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Chief Editor
Dharam Vir

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Aims and Scope

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.

Publication Schedule

The Journal of National Development is published in volumes of approximately 250-300 pages, divided into two bi-annual issues–summer and winter. Besides, a special issue in Hindi is also published every year to meet the demand of social scientists, both research scholars and teachers of Hindi speaking states of India.

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Problems and Prospects of Quality Education in Nepal

Krishna Raj Acharya*

Education is the mirror of a society and the rate of economic development depends on status and quality of education. Education is an important source of increase in productivity in human resources, definitely increase in national output. The quality of education in Nepal is poor due to absence of practical education, lack of expert manpower, poverty, geographical setting, gender bias, lack of appropriate infrastructure, illiteracy of parents and lack of appropriate government policy. In this paper attempt had diverted to explore the relationship between quality education (dependent variable) and investment in education, economic growth, teacher student ratio and qualification of teachers were taken as independent variables. The investment in education is approximately 12 percent of total budget so that the quality of education cannot be materialized according to the wish of policy makers. When there was an interview with 25 planner and 35 implementation agents regarding to the quality of education, there is the significance difference between these agents on the basis of their opinions. In their responses, it was found that they are confident in the context of contents and it is not practically used. People are not attracted in education because the job market is not sure so that they try to go abroad to earn money in early age. People are not interested because it is beyond the access of low- middle

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and low income people. There was positive relationship between investment in education and economic growth in Nepal.

[**Keywords :** Poverty, Human resources, Economic growth, Investment, Infrastructure, Education]

1. Introduction

Education is widely recognized as one of the fundamental factors contributing to the process of development. No country can achieve sustainable development without sustainable investment in human capital. It raises the people's productivity & creativity and promotes entrepreneurship & technological advances. Further, it plays a crucial role in securing economic and social progress and improving income distribution. An effective and innovative education system opens enormous opportunities for individuals, whereas weak educational system can result in declining standards of living, social exclusion and unemployment. Hence, there is a strong need to strive for excellence and quality. The 11th Plan recognized that higher growth rates would require a large expansion in both "quantity and quality" of formal education and skill formation. The Right to Education (RTE) will ensure the needed quantitative expansion to bring all the eligible school going age population into formal education stream at the elementary level. But evidences show that the key problems at the school level education are high drop-out and low retention rates. It's not just years of education that matters, the issue of quality at school level is equally important (Jain, 2014).

To reap the benefits of education to the extent possible, the policy makers need to address the dual challenge of increasing the quantity of education, while assuring the high level of quality of education. To achieve high standards of quality, nation requires both establishing quality assurance system and patterns of evaluation as well as promoting a quality culture within institutions or schools. It is generally seen in developing nations that education competes for scarce public resource with other urgent needs such as healthcare or infrastructure. Getting sufficient public resource is a major challenge across all the nations. In India, a large part of the resources for education come from the state governments which places a pressure on their finances. This calls for a relook at the financing of education. At the same time, it is argued that successful learning outcomes to a significant extent depends on enabling environments at schools, at

home, at work etc. Cognitive skills may be developed in formal schooling, but they may also come from the family, the peers, the culture, and so forth (Ibid).

Education is an important instrument in shaping, sharpening and directing an individual, the society and the nation towards achieving the high, broad based and sustainable economic development. It is also regarded as the indicator to the future. A good and practical education gives cognitive tools to students to solve real-life problems due to practical knowledge. It is a key driver of economic prosperity and social mobility. Management of quality and practical education must be the kept in highest priority of the long run development of a nation.

Economic Progress is uneven between and within regions and countries in the world. The major challenges are unmet commitments, inadequate resources, lack of focus and accountability, insufficient dedication to suitable development, financial global crisis. In addition, there are 39 million girls fail to attend primary schools (Biamba, 2013). In the context of Nepal, it states that education is a key factor for reducing poverty and maintaining sustainable development (ADB, 2010). However, achieving the equitable access to quality education to all the people is not an easy task. We efforts to reduce poverty fail, then quality of education agenda of Nepal cannot convert into reality. High economic growth with equal distribution of increased output may ensure higher level of primary school enrollment and move in the way of quality education in Nepal.

Poverty, ignorance, unemployment, less used syllabus and defective government policy is the main problem in the way of quality education in Nepal. Lack of practical education may be the best cause of low educational achievement in Nepal. After the restoration of democracy in Nepal, there was the flow of wind of liberalization. Thereafter, education sector also open for investment to the private sector according to the model of Public Private Partnership (PPP) model of development. Gradually, education moves in the hands of private sector and they have syndicate in this welfare sector. Education became expensive and move far way from access of poor, suppressed and remote lived people. Rich people have access on better and job oriented education so that the gap between rich and poor is widening in the context of Nepal.

Curricula, text books and resources may play the greater role to maintain the quality education at schools. These educational materials may address the aspirations of people in the society. Such materials may upmost the human ability, social harmony and social values of the local communities and encouragements of ethnic minorities for the quality education (Lapka, 2017). Conference paper of UNESCO opines that there would have been minimization of discrimination including caste, clan, sex, religion and races in practice and it has been closely related to backward population (UNESCO, 2003). Ministry of Education asserts that government has brought plans for the access of education to students in community schools. It is assumed that access is the first element absence of which quality may not be expected and without access, quality education may not be imagined because quality is found from the competition of all not from fewer population (MoE, 2010).

If there is quality education, then marginal productivity of labor can increased. It is an indicator of higher output of a nation. Increased in output has twin consequences; in the one hand it increased export and on the other it substitute import. Earning of foreign currencies is possible and outflow of domestic currency can be controlled. Quality education is useful to mobilize local resources so that there are additional employment opportunities. There is chance of technological advancement and innovation due to quality education in a country. It is ultimately useful to move a country in the mainstream of development.

2.   Objectives of the Study

Education is an important instrument of development. Better, applied and vocational education is useful to increase output. This paper is concerned with the problem and prospects of quality education in Nepal. The specific objectives of this paper are :

1. Problems of quality education in Nepal
2. Possibilities and prospects of quality education in Nepal

3.   Methodology of preparation of this Paper

A questionnaire with 11 items was constructed after a study of the literature on the basis of objectives and mailed to 60 members of a target population to planners and implementers of quality education in Nepal. Out of them 25 were planner and 35 were implementation

agents. The 'planners' comprised of the members of the designer of curriculum, Ministry of Education personnel involved with quality education, vocational experts of the Curriculum was done on the basis of quota sampling with convenience m Development Center, members of the National Planning Commission and related personnel, and popular educators. Those designated 'implementers' were the administrative and supervisory personnel of the Kathmandu. During 2019, over a one-month period and with one follow-up procedure, 60 (100%) of the target group returned filled questionnaires. The questionnaire required the subjects to respond to the 11 items using a five-point Likert scale, from 'one' indicating strong agreement to 'five' indicating strong disagreement. The responses of respondents were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using the simple mean value calculation in this study to explore the perception of planners and implementers of quality education in Nepal.

4. Data, Discussion, Analysis and Interpretation

Nepal is least developed country and try to graduates in the list of developing nations by 2022 AD. In this connection, quality of education may be the best instrument. Quality education can increase productivity of labor so that higher output is possible and the products produced by those types of manpower will be with better quality. GDP gap is the basic characteristics of least developed country and can reduced with the help of better education in the sense that it is related on the basis of available resources in the nation. Quality education can change and increase knowledge, skill, attitude and behaviour of the people. Education is the best way to transform unskilled manpower to skill and productive manpower.

In spite of quality debate in education coming from long time, there is still no universal acceptable definition and variables of quality. The concept of quality of education is multifaceted and is articulated differently by different scholars in the world based on their empirical evidences and situation of locality. There are two aspects of quality in education : Quality of the system as a whole and Quality of what the system offers to the students/learners. The terms like efficiency, effectiveness, equity and quality have often been used in Malcolm Baldridge Quality components; it consists of : a Leader setting values, systems and level of accountability; a System that consist of four building blocks of education and business management processes, human resource development, strategic

planning and information and analysis; Measurement of progress which uses quantitative indicators of performance; and the Goal which is student's focus. Baldridge holds the view of accelerating improvement efforts by serving as a framework to align institutional activities for achieving ever improving outcomes (Adams, 1993).

It is therefore not easy to define quality in the context of education. According to Hoy (2000), quality in education is an evaluation of the process of educating which enhances the need to achieve and develop the talents of the customers of the process and at the same time meets accountability standards set by the clients who pay for the process or outputs from the process of educating. Goddard and Leask (1992) highlighted the definition of quality as simply meeting the requirements of customers. For education, they have mentioned different customers, who include parents, government, students, teachers, employers and institutions that all look for different characteristics of quality. Education being a service and not a product, its quality cannot lie exclusively in the final output. Its quality should also be manifested in delivery process. The quality of education should also take into account determinants as provision of teachers, building, curriculum, equipments, textbooks and teaching processes are the main components of quality education (Grisay & Mahlck, 1991). They opt for three dimensional composition of quality of education comprising the quality of human and material resources available for teaching (inputs), the quality of teaching practices (process) and quality of results (outcomes). They further add that here are some indicators which are frequently by planners are approximate means of measuring quality are repetition, dropouts, promotion and transition rates. In 1990, the Jometien's World Declaration on Education for All identified quality of education in terms of assuring an increase in children's cognitive development as a prerequisite for achieving the fundamental goal of equity. UNESCO's education quality definition emphasized more on "lifelong learning" and "relevance" to be most important

Quality is not a unitary concept but involves multiple perspectives. The Communiqué of the World Conference on Higher Education 2009 states that "Quality criteria must reflect the aim of cultivating in students critical and independent thought and the capacity of learning throughout life. They should encourage innovation and diversity" (UNESCO, 2009).

In the context of Nepal, technical and non-technical are two types of education by which we can classify weather it is market oriented or not. If it is job oriented, it can be assumed that it is quality education in the sense that it is useful for their livelihood and can create job in the market. Students with non-technical education have no technical knowledge so that they should depend on the job offered by others. However, the students of technical disciplines have a capacity of job creation so that they should not depend on others.

Education if matched with the available natural resources then its quality and application will be high. Quality further depends on curriculum, instructors, pedagogy, suitable government policy, practicability and so on. In Nepalese context, our curriculum partially based on the curriculum of western countries and the situation of our country is different so that the output of education is not as expected from the side of policy makers. Again one matter should be relevant to state that the students with technical education also not interested to stay here because the income in abroad is higher when it is compared with Nepal. The condition of student enrollment in Tribhuvan University in technical and non-technical education is stated in the sense that it is one indicator to measure quality education.

Table-1 : Distribution of Students Enrolled in Several Technical and Non-Technical Disciplines in Tribhuvan University Constituent and Affiliated Colleges of Nepal

Year	Number of Students (Technical)				Total
	Engineering	Medicine	Science & Technology	Ag.	
2009	5666	2012	12779	860	21317
2010	5601	2007	12310	1181	21099
2011	5929	2084	12348	1101	21462
2012	12190	7564	14584	942	35280
2013	3002	7129	16649	1334	28114
2014	8458	3811	20266	1305	33840
2015	7444	5417	16589	-	29450
2016	7322	1582	27349	-	36253

Year	Number of Students (Non-Technical)			Total
	Education	**Humanities**	**Management**	
2009	91923	60611	75965	228499
2010	147457	68013	94189	309659
2011	151114	67129	109606	327849
2012	144914	86212	111888	343014
2013	219355	81153	167599	468107
2014	150863	54404	141840	347107
2015	122454	43100	133828	299382
2016	82805	35541	124568	242914

Source : Tribhuvan Bulletin Special, 2019 (p. 47).

The number of students in non-technical education is 86 percent which has low applicability in job market and huge numbers of people are fall in this category. Only 14 percent students are getting technical education in Nepal. There is quota in technical education and is expensive also. So that poor students with average cranial capacity are not able to learn this branch of knowledge. Only 0.8 percent students are reading agriculture since two-third of total population is engaged in agricultural activities for their livelihood. If there is balance in policy two-third students should learn agriculture in Nepal. Tribhuvan University has 82 percent of students out of total students of Nepal, even she has 11 universities.

Do we need less non-technical human resources than technical one? Do we need less number of engineers than educationists? A country cannot develop if it has more lawyers than engineers. In the last 10 years, South Korea developed very rapidly where enrollment of students in Science & Technology is more than 40 percent; about 30 percent students get enrolled in Engineering field (Aryal, 2019).

From the table-2 (next page), it is clear that there is not remarkable increase in the number of students in technical subjects. The structure of enrollment is not satisfactory and should be increased in technical component. In the time or reconstruction after devastating earthquake in Nepal (2072 Baisakh, 12), there was the scarcity of engineers in Nepal. When we can increase the number of enrollment in technical education, then national output of our country will increase. Quality in education is the basis issue in the world. It can be maintained with the help of appropriate government policy in this sector. Investment in this sector should be increased so

that better infrastructures can be created. There should be appropriate balance between inputs, process and output so that highest output can be achieved with the help of limited resources.

Table-2 : Change in students enrollment in technical and non-technical education of Nepal

Year	Total Number of Students (Technical)	% Change	Total Number of Students (Non-Technical)	% Change
2009	21317	-	75965	-
2010	21099	99.0	94189	124.0
2011	21462	101.7	109606	116.4
2012	35280	164.4	111888	102.1
2013	28114	79.7	167599	149.8
2014	33840	120.4	141840	84.6
2015	29450	87.0	133828	94.4
2016	27349	92.9	124568	93.1

Source : Based on Table-1.

Universities are taken as a mirror of a nation. Universities with better and quality education are the symbol of prosperous nation. In the context of least developed countries, they are fighting with quantitative aspect of education. Nepal is listed under the poor country so that children have no chance to go to schools and universities since they should support to their parents for their livelihood. Curriculum of Nepal definitely diverted toward agriculture and tourism because these are two potential sectors of Nepal.

Table-3 : Causes and Remedies of Quality Education in Nepal (implementers view)

Causes and Remedies of Quality Education in Nepal	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Moderate (2)	Disagree (1)	Strongly Disagree (0)	Mean Values
Poor Curriculum leads toward low quality graduates	5	15	10	3	2	2.51

We have no practical education	7	7	8	8	5	2.09
Low income of the parents is the cause of low quality	10	8	7	5	5	2.37
Low level of industrialization lower job market	2	12	15	4	2	2.23
Government has no manpower planning	3	20	10	1	1	2.66
Privatization in education is a threat in education	10	12	8	3	2	2.71
Investment friendly environment can improve quality	7	12	11	2	3	2.51
Provision of educational loan	6	15	10	4	1	2.66
Use of practical education	9	12	12	1	1	2.77
Co-ordination with other universities around the world	1	12	10	10	3	2.00

Source : Field Survey, 2019

In the above table, it can be realized that quality of education in the context of Nepal seems to be poor. Its poorness appeared in the form of poor curriculum, lack of practical education, low income, no manpower planning, no educational loan and lack of co-ordination with other universities in the world. Poor people are not able to support to their children because they have no additional income and their children should send to the work or to rear their juniors since higher growth of population is the feature of poor family. Federal, provinces and local authorities are silent about the quality education to their regions due to focus on political agendas rather than in development issues. Most of the teacher are unfriendly with modern technology and follow traditional mode of teaching and learning, threat to quality education in Nepal.

Regarding to planner view, it has lot of advantages when it compared with disadvantages. In Nepal, job market is clear and it is useful to increase the productivity of labor in Nepal. For poor students, Nepal has formulated and implemented various schemes to teach them freely by the state. It developed various vocational syllabus and implemented by various universities and training centers in Nepal. Curriculum is developed on the basis of

international criteria and semester system has forwarded. It is clear after a perception table :

Table-4 : Causes and Remedies of Quality Education in Nepal (Planners view)

Causes and Remedies of Quality Education in Nepal	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Moderate (2)	Disagree (1)	Strongly Disagree (0)	Mean Values
Poor Curriculum leads toward low quality graduates	1	5	7	11	1	1.76
We have no practical education	0	4	8	8	5	1.44
Low income of the parents is the cause of low quality	3	8	7	5	3	2.2
Low level of industrial-ization lower job market	2	6	15	4	2	2.4
Government has no man-power planning	3	5	5	12	0	1.96
Privatization in education is a threat in education	5	12	3	3	2	2.6
Investment friendly environ-ment can improve quality	2	2	11	9	1	1.8
Provision of educational loan	2	7	10	5	1	2.16
Use of practical education	3	12	8	1	1	2.6
Co-ordination with other universities around the world	1	12	5	5	3	2.2

Source : Field Survey, 2019.

In the table above, it is cleared that the mean value of most of the responses falls near of 2, indicates the indifference in the asked responses. From the answers of the questions, it is cleared that planners are not openly answer regarding to the quality of education. There is no co-ordination among students, instructors and society so that output of education is maximum. There is no harmony regarding to objective of education and the demand of society is different than curriculum designed and implemented by line agencies of education.

Several issues were identified which could have been influencing the development of vocational and quality education in Nepal, as indicated by the responses of the planners and implementors of vocational education. The planners did not believe that vocational education was only for less intelligent students, nor were they sure about vocational education being too expensive an endeavor for Nepal. However, the implementors felt more strongly than the planners that vocational choices can be made by students at the age of 14 or 15, and that vocational education was too expensive for Nepal. Except for these differences, both groups indicated general agreement with the issues as stated on the prepared questionnaire (Belbase & Jung, 2019).

Thus, for many aspects of vocational and quality education, there is general agreement among both planners and implementors about the problems and issues involved. Yet because some differences were discovered to exist, lines of communication between planners in the central offices and implementors in the field obviously need to be improved. By using feedback and taking more time to plan, a more appropriate program of vocational and quality education for Nepal should be realized (Ibid).

Salary of the instructor is an important component to assure quality of education. If they are paid high salary, they can stay longer time in the institutions. It may enhance higher quality of education. The facility to the teachers is another device to accelerate quality education. Parents awareness if increased they can send their children to school and college, increase enrollment in educational institutions. Similarly, use of modern tools in the field of teaching may enhance delivering process. Participatory approach rather than lecturer method can deliver their knowledge effectively to the target group. Sometime syllabus in local language may be the best way to achieve quality education and Nepal had applied this strategy to attain more enrollment as well as quality of education in Nepal.

There is difference in perception between policy makers and implementers in Nepal. In general, policy makers are confident regarding to the quality of education and Nepal has congenial atmosphere on the development of quality education.

5.   Conclusions and Policy Recommendation in Nepal

It is obvious that the quality status of education in Nepal seems to be poor. The policy of the government and line agencies are not in

the same direction while the expectation of society in quite different. Poverty is the main cause and consequences of poor quality of education in Nepal. Our theoretical curriculum is the main cause of its poor quality of education. Only less than one percent students are learning agriculture since two third of total population rely on agriculture. Poor people are not able to send their children to school because they have no additional income and their children should send to the work or to rear their juniors since higher growth of population is the feature of poor family. Federal, provinces and local authorities are not actively participate about the quality education to their regions due to focus on political agendas rather than in development issues of our country. Most of the teacher are unfriendly with modern technology as well as not interested to use modern technologies and follow traditional mode of teaching and learning, threat to quality education in Nepal. Regarding to planner view, it has lot of positive applications when it compared with disadvantages. In Nepal, job market is small and it is useful when we can increase the productivity of labor in Nepal. For poor students, Nepal should formulate and implement various schemes to teach them freely by the state. Quality improvement of instructors should be reco-mmended by which knowledge transfer process will be more effective. Educational loan to the student in nominal interest rate should be provided to achieve better quality of education. Education on the basis of student interest and need of the society may be the milestone in the field of quality education. These all the component is true in the context of south Asia of the world.

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Feminists of Modern India

Bharti Mohan*

Every now and then, we hear the word "Feminism", or someone being called a "Feminist". But often people do not know the true essence of the word and may form bias or in many cases incorrect notions regarding the meaning of the word. In this paper, we will aim at understanding of the concept better through examples of the women as well as men from our historical past that were feminists and were strong promoters of the feminist movement in India. The term may have come into limelight now, but the concept has deep roots in the past. Various periods of history have witnessed feminists, who have not only raised their voices against the cruel and discriminatory practices of the past, but have also worked towards liberation of women, in an attempt to build a better place for the future generations.

[**Keywords :** Feminism, Discriminatory practices, Liberation of women, Modern India]

"Feminism" is a word we get to hear a lot these days. Most of us believe that feminism is about placing women above men in the society. However, this is completely incorrect. Feminism is about equality - equal rights for both men and women in the society. This includes a number of rights and demands like right to equality of pay, the right to a quality and decent life- free from discrimination, abuse and violence.

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Though feminism in India has gained much limelight lately, it seeds were sown years ago- in the middle of the 19th century. Our history has a lot of examples of women as well as men who advocated women rights and fought for the equality of men and women. So while some Indians were fighting against the British for an independent India, there were some other who were fighting for a 'better' India.

The struggle for the equality of men and women can be traced back to the pre-independence period of the mid-19th century. That was a time when most women were not allowed to go to schools and get educated. A girl child was considered a burden on the family. They were married off at an early age, and did not have rights to property or inheritance of their parents.

Most of them were confined to their houses and their main job was to take care of the entire family. Adding to this was the violent and inhuman system of *Sati* (widow immolation) that was in practice.

As shocking as it may sound, but as per Maitrayee Chaudhuri, renowned author and professor, India's feminist movement, unlike in the West, was initiated by men, and later joined by women, who were mainly their wives, sisters and daughters.

One of the first feminists of historic India was Raja Ram Mohan Roy, one of the founders of Brahmo Samaj. He worked to abolish the social evils that existed in the society at that time including- the heinous Sati system, the practice of polygamy (having multiple wives) and child marriage. He also fought for the rights of inheritment of property for the women. He was a strong advocate of education for women. Such was his influence and power, and his will to bring a change that he is considered as the "Father of the Bengal Renaissance" by many historians.

The next and one of the most important women in India's story of feminism was Savitribhai Phule, also popularly known as 'The mother of Indian feminism'. She is also considered as the first female teacher of India. Her husband, Jyotirao Phule also played a very important role in improving the condition of women in India. He fought against his family and the society for the empowerment of his wife. They both were strong advocates of female education and together started the first school for women in Pune in 1848. They fought for the rights of women in historic India and played an

important role in improving the condition of women in Maharashtra, despite strong opposition from the local community. Divya Kandukuri, remarks that the teaching methodology adopted by Phule was far better than the ones in government schools, which is evident from the fact that at that time, the number of girls enrolled in Phule's schools were way more than the number of boys enrolled in schools run by the government.

In one more such instance, Savitribai noticed the plight of the widows in India. Already going through the pain of losing their loved one, they were subjected to extreme physical and mental punishment. They were forced to shave their head, wear a white sari and lead a life of complete isolation. Widow re-marriage was considered a sin. Savitribai noticed this and decided to do something against it. She organized a strike against the barbers, to resist them from shaving the heads of the widows. She also took note of the plight of the sexually harassed women and opened a care-centre for them, to help them lead a life without the fear of boycott from the society.

The next feminist of the 19th Century India was- Tarabai Shinde, a Marathi author known for publishing the first feminist text - Stripurush Tulana (which translates to - Comparing men and women) in 1882. The text criticized the upper castes Male dominance and also challenged the Hindu scriptures. This was considered a bold move in those times, especially by a woman, given the Hindu dominated society at that time.

The society at that time was majorly dominated by the Hindu caste system, a system in which the stature of the people in the society was determined by their castes. Pandita Ramabai, was one such feminist who did not just fight for the women rights but also set an example for the women by marrying outside her caste, thereby breaking the stereotypes and challenging the Hindu caste system. She also worked towards improving the life of the widows.

Talking about feminism, how can we not mention the greatest warrior of all time- Queen Rani Laxmi Bai, who did not only fight against the British and their unfair rules, but in doing that set an example for many women who were afraid to raise their voice against the injustice. Such was her bravery and valour that whenever we talk about the greatest warriors and freedom fighters India had ever seen, the first name that comes to our mind is that of the Queen of Jhansi. True to her name, Queen Manikarnika is indeed a gem of India's freedom struggle.

One more queen who fought against the oppressive rule of the Britishers and against the unjust system of 'Doctrine of lapse' was the queen of Kittur - Queen Chennamma. She was one of the first Indian queens to revolt against the Britishers and in doing so, became a source of inspiration for many women, teaching us a very important lesson that no matter how powerful your enemy is, at the end of the day what matters the most is the courage of your heart and the strength of your soul.

Bhikaji Kama, popularly known as Madame Cama, was the first woman who showed the courage to hoist the Indian flag on a foreign soil. At a very young age, she became inclined to politics and became aware of India's freedom struggle. She had a fall out with her husband for his pro-British outlook. At a time, when women rarely walked out of their homes, and even rarely spoke against the patriarchy, she became a symbol of strength by being actively involved in India's struggle for independence. Her house in London became a head quarter for those fighting for India's independence.

In 1896, Bombay presidency was hit by one of the worst pandemics - the Bubonic Plague. It was then, when women like Madame Bhikaji Cama and Savitribai Phule, came forward, risked their lives to save the lives of the masses, showing the grit, strength, determination and at the same time the care a woman can exhibit.

In August 1907, Madam Bhikaji Cama, hoisted the first design of the Indian flag at the International Socialist Congress that took place in Germany. The flag is still remembered for its tricolour scheme and the words *'Vande Mataram'* written in the middle. The flag was also a symbol of the Hindu and Muslim unity. Through this strong gesture, Madam Cama made the entire India proud in a foreign land. She, hence, gave courage to many women to contribute in India's war of independence in whichever way possible.

The 20th Century saw the rise of many feminists and one of them was the father of our nation - Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi is known worldwide for his non-violent practices and philosophies. He was one of the main men behind India's freedom struggle and hence has rightly been given the title of the father of the nation. However, many do not know that Gandhi's very strategies of '*satyagraha*' (holding to the truth) and '*ahinsa*' (non-violence) have been inspired from feminism. Gandhi had admitted that he had designed the philosophies to encourage and ensure maximum

participation from women. The philosophy of non-violence allowed women to participate in the freedom struggle without any fear. Such philosophies adopted by Gandhi to fight against the colonial oppressors was very different from the traditional methods of politics and violence. It encouraged women to come out of the prison of the four walls of their houses and show the world the strength of their character and what they were capable of doing. Gandhi played an important role in promoting the rights of the women, supporting them and encouraging them to fight for their rights. An All India Women's Conference was formed in 1927 and with Gandhi as its leader; it became a major supporter of several anti-colonial movements. On 10th April 1930, Gandhi invited women to be a part of the freedom struggle by boycotting foreign clothes and liquor. Thousands of women joined in, thus breaking away from the shackles the society had bound them in for years.

Madhu Kishwar, an Indian academician, remarked that Gandhi saw women as the epitome of suffering and sacrifice. Indeed the same is reflected from the very philosophies adopted by Gandhi to fight the Britishers. His philosophies indeed have a feminine touch to them.

One more prominent feminist was the nightingale of India - Sarojini Naidu, a very important part of India's freedom struggle. She was a prodigy. At a young age of 16, she won a scholarship and went to study in King's College at London. Her poems and excellent literary work made her earn the title of "The Nightingale of India". She travelled the country, gave powerful speeches on women empowerment and inspired many women to become a part of the freedom movement.

In 1918, Naidu along with the Indian and British feminists of that time, launched a magazine called "Stri Dharma" to report the happenings around the world from the perspective of a female. In 1925, she became the second female President of the Indian National Congress. Indian National Congress was one of the most important nationalist movements at the time of India's freedom struggle and having a women as its head was indeed one of the many important milestones for the feminist movement in India. During the famous Salt March initiated by Gandhi against the tax on salt, women participation in the march was not encouraged, for it was a long walk from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi. However, Naidu was the first

woman to join the movement and break all the stereotypes. This encouraged a lot of women to come out of their houses to contribute to India's freedom struggle. A fearless individual, she was also arrested by the Britishers and put behind the bars. However, this did not deter her and she came out even stronger to fight against the oppressive regime. The same British government awarded her the Kaisar-i-Hind Medal, in recognition of her work, which she later returned as a symbol of protest against the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

One of the greatest politicians, she served as the first governor of the United Provinces of India for a period of two years from 1947 to 1949, post-independence. Not just in India, she worked outside India too. In South Africa, she was the leader of the East African Indian National Congress. It is difficult to summarize the contribution of one of the greatest politicians and poetess that India ever had. It is matter of pride for the rich past of India to have such women leaders, who continue to inspire generations of women through their stories of grit and valour.

Our history has several examples of women who tried to break the stereotypes and refused to accept the boundaries set for them by the society. They in fact wrote their own history and in doing so became an integral part of India's history. They continue to inspire generations of women. It is matter of pride for the Indians, especially the women of India today to look back at the struggle of our ancestors and carry forward the legacy they left behind.

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A Comparative Study of Attitude of Government and Private School Teachers towards Inclusive Education

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Inclusive education is the education for all kinds of children in the same classroom setup irrespective of their social and economic background and type of disability. The success of this concept entirely depends on teachers, their commitment and attitude towards different categories of children in the inclusive settings. Inclusive education is in its nascent stage in India. The present study aims to find the attitude of government school and private school teachers towards inclusive education . The study was conducted on a sample of 200 primary and upper-primary school teachers (100 Government school teachers and 100 Private school teachers) of different cities of Uttar Pradesh, a North Indian state. The sample was selected through multistage stratified random sampling. Two tools were used for collection of data; 'Background Information Proforma', prepared by the researcher herself and a standardized tool; 'Teacher Attitude Scale Towards Inclusive Education' by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Arti Anand. Four different aspects of attitude towards inclusive

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education were studied using the scale; Psychological/Behavioural, Social and Parent related, Curricular and Co-curricular and Administrative aspect. The data collected was analyzed using percentage, mean and correlation. Majority of the teachers were found to be female in both Government (63%) and Primary (71%) schools. A greater percentage of government and private school teachers (52% and 98% respectively) were found to be B.Ed qualified as compared to having B.T.C./D.El.Ed. (48% and 2% respectively) as the qualification for teaching.

