmune disorder, incidence of celiac disease is increasing in India too. In 2011, a study by AIIMS with 2879 subjects had found that 6 to 8 million Indians are suffering from this disease. 1 in 100 suffer from the disease in North India. While in south India, the estimated incidence is 1 in 1000. Celiac disease is more common than recognized in India. Its prevalence is thought to be approximately 1% in India. Systematic population based prevalence studies have suggested that celiac disease is as frequent in India as that in western countries. Asia is probably the major reservoir of undiagnosed celiac disease in the world. The current prevalence of disorders related with wheat could be attributed to the high yield hybrid varieties of wheat which have increased level of gluten.

[**Keywords** : CD (Celiac Disease), Gluten intolerance, Gluten sensitivity, Mal-absorption, Diarrhoea, Prevalence, Diagnosis, Hybrid]

1. Objectives

There is a lack of studies on prevalence of Celiac disease in India. The objective of the present study is to estimate the prevalence of Celiac disease in India, and to spread awareness among the people.

* Associate Professor in Food & Nutrition, Chaudhary Ballu Ram Godara Government Girls College, Sri Ganganagar - 335001, Rajasthan (India) E-mail: <drkamalmann@gmail.com>

2. Prevalence of Celiac Disease in India

The prevalence rate of celiac disease (including in India) is understood to be 1% globally with some variations across countries. In India the diagnosis rate of Celiac disease though is extremely low presently, only about 5% that would mean out of 100 people affected with celiac disease, 95 are not aware of this condition. According to experts at All India Institute of Medical Science, Celiac disease affects close to Six to eight million people in India. Celiac disease, caused by allergy to gluten present in wheat and related grains, is a disorder of considerable and increasing importance in western countries.¹ Originally recognized primarily in children presenting with diarrhoea and mal-absorption, we now understand that it often affects adults, that it may present primarily with non-gastrointestinal manifestations including anaemia, arthropathy, osteoporosis & growth retardation, and what we see clinically is the tip of an iceberg that threatens to grow bigger. The diagnosis of celiac disease is now made with serological tests which may capture those at risk as well as those with actual disease. While small bowel mucosal biopsy is considered essential to the diagnosis of disease, there is now increasing recognition that even a positive serological test is associated with increased risks for vascular disease.²

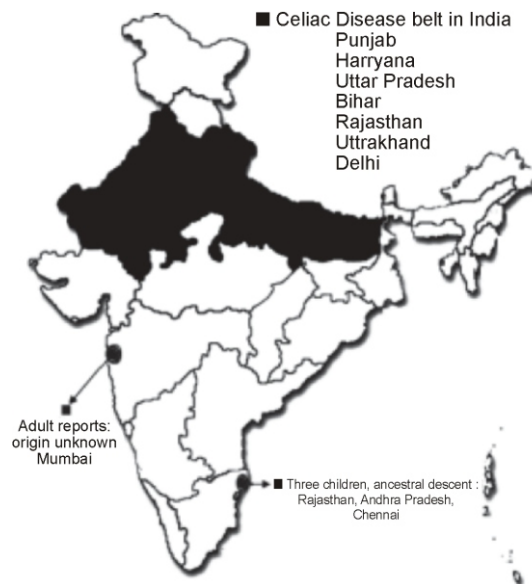


Figure-1 : Celiac disease occurrence in India based on published reports

The estimated population prevalence of diagnosed celiac disease in many western countries approaches 1%.³ The highest

prevalence rates of the disease are noted in the Saharawi People of Africa in whom celiac disease prevalence is believed to be around 5%.⁴ There is little information on celiac disease prevalence in South Asia, and indeed celiac disease is believed to be rare in this part of the world.⁷ Prevalence of celiac disease in a population broadly parallels the amount of wheat consumer in the diet. That's why it is more prevalent in North India in comparison to south India. Differences in celiac disease prevalence between North and South India could be ascribed to differences in dietary patterns (Rice being staple cereal in South India) or due to differences in genetic make-up.⁵ Cereal consumption patterns are very different between North and South India, although there has been a recent change in these patterns particularly in urban areas.

Thus Celiac disease is low or absent in Japan and Southeast Asia where rice is the main cereal consumed and in Sub - Saharan Africa where maize is the staple cereal in the diet. In the Indian Sub - continent, wheat consumption is high in Pakistan and in the States of North India, which also constitute the celiac belt of India.²

In India, Celiac disease is suspected to be more prevalent in the North Indian Population where wheat is primarily grown and forms the staple cereal. These States would include Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Maharastra, Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh & Gujarat . So far, it was considered non-existent in South India but there is now evidence that it is being diagnosed in the native population of South India too though it is rarer than in the North. Studies show that the prevalence of celiac disease has been doubling every 20 years. It is not clear why there has been an increase in the number of cases but the reasons could be many - an overall increase in the consumption of wheat, usage of the new strain of wheat which is considered more antigenic, increased use of antibiotics etc.⁶

Table-1 : Prevalence of Celiac Disease among Indian Children

Place, Year	<i>n</i>	Material	Prevalence (%)
Pediatric			
Chandigarh, 1993 ¹³	137	MAS	26
	62 < 2 y age		9
	75 > 2 y age		91

Delhi, 1994 ¹⁴	47	Chronic diarrhoea	6.8
Delhi, 1994 ¹⁵	800	Chronic diarrhoea	7.5
Lucknow, 2006 ²²	246	Chronic diarrhoea failure to thrive, anemia	16.6
Aligarh, 2006 ²²	346	Chronic diarrhoea	11.3
Ludhiana, 2006 ³⁴	4347	School Children	0.32
Adults			
Ludhiana, 2001 ³⁷	202*	CD	
Chandigarh, 2002 ²³	19	Refractory IDA	57.8
Chandigarh, 2002 ²⁴	55	Villous atrophy	20
Lucknow, 2004 ²⁶	99	MAS	9
Mumbai, 2006 ²⁷	50	Chronic diarrhoea	26

CD : Celiac disease; IDA : Iron-deficiency anemia; MAS : Mal-absorption syndrome

*Over 6 years period (1995-2000): Significant growth rate of 79.4% compounded annually; trend equation of 15.49 case/y (p<0.01)

Source : Indian Journal of Gastroenterology, Vol. 26, Sep-Oct 2007.

Celiac disease must not be confused with gluten allergy or its tolerance. The condition is the one where gluten consumption may cause damage to the small intestine. It is a kind of an autoimmune disorder occurring in people who are genetically predisposed. It is estimated that in India every 1 in 100 people suffer from celiac disease. Celiac disease is now seen as one of the emerging health epidemics. It is estimated that approximately 6 to 8 million Indians suffer from celiac disease. "Experts believe that the condition remains highly under-reported in the country."⁷

The biggest impediment in prevention & treatment of celiac disease is the limited awareness about it and its causes.⁸ Professor Govind Makharia (Department of Gastroenterology & Human Nutrition, AIIMS) said in a statement during 17th International Celiac disease Symposium (ICDS) organized by ISG (Indian Society of Gastroenterology), ISSCD (International Society for the study of Celiac disease) and the APAGE (Asia-Pacific Association of Gastroenterology).

3. Wide gap between CD Prevalence and Diagnosis



Diagnosis of Celiac disease increasing in western world, but in India very limited data is available regarding diagnosis and patient awareness. Where as the rate of new diagnosis of celiac disease has increased 7.5 % every year for the past few decades throughout the industrialized western world.⁹ Wheat, the staple food for crores of Indians, is also responsible for celiac disease - an autoimmune disorder - among lakhs of them. The numbers are rising but most Indians are unaware, experts said at a recent International Symposium on wheat related Disorders Jan 2019.^{12, 13}

According to experts the prevalence of celiac disease has jumped four folds in India since 1960s and now approximately 80 lakh people are affected.¹⁰ Studies reveals that 90 % of Indians are unaware of this disease. Thus a wide gap exists in India between the Celiac disease prevalence in the population (1%) and the prevalence based on diagnosis (0.02% - 0.27 %). Thus 90 to 95 % of Celiac disease remains undetected. There are very limited data available on prevalence of CD in India. The majority of data are from North India. The incidence of CD is increasing.²⁵ The prevalence of CD in India is probably not different from Caucasian populations²⁶ In a field study conducted among school children in Punjab, the estimated frequency of the disease was 1 in 310(0.3%)²⁷. This prevalence is probably an underestimation. The Siblings of CD patients have a high prevalence of CD (22%). In other studies, the prevalence of CD among the first degree relatives has been reported to be 8% to 25% (28-30). There are regional variations in the prevalence of CD due to genetic and dietary

factors, that is, the wheat - rice shift from the North to the South in India.³¹

4. Celiac Disease Genotype

Celiac disease has affected those with a specific gene type called DQA1 or B1. This gene in turn expresses the gene DQ2 or DQ8, which is prone to celiac disease.⁽¹⁰⁾ A 2015 study, however, revealed that only the presence of DQ2 or DQ8 is not enough for acquiring the disease, and other gene type can also exhibit the disease.¹¹ Out of 20,000 adults tested, 30 % did not have DQ2 or DQ8 in their genes. The Study found 1.2% of population in Haryana, 0.085% in Assam and one in a thousand people in South India had Celiac disease.¹¹

According to experts Celiac disease is just one of the many disorders related to wheat, and gluten is just one of the many triggers. The current prevalence of disorders related to wheat could be attributed to the “hybrid Varieties” of wheat which have increased levels of gluten.¹² Modern wheat breeding has increased in the protein parts that Cause celiac disease, known as epitopes. NORMAN BORLAUG, the Nobel prize - winning wheat breeder, not only introduced higher - yielding wheat but inadvertently created a high - gluten - wheat that humans have not evolved to digest. Why is modern wheat making us sick? That’s the question posed by author Eli Rogosa in her new book restoring heritage grains.¹³

Wheat is the most widely grown crop on our planet, yet industrial breeders have transferred this ancient stuff of life into a commodity of yield and profit - witness the increase in gluten intolerance and wheat belly. Modern wheat depends on synthetic fertilizers and herbicides that damage our health, land, water and environment. Fortunately, heritage ‘landrace’ wheat that evolved our millennia in the organic fields of traditional farms do not need biochemical intervention to yield bountifully, are gluten - safe (low gluten), have rich flavour and high nutrition. Yet the robust, majestic wheats that nourished our ancestors are on the verge of extinction.¹⁴

What’s with wheat is the story of how wheat production has changed over the course of millennia. Surprisingly, the wheat plant we know today is not the same as the plant our ancestors once harvested. This could be the reason behind the increase in celiac disease and gluten tolerance all around the world.¹⁵

5. Types of Wheat Cultivated in India

1. **Khapli wheat**—Also known as Samba, Emmer or Diabetic wheat. India is the biggest cultivator of khapli wheat in the world. It is rich in dietary fibre, chapati (Indian flat bread) made with khapli wheat can keep you full for longer and it reduces the lipid and glucose levels in the blood.
2. **Sharbati wheat**—This wheat cultivated in Sehore region of Madhya Pradesh. This golden grain is richer in protein content when compared with other types of wheat.
3. **Common bread wheat**—This is the most common variety of wheat produced not just in India, but worldwide. It also contains lots of protein. In India it is known as dwarf wheat.
4. **Durum wheat**—India also produces Durum wheat, also known as pasta wheat or macaroni wheat. This is because the coarse grain of the wheat is ground to make semolina, which is then formed into pasta, noodles, macaroni etc. It contains a high amount of gluten and has a similar nutritional value to common bread wheat.

Semolina flour is used in making pasta and Italian puddings. It is made from durum wheat, (The hardest type of wheat grown) the flour is highest in gluten.

6. Is main culprit the hybrid wheat?

Today's hybridized wheat contains hard - to - digest proteins that aren't found in the parent plant. Wheat raises blood sugar levels, causes immunoreactive problems, inhibits the absorption of important minerals and other nutrients and aggravates our intestines. Hybridized wheat indeed, today's wheat is a far cry from what it was 50 years ago. Back in the 1950s, scientists began cross - breeding wheat to make it hardier, shorter and better growing. This work, which was the basis for the Green Revolution - and one that won U.S. plant scientist Norman Borlaug the Nobel Prize - introduced some compounds to wheat that aren't entirely human friendly.¹⁶ Today's hybridized wheat contains sodium azide, a known toxin. It also goes through a gamma irradiation process during manufacturing.¹⁷ The ancient or diploid wheats (*e.g.* *Triticum monococcum*) are poorly antigenic, while the modern hexaploid wheats (*e.g.* *Triticum aestivum*) have highly antigenic glutens, more

capable of inducing celiac disease.^{17a} India for centuries grew diploid and later tetraploid wheat which is less antigenic, while hexaploid wheat used in making bread is recently introduced. Thus change back to older varieties of wheat may have public health consequences. Public health authorities may well want to examine both these avenues, *i.e.* infant feeding recommendations and wheat varieties cultivated in the country, for opportunities to avert the epidemic of celiac disease which is impending in our contry.^{17b}

In India, many more people are gluten insensitive than is commonly believed. Perceived as 'Western disease' gluten sensitivity has never really been taken seriously in India. It's most extreme form is celiac disease, caused by acute allergy to gluten, present in wheat and related grains such as barley and rye. A lack of awareness has meant it remains highly under - diagnosed.¹⁸ Dr. B. S. Ramakrishna wrote an editorial in IJMR calling Celiac disease an 'Impending Epidemic' and stating that "What we see clinically is the tip of an iceberg that threatens to grow bigger."

Awareness of CD is the need in developing countries particularly when the disease is treatable. Dimensions of CD in India seems to be huge and it is still unexplored from all quarters (population studies, atypical manifestation, inadequate referrals etc.) CD with extra intestinal manifestations known to occur particularly among adults should be searched. Malignancy as a complication of CD should be given importance in India and such cases should be reported. Where rice is the staple diet is likely to show up CD as the life style is changing rapidly and ethnic mixing is taking place.¹⁹ Wheat has been a fundamental source of nutrition for ages in India. Due to the growing sensitivity related to this power grain, it has become imperative to create awareness on a larger scale. The fact that wheat- related diseases are also associated with other conditions such as mouth ulcers, anaemia, osteoporosis, arthritis, easy fractures, etc., there is an urgent need to explore treatment options and safer or less harmful alternatives to wheat.²⁰ Once thought of as a Western disease, Celiac disease is yet to receive the much needed concern in India and Asia as a whole. The incidence of this condition has increased five - fold in the last since 1974. Apart from the fact that it can occur at any age and is highly under diagnosed, Celiac disease and gluten insensitivity can impact both physical and mental health. The need of the hour is to increase awareness among people and

physicians alike.²¹ Celiac disease and sensitivity to gluten in wheat are commonly unreported in India due to lack of awareness. This is also the biggest impediment in prevention and treatment.²² Statistics peg the prevalence of Celiac disease at 1% at a global level. Additionally, the prevalence of wheat - related disease is about 6% and more than 90% cases remain undiagnosed.²³ There is a lack of studies on the prevalence of celiac disease from Asian nations including India. It is estimated that the prevalence of CD in the North Indian community is 1 in 100. Its prevalence is thought to be approximately 1% in India. celiac disease is more common than is recognized in India. Although once considered uncommon, there is increasing recognition of celiac disease in Asia. It is now clear that CD is a disorder as frequent in certain Asian Countries as that in western countries, although it often remains undiagnosed. Systematic population based prevalence studies have suggested that celiac disease is as frequent in India as that in western countries. Asia is probably the major reservoir of undiagnosed celiac disease in the world.²⁴

7. Conclusion

Once perceived as a Western auto immune disorder, incidences of Celiac disease is increasing in India too. In 2011, a study by AIIMS with 2879 subjects had found that 6 to 8 million Indians are suffering from this disease - one in a hundred suffer from the disease in North India. While in South India, the estimated incidence is 1 in 1000. Globally, about 40 to 60 million people suffer from the disease. Both doctors and patients need to be made aware of this disease, more prevalent in North India. Screening for the disease is not expensive, but doctors at the primary health centres need to be made aware so they could diagnose the disease. Celiac disease, which the experts say 90% Indians are unaware of, has affected those with a specific gene type called DQA1 or B1. This gene in turn expresses the genes DQ2 or DQ8, which is prone to CD. The current prevalence of disorders related to wheat could be attributed to the high yield hybrid varieties of wheat which have increased level of gluten.

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Ethnological Conflict and Search for Healing of Non-White's with the Power of Stories in Silko's Ceremony

Mani Bhadra Gautam*

Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony reflects the Laguna cosmology conscientiously for Native American independency. Stories included in the Ceremony Ceremony inspire women and common citizens to take a position for fighting against all kinds of discriminations that Natives are facing even in their own ancestral land. The study highlights the ceremonies problems in women's cases with racial issues and makes the cultural study to create a socio-cultural harmony. Principal objective of the study is to create a harmonious relationship among Non-whites, Mix-breed and Whites. Silko writes that the good is greater than God and that good is to create the harmonious relation among different races. This article brings out the causes and consequences of ethnological conflicts and carries out the possible approaches to reduce the racial and socio-cultural disharmony.

[**Keywords** : Ceremonies, Witchery, Mix-breed, Healing, Independency, Darkness, Patriotism, Representation]

* Lecturer, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur (Nepal)
E-mail: <gautammanibhadra@yahoo.com>

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1. Text and Context

Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* begins with a poem reflecting on Laguna cosmology and incorporates the different issues on land, spirit, women, race, identity, war, witchery, evils and stories of changes. Central figures that Silko focuses in Pueblo cosmology are Thought-woman, Corn mother and the Sun father. Tayo narrates the stories about their experiences and collected memories. Individual stories of Tayo and collected stories of the people are included in the *Ceremony*. Tayo believes a lot in the traditional norms and values regarding the ceremonies and enjoys celebrating them. He accompanies with his friends and community people to invent the new ceremonies, for instance, in the time of drought he celebrates the rain ceremony and it rains. Stories are based upon oral tradition and ceremonies practice especially of the Navajo and Pueblo people.

The stories are about protection of culture and cultural changes as a representative self in recreation of the world voicing for justice to the people as legal documents with the power of healing. Native Americans celebrate the ceremonies frequently for the whole days and nights that are mentioned in *Ceremony*. They prepare different kinds of pictures of their god and goddesses especially related with Christian mythologies and worship them with different purposes to fulfill their dreams and desires. Silko criticizes on continuation of the cultural reservation without changes as says Betonie :

The people nowadays have an idea about the ceremonies. They think the ceremonies must be performed exactly as they have always been done, maybe because one slip-up or mistake and the whole ceremony must be stopped and the sand painting destroyed. That much is true. They think that if a singer tampers with any part of ritual, great harm can be done, great power unleashed. He was quiet for a while looking up at the sky through the smoke hole. That much can be true also. But long ago when the people were given these ceremonies, the changing began, if only in the aging for the yellow gourd rattle or the shrinking of the skin around the eagle's claw, if only in the different voices from generation to generation, singing the chants. You see, in many ways, the ceremonies have always been changing (*Ceremony*, 126).

Betonie is a spiritual healer who is known as a half-breed medicine man. His relationship with Tayo is contradictory as on the

one hand they serve in the military as friends, work together for human freedom and Native American's independency but on the other hand he insults Tayo to be a mixed breed. Betonie charges Tayo that he is close to the Whites even in the time of Tayo's critical condition in the hospital as he was nearly killed while serving as a patriotic army. "Western doctors and the local medicine man can do nothing to heal him. He is surrounded by bags of medicinal herbs, bones, sticks, and magical ceremonies wishing for health recovery. So they accept all kinds of treatment including allopathic, natural medication, magical activities of Indian communities and psychological counseling as spiritual healer.

Majority of the native people seem rigid in the cases of cultural changes, they celebrate the ceremonies for whole night within their communities and worship their goddess. Whites started cultural politics in the name of ceremonies and they victimize to the natives. They fueled misconceptions among natives to make them lost within the cultural boundaries to fulfill their dreams and desire to rule over them forever. Representation of the Navajo cultural community in Laguna and returning home to the Laguna Pueblo reservation from World War II via a Veteran's Hospital, Tayo finds a way to cure himself of his mental anguish to bring the rain back to his community in the time of draught by rejecting the cultural dominances in the name of ceremonies. Natives started opposing the dominances rejecting the bars created by Whites and planned to take the revenge with them as they captured their land, spirits and cultures that Silko writes in *Ceremony* combining prose and poetry. Collective memories of Harley, Leroy, Emo, Pinkie, Auntie, Josiah, Betonie, Thought-woman, Corn mother, Sun father and Rocky are narrated by Tayo in the stories of Laguna Pueblo people who fought in the World War and collected post-traumatic stress with socio-cultural conflicts. "...victims try to control themselves in self-medicating with alcohol" (Wilson, 84). Conflict among Mix-breed, Whites and Native Americans is never ending that drought the racial relationship. Laguna voices reflect the war memories of Tayo's mother's words casting an opposite wall in the white square. War memories tangle White men darker after death that is the power given to the Natives by stories to heal.

2. Race, Culture and Gynocentrism in Ceremony

Tayo, Emo and Rocky are close from school days and they serve jointly in army. Tayo is born of mixed breed blood of white father and

black mother and so Emo insults him. Emo is moody, drinks alcohol and involves himself in the murder cases of Pinkie and Harley. He takes all human beings and their works to be valued equally and so he rejects the color discrimination. He wants to take revenge against all kinds of dominances. He has a different perspective about racism; he claims it as a White European's politics for Native's dominance and remarks :

Long time ago
in the beginning
there were no white people in this world
there was nothing European.
And this world might have gone on like that
except for one thing:
witchery.
This world was already complete
even without white people.
There was everything
including witchery.
Then it happened.
These witch people got together.
some came from far far away
across oceans
across mountains.
Some had slanty eyes
others had black skin.
They all got together for a contest
the way people have baseball tournaments nowadays
except this was a contest
in dark things (*Ceremony*, 132-33).

According to Emo color discriminations are unnecessary debates created by the people who crossed the borders by ships or came over the mountains and captured their lands, destroyed the culture and started ruling over them. In the past there were no eyes and skin debates among people in America but with the passes of time people shifted from different parts of the world seeking for

opportunities. Natives and Non-natives or Blacks and Whites are not subjects to debate as it happens in the global world according to ideas, views and geographical locations. "People gather in different parts of the world across the oceans and mountains and now they are debating for dark things (A Laguna Grail Story, 92)." Skin does not determine darkness and whiteness but it is their concept. Tayo narrates the stories of witches and witchery, "Witches crawl into skins of dead animals, but they can do nothing but play around with objects and bodies. Living animals are terrified of witches. They smell the death. That's why witches can't get close to them (*Ceremony*, 131)." Their ideas, views and works about celebrating the rituals determine how much black or white/superstitious and changed they are by heart. As a ritual "...people keep dogs around their hogans. Dogs howl with fear when witch animals come around (131)." Silko writes, "...white men were darker after death (7)." Silko mean to say that white people have dark heart and Natives have white heart where they try to treat equally to the Natives and Non-natives. In this sense Natives take White Europeans as war mongering people. Tayo narrates about evil activities of the war mongering people who discriminate in the name of nationality, race and identity issues, increase the enmity and inspire their people/army to fight and murder the enemies as an obedient soldier. Silko writes :

The sergeant told them to kill all the Japanese soldiers lined up in front of the cave with their hands on their heads, Tayo could not pull the trigger. The fever made him shiver, and the sweat was stinging his eyes and he couldn't see clearly; in that instant he saw Josiah standing there; the face was dark from the sun, and the eyes were squinting as though he were about to smile at Tayo. So Tayo stood there, stiff with nausea, while they fired at the soldiers (7-8).

Silko portrays the horrific picture of wars among Japanese, Philippines, Spanish, Mexican, European and Native American. Navajo Laguna, Pueblo, Mexican, Spanish and Japanese soldier's humanity is dehumanized and they are killed like animals in the order of sergeants. "The disastrous picture of the women and children in the voice of voiceless reflects the never ending war between Natives and Non-natives (Salyea, 64)." Josia's trip to Black Mountain in the rain continues up to southwest that symbolizes her

never ending journey that has neither the proper beginning nor the end of the stories. The journey looks like foliage from the sky targeting to the earth but entangled in the island and vice versa. Whites take native women as prostitutes and their desire for home comes as a healing power of mixed breed as it is narrated, "...it is easy to remain invisible here, isn't it Tayo? It was until you came. It was all white, all the color of the smoke, the fog. I am sending you home Tayo; tomorrow you'll go on the train (*Ceremony*, 16)." Tayo entangles with sweats for the whole nights. Neither he can reject the traditions nor can he keep in the safe-landing of the Natives to rescue from the dangers of Whites.

Cultural dissatisfaction in Silko's *Ceremony* is about ill intentions and wrong practices of the certain cultural communities. There were lots of wrong practices about fight, wars and even murder of the innocents and celebrations by the power to exercise in the society as observed and told by an old man :

...in the old days
long time ago
they had this
Scalp society
for warriors
who killed
or touched
dead enemies (*Ceremony*, 37).

The old man tells the powerful stories through close observation of terrible punishments and killing of innocent Natives like Auntie and Grandma whose rooms of life and livelihood seem darker all the time. The old man reopens the bundled stories and discloses the historical truths by telling the stories of their ancestors who celebrate the White European people's ceremonies. "Natives are always afraid of the White people's activities collecting some terrors at what will happen at any time (Doren, 35)" as Tayo narrates. Tayo and Emo's misunderstanding is that Tayo frightens from Whites but Emo inspires to take the revenge with them and Whites charge Emo and his friends as black witchery. America for the Indian victims is dry land and dark place where they are neither able to create an identity nor they occupy an open space but what they face in all their lives is disease, depression, death, misbehave and injustices which

inspired them to fight against all kinds of ill treatments of the Whites as says Emo, "They took our land, they took everything! so let's get our hands on white women! (*Ceremony*, 55)."

Paula Gunn Allen takes Laguna Pueblo people shifting as 'stars flew'. Major focus of the novel is on 'power of stories' to heal. Silko fuels the Natives to fight and take revenge against all kinds of injustices. Tayo's quest for identify is healing with the importance of stories. The stories are important for Silko because they have power for healing about people and culture. Supporting in Silko's writing Gregory writes that, "...the world without stories becomes fragmented and people alienated" (Gregory, 42). Silko's *Ceremony* is a poetic novel in prosaic form containing the stories about their power to heal with final truth where Tayo seeks for the growth of stories. Stories refresh the memories of the past and they remind the people about their ritual, art and culture that help to rewrite the cultural history. The fragility of individual is like the stories of spider webs bringing different narratives in *Ceremony*. Growth of Tayo's consciousness is symbolical growth of the stories in present societal growth. Form and content in Silko's writing of the *Ceremony* is unique in poetic-prosaic style. Line breaks, spacing and poetic expressions are meditative incorporating Tayo's individual stories and stories of the common people with general feelings in the stories of Whites and Native characters. The symbol of sunrise is growth power of the stories to heal seeking for the ultimate freedom of Native Americans from the dominance of Whites.

Tayo wants to keep the things between Natives and Non-natives in balance as he is from white father and non-white mother as an output of mix-breed. Tayo's shifting power provides hope in the possibility of creation of good relation between Natives and Non-natives rather than creating an ethnological conflict and the fear of destruction. Native women like Auntie, Thought-woman and Corn mother are always dominated by Whites and they are experiencing the wretched life. They are remembering their past days about how they celebrated the ceremonies for whole night and enjoyed the moments among their friends and relatives and now they are thinking about future. Stories relating with the condition of women, Silko starts writing her novel *Ceremony* with these poetic expressions :

Thought-Woman, the spider,
named things and

as she named them
they appeared
She is sitting in her room
thinking of a story now
I'm telling you the story
she is thinking (*Ceremony*, 1).

Three central figures of the novel in Pueblo cosmology are Thought-woman, Corn mother and Sun father and here Silko opens her novel illustrating the activities of Thought-woman. Silko brings the voices of voiceless women through representatives whose activities are limited within the narrow rooms. They are sitting within a room and thinking about their future with the dreams and desires of their own independency. Women and their values in *Ceremony* symbolically reflect Silko's own energy to understand the feminist values. Female figure in Laguna Pueblo Mythology is marked as the earth that worked hard for 'Female Identity'. Tayo's memory on female identities heals through the conflicts of White and Non-white women having injustice grab of their land by whites. Emo puts forward the concept with Tayo of declaring war because the Whites only use and throw them and they are having nothing to show for it, Emo remarks, "We fought their war for them. . . they took everything!" (55). In *Ceremony*, Natives are angry with Whites and they want to get revenge by raising their hands towards the white women. The revenge motive of Emo groups also does not seem fair because they want to take revenge with women whereas their "gynocentric unfair intention invites the gender conflict (Aggarwal, 46)" that ultimately invites the fight for gender roles. Therefore, *Ceremony* along with the stories of healing is centered on the issues of women and racial discrimination.

The color and gender discriminations are grave problems for both the Whites and Non-white women as the social disharmony started in their homeland. Concept of the present society is bad to raise their hands towards female bodies to take the revenge. This type of gynocentric violence and ethnological conflict in the stories of Silko bring the moral lesson to not to fight among peoples in the community. This type of politically incorrect war leads the plot of the novel into complexity and people into darkness. In *Ceremony* the women are symbolically compared with rain and earth for the

'power of growth and fertilization'. Women of the Mount Taylor are surrounded by the yellow color and others by whites and non-whites. Tayo puts forward the concept of feminist issue and says :

Corn woman
 worked hard all day
 sweating in the sun
 getting sore hands
 in the corn field....(*Ceremony*, 13).

The above extracted piece of poem deals with the hard labour of corn women who worked all the day and night for living hood. Poverty and disease of the Non-whites is dangerous issue in White's land. Whites run the industries, work in the offices, earn lots of money and enjoy their lives but the Non-whites work hard sweating in the sun and being wet in the rain. Concept of home and land is culturally associated with identity problem and Norma C. Wilson writes, "Choice of cultural identity; human responsibilities to the earth, to oneself and to others; the ravages or racism; the presence of evil and goodness in humanity; the development of nuclear weapons; physical, mental and spiritual health; war and violence ...(Wilson, 70)." Silko's wish to return back to the homeland is possibly a search for nationality. Attack of whiteness by non-whites is the grab for revenge of colonial witchery of Whites. Nature of language use in Native American culture is one of the most difficult element for non- natives to understand the values of land. Non whites and mixed breed people are dominated by whites and so racial and cultural fight continued for a long among American, European, Mexican, Philippines and Japanese.

Gender and cultural issues for half breed people are greater. Betonie says to Tayo that mixed blood is a bond between him and Tayo. He further explains that a modern medicine man needs to present him differently and uses the artifacts of white American societies. Four American Indian Literary Masters Writers, claim "Betonie makes it clear that the ultimate causes of Tayo's illness, and the real enemy, is 'the witchery'" (Velie, 115). The witchery in Southwest Indian culture is very similar to those of medieval Europe. About the issues and concept on half-breed, Tayo says :

I'm half-breed. I'll be the first to say it. I'll speak for both sides.
 First time you walked down the street in Gallup or

Albuquerque, you knew. Don't lie. You knew right away. The war was over, the uniform was gone. All of a sudden that man at the store waits on you last, makes you wait until all the white people bought what they wanted. And the white lady at the bus depot, she's real careful now not to touch your hand when she counts out your change (*Ceremony*, 42).

Non-whites are in jealousy of Whites because they are able to buy what they want without any objection and wait. White women do not have any objection in using the public vehicles, storing the things in the side and paying for them but the Natives and Mixed-breed people are not allowed to touch them and wait for a long until the Whites finish their works. They suffer in poverty as they have a low purchase capacity.

3. Conclusion

Silko's *Ceremony* presents Tayo's new threats to the Pueblo to study the early Spanish conquest, and Second World War's dangerous attempts to continue the Laguna, Pueblo culture. Tayo's next seeking of medicine man tries to heal with the traditional Laguna culture. He chants in native language and explains for own sake, but entire world is under the spell of witchery. Love symbol in *Ceremony* gives power to fight against the social evil done in the basis of racial and cultural discriminations. Betonie is also a new kind of healer because he is half-Mexican like Tayo which is mentioned in the medicine man's story. Stories in *Ceremony* jump from traditional myths to the ritual revolts to meet the needs of present society. So, *Ceremony* is a novel about women, culture, identity, land, poverty and sickness. Tayo finally finds peace by participating in a Native American ceremony that allows him to free from horrors of cultural wars in ceremonies. Therefore, Silko's *Ceremony* presents the stories with ideas to solve the ethnological conflict searching for healing of Non-White's with the power of stories to heal.

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Reproductive Health Status and Contraceptive Utilization Pattern among Muslim Women

Arshi*

The purpose of this paper is to examine the contraceptive utilization pattern and reproductive health status among Muslim women in the term of age at marriage, age at first pregnancy, number of children, number of abortion and traditional method of contraception, modern method of contraception, surgical method of contraception in Abdullapur town, Meerut city, U.P. The data for the present paper collected from 100 Muslim women for the fulfilment of the information. Data collected by using the interview/schedule and observation method and sample selected by purposive sampling. The main finding of this paper shows that the majority (58%) of the Muslim women used rhythm method in contraception in traditional method, majority (67%) Muslim women used male condom in modern method and the majority (73%) of the Muslim women used female sterilization and the majority (67%) of the Muslim women gets married at the age of 15-20 years age group, the majority (56%) of the Muslim women conceived their first pregnancy at the early age group of 15-20, the majority (56%) of the Muslim women have 1-3 children and the majority (75%) of the Muslim women have no experience about abortion.