On comparing the attitude of government and private school teachers, no significant difference was found between the mean score of attitude of government and private school teachers towards any aspect of inclusive education. However, the Government school teachers were found to have 'most favourable attitude' in greater percentage (38%) towards Inclusive Education as compared to the Private school teachers (31%). Significant correlation(0.56) were found between the level of attitude of teachers in different aspects with different background variables namely 'Curricular and Co-curricular aspect' with teaching experience (r=0.19), 'Psychological/Behavioural aspect' of inclusive education with educational qualification of teachers (r=0.15) and 'total attitude score' with gender (r =0.22). The study suggests the need for more feasible programmes and practical trainings for Inclusive education of both Government and Private school teachers.

[**Keywords :** Inclusive education, Government school teachers, Private school teachers]

1.   Introduction

Inclusive Education is a system of education which covers a broader approach of education for all and is more humanitarian in nature. It involves removing all barriers in the environment, teaching, socialization and assessment at all levels. Although the concept of inclusive education is not new to the western countries but it is still in its infantile stage in India. It expands vision and outlook to see the world. It fulfils the goals of education in true manner by developing the capabilities to fight against injustice and lots of different unhealthy practices likes marginalisation within the society. By providing inclusive education, discrimination can be removed and each and every person can give the contribution to develop the country in his/ her own way.

India has been advocating the right to education for all children from diverse background and needs since the conception of Indian constitution. The article 45 of constitution provided right to education of all children upto 6 years of age. The 86th amendment to the constitution of India in 2002, inserted Article 21A which made Right

to Education as a fundamental right for children between 6-14 years. The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protections of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 was formulated which stresses the need to provide free of cost education to all children in an appropriate environment till they are 18 years old.

At the global level in order to ensure equal educational opportunities for all without discrimination or exclusion, UNESCO promotes a human rights-based approach to education. UNESCO is advocating for the inclusive dimensions of the right to education, notably through the implementation of the 1960 UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education, which provide an international legal framework for the protection of the right to education and prohibit any form of discrimination, including any distinction, exclusion, limitation or preference.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) emerged as a result of deliberations held by more than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organizations in June1994. For furthering the objectives of Education for all, it considered the fundamental policy-shifts required to promote inclusive education. It emphasizes that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions.

National Curriculum Framework, 2005 provided a policy of inclusion to be implemented in all schools and throughout Indian education system. To develop curriculum for special education and its inclusion in general teacher preparation programmes, Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) made a historic collaboration with National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) on January 19, 2005. Schools were expected to become centers that prepare children for life and ensure that all children, especially the differently abled children, children from marginalized sections, and children in difficult circumstances get the maximum benefit of this critical area of education.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was launched by the Government of India to achieve the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education. Three important aspect of UEE are access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age. A zero rejection policy has been adopted under SSA, which ensures that every Child with Special

Needs (CWSN), irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided meaningful and quality education. It covers the following components under education for children with special needs:-Early detection and identification, functional and formal assessment, Educational Placement, Aids and appliances, Support services, Teacher training, Resource support, Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Parental training and community mobilization, Planning and management, Strengthening of special schools, Removal of Architectural barriers, Research, Monitoring and evaluation, Girls with disabilities.

The Indian Education system has to cover a long distance to achieve the UN Sustainable development goals of Inclusive Education till 2030. UN has given 17 goals for sustainable development which are to be achieved by the year 2030 .The goal number 4 is about Quality Education for all. The goal number 4 ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

The new National Education Policy 2020 which is to be implemented in a year or two is a ray of hope to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of universal quality education and lifelong learning. The National Education Policy, 2020 has conveyed the structural change in the education system which aims to make India the global knowledge superpower ensuring equity and inclusion. NEP aims to ensure equity and inclusion in and through education by addressing all forms of exclusion and marginalization, disparity, vulnerability and inequality in education access, participation, retention and completion and in learning outcomes. Universal provisioning of quality early childhood development, care, and education must thus be achieved as soon as possible, and no later than 2030. During this transitional phase, the education system of India is facing several challenges and hurdles in the implementation of inclusive education.

1·1   Challenges to Implement Inclusive Education in India

The historical background of education of Children with Special Needs reveals that there were two important movements which made revolutionary changes in this field :

1. Segregation (Special Education) to Integration.
2. Integration (Integrated Education) to Inclusion (Inclusive Education).

The concept of segregation focussed on institutionalisation of exceptional children. Further the concept of integrated education came into being which laid emphasis on integration of mildly disabled children into regular classroom setup. The latest approach of education for all is based on a more humanitarian approach.

Inclusive education is a more broader and wider concept than integrated education as it includes not only the disabled children but children from diverse social and economic background.

India has started preparing itself for the implementation of inclusive education system in various cities. The teacher training courses like B.Ed. and D.El.Ed. have already incorporated the subject of inclusive education. Yet, due to certain misconceptions, blind beliefs, backwardness, lack of awareness among general population, year old discrimination towards certain cadre of society, the concept of inclusive education is not being understood and accepted by people in every nook and corner of various cities. The major challenges faced in the acceptance and implementation of inclusive education are :

- Dropout rates are very high in villages and socially disadvantaged sections of society like economically weaker sections and certain backward castes.
- Parents of economically weaker sections prefer to send their children for earning money working as a labourer rather than sending the child to school for education. They do not understand the importance of education due to their generation old sufferings.
- Families do not have enough information about their child's particular disability, its effects and its impact on their child's capacity.
- Due to various prejudices attached with learning disabilities & autism these children are unable to get admission in schools. Many private schools deny the admission to autistic children.
- Majority of schools in India are poorly designed and few are equipped to satisfy the unique needs of children with disabilities.

- Many old and even new teachers have lack of skills, lack of necessary attitude and lack of competencies to deal effectively with children with special educational needs.

- Architectural barrier are also a crucial obstacles as school buildings don't have facilities of ramps, accessible toilets, etc.

- During a regular school it is difficult to provide special material and method within the instructional setting.

The attitude of teachers is utmost important in the Inclusive Education system. The right attitude towards education for all in a common classroom setup will definitely lead to right practices of including all kind of children in the classrooms no matter what pains and efforts are required. Inclusive education is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together.

The present study was conducted with the objective to study the attitude of teachers towards inclusive education in the present scenario. The acceptability of Inclusive Education system by both government teachers and private teachers was studied.

2. Methodology

2·1 Sample Characteristics and Sampling Design

The present study was conducted in Uttar Pradesh, a North Indian state. There are 75 districts in Uttar Pradesh out of which the researcher has selected 6 districts randomly from Eastern and Western Uttar Pradesh. The sample comprised about 200 primary and upper primary teachers of government and private schools (100 private school teachers and 100 government school teachers) of Uttar Pradesh state. The sample of 200 primary and upper primary teachers of government and private schools were selected using multistage stratified random sampling method. In first stage, out of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh the researcher selected 6 districts from eastern & western randomly. In the second stage, schools were selected randomly out of the list of different Government schools and Private schools obtained from Nagar Nigam office and online sites. In the third stage, 100 teachers from government schools and 100 teachers from private schools were selected randomly from the list of teachers obtained from the selected schools.

2·2 Tools Used in the Study

Mainly two types of data was collected in the present study using different tools :

2·2·1 Background Information

A proforma prepared by the researcher herself was used for collecting related information. There were two section in this proforma :

a. **Personal data of teachers :** The teachers were enquired about the level of teaching, teaching experience, educational qualification etc.

b. **Information regarding inclusive education setting :** The teachers were asked whether they had any special need students in their classroom.

2·2·2 Attitude of Teachers towards Inclusive Education

To study the attitude of teachers firstly, the teachers were asked about their attitudes towards inclusion of students with general non-acceptable behaviours like children who are shy, children who have language difficulties etc. in regular classrooms. Secondly, a standardized tool "Teacher Attitude Scale Towards Inclusive Education" (TASTIE) by Dr. Vishal Sood and Dr. Arti Anand (2011) was used to study the attitude towards 4 aspects of Inclusive Education; 1) Psychological/Behavioural aspects, 2) Social & Parents related aspects of inclusive education, 3) Curricular & Co-curricular aspects of inclusive education, 4) Administrative aspects of inclusive education.

It is an Indian tool and number of the items in this tool are 47. Each of the areas had 10- 13 items. It is a self-administering and self-reporting scale. The scale had statements requiring information on either of the options on a continuum as; Agree , Undecided , Disagree.

2·3 Procedure of Data Collection

To achieve the research objective, the data were collected using survey method. The addresses of the households and the contact number, email addresses and whatsapp number of teachers in various cities were collected from online sources. Firstly researcher had established a rapport with the teachers and explained the

purpose of the study and the consent regarding participation in the survey was obtained. The researcher collected the data with the help of online sources, the link for Google form were sent through email and whatsapp. The teachers responded by filling and submitting the google forms through online mode only.

3. Results and Discussion:

3·1 Background Information of Respondents

a. **Personal Details :** Majority of the teachers were found to be female in both government (63%) and private (71%) schools. A greater percentage of government and private school teachers were found to be B.Ed. qualified as compared to having B.T.C./D.El.Ed. as the qualification for teaching.

Table-3.1a : Personal details of the Respondents/Teachers

Personal details of teachers	Government school teachers (n=100)		Private school teachers (n=100)		Total (n=200)	
Gender	M	F	M	F	M	F
	37	63	29	71	66(33%)	134(67%)
Educational qualifications	B.Ed	B.T.C	B.Ed	B.T.C	B.Ed	B.T.C
	52	48	98	2	150(75%)	50(25%)
Level of teaching	Primary level	Upper P.L.	Primary level	Upper P.L.	Primary level	Upper P.L.
	61	39	43	57	104(52%)	96(48%)

b. **Information regarding inclusive education setting :** The teachers were also enquired about whether they had any experience of teaching children from diverse background and needs by asking them if they had any slow learners, physically disabled, sensory disabled, emotionally disabled or hyperactive children in their classes. Majority of the teachers reported to have slow learners in their classroom followed by physically disabled, hyperactive and sensory disabled children as shown in the table-3.1b. Thus, almost all the teachers reported to have the experience of teaching children in an inclusive education setting.

Table-3·1b : Different categories of Special Children in the classrooms of Government and Private School Teachers

Category of Special Children in Classroom	Government School Teachers (n=100)	Private School Teachers (n=100)
Slow learners	83	97
Physically disabled	67	38
Sensory disabled	7	1
Emotionally disturbed	4	2
Hyperactive children	1	14

Note : Multiple responses included; percentage may exceed 100.

3·2a Attitude of government & private school teachers towards Inclusive Education

On asking the teachers about inclusion of students with general non-acceptable behaviours like children who are shy, children who have language difficulties etc. in regular classrooms, it was found that mainly the inclusion of the children with anti-social behaviours like children who are verbally aggressive, who do not follow school rules, who are frequently absent, who physically harm others was not acceptable by the teachers of both government and private schools (Table-3.2a).

Table-3·2a : Attitude of teachers towards Inclusion of children according to their behaviour in regular classrooms

Category of Children to be included in regular classroom according to their behaviour	Government School Teachers (n=100)	Private School Teachers (n=100)
Who fail in exams	88	96
Who are shy	97	95
Who have language difficulties	49	52
Who are verbally aggressive in class	5	2
Who do not follow school rules	0	0
Who are frequently absent	0	0
Who are inattentive in class	70	56
Who physically harm others	0	0

Note : Multiple responses included; percentage may exceed 100.

**3·2b : Comparison of mean scores of government and
private school teachers on TASTIE Scale**

Aspects of Inclusive Education	Govt. school teachers		Pvt. school teachers		Z-score	S/NS
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Psychological/ Behavioural aspect	26.67	3.38	27.44	2.69	-1.56	NS
Social and parents related aspects	27.78	4.47	27.43	2.97	1.19	NS
Curricular and Co-Curricular aspects	27.71	4.24	27.23	3.05	1.19	NS
Administrative aspects	27.18	4.45	26.74	3.6	0.75	NS
Total attitude score	109.34	10.07	108.84	0.29	0.25	NS

The attitude of teachers towards four aspects of Inclusive Education : 1) Psychological/Behavioural aspects, 2) Social and Parents related aspects of inclusive education, 3) Curricular and Co-curricular aspects of inclusive education, 4) Administrative was studied using the standardized scale. No significant difference was found between the mean scores of government and private school teachers in all the four aspects of inclusive education as shown in the table-3.2b.

Majority of the government and private school teachers had 'moderate' or favourable attitude towards inclusive education system. The B.Ed and D.El.Ed all kinds of teacher training courses cover the theoretical concept of Inclusive Education in detail. The teachers of both government and private school teachers in large number are becoming aware about this new concept of Inclusive Education since its inclusion in the curriculum of B.Ed and D.El.Ed/ B.T.C. Only 4% of parents had unfavourable attitude towards inclusive education system. However, the 'most favourable' attitude was found to be in maximum percentage among all the levels of attitude. The government school teachers were found to have 'most favourable' attitude towards inclusive education in greater percentage as compared to the private school teachers as shown in Table-3.2c on next page.

A large number of training programmes being organized by the government sector for the government school teachers from time to time could be the reason behind greater percentage of government

school teachers having 'most favourable' attitude in greater percentage towards Inclusive Education as compared to the private school teachers . Especially during Covid-19 period many short term training programmes were organized online.

Table-3·2c : Percentage distribution according to level of Teacher's attitude towards Inclusive Education

Level of teacher's attitude	Govt. school teachers (n=100)		Pvt. school teachers (n=100)		Total (n=200)	
	N	%age	N	%age	N	%age
Extremely favourable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Most favourable	38	38%	31	31%	69	34.5%
Above average favourable	25	25%	35	35%	60	30.0%
Moderate attitude	33	33%	30	30%	63	31.5%
Below average unfavourable	4	4%	4	4%	8	4%

3·3 Need for more feasible and practical Training Programmes

As per the quantitative analysis, all teachers were having a favourable or moderate attitude in our study towards Inclusive Education. Only 4% teachers were below average. The teachers were found to be very much aware about the concept of Inclusive Education. They are having a positive attitude towards including children of different behaviours like slow learners, children who are shy, children who are inattentive in class, children with language difficulties.

However, as per some qualitative observation of the researcher it was found that the teachers of both government and private school were quite apprehensive about Inclusion of children with disabilities like visual, hearing and children showing anti-social behaviour in their classrooms. According to them due to lack of proper facilities and specially trained teachers such category of children could be difficult for them to handle along with other children.

As per the observations of the study and as reported by the teachers, following aspects were noted regarding in-service training of the primary and upper primary teachers :

1. The online short term trainings were provided mainly to the government school teachers during COVID-19.

2. These training were more target oriented i.e., a certain cut-off/ minimum score was expected from teachers in greater number.

3. These training during COVID-19 covered mainly the theoretical aspects of inclusive education and regular classroom teaching. The practical aspect and general problems of inclusive education were reported to be lacking in these online trainings.

3·4 Factors affecting Attitude of Teachers

To study the effect of various background variables on different types of scores towards inclusive education, the correlation between various attitude scores and various background variables of the respondents was calculated.

Table-3·3 : Correlation of Government school teachers and private school teachers TASTIE scores with background variables

Teacher's attitude towards Inclusive Education	Gender	Educational qualification	Level of Teaching	Teaching experience
Psychological/ Behavioural	-0.05	+0.15*	-0.04	-0.05
Social and Parental related	-0.024	+0.03	-0.08	+0.07
Curricular and co-curricular	+0.01	+0.12	-0.06	+0.19*
Administrative	+0.06	-0.01	-0.09	+0.12
Total attitude score	+0.22*	+0.09	-0.09	+0.13

S* stands for significant; Level of significance=0.05

As shown in the table-3.3, a significant correlation was found between the level of attitude of teachers in different aspects with different background variables namely 'Curricular and Co-curricular' aspect with 'teaching experience' (r=0.19, Level of significance=0.05), 'Psychological/Behavioural' aspect of inclusive education with 'educational qualification' of teachers (r=0.15, Level of significance=0.05) and 'total attitude score' with 'gender' (r =0.22,Level of significance=0.05). Female teachers were found to have a more positive attitude towards Inclusive Education as compared to the male teachers.

4. Conclusion

The present study has been helpful to analyze the attitude of government and private school teachers towards inclusive education. This study was helpful in understanding the inclusive education practices, the nature and barriers to learning. This study highlights the importance of practical competencies which require teachers to develop the skills to perform the action of creating a learning environment, developing teaching strategies, developing resources to support learning for children from diverse background and needs and developing the skills required among teachers to treat all students as individuals. The study suggests the need for more feasible programs, practical trainings and more facilities related to inclusive education for both government and private schools to make this new education approach successful.

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India Defeating Pandemic Covid-19 : An Invisible Helping Hand of Swachh Bharat Mission

Prahlad Kumar Bairwa and Pintu Kumar***

The present article is a byproduct of our project of IMPRESS scheme related to the Swachh Bharat Mission, the most comprehensive public policy. The SBM presented as an exemplary example of skillful management on every stage, i.e. planning, implementation and sustainability. The survey-based study projected the SBM (a mass movement) as a successful example of community-led management in the government policy for the first time. It included 360 respondents from different villages of the Nalanda district of Bihar through random sampling among the beneficiaries of the SBM. Also, we talked to several other villagers during the survey to know their views about the SBM. The survey that happened during June-August in the year 2020 reflected a fantastic fact that the SBM provided Corona Shield to all by promoting cleanliness in the society leading to success against the Corona pandemic. The research focused on this finding with other helpful factors in preventing the spread of the first wave

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of Corona pandemic in India, a highly populated country with fewer medical resources beyond the expectations of the developed nations.

[**Keywords :** Sustainability, Corona, Community, Planning, Implementation, Sanitation, Cleanliness, Swachh Bharat Mission, Open Defection Free, Lockdown]

1.   Introduction

The world is going through the Covid-19 pandemic, which is the most catastrophic event after the Second World War, which surpassed all previous epidemics and pandemics both in terms of transmissibility and number of deaths.The COVID-19 pandemic is also known as the Corona pandemic due to the associated virus. The Coronavirus originated in Wuhan (the largest city of Central China) and transmitted worldwide primarily through human to human transmission killing more than one million people. In January 2020 itself, the WHO proclaimed the current outbreak of Corona virus as Global Public Health Emergency. It is almost more than one year that we live with Wuhan Coronavirus, and now everybody is aware of its symptoms, spread, and preventive measures, so I will not go into the detail. Each country of the world is affected now without any discrimination of the stage of development. Interestingly, the world's most developed countries are badly affected, such as America, England, Spain, France, etc. India is one of the less affected countries from the corona pandemic in terms of the slow spread, the high rate of recovery and the low number of deaths as per its population.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting declared that India's fatality rate is the lowest in the world at 2.41% resulted in the highest recovery rate in the first wave of corona pandemic. India's case fatality rate (CFR), the proportion of people who have died among the confirmed cases, is also declining continuously and always remained below the global average of 3.1% (Hindustan Times, Monday, 28 September 2020). The world is wondering why India has a lower rate of corona cases, a higher recovery rate, and a lower mortality rate is proportionate to its population and resources.The developing country,India, is the second highly populated country of the world.India is still trying to meet the pressing medical needs of its rising population due to fewer health-related resources such as hospitals, doctors, beds, ventilators, etc. In this respect, a rapid increase in the number of corona cases and resultant deaths expected. People believed that it would be hard for India to control the outbreak

and provide necessary healthcare to all Corona patients. India set an example while fighting against Corona beyond all expectations and successfully prevented the spread of the pandemic with fewer fatalities. India successfully challenged the Corona pandemic and helped other countries by the unprecedented actions in the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. India became self- independent through indigenous production of health care resources like a mask, sanitiser, PPE Kit, ventilator, vaccine etc. and provided these to needy nations. The number of daily cases is rising in India due to the ongoing highest number of daily tests in the world since the mid-2020.

2. The Objective of the Study

An attempt has been made in this article to find out a possible explanation behind the behaviour of Indian citizens against the Corona pandemic.

3. Possible Explanation offered so far

The studies and researches of scientists, doctors, culturists and sociologists indicate three possible reasons behind India'ssuccessful defeat of the corona pandemic. *First*, the decision of complete lockdown proved to be the most effective step by the current Indian government of the Bhartiya Janata Party. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ordered a mandatory national lockdown on 24 March 2020 after a one-day voluntary Janata curfew on 22 March. The complete lockdown continued till 30 May, and the government started unlocking the country in phases after 1 June 2020.The complete lockdown proved a big blow to the Indian economy but stopped the spread of Corona among Indians. The government saved the life of millions of Indian citizens at the cost of economic growth. The countries with partial lockdown witnessed the highest number of Corona cases and resultant deaths, especially the developed nations. The nationwide lockdown welcomed by 1.3 billion Indian populations between vigorous and promotional activities such as beating *thali* and lighting *Diya*. The phased unlock down is still going on. The United Nations and the World Health Organization believed in India's tremendous capacity to deal with the pandemic. They applauded the BJP government's comprehensive and robust efforts, especially lockdown, to prevent the spread of the outbreak. The UN

and the WHO called the lockdown restrictions aggressive but vital for containing the attack and creating healthcare facilities.

Second, India is a land of unity in diversities of cultures, which worked in the background for the lower deaths due to Corona and hindered the spread of the pandemic. Our culture is an accumulation of experiences, thoughts, and philosophies of ancestors in a peculiar environment since the beginning of civilization. The Corona pandemic reminded us about our vibrant culture and society, which also earned respect in foreign countries due to its closeness to nature. The Western world, which criticised Indian culture for its conservativeness, clearly understood its significance during the Corona pandemic. For example, our way of greeting by folded hands, i.e. *Namaste*, became eye-striking for the Western world due to its usefulness in preventing Corona spread. There are several features in our culture, i.e., living, eating, dressing, worshipping, meditation, medication, and drinking, which stopped the quick spread of the Corona pandemic. We leant the benefits of fresh food from our ancestors, i.e. cook every day and eat every day. The use of spices in food preparation also made our body healthy and immunised, such as black pepper, garlic, ginger, cardamom etc. Indians generally avoid packed and frozen foods, which is preventing corona infection. We always respected our elderly and took special care at the time of sickness, who were vulnerable to Corona infection but recovered fast. Generally, most of the population of India worship in their home and burn Human and *Kapur*, which purifies the air and kills viruses and bacteria in the environment. Indians are famous for their unique meditation and medication, which is getting appreciated by the world now. Meditation and Yoga became crucial in preventing Corona spread, which Indians are practicing since the pre-modern days, such as *anulom, vilom, Kapal Bhati* etc. Indians have been fond of *ayurvedic* medication, which became part of daily life. Indians use different kinds of medicinal drinks made of *pudina, tulsi*, ginger, pepper, honey etc. and become highly immune to any infection.

4.   Swachh Bharat Mission and the Corona Pandemic

The most comprehensive public policy to achieve complete cleanliness, the Swachh Bharat Mission (hereafter SBM), is another reason behind India's successful challenge to the corona pandemic, which focuses on this article. Most intellectuals ignored the vital role

of the SBM, which prepared the ground to halt the spread of the Corona outbreak in India.Our honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Damodar Das Modi announced the SBM during the Independence Day speech at Lal Quila on 15 August 2014, long before the Corona outbreak. On October 2, 2014, the Government of India tossed the SBM celebrating the 145th birth anniversary of the father of nation Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi. India's Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi initiated this drive of Swachhta to achieve Swachh Bharat by 2019 when Corona started.The SBM or the Clean India Mission became one of the flagship programmes of the present BJP led Indian government, aiming to achieve clean India through the increase of cleanliness and sanitization and the end of open defecation. The SBM aims to provide sanitation and cleanliness facilities to every household such pour-flush toilets, safe and adequate water,to end the manual scavenging, to increase awareness about healthy sanitation practices, to bring behavioural changes, and to increase people's participation in the policies of sanitation and public health.

The Prime Minister Sri Modi took cleanliness pledge to start the SBM on 2 October, 2014, which turned this policy into a mass movement through the increased participation of citizens. Millions of Indians took the pledge with Mr. Modi. The pledge focuses on not only personal involvement but also the engagement of society. It mentions that "We must serve our country India like Mahatma Gandhi by keeping it neat and clean.Being dedicated to cleanliness, I take this pledge that I will work 100 hours per year, and two hours per week. I will initiate the quest for cleanliness with myself, my family, locality, village, and workplace.I will spread the message of the Swachh Bharat Mission in my family, workplace, locality, village and town and I will request citizens that do not indulge in littering and nor do allow it to happen.I will inspire hundred other persons to take the same pledge and devote their hundred hours to cleanliness" (http://www.oneindia.com).

We became aware of the critical role of the SBM in defeating the corona pandemic during field surveys related to our project. We Prahlad Kumar Bairwa and Pintu Kumar awarded with a research project entitled "Operation and Impressions of Swachh Bharat Mission in Rajasthan and Bihar: A Step towards Social Revolution" by the Indian Council of Social Science Research under IMPRESS

scheme. The field surveys indicated that the SBM is a programme to achieve Swachh Bharat by 2019 by improving the levels of cleanliness and turning out as a social movement in increasing awareness and consciousness about sanitation and healthy life in villages and urban areas.Here we can note the deep connection between the corona pandemic and the SBM based on ongoing experiences. Cleanliness is the only enemy of deadly Coronavirus enthusiastically promoted under the SBM.In this regard, the WHO also published an interim guidance document on 23 March 2020 entitled "Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Waste Management for the COVID-19 Virus (available at https : //apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/333560/WHO-20 19-nCoV-IPC_WASH-2020.4-eng.pdf ? ua=1)." The WHO guide-lines mentioned that the protection from all infectious disease pandemics including the COVID-19 episode needs availability of safe water, sanitation and hygienic conditions.There is still no medicine for the treatment of COVID-19 patients, but you can kill and stop human-to-human spread of Coronavirus by applying sanitiser or washing your hand with soap and water and the waste management practices. It is a matter of pride for all Indians that the most comprehensive public policy of SBM promoted and focused on the above preventive measures related to the spread of the Corona pandemic since 2014. All Indian States and Union Territories achieved substantial progress towards the achievement of Clean India by becoming Open Defection Free. More than six lakhs villages also became ODF. More than 107300000 individual toilets have been constructed in the country. The sanitation coverage in Indian villages has increased to a hundred per cent from thirty-eight per cent since the beginning of the SBM in 2014 (http://newsonair.com/News? title=Year-ender-2020%3A-Report-on-Swachh-Bharat-mission&id= 406425). The transformation in rural sanitation and behaviour of over 600 million people turned hand hygiene into a Jan Andolan. In this way, the SBM became very significant in increasing awareness about the crucial role of sanitation and hygiene in preventing diseases during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5.   Findings of Survey in the Nalanda District of Bihar

We have seen a brief report on the success of the SBM in connection with the preventive measures needed in the COVID-19 pandemic. The cleanliness drive has been a great support in the fight

against Coronavirus, which became evident during our survey of the Nalanda district of Bihar during the pandemic. An Indian district of Nalanda is one of the thirty-eight districts of Bihar with the administrative headquarters in Bihar Sharif. Nalanda became a fully-fledged district in 1972, split from Patna. The majority of the land in the community is a fertile land of Indo Gangetic plain. The section comprises 20 blocks, 1084 villages and four municipalities with a literacy rate of 64.73%. We collected data for the study through a questionnaire in Hindi with observation and discussion on the SBM. In the months of June-August 2020 approximately 360 households surveyed from the villages of Nalanda district benefited from the program selected through random sampling. A comprehensive but general survey of districts performed to witness changes on the levels of culture, society, family, and individual due to the SBM. The following table shows the number of villages surveyed and the number of households covered in the same town :

Table-1 : Surveyed Number of Villages and Households of Nalanda District

S. No	State	District	Village	Households
1.	Bihar	Nalanda	Beldaripar	10
2.	Bihar	Nalanda	Chandaura	13
3.	Bihar	Nalanda	Kadichak	13
4.	Bihar	Nalanda	Mandilpur	10
5.	Bihar	Nalanda	Rampur	10
6.	Bihar	Nalanda	Mirzapur	10
7.	Bihar	Nalanda	Khaira Salaru	15
8.	Bihar	Nalanda	Milkipar	13
9.	Bihar	Nalanda	Sultanpur	09
10.	Bihar	Nalanda	Nagma	10
11.	Bihar	Nalanda	Bhandari	10
12.	Bihar	Nalanda	Khirauna	11
13.	Bihar	Nalanda	Fatehpur	10
14.	Bihar	Nalanda	Sonsa	10
15.	Bihar	Nalanda	Pathraura	03
16.	Bihar	Nalanda	Manjaitha	04
17.	Bihar	Nalanda	Dhamasang	43
18.	Bihar	Nalanda	Kadibigha	51

19.	Bihar	Nalanda	Rahui	43
20.	Bihar	Nalanda	Amba	60
21.	Bihar	Nalanda	Kevai	02
			Total	**360**

The questionnaire included a question related to the practical aspects of the SBM and its long term effect in the Corona pandemic, i.e. Q. 30. "There is a need for cleanliness to fight Corona. Did the SBM provide Corona Shield to all by promoting cleanliness in the society leading to success against the Corona pandemic? (कोरोना महामारी से बचाव के लिए साफ–सफाई आवश्यक है। क्या स्वच्छ भारत अभियान ने इसको बढ़ावा देकर जनता को पहले से ही कोरोना कवच प्रदान कर दिया जिसके कारण वो काफी हद तक कोरोना से लड़ने मे सफल हो रहे है?)." The question includedtwo options, yes or no, to answer. The participant has to answer the question by writing yes or no in the provided blank space.The survey became a success with an overwhelming response from almost all participants except five. The data analysis of the questionnaires indicates the long-term effect of the SBM on the mass population resulting in a social revolution. The following pie chart and graph present the data analysis of the survey of the Nalanda district of Bihar, which is telling several stories of the success of the SBM.