[Keywords : Family planning, Reproductive health, Contraceptive utilization pattern, Health Status.

* Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Meerut College, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <arshimaliksociology@gmail.com>

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1. Concepts and Terms

1.1 Medical Sociology

Ruderman explain that medical sociology medical sociology is the concerned with the relationship between social factors and health, and with application of sociological theory and research techniques to questions related to health and health care system. Medical sociology is the study of the social causes and consequences of health and illness. Medical sociology can have an applied orientation to understanding and improving health and can be seen as one of many disciplines that might appropriately be studies of health care. The field of medical sociology is an extraordinarily broad and exciting arena where one can pursue an unusually wide range of interests from social psychology and social epidemiology to health policy, social movement and political sociology. In which sub-field, there is more theoretical and methodological diversity?

1.2 Health

In 1948 the World Health Organization (WHO) defined health with a phrase that still used today. "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Health is state of optimum capacity of an individual for the effective performance of the roles and tasks for which he has been socialized. Defining Health may appear to be quite simple, but there is no consensus about what constitutes a 'healthy' person. Three mains approaches exist for defining health: the biomedical approach, the psychological approach, and the sociological (socio-cultural) approach.

1.3 Reproductive Health

Reproductive health means a satisfying, safe sex life, free from the fear of disease and free from coercion and violence. Reproductive health is a state which people have the ability to reproduce and regulate their fertility. Reproductive health implies that people are able to have a responsible, satisfying and safer sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. One interpretation of this implies that men and women ought to be informed of and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of birth control; also access to appropriate health care services of sexual, reproductive medicine and implementation of health education programmes to

stress the importance of women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth could provide couples with the best chance of having a health infant.

1.4 Contraceptive Utilization in India

Women in India are not being fully educated on contraception usage and what they are putting in their bodies. From 2005-2006 data was collected to indicate only 15.6% of women using contraception in India were informed of all their options and what those options actually do. Contraceptive usage has been rising gradually in India. In 1970, 13% of married women used modern contraception methods, which rose to 35% by 1997 and 48% by 2009. Awareness of contraception is near-universal among married women in India. However, the vast majority of married Indians (76% in a 2009 study) reported significant problems in accessing a choice of contraceptive methods. The above table clearly indicates more evidence that the availability of contraceptives problem for people in India. In 2009, 48.4% of married women were estimated to use a contraceptive method. About three-fourths of these were using female sterilization which is by far the most prevalent birth-control method in India. Condoms, at a mere 3%, were the next most prevalent method. Meghalaya, at 20%, has the lowest usage of contraception among all Indian states. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were the other two states that reported usage below 30%. It is important to note that sterilization is a common practice in India. They also use camps to enforce sterilization. This process can be done with or without consent. Comparative studies have indicated that increased female literacy is correlated strongly with a decline in fertility. Studies have indicated that female literacy levels are an independent strong predictor of the use of contraception, even when women do not otherwise have economic independence. Female literacy levels in India may be the primary factors that help in population stabilization, but they are improving relatively slowly : 1990 study estimated that it would take until 2060 for India to achieve universal literacy at the current rate of progress. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the government unit responsible for formulating and executing family planning related government plans in India.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

Abdel Aziem et al. (2011) studied on use of family planning methods in Kassala Easteru. Suddu to investigate use of family

planning methods among married women in Kassala, a community based cross sectional household survey was conducted to investigate use and factor associated with family planning serious structured questionnaires were use to gather socio-demographic data and use of family planning the main findings of current study were : poor use family planning services combined oral pill's progesterone injection and pills were the most common used methods and conptes education were significantly associated with use of family planning in this setting.

Barbara Barnett Mamadora Konate et al. (1999) explored the impact of family planning on women's lives : findings from the women's studies project in Mali and Zimbalwe. To study the impact of family planning on women's lives. Family planning is one of many strategies women can use to exercise autonomy in their lives. The data were collected through to continue or discontinue methods including spousal approval 16 focus group discussion. Thirteen focus group discussions were held for women and three for men.

Heena Budhuani Jami Anderson et al. (2018) to reported on Muslim women's use of contraception in the united states. To examined American Muslim women's contraception utilization patterns. Ten dings suggest American Muslim women's contraception utilization pattern share certain similarities with both American women in general and disadvantaged racial and ethnic minority groups in the united states, implying that factors that influence American Muslim women's use of contraceptives are possibly countervailing and likely multi-facted. Self-reported data collected in late 2015 were analyzed. Women who identified as Muslim, were at least 18 years old. Sexually active and current residents of the united states met the inclusion criteria, convenience sampling was employed.

Neeti Purwar, Hari Shankar et al. (2019) focused on family planning adoption and unmet needs : spousal agreement in rural Varanasi. The aim of the study was to assess the spousal agreement level regarding family planning adoption and unmet needs. Data were collected through focussed group discussion interview schedule and cross-sectional study. The findings of intermediate to poor agreement among married couples regarding contrastive practices unment needs. Ideal family size and their approval for contraception suggest that there is need to encourage spousal

communication to that they can make informed decisions on contraceptive choice.

Odimegwu Obby Clifford et al. (1999) Family planning activities and use in Nigeria : A factor analysis to investigate the association between Nigerians attitudes toward family planning and their contraceptive behavior. Do positive attitudes toward family planning affect contraceptive use? Factor's found to be associated with contraceptive use should be utilized by the Nigerian government in its family planning awareness campaign. Individuals who have an influence on the respondents had a positive effect on their contraceptive behavior. A total of 1540 men and women were selected for interview, using a multistage sampling technique.

Marge Berer et al. (1993) studied on population and family planning policies the aim are to examine reproductive health matters from a women-centred perspective to promote law, policies, health services and research which meet women's reproductive health needs. The were collected and sample studied to reproductive health matters examine development, environment, population and family planning policies. Meeting the family planning needs to all the women and men in the world through good quality services, that after a full choice of methods along with broader reproductive and other health services.

Yishak Lailulo et al. (2017) focused on improving maternal and reproductive health in Ethiopia. The study aim to examine the relationship between maternal health and good quality of life in an attempt to understand the year 2005 and 2011. Survey method and sample studied Ethiopia (South Africa) there was a significant relationship between the stands of women and a good quality of life and this relationship appeared to differ by education and work status.

Rebecca J. Cook et al. (1993) explored international human right and women's reproductive health to examine international human right. The human rights of particular concern to women that which frequently exists as the pre condition to the enjoyment of other is the right to reproductive. Self determination to study international women's reproductive health. He concluding that great potential exists to enforce state responsibility for the observance of women's reproductive rights by employing the resources of international law.

Anne Sebert Kuhlmann et al. (2010) the integration of family planning with other health service : A literature review. The integration family planning services with other health services may be or effective way to reduce unmet need. He concluded that integration an family planning with other health services may be bifacial however before integration is embraced as a board scale strategy to address the high level of unmet need for family planning around the world well designed and properly collected evaluation research is needed to establish an evidence base from integration diet were be collected through cross-sectional study by using survey method. To examining integration of family planning services with any type of health service. The integration intentions ranged from simple referrals between providers of existing services to fully integrated, community based delivery of education and services.

P. H. Readdy et al. (2003) studied on religion, population growth, fertility and family planning practice in India to examine dispassionately as possible, the differential growth rates of the Hindus and Muslim in India. Their fertility levels and family planning practice by them researcher data were collected through method of sample survey use. He concluded that far greater percentage of Muslim them Hindus are against family planning on religious genders. The going data and analysis convincingly demonstrate that the Muslim population is growing at a faster rate than Hindu population. The fertility of Muslim is higher that of Hindus and the family planning acceptance rate is lower among the Muslims than among the Hindus.

Kmoulasha, G. Rama Rao et al. (1999) religion population growth, fertility and family planning to examine dispassionately as possible. The differential growth rates of the Hindus and Muslims in India, their fertility levels and family planning. To study the relationship between religion and fertility behaviour. He concluded that the total unmet demand for family planning was higher among Muslim women than among Hindu women in this study. The author used survey method and interview. To examine religion specific differentials in fertility and family planning. The Muslim women had 1.1 children more than Hindu women the possible reason could be the longer reproductive spare of three year than Hindus. Muslim also have reported a shorter period of post-partum amenorrhea and post-partum abstinence than Hindus.

Lisa Ann Richey et al. (2019) studied on the structural adjustment policies and related reforms have not been in conflict with the old neo-malthusian policies concerned primarily with increasing family planning use and decreasing fertility. This task has become ever more evasive in the context of the increasing challenges of integrating HIV/AIDS with all other reproductive health needs.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To know the reproductive health status of the Muslim women.
- To examine the contraceptive utilization pattern among Muslim women.

The objective takes note of the reproductive health status of the Muslim woman in terms age at marriage at first pregnancy number of children number of abortion, and the contraceptive utilization pattern among Muslim women in terms traditional methods modern methods surgical methods etc.

4. Methods

Abdullapur town has been selected for the purpose of study. It is a town of Meerut district. It is located on Kila Parikshitgarh Road 7.5 km from Meerut head quarter, Uttar Pradesh, north east part of India, about 98 km from the National Capital of Delhi. Meerut district is situated in the western region of Uttar Pradesh, 85 km from Delhi. It lies on National Highway No. 58, Delhi to Dehradun, Meerut district is well connected by the rail and road. During the summer temperature is around 40-45 degree Celsius while in winter it is around 5-10 degree Celsius. As of 2011 India census, total population of Abdullapur is 19540 male population is 10289 and female population is 9093 Abdullapur has an average literacy rate of 71.58 male literacy is 79.57 and female literacy is 62.76. In Abdullapur 31% of the population is under 6 years of age. There are two major religions: Hindu and Islam. There are many others caste among Hindu Jaat, Brahmins, Kumhar, Valmiki, Chamar, Gurjar etc. And muslim have many other cast as Sayyed, Khan, Teli, Luhar, Rajput, Nai etc. The data for the present study have been collected from 100 women for the required fulfilment of the information. Data have been collected by using the interview/schedule and observation

method. Data have been selected by using the purposive sampling. I decided to conduct the interview from the age group 20-40 years old women of this town. The collected data have been analyzed by using simple statistical i.e., simple variable table.

5. Results

5.1 The Reproductive Health Status of the Muslim Women

Marriage is considered an essential social institution to enter in family life and for procreation of new generations. Almost in all societies, traditional of modern in India unique some other countries, reproduction and fertility of adolescents young and adults occur mainly within the context of marriage.

The reproductive health status of the Muslim women have been observed on various aspects like, Age at marriage, Age at first pregnancy, Number of children and Number of Abortion.

Table-1 : Age at Marriage

S.No.	Age	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	15 - 20 Years	67	67
2.	21 - 25 Years	30	30
3.	25 to above	03	03
Total		100	100

Source : Field Survey during August-September, 2019.

The above table shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 67% Muslim women get married at the age of 15 - 20, 30% Muslim women get married at the age of 21-25 and 03% Muslim women get married at the age of 25 and above.

Thus, the fact reveals that the majority (67%) of the Muslim women gets married at the age of 15-20 years age group and a few number (03%) of the Muslim women get married at the age of 25 to above age group. Whereas in the majority (67%) of the Muslim women get married at the early age group (15-20), it is really a very surprising issue.

Table-2 : Age at First Pregnancy

S.No.	Age	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	15-20 Years	56	56
2.	21-25 Years	37	37
3.	25 and above	05	05
4.	Issueless	02	02
Total		100	100

Source : Field Survey during August-September, 2019.

The above table shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 56% Muslim women who conceived their first pregnancy at the age of 15-20, 37% Muslim women who conceived their first pregnancy at the age of 21-25, 05% of the Muslim women who conceived their first pregnancy at the age of 25 and above and only 02% of the Muslim women who conceived their first pregnancy at the age of issueless.

Thus, the above facts reveal that the majority (56%) of the Muslim women conceived their first pregnancy at the early age group of (15-20) and followed by larger number (37%) of the Muslim women conceived their first pregnancy at the right age group of (21-25). Thus in the Muslim women majority of the women conceived their pregnancy in early age group, it is really a very interesting facts.

Table-3 : Number of Children of the Muslim Women

S.No.	No. of Children	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	Issueless	05	05
2.	1 - 3	56	56
3.	4 - 6	35	35
4.	6 and above	04	04
Total		100	100

Source : Field Survey during August-September, 2019.

Table-3 shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 05% of the Muslim women are issueless, 56% of the Muslim women have 1-3 children, 35% of the Muslim women have 4-6 children and 04% of the Muslim women have 6 or more children.

Thus, above fact reveals that the majority (56%) of the Muslim women have 1-3 and small number (04%) of the Muslim women have 6 or more children.

Table-4 : Number of Abortion of the Muslim Women

S.No.	Number of Abortion	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	Voluntary	18	18%
2.	Spontaneously	07	07%
3.	Abortion not experienced	75	75%
Total		100	100

Source : Data collected by the researcher herself during Aug.-Sept. 2019

The above table shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 18% of the Muslim women are voluntary, 07% of the Muslim women are spontaneously & 75% of the Muslim women are abortion not experienced about abortion.

Thus, the fact reveals that the majority (75%) of the Muslim women have no experience about abortion where small number (07%) of the Muslim women induced abortion natural.

5.2 Contraceptive Utilization Pattern among Muslim Women

The various aspects of planning and knowledge about the contraceptive methods have been observed during the field observation and it is divided into traditional, modern and surgical methods.

Table-5 : Traditional Method of Contraception

S.No.	Traditional Method	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	Rhythm Method	58	58%
2.	Withdrawal Method	35	35%
3.	Lactational Amenorrhoea Method	07	07%
Total		100	100

Source : Data collected by the researcher herself during Aug.-Sept. 2019

The above table shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 58% Muslim women use the rhythm method, 35% Muslim women use withdrawal method and 7% Muslim women use lactational amenorrhoea method of contraception.

Thus, the above facts reveals that majority 58% of the Muslim women used rhythm method in contraception and few number 7% of the Muslim women used lactational amenorrhoea method of in contraception.

Table-6 : Modern Method of Contraception

S.No.	Modern Method	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	Male Condom	67	67%
2.	Female Condom	2	2%
3.	Oral Contraceptive Pills	17	17%
4.	Injection	14	14%
Total		100	100

Source : Data collected by the researcher herself during Aug.-Sept. 2019

The above shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 67% Muslim women used male condom, 2% Muslim women used female condom, 17% Muslim women used oral contraceptive pills and 14% Muslim women used injection in contraception.

Thus, the above facts reveals that large majority 67% Muslim women used male condom and very few Muslim women 2% of Muslim women used female condom in contraception.

Table-7 : Surgical Method of Contraception

S.No.	Surgical Method	No. of Muslim Women	Percentage
1.	Intrauterine Devices (IUDs)	15	15%
2.	Female Sterilization	73	73%
3.	Male Sterilization	12	12%
Total		100	100

Source : Data collected by the researcher herself during Aug.-Sept. 2019

The above table shows that out of 100 Muslim women, 15% Muslim women used intrauterine device method, 73% Muslim

women used female sterilization method and 12% Muslim women used male sterilization method in contraception.

Thus, the above facts reveals that large majority 73% of the Muslim women used female sterilization and few 12% of the Muslim women used male sterilization in contraception.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

The reproductive health status of the Muslim women have been observed on various aspects like, Age at marriage, Age at first pregnancy, Number of children and Number of Abortion.

Age at Marriage: The majority (67%) of the Muslim women gets married at the age of 15-20 years age group and a few number (03%) of the Muslim women get married at the age of 25 and above age group. Whereas in the majority (67%) of the Muslim women get married at the early age group (15-20), it is really a very surprising issue.

Age at First Pregnancy: The majority (56%) of the Muslim women conceived their first pregnancy at the early age group of (15-20) and followed by larger number (37%) of the Muslim women conceived their first pregnancy at the right age group of (21-25). Thus in the Muslim women majority of the women conceived their pregnancy in early age group, it is really a very interesting facts.

Number of Children: The majority (56%) of the Muslim women have 1-3 and small number (04%) of the Muslim women have 6 or more children.

Number of Abortion: The majority (75%) of the Muslim women have no experience about abortion where small number (07%) of the Muslim women induced abortion natural.

The various aspects of planning and knowledge about the contraceptive methods have been observed during the field observation and it is divided into traditional, modern and surgical methods. Traditional method of contraception include the rhythm method, withdrawal method and lactational amenorrhoea method.