Figure-1 and 2 represent Pie chart and Graph of Q. 30 of the Survey of households of Nalanda :

Figure-1 : Pie chart

कोरोना महामारी से बचाव के लिए साफ़ सफाई आवश्यक है | क्या स्वच्छ भारत अभियान ने इसको बढ़ावा देकर जनता को पहले से ही कोरोना कवच प्रदान कर दिया जिसके कारण वो काफी हद तक कोरोना से लड़ने मे सफल हो रहे है ?
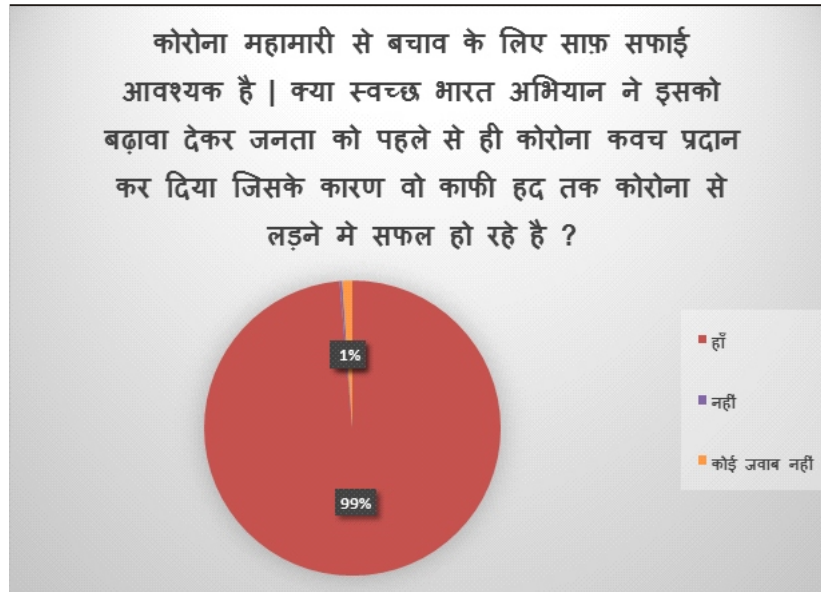
Figure-1 : Graph

A total number of 360 households from the Nalanda district of Bihar participated in the survey. There are only four participants who did not answer the question. Only one participant responded to the question negative. In this way, the total number of 355 households, i.e. 99 per cent, responded to the question favourable. These households agreed that the SBM provided them Corona Shield long before starting the Corona pandemic in India through increased cleanliness and hygiene. The SBM promoted cleanliness and hygiene among individuals and the community through all possible ways, one of the deadly enemies of the COVID-19 virus. The families shared with us that the construction of a personal toilet in the home prevented us from going outside for nature's call and increased the level of personal hygiene. During the interview, the families also told us that we understood the importance of healthy and hygienic living and a clean neighbourhood through the constant requests, promotions and ground zero works of the swachhtadoots and the swachhtagrahi. The developed awareness about sanitation, cleanliness and hygiene and the habit of using the toilet, washing face, hand and foot and taking a bath proved helpful during the Corona pandemic.

The government of India has explicitly declared that the SBM is a joint responsibility of the government and citizen of this country because cleanliness has a social dimension or implies a system of interaction concerned with hygiene and disease prevention. Cleanliness has played an essential role in re-establishing cultural

values, traditions and humanitarianism. Social awareness and behaviour change are necessary for complete and sustainable cleanliness. The government has a clear view in this regard, and that is why community-level Swachhagrahis are appointed and promoted to motivate communities to construct and use toilets in villages. Swachhagrahis recruited from among Panchayati Raj institutions, co-operatives, ASHAs, Anganwadi workers, women groups, community-based organizations, self-help groups, etc. The Mission aims to have one Swachhagrahi in every village, with at least 6.5 lakh swachhagrahis volunteers by March 2019. Another social feature of the SBM is the Swachhta pledge, an oath for all to participate in the Clean India movement. The interactive and social dimensions of the SBM had turned it into a mass movement.

The SBM developed a sustainable, healthy and hygienic society both in urban and rural areas, which became crucial during the Corona pandemic. It initiated behaviour change and a positive attitude towards cleanliness and sanitation. It touched the daily life of individuals through the promotion of clean surrounding. Thepersonal cleanness includes hand, face and footwash before preparing and eating food and after toilet, ecologically safe and sustainable community and environmental sanitation and waste management system (http://www.mdws.gov.in/sites/default/files/TS CGuideline2007_0.pdf). The SBM increased the level of awareness about personal and community cleanliness for a healthy society. People understood the real significance of personal hygiene and a clean neighbourhood after the spread of the Wuhan virus.

Earlier, the concept of sanitation was limited to the disposal of human excreta. Still, the SBM turned itinto a mass movement with the inclusion of liquid and solid waste disposal, food hygiene, and personal, domestic, community, and environmental hygiene. Proper sanitation is essential not only for good health but also for a sound individual and social life. Sanitation is one of the fundamental determinants of quality of life, which prevent contamination of water and soil and thereby prevent diseases. The concept of cleanliness now includes not only personal hygiene but also home sanitation, safe water arrangement, garbage, water and excreta disposal. The SBM programme became the most persuasive advocates of good sanitation practices, including the human body, working and living places, surrounding area, i.e. colony, street, etc. The SBM brought an

improvement in the general quality of life by promoting cleanliness and hygiene as per its one of the main objective. Altogether, these good sanitation practices became the part of corona shield later as per the guidelines of medical professionals.

During the survey, we were surprised to know that the SBM is more successful in Indian villages than urban areas. In other words, the SBM (G) proved it is more powerful.The SBM upgraded the standard of living in the rural areas like ancient days by accelerating sanitation coverage,motivating communities and Panchayati Raj institutions, promoting cleanliness, hygiene and eliminating open defecation. An army of foot soldiers, i.e. Swachhata Doots and Swachhatagrahis on sanitation created through using existing and working state, central and non-government institutions.

The Swachhta Survekshan (an annual survey of cleanliness, sanitation and hygiene) 2021 also shows that the Indian villages are cleaner than cities and achieved the vision of Swachh Bharat by accelerated sustainable sanitation practices and coverage, adopted of sustainable sanitation practices and facilities. India's spirit dwells in its villages. The heart will change, then the body will change accordingly. The transformed villages proved their value with the lowest spread of Corona in Indian villages at the peak point. Even there will be no exaggeration to mention that when thousands of infected urban people migrated to their villages, they infected less healthy villagers and became healthy soon in the clean environment of villages.

The smooth and efficient implementation framework worked behind the success of the SBM to provide a Corona shield to everyone. To achieve total cleanness and swachhta, the government of India provided sanitation as a state subject with the flexible authority to decide on the implementation of their policy of sanitation and its mechanism, taking into account State-specific requirements.Each state prepared the implementation framework with a road map of activities, actions and checks covering the three critical phases necessary for the policy, i.e. planning, implementation, and sustain-ability with the community-led community sanitisation approaches triggering behaviour change and house-to-house interventions. Community-based monitoring and vigilance commi- ttees created essential peer pressure to meet the community needs at the district level. Participation of prestigious civil societies, self-help communities, NGOs, international, national and local level organi-

zations working for the societysecured.An effective monitoring mechanism is activated to monitor both toilet construction and usage.

6. Conclusion

The SBM is the most comprehensive public policy of the BJP led Indian government in terms of its coverage and beneficiary. The success of the SBM lies in its skilful management at all phases, i.e. planning, implementation and sustainability. It is unique in the sense that the programme is for the public, of the public and by the public. The concept of community management successfully launched through the SBM in one of the largest populous countries like India. India became a clean country and improved the standard of living in the rural and urban areas by promoting cleanliness, hygiene and eliminating open defecation. All Indians returned to their roots of a healthy and hygienic life by expanding sanitation coverage, adopting sustainable sanitation resources, the community managed sanitation systems, solid and liquid waste management, behaviour change, and awareness creation and health education. It is the secret behind Corona shield. Altogether, a changed lifestyle by the SBM worked as a shield during the first wave of COVID-19. The guard controlled the rapid spread of the Wuhan virus in India. The second wave of single and double mutant Coronavirus arrived in India from foreign countries like England, Africa, Brazil, etc., spreading nothing like anything. The situation is now quite serious since with hundreds of causality every day. Soon, Indians will develop herd immunity through the provided Corona shield by the SBM in the form of a healthy, hygienic, and natural life. We will again defeat the Coronavirus with extraordinary management of the government and the public.

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Secularism in Nepal : Contextualization and Contestation

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Nepal has been observing secularism for more than a decade. However, the terminology carries loads of disputes within; the true meaning of the term is yet to be brought into the practical sphere as the realm is the absolute guidance of a majoritarian perspective. Insertion of secularism in the constitution exhibits the equal participation of divergent groups but it can be taken as the true example in forming an illusion among groups of people raising voices for their identity. Each utterance from either leaders or activists or intellectuals carries apathy in fulfilling the demands of minorities and the high personnel are unaware of the consequences behind their squashing attitude. Their particular attitude can appear in the devastating mode for the broader group of minorities. They are being excluded from most of the spaces which explicitly is affecting their everyday lifestyle making them the victim of deterioration, paralyzation and passivity. The voices of excluded minorities are deliberately silenced and suppressed. Instead of being the channels of their voices, the intellectuals connected to status-quo are shamelessly promoting manipulative ideas of

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Hinduism ignoring the rights of divergent identity. Promoting the slogan of equilibrium in diversities, a new group of intellectuals needs to deconstruct the prioritization of religious orthodoxy and strengthen the autonomy of the minorities.

[**Keywords :** Religion, Secularism, Intellectual, Minorities, Autonomy]

1.   Introduction

Secularism became a widely popular terminology to address Nepal after 2006. It is used as a robust slogan to popularize the vehement process of inclusion. However, practices and exercises seem to be despondent. It is not acknowledged, among the dominant groups, as it is understood in the global periphery rather mostly taken as a western canonical concept to imperialize Nepal ideologically. Moreover, some critics take it as a conspiracy of Christian interference that leads to the conversion of religion. Whereas others, those who belong to minority groups of people, consider it as an elastic boundary that is potential enough to elongate the circumference of the inclusion. The debate and contradiction that emerged regarding the rubric are common but the folks and the political leaders along with the state mechanism are not comprehending secularism to its essence. Secularism should not be defined as the way people define it as they think rather to its global definition. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word 'secularism' is the doctrine that morality should be based solely on regard to the well-being of mankind in the present life to the exclusion of all considerations drawn on belief in a god or a future state (qtd. in Singh, p. 598). However, in the Nepali context, it is comprehended in alienated conception. It is interrogated as a western concept and has been interpreted in a monolithic dimension to a broader extent.

The wider extension of the term secularism has the humanistic root and efficiency in the consolidation of the welfare state. It is not an alienated concept as a system that problematizes social harmony rather it is a fundamental dimension of the society that helps to substantiate social equality and integrity. George Holyoake advocates secularism as "the study of promoting human welfare by material means measuring human welfare by utilitarian rule, and making the service of others a duty of life" (Qtd. in Holyoake). These definitions illuminate that secularism is not an alienated term rather than a humanistic approach to dignify religious value without any other agencies to dilute and have no political interest in the state

regulation. Definitively secularism is more connected with the prosperity of the society curtailing the hierarchy and upbringing the marginalized group from the religious perspective. It would be wrong to define secularism in terms of personal thoughts and as a concept as some categories of people believe it. The global perception should be taken into consideration to justly define it to its utmost.

Secularism accommodates the segregation of religion from the state and social arena where people may practise their religion with their autonomy without problematizing social peace and harmony. It provides religious freedom to practice one's conviction without sabotaging others. "The need for secularism as state policy arises from the requirement of both protecting the individual's freedom of religion as well as making possible the creation and promotion of a democratic public space", as Niraja Gopal Jayal asserts, "in which issues of shared civic concern may be deliberated upon, determined and resolved, in keeping with liberal values such as freedom, human rights and self-determination" (2). One can change or keep on practising religion according to one's conscience. Eliminating the possible intrusion of religious belief and evaporating proselytization secularism promotes religious equality and neutralizes supremacy without taking any religion into prominence. Secularism is to be viewed as the channel of diminishing established religion rather as an influential aspect in unscrambling the scrambled diversities of the nation. The establishment of secularism accords to raising voices towards the eradication of constructed supernatural beliefs that have been promoting negative attitudes towards minorities and deliberately crushing their voices. This sort of notion is still prevalent in Nepal.

The supremacy of religious doctrine is at its height because of promotion on inserting the credit to god when one achieves success instead of encouraging the ability one has accumulated within oneself through one's hard work. Miracle has its prominence but is valorized standing as opposed to that of reality. Belief in supernatural power is making most people dependent on orthodoxical ideology instead of sharpening the capabilities in terms of the advancement of ideas. As Irfan Engineer writes, "people should reject any politics which attempts to encourage or discourage any religion or interfere in any religious practices…if true and

democratic secularism has to succeed, the present hegemonistic 'secularism', which has come to mean equal respect for fundamentalists of all religions, has to be rejected and defeated" (27-28). Secularism, therefore, promotes making people realize that the diluted concept they have been carrying within themselves is the crucial reason behind their manipulating concepts. It illustrates the need with absolute reasoning on the sectors which are deliberately silenced as per the interest of people residing in power. Logos and pathos of people have a major influence on religion and if it is not amended timely, the extinction of some groups residing on the population won't be delayed.

Diverse features of the nation have been the matter to eulogize and nevertheless are commemorated now and then. According to the National Population and Housing Census 2011, people follows Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Kirat, Christianity, Prakriti, Bon, Jainism, Bahai, Sikhism and undefined religions in Nepal. The religious variant and overwhelming domination of Hinduism was quite the channel of the problematic religious aspect of Nepal as it incorporated and went through a big political transition. The conflict on socio-cultural diversities of the nation can be alleviated through the active implementation of secularism. In Rameshwor Bhandari's words, "the formal end of armed movement following the Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006 followed by People's Movement II gave hope not only to perpetual peace in the country but also to the establishment of inclusive governance" (35). More precisely Prakash Upadhyay states, "the regime transition of 2006 brought major political transformations, and unlike the previous transitions has made some significant impact on exclusion/inclusion. The state was declared secular in 2006 while the Hindu monarchy was abolished in 2008" (87). Though the endorsement process of secularism through resistance has been a decade the representatives of diverse groups are still standing at bay. Minorities are being suppressed, they are victimized predominately through the definition of secularism concocted by the dominant groups which inevitably has been the fundamental reason behind the malfunctioning of secularism. Through this lance, the paper explores the history of secularism in Nepal together with the failure of the government to neutralize religious supremacy. This paper also accumulates the perspective of general people on the need for secularism for the equal distribution of

rights among people in Nepal. Both quantitative and qualitative data have been used in the analysis.

2.   Endorsement Contextualization

Although Nepal was officially declared as a secular state in 2006, it was voiced approximately half a century before. Puspa Lal Shrestha, a pioneer of the Communist Party in Nepal, had initiated the discourse of secularism in 1947 after a century back The Communist Manifesto came into existence. He is the one who had acknowledged the importance of secularism for mutual respect and equality in religion in divergent Nepal. He demanded secularism along with republic and federalism through constituent assembly. But his aspiration did not come into practice though there was the end of 104 years long Rana regime in 1950 with the promulgation of democracy. A magnificent transformation from absolute dictatorial totalitarianism to liberal democracy was a great achievement for the Nepalese people; the collaborative effort of King Tribhuvan and the Nepal Democratic Party (Nepali Congress) played a significant role in the new beginning but could not continue the demand of the secular state. There was an absolute dominance of single religious assumptions though Nepal was not constitutionally consolidated as a Hindu state, then. The interim constitution of Nepal in the post Rana regime was crafted by Ram Ugra Sing, which was a xerox copy of the independent Indian constitution and that was pretty much indifferent to religion. Meanwhile, in the words of a Professor of Tribhuvan University, King Mahendra commissioned Ivory Jennings, a Professor of Cambridge University, to prepare a constitution apt to the non-party system and very ironically he crafted the constitution of Nepal as the Hindu religious kingdom in 1962 (based on the personal interview conducted on 12 April 2021). According to Pawan Kumar Sen, "the country was formally declared a Hindu kingdom under the new Constitution promulgated under the Panchayat regime (1960-1990) in 1962. The executive power of the Hindu king, and the entrenchment of Hindu values in the state institutions and public policies, was established through the 1962 Constitution" (68). Furthermore, as he writes, Nepalese rulers institutionalized "the hill variant of the Hindu and hierarchical caste systems, as the so-called Hindu high caste hill groups felt superior to others, while the marginalized others felt inferior to the former. This caused the hill indigenous groups (who were non-Hindus) to feel discriminated against" (66).

While defining Nepal in 1989 there was a huge debate and controversies regarding either to call "Hindu Rajya" or "Hindu Rajtantratmak". The constitution drafted by Bishwa Nath Upadhya reformed the new constitution under the panchayat regime but Nepal was still declared as "Hindu Rajtantratmak" because it was thought to be suitable for Nepal that has Hindu monarchical aptitude. In Harka Gurung words, after 90 years of the declaration of Muluki Ain in its act of untouchability, some amendments were made. The constitution of Nepal 1990, assuring the right of equality, has encrypted - the state will not discriminate against folks in terms of religion, merits, gender, ethnicity, and faith. But, in 1992 the amended constitution's act asserted that the traditional vogue in religious premises would not be observed, made constitutional rights (reserved). In another word, the cast categorized as untouchable in terms of tradition were not given rights to enter inside the temples and sacred places. To accept this sort of traditional trend is to discriminate against indigenous and Dalits and persist demarcation in other sectors (Our trans. 3). Social exclusion and discrimination against Dalits, Adivasi Janajatis, Muslims, and Madhesis have come to the forefront more recently, as Gurung claims, "once the post-1990 democratic movement opened the space for public debate on Nepal's ethnic groups" (6). According to Astri Suhrke, political liberalization in the 1990s was more effective in fuelling expectations than in meeting demands. The new Constitution recognized the multi-cultural and multilingual nature of society, but the affirmation of Nepali as the national language and the country as a Hindu kingdom, as he writes, "enabled the state to privilege the dominant culture through political and financial support and the ban on parliamentary representation through political parties was lifted, but political parties based on caste, ethnicity or region were not allowed" (4). To quote Mahendra Lawoti is apt here, who opines,

> Even though the 1990 constitution called the state multiethnic and multi-linguistic, it did not recognize different languages, religions, and socio-cultural groups. For instance, the constitution declared the state Hindu, effectively endowing the Hindu religion with privileged status. It facilitated laws based on Hindu jurisprudence, imposed a Hindu value system in governance by defining the rights and duties of the state and citizens based on Hindu norms, and initiated public policies imbued with CHHE values. (377)

Reforms and amendments in the constitution were made many times in history nevertheless the dominance of the majority and suppression of minorities were not neutralized. Freedom and liberty are confiscated by the majoritarian leading the boycotted groups into a famine of autonomy and independence. Voices for the margin have been battered by the government, activists, organizations and intellectuals but the suffocation of the eroded subaltern is repelling the abstinence of constraint. The most recent amendment made in 2018 was thought to be the most effective constitution of Nepal but the reformation retrograde Nepal towards Hindu religious dogma. The inscription of "sanatan dekhi chali aayeko" vehemently supported to accentuate and formally legalize the overwhelming domination of Hinduism. Nepal- time and again in this and that way manipulating the subject matter- is implicitly marching towards the consolidation of Hinduism which is creating hostility and cleavages between groups of people. It is overtly significant to comprehend the diversity of Nepali society before running after a unitary religious dogma. Rather than emphasizing upon the majority, the concerned agency must prioritize the aspiration and demands of the sidelined group being ardent to the circumstances of the backwarded people. Contestation on secularism is persisting subtly in Nepal. The majority of Hindu followers want to continue Nepalese polity through the subtle practice of Hindu hegemony. They are still in the favour of continuing Nepal as a Hindu kingdom. Another group of intellectuals and activists are against the Hindu hegemony. They do not believe in religious dogmas. They believe that a nation should not have a religion. This group is small but their voice is sharp. There is another third group that wants to remain silent. This is a dangerous group because it helps to the dominant ideology. Through a survey, the structure of the mentality of the intellectuals - both academic and activists from within and outside the universities - was explored to accumulate basic viewpoints of them on secularism.

3.   Methods

We reviewed the literature to assess secularism in Nepal with no methodological restrictions to select relevant studies. We included studies that describe secularism in Nepal. This study has used both qualitative and quantitative methods to explore the issues. The study population consisted of activists and academicians. A structured self-administered questionnaire was used to gain data from the study

participants. Respondents were selected purposively from activists and academicians. The self-administered questionnaire was used for sociodemographic characteristics and to assess the perception of secularism in Nepal. In total,15 statements were rated on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 according to their importance: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=undecided, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The 15 statements have been categorized into four subscales as discourse, people and place of margin, conflict resolution and harmony, freedom and autonomy. A qualitative investigation was obtained from some selected key informants who are familiar with the issues by using one-on-one interviews, along with discussions as the data collection method. A range of questions was asked to assess the secularism in Nepal to support the quantitative results. The collected data were organized and coded and entered in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 for analysis. The results were presented in the form of frequencies and percentages by using tables.

## 4.	Results and Discussion

This study has tried to explore the knowledge of secularism among academicians and activists. In this regard, first of all, we have tried to find out the background characteristics of respondents and then the perceived knowledge on secularism.

### 4·1	Background Characteristics of Respondents

The following table-1 presents the background characteristics of respondents i.e., age, sex, social group and religion :

Table-1 : Background characteristics of respondents

Background characteristics	%	N
Age group		
Less than 25	42.0	55
25-34	36.6	48
35 and above	21.4	28
Sex		
Male	55.7	73
Female	44.3	58
Social group		
Chhetri	22.1	29

Hill Brahmin	30.5	40
Newar	8.4	11
Kirat	29.0	38
Hill Dalit	6.9	9
*Other (Madhesi Brahmin, Kayastha, Koiri, Undefined)	3.1	4
Religion		
Hindu	59.5	78
Others	23.7	31
Atheist	16.8	22
Total	**100.0**	**131**

*Others include Madhesi Brahmin, Kayastha, Koiri, Undefined.

It is evident from the data contained in the table above that out of 131 respondents, about 52 percent are males and 44 percent are females. According to the age group, the majority are less than 25 years (42.0%) followed by 25-34 years (36.6%) and 35 and above years (21.4%). Similarly, the majority of the respondents are from Hill Brahmin (30.5%) followed by Kirat (29.0%) and Chhetri (22.1%). Likewise, Hindu followers have their dominance with about 60 percent.

4·2 Essentialities of Secularism

This study has sought the perception of the respondents regarding secularism based on four domains i.e., discourse; people and place of margin; conflict resolution; and harmony, freedom and autonomy in terms of their significance. Table-2 shows the different perspectives regarding secularism in four domains. In the discourse domain, there are three statements. All three are of the perception about discourse on secularism. In this regard, about 92 percent of respondents perceived that there needs intensive discourse on secularism. And about 9 in 10 respondents agree that for the intensive study of secularism, there should be a mutual understanding between the intellectuals and activists. Likewise, about two-thirds of them also agree that till now there has not been any comprehensive discussion of secularism in Nepal. Data reveals that there needs a comprehensive discourse on secularism for the upliftment of neglected community groups. Most of the activists during the personal talks and interviews expressed that the dominant ruling class along with state mechanisms are still playing roles to save orthodox religious status-quo. Some of them even said that Nepal still looks as if

it is a Hindu kingdom. All of them agreed to promote discourses and movement for applying secularism in a practical way in our daily life because, as they believed, secularism reinforces providing justice for marginal caste groups protect the rights and identity of indigenous tribes, and liberates subaltern groups of people including women.

Table-2 : Perceived knowledge on secularism

Statements	Disagree	Undecided	Agree
Discourse			
A comprehensive discussion of secularism has not been conducted in Nepal.	23.2	10.4	66.4
The intensive study, investigation, discussion and interpretation of secularism is pivotal.	4.8	3.2	92.0
For the intensive study of secularism mutual understanding between the intellectuals connected with universities and exterior engineers must be maintained.	2.4	8.0	89.2
People and place of margin			
Secularism is needed for the upliftment of neglected community groups.	9.6	5.6	84.8
Secularism reinforces providing justice for marginal caste groups.	13.6	16.0	70.4
Secularism is useful for the protection of the rights and identity of indigenous tribes.	10.4	12.0	77.6
Secularism is crucial for the liberation and freedom of women.	19.2	19.2	61.6
Secularism is also useful for the reduction of geographical deviation.	18.5	23.1	58.6
Secularism provides benefits for general minority groups scattered in an interior part of the nation.	10.4	12.0	77.6
Conflict resolution			
Secularism helps not in war rather in an establishment of harmony.	10.4	13.6	76.0
Secularism is not western agenda in proselytizing the religion.	22.4	15.2	62.4

Secularism doesn't increase religious-cultural conflicts rather helps in minimizing them.	11.9	8.8	79.2
Harmony, freedom and autonomy			
Secularism assists in constructing autonomous concerns and thoughts.	8.0	14.4	76.8
Nation has no religion; the nation mustn't have; an individual's religious faith and religious freedom must be honoured.	4.8	7.2	87.0
The values of secularism implementation in everyday behaviour have magnificent benefits.	7.2	12.8	80.0

Source : Independent field survey 2021.

Regarding people and place of origin, there are 6 domains. Among the six domains, more than 70 percent agreed that secularism is needed for the upliftment of neglected community groups, is useful for the protection of the rights and identity of indigenous tribes and provided benefits for general scattered minorities group. Likewise, about 70 percent perceived that secularism reinforces providing justice for marginal caste groups. However, there are some disagreements on secularism. Among six statements data shows that more respondents (about 19 %) disagree on basically two statements of people and place of margin domain. It indicates that about 2 in 10 respondents are not confident about secularism and its decisive role for women and geographic diversity.

Another domain of this study is conflict resolution. There are three statements that deal with conflict resolution. In this regard, about 8 in 10 respondents agree that secularism creates harmony and decrease religious-cultural conflicts. Whereas, about 6 in 10 respondents perceived that secularism is not western agenda in proselytizing the religions. The last domain is about harmony, freedom and autonomy. In this regard, more than 70 percent of respondents agreed that secularism assists in constructing autonomous thoughts that have no color and have magnificent benefits in everyday life. The views of university scholars and academic groups are close to the activists but the activists are sharper in understanding the nuances of secularism in Nepal who express confident statements to implement secularism in practice.

The results of the personal interviews, structured and unstructured discussions and interactions among the academics and activists are analyzed based on the very four domains and summarized within and across subjects. A central theme mentioned by every respondent was the realization that there should a great discourse on secularism and that making good discourse may advantageous. Several interview participants spoke about the need of engaged discourse on secularism.

Many people are spending their lives standing on the thin line between two worlds: a world they are forced to belong to and the world they actually need to belong to. People wait for their grievances to be heard just to live a life free from struggling daily for identity, conflict resolution. Nepal, a land of diverse communities, requisites the practical implementation of secularism even though Hinduism has its dominance since historicity. Gopi Upreti opines, "though Hindu constitutes the largest block of population, Buddhist, Christian, Muslims, Kirat religion has its significance and is growing tremendously. In diverse communities of nations, it is not only preposterous to impose Hinduism as a state religion but it is also an antithesis to an inclusive democracy" ((http://sochnepal.org/2019/01/911/). Secularism seeks to defend the outright freedom of religious beliefs maximizing the freedom of religions protecting the right to demonstrate the religious belief of others. However, the development of the diluting concept has diverted in recognizing the true meaning of secularism. The general public, during discussions, mentions, "Our country to be secular is a good thing. It is generous to behave with all religions with equality rather than prioritizing the one but these days people claiming not to be a secular country are what I dislike". Voices of the majoritarian group have installed pessimistic consequences regarding the practical implementation of secularism, therefore, modification on an established concept is influential in prioritising voices of the voiceless, who exist in the margins.

Secularism is not western agenda in proselytizing the religion rather an inclusive platform for the minorites. It advocates, the nation has no religion; the nation mustn't have; an individual's religious faith and religious freedom must be honoured. Furthermore, secularism doesn't increase religious/cultural conflicts rather helps in minimizing them. Thus, the values of secularism implementation in everyday behaviour have magnificent benefits. Secularism needs to be brought up in the political forum and defined

practically as it has been scripted in the constitution. For instance, a sixty years old Brahmin man asserts that secularism is only an inhumane concept of people who have an imperialist ideology and are war thirst and are profit-seekers with motive in inviting conflict in society and nation. Further, thirty years old Kirati man mentions that as per his recognition secularism is not absolute religious freedom. The knowledge of Nepalese people on secularism recognizes them as being in an oscillating position. Some people have a misleading influence on the knowledge of secularism, however, some have a neutral viewpoint. Amar Singh discloses his point of view. In his view, "secularism is a notion which benefits to someone whereas trouble- some others - it means, whether it resolute hitherto social inequality or social discrimination or it doesn't depend upon the methods of its implementation, the obedience of the implementers and the character to whom it is implemented". The questionnaire distributed accumulates the positive perspective of people regarding secularism. Secularism enables people to live with affability respecting the ambiguous faiths of people, allocating equal access to identity for the entire population with the preservation of speeches and expressions.

The conceptualization of secularism regarding the promotion of the practice of equality respecting the autonomy of individuals has been diminished with the self-furnished interpretation of the dominant groups. However, the constitution of Nepal provides the right to choose and the right to religious freedom, the dominant group with the pessimistic hypothesis has smashed ideas of freedom. If the choice of individual conceptions is sustained the nation would be a step ahead in inaugurating the concrete notion of secularism. A high award winner novelist, poet and essayist, in our interview opined, "Individual freedom is a tool to assist the overall development of human beings. So secularism corroborates individual independence of selection". People in our society are enforced in being part of the religion antecedent has been following without prior discussion about an interest. Secularism is one of the modalities of the system of government that allows liberal states to grant equality for individuals having various sets of values. It accommodates autonomy for the individuals as autonomy assists equality along with peace and social harmony.