Traditional Method : The majority 58% of the Muslim women used rhythm method in contraception and few number 7% of the Muslim women used lactational amenorrhoea method of in contraception.

Modern Method : The majority 67% Muslim women used male condom and very few Muslim women 2% of Muslim women used female condom in contraception.

Surgical Method : The majority 73% of the Muslim women used female sterilization and few 12% of the Muslim women used male sterilization in contraception.

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An Analysis of the Perception of Community Members on Women's Mobility in the Rural Areas of Asansol-Durgapur Planning Area (ADPA)

Mohana Basu*

Mobility may be defined as the physical movement that people undertake over geographical space to fulfil their various requirement of life. Mobility plays a significant role to a considerable extent in empowering women as for accessing any service like education, health care, for earning living one needs to go out of their homes. Often the outdoor free movement of women is governed by the judgmental views of the society as it is seen that families often take decisions related to the female members based on the views of the community members. In the rural areas people attach more value to the opinion of the society members with decisions related to women of the family. In the rural areas, the families of the women often place a lot of importance on the role of the society mainly the community members in the context of mobility of women as they feel that free movement of women may pose a threat to the honour code of the women. Hence, the aim of this paper is to understand the perception of the community members of the rural areas of Asansol Durgapur Planning Area, on the context of women's mobility. Qualitative data has been collected mainly through primary survey by conducting in-depth

** Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Polba Mahavidyalaya, West Bengal-712148 (India) E-mail: <mohana15basu@gmail.com>*

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interviews and questionnaire-based survey. Results reveal that in the rural areas woman face restrictions on their outdoor movements mainly due to their safety and security concerns and also based on the judgmental views of the society families often impose restrictions on their outdoor movement. The restrictions are more rigid on the adolescent girls than on the married women and the old women. Old women mainly face restrictions due to their health concerns. For married women, they are unable to undertake outdoor activities more often as they suffer the most from time-poverty as they are bound to do all the household related works. Relevant suggestions have been forwarded keeping in mind the governmental rules and regulations for improving the status of women's mobility in the study area.

[**Keywords** : Mobility, Geographical space, Community members, Society, Adolescent girls]

1. Introduction

1.1 Concept of Mobility

The movement that people undertake over geographical space to fulfil their various requirement of life may be termed as mobility (Magdalena, 2006). Mobility, freedom and rights are linked with each other the evidence of which has been found to exist in the Article 13 of United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the year 1948 (Sager, 2008). In the wake of neo-liberal globalization and consumerist lifestyles, the concept of mobility has undergone immense changes since the last quarter of the 20th century (Kotz, 2000). The connection between freedom and mobility is easily observed as high mobility implies a high level of freedom of choice to travel which is a precondition for self-decision on the types of activities to take part in (Houseman, 1979). Over the years, the concept of mobility has made its presence felt in the context of economics, history, society, culture, travel behaviour and movement in understanding the creation of identities, empowerment and the circulation of all these over space and time. It has been witnessed that differences exist to a considerable extent in terms of physical mobility patterns across class, caste and gender dimensions. Due to certain socio-biological advantages mainly physiological as well as the patriarchal social structure enjoyed by men, traditionally, the male sections of the human societies enjoy a considerably greater mobile life than their women counterparts (Akyelken, 2013).

1.2 Gender and Mobility

Gender-based variation of mobility is a well-established phenomenon across the world and this variation is more pronounced

in the rural areas particularly (Uteng, 2011). In order to achieve social equality by using spatial equality as a mean then equal access to transportation facilities should be treated as a necessity despite the various complexities underlying social inequality (Polk, 1998). Significant gender-based differences in mobilities can be recognized on the basis of various parameters like income, age, household size and structure, marital status, elder and child care responsibilities, employment status, place of residence, education level etc. Some research works also indicate that gendered variable role with regards to sharing of household chores leads to creation of greater time burden on women which in turn leads to the woman suffer from time poverty which is again reflected in the trip purposes, trip behaviour and trip. In the developing areas, specially in the rural areas, free mobility of women is met with a lot of obstructions and in certain circumstances with regards to access to health care facilities also they face restrictions (Khan, 1999). In the rural areas, the families of the women often place a lot of importance on the role of the society mainly the community members in the context of mobility of women as they feel that free movement of women may pose a threat to the honour code of the women.

1.3 Role of Perception of Community Members on Women's Mobility in the Rural Areas

Various social causes play a significant role to a considerable extent in posing restrictions in independent mobility of women. In many families in the rural areas, unmarried girls often face a lot of restrictions as far as their liberty is concerned. In many families, higher education of girls are stopped as a result of social pressure since for acquiring higher education often one needs to go to educational institutions that are located at a distance from their houses. After marriage lot of women are compelled to quit their jobs due to social pressure as they are expected to perform their household chores with utmost significance. Hence, it is very important to analyze the role of the perception of the community members of the rural areas in the context of women's mobility.

1.4 Significance of Women's Mobility

Women's mobility is extremely important for ensuring overall development of a region and also for empowerment of women. For making women independent, education is very important but for

accessing educational facilities one needs to go and attend the educational institutions and if there is no freedom of movement then it becomes very difficult to a great extent to acquire education. Even for accessing basic health care facilities one needs to go out so for being healthy one has to be given the freedom of movement as in many countries it has been observed that in this regard also women often face restrictions. For becoming financially independent any person is required to go out of their house, if freedom of women's mobility is not there then in this aspect also women's independence will be hampered. In a nutshell, for achieving gender equality and women empowerment, women's mobility has quite an important role to play.

2. Methodology

2.1 Delineation of the Study Area

The Asansol-Durgapur Planning Area (ADPA) in the state of West Bengal in India, is an emerging region of utmost significance from the industrial and economic point of view. In this region, lots of industries have come up over the years as a result of this region being rich in several types of mineral resources. Hence, this region has evolved over the years to a certain extent and possess the potentiality of emerging as a developed region. However, review of literature indicated that not much work has been done in this region with regards to the condition of empowerment of women residing in this region. Mobility is regarded as one of the most significant factors of women empowerment. Mobility of women in the rural areas is largely governed by the mentality and opinion of the community members. Hence, a perception analysis of the mentality of the community members in the rural areas of ADPA will be beneficial for understanding the condition of mobility of women in the study area and in forwarding relevant measures for improving the status of free mobility of women. There are eight Community Development Blocks (C.D. Blocks) within the jurisdiction of ADPA. From these eight blocks two villages from each of the Gram Panchayats under these blocks were surveyed for the purpose of conducting the survey.

2.2 Selection of the Samples

The main aim of the survey was to spatially cover the study area hence from each of the selected villages which has been selected

through multistage random sample method ten households were surveyed. All total from 95 villages 10 households were surveyed i.e. total 950 households were surveyed. The respondents for the in-depth interviews and the focus group discussion were selected in such a manner so that respondents belonging to various age groups, various income levels, gender, and working women, married women, unmarried women and housewives were included.

2.3 Focus Group Discussion

For conducting the focus group discussion men, women and girls of various age groups and profession were chosen. From each of the chosen areas, men, women (both married and unmarried, housewives and working) and adolescent girls were included in the discussion. A lot of help was rendered by the panchayat pradhans in conducting the discussion. Separate groups were made for conducting the discussion- one comprising of the men, another with women and the third one with the adolescent girls. Each group comprised of about 10 people.

2.4 Questionnaire based Survey

Information was also obtained by conducting questionnaire-based survey and the members of the panchayati raj institutions helped a lot for filling up the questionnaires. The obtained data has been represented with the help of cartographic diagrams.

2.5 In-depth Interview

In-depth interviews of some selected women including housewives, working ladies, married and unmarried woman and some adolescent girls were conducted for representing showing some case studies for a better understanding of the status and condition of mobility of women and the various restrictions that they face in their daily lives for their movement.

3. Results and Discussion

The opinion of the respondents in the context of women's mobility has been taken (Fig.-1). The respondents were asked about their opinion on women's mobility and the opinions has been represented under the categories of Approve, Moderately Approve and Disapprove.

Approve implies that the respondents who approved of women’s free mobility did not attach any criteria related to the free movement of women.

Moderately Approve implied that the respondents approved of women’s mobility based on certain criteria like the woman should complete household works properly before going out, they must return home before sunset, they must not stay out for their own career related needs for a long duration of time, they must inform in detail their outdoor schedule.

Disapprove implied that the respondents felt that women’s mobility might act as a distraction towards her responsibility towards her household works and for unmarried women they felt that it might unnecessarily attract outside attention. Some even cited safety and security as the reason behind their disapproval.

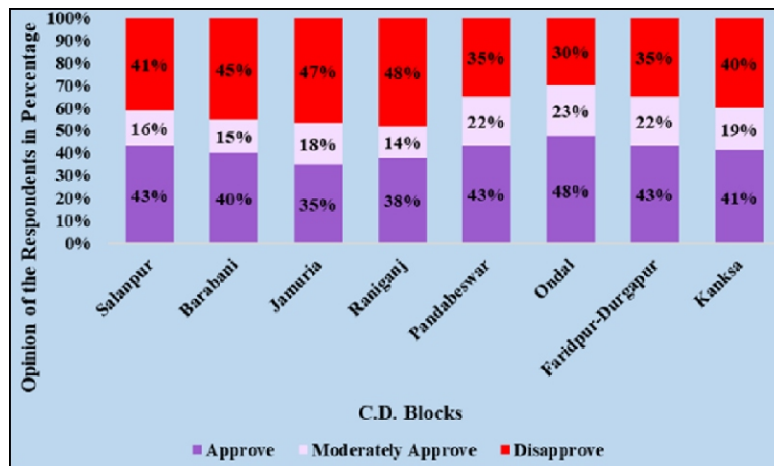


Fig-1 : Opinion of Community Members on Women’s Mobility in the Rural Areas of ADPA, Data Source: Primary Survey

Among the eight C.D. Blocks, only in Jamuria C.D. Block and in Raniganj C.D. Block, the proportion of approval on women’s mobility is below 40% (Fig-1). In both of these C.D. Blocks, the sex ratio and literacy rates are relatively lower than the other C.D. Blocks. These two parameters play a significant role to a considerable extent in issues related to women empowerment.

During the primary survey while conducting the in-depth interviews it came to our knowledge that many respondents were fine with women working after marriage provided, they did not ignore their household responsibilities. However, some of the respondents were not in favour of married women working till late

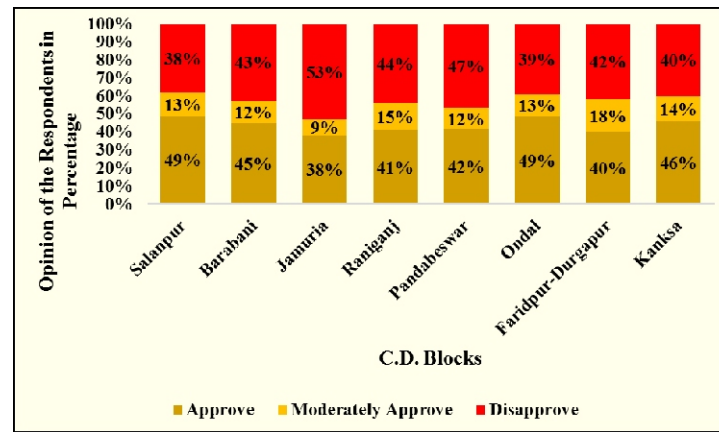


Fig.-2 : Opinion of Community Members on Married Women working for long hours in Rural Areas of ADPA; Data Source : Primary Survey

hours as they held this viewpoint that women will ignore their household responsibilities. Swapan Bauri, a middle-aged man of Ethora village under Salanpur C.D. Block, moderately approved of married women working for long hours and opined that he feels that as long as a married woman fulfils all the household needs and her responsibilities towards the family properly there should be no problems in letting her work. Moreover, the woman will also contribute towards the family expenditure if she also works. He said that he owns a small grocery shop, the income generated from there is not sufficient for his family of six which comprises of his wife, two children and his old parents. Hence it is actually necessary for his wife to work in order to share the financial responsibilities of the family. His wife works as a household help in Asansol. Before she leaves for her work she completes all the household chores and upon returning she does the rest of the work, hence it is not possible for her to work for long hours at a stretch. On being asked if he helps her in doing the household works, his prompt reply was that household works are meant for women and not for men. It also came to light that his daughter helps her mother with the household chores and she also does some work before going to school but his son does not do any of the household works.

A perception analysis of the opinion of the respondents of the study area regarding their status of approval on various aspects related to mobility and independence of women. The parameters that were taken were access to health care facilities where the respondents were asked whether they totally approved of women

going out to access health care facilities for their health issues that were not only limited to child birth. The other parameter that was taken into consideration was going out for sanitation as in the rural areas people often do not have toilets attached to their homes. The parameter going out for household work comprised of going out for daily grocery shopping, accompanying children to educational institutions, fetching drinking water and such works. The status of approval of the community members on the women going out for their career needs included their going out for education or for their own jobs. Lastly, the parameter recreation comprised going out for a movie, visiting friend’s home, morning/evening walk, going to a fair etc.



Fig.-3 : Perception Chart of the Study Area, Data Source : Primary Survey

In all the centres of the study area, almost 95% of the respondents completely disapproved of sanitation outside (Fig.-3 & 4). In course of the survey, it also appeared from the responses of the respondents that most of them were aware of the unhygienic aspects that are associated with outdoor sanitation and many of them also stated that they have received governmental aids for constructing their toilets. As far as access to health care facilities is concerned it has been noted that in all the C.D. Blocks more than 50% of the respondents have expressed their complete approval in this context as well (Fig.-3 & 4). During the in-depth interview, Nimita Maity, a 55-year-old woman living in Gobindapur village in Pandabeswar C.D. Block expressed for basic health care needs the women of the

villages usually go to the local primary health centre accompanied by any of the family members. She lives with her husband, two daughter-in-laws and sons. She got her daughter married as soon as she attained the legal age of marriage and did not continue her higher education as she felt the hidden societal pressure of getting her daughter married. She and her husband, approves their both of the daughter-in-laws to go out as they are part of a self help group only after they have finished their household responsibilities. Usually, both the daughter-in-laws on alternate days go out to fetch the drinking water.

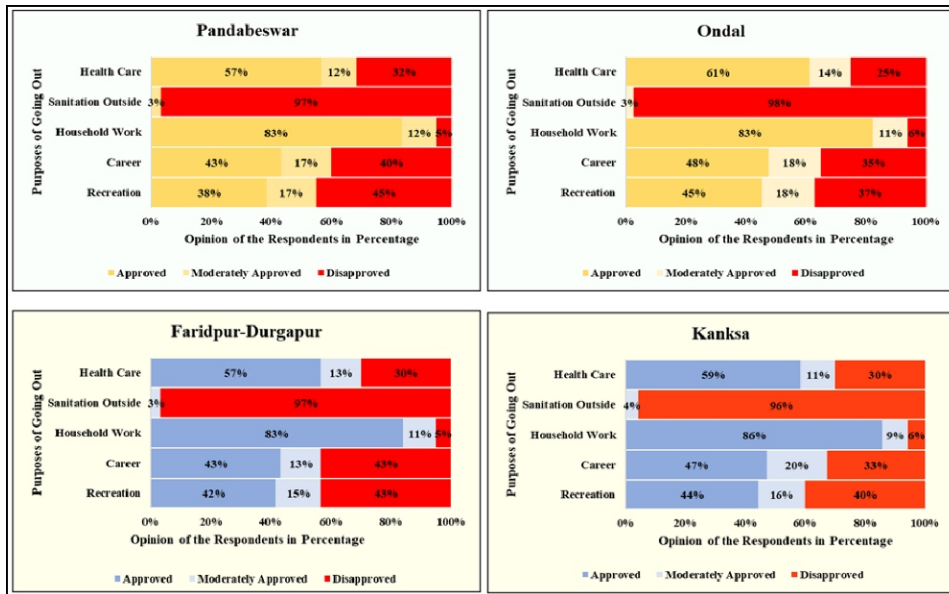


Fig.-4 : Perception Chart of the Study Area, Data Source : Primary Survey

As far as women going out for household needs were concerned, the respondents approved it as many outdoor household works such as going out to fetch drinking water or washing clothes and utensils in nearby ponds were to be done by women. Most of the respondents including women also considered that household works are to be done by women only.

However, it seemed that the respondents attached less significance to a considerable extent on the necessity of women going out for recreation. The approvals that came for women going out for recreation mainly meant letting women go out to visit their parent’s homes in case of married women and for unmarried girls recreation was mainly confined to going out of their house to neighbour’s house or meeting other girls within the close proximity of their house.