The autonomy of individuals alleviates the hegemonic attitude of dominant groups and concurrently supports the sidelined groups in

raising their voices on liberation. As the silenced voice of marginal groups seeks recognition along with the identity secularism breaks a prejudiced footing of the majoritarian groups and engages the neglected groups in obtaining their rights. A Kirati man, in the interaction, mentions, "Constitutionally, the respect and representation of every thought are crucial to neutralize". Secularism is the representation of a particular basis. The excluded population in terms of religion, identity, discussion led to a contemporary inclusive forum through secularism. As Chiara Letizia opines, "Secularism has been an essential step in the larger project to create a new, inclusive and republican Nepal, but it has also led to a public debate on the relationship between religion and the state that has at times become fractious" (111). It is an absolute force to bring the sidelined group into the mainstream with the collaborative effort of intellectuals. Intellectuals need to make people comprehend that the majoritarian group have generated manipulative conceptions regarding secularism for deliberately silencing the voice of the voiceless and making the population their puppets for their self-benefits. However, secularism uniformly treats the population making people self-reliant in speaking for justice. An indigenous activist and writer during a talk said, "To make self-human and lively, to make self-atheist, physical and materialistic, secularism is essential". Similarly, from our survey, 58.4% strongly agrees on secularism for harmony, peace and autonomy.

The practice of emphasis on sole religion nevertheless promotes social upheaval, therefore, to perpetuate culture, acknowledge the voices and admire the autonomy, enforcement of secularism has prominence. In the context of Nepal, the definition of secularism lacks authenticity. It is comprehended as the product of a Christian conspiracy to allow conversion of religion promoting the anti-god concept replacing the old religion: Hinduism. Foremost, the appropriate definition of secularism is crucial. For instance, a female political activist states, "Secularism has been wrongfully defined in Nepali context. It requires appropriate management". Obstructive interpretation of secularism is a mere weapon of diluting the obligations of minorities which has been strengthening the supremacy of dogmatic religious practices. The essentialism of discourse discussion has been a significant matter for 92.0 % of respondents as per the report of our survey.

5. Conclusion

The questionnaire was prepared to obtain the ideas regarding secularism within the group of students, social activists, intellectuals and some general people. However, of certain limitations, we were not able to cover a diverse group of people rather presented a questionnaire among the majoritarian group though our focus was on minorities. As we analyzed the data we acquired knowledge interestingly that secularism is celebrated among the majoritarian group. The result, therefore, from the questionnaire encouraged researchers to move forward on the work. It is indeed a matter of gratification to know that the generation of today has no diluted concept towards the people who are deliberately silenced. They are in demand of secularism for the liberation of women, for the people belonging to the sidelined group.

This research paper illuminates the secularist problem confronted by the Nepalese folks in the contemporary scenario. The paper has highlighted the significance of secularism to consolidate social integrity, peace and harmony in the Nepalese atmosphere. It is discovered that the autonomy and security of religious divergence are directly proportional to the strategic endorsement of secularism in multiple ways. This paper elaborates contemporary Nepali subtle issues that hitherto plays a significant role to exacerbate marginal groups demarcating people in terms of religious dogma. The paper tends to understand a need for potential governance to achieve the felicitous recognition of boycotted religious variants. It is found that most of the people in the Nepali community demand a secular state to outcast the booming religious conflict in Nepal. It explicitly surged the need for religious equality to accentuate Nepal in a profound succession in terms of an autonomous religious state. A country may respect any religious belief and its practices, however, the state should not accommodate merely a religion sidelining the rest; rather it should provide equal rights and liberty without prioritizing the one.

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6

COVID-19 and Domestic Violence : Examining the Impact of Lockdown in India

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With a rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases globaly in the past few months since various countries started lockdown as a measure to contain the pandemic, several international organizations have raised concern about the global rise in the incidences of domestic violence. It was further validated as many countries reported a substantial increase of 15-30% distress calls, which were received from women who were confined in closed spaces with abusive partners. India is said to be no exception to it. The present paper aims to analyze the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 in India. Empirical evidence collected from 750 respondents through the unrestricted self-selected online survey using google form in May 2020 from 19 states and union territories of India shows that a little more than one-third respondents (35·1 percent) agreed that incidences of domestic violence have increased in the lockdown period. The proportion of middle-aged respondents (41·3 percent) was much more as compared to young and the aged ones among such respondents. Not only this,

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respondents from nuclear families were more (36·2) than joint and single-parent families.

1. Introduction

The global outbreak of coronavirus since a patient in the city of the wet market of Chinese city Wuhan reported pneumonia-like symptoms on December 8, 2019, had turned into a global pandemic in 3-4 months and threatened the lives of millions of people across the globe. This virus has put the world on standstill untill few weeks/months earlier. It created the World War situation across the globe as most of the countries were blaming China for this pandemic for hiding the facts and misleading WHO. At present, majority of the countries in the world are fighting the menace of coronavirus (changing its form constantly)[1] which has disturbed the safety, security and well-being of their citizens, besides paralyzing the economies. All the countries were forced to impose various restrictions on their own people, which probably they have not even imagined before. The world battled with COVID-19 during lockdown to save their citizens as well as economies. Hence, it becomes imperative to investigate the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 at various levels.

2. COVID-19 Pandemic in India at the time of Study

India faces multiple major challenges on the COVID-19 front as its position is quite different from other countries. For example, it is densely populated : 464 people/km^2 compared with Italy's 206, Spain's 91, Iran's 52 and the USA's 36. It has a huge population: 1350 million (USA 330 million, Iran 83 million, Italy 60 million, Spain 46 million). Social distancing without total shutdowns is unimaginable, especially in the big cities with crowded streets, trains, buses and offices. Besides, India has a population of 1·35 billion and the largest concen- tration of COVID-19 cases initially had been in the metropolitan cities of New Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Chennai. According to Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, on June 30, 2020, there were 5·85 lakh cases to date in India with 17,410 deaths. The government response has included prolonged lockdown, public awareness campaign and a series of innovations including a novel smartphone application called *Aarogya Setu* for contact tracing and aiding in quarantine and related containment measures.

India reported its first case of COVID-19 in Kerala on January 30, 2020 which rose to three cases by February 3, 2020. All these affected people were students who had returned from Wuhan, China. On March 4, 2020, however 22 new cases came to light, including those of an Italian tourist group with 14 infected members. The transmission showed a steady increase during March after several cases were reported all over the country. Most of the affected people were linked to people with a travel history to affected countries like China, Italy and America etc. and since then the cases have shown a prominent increase and the graph has risen exponentially. The growing threat from the COVID-19 has prompted Indian government to try and limit contact between citizens by encouraging them to stay and work at home, closing all educational institutions, postponing exams and shutting down malls and restaurants.

Most effective measure to contain coronavirus has beeb the total lockdown in the world including India. A lockdown (also known as containment, locking, lock, confinement, confining, curfew and lockout) can be defined as an emergency protocol implemented by the authorities that prevents people from leaving a given area. A complete lockdown means that the people in the given area must stay where they are and must not exit or enter other areas because of an emergency due to any reason. As COVID-19 takes a firm grip over India, the central and state authorities are working in overdrive to try and curb the spread. Most of the countries including India, adopted the measure of lockdown to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Thus, a lockdown is an emergency protocol that prevents people from leaving a given area. This scenario usually allows for essential supplies. All non-essential activities remain shut for the entire period.

On March 24, 2020, Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi announced in his address to the nation that the entire country would be in a complete lockdown for 21 days, limiting movement of the entire 1·3 billion population of India as a preventive measure to check the spread of coronavirus. He said it was not a curfew, but, given the seriousness of the matter, it should be treated as no less. On April 14, 2020 the Prime Minister announced that the 21-day nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19 in the country would be extended to May 3 owing to the rising number of cases.

Lockdown restrictions in India were extended for the third time under new guidelines designed to contain the COVID-19 situation in

the country with some relaxations. The central government announced that the measures would run for a further two weeks which means the lockdown was extended till May17. Authorities also introduced changes to the designated red, orange and green zoning system with restrictions eased for the parts of the country where the situation was less severe. This third phase, however, was less severe than the first two as the government had announced several relaxations. This was the time when the survey was conducted for the present study. Hence, the responses are confined only to first three phases of lockdown in India.

3.   Clarifying the Concept of Domestic Violence

Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, in all socio-economic and educational classes. It cuts across cultural and religious barriers, impeding the right of women to participate fully in society. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) defines violence against women as "Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (DEVAW, Article 1)[2].

Violence against women takes a dismaying variety of forms, from domestic abuse and rape to child marriages and female circumcision. All are violations of the most fundamental human rights. This is the reason that violence against women is considered a major violation of human rights. It is also a major public health problem. A wide range of physical, mental, sexual and reproductive and maternal health problems can result from violence against women. Violence against women is associated with sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, unintended pregnancies, gynecological problems, induced abortions, and adverse pregnancy outcomes, including miscarriage, low birth weight and fetal death (Mahajan and Mahajan, 2012 : 1).

Domestic Violence may be described as the situation where one adult in a relationship misuses power to control another. It is the establishment of control and fear in a relationship through violence and other forms of abuse. This is the reason that 'domestic violence' is synonymous with domestic abuse. It is an abuse which manifests

itself when a spouse or a family member violates another physically or psychologically. The term domestic violence is normally used for violence between husband and wife but also encompasses live-in relationships and other members of families who live together.

The term 'domestic violence' is used to describe the exploding problem of violence within homes. This type of violence is towards someone whom we are in a relationship with, be it a wife, husband, son, daughter, mother, father, grandparent, daughter-in-law or any other family member. It can be a male's or a female's atrocities towards another male or a female. Anyone can be a victim and a victimizer. Although both men and women can be abused, but the victims are women in most of the cases. This is the reason that generally domestic violence connotes the violence against female members of the family. Children in homes where there is domestic violence are also abused or neglected. Although the woman is usually the primary target, violence is sometimes directed toward children, and sometimes toward family members and friends (Mahajan, 2020).

Domestic violence has a tendency to explode in various forms such as physical abuse and assault, sexual assault and threats or emotional abuse. Sometimes it is more subtle, like making someone feel worthless, not letting one to have any money, or not allowing one to leave the home, while in other situations it may lead to physical assault. It may be in the form of hitting or fighting or an occasional argument. Even social isolation and emotional abuse can have long-lasting effects like the physical violence which is a blatant abuse of power because the abuser (generally male member of the family) tortures and controls the victim (generally the female member of the family) by calculated threats, intimidation and physical violence.

Though domestic violence as such was not recognized by any law till the year 2005 in India[3], still it has been an intrinsic part of our society since times immemorial. The contributing factors could be the desire to gain control over another family member, the desire to exploit someone for personal benefits, the flare to be in a commanding position all the time showcasing one's supremacy so on and so forth. On various occasions, psychological problems and social influence also add to the vehemence. However, domestic violence has increased in magnitude during recent decades. It is now present almost everywhere and nowhere is this eruption more intense than right behind the doors of our homes. Behind closed doors of homes all

across our country, people are being tortured, beaten and killed. It is happening in rural areas, towns, cities and in metropolitans as well. It is crossing all social classes, genders, racial lines and age groups. It is becoming a legacy being passed on from one generation to another.

The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 defines domestic violence as actual abuse or the threat of abuse that is physical, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic. Harassment by way of unlawful dowry demands to the woman or her relatives is also be covered under this definition. This act has been brought into force by the Indian government from October 26, 2006. The preamble of the Act aims at providing effective protection of the rights of women guaranteed under the Constitution of India who are victims of any kind of violence occurring within the family. Though it is a civil law, yet this Act also recognizes certain acts as offence, punishable with imprisonment or penalty. Breach of Protection order, has been made as cognizable and non-bailable offence.

It is quite clear that various connotations of domestic violence have certain common features : domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour (as contrasted to a single event); the abusive behaviour involves control, coercion, and/or power; the abusive behaviour may be physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and/or financial; and the victim of the abusive behaviour is a co-habitating or non-cohabitating intimate partner or spouse.

4.   Objective of Paper

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 on the incidences of domestic violence in India.

5.   Methodology

The universe of this study was cross sections of Indian population residing in various states and union territories of India. As the universe was very large and vague in nature, it was not possible to draw a definite sample. Unrestricted self-selected online survey was used for this study. This is a type of unrestricted self-selected survey which is used in online researches. Unrestricted, self-selected surveys are those that are open to the public for anyone to participate in (Couper, 2000, 2008). They may simply be posted on a website so that anyone browsing through may choose to take the

survey, or they may be promoted via website banners or sent through social media platforms. Regardless of how they are promoted (or not), the key characteristics of these types of survey are that there are no restrictions on who can participate, and it is up to the individual to choose to participate (opt in). Unrestricted, self-selected surveys are a form of convenience sampling.

The responses of 750 respondents from 19 states and union territories of India (Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal) who sent the google form back form the sample and basis of interpretation. The data were collected in May 2020 and were subjected to analysis using SPSS package. Statistical technique of Chi-square was been used to find out the association between two variables..

6. An Overview of Studies

As the history of this pandemic is hardly of one and half year, there are not many full length studies available so far in India on impact of lockdown on incidences of domestic violence. Some studies depicting psychological impact have been conducted at the initial stages. To cite a few, studies conducted by Varshney *et. el.* (2020), Khanna *et. al.* (2020), Chakraborty and Chatterjee (2020) and Dubey *et. al.* (2020) have shown that a significantly high proportion of respondents had felt a significant psychological impact during the initial stages of COVID-19 in India as the pandemic had threatened their existence and they found it difficult to adjust to the new routine. The ongoing COVID-19 crisis and lockdown related rules and restrictions have forced most of the older persons to live in isolation, with life affected adversely during.

There are few studies on impact of coronavirus on education in India. Arora and Rathi (2020), Gupta (2020), Saksham Mahajan (2020) and some others have shown that online classes are not capable of substituting classroom lectures. Network issues, lack of training, and lack of awareness remain to be the major challenges faced by the students. They have underlined the need to arrange refresher and orientation courses for the teachers for preparing E-contents and teaching students on digital mode. Even the teachers

have to take this challenge as an opportunity to go for virtual classrooms, virtual learning and teaching. Infra-structure for digital teaching in colleges and universities should be given priority for adapting to technology and virtual engagement of students. We also have to keep in mind the difficulties being faced by students of marginalized and vulnerable sections of society, who are without tools to access online classes and reliable internet and/or technology and are still struggling to participate in digital learning.

Studies, over the years, have shown a direct link between times of crisis like these and interpersonal violence. Pandemics provide for an enabling environment of fear and uncertainty that may exacerbate diverse forms of violence against women. COVID-19 pandemic is no exception to this rule as this upheaval has led the women to faced the brunt of lockdown - the vital measure to contain the spread of coronavirus throughout the globe including India. The worst part of this increase of complaints of domestic violence is that the affected women were unable to access the institutional support at time crisis. Undoubtedly, the rules of mandatory stay-at-home, economic uncertainty as well as anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have led to an increase in domestic violence.

We have witnessed an increase in domestic violence globally during COVID-19 pandemic. China, United States, United Kingdom, Brazil, Tunisia, France, Australia, and others have reported cases of increased domestic violence and intimate partner violence. According to WHO report, 1 in every 3 women in the world faces domestic violence and most of this violence is intimate partner violence and globally, as many as 38% of all murders of women are committed by intimate partners. Recently, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Director General, WHO) announced on May 5, 2020 that "sadly there are reports from some countries of increase in domestic violence since the COVID-19 outbreak began. ...Stress, alcohol consumption, and financial difficulties are all considered triggers for violence in the home, and the quarantine measures being imposed around the world will increase all three".

Moreover, besides economic insecurity, financial instability and isolation are also some of the factors that contribute to making domestic violence even more prevalent. A UN report on *Violence against women and girls: the shadow pandemic* (2020), has stated that with 90 countries in lockdown, four billion people are now

sheltering at home from the global contagion of COVID-19. It's a protective measure, but it brings another deadly danger. We see a shadow pandemic growing, of violence against women. It analyzed the impact of COVID-19 on women, urging nation-states to include prevention of violence against women and girls as a part of their COVID-19 action plan. With a sharp increase in domestic violence cases across the world, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, has termed this increase in violence as a "shadow pandemic". Violence against women is a human rights violation that takes place every single day around the world.

Lockdown has caged the women in homes where they are placed in the situation where it is difficult to seek help or support from the outside world.However, it may ne noted that women worldwide (including India) consider informal channels as their first point-of-reporting in the case of domestic violence. The first respondent is often the family and the police the last (Jacob and Chattopadhyay, 2019). The series of COVID-19 lockdowns in India diminished the opportunities of reporting of domestic violence cases. Factors like restricted movement, handicapped mediums of communication, reduced contact with the natal family, unavailability of the formal support system etc. are said to be responsible for under-reporting in this situation.

India, infamous for gender-based violence, who ranked at the fourth worst country for gender equality according to public perception, also showed similar trends. This has been validated by many studies (Kumar, Mehta and Mehta, 2020; Das, Das and Mandal, 2020; Krishnakumar and Verma, 2020; Arora and Kumar, 2020 etc. among many others). All these studies have concluded that not only domestic violence has increased due to lockdown in India as well as all over the world, but has also emerged as a big public health threats that concerns all of us.[5]

The NCW monthly data spoke some alternate truth for initial months of lockdown in India. It showed an overall decrease in the complaints received during the months of lockdown in comparison to even the initial months of 2020 (Complaints received were 538 in January 2020, 523 in February 2020, 501 in March 2020 and 377 in April 2020).[1] Not only this, in order to step-up its outreach for women facing domestic violence in their homes during the lockdown, the NCW also launched a dedicated WhatsApp SOS alert number for

those who are unable to reach out through emails and social media. However, the gradual relaxation of the lockdown saw a subsequent surge in the complaints. While 552 complaints were recorded in the month of May, June saw over 730 complaints. This data showed that while the concern of a rapid increase in the domestic violence cases during the lockdown was valid, the instances were not actively reported. In an interview with NDTV, Rekha Sharma (Director, National Commission for Women) informed that there is an increase in the number of domestic violence complaints received by NCW.

Thirumurthy and Parasa (2020) hold that victims of domestic violence have even more hurdles in seeking help during the lockdown as their abusers are always present at home. They have substantiated their point by quoting Swetha Shankar (Director, Client Services at International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care (PCVC)) in Tamil Nadu, who pointed out that the lockdown may be able to prevent or slow down the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.[4]

It is evident that still there are few empirical studies on the impact of coronavirus on families. Hence, this study is an important one and is likely to provide impetus to all those concerned with the impact of coronavirus on violence against women in Indian society to undertake such investigations after the pandemic is over.

7. Lockdown due to COVID-19 and Violence against Women : The Empirical Evidence

With a rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases across the world in the past, several international organizations took cognizance of a global rise in domestic violence incidences as a result of physical distancing (also initially called social distancing) regulations and subsequent lockdowns. It is said that many countries have reported a 15-30% hike in the number of distress calls received from women who were confined in closed spaces with abusive partners. This percentage may be quite less as unfortunately, domestic violence cases are underreported across the world, especially in times of global emergencies like COVID-19. India is no exception to it. It is held that the grasp of domestic violence perpetrators has tightened in times of the pandemic in India too. Not only this, abuse victims were distanced from their regular support systems making it difficult for them to call out for help.

In this light, the data collected have been presented into following two sub-heads :

7·1 Characteristics of the Sample

The findings of the study show the following characteristics of the sample :

1. The percentage of female respondents (55·9 percent) was comparatively more than those of male respondents (44·1 percent).

2. A little less than two-third respondents (63·9 percent) were young (less than 35 years) and one-third (30·5 percen) middle-aged (36 to 58 years). Remaining (5·6 percent) were the aged ones (more than 58 years). Thus, the sample had more youth than the middle and aged persons.

3. As regards the profession of respondents, a little less than half (45·5 percent) of them were students, followed by private and government employees (34·4 percent). Remaining one-fifth were housewives, retirees, doctors, health care workers, police personnel and unemployed people (21·1 percent).

4. Respondents have been classified in three broad categories on the basis of their monthly family income : low income families (less than ₹1,00,000), middle income families (₹1,00,001 to 2,00,000) and high income families (above ₹2,00,000). Their proportions were 58·9%, 22·1% and 18·9% respectively.

Thus, the sample represents both male and female of various age groups and professions and different income bracket of families.

7·2 Domestic Violence during the Lockdown

COVID-19 led to prolonged lockdowns throughout the world. Fuelled by mandatory stay-at-home rules, physical distancing, economic uncertainties, and anxieties caused by the lockdowns as well as pandemic, domestic violence have increased globally. India, famous for gender-based violence since long, is showing almost similar trends as has been reported by newspaper reports and articles.

Table-1 on the next page depicts the responses of the selected sample on whether the incidences of domestic violence have increased in the lockdown period or not on next page according to the age group and type of family.

**Table-1 : More incidences of domestic violence
in the lockdown period**

Variables	Responses			Total
	Agree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	
Age Group				
Less than 35 years	24·0 (55)	45·4 (104)	30·6 (70)	**100·0 (229)**
36 to 58 years	41·3 (198)	31·1 (149)	27·6 (132)	**100·0 (479)**
More than 58 years	23·8 (10)	45·2 (19)	31·0 (13)	**100·0 (42)**
Total	**35·1 (263)**	**36·3 (272)**	**28·7 (215)**	**100·0 (750)**
Chi-Square = 25·164*; DF = 4; Significance Level >·05 Contingency Coefficient = ·180				
Type of Family				
Joint	32·5 (76)	43·6 (102)	23·9 (56)	**100·0 (234)**
Nuclear	36·2 (160)	33·1 (142)	31·7 (140)	**100·0 (442)**
Single-parent	36·5 (27)	37·8 (28)	25·7 (19)	**100·0 (74)**
Total	**35·1 (263)**	**36·3 (272)**	**28·7 (215)**	**100·0 (750)**
(Actual figures are shown in parentheses) Chi-Square = 9·706*; DF = 4; Significance Level >·05 Contingency Coefficient = ·113				

It is quite clear from the reading of data presented in above table that a little more than one-third respondents agreed that incidences of domestic violence have increased in the lockdown period. The proportion of middle-aged respondents was much more as compared to young and the aged ones in this category. Almost same proportions of respondents have shown disagreement with this impact on family. The proportion of such respondents was more for the middle-aged vis-a-vis the young and the aged ones. Remaining more than one-fourth remained neutral to this query. Here, the proportion of young and the aged respondents was almost same and was more than those in the middle-age. As the calculated value of Chi-square is more than the table value (9·488) at 4 degrees of

freedom, the association between age group and view about the incidences of domestic violence having increased in the lockdown period seems to be significant.

It may also be seen from the data presented in table-5·8 that there was not much difference in the proportion of three types of families in the agree category. The same was visible in disagree category, though the proportion for nuclear families was slightly less than the other two types. This is other way round in neutral category where the proportion of nuclear families was slightly more. As the calculated value of Chi-square is marginally more than the table value (9·488) at 4 degrees of freedom, the association between type of family and view that incidences of domestic violence has increased in the lockdown period seems to be significant. However, a larger sample could have given different results. The role of financial position of the family (Chi-square = 39·717*, d.f. = 8, Significance Level > ·05) seems to be significant in shaping this view as there was more proportion of families having monthly income of less than ₹50,000 and between ₹50,001 to 1,00,000 (lower income families) in disagree categories as compared to families having high income brackets. It indicates that incidences of domestic violence have increased more among higher income families in the lockdown period.

8. Conclusion

India has a fragile socio-economic fabric compared to advanced countries of the world. This is the reason that many critics in India and abroad have been blaming strict measures like complete national lockdown by shutting down all schools/colleges/universities, workplaces and all offices, cinema halls, parks, public places, religious places, markets, malls, public conveyance like rail and state/private buses, business establishments, all types of industries etc. and confining all the citizens within four walls of their household. But, the Indian government took a bold decision and declared national lockdown on March 25, 2020 to flatten the curve and contain spread of the disease, thus giving priority to save human life in the country rather than bothering about slowdown in economic growth.

Lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic has also made far reaching impact at family level so far as domestic violence is concerned. The finding show that the respondents in the three types of families are equally divided on the view that incidences of domestic violence have increased in the lockdown period as 35·1% show

agreement and 36·3% disagreement. The role of financial position of the family seems to be significant in shaping this view as there is more proportion of lower income families in disagree category as compared to families having high income brackets. Middle-aged respondents seem to agree more for increase in domestic violence than those comparatively young and the aged. Hence, this study has shown that the incidences of domestic violence increased during lockdown due to COVID-19. It implies that women tend to face greater risks during emergencies, including health disasters such as pandemics. It has been widely blamed that the government in India had overlooked the need to formally integrate domestic violence and mental health repercussions into the public health preparedness and emergency response plans against the pandemic.

Footnotes

1. According to WHO, all viruses – including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 – evolve over time. When a virus replicates or makes copies of itself, it sometimes changes a little bit, which is normal for a virus. These changes are called "mutations". A virus with one or more new mutations is referred to as a "variant" of the original virus. Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta and Delta Plus (named after the first letters of the Greek alphabet) are various variants/ mutations of of original virus.

2. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993 recognized the urgent need for the universal application to women of the rights and principles with regard to equality, security, liberty, integrity and dignity of all human beings. For the purposes of this Declaration, Article I used the term "violence against women" for any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

3. Traditionally, issues related to domestic violence were considered as private matter even by the police. However, increased awareness about the far-reaching effects of the problem has forced the government to view it as a serious problem with significant repercussions on the physical and the mental well-being of victims and their forthcoming generations. In the absence of specific law, cruelty by husband was recognized as offence under Section 498A of IPC, demanding dowry was prohibited under Dowry Prohibition Act 1961.

4. Swetha Shankar (Director, Client Services at International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care (PCVC)) in Tamil

Nadu, also underlined the fact that an unprecedented consequence of the same is women who face domestic violence becoming more vulnerable as they are compelled to be with the perpetrators behind four walls all day. She also underlined that usually, the perpetrator leaves the house for work or something else. It is short term relief for these women, which is now gone due to the lockdown. "There are cases where these women are told, 'If you cough, we will throw you out of the house'. There is nothing worse than feeling unsafe in your own home", she adds (Thirumurthy and Parasa, 2020).

5. The Hindu (June 22, 2020) also reported that domestic violence complaints were at a 10-year high during COVID-19 lockdown in India. In 2020, between March 25 and May 31, 1,477 complaints of domestic violence were made by women. This 68-day period recorded more complaints than those received between March and May in the previous 10 years. It is worth mentioning that about 86% women who experienced violence never sought help, and 77% of the victims did not even mention the incident(s) to anyone.

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Buddhism : An Impact on Youth Entrepreneurs in Nepal

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This research paper explores the relations of youth entrepreneurs in Nepal in relation with Buddhist eightfold path - right action, right speech, right view (thinking), right livelihood, right effort, right concentration, right under-standing, and right mindfulness. The paper's main goals are to improve efficiency, creativity, and cheerfulness and to increase customers' self-satisfaction by satisfying their needs in a fun way. Furthermore, this research is to improve the lifestyle of young entrepreneurs by incorporating Buddhist culture, tradition, philosophy, and precepts into their daily lives. The paper begins by examining the Buddhist eightfold path's underpinnings, then contrasts the path (methods) established on these foundations and connected with pleasant livelihood and entrepreneur well-being. Secondary data was gathered from the internet, including related research publications and books, to conduct the study. The paper's findings show that today's entrepreneurs conduct business without regard for ethical, moral, or cultural values. In any organization, there is diversity in the workforce, which includes variances in culture, religion, and language. All of these factors have posed difficulties for entrepreneurs. The Buddhist eightfold path, which includes right livelihood, right action, right speech, and right thinking, helps individuals reign in their greed and behave properly toward others. Following the Buddhist eightfold

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path, five precepts have improved teamwork, respect for others, performance effectiveness, and efficiency, making it easier to attain specific goals. The paper's examination method focuses solely on the behavioural (intangible) aspects of entrepreneurs, such as skills, creativity, responsibility, and accountability, and while the application of the Buddhist eightfold path in the development of youth entrepreneurs may vary, this paper can serve as a resource for future study and research. The study's uniqueness is that it combines Buddhist philosophy with adolescent entrepreneurship.

[**Keywords :** Buddhism, Success, Youth, Entrepreneurs, Nepal]

1. Introduction

Simply said, entrepreneurship is concerned with whatever activity entrepreneurs engage in. It also covers the topic of beginning a business. Entrepreneurs are those who start their own business. The capacity to spot an investment opportunity and establish a company endeavor is one of the characteristics of entrepreneurship. It entails taking risks and making essential investments in uncertain times, as well as developing, planning, and making decisions to enhance production in a variety of industries.

Drucker has defined entrepreneurship in these words—"a systematic, professional discipline available to anyone in an organization—brings our understanding of the topic to a new level" (Drucker & Maciariello, 2015).

This paper investigates the relationship between the current state of Nepalese youth entrepreneurs and the positive impact of the Buddhist eightfold path, in which entrepreneurs change their perspective, begin to think rightly, focus on the positive, begin to live rightly, and develop mindfulness and right concentration on their business and socio-cultural life.

Buddha was born in the Nepalese city of Lumbini, and the majority of Nepalese people follow the Hindu religion, adoring the Buddha as a god. The majority of Buddhist youth in Kathmandu, Butwal, and Palpa are engaged in commerce. They practice Buddhism not only in their professional lives, but also in their social and cultural lives. In Buddhism, there are various caste systems that exist in Nepal, they are Newar, Tamang, Gurung, Sherpa and so.

Similarly, once the Rana dynasty was deposed in 1951, Buddhism gradually spread throughout the country. Since the 1920s, Theravada Buddhists have played a critical role in the Buddhist revival movement in modern Nepal. In Nepal, this revival

effort has transformed Buddhism from a religion of a few ethnic groups and castes to a religion that transcends caste and ethnicity. There are three major Buddhist schools in existence today : Tibetan Buddhism, Newar Buddhism, and Theravada Buddhism.

Tourism is the most visible area in which young entrepreneurs are involved, and it is a crucial role in promoting Nepali Buddhism around the world. The Buddha Stupa Boudhanath and the Swyambhu Maha Chaitya Swayambhunath stupas in Kathmandu attract over 10,000 visitors each year from all over the world (MCTCA, 2020). These are the only architectural sites in Nepal that are outstanding and notable. Aside from these two major Buddhist monuments, Kathmandu and Nepal's other major cities are home to hundreds of Buddhist monuments. Kathmandu, Nepal, also has the Inter-national Buddhist Meditation Center.

2. History of Buddhism

Buddhism is a world religion that has been practiced for over 2,500 years. Buddhism began in the 5th century BCE in the northern portion of India and Nepal, and has since developed to become one of the world's major faiths. The Buddhist faith is practiced by around 470 million people worldwide (Buddhism, 2017), with the majority of its adherents residing in East and Southeast Asia.

However, in recent years, the religion has grown in popularity across the Western world (Buddhism, 2017). Buddhism continues to rise in popularity in the United States, with more than 4.2 million adherents projected by 2020.

The Buddha, also known as Siddhartha Gautama, is said to have been born in Lumbini, Nepal, in the Himalayas (Vail, 2018). The Buddha was born into royalty and grew up in a mansion with many privileges. As he grew older, though, he became more aware of human misery and disillusioned with life's pleasures. As a result, he took steps to give up his opulent lifestyle and retreated to the jungle, nearly starving to death. He began to meditate and eventually achieved enlightenment, also known as Nirvana (Vail, 2018).

At this time, the Buddha, whose name means "enlightened or awakened one", began to share his compassion for suffering with others. He spent the rest of his life teaching others about his vision of The Middle Way and how to obtain enlightenment. "Rather than extreme physical mortification or a life of sensual delights, the

Buddha advised a moderate or 'balanced' wandering lifestyle, as well as the cultivation of mental and emotional serenity via meditation and morality" (Vail, 2018).

The Buddha began to spread his views around the world and gave his first speech near Varanasi (a town in India). "This was a pivotal point in Buddhist history, often described as the moment when the Buddha set the wheel of law in motion" (Violatti, 2013).

From there, the Buddha began to gather followers, and he spent the next 45 years disseminating his teachings throughout northern India. On his deathbed, the Buddha implored his students to keep propagating the vision to which they had devoted their lives. Following the Buddha's death, his followers continued his teachings and created a religious organization that would eventually become Buddhism.

For the next 200 years or so, the Buddha's thoughts and teachings expanded predominantly throughout northern India, thanks to the disciples' encouragement. Ashoka the Great became the monarch of the Indian Mauryan Empire in 268 BCE, and after a deadly and aggressive drive to extend his kingdom, he repented and turned to Buddhism (Merryman, 2018).

After that, Ashoka the Great recognized Buddhism to be India's official state religion. He supported the growth of numerous monastic schools and monasteries (Vail, 2018). "He used the Buddha's dharma to reorganize his administration, sending Buddhist missionaries all over India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, China, and North Africa" (Merryman, 2018, para. 17). Buddhism continued to spread throughout the East over time. "Buddhism, on the other hand, was not constrained by the Hindu caste structure, making it more suited to the world outside the peninsula" (Hesselink, n.d., para. 5).

Buddhism extended throughout Central Asia and China in the first century BCE. This was around the period that the Buddha was first shown as a human being in art. In locations with a strong Buddhist influence, statues and sculptures were erected. Buddhism spread to Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Indonesia in the second and third century BCE. Buddhism continued to spread throughout Southeast Asia over the next several decades, eventually settling in Thailand in the tenth century BCE. Around the same period, Islam began to spread rapidly across Central Asia, eventually displacing Buddhism in many of the region's countries (Timeline, 2008).

The expansion of Islam in India during the tenth and eleventh century BCE contributed to the downfall of Buddhism. Buddhism, on the other hand, was rapidly spreading throughout Southeast Asia. During the Koryo Dynasty in the twelfth century BCE, Buddhism flourished in Korea. Buddhism did not spread outside of Southeast Asia until the nineteenth and twentieth centuries BCE, when it began to spread across Europe and the United States (Timeline, 2008).

Buddhism's spread had a major impact on the world, as seen by art Buddhism's spread had a major impact on the world, as seen by art and architecture throughout the East, with noteworthy structural and cultural presence in Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Sri Lanka, and other parts of Southern Asia (Hesselink, n.d.). "Buddhism grew in prominence as a cultural force in Asia, and it has remained the mainstream religion for thousands of years" (Merryman, 2018).

There are many different types of Buddhism practiced nowadays all throughout the world. The three most common types of Buddhism are Theravada Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism, which are all region-specific. Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, and Burma are the main centers of Theravada Buddhism. In China, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Singapore, and Vietnam, Mahayana Buddhism is widely practiced. Tibet, Nepal, Mongolia, Bhutan, sections of Russia, and northern India are the most popular places to practice Tibetan Buddhism (Buddhism, 2017).

3. The Buddhist Belief

The Three Universal Truths; The Four Noble Truths; and The Noble Eightfold Path are the Buddha's Basic Teachings that are important to Buddhism.

The **Universal Truths** are :

1. There is no such thing as a lost soul in the universe.
2. Everything is in flux.
3. The Cause-and-Effect Relationship.

The rule of karma in Buddhism states that "for every event that occurs, there will follow another occurrence whose existence was caused by the first, and this second occurrence will be pleasant or painful depending on whether its cause was skillful or unskillful". As a result, the law of Karma teaches that the individual who conducts unskillful acts bears responsibility for his or her deeds.

The Buddha traveled to the Deer Park near the holy city of Benares after attaining enlightenment and shared his new knowledge with five holy men. They instantly grasped what he was saying and became his disciples. The Buddhist community was born at this time. The Buddha and his students traveled across India for the following forty-five years, disseminating the Dharma, or his teachings. Their charity knew no bounds; they aided beggars, kings, and slave girls along the road. They would sleep wherever they were at night and ask for food when they were hungry (Saisuta, 2012).

The Buddha earned the hearts of the people wherever he went because he dealt with their actual feelings. He instructed them not to take his remarks at face value, but to evaluate for themselves if they were correct or incorrect, and then to follow them. "You should do your own work, because I can only teach you the road", he said, encouraging everyone to exhibit compassion for one another and cultivate their own virtue.

The Buddha and his disciple Ananda once went to a monastery to see a monk who was sick with an infectious sickness. The poor man was in a state of chaos, with no one to look after him. The ailing monk was cleansed and placed on a fresh bed by the Buddha himself. Following that, he warned the other monks : "You don't have a mother or a father to care after you, monks. Who will look after you if you don't look after each other? Serving the ill and afflicted is serving me".

After many such cycles, a person can achieve Nirvana if they let go of their attachment to desire and the self. This is a state of emancipation and no longer having to endure (Saisuta, 2012).

The **Three Trainings or Practices** consist of :

1. **Sila :** Virtue, morality, and good deeds. This is founded on two basic principles : The equality principle states that all living things are equal. The notion of reciprocity is based on Christianity's "Golden Rule", which states that you should treat others as you would want them to treat you. It can be found in all of the world's main religions (Saisuta, 2012).

2. **Samadhi :** Mental development, meditation, and concentration. The way to wisdom, which leads to personal freedom, is to develop one's thinking. Mental development also helps us sustain excellent behaviour by strengthening and controlling our minds.

3. **Prajna :** Perception, wisdom, and enlightenment. This is where Buddhism's true heart lies. If your mind is clear and

quiet, wisdom will emerge. The first two ways in the Eightfold Path are about insight; the latter three are about concentration; and the middle three are on virtue.

 The four noble truths :

The **Four Noble Truths of the Buddha** deal with human suffering. They can be summarized as follows (in a simplified form) :

1. **Dukkha :** Suffering is real: Life is a struggle. Suffering is a true and nearly universal experience. Suffering can be caused by a variety of factors, including loss, illness, suffering, failure, and the fleeting nature of pleasure.

2. **Samudaya :** Suffering is caused by something. Attachment is the cause of suffering. It's the drive to possess and exert control over things. It can take many forms, including a desire for sexual pleasures, fame, or the drive to avoid negative feelings such as fear, wrath, or jealousy.

3. **Nirodha :** Suffering will come to an end. Attachment is something that can be overcome. Suffering comes to an end with Nirvana's final liberation (Nibbana). Complete freedom, liberty, and non-attachment are felt by the mind. It satisfies all desires and cravings.

4. **Magga :** You must pursue the Eightfold Path in order to be free of pain. There is a way to make this happen (Saisuta, 2012).

The **Five Precepts** are the guidelines to follow. They're similar to the second half of the Ten Commandments of Judaism and Christianity, the part of the Decalogue that describes forbidden acts. They are, however, suggestions rather than mandates. Believers are supposed to utilize their own judgment in determining how these guidelines should be applied :

1. Do not murder. This is sometimes interpreted as "doing no harm" or "doing no harm".

2. Don't steal anything. This is commonly understood to include the prevention of fraud and economic exploitation.

3. Do not deceive yourself. This can be construed to include things like name-calling, gossip, and so on.

4. Do not use sex inappropriately. This includes any departure from full celibacy for monks and nuns. Adultery, as well as any form of sexual harassment or exploitation, including inside marriage, is prohibited for the laity. Because the Buddha did

not speak about consensual premarital sex in a committed partnership, Buddhist traditions differ on the subject. Most Buddhists, inspired by their respective cultures, reject same-sex sexual behaviour, regardless of the nature of the connection between the individuals engaged (Saisuta, 2012).

5. Avoid consuming alcohol or other illegal substances. Intoxicants cloud the mind, which is the main worry here. Other means of distancing ourselves from reality have been considered as a drug by some - e.g. movies, television, and the Internet.

Those training for monastic life or who do not belong to a family are urged to abstain from the following five activities:

- Eating at inopportune times.
- Dancing, singing, and listening to music, as well as witnessing obscene mime.
- Garlands, fragrances, and other forms of personal orna-mentation.
- Seats with a high back.
- Accepting gold or silver as payment.

There is also an eight-precept set that consists of the first seven commandments stated above, followed by the eighth and ninth precepts united into one. "Ordained Theravada monks swear to adhere to 227 commandments!"

The Buddha's **Eightfold Path** consists of :

1. **Panna :** Wisdom, discernment :

   - **Samma ditthi :** Right Understanding of the Four Noble Truths the true knowledge of the four noble truths is right view.
   - **Samma sankappa :** Correct thought; adhering to the correct path in life. The sincere desire to be free of attachment, ignorance, and hatred is known as right aspiration.

   Prajna, or Wisdom, is the name given to these two.

2. **Sila :** Virtue and morality are two words that come to mind when I think of virtue and morality.

3. **Samma vaca :** Proper communication: No deception, criticism, condemnation, gossip, or harsh words. Right speech means not lying, gossiping, or saying hurtful things.

4. **Kammanta samma :** Right action or right conduct entails refraining from harmful activities such as murder, theft, and reckless sex.

   These are called the Five Precepts. The Five Precepts are what they're named.

5. **Samma ajiva :** Appropriate livelihood: Provide for oneself without causing harm to others. Making a living in a way that avoids dishonesty and harming others, especially animals, is what it means to live a just life. Shila, or Morality, is the name given to these three.

   Concentration and meditation are referred to as Samadhi.

6. **Samma vayama :** Correct Effort: Encourage positive thoughts and defeat evil ones. Right Effort entails exerting oneself in relation to one's mental content: negative qualities should be abandoned and prevented from resurfacing. It's important to model and foster positive traits.

7. **Samma sati :** Right Mindfulness: Pay attention to your body, mind, and emotions. The practice of focusing one's attention on one's body, feelings, thoughts, and consciousness in order to transcend craving, hatred, and ignorance is known as right mindfulness.

8. **Samma Samadhi :** Meditate to obtain a higher state of consciousness. Right Concentration is the practice of meditating in such a way that one gradually realizes a true comprehension of imperfection, impermanence, and non-separability.

However, Buddhism is divided into several sects, and Buddhist monks can be found all over the world. Buddhist monks' lives and rituals are not only unusual and distinct, but they also have a spiritual significance. Their daily routine centres upon meditation, scripture study, and participation in rites. Buddhist shrines, Buddhist monasteries, Gompas, and Buddhist Stupas can be found all over the world.

Though Buddhism originated in northern India and Nepal, Emperor Ashoka assisted in its spread to South East Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, and Indo-China, from where it spread to Himalayan kingdoms such as Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, Central Asia, China, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan. Thailand has the highest concentration of Buddhists in the world,

with Cambodia, Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Tibet, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam, Japan, Macao (China), and the Chinese province of Taiwan following closely after (Saisuta, 2012).

Devotees reconfirm their belief in the Panchsheel (five principles) : 1. Don't take someone's life; 2. Don't steal; 3. Don't commit adultery; 4. Don't lie; and 5. Don't drink alcohol or other intoxicants.

4.   Present Market Scenario for Youth Entrepreneurs

We live in an era where practically anything may be purchased or sold. Markets-and market values-have come to rule our lives in unprecedented ways during the last three decades. We didn't get into this situation by making a conscious decision. It's almost as if it happened out of nowhere (Sandel, 2013).

The market's behaviour is shifting in a negative direction, with corruption, unethical corporate practices, and other issues on the horizon. Furthermore, Some argue that greed, which led to reckless risk-taking, was the moral flaw at the heart of market triumphalism. According to this viewpoint, the remedy is to curb greed, demand greater integrity and responsibility from bankers and Wall Street leaders, and adopt appropriate rules to prevent a repeat of the catastrophe (Sandel, 2013). Around 2600 years ago, Buddha taught his student that greed is the root of all human misery, and that if you rein in your greed, you will be happy. Since the era of Koutilya's economics, there has been a strong relation between commerce and Buddhism.

In addition, Our global corporate environment in the twenty-first century is more geographically and culturally varied than it has ever been. Because of the widespread adoption of technology, firms all over the world are now connected and can conduct business with ease. Professionals in the business world must be prepared to work in such a diversified setting. This involves the capacity to communicate effectively with business professionals from many ethnicities and religious backgrounds (Dunn & Jensen, 2019).

However, Buddhism is an important part of many cultures across the world. Religious and cultural conventions influence business procedures in many regions of the world, and business professionals must be educated on this. It is impossible to claim ignorance of religious practices in nations where business professionals will be conducting business because religion is strongly established in the norms and practices of society in many countries.

Today's business professionals must be able to negotiate the maze of cultural and religious ideas that pervade the countries in which they will do business (Dunn & Jensen, 2019).

5. The Noble Eight-fold Path in Business

Buddhist eight-fold path support to enhance the quality of life of Nepalese youth entrepreneurs. How it is helpful in the work place. Nepalese youth entrepreneurs incorporate Buddhism into their business practices as well as their social and cultural lives. When engaging with clients and other stakeholders, entrepreneurs must use appropriate language. Because language can be both productive and destructive, entrepreneurs are practicing by using appropriate language. Despite the difficult climate, Nepalese young entrepreneurs believe in having the proper perspective and having the correct intention. When it comes to pricing, advertising, and selling their product, those who follow the Buddhist eightfold path and practice right livelihood recall right intention and right effort. The eightfold path is a medium path via which people can maintain their respect, commercial, social, and cultural relationships.

Religion is important in enshrining beliefs and goals, symbols, practices, and faith traditions that influence how key society institutions function. Cultural orientations, general positions and attitudes, as well as behavioural styles, continue to influence its impact. Religious belief systems tend to be linked to personal cognitive styles, perceptions, expectancies, and motivations, all of which interact with other social system factors. In this way, religion has the potential to influence both individual and social subjectivities, identity formation, and individualization.

In other circumstances, depending on the societal and cultural setting, religious discourses may be expected to shape entrepreneurial selves or nurture specific personality qualities. Due to institutional, cultural, or even religious factors, societies may differ greatly in the degree to which they foster or obstruct entrepreneurial ventures (Gotsis & Dodd, 2007).

We maintain our eyes on the wider picture of what we do when we practice Buddhist philosophy. We think about our work and make sure it's a good thing to do, and that the result of our effort doesn't harm anyone, directly or indirectly.

When we dig more into the attributes Buddhist philosophy brings to us, we can see all of these represented in the Noble

Eightfold : right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

1. **Right View :** We practice right view by focusing on the big picture rather than on minor details that could irritate us. Within this larger context, we recognize that employment is a blessing that serves a variety of purposes in our lives, including :

   - Allowing us to develop and showcase our skills.
   - Assisting us in overcoming our egotism through collaboration with others for a common goal.
   - Enabling us to assist in the delivery of products and services that improve overall quality of life.

   We focus on success for the organization we work for with this wholesome viewpoint in mind, and we don't let petty issues get the best of us.

2. **Right Intention :** By carefully examining the basis for our judgments, we practice right intention (or thinking). We don't have a selfish agenda since we work from a no-self attitude, thus we don't make self-centered decisions that can damage others. Working with a caring and constructive mind, on the other hand, does not preclude us from enjoying the results of our efforts. There is no sin in making a fair income and appreciating the comfort that comes with it if we work hard and honestly, as long as we don't become obsessed with it and are attentive that our desire for comfort and luxury does not become our focus (Gotsis & Dodd, 2007).

   It may be mentioned that there is nothing wrong with earning a respectable living for our hard work. We must remember that our income not only allows us and those who rely on us to live more comfortably, but it also allows us to do more for others.

3. **Right Speech :** By telling the truth, offering our ideas to the best of our abilities, and avoiding bai-stabbing or harmful statements, we practice appropriate speech. Because it is so easy to go with the flow and find oneself trapped in a web of gossip or badmouthing when something does not go as planned, practicing correct speech necessitates the appropriate view, intention, effort, mindfulness, and focus.

4. **Right Action :** We demonstrate appropriate action by taking up difficult duties rather than delegating them to others. We assist

our coworkers in every way we can and work in teams to the best of our abilities. We don't participate in any actions that we know are harmful to others, thus we avoid killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, greed, lying, and drug misuse. In other words, we make certain that our behaviour do not harm us or others.

5. **Right Livelihood :** We practice right livelihood by assessing the nature of our employment and refusing to work for a company that engages in potentially harmful practices or productions. Millions of individuals labor in the arms industry and assist in the production of weapons, whether directly or indirectly, or in human trafficking, or in the production of addictive substances or intoxicants. It's a bad way of life. While our profession is supposed to foster empathy and compassion for others, such negative sources of income simply serve to weaken our inter-human senses. We should always be conscious of the long-term effects of our personal and professional acts, not just in the here and now, but also in the future. So, even if someone works as an accountant and has little to do with the company's production, he or she is aware that whatever they do for the workplace adds to its mission.

6. **Right Effort :** We put out proper effort because we want to ensure that our mental and physical output is clean and free of malice. We ensure that the organization is successful when operating in a business (or non-business) setting. When it comes to company savings, this means that it should be profitable. While a Buddhist practitioner will not participate in creating a profit at any cost or through unethical means, he or she will have no objection to making a profit in a morally decent manner.

7. **Right Mindfulness :** We exercise proper mindfulness by being aware of our work, activities, words, and other aspects of our behaviour. Our attitude toward our work is one area in which we should be very vigilant. When our occupations are both appealing and demanding, workaholism is easy to develop. Habits form quickly, even when they are not healthy or positive. We will start clinging to our work if we become workaholics, undoing the healthy deterrent we diligently nurtured. As a result, we will feel agitated, obsessed, and victimized once more by our workplace's daily battle and turmoil (Marques, 2015).

8. **Right Concentration :** We cultivate proper attention by refusing to be distracted by things that may cause us to stray

from our noble path. 1) Who am I? is a basic yet wise series of questions we should ask ourselves on a frequent basis. 2) What am I doing in this place? 3) How can I reach my full potential in life? We ensure that we are still focusing on the proper thing by crafting the answers to these questions, and we avoid slipping into the trap of hopeless tedium, which leads to rage, irritation, and boredom (Marques, 2015).

6.   Impact of Buddhism on Social Entrepreneurial Practice in Nepal

In a restricted planet, it is considered that the existing capitalist corporate model cannot be expanded. As the population grows, so does the desire to consume more. Unemployment and social isolation are increasing as income and consumption gaps widen. In the post-capitalist era, a strategy for a new economic vision is required to save human civilization and the cosmos from "corporate money-seeking robots", where the "money economy" has been transformed into the "suicide economy" (Korten, 2015). Social entrepreneurship has now become a source of hope, yet we are like water-tap users who have no idea where the supply comes from in Nepal (Ziegler, 2009). The majority of Nepalese youngsters opt to work as migrant workers outside of the country, and they are forced to be rootless.

Social entrepreneurship may offer hope to Nepalese teenagers. Nepal offers a broad spectrum of traditional vocations, cultural customs, art, and pleasures from east to west. Hundreds of traditional occupations and indigenous cultures are under pressure to modernize while maintaining their uniqueness and authenticity. Dilution may occur in a harsh manner, necessitating the use of a uniform framework for retaining traditional originality. Dilution can be worsened by a high level of commercialism. Traditional individuality may be suffocated by more business-oriented commercialism.

Rather than becoming much more involved in quantitative profit objectives, Nepal has to focus on social entrepreneurship through qualitative modes of discourse. Nepal is currently reaping the benefits of a growing demographic dividend. It is a period of about 20 to 30 years during which the population is seen at its highest proportion in the total population. Because of lower fertility and longer life expectancy, the working-age population has expanded dramatically. However, in the period of capitalist globalization, a large portion of the Nepalese people is dissatisfied because "it is

simpler to envisage the end of the world", as it has been remarked, "than to envisage the end of capitalism" (Sklair, 2002).

In Nepal, inequality is a major issue. How can increased public knowledge be turned into policies and actions that genuinely reduce inequality, argues Antony B. Atkinson? Indeed, certain disparities in monetary compensation may be justifiable (Atkinson, 2015, pp. 1-6). The fact that most people are eager for material riches is a basic truth of the capitalist globalization period. Nepalese young youths are rushing to work as migrant labourers outside of the country. In the previous 100 years, the rate of entrepreneurship has been much higher than at any other time in history (Gartner & Shane, 1995).

It has fostered a consumerist society and capitalist globalization. They don't question how severe capitalist exploitation and ecological unaffordability are, and as Leslie Sklair points out, "none of the anti-capitalist initiatives really problematizes the role of the state - whether leftist, rightist, or centrist - nor how these initiatives work with the capitalist consumerist market".

Nepalese entrepreneurship and its proponents are equally unconcerned about long-term economic progress. According to Antonio Gramsci's book Prison Notebook, during a crisis, the old structures die and the new structures do not yet exist; Nepal is in the midst of this transition and transformation. The previous system is no longer effective, and a new federal structure will be established, putting traditional indigenous occupations of marginalized peoples at risk of extinction.

Traditional indigenous vocations that are still in use could be conserved and transformed into social entrepreneurship by keeping their traditional essence; yet, few young people and policymakers are taking this issue seriously. As Vice-President of the National Planning Commission Nepal, Dr. Swornim Wagle, argues, a jump is necessary in economic progress (personal interview with Wagle at NPC), but he also believes in a welfare state and advocates devoting time and efforts to promote change (Sharma, 2017).

This idea is important, but we must not overlook the foundation, which is traditional indigenous vocations, which provide a good source of income for a large number of Nepalese subaltern populations. As Niraj KC says, "the limping economy should be able to enjoy a leapfrogging growth, and henceforth no argument can stand against leveraging economic empowerment" now that local, provincial, and federal elections have been successfully completed (KC, 2017).

Nepal wants to be an upper middle-income country by 2030, and as KC points out, achieving that goal will require a 14 percent increase in per capita GNI. In his opinion, the probability of the Nepali economy growing at 7% per year, culminating in a rise in GNI per capita to $2000 by FY2030 is more plausible (CK, 2017).

7. Conclusion

Before concluding this article, there are a few questions to be answered, such as how Nepalese entrepreneurs apply the Buddhist eightfold path to their businesses. Another question was whether or not they find comfort in incorporating Buddhism into their socio-cultural lives.

Following a review of all relevant literatures, internet sources, research articles, and books, the conclusion has been formed that youth entrepreneurs who believe in the eightfold path are practicing in their job and social lives. Despite the fact that Buddhists make up only about 9% of Nepal's population, the majority of them are involved in business. In the Buddhist community, there is a cast system that includes Newar, Sherpa, Gurung, Thakali, Tamang, and others. Because they follow the Buddhist concept, most of them manage their businesses for a moderate profit over time. They also carry out their social and cultural responsibilities with appropriate intention and perspective.

Furthermore, the eightfold path of Buddhist philosophy is simple to apply in everyday life. It is also beneficial for young entre-preneurs who are just starting out and have a long way to go. An entre-preneur's moral in business, practice ethics, value, and traditions improves when these precepts are followed. When a business owner limits greed, carving, desires, profit, and so on, the consequence is harmony in the family, society, and, eventually, in the mind.

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COVID-19 and Migrant Labourer : Reflections of Kerala Model of Development

Shafeeque K* and Deeptimayee Rout**

The pandemic Covid-19 has a serious effect on the migrant labour in India. While the country- with a large internal migrant force-failed to administer the situations then prevalent crisis of migrant labour, the state of Kerala invite appreciations from the international community for its proactive measures as well as handling the menace of Corona virus. The success of Kerala needs to be analyzed from a wider perspective that its development strategies-known as Kerala model of development-further inspected. The usage of migrant labourers as guest workers or Atithi thozhilalikal is opened up a new debate concerns the welfare of migrant labourers. The welfare schemes and the model together explored and scrutinized. It has been discussed that the proactive measures are not only the reflections of the model of development adopted by the state, but also as a result of the manifestations of what has been referred as 'new humanism' of the state and its people.

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1. Introduction

Epidemics had serious effects on the society. It produced hurdles and difficulties for many. Recent years have witnessed numerous outbreaks of cholera, anthrax, yellow fever, and plague. In addition to these known killers, new ones continue to emerge. At least 30 new diseases have been identified over the last several decades (Garrett, 1996). SARS - Severe acute respiratory syndrome - was unheard of before 2003. But it affected more than 8,000 people, killing about one in ten of them, causing fear and panic across the world, and inflicting enormous economic damage, especially in Asian countries. In 2009, a novel influenza virus, H1N1, started to spread, creating the first influenza pandemic of the 21st century. In 2012-2013, a new virus surfaced in the Middle East, causing an epidemic of what became MERS - Middle East respiratory syndrome - that spreads fatally into many countries beyond that region. The Ebola epidemic in West Africa (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) in 2014 was unlike the previous 24 localized outbreaks observed since 1976. In 2015, the Zika virus triggered a wave of microcephaly in Brazil. Almost 70 countries, one after another, then experienced their own Zika epidemic (WHO, 2018).

India has encountered several epidemics and pandemics throughout history. Several accounts of influenza, cholera, dengue, smallpox and several others have been recorded in recent decades; while we have been able to eradicate some; many diseases still continue to pose a threat to the community. As far as India is concerned, there have been only two major, significant pandemics throughout history. While cholera had been predominant throughout the 19th century with increasing death tolls every year, the influenza pandemic came later on in the early 20th century (Mills, 1986; Ramamurthy and Sharma, 2014). The influenza pandemic was short but devastating and after a long time, quite recently, came yet another flu pandemic by the H1N1 strain (Mishra, 2015).

The spread of pandemic Covide-19 from the epicentre of Wuhan in China has serious implications to worldwide (Sanderson, 2020; Sobecki, 2020; Kinyanjui, 2020; Devakumar *et al.*, 2020; Mays and Newman, 2020). As in many other crises, migrants may be particularly vulnerable to the direct and indirect impacts of COVID-19. Their ability to avoid the infection, receive adequate health care and cope with the economic, social and psychological

impacts of the pandemic can be affected by a variety of factors, including: their living and working conditions, lack of consideration of their cultural and linguistic diversity in service provision, xenophobia, their limited local knowledge and networks, and their access to rights and level of inclusion in host communities, often related to their migration status (Liem *et al.*, 2020).

The Pandemic-Covid-19 affect the labour community in India the most. The complete lock down in the entire country was announced on 24th March for a period of 21 days. Borders were sealed, transportation got stopped, factories, shops, restaurants and all type of the economic activities were shut, barring only the essential services. This proved to be a nightmare for thousands of migrant workers, who lost their livelihoods overnight and became homeless. The immediate challenges faced by these migrant workers were related to food, shelter, loss of wages, fear of getting infected and anxiety. As a result, thousands of them started fleeing from various cities to their native places. Many migrants lost their lives either due to hardship on the way, hunger, accident or co-morbidity and some even committed suicide (Bhagat *et al.*, 2020).

Jan Sahas (2020) shows that majority of the workers were the daily wage earners and at the time of lockdown, 42% were left with no ration, one third was stuck at destinations city with no access to food, water and money, 94% don't have worker's identity card (Jan Sahas, 2020). Sudden lockdown also stranded many migrants in different cities of the country. Those who were travelling were stuck up at stations or state or district borders. Many were forced to walk hundreds of miles on foot to reach their home villages finding no public transport. Those who reached their native villages, were seen as potential carriers of the infection and were ill-treated by the police and locals. In one of the instances a group of returnees were sprayed with chemicals to disinfect them for which the local administration apologized (India Today, 2020). This is one of the biggest streams of mass return migration in the country. The very effort to stave off the pandemic turned into one of greatest human tragedy in India's recent history.