The perception of the respondents on various categories of women going out alone were also taken. Women were categorized as adolescent girls, married women and old women. The status of approval on the various categories of women going out alone shows that throughout the study area, majority of the respondents approved of old women going out alone (Fig 5 & 6). Majority of the respondents approved of old women going out alone because they held the viewpoint that the going out of homes of old women implied that they mainly stayed within their village and in close proximity of their houses. Moreover, the family members did not attach much importance on imposing restrictions on old women going out alone as they were not scared of the judgemental mindset of the society. Those who disapproved of old women going out alone were mainly concerned about the health issues of the old women as going out alone may not be safe in case the old woman feels sick due to old age-related health issues.

As far as going out alone of married women and adolescent girls are concerned it came to light in both the cases the main cause of disapproval came citing safety and security. However, the judgemental views of the society seemed to play a more important role in creating restrictions of outdoor movement of adolescent girls to a greater extent than the married women. The families of the adolescent girls were of the opinion that if they allow their young

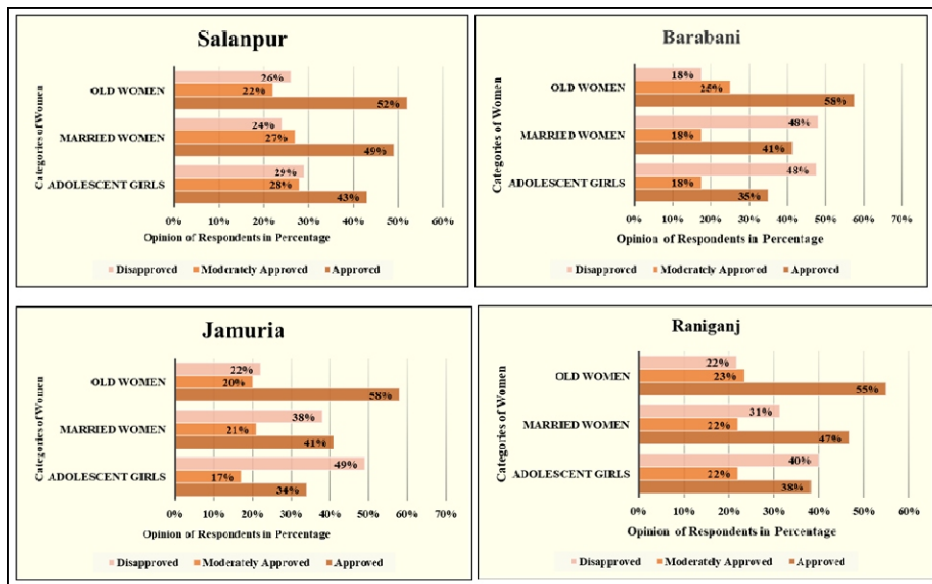


Fig.-5 : Perception of Community on Various Categories of women going out alone in the Study Area, Data Source : Primary Survey

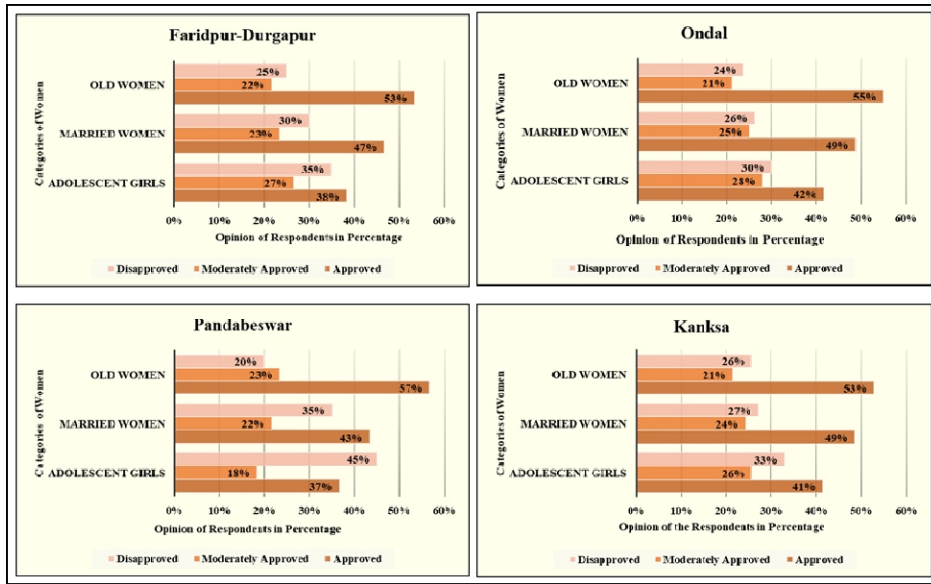


Fig.-6 : Perception of Community on Various Categories of women going out unaccompanied by Men in the Study Area, Data

Source : Primary Survey

girls to go out alone then it may bring dishonour to the family and they might also face problems in getting the girl married. Most of the respondents were not in favour of girls and married woman going out alone after sunset citing safety and security concerns. A significant proportion of disapproval came for married women as the respondents cited that married women suffer from time poverty and hence they disapproved of married women’s going out and not only their going out alone.

3-1 Case Studies

In order to understand the status of women’s mobility in the study area, some of the in-depth interviews are presented here as case studies. The in-depth interviews of a variety of respondents are presented here in order to get a diverse view of the mentality of all members of the society irrespective of age, gender, working status etc.

Sri Laxmi Bauri aged 36 years is a daily labour. He lives in Barabani village in Barabani C.D. Block. His family comprises of his parents, two children and wife. His daughter studies in standard 7 and his son in standard 4. He got his daughter enrolled in a nearby government school. He opined that household chores are sole responsibilities of a woman and hence he said that from a young age

only a girl should learn all the household works. So, his daughter is made to perform some household works before she could go for her school. Moreover, he furthered said he is providing his daughter with basic education as that will help in getting a good groom for her. Respondents like Laxmi Bauri approved of mobility of women when the aim of the outdoor movement of women meant going out for various household chores like washing clothes in the nearby pond or fetching drinking water. However, going out for their own needs like going out to work or going out for their own career needs were not quite approved by these kinds of respondents. However, some respondents like Subrata Saha who by profession is a carpenter living in Gaidhoba Village in Ondal C.D. Block holds a different mentality. He lives with his parents, wife, two daughters and a son. He always wanted to impart education to all his children. But he was compelled to get his elder daughter married off when she attained her legal age of marriage due to financial crisis and during her education days there were hardly any scholarships meant for girl child. But due to the availability of various scholarships from both the central and state government he is able to continue education of his younger daughter and his son. His daughter even got a cycle from the government under a scheme meant for which has eased her communication to the school. She studies in final year of school. He wants his daughter to become independent and to achieve that education is the only way he opined. As far as her outdoor mobility is concerned, he does not impose any restriction on her movement but only he does not allow her to stay outside post sunset due to safety and security concerns. However, he also stated that free mobility of woman is to a certain extent governed by the judgemental views of the society as the parents like Subrata Saha are gripped by the fear of facing difficulties in getting their girls married.

Padma Bauri aged 25 years lives in Ethora Village of Salanpur C.D. Block. She got married when she got attained 20 years of age as her father's financial condition was not sufficient enough to bear her expenses. She lives with her in-laws and her husband. She said that she completed her higher secondary education after which her family did not allow her to study further as the higher education institution is located at a distance from her father's home. However, her in-laws family is very supportive as they have allowed her to work so that she could earn some money for herself. She works with a local self help group where she goes everyday in the afternoon. Her

husband helps her in fetching the drinking water for their family. The household chores are shared between her and her mother-in-law but she tried to do most of the household works as she is gripped by the notion that in order to become a 'good daughter-in-law' she has to prove herself proficient in household works. As far as daily mobility is concerned, she stated that within the village she moves alone but while going to places that are far away from her home her husband accompanies her citing safety concerns.

4. Major Findings

In the rural areas, it seems that most of the people attach a lot of importance to the opinion of the society when it comes to taking decisions regarding the women of the families. As free mobility is to a certain essential for getting access to some of the basic services like education, health care etc. hence mobility of women has an important role to play to a considerable extent for liberation and empowerment of women. But often, free outdoor movement of women is met with certain restrictions specially in the rural areas. In the rural areas of ADPA, it has been noted that during the in-depth interviews many respondents stated that they are bound to attach importance to the mindset and view points of the society as even these days also women are considered as the flagbearers of the honour of the family. Hence, those women who have to stay outside for late hours or have to travel long distances for their career needs are often stigmatized by the society as 'unwise' and specially for unmarried girls the families are more gripped by this fear as they are gripped by the fear that they might face difficulties in getting their daughters married. So, from this fear many often do not let their daughters go out to pursue higher education if that requires them to travel to a long distance.

It has been observed that as far as mobility of the old women is concerned there is hardly any restriction on their free movement. The primary cause of restriction of any kind has been concerns over health issues. For married women also the movement within the close proximity of the house hardly meets with any restriction. Most of the married women are allowed to go out for their own career related works only after they have finished doing all their household responsibilities. But it has been noted during the survey that most of the women suffer from time poverty specially those who work hence, women cannot afford to undertake journeys that required lot of time

to reach the destination so mostly they have confined their works to the local Self-Help Groups. The adolescent girls face most of the restrictions in their outdoor movement as they most of the families are concerned about their safety and also about the judgement of the society.

During the survey, it has been noted that the various governmental schemes meant specially for the upliftment of women and girls plays a considerable role in empowering women. Many of the families even admitted that the governmental schemes have helped them in the continuing the higher studies of their daughters.

5. Suggestions

In the rural areas of ADPA, it has been noted that decisions related to outdoor activities of women are largely governed by the mindset of the society. Hence, a liberal society will play a positive role in elevating the status of women and in improving the mobility of women. Widescale awareness programmes in compliance with the governmental rules and regulations might be beneficial for broadening the mindset of the community members. They must be made aware of the necessity of free mobility of women as it is extremely important for empowering women through providing them with access to basic amenities essential for upliftment of condition of women. Apart from this the level of safety and security for women should be improved so that the families do not feel scared in letting the female members go out alone.

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Change through Education among Scheduled Castes and Emerging Problems : A Sociological Study

Rakesh Kumar*

Scheduled castes have been deprived the equal opportunities to get education in caste-based Indian society as a result of problem of untouchability and caste discrimination. Education plays not only important role in uplifting the socio-economic level of the Scheduled Castes but also, it awards them an opportunity to face the problems in better way compared to the illiterate segment of the depressed section of the society. This paper analyzes some features of social change associated with the advance of education among the Scheduled Castes and emerging problems. It has been shown that without education we can't think of a civilized modern society when no body suffers on the account of untouchability, poverty, awareness and caste indiscrimination.

[**Keywords** : Scheduled Castes, Change, Education, Untouchability, Caste indiscrimination]

1. Introduction

Scheduled Castes are a marginalized and segregated group in Indian society. They are still economically poor and backward, social

* Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Rajesh Pilot Mahavidyalaya, Loni, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh (India) E-mail: <rakesh2011jan@gmail.com>

segregated and politically suppressed section of society in India. Education is considered a key instrument for the over all development of the any social group in society. M. S. A. Rao (1972 : 131-132) considered that education is major determinate and contributing factor in socialization of the younger generation which influences their values, attitudes and norms of behaviour accepted in the society to which they belong as passing of the forms of knowledge, skills of occupational and other techniques. Therefore education is important for improvement of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, confidence motivation, social change as well as development of Scheduled Castes. Durkheim and Parsons have also considered that education is a major factor for social change. (Bottomore, 1970). A number of sociologists accepted that education is an important factor for overall development in the society. Number of people who belong to Scheduled Castes are getting education but all people who are getting education are not getting better academic achievements and job opportunities in the society. There are numerous of problems for the overall development of Scheduled Castes because they come largely from rural background, lower social status, poor economic condition, politically and mentally suppressed. Poverty is the basic problem for the development of Scheduled Castes. Keeping in mind all such factors about Scheduled Castes and changes that are taking place, it is called for to take stock of the extent and degree of education and their problems. C. Parvathamma (1984 : 191-211). Considers that education has not reached the bulk of Scheduled Castes staying in villages because of poverty, ignorance and lack of knowledge about existing facilities, absence of compulsory education in primary and secondary levels and the traditional apathy for education, on account of social and environmental conditional and occupational handicaps.

G. Shah (2000 : 30) the term 'Scheduled Castes' is primarily an administrative category, used in the Constitution of India. They are castes identified by the President of India, under Article 431, and put under a schedule. The term was used for the first time by the British Government in the Government of India Act, 1935. Before, this some of these classes were labeled a 'depressed classes', the term was used for the first time in the beginning of this century. Sociologically speaking, the castes which suffered the stigma of untouchability and were considered *ati-sudaras* or *varna*, i.e. beyond the pale of Hindu Caste structure are now generally known as Scheduled Castes. How

ever, all ex-untouchables do not find place in the 'Schedule' and all castes under the scheduled did not experience equal degree of 'untouchability' in the near distant past.

Jaiswal (2002 : 129-136) says that those people belonging to the last varna namely the Sudra and Avarna include many caste groups which have suffered social, economic and political inequality since the ages. Particularly those people who were outside the Varna system were known as Avarna or Sudra (Now Scheduled Castes), they were external in the sense that they were required to stay outside the village settlement. The concept of pollution was attached to them and they were treated as untouchable castes. These untouchable castes in India were officially defined as depressed castes in 1932. Gandhi named them Harijans where Hari means God, Jan means people and thus Harijan means people of God. The expression Scheduled Castes was first coined by the Simmon Commission and embodied in the Government of India. Act, of 1935 while the castes were listed systematically in the 1931 census of India. The term Scheduled Castes was applied to these castes for the first time in the Government of India Act, 1935. Until then they were know as untouchables depressed classes, or exterior castes. Then the Government of India published a list of Scheduled Castes under the Government of India (SC) order, 1936.

Various social reformers as also the British government stressed upon spread of education among the weaker section of society in the early part of nineteenth century. Their efforts resulted in many schools being established in Dalit area. Jyotiba Phuyale and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar in the initial stage of Dalit movement realized this and worked towards creating facilities for advancement of Dalit education. G. Shah (2002 : 52-55) observed that the effects of education among the Scheduled Castes linked to student-parent relationship have been diverse in nature due to prevalent difference of attitude and value. From the angle of the family education in the younger generation makes a larger gap in the knowledge of the parents and the children. This gap is widening due to the conflict between tradition and modernity as the young education ones from very radical attitude against the prescribed caste norms while the older generations of the Scheduled Castes are still bearing the backlog of traditions in terms of purity and pollution, superiority and inferiority. This would mean greater problems of adjustment among

the uneducated parents and their educated children but this gap may be less conflicting for the third generation of the Scheduled Castes.

S. Patwardhan (1973 : 80-84) Finds that the Scheduled Castes gave more importance to occupation than education. In childhood itself they began to practice work on field and earn money, hence their lack of interest in schooling.

L. P. Vidyarthi and N. Mishra (1977 : 105-109) have observed that the benefits to be derived from education are realized by the Scheduled Castes also, because those who are educated are engaged in some service or gainful occupation and leading comfortable lives. Despite their good feeling about education they are however forced not to educate their children. Though the government provided free education and also stipends to Scheduled Castes pupils, yet due to their generally wretched economic condition they cannot set their children to school. They are facing a number of problems and all problems are concentrated in their poverty.

Many such social researchers, and scientists highlight that the Scheduled Castes population is achieving education and education plays an important role in getting higher status. So education can play important role in the overall social development of Scheduled Castes. The Indian constitution and thereby national government and state government provide special educational opportunities for them.

2. Constitutional Safeguards/Provisions for Scheduled Castes

The Constitution of India prescribes protection and safeguards for Scheduled Castes either especially or by the way of insisting on their rights as citizens with the object of promoting their educational and economic interests and removing social disabilities. (Paswan and P. Jaideva, 2002)

The main safeguards are :

In the Form of Fundamental Rights :

- » **Article 15** : Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste.
- » **Article 15 (2)** : Removal of any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to (a) access to shops, public restaurants, hostels and places of public entertainment.

- » **Article 15 (2)(b)** : The use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of state funds or dedicated to the use of the general public.
- » **Article 15 (4)** : Nothing in article (15) or in clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement or any socially or educationally backward classes or for the Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes.
- » **Article 17** : Abolition of untouchability and forbidding its practice in any form and making it any offence punishable by law.
- » **Article 23** : Prohibition of traffic in human beings and beggar or forced labour.
- » **Article 25 (2)** : Providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of Hindu.
- » **Article 29** : The constitution provides that no citizen shall be denied admission to any educational institutions maintained by the state or receiving aid, out of the state funds or grounds only on religion, race caste, language or only of them.

In Form of Directive Principles of State Policy :

- » **Article 38** : **State to secure a social order for the promotion of the welfare of the people.**
- » **Article 46** : Promotion of educational and economic interests of SC, STs and other weaker sections and their protection from social injustice and all form of exploitations.

Other Constitutional Provisions :

- » **Article 330** : Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribe in the house of the people.
- » **Article 332** : Reservation of Scheduled Castes Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the states.
- » **Article 334** : Reservation of seats and special representation to cease after thirty years.
- » **Article 335** : Claims of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes etc.
- » **Article 341 (1)** : The president (in consultation with the Governor in case of states) may by public notification specify

castes, races or tribes or parts of or groups within castes races or tribes as Scheduled Castes in relation to that state.

Parliament may by, law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Castes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any caste, race or tribe or part of or group within any caste, race or tribe, but save as a for said a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are as follows :

1. To find out the impact of education on social life patterns of Scheduled Castes.
2. To investigate various socio-economic and other problems they face in getting education.

4. Conceptual Framework

The concepts used in this study have been operationalized as under :

1. **Education** : Durkheim defined education as “The action exercised by the older generation upon those who are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to awaken and develop in the child those physical, intellectual and moral states which are required of him both by his society as a whole and by the milieu for which he is specially destined” (Quoted by Bottomore, 19970 : 262).
2. **Scheduled Castes** : In 1935 the British passed The Government of India Act 1935, designed to give Indian provinces greater self-rule and set up a national federal structure. Reservation of seats for the Depressed Classes was incorporated into the act, which came into force in 1937. The Act brought the term ‘Scheduled Castes’ into use, and defined the group as including “such castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within castes, races or tribes, which appear to His Majesty in Council to correspond to the classes of persons formerly known as the ‘Depressed Classes’, as His Majesty in Council may prefer.” This discretionary definition was clarified in The Government of India (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1936 which contained a list, or Schedule, of castes throughout the British administered provinces.

The term Scheduled Castes is defined under Article-336 (clause-24) read with Article-341 of the constitution. The Article 366 states : "Scheduled Castes mean such castes, races or tribes or parts or groups with in such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 341 to be Scheduled Castes for the purpose of this constitution". The definition of the term Scheduled Castes given under clause-24 of the Article-366 is not self-contained definition. It provides for the deeming clause as only such castes, races or tribes or part or a groups with in such castes, races of tribes as are deemed under Article-341 to be Scheduled Castes.

5. Theoretical Perspective

To observe historical and educational background of Scheduled Castes, historical approach has been used. To analyses the consequences or impact of education and social change among Scheduled Castes and Sub-Castes. Structural-functional approach appears has been helpful. Thus, the study has been make use of structural-functional approach to observe the background and impact of education and social change among Scheduled Castes of Sub-Castes in terms of educational, occupational, economic and social and educational problems aspects of Scheduled Castes. The rural urban continuum perspective has been also used in the study. All these aspects have been studied in a rural and in an urban (Town) area, thus the study have been making use of comparative approach as well.

6. The Methodology

The Wair village and Dankaur town are two different settings, from where a number of Scheduled Castes have shown social change among Scheduled Castes. Thus, at the first stage, some cases are identified who have shown educational, occupational, economic, social and educational problems: Specific intensive field work has been undertaken in two settings village and the urban (town) area, about 100 families . Empirical data have been collected with the help of specific research technique like observation, interview, personal records and secondary records. Secondary records have been consulted from the local, Block and District head quarters and other government's records. Quasi participant observation and case study methods have been used for the collection of first hand data.

7. An Overview of Literature

The meaning of education in common usage, that education is merely the delivery of knowledge, skills and information from teachers to students, is inadequate to capture what is really important about being and becoming educated.

Marshall Gordon (1998 : 182-183) says, that education is a philosophical as well as a sociological concept, denoting ideologies, crucial and pedagogical techniques of the inculcation and management of knowledge and the social reproduction of personalities and cultures. In practice, the sociology of education is mostly concerned with schooling: and especially the mass schooling systems of modern industrial societies, including the expansion of higher further, adult and continuing education. School organization pedagogy has drawn upon at least four competing education philosophies elitist are platonian, open are encyclopedic; vocational; and civic (as exemplified by American pragmatist education for democracy and the polytechnic school system of Marxist state socialism) Sociologists argue that the power structure and need of individual societies determine which of these is emphasized.

N. K. Singhi (1979 : 20-85) considers that education is an important indicator of social status. Education influences the process of social change amongst Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people. Social change in the context of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes categories imply creating conditions through such appropriate means where by these people do not continue to remain derived neither due to their status-ascription nor due to any institutionalized disabilities.

Purbi Nandi finds that education exerts a strong effect on fertility that is the rate of fertility performance increase with the rise in the level of education. The study suggested that illiteracy or very little education helps to raise the level of fertility. Therefore, investment towards mass primary education does not appear beneficial. Hence, investment towards mass higher education may, in the long run help to reduce fertility (Quoted by Makhan Jha, (1997 : 65-78).

Uma Ramaswamy (1969 : 1153-1158) finds that the Scheduled Castes have left behind their traditional occupations, whether it be scavenging, Leather work, agriculture labour, their entry into salaried occupations, particularly government service, and their

exploitation of educational opportunities. The Scheduled Castes continue over while mainly in their traditional occupations in rural areas. Even in the urban areas only a fraction of the posts in the administration which are reserved for them are actually filled. Similarly, they are still steeped in illiteracy and only a small proportion of the population of school going age actually attends school completion of formal education even up to the secondary level in negligible.

A. R. Kamat (1981 : 1270-1283) considers that some features of social change associated with the advancement of education among the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes during the post-independence period. These changes are taking place in their three constituent's changes within the segment of SC/ST; changes in the wider caste Hindu Society, and changes in the inter-relations between caste Hindu society and SC/ST segment. The discussion of inter-relation between the Scheduled Castes and caste Hindu society touches mainly upon the problem of untouchability and caste discrimination while in the case of SC/ST, the problem of transition from isolation and backwardness to assimilation into and greater interaction with the rest of Indian society to touch upon.

N. J. Usha Rao (1983 : 164-179) observes that the role of education as a catalyst or agent of social change has been well recognized education is said to determine the level of aspirations technology, productivity efficiency etc. Which constitute some of the basic factors in the process of development? The role of education in the all round of a community, economically, socially or culturally hardly needs to be emphasized. Education is beginning increasingly regards as an important instrument of social change.

Sachchidananda (1976 : 135-210) observes that urbanization, because of improved economic, social and political position, decreased influence of caste disabilities and together with the new government policies which provided to be as an effective force the change in their style of life.

8. Change through Education and Problems among Scheduled Castes

Empirical evidence collected for this study has been presented in following sub-heads :

8-1 Change in Social Life Patterns

Education is considered as the most influential agent of change in social life and social relations with high caste. This has been observed in social life patterns. Education is also considered to key of economic growth and economic development. It has also become a prestigious issue among the high caste families compared with low caste society.

In this area, we find out the change in social life patterns in terms of - voting behaviour, choice of mate selection, commensality with caste, intercaste marriage, awareness about educational facilities, reservation of post, knowledge of policies and Constitutional provisions and impact of educational as well as reservation policy.

Voting Behaviour : After declaring adult Franchise, voting behaviour is an important that can determine their participation in politics. After independent this particular caste taking participation more and more in politics. It has also been found they are voting on the name of caste and religion, which is not going to be fruitful for the well being of state and nation.

Table-1 : Voting Behaviour of the Scheduled Castes Respondents

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Voting Behaviour			No. of Respo.
		Independent Decision	With Discussion	No Interest	
1.	Jatav	20	05	02	27
2.	Dhobi	09	13	03	25
3.	Valmiki	06	16	04	26
4.	Kori	03	14	5	22
Total		38	48	14	100

The above table shows that 38% of the respondents, who take independent decision in their voting behaviour, among them 20% are Jatav Caste, 9% are Dhobi Caste, 6% are Valmiki Caste and 3% belong to the Kori Caste.

Among 48% of the respondents give vote with after discussion 5% belong to the Jatav Caste, 13% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 16% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 14% belong to the Kori Caste. 14% of the respondents do not take interests in voting behaviour, among

them 2% belong to the Jatav Caste, 3% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 4% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 5% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest segment (20%) of the Jatav Caste respondents who take independent decision in voting behaviour and vary small (2%) of the Jatav Caste respondents who do not take interests in voting behaviour.

Mate Selection : Mate Selection is an important variable that can measure the freedom of a person that can reflect their martial life. If a male is unmarried he felt himself more free to do something more productive while if he is married, more responsible for the society.

Table-2 : Mate Selection of the Scheduled Caste Respondents

S. No.	Scheduled Caste/ Sub-Caste	Mate Selection			No. of Respo.
		Independent Decision	Joint Consultation	Completely Depend on Parents	
1.	Jatav	08	12	07	27
2.	Dhobi	01	04	20	25
3.	Valmiki	00	02	24	26
4.	Kori	00	00	22	22
Total		09	18	73	100

The above table shows that 9% of the respondents took or will take their decision on freely in selection of their mate who are, among them 8% belong to the Jatav Caste, 1% belongs to the Dhobi Caste and no one belongs to the Valmiki Caste as well as in Kori Caste. 18% of the respondents took or will take their decision with consult of their other family member in mate selection, among them 12% belong to the Jatav Caste, 4% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 2% belong to the Valmiki Caste and no one belongs to the Kori Caste.

73% of the respondents completely depend on parents decision of mate selection, among them 7% belong to the Jatav Caste, 20% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 24% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 22% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest segment (24%) of the Valmiki Caste respondents took or will take their decision about

mate selection completely depend on parents and very small number (1%) of the Dhobi Caste respondent takes independent decision in mate selection.

Commensality : We have used commensality referring to interaction of the Scheduled Castes with other caste specifically with high caste on the social and auspicious festivals.

Tables-3 : Commensality of the Scheduled Castes Respondents in Social and Auspicious Festivals

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Commensality in terms of Economic Level			No. of Respo.
		With Higher Castes	With Equal Castes	With Lower Castes	
1.	Jatav	10	15	02	27
2.	Dhobi	02	21	02	25
3.	Valmiki	00	26	00	26
4.	Kori	00	21	01	22
Total		12	83	05	100

The above table shows that 12% of the respondents have Commensality in festival and social auspicious with high caste, among them 10% belong to the Jatav Caste and 2% belong to the Dhobi Caste and no one belongs to the Valmiki Caste as well as in Kori Caste. 83% of the respondents have Commensality with equal caste, among them 15% belong to the Jatav Caste 21% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 26% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 21% belong to the Kori Caste.

Only 5% of the respondents have Commensality with lower caste, among them 2% belong to the Jatav Caste, 2% belong to Dhobi, 1% belongs to the Kori Caste and no one to belongs to the Valmiki Caste.

Thus, the facts show that largest number (26%) of the Valmiki Caste respondents have commensality with equal Caste and very small (1%) of the Kori Caste respondent has commensality with lower Caste and no one of the respondent has commensality with high castes in Valmiki Caste as well as in Kori Caste.

Intercaste Marriage : Inter-caste Marriage is most significant variable that can improve their social relation with another castes. Now the scene has been changed that the high caste family are going to join with Schedule Caste to take the right of reservation so that they may take jobs in government sector.

Table-4 : Preferences of the Scheduled Castes Respondents on Intercaste Marriage

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Intercaste Marriage		No. of Respo.
		Yes	No	
1.	Jatav	5	21	27
2.	Dhobi	01	24	25
3.	Valmiki	00	26	26
4.	Kori	00	22	22
Total		06	94	100

The above table shows that 6% of the respondents prefer to intercaste marriage, among them 5% belong to the Jatav Caste, 1% belongs to the Dhobi Caste and no one belongs to the Valmiki Caste as well as in Kori Caste.

Among 94% of the respondents who do not prefer intercaste marriage, 21% belong to the Jatav Caste, 24% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 26% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 22% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest segment (26%) of the Valmiki respondents do not prefer intercaste marriage and very small section (11%) of the Dhobi Caste respondent have prefer intercaste marriage.

Educational Facilities : Government has provided reservation in educational facilities for Scheduled Castes in terms of scholarship and fee concessions, reservation of seats in schools/colleges/professional courses, free education and dress, educational material, meals at various levels, remedial coaching etc. leading to increasing number of Scheduled Castes in educational institutions. This has also subsequently led to an increasing literacy rate among them. However, it depends on the knowledge and awareness about these facilities and actually availing them.

Table-6 : reservation in educational facilities for Scheduled Castes

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Knowledge of Educational Facilities		No. of Respo.
		Yes	No	
1.	Jatav	15	12	27
2.	Dhobi	08	17	25
3.	Valmiki	04	22	26
4.	Kori	03	19	22
Total		30	70	100

The above table shows that 30% of the respondents have knowledge about four educational facilities, among them 15% belong to the Jatav Caste, 8% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 4% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 3% belong to the Kori Caste.

Among 70% of the respondents have no knowledge about the educational facilities, 12% belong to the Jatav Caste, 17% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 22% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 19% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest segment (22%) of the Valmiki Caste respondents have no knowledge about educational facilities and very small number (3%) of the Kori Caste respondents have knowledge about educational facilities.

Reservation in Government Service : Mostly Scheduled Castes people were from poor family background. So the educated people always aspire for better jobs through education for a better future. The present day job reservations have generated a new hope and better opportunities to acquire education in order to rise up. But it has also been observed that facilities are going to be in non productive directions. These lower caste assume that it is their fundamental right to take assets from the government and enjoy it for their personal life.

The above table shows that 62% of the respondents have knowledge about three facilities and reservation in Government service like reservation of seat, age relaxation, percentage relaxation, among them 21% belong to the Jatav Caste, 15% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 14% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 12% belong to the Kori Caste. 38% of the respondents have no knowledge about the facilities

Table-7 : Knowledge of Scheduled Castes Respondents about Reservation in Government Jobs, Reservation of Seats, Age Relaxation, Percentage Relaxation

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Knowledge about Reservation		No. of Respo.
		Yes	No	
1.	Jatav	21	06	27
2.	Dhobi	15	10	25
3.	Valmiki	14	12	26
4.	Kori	12	10	22
Total		62	38	100

and reservation in Government service, among them 6% belong to the Jatav Caste, 10% belong to Dhobi, 12% belong to Valmiki and 10% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest segment (21%) of the Jatav Caste respondents have knowledge about facilities and reservation in Govt. Service and small number (6%) of the Jatav Caste respondents have no knowledge of reservation in Govt. Service.

Reservation Policies and Constitutional Provisions : The essential character of development of the Scheduled Castes, democratic politics and the state perspective on the problem of deprivation and social justice as well as policies and programmes, undertaken specifically to uplift them. It is also observed that the academic of Scheduled Caste is very poor and it has partiality with high Caste families.

The following table depicts data on the Knowledge of Scheduled Castes Respondents about the constitutional provisions such as Untouchability Act, Protective Discrimination, Civil Right Act, socio-economic and educational upliftment of Scheduled Castes :

The above table shows that 45% of the respondents have knowledge about four Constitutional provisions, among them 18% belong to the Jatav Caste, 11% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 6% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 10% belong to the Kori Caste.

Table-8 : Knowledge of Scheduled Castes Respondents about the Constitutional Provisions

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Knowledge about Constitutional Provisions		No. of Respo.
		Yes	No	
1.	Jatav	18	09	27
2.	Dhobi	11	14	25
3.	Valmiki	06	20	26
4.	Kori	10	12	22
Total		45	55	100

55% of the respondents have no knowledge about the Constitutional provisions among them 9% belong to the Jatav Caste, 14% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 20% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 12% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest number (20%) of the Valmiki Caste respondents have no knowledge about Constitutional provisions as protective discrimination untouchability act, upliftment of Scheduled Castes social, economic educational and civil right act. And the lowest (6%) of the Valmiki Caste respondents have knowledge about Constitutional provisions.

Impact of Educational and Reservation Policy : The Constitutional safeguards have been provided to protect and to promote their interests, numerous schemes and programmes are being implemented to bring about desired changes in their social, economic and educational conditions.

Table-9 : Impact of these Reservation Policies on Scheduled Castes Respondents

S. No.	S.Cs/ Sub-Caste	Impact of Reservation Policy			No. of Respo.
		Better	Less Impact	No Change	
1.	Jatav	19	05	03	27
2.	Dhobi	12	08	05	25
3.	Valmiki	04	06	16	26
4.	Kori	02	07	13	22
Total		37	26	37	100

Table-9 shows that 37% of the respondents says that through these educational and reservation policy the Scheduled Castes' social, economic and educational, condition are better in comparison to past time, among them 19% belong to the Jatav Caste, 12% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 4% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 2% belong to the Kori Caste. 26% of the respondents say that there is less impact on these facilities, among them 5% belong to the Jatav Caste, 8% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 6% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 7% belong to the Kori Caste.

Among 37% of the respondents say that no impact of these facilities, 3% belong to the Jatav Caste, 5% belong to the Dhobi Caste, 16% belong to the Valmiki Caste and 13% belong to the Kori Caste.