The Indian Express reported on 30th July 2020, "The entire post- lockdown scenario vindicates the fact that the lockdown was a half-baked, knee-jerk exercise that has resulted in an unprecedented human disaster on a scale unseen since Independence. On the one

hand, these workers have lost their livelihoods abruptly. Their hard-earned money - otherwise remitted to their homes to cater to the needs of their families, and means of survival for themselves - was wiped out instantly. Now, shorn of everything, these migrants have been mobilizing the cost of their return journeys home by selling their family valuables. The stringent lockdown is like a double-edged sword for them: Their sources of income have dried up, and the little resources back home are not sufficient to help them withstand the hardship of the situation".

Both the government and mainstream political opposition failed to make a serious intervention over the hurdle situations of migrant labourers. They even failed to address the question of migrant labourers as a "social" question. Ranabir (2020) argues that "Social Darwinism and neo-Malthusian population policies were now gain momentum to reproduce the country from the effect of disaster with 'minimum loss'. The prominence was given on 'productive labour' and 'productive economy' instead of giving emphasis on saving lives by expanding public health systems and social security, including access to food. Although money supply was further enfolded by refusing to directly transfer cash to millions of poor people, credit and loans were given a fillip".

It is a fact that migrants' face at most difficulty by losing their income and it is even more to bring the hurdles faced by them during their shift to home. The central government and many state government alleged by the ill-treatment of migrant labourers and failure to bring a policy for helping the poor migrant community. On the other side, there is a different story from the southern state of Kerala. The proactive measures taken to handle the cranky situations of migrant labourers in Kerala became a matter of discussion among the international community. Kerala with its rich heritage in public health and welfare oriented governance- in which welfare measures to the migrant labourer is part-invite appreciations in handling both the menace of Corona Virus and the hurdles of migrant labourers. It is pertinent to note that the success of the state in handling the Nipah outbreak in 2018 exemplifies how well-organized committed health care interventions endorsed by the government as well as non-government agencies with complete indulgence of the public could achieve the desired targets within a short period of time (Kumar and Kumar, 2018).

Times of India reported on 4th April 2020 that while migrant labourers are being forced to leave cities in north India in droves in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak, the Kerala government has been taking proactive steps to ensure the welfare of guest workers in the state, right from undertaking health screening, delivering food or food items and setting up help desks to allay their concerns. Unlike other states, migrant workers in Kerala enjoy better rights and have greater access to health, education and housing. Further BBC in its panel discussion treasured the success of Kerala in handling its migrant force and esteemed that its policies become a model for the other Indian states to follow. It this context, it is pertinent to understand the fundamental questions that, *firstly*, what is the nature of welfare measures adopted by Kerala state to its migrant force, *secondly*, do we establish the connection between welfare measures and the model of development adopted by the state. We examine this by analysing the way in which the state handled the crisis erupted out by the pandemic Covid-19 and in the process a detailed investigation has put on the proactive measures taken by the government towards the welfare of migrant workers in the state. Further an attempt has been made to substantiate the model of development adopted by the state in administering the crisis driven situations.

2.   Historical Development of COVID-19 in Kerala

The first positive case of Covid-19 in India was reported on 30th January 2020 among three students of Kerala, who have returned from Wuhan of China,which is the point of origin of the disease (Narasimhan, 2020). However, all the three positive cases were discharged from hospital in the mid of February. The second wave of cases are reported on 8th March (World Asia, March 2020). To control corona virus spread, the government have started many pre-cautionary majors to control the spread of corona virus in the state. However, on 10th March, the government of Kerala shut down all colleges and schools up to grade 7 (Financial Express, March 2020). Even the government have advised people not to undertake pilgrimages, attend large gatherings such as weddings and cinema shows.

The central government on 19th March gave a call for a nation-wide curfew called Janta Curfew, as the first step (BusinessLine, March 2020). On 23rd March, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan announced a state-wide lock-down till 31st March to prevent

further spread of Corona virus (Manorama, March 2020). This was before the central government declared a nationwide lock-down. The sudden announcement of luck down has created panic and tension among the migrants, as their only ownership in the form of 'physical labour' will collapse due to lock down. Without having any work, resulted shortage of food and other essential items, the migrants have desperately tried to flee from cities without lack of planning and preparation. Images of millions of Indians walking back to their home town and some of them are losing their lives became the headlines of media.

3.   Guest Workers : Not Migrant Workers for Kerala

With the massive spread of COVID-19 epidemic, a number of new words are being used in every-day vocabulary. One of such powerful word emerged in the state Kerala, where the government has started referring the migrant labourers as "guest workers" or "Atithi thozhilalikal". The term was used to commemorate the migrant labourers in Kerala and to honour them for their contributions to the state's labour force and economy. The Malayali's widely accepted such a concept and designate the Guest Workers as 'Bhais' in their day-to-day communication. By calling guest worker the state not only tried to increase their status symbolically, but also tried to intensify their socio-economic conditions. Hence the state has implemented many welfare schemes for the migrant workers.

In order to assess the demographic and socio-economic characteristics, and to implement several welfare programmes for the migrant labourers including education and health, the state Kerala is conducting regular surveys on migration since 1998 (Rajan and Zachariah, 2020). For the welfare of migrant workers, the state has tried to integrate the migrant workers with the host population by constructing a comprehensive and accommodative approach. Kerala is the first State in the country to enact a social security scheme for the migrant workers and has implemented many welfare programmes. Few of the programmes are Aawaz, Apna Ghar, Changathi etc.

For the welfare of the migrants, the Kerala government have introduced 'Inter-state Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme' in 2010. To point out the appropriate beneficiary, the government has made the provision of registration and membership has to be renewed every

year by paying ₹30. The scheme provides a registered migrant four benefits : (i) each registered worker would get up to Rs. 25,000 as health care assistant in case of accident or chronic disease. However, the worker is eligible to get only ₹100 per day and the maximum limit fixed per episode of disease is ₹2000. If the labourers become incapable of working for more than six months due to accidents or chronic diseases, they are entitled to get a special assistance of up to ₹25000. The labourers who have registered in the scheme conti- nuously for three years are also eligible to enjoy a retirement benefit of ₹ 1000 per year subject to a minimum of ₹10,000 and a maximum of ₹25,000. (ii) A migrant worker's dependant would be provided financial assistant up to Rs. 50,000 for death in accident at work site and ₹10,000 in the event of natural death. An additional assistance of ₹5000 to ₹15000 (depending on the distance to the state of origin) is also given for transporting the body to their native places. (iii) The scheme has also the provision to assist ₹3000 per annum for the education of the children of migrant labourers who are studying beyond Class X in Kerala. The scheme is implemented through the Kerala Construction Workers Welfare Fund Board. The migrant worker will be required to pay an annual contribution of just ₹ 30. (iv) As per the scheme, a migrant worker can get termination benefits of ₹25,000 after five years of work (Basheer February 2015). In order to bring more migrants under the safety net of the scheme, the department also started kiosks and call centres with people proficient in Hindi as staff to interact and understand the problems of the labourers and pamphlets and application are issued in Hindi. However, this scheme did not able to reach near all the migrant workers due to some loop holes and structural issues. But the initiative of the state government to institute a welfare scheme for migrant workers, in spite of its weaknesses, brought the invisible migrant workers to forefront of the state's governance (Kumar, 2011).

Immediately after the left government under the governance of the Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, came into power in 2016, the state has launched an ambitious insurance plan named 'Aawz' for the migrant workers. This scheme can be utilized by migrant labourers between the ages of 18 and 60. At the time of enrolling in the scheme, all the, labourers must provide their fingerprint, iris, and other work-related proof. Once these details are provided, the Awaz insurance card can be issued to the worker. The scheme is aimed to provide social security to the migrant workers and also to act as their

database and registry as the crimes involving migrant workers are also rising along with the population.Currently, the plan takes measures to enrol all migrant workers in the states and entitles them with free healthcare (NDTV, July 2016). To provide safe, economical and hygienic rental accommodation for migrant workers, the government of Kerala has also undertaken 'Apna Ghar' project. The first such hostel was inaugurated in Kanjikode in Palakkad in November 2017 with 64 rooms, 32 kitchens, 8 dining halls and 96 bathrooms to accommodate 640 workers. Rooms at the state facility were rented out for ₹750 - ₹1000 per month (Gopika, November 2017). Migrant Suraksha Project is being implemented across the State under the aegis of the Kerala State Aids Control Society among migrant labourers since 2009 mainly to detect HIV+ cases among them and to create awareness and health cards also have been issued to the labourers (The Hindu, March 2016). Many private foundations have their own 'migrant suraksha projects' and even free medical camps which aims to improve the life of migrants working in the state. Exclusive grama sabhas or village councils are planned for the migrant labourers to identify their issues and find solutions (Muringatheri, April 2016).

Leaving health and housing provisions, the government is also trying to give skilled education and is trying to develop literacy among the guest workers. The Kerala government have planned to development a Skill Development Institute for migrant workers (Philip, October 2014). It has already established Indian Institute of Infrastructure and Construction in Kollam city.New centres of Kerala Academy of Skills Excellence (KASE) will be opened soon in other districts. To make a part of mainstream education system, the state education department has opened schools for the children of migrant workers under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Region specific teaching curriculum has to be often adopted as the origin and languages of migrants always differ (The Economic Times, November 2014). The effort to teach the migrant labourers Malayalam and Hindi languages through Literacy Mission is another commendable step from the part of the Kerala government. For it, the government publishes textbooks like 'Hamari Malayalam' textbooks and 'Changathi' and offers classes in most unlikely places such as factories and auditorium apart from anganwadis and union offices, libraries and shelters (Business Line, January 2018).

Such provisions of the government not only will ensure welfare among the migrant workers but will empower them to live with honour among their hosts and will assist them in getting integrated with the local communities. Here it is argued that only schemes made by government cannot integrate the migrants, but support and acceptance from the host community can open the path.

It is observed that socially, Keralites have started to recognize migrant workers as a reality. This is quite visible from a popular television show in which a rural housewife has learnt to speak Hindi to communicate with the migrant workers, whom she encounters in every shop, restaurant and workplace.Even it is found that the migrant workers are very empathetic towards Malayalis. This is quite visible from the words Roshid Ahmed.

"Roshid Ahmed, a migrant worker from Assam engaged at a grocery shop on the outskirts of Perumbavoor town in Kerala, has preferred to stay back. Though his family members are persuading him every day to come back to his native place and some of his colleagues are returning, he has a humane reason for not to leave his workplace. Ahmed revealed that he has a cordial relationship with his Malayali employer who runs another shop, in addition to the groceries. And he doesn't want to leave him high and dry. He viewed that 'My employer hasn't said anything but I know I am free to go. And if I leave, there will be no one to manage the shop'. He replied that most of the migrant workers who decided to stay back consider the state as one of the safest places in the country to see off the pandemic" (Verma *et al.*, June 2020). Such expressions of gratitude are not unusual to see in Perumbavoor or other towns in Kerala where most of the migrant workers have close, cohesive relationships with their natives. On the other hand, the Malayalis also show their gratefulness by denoting the migrants as Bhais, who are hard-working, devoted and frankly.Such a cohesive relationship highlight that by denoting migrants as guest workers the state not only integrated them with host symbolically but it happened in reality.

4. Migrant Workers during COVID-19

The state Kerala is experiencing a massive influx of migrant workers. According to a research study conducted by Gulati Institute of Finance and Taxation (Trivandrum) for the Kerala Government

(2013), there are over 25 lakh domestic migrant labourers in Kerala with an annual arrival rate of 2.35 lakhs. Most of them are from West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha. Sixty per cent of them work in the construction sector; the rest work in the hospitality, manufacturing, trade and agriculture sectors. It can be said that every twelfth person in Kerala is a migrant worker from outside the State. The state Kerala has continuously been a model in matters of social sector Development and has received praise for handling a large number of migrant workers stranded by the lockdown. Images of millions of Indians walking back to their home town and some of them are losing their lives became the headlines of media. But unlike other states of the country, most of the migrant labourers of Kerala prefer to stay back during this pandemic. A report highlight that 1.61 lakh migrant labourers in Kerala do not want to leave the state. Even majority of migrant worker stayed peacefully in the quarantine centres without creating any hurdle for the organizer or host community. In such a heterogeneity of migrant population, it is reasonable to ask the question 'Unlike other states, why did the migrant workers in Kerala do not walk back to their home town and stayed peacefully in quarantine centre until the government have arranged transport facilities'.

The Kerala government is trying to explore a humanitarian approach for treating the migrant workers.The state is taking pro-active steps to ensure the welfare of migrant workers in the state, right from providing camps or shelter places, undertaking health screening, delivering food or food items and setting of health desks to alley their concerns. Just after luck down, the Kerala government has opened 4,603 camps housing for migrant workers (Bose, March 2020). The highest number of camps are found in Ernakulum district due to high concentration of migrant workers. In order to provide shelter for migrant workers, the administrators along with the help of local communities have developed a model in Ernakulum, known as 'Ernakulum Model' . However, this model is being used in other parts of the state to properly handle the migrant worker during pandemic. The local self-government bodies were directed to run the camps and the police monitored the activities. All the camps were provided with electricity and water.

Leaving the shelter facility, the government has proposed various ways to supply food to the migrants. For instance in Kannur

district, food if provided to the migrant workers through (1) Kannur Thali (in corporation limits), (2) Community Kitchen (in Munici-palities and Panchayats) and (3) Raw Material Kits such as atta or rice, vegetables and oils etc. (Roy, 2020 : 79). The state government used the 'Ernakulum model' to reach out to workers through migrant community kitchens managed by them across the state to ensure no one goes hungry during the national lockdown on 25th march. These community Kitchens are managed by the local community. The government has put the onus on the panchayats to launch a dedicated phone number and deliver cooked food at the doorstep of anybody who dials the number. On 26th march it is declared that 1,000 such community kitchens will be up and each meal will cost ₹20 (Swamy, March 2020).

As like other states of the country, agitations by migrants are also noticed among the migrant workers. On 29th March, hundreds of migrant labourers flooded on the streets of Kottayam town and demanded to go back to their home states. One of the major causes for the discontent was food - the migrant workers weren't happy by the endless supply of rice being served from the Kudumbashree Community Kitchens, which are entirely run by women workers. By understanding the heterogeneity of migrant population and their North Indian originality, the government has decided to provide food as per their taste and choices. In the migrant camps,the menu and rice was being changed. They were provided North Indian dal, chapatis , and pickle along with rice. In some places raw materials (Atta/Rice, Onion, Patatp, Cooking Oil and other vegetables) and cooking facilities were provided and they were encouraged to cook as per their food choices and taste. In some cases the diet were altered as per the food of a particular region. For instance sattu khichdi is served in the camps that had labourers from Jharkhand. The camps provide meals three times a day, apart from tea and biscuits as refreshments (Shanker, April 2020). The Kerala government has also provide free milk through MILMA (Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation) to all the migrant workers camps and nursery children to solve the problem of additional production of milk while also providing migrant workers a portion of necessary dietary requirements (Nidheesh, April 2020).

In addition, the migrants were provided free essential commodities, including sanitizers, masks, toiletries and medicines.

The migrant workers are also provided carom boards and chess boards for recreational facilities and TV sets for entertainment. Even provision is being made by the government to recharge the phones of migrant workers and the government has tied up with the service provider. "Each labourer can recharge their phone for ₹100-200 a month (Jeemon, May 2020). The main idea behind such facilities is that during luck down the migrant workers can keep contact with their family members".

In order to increase awareness among the migrant workers, brochures, leaflets and short videos were prepared. As the state has a large inflow of migrant labourers from the state like West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Odisha, Jharkhand and Utter Pradesh other than the neighbouring states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the printed awareness materials are being prepared in Hindi, Odia and Bengali language. Health workers who could communicate in Hindi were positioned to interact with them and make them understand the gravity of the situation. The information of the number of infected cases and route maps of the patients of GoK (Government of Kerala) Direct, Kerala government's official app have posted in various languages such as Malayalam, English, Bengali, Hindi, Tamil and Kannada. There is also a dedicated helpline introduced which enables the migrant workers to raise their queries and redress their grievances (Bodhi Commons, April 2020).

To send the migrant worker to their home town safely, the state have requested the central government to arrange transportation facility.After the central government allowed the Sharmik Trains to run, the state has made various provisions. Considering a large number of the migrant population in the state and the current frequency of trains, the state has set up a counselling centre for the workers. There are 20 counsellors at the centre to provide relief. There are 24×7 control room to monitor migrant problems. Every day, a report to the chief minister and the chief secretary with details of whether the concerns were resolved. Even the state government has taken the help of the Mumbai-based research firm, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), in understanding the migrant workers' behaviour. The state govern- ment also provided food kits and water for all passengers. Before leaving the relief camps, police briefed the migrant workers about the procedures to be followed during their travel and made elaborate arrangements for

transporting them from to the railway station (Jeemon, May 2020). As per the report 1.61 lakh migrant labourers replied negatively to return back their home towns. In this regard the Kerala Labour Minister T P Ramakrishnan said the state will give all legal protection to migrant workers who want to work in the state. "Kerala does not want migrant workers to go back. Those who want to go home can do so. If those who had returned to their states come back to Kerala, the government would offer them all facilities for taking up jobs. The government even started 'Apanaghar Project' for providing dwelling places to them at a reasonable rate" (Shanker, April 2020).

5.   Reflections of Kerala Model of Development

Kerala governments' engagement with migrant labourers invite attractions from international community. Many international media including BBC and the Guardian noted government policies on migrant labour. Kerala's treatment of migrant labour can be understood within the framework of Kerala model of development. The Kerala model of development is a model of development based on the practices adopted in the state of Kerala. It is characterized by achievements in social indicators such as education, healthcare, high life expectancy, low infant mortality and low birth rate, by the creation of productive social infrastructure rather than materialistic infrastructure. Kerala has achieved material conditions of living, reflected in indicators of social development comparable to those of developed countries, even though the state's per capita income is moderate (Govindan, 2000). Kerala's transformative experience in education, health, social security, land reforms and decentralized governance has been widely acknowledged as a 'model' for other States (Oommen, 1999).

The major concern of this writing is that how the prominent model of development work for the well treatment of migrant labourers. This is of course need to outline that Kerala is known for its trade unionism and labour rights compare to the other Indian states (Nair, 1973). And the state became a reverie place for labourers for its high wage is a repercussion of trade unionism. While many Indian states like Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh deteriorated its labour laws during the lock down to push their industry and finance, Kerala remained with a pro-labour stance is, of course, the strength of trade unionism and communists' movements.

The proper implementations of housing, education and insurance schemes for the migrant workers shows that the state has no divide in terms of the welfare programmes between the migrants and the hosts. One of the finest example for this is that during the lock down the state has extended its ration to the migrant workers too. The success of Kerala in local administration is made easier to extend state's support and help to the migrant labour. Government exerted its help to migrant workers through local administration. In which the kudumbasree units, asha workers and community health centre played a major role. The timely involvement of local administration restrict the migrant labourer to call for strike and enter into the streets to a great extent. While many Indian states face the hurdles in extending their support to migrant labourers which later culminated into widespread migration of labourers to their homely states created the death of many and endless trouble to them. It has been reported that many migrant labourers who have been shifted to home states wish to come back to Kerala for their ill-treatment in their home states.

The plans and programmes of the state government towards migrant labour is appreciative on many grounds which can be understood as the reflection of the concept of 'guest'. Although it is vague to understand the concept of guest workers merely on material grounds. One has to bring a more subjective understanding of the term. The assessment of migrant labourers as guest workers is part of the 'new humanism' emerged as part of the alternative modernity of the state. Kerala has witnessed emergence of what has been refereed as 'new humanism' especially during the crisis. The new humanism that has been born through young people, labourers, and women was arisen during the floods is largely shaped within the frame of Kerala modernity (Rajeevan, 2018). For instance, guest worker is not just a showy utterance for its people, but a ceaseless effort obliges the concept into practice. The malayalee usages of changathi and bhai to guest workers cutting the boundaries otherness and exclusivity. Treating migrants as guest workers, of course, is the reflection of new humanism that promoted by its people and government. Kerala is known for its humanitarian values which bring down caste and religious based conflict in the state for decades. The welfare and philanthropic oriented activities of political parties and religious organizations are paramount the concept of 'helping other' who are in need of help. Guest workers in Kerala not only

received aid from the government physically but also the helping mentality of other firms like political parties, religious organizations and even the common people's attitude is made a part.

To conclude that while many of Indian states face the hurdles in providing facilities to migrant labourers, the achievement of Kerala can be analysed and discussed as a reflection of the model of development hailed by the state of Kerala. This model of development can be understood from a wider perspective in which state and its people work within the realm of new humanism emerged as part of alternative modernity. Conventionally Kerala model has been understood in terms of the betterment of physical infrastructure. Going beyond, we take the position that a more subjective understanding brings a more fruitful evaluation of social reality and thus challenge the conventional critique of Kerala model of development.

Footnotes

1. *Atithi* means guest and thozhilalikal means "*mazdoor*" or "labourer". The term was coined first by the state's Finance Minister Thomas Issac during his Budget speech in February 2018.
2. *Bhai* is a Hindi term denote for brother. It is a commonly used term in the northern parts of India.
3. Insurance scheme for migrant labourers.
4. *Apan ghar* - the term refers as own house. The Apna Ghar project is sponsored by the Government of Kerala to provide houses to the migrant labour in affordable rate
5. *Changathi* Malayalam word refers friend
6. ***Hamari malayalam***, the textbook for the changathi project of the Kerala State Literacy Mission to teach Malayalam to guest workers, has been published as a digital book.
7. *Anganwadi* is a type of rural child care centre in India.
8. *Malayali* - the term is used to symbolise for people of Kerala who use Malayam language
9. As per the 'Ernakulam Model' the migrant workers are classified into four categories : (1) The first category of workers are organized labour who worked in establishments and factories before the lockdown. Their camps are structured in their workplaces. The workers are provided raw material such as pulses, vegetables and pickles to contractors. (2) The second category of workers belongs from unorganized sector. Exclusive migrant community kitchens are established for them. Village and ward level migrant management

committees have been formed to look after these kitchens. (3) The third category labourer belong from unorganised sector, particularly the construction workers. The camps are at the construction sites and they are provided with ration kits, which contain rice, pulses and even toothpaste. (4) The fourth category is camps for jobless workers. Further it is found that the diet is tailored to meet different palates. For instance Perumbavoor town has the largest migrant population in the state, most of them are from West Bengal. In this area a Bengali community kitchen was built to cater to them. The administration has made arrangements to monitor the health of the migrant workers. "We have deployed 14 mobile clinics that have doctors, nurses and equipment are deployed. The mobile clinics move from one camp to another camp to conduct regular health check-ups", The district administration has also set up a call centre to address the concerns of the migrant workers. "Those manning the lines can speak five languages - Hindi, Bengali, Odia, Assamese and Garwahli. The services provided in these camps are also being enumerated and publicised by top leaders and bureaucrats", Shanker Arnimesh "Rotis, mobile recharges, carrom boards - how Kerala fixed its migrant worker anger", See **The Print**, April 18, 2020, https://the print.in/india/rotis-mobile-recharges-carrom-boards-how-kerala-fixe d-its-migrant-worker-anger/403937/

10. *Thali* is a round platter used to serve food in the South Asia and Southeast Asia. *Thali* is also used to refer to an Indian-style meal made up of a selection of various dishes which are served on a platter.

11. *Kudumbashree* is the poverty eradication and women empowerment programme implemented by the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM) of the Government of Kerala. The name *Kudumbashree* in Malayalam language means 'prosperity of the family'.

12. *Chapati* also known as *roti, safati, shabaati, phulka* and (in the Maldives) *roshi* is an unleavened flatbread originating from the Indian subcontinent and staple in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, East Africa and the Caribbean *Chapatis* are made of whole-wheat flour known as *atta*, mixed into dough with water, oil optional salt in a mixing utensil called a *parat* and is cooked on a *tava*.

13. *Sattu Khichdi* is dish prepared with roasted and ground powders of cereals and pulses like chana daal, jowar, wheat, oats and barley.

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9

Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of Digital Devices by their School-going Children during COVID-19 Pandemic

Ayushi Sharma* and Madhulika Sharma**

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the lifestyle of almost all age group people. One of the major change in the lives of school-going children is their dependency on digital devices (D.D) like smart phones & laptops for their education, entertainment and to connect with friends & relatives. In the present study an attempt was made to study the attitude of parents of school-going children towards this change in usage of D.D by their children in the early adolescent years during COVID-19 pandemic. The study was conducted on a sample of 150 parents (75 parents of junior secondary & 75 parents of senior secondary school-going children) of Agra city who were selected through multistage random sampling method. Two tools prepared by the researcher herself 'Background Information' Proforma & 'Attitude Measuring Scale' were used for collection of data. The attitude of parents towards the usage of D.D by their children was measured on a five point scale. Three aspects of attitude of

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parents towards the usage of D.D by their children were measured; usage for education, usage for entertainment & usage for socialization. The data was collected through online mode from anyone of the parents. After collection of data it was statistically analyzed using percentage, chi-square & correlation method. Majority of the parents (79%) of both Junior Secondary (J.Sec) & Senior Secondary (S.Sec) classes belonged to upper socioeconomic status (SES) (Kuppuswamy Scale) & the level of the education of their mothers was graduation or above graduation mainly (49%). The scores on attitude measuring scale revealed 'favorable' attitude towards the usage of D.D for socialization of majority (77%) of parents. Similarly, in case of majority (76%) of parents attitude towards the usage of D.D for education the attitude was found to be 'moderate' & the attitude towards the usage of D.D for entertainment was mainly (51% parents) found to be 'unfavorable' in total. The parent's of Junior class children were found to be more supportive in both these aspects as compared to the parents of senior class children. The attitude of parents was not so favourable for online education or using digital devices for the purpose of education but, the parents were found to be highly supportive for the usage of digital devices by their children for socialization. The study recommends greater awareness of parents regarding safety measures for the usage of digital devices like child locking system & parental control apps for safe & healthy usage of digital devices by children of different age groups.

[**Keywords :** Attitude, Parents, School-going children, Usage of digital devices, COVID-19 pandemic]

1. Introduction

The nationwide lockdown imposed by the government of India to arrest the spread of Corona virus has affected the lifestyle of all the family members of households especially the working members and school-going children. Work from home and online classes became the new normal. The worst part of it is that the children who were given smartphones for the online classes became accustomed to the use of digital devices. Their lifestyle mainly became sedentary as they could not go outside to play and they became dependent on digital devices for entertainment and socialization also. Due to the increased screen time, mental abilities like creativity of children had been affected badly. All activities became limited to digital devices and even the parents of children were not able to judge the dependency of children on digital devices; whether it's good or bad for them.

1·1 Effects of Excessive Usage of Digital Devices among Children

Exposure to digital devices by children has increased day by day during corona pandemic. Even parents have found different easy

ways to deal with young children who used to be busy in their school homework and take help of these devices to make them eat food and performing other tasks. Digital devices (D.D) became very popular among all classes & societies of people. Parents thought this was a temporary phase and would fade with the lifting of lockdown & when school reopens but, few parents said that children had accustomed to the use of digital devices so the digital devices will become more popular and in demand in a post- COVID world. The Prime Minister of India warned the students against the addiction to digital devices. In his *Pareeksha pe Charcha* interaction with students in January, PM said, "I'm all for using technology to advance our lives but let's not allow ourselves to be enslaved by technology", (Amandeep Shukla, 2020). Various other studies have also reported the physiological, psychological & sociological effects of excessive usage of digital devices on children. (Urvashi Dev Rawal, Hindustan Times, 2020; Rabail Tahir & Fahim Arif, 2015; and Amandeep Shukla, 2020).

I. **Physiological problems :** During this COVID-19, increased screen time, playing games on digital devices for many hours sitting on the couch, watching T.V while eating food and completely avoiding exercises, going to playground to play games or usual walks have been found to result into increased sedentary in children and teens, decreased metabolism, disturbance in sleep cycle, more distractibility and perhaps lower well-being. Complaints of daytime sleepiness and fatigue, headache, irritability, weight gain, back pain, etc. were also reported among children in a study. (Urvashi Dev Rawal, Hindustan Times, 2020).

II. **Psychological problem/Behavioural problems :** In her study on children during COVID-19, Urvashi Devi Rawal (2020) investigated that children exhibited the signs of behavioural problems like hyperactivity, lack of attention and concentration due to too much use of screens.

- **Violence :** Children even exhibited the sign of violence, anger and frustration due to too much usage of digital devices during the pandemic.

- **Stress/Anxiety :** Children were also found to face problems of anxiety/stress due to excessive usage of digital devices, they were found to suffer from headache, tiredness and mental weakness.

III. Lagging in social skills and deterioration of moral values : Children were found to create their own virtual world and became less interested in real friends and relatives. They were found to keep themselves busy in video games avoiding the offline games and face to face social talks. Due to chatting on virtual mode and video calls, children were found to be lagging behind in the social skills as per their age groups. Due to the online classes for five to six hours and online tuitions for 2 to 3 hours, the children had begun to explore the other uses of technology in their hands at an early age of 6-10 years. Digital devices became their favorite means of entertainment. This has led to even deterioration of moral values & respect for each other (Abdul Majid Khan Rana & Uzma Perveen, 2014). Making funny videos of themselves & others, using social networking sites like instagram, facebook, snapchat for learning & bullying each other were reported to be the entertaining activities for children of various age groups.

Despite the negative effects of usage of digital devices on children, many parents have also been found to support the positive effects of various learning apps and online learning sites in facilitating the learning of new things among children of various age groups (Rabail Tahir & Fahim Arif, 2015).