Thus, the facts show that the largest segment (19%) of the respondents who belong to the Jatav Caste say that through these educational and reservation policies have made their conditions better in society with comparison to past time and small section (2%) of the Kori Caste respondents say that better impact on their life due to these facilities.

The findings on social life patterns of Scheduled Castes shows the following results :

1. The largest number of the respondents (20 out of 27) belong to the Jatav Caste who take independent decision in voting behaviour and very small number (2 out of 27) belong to the Jatav Caste who do not take interests in voting behaviour.
2. The majority of the respondents (24 out of 26) who belong to the Valmiki Caste took or will take their decision about mate selection completely depend on parents and only one respondent who belongs to the Dhobi Caste takes independent decision in mate selection.
3. The largest number (26 out of 26) in the Valmiki Caste respondents have commensality with equal Caste and very small number (1 out of 25) of the Kori Caste respondent has commensality with lower caste and no one of the respondents has commensality with high caste in Valmikies as well as Kori Caste.
4. The Majority of the respondents (26 out of 26) who belong to the Valmiki Caste do not prefer intercaste marriage and very small only one of the Dhobi Caste respondent has preferred intercaste marriage.

5. The largest numbers (22 out of 26) of the Valmiki Caste respondents have no knowledge about educational facilities and small number (3 out of 22) of the Kori Caste have knowledge about the educational facilities.
6. The Majority (21 out of 27) of the Jatav Caste respondents have knowledge of reservation in Govt. service and small number (6 out of 27) of the Jatav Caste have no knowledge of reservation in Govt. service.
7. The largest numbers (20 out of 26) of the Valmiki Caste respondents have no knowledge about Constitutional provisions and small number (6 out of 26) of the Valmiki Caste have knowledge about Constitutional provisions.
8. The Majority (19 out of 27) of the Jatav Caste respondents feel that through educational facilities and reservation policies have made their conditions better in society with comparison to past time and very small number (2 out of 22) of the Kori Caste respondents say better impact on their life due to the educational facilities and reservation policy.

Comparison of social life patterns in two Settings shows the following facts :

1. In the both areas, the Jatav Caste shown independent decision in voting behaviour in comparison to other Scheduled Castes.
2. In both areas the Valmiki Caste take their decision about mate selection completely dependence on parents' decision, and other Scheduled Castes have shown independent decision in mate selection specially in Jatavs.
3. In both areas, Valmiki Caste has commensality with equal caste while other Scheduled Castes have shown that they have commensality with high caste.
4. In Both areas, the Valmiki Caste do not prefer intercaste marriage, but other peoples have shown preference to intercaste marriage particular in Jatav Caste.
5. In the both areas, the Valmiki Caste has no knowledge about the educational facilities and other Scheduled Castes have shown they have knowledge about the educational facilities maximum in Jatavas.
6. In both areas, the Jatav Caste has more knowledge of reservation in Govt. Service and other people's of Scheduled Castes have some knowledge of reservation in Govt. Service.

7. In Wair village, the Valmiki Caste has no knowledge about the Constitutional provisions while in Dankaur town the Jatav as have knowledge about the Constitutional provision and other people have shown that they have some knowledge about the Constitutional provisions.
8. In both areas, the Jatav Caste has feel that educational facilities and reservation policy made better conditions in society in comparison to the past time while some other Scheduled Castes feel better impact on their life.

8-2 Educational Problems of Scheduled Castes

Before independence Scheduled Castes suffered many type of problems in education. But after independence Constitutional provisions change their situation. Now a days this particular caste has awoken about their rights and they are employing them but still in some cases it has been observed they are still suffering from different kind of disease (untouchability, under employment, slavery and abusing language). In the particular caste it has been observed that the people are very poor. They have no land, no parental assets. They think to spend on education, is a worthless concept, if God has given two hand to them, the children should start earn properly as soon as possible. This study shows that as soon as the generations are being transferred from first to second and second to third, the level of thinking as well education has also changed.

In this area, we find out the socio-economic obstacles in getting education : financial, untouchability, institutional and awareness.

Educational Problems in First Generation : Before independence Scheduled Castes suffered many type of problems in education but after independence Constitutional provisions change their situation.

The following table show that problems of education in Sub-Castes of Scheduled Caste in first generation :

Table-10 : Problems in Ist Generation of Scheduled Castes Respondents

S.No.	Problems	Yes	No	Total
1.	Financial	98	2	100
2.	Untouchability	100	00	100
3.	Institutional	99	01	100
4.	Unawareness	100	00	100

Table-10 shows that 98% of the respondents had financial problem in first generation, all respondents felt one or the other problem related to the untouchability, almost all (99%) had the institutional problem and all the respondents had the problem of awareness due to which they could not get education.

Educational Problems in Second Generation : Before independence Scheduled Castes suffered many type of problems in education but after independence Constitutional provisions change their situation.

The following table show that problems of education in Sub-Castes of Scheduled Caste in second generation :

Table-11 : Problems in IInd Generation of Scheduled Castes Respondents

S.No.	Problems	Yes	No	Total
1.	Financial	91	09	100
2.	Untouchability	81	19	100
3.	Institutional	60	40	100
4.	Awareness	82	18	100

The above table shows that 91% of the respondents are related to the financial problem of Scheduled Castes in second generation, 81% respondents are related to the untouchability, 60% respondents are related to the institutional problem, 82% respondents are related to the awareness problem.

Educational Problems in Third Generation : Before independence Scheduled Castes suffered many type of problems in education but after independence Constitutional provisions change their situation.

The following table show that problems of education in Sub-Castes of Scheduled Caste in third generation :

Table-12 : Problems in IIIrd Generation of Scheduled Castes Respondents

S.No.	Problems	Yes	No	Total
1.	Financial	76	24	100
2.	Untouchability	65	35	100
3.	Institutional	20	80	100
4.	Awareness	49	51	100

The above table shows that 76% respondents are related to the financial problem in Scheduled Castes in third generation, 65% respondents are related to the untouchability, 20% respondents are related to the institutional problem, 49% respondents are related to the problem awareness of Scheduled Castes.

The findings on problems of Scheduled Castes in education show the following results :

1. In the first generation, majority of the respondents (100%) were related to the problem of untouchability as well as awareness and minority of respondents (98 out of 100) who were related to the financial problem in this generation.
2. The majority of the (91 out of 100) respondents are related to the financial problem in second generation and minority of respondents (60 out of 100) who are related to the institutional problem in this generation.
3. The majority of the respondents (76 out of 100) are related to the financial problem in third generation and minority of respondents (20 out of 100) are related to the problem of institutional in this generation.

Comparison of educational problems of Scheduled Castes in two setting shows the following facts :

1. In the both areas mostly Scheduled Castes faced the problems related to untouchability as well awareness in first generation.
2. In Both areas, the largest of the Scheduled Castes financial and untouchability problems in second generation.
3. In the both areas mostly Scheduled Castes faced the Financial Problem and awareness problems in third generation.

9. Conclusion

Education plays not only important role in uplifting the socio-economic level of the Scheduled Castes but also, it awards them an opportunity to face the problems in better way compared to the illiterate segment of the depressed section of the society. Only, education can enable them to resist the oppressive forces of the society, to secure the goal of living with dignity and prosperity. The state is promoting with special care the education and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of Scheduled Castes and shall protect them from social injustice and all

forms of exploitation. So we can say that without education we can't think of a civilized modern society when no body suffers on the account of untouchability, poverty, awareness and caste in-discrimination.

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Sexual Minority : Progressing towards a Gender-neutral Society

Beena Antony Reji*

Sexual minorities have been an integral part of Indian culture for centuries, but they have been excluded from effective participation in social, economic, political life, and decision-making processes. Indian society is opening up to this hidden community but are we really listening to their voices? Over the past ten years, there have been many changes in the legal status of sexual minority persons, but what are the ground realities? This qualitative research paper is an examination of the views, perspectives and experiences of the sexual minority persons. The study finds that the government, social activists, non-government organizations and corporate houses are all changing their perspectives and opening up to accepting sexual minorities.

[**Keywords** : Sexual minority, Transgender, LGBTQIA, Mainstreaming, Gender-neutral]

1. Introduction

As our world moves on the path of development, there are innumerable changes that we have witnessed in the past century itself. We have seen various revolutions and freedom struggles.

* Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, Aditi Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi, Delhi (India) E-mail: <breji@aditi.du.ac.in>

There have been major shifts in our political and economic world. The country boundaries have been drawn and redrawn, the nations have moved in together to form a new globalized community. Very well explained by the spread of Coronavirus, in the year 2020 within a few months the whole world was affected by a virus that originated from a city in China. The communication development is unthinkable, we are able to communicate and travel at high speed, safety, and convenience. The list of changes also includes development in medicine, agriculture, education and we have also seen the development of the marginalized population like the women population, backward communities. But there are some marginalized groups that need to be recognized and developed worldwide. One among them is the sexual minorities.

A very critiqued Book by an American biologist Alfred Kinsey way back in 1948 is '*Sexual behavior in Human Male*', one of the first books on sexual diversity, the author very beautifully explained his views on the sexual community as :

“The world is not divided into sheep and goats. Not all things are black nor all things white. It is a fundamental of taxonomy that nature rarely deals with discrete categories. Only the human mind invents categories and tries to force facts into separated pigeon-holes. The living world is a continuum in each and every one of its aspects. The sooner we learn this concerning sexuality the sooner we shall reach a sound understanding of its realities.”

So, who are the sexual minorities? Sexual minorities are those persons whose sexual orientation, identity, and practices are different from the majority of the population that inhabit our world. The sexual minorities are grouped into lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (Math & Seshadri, 2013). Though commonly referred population of sexual minorities comprise of the LGBT- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender people, newer groups are being added as the journey of understanding increases in them like queer, intersex, and asexual/agender, now the acronym being used is LGBTQIA.

The terms sexual minority, third gender, and LGBTQIA is used very interchangeably. This confusion only justifies that we need to understand this community in depth. In an article by Sharma (2014), Laxmi Narayan Tripathi, a transgender activist, very clearly shows the hierarchy within this community too, she says “We were the only

visible sexual minority under the LGBTQI, umbrella yet were treated as invisible within the community". As a researcher, the term sexual minority best explains, as an umbrella term, all the diverse sexual orientation that does not fit into the typical binary notion of man and woman.

This group of sexual minorities has been discriminated against from time immemorial. It was only after the 1970s that the American Psychiatric Association accepted that homosexuality was not a psychiatric illness (Mayer et al, 2008). Most of the religions do not accept homosexuality and thus communities have not accepted sexual minorities. This has caused great damage but the damage is already done. Now we have to deal with homophobia and even extreme criminalization of sexual minorities in many of the countries of the world.

2. The Sexual Minority Movement across the Globe

There are approximately seventy-seven countries that criminalize homosexuality (some of them are Egypt, Libya, Jordan, and Russia) and in thirteen countries homosexuality is punishable by death (some of these countries are Sudan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan). Across the world, the unrest in the sexual minority community for their rights has been in the limelight for the last three decades. The larger community to some extent has come forward to support and promote LGBT rights and have encouraged this oppressed community to raise their voices for their rights. Now we have begun discussing the evils in the form of various persecutions that are done on the sexual minorities in many countries. While in some countries, the larger community refuses to acknowledge the existence of the sexual minority in society. This is because sexual minorities fall out of the bracket of the definition of the hetero normative society - this raises an alarm! It is worth mentioning here that the stigmatization and discrimination that shackled them for centuries have deprived them of a family, education, employment, health, security, and dignity of life.

The LGBT community has come together in groups to fight for their rights that are ensured to the rest of the larger community. They ask why they are debarred from the basic right to exist in society. They have suffered this oppression because they are not in conformity with the hetero normative society that advocates the

sexual orientation of the heterosexuals as natural while that of the others as unnatural offense posing a threat to the institution of marriage and family. However, upheavals all across the world by the sexual minorities have led the government to rethink the change in policies and ensure human rights and fundamental rights so that they can lead a life like that of any other citizen of the world.

Initiatives in countries like Denmark, Finland, Australia, USA, and UK who came forward accepting the other genders and in even legalizing marriages of the same sex population have opened gates for the other countries to rethink and create the laws in order to protect these populations who have suffered and been neglected since a long time in the history of the civilization of human beings.

3. Struggle for Recognition of Sexual Minorities around the World

The sexual minorities have been suffering over the centuries by oppression and discrimination from the majority heterosexual population. In the 1530s the Buggery Act in England made homosexuality a criminal offense and also punishable by death. Even in the Islamic countries, homosexuality was punishable, even with execution. Germany in the 1870s also criminalized same-sex sexual relationships. The sexual minorities had formed groups, organizations, and clubs in the 20th century in Europe and the United States. In the 1980s with the coming of HIV and AIDS, countries were forced to recognize sexual minorities. The HIV prevention programmes of different countries including India turned their focus on the homosexual community. A lot of research and study in HIV/AIDS also brought out the sexual minority to the public domain.

4. Sexual Minorities in India

A peep into Indian literature sees a mention of the third gender in a number of texts. '*Tritiya Prakriti*' meaning the third nature in Kama Sutra an ancient Indian text written by Vyasadeva and later compiled by Vatsyayana, where there is a description of three genders according to *Prakriti* meaning nature. The three genders were named as *pums-prakriti* or males, *stri-prakriti* or females, and *Tritiya-prakriti* or the third gender. In the epic *Mahabharata*, Arjuna disguises himself in the last year of his exile as Brihannala, a eunuch (Wilhelm, 2010). Indian ancient texts like *Ramayana* also have made a

mention of the third gender. Lord Shiva one of the most revered God of the Hindu religion is also depicted merging with Parvati (his wife) where together Lord Shiva is called '*Ardhanari*' - half man and half woman.

It was after the foreign invasions in India both by Islam and Christian rulers, that the intolerance to the third gender increased. Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was introduced in the year 1860 (Modelled on the Buggery Act of 1533, prevalent in Britain) and criminalized any sexual activity 'against the order of nature'. This criminalized the sexual minorities in our country and the other countries in the Indian subcontinent under British rule. This led to the subjugation of sexual minorities. They were thrown out of their families, schools, jobs, beaten up by all, lost inheritance, slowly but surely were pushed behind closed doors. They have been excluded from effective participation in social and cultural life, economy, and political decision-making processes.

The initial literature on sexual minorities after India got Independence could be credited to Shakuntala Devi in her book *The World of Homosexuals* in the year 1977. Ansari (2019), has highlighted how Shakuntala Devi in her book tries to understand the lives of the sexual minorities who live a half-hiding life. In the 1980s individuals like Ashok Row Kavi, a journalist, is one of the first who openly declared his sexual minority status, later he set up the Humsafar Trust an LGBTQ organization in Mumbai. In 1987 the first same-sex marriage of two policewomen from Madhya Pradesh was documented. The first Gay rights protest was held in August 1992 outside the police headquarters in Delhi. In 1999 India's first Gay Pride Parade was held with just 15 persons marching down the Kolkata streets (Krishnan, 2018).

In 2001 Naz Foundation and Lawyers Collective filed a PIL, asking the court to decriminalize sex between same-sex by consenting adults, reconsidering Section 377, IPC. The favorable judgment towards the sexual minority in 2009 by Delhi High Court was overturned by the Apex court in 2013. The Supreme Court in December 2013 set aside the 2009 Delhi High Court order and criminalized same-sex sexual activity. The Apex court heard the writ petition of Navtej Jauhar, Sunil Mehra, Ritu Dalmia, Aman Nath, Keshav Suri, Ayesha Kapur, and 20 IITians, again asking for the decriminalization of consensual same-sex adults as cited in Section

377 of IPC. The five-judge bench in July 2018 partially struck down Section 377 of the IPC and decriminalized same-sex relations with consenting adults.

5. Legal Status of the 'Third Gender' in India

In a path-breaking judgment, also called the 'NALSA judgment', in April 2014, the Supreme Court has affirmed the constitutional rights and freedom of transgender persons, including those who identify as third gender (Tewari et al., 2020). By recognizing diverse gender identities, the Court has broken the binary gender construct of 'man' and 'woman' that has pervaded Indian law.

The Supreme court directed the Central and State governments to hold awareness programmes to remove the stigma against the transgender population. The Governments were asked to take steps for the advancement of the community by :

- Legal recognition of 'third gender' in all documents.
- Acknowledging the 'third gender' as 'socially and educationally backward' so reservations in educational institutions and public employment can be made.
- Offering social welfare schemes for this community.

The Indian Parliament in 2019 enacted the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. The Act defines transgender as "a person whose gender does not match with the gender assigned to that person at birth and includes trans-man or trans-woman (whether or not such person has undergone Sex Reassignment Surgery or hormone therapy or laser therapy or such other therapy), person with inter-sex variations, gender queer and person having such socio-cultural identities as *Kinner, hijra, aravani* and *jogta*."