1·2 The Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of Digital Devices by their Children

Time is changing and views of parents are also changing. Parents want their children to move with the societal norms. This is the period of digitalization. From education to connecting with the people & from shopping to paying the bills, we use digital devices and it has caused a change in parent's attitude. Parents are now allowing their children to learn many things or to explore the world through digital devices. Like all other age groups, children of school-going age group are interested to explore the world through digital devices. Every coin has two sides similarly if digital devices (D.D) have some benefits they also have some negative effects. The parents are worried for the health of children being affected by consistent and excessive usage of digital devices and how to control the children from being addicted to the screen. The addiction to screens is hampering the creative aptitude of children which is going to be a big loss for the coming era of artificial intelligence. It is high time for the

parents to realize the importance of creativity which differentiates humans from the machines. Studies have revealed that the parents want to save their children from being addicted to the use of digital devices. Parents have concerns about how to encourage reading books at home, especially when their children are surrounded by technology everywhere (Johnson, Kurt W., 2014). In another study by Rabail Tahir & Fahim Arif (2015), 96% parents thought that there should be control over the usage of mobile & 40% parents avoided control over their children, 40.3% set rules but not strictly enforced & 30.6% parents set strict rules over the use of mobile by children.

As far as the attitude towards parental control on the usage of digital devices was concerned many parents thought that there should be parental control apps especially in mobile and very few parents thought that there is no need of them.70% Parents gave their views that passwords should be set in phones/computer and 57% said that there should be time limit on usage of digital devices & 48.6% said children should use digital devices in presence of parents (Rabail Tahir & Fahim Arif, 2015).

The study of John Scott Lewinski (May 2020) stated that 81% of parents said online learning was more important than screen time that was earlier agreed upon by 70% parents before COVID-19. Meanwhile, 84% of parents said technology helped children to learn or to explore. Only 57% of parents said that children got distracted by social media during online learning.

In view of the negative effects of increased screen time on children even the Ministry of Human Resource Development now known as the Ministry of Education had issued guidelines on 14 July, 2020 called PRAGYATA Guidelines for Digital Education for children for online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was prepared by National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). Certain guidelines were given for teachers and parents for online education. As per rules, a maximum of 2 classes of 45 min duration for classes 1 to 8 and 4 classes a day of 30 to 45 min duration for classes 9 to 12 could be conducted by the teachers. Parents were also expected to cooperate in the provisions of online modes for their children's education. Guidelines for parents included regular interaction with children, maintaining a routine, online time management, participation of children in physical activity like yoga, exercise etc., and using safety measures like parental control app.

During this transitional phase of dependency on digital devices for education of children, and everything mainly entertainment & socialization, the present study was conducted to explore the changing attitude of parents towards the excessive usage & dependency of children at an early age of 11 years, their concern about the negative & positive impact of usage of digital devices for various purposes & the safety measures which can & should be taken by the parents.

2.   Materials and Methods

2·1   Sample and Sampling Method

The present study was conducted in Agra city. Multistage Random sampling method was used for sample selection. In stage one, two zones; Hariparwat & Lohamandi of Agra city were randomly selected. In stage two, out of these two zones 12 private schools where online classes were going on due to the pandemic were randomly selected. In stage three, list of parents was obtained from schools and 150 parents (any one of the parent); 75 parents of junior secondary (J.Sec.) school-going children (6 to 8 Std.; 11 to 14 years) & 75 parents of senior secondary (S.Sec.) school-going children (9 to 10 Std.; 13 to 16 years) were randomly selected as sample.

2·2   Tools used for the Study

Two types of information was collected through the use of tools constructed by the researcher herself.

2·2·1 Background Information

A self-prepared proforma was used to collect the personal detail of the child & his/her family from the parents. It had items like age, class, name and address of the school, and the details of the parents: education/qualification of parents, monthly income of the family, occupation of parents, and number of the family members, family type and age of family members.

Parents were also enquired about the type of digital device children were using and the usage of digital devices by the school-going children in their daily routine during COVID-19 lockdown.

2·2·2 Attitude of Parents towards Usage of Digital Devices by School-going Children

Attitude Measuring Scale having statements related to the attitude of parents towards the usage of Digital Devices (D.D) by their school-going children during the COVID-19 Lockdown period was constructed by the researcher. The scale was made on a five point scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). A score of 5 to 1 was given for the items measuring positive attitude towards the usage of digital devices by their children and a reverse score (1 to 5) was given to the items measuring negative attitude towards the usage of digital devices by their children. The Scale was sent to six experts of related field through email to check the face and content validity of the tool. After receiving the views of experts, the tool was modified as per their suggestions. The reliability of the scale was calculated through odd even method and the calculated reliability was found to be 0.766. The scale had total eighteen items. The scale was divided into three sections to study the attitude of parents towards the usage of digital devices by their school-going children for the purpose of (1) education, (2) entertainment, and (3) socialization. Each section had six items.

2·3 Procedure of Data Collection

The data was collected through online survey method. It was collected through e-mails & social networking sites. Initially the researcher established a rapport with the parents of both J. Sec. & S. Sec. children on phone calls & social networking sites and explained them the purpose of the study. Finally after obtaining their consent, 75 parents each of both J.Sec. & S.Sec. school-going children were asked to fill the tools on Google form & submit them online.

3. Results and Discussions

3·1 Background Information of the Respondents and their Children

Majority of the respondents/ parents were found to belong to the upper SES (Kuppuswamy Scale) in case of both J.Sec. & S.Sec. School-going children and had a nuclear family setup. Mothers were also well educated, mainly till graduation or post-graduation as also shown in the table-3·1 on next page.

Table-3·1 : Personal Details of the Respondents

S. No	Variable/Attribute	Parents of J. Sec. Children (N=75)	Parents of S. Sec. Children (N=75)	Total Parents (N=150)
1.	**SES**			
	Upper	62(82)	56(75)	118(79)
	Upper Middle	9(12)	19(25)	28(19)
	Lower Middle	4(6)	0	4(3)
2.	**Mother's Education**			
	Professional/honour	29(39)	19(25)	48(32)
	Graduation/PG.	34(45)	39(52)	73(47)
	Intermediate/Higher secondary Education	6(8)	11(16)	17(11)
	Secondary Education	5(7)	4(5)	9(6)
	Primary Education	0	1(1)	1(0.6)
	Literate	1(1)	1(1)	2(1)
3.	**Type of Family**			
	Joint family	29(39)	21(28)	50(33)
	Nuclear family	46(61)	54(72)	100(67)

Figures in bracket indicate percentages.

On exploring the usage of digital devices among children, majority of the school-going children were found to spend 3 to 5 hours on digital devices for online classes, 1 to 2 hours for tuition/self-study, 1 to 4 hours for entertainment in a day. Smartphones were the most preferred devices among the children for education, entertainment as well as socialization. The laptops/desktops were found to be more in use for entertainment and socialization by the junior secondary school-going children as compared to the senior secondary school-going children. It was also found that majority of school-going children used to watch T.V/smartphones while eating food.

3·2 Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D by their School-going Children

3·2a Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D for Education by their J. Sec & S. Sec School-going Children

In the present study we found that majority (61%) of the parents of school-going children agreed with the fact that digital devices played an important role in education of children during the corona pandemic. However, majority (55%) of parents in total strongly agreed that studying on digital devices for many hours is not right for their health & majority (51%) of parents in total agreed that children should not continuously gaze mobile phones/ laptops for hours instead, they should take a break for about one hour and majority (50%) of parents also strongly agreed that online studies could never prove to be better than digital devices for studies as shown in the figure 3.2.1.a. Earlier studies have also reported similar findings that books can be a better medium of learning as compared to the online learning. (Patricia A. Alexander & Lauren M. Singer, 2017).
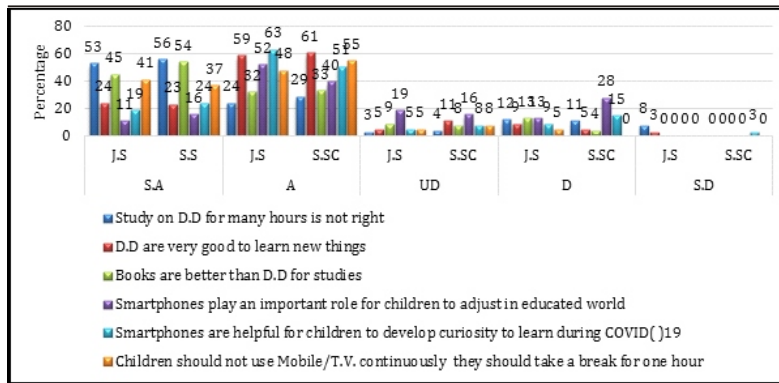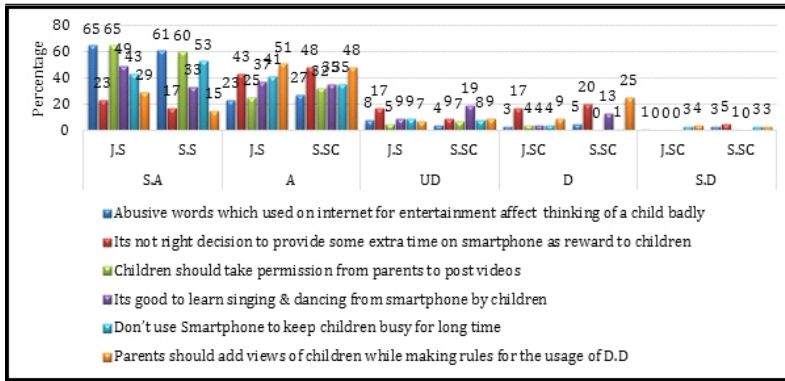

Figure-3·2a : Comparison of Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D for Education by their J. Sec. & S. Sec. School-going Children

On comparing the attitude of parents of J.Sec. & S.Sec. school-going children using chi-square test, no significant difference was found in parent's attitude towards the usage of digital devices for Education by their J.Sec & S.Sec school going children.

3·2b Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D. for Entertainment by their J. Sec. & S. Sec. School-going Children

On asking the views of parents regarding the usage of digital devices by their school-going children for the purpose of entertain-

ment, the parents were quite apprehensive about the content of entertainment sites available on digital media. Parents in large majority strongly agreed that abusive words which are being used on internet for entertainment affect thinking of a child badly, majority (63%) of parents of school-going children in total strongly agreed that children should take permission from parents to post videos on internet and majority (48%) parents of school-going children in total strongly agreed that digital devices should not be used as a substitute to keep children busy for long time. The study thus suggests that the parents should anyhow encourage children to involve them in other entertainment or stress relieving activities like yoga, exercise and meditation.

Figure=3·2b : Comparison of Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D for Entertainment by their J. Sec & S. Sec School-going Children

On comparing the attitude of parents of J.Sec&S.Sec school-going children using chi-square test, significant difference was found in two aspects; parent's attitude towards learning extracurricular activities by their children from digital devices (x^2=9.8,level of significance=0.05) & involving children in making rules for the usage of digital devices (x^2=9.7,level of significance=0.05).The parents of J. Sec. school-going children in significantly greater number than the parents of S. Sec. school-going children agreed that the children should use digital devices for learning extracurricular activities like singing and dancing as compared to the parents of S.Sec school-going children.
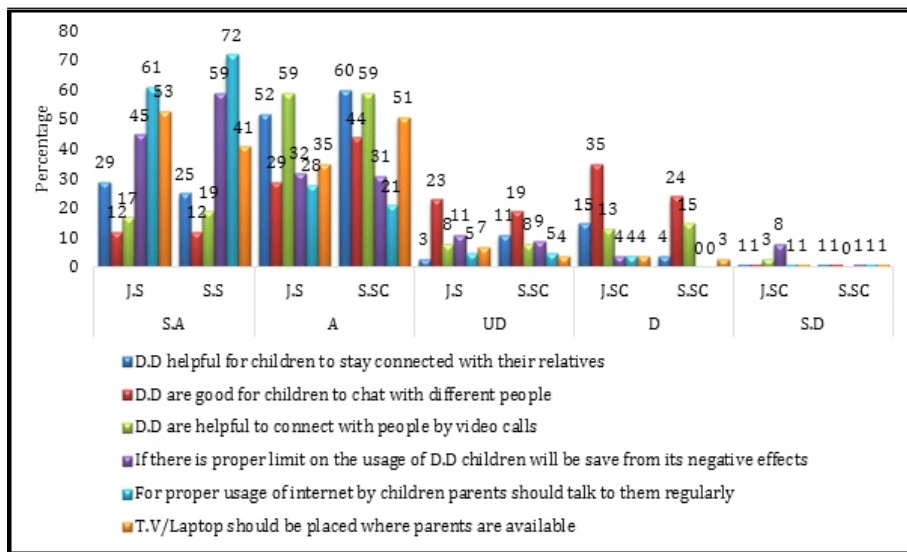
The parents of J. Sec. school-going children were found to be more in favor of involving children's view for making rules for them to use digital devices as compared to the parents of senior secondary school-going children. This opinion of parents reflected that

parenting the younger kids; making rules for the junior class children and implementing them was easier as compared to the older or senior class children.

3·2c Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D for Socialization by their J. Sec & S. Sec School-going Children

Parents of both the age groups were found to agree with the necessity of using digital devices for connecting with relatives and friends during the pandemic. Children and even parents were found to be using many social media sites like whatsapp, facebook and instagram for socialization. Majority (52%) of parents of school-going children in total agreed that if there is proper limit on the usage of digital devices children will be saved from its negative health issues and addictions. Majority (67%) of the parents of school-going children in total strongly agreed that for proper usage of internet by children parents should talk to them regularly and we found that the parents of both J.Sec school-going children and S.Sec school-going children strongly agreed that digital devices should be placed where parents are available to keep a check on their chatting with friends, relatives and strangers on virtual media.

Figure-3·2c : Comparison of Attitude of Parents towards the Usage of D.D for Socialization by their J. Sec & S. Sec School-going Children

On comparing the attitude of parents of J. Sec & S. Sec school-going children using chi-square test, no significant difference as

found in parent's attitude towards the usage of D.D for socialization by their J. Sec & S.Sec school-going children.

After calculating the mean scores on the five point rating scale, the level of attitude (favourable or moderate or unfavourable) of parents was also studied as depicted in the following table :

Table-3·2 : Distribution of level of Attitude of Parents of J. Sec & S. Sec School-going Children towards the Usage of D.D for Education, Entertainment & Socialization

S. No	Level of attitude	Parents of J. Sec. Children (N=75)		
		Ed.	**Ent.**	**Soc.**
1.	Favourable	2(3)	7(9)	**55(73)**
2.	Moderate	**60(80)**	31(41)	17(23)
3.	Unfavourable	13(17)	**37(49)**	3(4)

S. No	Level of attitude	Parents of S. Sec. Children (N=75)		
		Ed.	**Ent.**	**Soc.**
1.	Favourable	4(5)	2(3)	**61(81)**
2.	Moderate	**54(72)**	34(45)	13(17)
3.	Unfavourable	17(23)	**39(52)**	1(1)

S. No	Level of attitude	Total Parents (N=150)		
		Ed.	**Ent.**	**Soc.**
1.	Favourable	6(4)	9(6)	**116(77)**
2.	Moderate	**114(76)**	65(43)	30(20)
3.	Unfavourable	30(20)	**76(51)**	4(3)

Figures in bracket indicate percentages.

We could clearly see that the digital devices like mobile phones were the last resort to continue the academic session of children during the lockdown due to corona pandemic. However, in our study the attitude of parents towards use of mobile phones as a substitute for offline classes through face to face learning with the teacher was found to be moderate/average (76% in total).

Similarly, in case of the usage of digital devices by their children for entertainment purpose, the attitude of parents was

mainly (51% in total) 'unfavorable'. The parents strongly favoured that the abusive language used on internet affects the child's thinking negatively. In large number they agreed that the smart phones should not be used to keep children busy or to use as a reward for some good behaviour of children.

Last but not the least socialization was one of the aspect towards which most (77%) of the parents were found to have a positive attitude. During the corona pandemic when people living in a nuclear family setup were found to be suffering from mental health problems and stress due to financial losses and ill health of near and dear ones, digital devices definitely proved to be of great assistance in getting connected with family and friends and sharing their fears and feelings.

3·3   Correlation of Attitude of Parents of School-going Children towards the Usage of D.D with the Background Characteristics of the Respondents

SES, class of children and the education of mother were found to be the major demographic factors affecting the attitude of parents towards the usage of digital devices by their school-going children.

Table-3·3 : Correlation of Attitude of Parents of J.Sec & S.Sec School-going Children towards the Usage of D.D with Background Characteristics

Aspects	Class of Children	SES	Type of Family	Mother Education
Usage for Education	0.16**	0.27**	-0.15*	0.18**
Usage for Entertainment	0.04*	0.19**	0.20**	0.20**
Usage for Socialization	0.06*	0.04*	-0.15*	-0.17**
Total	0.17**	0.31**	-0.10*	0.05*

** S : The result is Significant at p<.05

*NS : Not Significant

The results as shown in the above table revealed a significant correlation between the total attitude score of parents and the background variables SES (r=0.31, level of significance=0.05) & the

standard in which children were studying (r=0.17, level of significance=0.05). The parents of higher SES, of higher standard/ Class of the child, higher education level of mothers and staying in a nuclear family setup were found to have a more positive or favorable attitude towards the usage of digital devices by their children.

3·4 Safety Measures and Child Friendly Apps for Education, Entertainment & Socialization

The present study has been helpful in exploring the changing attitude of the parents of school-going children towards the increased usage of different digital devices by their children for Education, Entertainment & socialization during corona pandemic. It throws light on the need to improve the level of digital learning by developing different learning apps & digital learning sites for the children so that they can learn effectively.

The favorable attitude of parents towards the usage of digital devices by their children for the purpose of socialization laid emphasis on the designing and developing of different child friendly apps by the apps designers so that children can explore more and connect with their friends in a positive manner.

For the entertainment purpose much needs to be done on the digital platform in order to change the unfavorable attitude of parents into a favorable attitude like developing more effective infotainment apps (playing while learning) and games for the children. Certain age restricted rules/ safety measures should be used by the parents for controlling the viewing of videos and music which have abusive and antisocial language by children of tender age. The study suggests that if the parents are made aware about the parental control apps and safety measures they could be less apprehensive towards any kind of usage of digital devices by children even for entertainment purpose.

4. Conclusion

The present study throws light on the increasing popularity of digital devices like mobile phones among the school-going children (classes 6 to 10) for the purpose of education, entertainment and socialization during COVID-19 Pandemic. The parents were especially concerned about the long hours of study their school-going children had to succumb to on the digital devices during the

lockdown period. However, the parents agreed with the fact that digital devices were the only option for carrying out the studies of children during this academic session. Even for interacting with their friends and relatives audio and video modes of chatting were of great help. Only for the purpose entertainment by their school-going children the parents were found to be worried regarding the content of entertainment sites; the abusive language, the unethical and antisocial values being projected on comic videos on you tube and other apps on mobile phones. The parents were found to be concerned about the impact of these antisocial content on the moral and social development of their children. The study revealed the need for greater awareness of parents about safety measures like parental control apps and child locks for limiting the screen time of their kids and controlling the accessibility of their kids to all the unnecessary sites and apps. The parents were especially concerned about the long hours of study on the digital devices their school-going children had to succumb to during the lockdown period. A longitudinal study covering both the COVID and post-COVID period can be of great help in revealing any changes in the usage of digital devices by the school-going children, their attitude and their parent's attitude towards the usage of digital devices for various purposes after this pandemic.

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The Ethical Dimensions of Research and Scholarship

N. R. Gopal*

Candid modernity and detrimental materialism can be considered as the basis of our deviation from ethical values in present times. The basic human moralities have always been considered as the foundations of harmonious human co-existence. The need to follow ethics is being felt in every sphere of human actuality. Unfortunately, acts of violence and crime are the prevailing trends! Indeed, there is hardly any realm of human life untouched by growing dissoluteness. Similar to other ambits of our society today, research misconduct too is not uncommon. Data fabrication, falsification of results, and plagiarism are some such acts of misconduct as cited in the Guidance Document on Good Academic Research Practices published by the University Grants Commission in September 2020. This paper purports to analyse the need to uproot such unethical practices and define the prescribed and essential ethical norms.

[**Keywords :** Ethics in research, Ethics in publications, Research misconduct, Scholarship]

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1. Introduction

The expression *achar niti* in Hindi or ethics in English universalizes the significance of virtuous living. "Ethics" originates from the Greek expression "ethos", which implies manner of comportment. It examines human actions based on their appropriateness. This concern for human activity entails human responsibility after deliberation about the apt and inapt deeds. On the philosophical plane, it involves examining values to be followed in life based on universally applicable principles. Ethics also deals with moral dilemmas and moral discernment. In fine, it steers one to accomplish the good after careful pondering rather than imposing restraints. For example, a lot of intelligence is needed to design a deadly weapon, but without appropriate moral wisdom, it may be misused. Karma, an ethical concept in Indian Hindu tradition, also advances that the corollaries of one's action cannot be obviated. The primary virtues like endurance, integrity, restraint, wisdom, and truth have been a part of our Indian tradition. The ideas of dharma and niti are as old as the Indian civilization.

Ethics deals with intentional and wilful human actions. There may be many activities to do during leisure. Some read, some go out, or some listen to music, some watch a film. A voluntary action is to act by choosing one thing out of many. Since we choose our activities, the responsibility to bear the consequences is also ours. Freedom and responsibility are thus always connected. We know that natural urges and instincts primarily govern animal behaviour. Human beings can try to regulate their innate desires. Self-interest and societal interest cannot be regarded in an isolated manner, but we cleverly try to do so. The moral code maintains the balance between the two. The absence of rules leads to disorder. For example, a significant disorder occurs on busy roads as soon as traffic signals stop working in the evening. Everyone tries to plunge through the traffic. No one wants to be patient. No one is heedful of the inconvenience faced by children, older people, or disabled persons. This situation is not only chaotic but hazardous too. It increases the risk of road accidents. This example illustrates that after breaking societal rules and the system designed for their implementation, only self-regulation can save a system. The absence of regulations leads to disorder.

2. Ethics in Research

Before we talk about Research Ethics, let us define research in the simplest of words. I want to put forth the viewpoint of a Hungarian Biochemist, Albert Szent Gyorgyi. According to him, "Research is to see what everybody else has seen and think what nobody has thought". Research broadly aims to study various phenomena, develop new perceptions about them, and explain unexplored horizons of knowledge. Good research is possible only through a good researcher. A good researcher has been described as one who has the following qualities :

- Devoutness and Commitment.
- Constancy and Imperturbability.
- Good verbal and written Communication.
- Knowledge of the concerned realm.
- Originality and ingenuity.

Now, it is crucial that while maintaining high research quality, research is conducted in a culture that supports honesty and integrity to ensure the highest standards of ethical practice and behaviour. To come to the point- Research Ethics comprises of two dimensions or aspects. Firstly, Research Integrity, and Secondly, Publication Ethics. According to the US National Institutes of Health, research integrity includes the "use of honest and verifiable methods in proposing, performing, and evaluating research. Reporting research results with particular attention to adherence to rules, regulations, and guidelines" (NIH).

D. B. Resnik summarizes some ethical norms or principles that various codes of associations, government agencies, and universities worldwide have adopted concerning research work. He highlights the importance of honesty, objectivity, confidentiality, and social responsibility as some of the most significant values to be adhered to by a researcher. The promotion of ethical values leads to error-free, collaborative, and accountable research aiming at social good (Resnik).

3. Ethics in Publication

A Scholarly work is published in the form of a book with single or multiple authors, articles in research journals, conference

proceedings, and many other formats. Authors, journal editors, peer reviewers, and publishers together are involved in the publication of research output. Publication of an article in any of the above forms is an essential building block in developing an understandable and reliable knowledge network. Research and the publication process are built on trust based upon the fundamental belief that information and data are collected and reported honestly without falsification and misrepresentation. The resulting literature can be used reliably in the future. Since there are substantial career pressures to publish research outputs, unethical behaviour on the part of authors is, unfortunately, becoming more noticeable in recent times. On occasions, the examiners who evaluate a Ph.D. thesis are found appropriating the original thought of the examinee for their vested interests.

It should be noted that if a published work is subsequently found to be unreliable or dishonest, not only personal and institutional reputations are destroyed for good, research efforts building upon such published work also suffer significantly in a cascading manner. Hence, all the concerned individuals need to follow the highest standards of ethical behaviour. The Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) has pronounced very detailed notes on ethical practices expected of authors, editors, reviewers, and publishers. COPE, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting genuine research, defines best practices in the ethics of scholarly publishing and assists editors, publishers, etc. Its guidelines are internationally accepted and implemented.

Authorship confers credit for the work that has been carried out to result in a publication. It has many important academic, social, and financial implications. It is implicit that authorship entails responsibility and accountability for the published work. When one person authors a book, research article, or another category of research output, it is implicit that that person essentially carried out all the research work related to that publication, and they bear all responsibilities. In multi-authored publications, however, it becomes necessary to identify the contributions of each author so that their duties can be defined. Those who provide only assistance in writing, technical editing, language editing, and proofreading do not qualify to be co-authors. Some other types of authorships like guest authorship,

honorary or gift authorship, anonymous, surrogate, and ghost author-ship are grossly unethical and unacceptable. Including some- body as a co-author without valuable contribution to work or excluding names of genuine contributors is undesirable and unscrupulous.

Authors need to avoid multiple submissions and publications as it is unethical and illegal to submit a research work to more than one journal at a time. Furthermore, it is unethical and amounts to plagiarism to duplicate or reformulate existing publications into new publications by willfully disguising the sources of work. Also, do not feel hesitant to do error correction in a published paper by publishing an erratum. Depending upon the seriousness of the unethical misconduct, authors may publish an 'apology' note, or editors may publish an expression of 'concern' or retract the paper. Indeed, there are ethical norms and guidelines prescribed for publishers, editors, and reviewers too. However, there are enough reasons for authors to singularly recapitulate responsibilities as researchers and contri-butors to the knowledge arena.

4. Conclusion

Unfortunately, in a "publish-or-perish" world, a publication can become an objective in its own right, encouraging and introducing unethical publication practices. We find scholars striving to swell the number of their publications without adding anything to the knowledge corpus. Such works do not have any social significance and are not much cited. Balanced and rightful stress on research goals and research methodology needs to be achieved in any scholarly endeavour. However, when adequately disseminated, research also adds to the collective increase in knowledge and understanding of human society and leads to technological innovations and advances which have more profound consequences. Assessment of the research output of an individual or institution also has significant implications for professional advancement. Following appropriate ethical guide-lines at every step of research and its dissemination adds to the pleasure of researchers and the target audience. Research organizations, including universities, have developed their policies for the ethical conduct of research. What is lacking is a culture supported by a sound governance structure to ensure that research misconduct does not occur. The procedures and processes to address the violations fairly, promptly, and effectively are lacking, and this problem needs to be addressed!

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11

Indispensable Leap towards Transparent Electoral Financing

Neena Shireesh* and Sitaram Kumbhar**

The democracies around the world are facing severe challenges mainly emanating from surging authoritarian tendencies and excessive intrusion of money power in the electoral processes. The money power and corruption in democracies have dampened the image of democracy. The rise of money power in India has been one of the topical issues in the social sciences (Chhokar 2017; Vaishnav 2017). The elections in democracies need to be both free and fair. However, the electoral reforms which have been introduced in the past have made elections somewhat free but it still lacks fairness in practice. The voters in India vote for the candidates of their choice without much fear. Among others, the increased role of money power and media is making competitive elections unfair in most democratic countries. This paper analyses the budget of the "Electoral Bonds" which came to light through the Annual Budget of 2017-18 of Government of India.

[**Keywords :** Democracy, Money power, Electoral reforms, Transparent electoral financing]

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"It needs little argument to hold that the heart of the Parlia-
mentary system is free and fair elections periodically held, based
on adult franchise, although social and economic democracy may
demand much more".   *- Supreme Court of India (1978)*

1.   Introduction

The Annual Budget of 2017-18 is a historic one particularly in
the direction of cleansing election financing. It has expressed
exclusive desires and measures to push for greater transparency and
removing opacity in resources mobilization by political parties. In
doing so, it has capped cash contribution by anonymous donors from
₹20,000 to ₹2,000 which is a radical step in the right direction. Major
share of money coming to the coffers of the political parties come in
the form of cash and below ₹20,000 where an anonymous donor needs
not mention his identity. The Election Commission of India had
recommended the Government of India to change the law which the
present government agreed to implement. The Government has
proposed the introduction of "electoral bonds" which will reveal the
identity of the donor without naming the political parties. The
Ministry of Law and Justice had asked the twentieth Law
Commission in January 2013 to consider substantive changes to
electoral matters and recommend suitable electoral reforms. The
Twentieth Law Commission of India Chairman Justice Ajit Prakash
Shah did submit the 244th report titled "Electoral Reform" for the
consideration and adoption by the Government of India.

2.   The Union Budget 2017-18

This year's budget is an unusual departure from the past which
carried a section called "Transparency in Electoral Funding". It has
suggested means to cleanse the system. Politicians and parties are
benefiting from an opaque funding process by virtually converting it
into a money minting industry. Politicians of various genres are
suspected by the public as corrupt. The transparent electoral funding
will develop public confidence in political parties and politicians. The
general perception is that the politicians use their political weight
and other leverages and become wealthy in a short span of time. The
corruption in politics is the mother of all corruption. Any radical
electoral reforms initiatives which look radical and strong initially
will be in the interest of political parties and politicians which will
gradually develop confidence of people in the political process of the

country. The proposed cleansing of electoral funding will flush the system of corrupt "black money" because it allows the donors to contribute to political parties using digital mode and using the bank as an intermediary. It might be a devastating blow to hit political fund-raising.

3. The Electoral Bonds

No doubt, Electoral Bond is basically a financial instrument purportedly for donating to political parties. It is an out of box idea. It can be issued by scheduled commercial banks for prospective donors available against cheque and digital payment and not cash. Such bonds can be redeemed into the accounts of the registered political parties with the Election Commission of India. It has attempted to address the longstanding concerns of the corporate donors who want to remain anonymous. They want to remain anonymous from the general public and political parties. Section 29C (1) of RPA requires the political parties to disclose the sources from where they received donations over ₹20,000. However, in a significant departure if they receive through bonds they are not required to do so.