The Act prohibits discrimination in educational, occupational, health care services, use of goods and services, purchase/rent of property and confers rights to self-perceived gender identity. The Government is bound to provide welfare programmes and promote National Council for Transgender. This Act is also widely criticized as a 'draconian and discriminatory' form of legislation by the transgender community (Goyal, 2020). This Act is a step towards equality and justice, which needs to be tested and observed over time. Research studies and dialogue with the beneficiaries are

needed to understand what are the loopholes and how to make the legislation more effective. This research study is an attempt in this direction.

6. The Rationale of the Present Study

In the past few years, in India, we have seen a major shift in the legal status of the Third gender or the sexual minority. The three landmark events that have changed the sexual minority movement for recognition and equality in Indian society has been :

- The NALSA judgment (2014).
- The decriminalization of same-sex relations with consenting adults and the partial withdrawal of Section 377 of IPC (2018).
- Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

It is important to now create awareness and sensitize the community, so that there is a conducive environment for the implementation of the landmark decisions passed by the Supreme court and the Act passed by the Indian parliament. The present study is aimed to understand the ground realities from the point of view of the most important people we are focusing on and that is the sexual minority.

If we analyze the women's movement, we have seen that even after the enactment of important social legislation for women rights like Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Immoral Traffic Prevention Act 1956, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, The Indecent Representation of Women (prohibition) Act 1986, the changes in the society is gradual as attitude changes among the general population takes time. There are issues and challenges to change the mindset of persons in the system and the general public that has been built up over centuries. That is why we still have cases of discrimination, exploitation, and abuse against women, even after so many years of talking about equality and justice.

Thus, we understand that in the case of the sexual minorities also by just legal status and an Act, our work is not yet over. Society has to work for awareness, sensitization, and then finally for equality towards all the persons in the sexual minority community. This study aims to explore the views and perspectives of the sexual minority to their status in society in the present times.

7. Objectives

The specific objectives of the present paper are as follows :

1. Understanding the changing scenario for the sexual minority persons in the past ten years, to the present times.
2. Investigating the changing facilities in the past ten years for the sexual minority in schools, colleges, health care services, and employment.
3. Exploring the attitude and relationships of this community with their families.
4. Examining ways to mainstream sexual minorities.

8. Research Questions

The research questions to be answered are as follows following :

1. How do the sexual minority see the changes in society towards them?
2. What do the sexual minority persons experience in their families?
3. What are the support groups available to them?
4. What is the attitude in schools towards sexual minorities?
5. Where do the sexual minority persons go for their health needs?
6. What is the scenario for employment for them?
7. Is there social inclusion or mainstreaming of sexual minorities?

9. Research Methodology

This research study was a qualitative investigation into the present situation of sexual minority persons in Delhi, the capital city of India. The study explored the views and experiences of the sexual minority persons in their day to day living. What are the issues and challenges they face and how do they overcome them?

9.1 Universe

The universe for the present study were persons who identify themselves from the sexual minority community in Delhi.

9.2 Sampling

Sexual minority is a hidden population that has lately been given legal status. It is only after the decriminalization of same-sex

couples that the sexual minority has now been accepted by the system to some extent. Thus, society is slowly changing but there is a long way to go. Earlier this community was exploited, discriminated against, and abused. The situation is slowly changing. So, it is still a hidden population to some extent. As this was a qualitative study and the topic was very intense and sensitive, the researcher selected a small sample, so that in-depth interviews could be done to understand the issues in detail. A sample of fifteen respondents was selected by purposive sampling with maximum variation sampling (Palinkas et al., 2015). This technique was used to understand the community better, as there was wide variation due to socio-economic background, education, rural-urban differences, and the differences due to the regional background of the sexual minority persons.

9-3 Ethical Considerations and Data Collection Methods and Process

The selected sample was carefully briefed about the study and fully explained that their responses would be confidential and used for only research purposes. The respondents were also explained that they were free to participate in the research or decline to be part of it. The respondents were selected after visiting the different NGOs working for sexual minorities in Delhi. There are a number of organizations working for the sexual minorities in a different part of Delhi cutting across different socio-economic client populations.

9-4 Limitation of the Study

This research study has been with a small sample size and in Delhi only. In the 2011 census, 4.9 lakh was the official count of the third gender, while the transgender activist claim that the number would be six to seven times higher (Nagarjan, 2014). This study has taken only a very small percentage of that number as compared to the total sexual minority population of the whole country. India is diverse from North to South of the country, covering regions like Jammu, Punjab, Haryana in the North and states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala in the south of the country. Spreading from Rajasthan in the west and states like Assam, West Bengal in the East of the country. The population in these different regions of the country is diverse. So, a study in each of these regions will be helpful in understanding the needs and challenges of the sexual minorities.

10. Findings

The present research study is an attempt to understand the changes in India in the past few years for the third gender. Since the 1980s with the advent and threat of HIV/AIDS, international agencies like WHO, United Nations Organizations, and governments of various countries were forced to recognize and acknowledge the third gender to control and prevent the spread of the deadly virus, HIV. This set a stage for further transformation for the status and identity of the sexual minority. As mentioned earlier in the past years, there has been a lot of lobbying, networking, and advocacy by the social activists and reformists for the sexual minority. In India in the last ten years the two Supreme court verdicts of the NALSA judgment in 2014, the Decriminalization of same-sex relationships with consenting adults in 2018, and the enactment of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 has brought in many modifications and amendments in the views and perspectives of the government and general public.

The researcher at first listed the most active and popular Non-government organizations that were working for the sexual minorities in Delhi, the capital city of India. Delhi was selected as the universe for the study as being a metropolis it is the most important city of north India and a hub to economic, political, and cultural activities. There are a number of organizations working tirelessly to the needs and challenges of sexual minorities. The researcher selected fifteen respondents by purposive sampling following maximum variations, so as to understand the different issues, needs, views, perspectives, and experiences of the sexual minority population.

10.1 Socio-economic Background

The fifteen respondents that were interviewed were in the age group of 20 years to 39 years. The mean age was 31 years. Most of the respondents (nine) identified themselves as Transgender, three said they were *Hijras*, another two said they were Gay and one claimed to be a Lesbian. All the respondents had moved out of their parent's house and started living with their partners or friends. The majority of them were working except one who was supported by his partner. The respondents earned between Rs 5,000/- to 40,000/- per month. With an average income of Rs19,500/- per month. One-third (5) of

them said they were from Delhi, others had migrated to Delhi from different states of the country Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu.

10.2 Changes in Society in the past ten years for the Sexual Minority Population

All fifteen respondents acknowledged that there has been a tremendous change in the past ten years for the sexual minority population. Few respondents (five) mentioned that the international countries are far ahead in the outlook and Indian society is also following in opening up to the sexual minorities. The majority felt that the sexual minority movement in India caused a big change. This social movement for sexual minorities is said to be three decades old. Various activist and organizations have worked hard and brought in major changes in the attitude of the general population and government officials. Various prominent persons from the cinema, art, and media have also supported this movement.

The majority of the respondents (ten) explained that the situation in the rural regions is not good. The big cities have opened up to accept the sexual minorities, but if we move to the smaller cities or to the villages the persons from the other genders are not accepted at all. So, there is a migration to the bigger cities. One of the respondents from Rajasthan said “It was impossible to live in my hometown, as everyone insulted and humiliated me, boys would call me names and throw stones on me, so I came to Delhi to get lost in the crowd of the big city”.

Respondents also mentioned the difference in the situation in the wide cultural disparity in our big country. The problems faced by sexual minorities are similar in the whole country. There is a difference in the intensity of the problems. The states in the north and west of India like in Haryana, Rajasthan the situation is hostile and discriminating. The changes of the outside society are not percolating into these states, as compared to the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra. The eastern states like West Bengal, Sikkim, and Manipur also are a shade better and adopting new progressive measures as compared to north India. One of the respondents from Tamil Nadu said that in the southern states there is no culture of ‘*bhadai*’ (the sexual minorities, especially the *Hijras* traditionally live in groups and visit homes for offering blessings on special occasions

like marriages or childbirth by singing and dancing , for which they collect money and sometimes gifts too), so the sexual minorities work or get into jobs to earn a living. Another respondent added that “the education levels of the people in south Indian states are better so the sexual minorities also now- days become doctors, engineers, teachers and get jobs”.

The majority of the respondents (eleven) reported that in the present times more and more people are able to come out and express their sexual orientation, they are able to identify and say openly that they are either transgender or gay or lesbian. One of the respondents said, “Now I have a legal status, I can openly say I am gay, I am not a criminal”. Another respondent said, “Everyone is interested to know what I am doing in my bedroom? Every individual is much more than just their sexuality?” Only one respondent replied that she is suffering and cannot see any change or improvement in society. This nineteen-year-old narrated “My parents beat me up several times, my uncle even raped me to show that I was a woman. I continued to say that I feel suffocated in a woman’s body and I am not attracted to women. My parents wanted that I get married to a man, when I did not listen to them, they threw me outside my home giving me rat poison, saying I should eat the poison and throw myself into the river. That’s how I have reached Delhi”.

The recognition of the third gender in various government and other documentation forms was a sign of relief for the sexual minority. All the respondents felt that the third gender/transgender is given as an option now. In the documentation forms for Voter Card, Aadhar Card, Banks, Railways, Life Insurance Corporation the option of third gender/transgender is found. One of the respondents said that the Indian Passport office was the first to introduce the third gender in 2005 and it was called ‘E’ standing for eunuchs. Most respondents (ten) said it is still very difficult to get various documents being the third gender. One respondent narrated that, “If we fill the Voter card saying we are the third gender, they will ask for proof. Most of the third gender persons are either thrown out of their homes or they leave their homes due to discrimination and violence against them. At that time, they were so traumatized that they didn’t think of carrying their identity proofs and thus they suffered a lot”. One respondent said “Except for a Voter card all other documents can be made if I have a letter from the NGO that I am associated with. The NGO writes on

their letterhead that I am transgender and they know me and that helped me make my Aadhar card (An identity card issued by the Government of India) and opening my bank account also”.

In mass media too, there has been a lot of change in contemporary Indian society. All respondents agreed that there is a positive change in mass media, be it in television advertisements or programmes like dance competitions and in the cinema too. The new cinema ‘Laxmii’ of the Bollywood industry with the lead role played by the most popular actor of the present time as a transgender show that times are changing. In 2019 the first beauty pageants for the sexual minority in India were organized, they then represented India at the Miss international queen.

10.3 Conditions in Health Care, Schools, and Employment for the Sexual Minority

The health care system in India is either government or private sector. All the respondents said that they go to private doctors and private hospitals for any health needs. They know of a select few doctors and private hospitals by referral from their community, that the doctors are supportive and accessible, so they all go there. While in government hospitals their forms do mention the third gender but there are no separate queues or wards or washrooms for the third gender. So, respondents say they don’t feel confident going to government hospitals.

The schools in India are categorized as Government schools run by the government (Central, state, and local) and the Private schools. All the respondents claimed that the schools are not friendly to sexual minorities. The administration, teachers, and students lack an understanding and are discriminatory, insulting, and abusive to the students who are from sexual minorities. One of the respondents explained that it is in the school years (sometimes between 12 to 15 years) that individuals are realizing their different sexual orientation. So, there is a lot of confusion and dilemmas. All the respondents felt they hardly had any good friends in school as no-one could understand their feelings. One respondent narrated that he studied in a government school in west Delhi, he confided with a teacher, the teacher in good faith declared it to the class, saying don’t tease this child but that was a big mistake as then he became the target of many boys, especially the senior boys in the school.

Few respondents (four) mentioned that there are changes now in the school after the NALSA judgment. One of the respondents working with an NGO for sexual minorities said that their NGO is closely working with schools in Delhi providing awareness and sensitization to teachers and students. Earlier they used to request schools to allow them to conduct the awareness training programmes but now schools contact them and request them to come and take awareness sessions on sexual minorities. Recently they were conducting training to teachers of government schools on sexual minorities, to be nodal teachers in schools. They were to train two teachers from a school but due to the interest shown by the teachers, they trained ten teachers from the schools. This organization will be training seven thousand government school teachers in all. While the private schools showed less interest. Fifty private schools were contacted for training their teachers, only fifteen agreed. The dropped-out schools gave excuses that they don't have time, the board members and parents will not agree. Basically, they didn't feel the importance of this matter.

For employment, the private sector is opening its doors to the sexual minority persons. All respondents acknowledged that corporate houses, multinational companies in Gurugram, and some industries like Titan, Fastrack watches are employing sexual minorities. More than half (nine) of the respondents added that those who are educated they get jobs but many of them were not able to complete schooling due to abuse and discrimination in family and schools and they were not able to get jobs. For them, the only way out is to do begging or sex work. A small number of the respondents (four) also added that begging and sex work is the only work that they know and it gives them enough money, this amount of money they would not be able to earn if they go for any office jobs. Three of the respondents called themselves *Hijras* so for them '*bhadai*' is their traditional job (offering blessings to families on auspicious occasions) which gives them respect and they like to dance and sing. They said they will never give up their traditions. The *Hijras* also complained that the newer generations don't follow traditions and because of the gated colonies, it gets difficult to visit houses now. Many NGOs also employ sexual minorities.

The government sector is also coming forward and offering employment to sexual minorities. The respondents listed out a

number of openings like Noida metro has employed only transgenders in one metro station and named it 'Pride station', Assam has offered the option of transgender for their civil servants, Ministry of social justice and empowerment has employed Transgender consultants. One of the respondents from West Bengal cited Manobi Bandopadhyay was the first Transgender college principal.

10.4 Changes in Attitude and Relationship with Family

The respondents explained that for them they had many families, one their biological family and other families of friends, partners, or guru who adopted them and gave them a home. All the respondents had moved out of their biological family houses. Only three of the respondents went back to their biological family occasionally. Another three rarely visited their families, only to give their family members some money. One respondent mentioned that his mother had informed him of his sister's wedding. The mother told the respondent that he was not to come but to send money as it was his sister's wedding. All the respondents except one were very disappointed by their biological family. Only one had an understanding family, she reported that they had also objected at first and were not ready to accept when the respondent confided that she was a lesbian. the respondent remained firm and determined and refused to give in to the parents. Ultimately the parents accepted, she lives with her partner and visits home occasionally.

All the respondents after leaving their homes faced many difficulties, but later settled with friends they had met in their journey of self-exploration. They call their new family of friends and partners their new families. Most (twelve) were happy but three reported violence even with their partners. Three of the *Hijras* live in the family with their gurus. They claimed that the *guru-chela* (leader-discipline) relationship is like a mother-child relationship. They have full loyalty to their guru.

10.5 Measure for Mainstreaming the Sexual Minorities

The scenario in the last ten years for the sexual minority has seen an ocean of changes but still, the sexual minority are still outside the mainstream population. Initiatives have been taken by the government and much more by the sexual minority movement. The activists have toiled their blood and sweat for identity and

recognition of the sexual minorities. The respondents expressed that they have been successful but more needs to be done. These recommendations of the respondents, of the steps that need to be taken, can be listed down as :

- More awareness and sensitization, so that there is a better understanding of the sexual minorities and their needs and issues.
- In schools, there must be a safe and comfortable environment with an anti-bullying committee and wash-rooms for them.
- Government hospitals must have guidelines for treating and handling them.
- Employment must be open in all sectors and also reservations so that the sexual minorities can come out of poverty and deprivation.
- Skill training for them in all areas, not just beauty culture and other stereotyped jobs.
- Helpline and helpdesk in police stations for the protection of sexual minority persons.
- Barriers in documentations removed and procuring different cards like Aadhar, Voter cards must be more accessible.
- NGOs could be funded for helping in spreading awareness, opening shelter homes, education and skill training centers.
- The National Council and State welfare boards for the sexual minorities must be more approachable and effective.

11. Conclusion

The views, perspectives, and experiences of the sexual minority persons reflect that almost all have experienced a hostile, unfriendly, and discriminative environment at home and in society at large. There are a number of NGOs, Government organizations and social activists that are all working to the recognition and upliftment of the sexual minorities in Delhi and in other parts of the country and world. The world is moving towards bridging the gap between the different genders and rising to have a gender-neutral society. The sexual minority are stimulating social thinkers to build a 'gender-fluid' society. It is important to blend the population, the

categories of 'he', 'she', or 'it' can be changed to have a 'Ze' society, which is a gender-neutral community. Society has made so many rules for- do and don't to fit each gender type. As society is opening up to the sexual minority there are various important steps to be taken so that the sexual minority are able to live life freely like facilities as simple as restrooms to education and employment opportunities so that we have an egalitarian and all-inclusive society.

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