The "Electoral Bonds" proposed by the Finance Minister Arun Jaitley will require an amendment to existing laws particularly the RBI Act 1934 [section 31 (3)] and Representation of People Act (RPA), 1951. The Bonds are "likely to resemble promissory notes backed by the nation's central bank, with lenders remaining the custodian of the donor's fund until the political parties are paid". This will enable the donors to donate in a more transparent manner. It will greatly help in pushing India's "cash-based" electoral funding system into a more transformed and transparent digital one. The announcement in the Union Budget 2017-18 mentioned that political parties can receive cash donations up to ₹2,000. The vast majority of contributions that the political parties receive is fundamentally anonymous in nature. The Electoral Bond is to clean up the existing opaque system of election funding in one of the world's largest and populous democracies.

The Budget of 2017-18 has shown unusual desire to alleviate corruption plaguing Indian political system. Limiting cash donations and allowing donation through cheque and digital transfer to the political parties will not only support the government's flagship digital India mission but also help in checking money entering the

political process through illegitimate sources. It is being argued that the government is garnering support in favour of proposed reform as a sequel to eliminate corruption and black money. The details about the proposed reforms are very stingy at the moment to make any judgment about it. In India there were electoral trusts but electoral bonds are new. Electoral trusts were introduced in January 2013 which envisaged transparency in how campaigns are funded.

It can be akin to "bail bond than a financial bond". Possibly RBI will issue these bonds through designated commercial banks which donors will buy in order to donate to a particular political party and remain anonymous if it so desires. The political parties can redeem the same from the bank into their bank account within a stipulated period of time. A political party can have a single bank account. The government will know the sources of bond buyers because they have to buy through either cheque or digital mode. The existing mechanisms have failed in curbing entry of black money into the political process. Hence, possibly the proposed law can instill new energy to the nation's fight against corruption.

Will it herald a significant transformation in Indian politics tarred by a negative image? The public imagination of party politics has gained a negative painting on its face. How this overture if implemented through desirable legislative actions transforms Indian polity is inexplicable at this juncture. How it will traverse in the complexity of Indian polity will determine its destiny. Hence, any judgment on the future of electoral bonds at the moment would be mere speculations, eulogizing and filled-expectations.

Prior to the present proposal of the government many committees and commissions have made recommendations to which governments did not pay any heed. The committees and Commission which have examined issues concerning electoral reforms are : The Goswami Committee on Electoral Reforms (1990); The Vohra Committee Report (1993); the Indrajit Gupta Committee on State Funding of Elections (1999); The National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2001); Election Commission of India -Proposed Electoral Reforms (2004) and The Second Adminis- trative Reforms Commission (2008). These committees and Commi- ssions had recommended many substantive electoral reforms which were not translated into legislative actions and ignored by successive governments. The electoral reforms process is very slow and gradual

in India. Time has come when we must think about radical reforms which will deepen our democracy and eliminate crooks from entering Legislative Assemblies and Parliament. The urgent areas which deserve immediate attention of the present Government are the use of money power, strict provisions preventing criminals entering politics, bringing political parties under the Right to Information Act and mechanism to check paid news which influence elections.

The proposal is to encourage digital mode of donations both small and big. In most democracies the donors contribute to political parties through digital mode which is more transparent. Whatever amount that reaches the coffer of the political parties come from traceable sources. In a democracy like India more legal amendments are required to purify the political funding, check legitimization of black money and overuse of money in the electoral campaigns. The overuse of money power in the democratic process undermines the virtues of democracy. It is high time the government and political parties build consensus on these issues which otherwise will erode democratic virtues and create disillusionment among the citizens of the country. The political culture is dynamic and it is changing faster which structure beliefs, orientations, attitudes, political behaviour of the people towards the political system. The information revolution, globalization, and spreading literacy are bound to shape political behaviours of the younger generation. We live in a world of mediated politics. In this process newly emerging upwardly mobile, awaked and empowered individuals will yearn for easy entry into politics. They would want the existing structural challenges to be eliminated in the election campaigns for easy entry of honest, committed and visionary individuals who want to contribute towards the nation's development.

The money power in election campaigns is the antithesis of democracy. Hence, any step towards elimination of money power in election was an overdue in India. When money comes from unknown and untraceable sources the government mechanisms cannot control overuse of money in general elections and encourage resourceful to contest and win election. In this process honest individual and parties with clean money cannot contest and win any election. Free and fair election is the heart and soul of representative democracy. It is the only known legitimate means available through which citizens can elect their representatives. It is through elections that ordinary citizens express their will and elect the candidates and parties they believe will protect and promote their welfare. Honest candidates can

get elected only when elections are free and fair. This is to happen election commission must be autonomous and must possess enough authority to enforce laws strongly so as to ensure free and fair election. The democracies in developing countries have been facing manifold challenges to ensure free and fair elections. However, India is one of the developing countries which hold election periodically without much hassle. The democracy has got highly embedded in the Indian soil. Periodic elections at each levels of democracy have become common. If right persons are to be elected the election must be immaculate.

The use of money power has grown immensely in election campaigns which erodes level playing field among the candidates and parties. The resourceful parties and candidates tend to spectacularly dominate election campaigns and win as well. It is reducing the value of India's competitive political process.

4.   Understanding Political Funding

In all democracies of the world political parties raise funds. Political parties spend billions across the world in pursuit of vote share maximization. Frivolous spending with newfangled ways rankle the parties and individuals with moderate access to resources in electoral fray. Electorates are growingly becoming disenchanted with the electoral process because political parties are engulfed by allegations of frolicsome spending in election. Undeniably, boisterous electoral campaigns in India accompany high expenditures. Political process must be wary about possible negative consequences it could usher in, if it remains unaddressed for long.

Currently, political parties are finding it hard to raise funds across the world even in the liberal capitalist countries like the UK and USA. The technological, legislative, and market changes have hit political fundraising hard across the globe. How the proposed overtures in India will check free flow of black money and allow continuous flow of legitimate resources into the coffer of political parties is a major challenge.

The public funded elections in India are difficult because of minuscule resources and infinite responsibilities upon the state. Without adequate and continuous flow of resources through legitimate roots, the political system will run dry which will give rise to gargantuan magnitude of problems. India is undergoing techno-logical revolution and changes of epic proportions which are bound to

get reflected in various spheres of nation's life. This is how political processes across the globe are evolving. All enterprises, business, trade and investment are reinventing to function efficiently and remain profiteering. Affected by the tidal wave of change the political fund-raising methods must reinvent to motivate people to give money. However, in India corporate houses favour some kinds of public funded elections. Traditionally the main sources of income for political parties were coming through membership fees which have disappeared in India.

5.   Regulating Political Funding

The dominance of money power in legislative and parliamentary elections comes from unaccounted sources. India already has rules which regulate political financing but plethora of in- congruities do not allow enough power to concerned authorities which otherwise can effectively check entry of unaccounted money into the political process. The Election Commission of India with plodding thoroughness can play a crucial role in curbing the role of money power in elections. Nevertheless it should have enough authority and power to act strongly. In politically pluralist countries like India, political parties are free to organize and compete for power. The study of elections and electoral behaviour in recent years has attracted a good deal of scholarly attention. Widespread election research has divulged many aspects of India's electoral process in the last couple of decades. In fact, election is the central place of popular election in the democratic process. In the present world, election is the basic institutional mechanism of political recruitment, consensus, legitimization, participation, mobilization and communication which are integral parts of democratic politics.

Election in every level of democratic set-up has become a regular ritual in Indian political process. It is in the last decades that considerable interest in purifying elections has gained momentum. The conduct of election campaigns is of major importance in discussions of how democracy ought to work and in understanding how democracy does work.

The political parties and candidates in order to influence voters increasingly rely upon the mass media, experts in modern media technology, and social sites. The mode of election campaigns has been witnessing great shifts. The political parties place themselves in the hands of an advertising agency which crafts the image of the political

party by newfangled advertising methods. In a surprising shift political parties are vying with each other to rope in advertising agencies to contest elections which were alien to them. The present shifts are to inviting experts in modern media techniques to help it influence voters. The elections in India are becoming the biggest propaganda campaigns. The campaign methods adopted by political parties gradually change. Understanding the way in which campaigns are conducted are of special significance in today's India because of manifold technological changes. The characteristic response of campaigners to change in electoral conditions and communication technology has not been able to abandon old techniques. Technological basis of nationwide campaigning is developing and has begun to alter the campaign practices. In consequence of these and related changes, election campaigns in India are no longer conducted primarily by face to face conversations between individuals personally known to each other, with candidates standing on behalf of a local interest or a party based upon a constituency rather than a national programme.

Campaigning has become impersonal no party contestant can hope to know a majority of their electorate. The inventions of many new forms of mass communication and the general increase in literacy have also made election campaigns much more widely publicized throughout the adult population. Systematic study of the changes can help us in uncovering how changes in election campaign are transpiring.

The former Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Bajpayee once said "every legislator starts his career with the lie of the false election returns he files". The upper limit of electoral expenditure set by the Election Commission is periodically upwardly revised. The cap set by the Election Commission is invariably violated and horrifyingly ineffective due to lack of powerful monitoring mechanisms. In every election political parties and candidates break rules to win elections. This derives them into the arms of dreaded criminals who have access to black money because better funded candidates fear/benefit against their rivals. The unprecedented dark sea of liquid assets, mostly untaxed cash, makes Indian electoral campaign the most expensive in the world, trailing just behind the USA.

The money mostly from untaxed sources pours into the coffers of parties due to loopholes and flimsy rules pretending to check black money in elections. According to Association for Democratic Reforms

findings 69 per cent of funds of political parties come from unknown sources. Indian political system does not deserve to be funded by the shadow economy alone. The EC has proposed an amendment and inserted a new section 29C into the RPA to make all funds of parties transparent.

More needed to be done to ensure a transparent political funding regime in India. The proposed law is to allow transparent money to be used by donors and donee. Cleansing political financing will cleanse the Indian economy in the long run. The proposed changes in the Budget which will be effective from 1st April 2018 could bring the political funding out of the shadows paving the way for a more transparent election regime. This will be achievable if some more laws are brought in to regularly monitor the issues of political financing in India. The urgent need to tackle poll finance in the world's largest democracy arises due to the growing clout of the rich. At present, the debate of political funding has been framed around the narratives of black money and anti-corruption measures.

The clear framework should be laid to empower the concerned agencies to probe funding of political parties. The concern is that if the sources of funding are not known the untaxed money will keep flowing into the electoral system. Disclosure of every donation or contribution sources big and small should be compulsorily verifiable. The country has not been able to evolve a more transparent political funding mechanism.

The more transparent methods of election funding will produce positive consequences in the political process of the country. The political parties in democracy should be open to public scrutiny of every sort. Hence, the laws should create enabling conditions for political parties to be more transparent. Mere force will not be effective because the parties will discover new ways to evade public scrutiny. However, the elections are affected by many other socio-cultural and political factors in multicultural societies like India (Devesh Kapur and Milan Vaishnav, 2018; Steven Wilkinson 2004).

The budgetary effort of the present government to curb black money in election campaigns is commendable in many ways. Myriad agencies have been raising issues of black money but political parties have been taking refuge under various provisions and decline to disclose sources of their income saying the law does not require them

to do so. The political parties can legitimately collect donations from legitimate sources.

The transparent electoral funding will generate ungrudging respect from the society towards the political parties which are being attributed to manifold negative narratives in society. The next substantive step should be to bring political parties under laws passed by themselves in the well of both the houses of parliament especially under the Right to Information Act. Rules are already there but invariably violated by parties.

6. Conclusion

The problem of opaque financing requires strong intervention. The present proposal is a significant step which if implemented with an iron-will can bring about transparency and much needed accountability in the electoral funding and check future production of black money. The ins and outs of the present law will be known only after it receives legal recognition through suitable legislative actions, laws. At present there is little doubt left about black money being in hand and globe with political parties which urgently needed to be checked in the interest of Indian political system, democracy and nation's development. The story of excessive use of money in election campaigns keeps oscillating in India. It should evoke genuine public actions to mollify this malady of Indian democracy. It will be a ludicrous and otiose exercise if the proposed law is not fully translated into real actions. It is high time the proposed law must not be let off due to paucity of political consensus otherwise the hopes will sadly and gradually fritter away.

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<p align="right" style="font-size:2em">12</p>

Freedom of the Press and Relevance of Professional Ethics in Journalism

*Rajendra K. Sharma**

Freedom of the Press has been frequently debated on so many platforms, mostly as a right and the aspect of responsibility of the press has been many times neglected. Journalists demand freedom from all types of control to impart their duties and serve the public. Evolving and adhering to a Professional Code of Ethics is one of the first requirements for any profession before demanding freedom, and press is no exception to it. In the present endeavor an attempt has been made to understand journalists' adherence to their Professional Code of Ethics. Role of journalism education, professional associations, the Press Council of India (PCI) and newspaper organizations have been examined in evolving and enforcing professional ethics for journalists. In the present analysis it was noted that, various professional organizations have evolved very elaborated code of ethics for the journalists, press and media, but their imple- mentation has been neglected. Allegations of yellow journalism and paid news can often be observed. Therefore, a lot more serious concern in implementation of Professional Code of Conduct in journalism and the press is need of the hour. The

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adherence to professional ethics may justify journalists' demand for freedom of the press, before regulators in particular, and society in general.

1.   Freedom of the Press

Freedom of the press has been debated on so many platforms, mostly as a right and the aspect of responsibility of the press has been often neglected. There is no special mention of the freedom of the press in the Constitution of India. It has been guaranteed under Article 19 (a) of the Constitution stating Fundamental Rights, 'All citizens shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression'. It is important to know that any freedom comes with so many responsibilities and in the case of press it becomes more and more important because press influences the public opinion. In the Constitution Article 19 (2) states that 'a law may be enacted in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of states, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence or violence'. The freedom of the press, therefore, is not absolute and subject to judiciary.

2.   Professional Ethics

Each profession is governed by a professional body or statute. Every professional body develops ethical codes which must be followed by the professionals mainly to ensure uniformity in their work. In simple words, professional ethics are principles that govern the behaviour of a person or group in particular vocation like journalism, teachings, medicine and health services, engineering, IT, architecture, etc. Journalistic ethics and standards comprise principles of ethics and good practice applicable to journalists.

Evolving and adhering to a professional code of ethics is one of the first requirements for any profession before demanding freedom. Advocates of processual approach in the study of professions submit that, evolving a 'code of conduct', is a major step in the development of a profession (Wilensky, 1964; Caplow, 1970; Ritzer, 1972). It is through a properly evolved and strictly enforced code of conduct, that a profession will be self-regulated. In India, besides the Press Council many journalists' organizations like AINEC, IFWJ, NUJ have

declared professional ethics. Adherence to these professional ethics is particularly important for claiming freedom of the press. In the present endeavor an attempt, therefore, has been limited to understand the journalists' adherence to their professional code of ethics.

3.   Development of Newspapers as an Industry

A review of the history of journalism in India reveals that initially (1858-85) the focus of journalism was social reforms, after this period the focus of journalism shifted towards independence of the country (1986-1947). After independence, journalism started developing as an occupation (Sharma, 1990). After independence, the press developed as an industry and with this the nature of journalism saw a big shift that is from a noble profession to an occupation of earning livelihood. Journalists became employees of an industry. It is important to remember that freelance journalism in India constitutes a small section. Before independence, on many occasions, journalist or a group of journalists were owners of the newspaper and in this situation commercial interest was not the goal of the press, but its goal was to bring social reforms in Indian society and later to achieve the independence of the country. The development of newspapers as an industry had important implications on freedom of the press.

India got its freedom in 1947 and since independence press has witnessed many phases of change in Indian society and newspaper journalism has now matured as a full-time profession. In the initial period of independent India, during the regimes of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri the relations between the Government and the press were cordial. For the first time in independent India, it was the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who warned the press while speaking at the International Press Institute in December 1966, as she said "How much freedom can the press have in a country like India fighting poverty, backwardness, ignorance, disease and superstitions? (Quoted in Sunder Rajan; 1966: 819)". Later, she declared emergency on 26th June 1975 and censorship orders were issued for the press. This period of emergency (26th June 1975 to 20th March 1977) is remembered as the Dark Age in the history of the Indian press.

In the 21st century newspapers have altogether changed as an industry and almost all national newspapers are now owned by industrial houses. Today, publishing requires a big infrastructure with huge investment. Modern technology, heavy machinery and digitalization have given birth to a new industry namely Newspaper Publication. With commercialization of the newspaper industry, journalists have become employees of this industry and this scenario has led to various issues in the freedom of the Press like editorial policies v/s professional ethics.

4. Need of Professional Ethics in Journalism

In every profession the public interest is protected by evolving and implementing an exhaustive professional code of ethics. In journalism also the need of developing a code of conduct has been felt on various occasions. In the inaugural address of the second National Convention of Confederation of Newspapers, organized by News Agency Employees' Organization at Nagpur on 3-4 August 1985, Mr. V. P. Sathe, and Mr. V. N. Gadgil, Union Ministers, emphasized an urgent need for a code of conduct for journalists. As a journalist, one has the responsibility towards society to provide truthful, balanced, fair, factual and objective information honestly and independently. Ethics in journalism lead to steering away from conflicts of interest and taking society's privacy into account.

5. Journalism Education/Training and Professional Ethics

The first requirement in adherence to the professional ethics is the awareness and the knowledge of the code of conduct. To inculcate professional ethics among professionals in any profession, a long-term education/training period is required as in Medical and Legal professions. Journalists will be taught about professional ethics during their study of Mass Communication courses leading to their degree in journalism. Now here it is important to note firstly, that a formal education in journalism i.e., a degree, is not necessarily required to get a job in newspaper organization. It has been often quoted that 'Journalists are born' and therefore, a formal training is not necessarily required. Now those who have no formal education in journalism may not even know about professional ethics of journalism. Professional ethics are a part of the curriculum of journalism education. Secondly, what we find in journalism

education/training is that a wide variety of short-term diploma courses are offered and on the job training in newspaper organizations is also a common practice. In these short-term courses and training programs, inculcation of professional ethics, which requires a long-time duration, is not properly possible. In view of this, it may be submitted that inculcation of professional ethics during journalism education/training has been neglected to some extent.

6.   Professional Associations and Professional Ethics in Journalism

Professional associations, besides safeguarding the interests of the profession, also play a significant role in controlling the behaviour of its members to maintain the dignity of the profession. In journalism several professional ethics have been evolved by various professional associations. All India Newspapers Editors' Conference (AINEC) (http://www.unesco.org) declared Code of Ethics for journalists in September 1953. The Indian Federation of Working Journalists (IFWJ) in its declaration on 26th April 1971 stated that "We, the working journalists of India declare that the objectives of the profession of journalism are closely related to the wider social objectives to which the nation is pledged" (https://www.ifwj.in). "The press has to function as an integral part of a just social order in which the people have a vital interest. Working journalists pledge themselves to maintain an integrated social outlook, keep in mind the larger interests of the people and work always with a sense of social responsibility" (Chaturvedi, 1983 : 71). National Union of Journalists (NUJ) also assured that protection of social interest is the prime goal of journalism. The union declared that "We, the working journalists in India, considering our calling as a trust, believing in serving the public interest by publishing news and comments in free and fair manner" (Sharma, 1990 : 66). In 1981, National Union of Journalists declared professional ethics for journalists in the form of a 'Declaration of Journalists' (http://nujindia.com). If we analyze the contents of these professional ethics, we will find that there are no contradictions of values and mostly all are intended to protect the national and public interest at large.

However, the question emerges whether theses Ethics are followed by the journalists, or they are just limited to declarations only. Journalists have been criticized for neglecting the public interest on many occasions. Even several journalists have observed that the public interest has been neglected before business interest and the press protects the interests of Indian bourgeoisie (Dharmarajan, 1970; Mulgaokar, 1971; Bhattacharjee, 1972; Purohit, 1973; Ram, 1973). In a recent empirical study (Verma, 2009) it was found that a significant number of journalists are even not aware of these ethics. Allegations of paid news and yellow journalism have been made and complaints lodged to the Press Council of India. In view of this, the implementation of these ethics needs to be examined, to understand their effectiveness in maintaining discipline in the professional of journalists.

7.   The Press Council of India and Professional Ethics in Journalism

Professions have self-regulatory body to enforce professional ethics among its members like Medical Council of India and Bar Council of India in medical and legal professions, respectively. These Councils may be defined as self-regulatory bodies of the profession as they have members only from their own professionals. In journalism the task of regulator has been assigned to the Press Council of India. The Press Council Act was promulgated on 4th July 1966 with the first objective of protecting the freedom of the press. The Council functioned till 1st January 1976, when during emergency it was abolished by the Press Council Repeal Act 1976. The Council was reinstated in March 1977, when emergency was lifted.

The Press Council aimed 'to encourage the growth of a sense of responsibility and public service among all those engaged in the profession of journalism'. To achieve this goal the Council was assigned the task of developing and enforcing a professional ethics among journalists. The Press Council has evolved a very exhaustive professional ethics for journalists in 1996 entitled as 'Norms of Journalistic Conduct' which was subsequently revised in edition of 2010 and recent edition of 2019 (https://presscouncil,nic,in).

However, the rights of the Council are so much limited that it has been described as 'Paper Tiger'. Under the section 14 of the Press Council Act 1978, the Council has been authorized to hold an enquiry

on receipt of a complaint against an editor or journalist for offending against the standards of journalistic ethics or any professional misconduct. The decision of the council under subsection (1) or (2), as the case may be, shall be final and shall not be questioned in any court of law. However, the decisions of the council are not judicial pronouncements, and therefore, cannot impose any punishment on offending journalist. The decision of the council is important only in exposing the offender. The powers of the Council are insufficient in strictly enforcing this ethics. Its effectiveness depends on its moral authority rather than on any statutory sanctions (Ghosh, 1973). The Press Council of India has been therefore, called as 'Paper Tiger with rubber teeth' as a vague and powerless body (Sarkar, 1984). Journalists are not in favour of increasing the powers of the Council. "The Press Council is not a court of law and should not be converted into one. It is a court of honor and should exert its moral authority" (Sarkar, 1984 : 200). From the above discussion it may be submitted that, the Press Council has extremely limited role in enforcing the declared code of ethics in journalism.

8. Professional Ethics and Editorial Policies of Newspapers

Journalists' freedom is related to the editorial policy of the Newspaper Organization, which is like a code of ethics for employed journalists. Here important issue in the freedom of the press, is that who has the right to develop and enforce the code of conduct for journalists in newspaper organization? This issue is also important because most of the journalists are employed and the number of free-lance journalists is exceedingly small. The editorial policies of the newspaper organizations also restrict the freedom of journalists. With the press developing as an industry after independence, Natrajan has observed that "The net result of these five years was the total destruction of all interest in codes of journalism and all pride in the work; a general lowering of the status of journalist within the office and outside; and the virtual elimination of the editor as a moderating influence between journalist and proprietor" (1962 : 304). Even against professional demands, journalists are compelled to follow editorial policies (Sahni, 1970). A journalist is expected to operate within four corners of the editorial policy (Mankekar, 1970). There are areas in which editors are required to or expected to follow

the policies which are based on the political predilection and the economic interests of the proprietors, and this often runs counter to the larger interest of the society (Ayyangar, 1970). The second Press Commission submitted that the right of the owner of the newspaper organization to lay down editorial policies cannot be taken away. On various occasions, the policies of the newspapers on the one hand, and the professional ethics on other hand, pose different demands from employee journalist. Editorial policies are obviously evolved to protect the owners' interest. In such situations on many occasions, journalists neglect the professional ethics in favour of employers' interests. For example, political and business interests of the newspaper organizations create a biased approach among employee journalists. Allegations on the press for such bias are quite common.

It is evident from this and so many such opinions that as soon as newspapers developed as an industry the freedom of the press was seriously curtailed by the proprietors of the press and therefore, journalism no longer remained a self-regulatory profession. It must be examined that while framing and implementing the editorial policies in any newspaper, to what extent, journalists are involved?

The interference of the owners of the press in the freedom of the journalists, was so gravely felt, that the All India Newspapers Editors Conference (AINEC) demanded for the establishment of the Press Commission to look into the various interests of journalists in the newspaper's organization. The Government of India established The Press Commission on 11th October 1952. The Commission submitted its report on 14th July 1954. Based on the recommendations of the Commission, The Press Registrar was appointed to maintain the records of developments in the press. In view of the recommendations of the Commission, The Working Journalists Act 1955 was enacted, with provisions of establishing a wage board for fixing the wages of journalists in the press after an interval of every five years.

9. Conclusion

In view of the above analysis, it may be submitted that a properly evolved, inculcated, and strictly enforced professional ethics is one of the first requirements before the claims of professional autonomy in journalism. Although a number of professional organizations have evolved very elaborated code of ethics for the

journalists, press and media, their implementation has been neglected. The efforts of the professional associations, journalism education, the Press Council and newspaper organizations in implementing professional ethics in journalism need more serious concern. The adherence to professional ethics may help journalists in justifying their claim for freedom of the press, before regulators in particular and society in general.

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Book Review

Surabhi Mahajan, *COVID-19: Changing Social Fabric in India*, **New Delhi : Nation Press, 2020.**

**S. K. Gupta**, Panjab University, Chandigarh

Surabhi Mahajan's book **COVID-19: Changing Social Fabric in India**, is written effulgently and is packed with statistical data in the form of tables. It is a great reading for all those concerned with COVID-19 globally and its impact on individuals, families and society at large in India during first three phases of lockdown in particular. This book is very well timed at this hour when the coronavirus has taken a death toll of more than 8 lakh globally with 2 crore plus positive cases (more than 50,000 deaths in India with 30 lakh plus positive cases) and there seems to be no end to this unforeseen pandemic in near future.

The cover illustration of structure of coronavirus is just as captivating as the book itself. The book has a preface and is divided into seven chapters. The foreword has been written by Prof. Sandeep Bains, Dean of College of Community Science, PAU, Ludhiana. Three chapters (4, 5 and 6) are devoted to presentation and analysis of data. Interestingly, as one glances through the references, one notices that most references are of online articles of 2020 understandably in accordance with the topic under study. With barely any book in the reference list, the references reveal the fact that for this pertinent issue, not much has been documented or written. This huge gap is what the book tries to fill.

The book under review attempts to investigate the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 on various sections of Indian society at three different levels : individuals, families and society. Its importance increases manifold as it also attempts to suggest possible measures to cope with such pandemic in future. The responses of a sample of 750 from 19 states and union territories of India (Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal) well illustrate the impact at these three levels.

The authoress categorically mentions that the lockdown has been a tough period, but the overall, majority of the respondents are

appreciative of the government's decision taken for the welfare of the country men amidst this pandemic, irrespective of their age, sex, profession, type and financial position of the family. She has concluded on the basis of empirical evidence that our life at individual level is not going to be the same as before the global spread of COVID-19. Social distancing, use of masks, sanitization and washing hands repeatedly are going to be part of our life in during journey by bus or train, morning and evening walk, shopping in market places and malls and going out for dinning in hotels and restaurants, joining marriage (wedding) or birthday parties, any religious or political gathering and so on. This problem is going to be more severe when the authorities allow school/colleges/universities to reopen shortly. Only time to come will validate as to how each and every one shall be able to learn this new way of life and customize themselves with new situation.
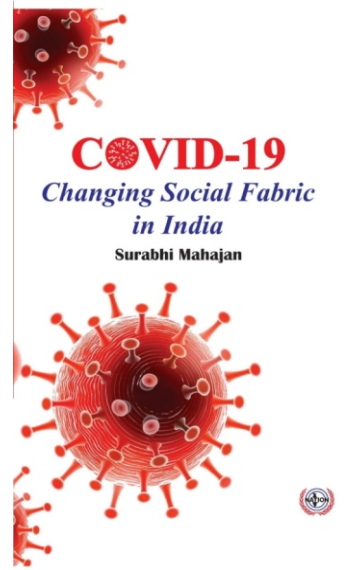
The study has revealed that overall the lockdown had more of a positive impact on families in terms of building sound relationship amongst each other and providing a moral support to handle the hard time of crisis. It gave a chance to the family members for not only staying together but also spending quality time with each other for better understanding. But, the negative implications especially for those families who were not able to earn two meals for themselves due to the lockdown or those families whose one or two members were struck anywhere else and so all were not together was painful and cannot be ignored. What one can do in this sensitive hour is to pray for one and all so that all families remain safe and comfortable to face global crisis spread due to COVID-19.

Her study has concluded that undoubtedly lockdown had a brighter side relating to self-realization and up-gradation of people, well-being of the community and healing of Mother Nature, new role of police and para- military forces, positive impact of increased use of technology as well as simple weddings without huge gatherings. However, the darker side also covers painful pictures of lower sections

striving for essential commodities, difficult & very painful exodus of migrant labourers to their homes in native states, loss of income and jobs for so many people due to the slowdown of economy, more problems like heated arguments, quarrels, divorce, depression etc. due to social isolation and an adverse effect on social relations due to social/physical distancing in the lockdown. Hence, it has to be ensured that a secondary epidemic of burnouts and stress- related diseases may not pop up in the end of latter half of 2020 or early 2021. The pandemic has left an indelible impression on many of us, making us to maintain cleanliness habits and follow good discipline in our life.

Every private or public library should have this book on its stacks for the simple reason that it provides an intensive narrative about the coronavirus, both at the global level as well as India, its impact at various level and the suggestions it renders to cope with such pandemic. The effectiveness of lockdown as a means to control the spread of coronavirus and the views of cross-section of society included in the book are also revealing and helpful for the authorities in the ongoing unlock periods. Not only this, Surabhi Mahajan comes up with some viable suggestions in last chapter to cope this as well as any other such pandemic in future. These suggestions are definitely going to prove very useful.

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