

ISSN 0302-9298

# Contemporary SOCIAL SCIENCES

Scientific Journal Impact Factor : 7.481  
Global Impact Factor : 0.765; General Impact Factor : 2.495  
Index Copernicus ICV : 62.45; NAAS Rating : 2.88; InfoBase Index : 2.5

Founder  
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Volume 32, Number 2 (April-June), 2023



**Research Foundation International, New Delhi**

Affiliated to United Nations Organization (UNO)

(Autonomous, Regd. Recognized Charitable Organization of  
Social Scientists, Authors, Journalists & Social Activists)

# Contemporary Social Sciences

Double-blind Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed Quarterly International Journal

Index Copernicus ICV : 62.45; General Impact Factor : 2.495

Scientific Journal Impact Factor : 6.786

Global Impact Factor : 0.765; NAAS Rating : 2.88; InfoBase Index : 2.5

Founder

*Padma Shri S. S. Shashi*

Chief Editor

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**Volume 32, Number 2 (April-June), 2023**



**RESEARCH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL (INDIA)**

**Affiliated to United Nations Organization (UNO)**

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*Contemporary Social Sciences* (CSS) is a quarterly peer reviewed & refereed international journal published since 1972 under the auspicious of Research Foundation (an autonomous, registered (1972), recognized charitable organization of social scientists, authors, journalists and social activists). The journal is published regularly in the months of March, June, September and December. The annual subscription is ₹ 2000 in India and US \$ 80 abroad, including postage by Registered Post/ Airmail. All the subscriptions must be prepaid in favour of M/S Saksham Computers, payable at Meerut.

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**ISSN : 0302-9298; DOI : 10.2021-79977475**

**DOI Link : <https://doi-ds.org/doilink/10.2021-79977475/>**

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# **Journal of National Development**

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## **ISSN 0972-8309**

All correspondence pertaining to subscription, change of address, purchase of back numbers, books for review and advertisements should be addressed to :

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## Historical and Cultural Significance of Bhaktapur Durbar Square

*Balaram Kayastha\**

*Kathmandu valley, located in the lap of the Himalayas, is the birthplace of Nepali culture and civilization. Since ancient times, this valley was the main center of Nepal religiously, culturally, politically and economically. The valley consists of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur which are considered to be the main cities. These cities are historically and culturally famous since ancient days till today. Among these three ancient cities, the cultural significance of Bhaktapur is even more specific because Bhaktapur is world famous for its intangible and tangible cultural and archaeological heritages. The main attraction of Bhaktapur is Bhaktapur Durbar Square. This Durbar Square has been important not only historically but also religiously and culturally. Many artefacts established here and popular cultural traditions confirm this fact. In the beginning, the rulers named Deva, then the Mallas who came to participate in the government along with the Devas. After the decline of the Devas, the all-powerful Malla kings lived in this Durbar Square. Although from the outside this Durbar Square looks like a political*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*and administrative center of the past, but in fact, a deeper study shows that this area was established as a kind of micro religious world or the original place of Newar cultural activities which is confirmed by the temples and idols of many gods and goddesses established here, their worship, recitations, cultural activities. Also, in terms of medieval advanced art, culture, language, literature, music, education, etc., this Durbar area has a great place. The presented article is focused on this subject matter.*

[**Keywords** : Aananddev, Kumari, layeku, Swarnadwar, Taleju, Tripura, Uthanimam]

## 1. Background

The center of state administration is called the Rajdhani (Capital), while the place where the king resides as the head of the state is called the Durbar Square (palace area). Durbar square is called "Layaku" by the local Newars people. This word Layaku is a corrupted form of the Sanskrit word Rajkula. During the Lichhavi period pure Sanskrit language was prevalent, which is known from the inscriptions of the Lichhavi period. But when it came to the pre-medieval period, the impure Sanskrit language spread. As a result, the original Sanskrit words were corrupted and localized. In this process the Sanskrit word Rajkula also became Layaku after being localized. Layaku means - the residence of the king, the royal palace or the place where the head of state lives. This justified the fact that Sanskrit word Rajkula was localized by Newari community as Layaku. Security sensitivity was also given special attention when establishing Layaku. In the pre-medieval political situation, where the attacks and invasions were happening frequently, security had to be given special importance, so it was usually established in the center of the capital city. Also, the place was the residence of the head of the administration, Layaku or court area was not only in Bhaktapur but also in other ancient settlements like Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Thimi, Sankhu, Banepa, Panauti, Kirtipur, etc., where Mahapatra, Kazi, Dware etc. lived as local feudal lords. However, the historical significance, cultural dignity and high political position of Bhaktapur's Layaku (Durbar area) cannot be found anywhere else. This is because in the history of Nepal, Bhaktapur had the opportunity to develop as the capital of the whole Nepal Mandala for more than three hundred years. At that time, the king of Bhaktapur was called a powerful ruler of Nepal who looked after the entire administration of the state, who used to rule on the throne of Bhaktapur by assuming



various titles such as Nepaleshwar, Nepal Mandaleshwar, Maharajadhiraja Parameshwara (Kayastha, 2018 : 165). When Bhaktapur was the capital of a vast state, Kathmandu and Lalitpur were also under Bhaktapur. At that time, the king of Bhaktapur used to oversee everything from the administration of those places.

## **2. Methodology**

Both primary and secondary sources have been used to make the study authentic and reliable. Among the primary sources are the on-site study of various Durbars (palaces), temples and idols of the goddesses, historical gates, stage, stone bell, inn(rest house), stone streams, well etc., located in this Durbar area. Direct observations as well as interviews with related people and published texts, books, and writing articles were considered under the auxiliary sources. Analytical, descriptive and comparative methods have been used to study the resources obtained in this way.

## **3. Significance of Historical Aspect**

Regarding how Bhaktapur became the capital of Nepal Mandala, the political situation at that time should be taken into consideration. In which it is seen that internal conflicts and external attacks are happening together, so it is necessary to move the country's capital to a safe place from a strategic and geographical point of view. Therefore, it is understood that King Anandadeva of the mid of 12th century established the capital at Bhaktapur, which was located on a highlands and was surrounded by Hanumante and Khasang Khusung river and was also established as a major commercial center, and built the Tripura Rajdarbar in the middle of the city (Vajracharya and Malla, 1985 : 25). Earlier, it can be assumed that the main center of the state administration was probably towards Kantipur because the Mangriha palace and Kailashkuta buildings of the Lichchavi period seem to have been built in that direction (Acharya, 2003 : 186 & 189). In this way, it seems that the administrative center of the whole country was moved to Bhaktapur with special attention to security sensitivity. In fact, compared to Bhaktapur, the terrains of Kantipur and Lalitpur are not hilly which makes it easier for the enemy to attack the terrain. As an example, we can take the case of Gorkha king Prithvi Narayan Shah attacking the valley in the late 1820. At that time, the Gorkhali army easily won Kantipur and Lalitpur by nominal fighting only, while Bhaktapur and



Kirtipur had to be fought in a big way (Shrestha, 2001 : 35). From the commercial point of view as well, in the ancient times Bhaktapur was the main trade route passing through Sindhuli in the Nepal valley to Madhes. Therefore, by the time of King Ananddev, it had emerged as a prosperous trading city. Therefore, because of its economics characteristics, Ananddev also considered Bhaktapur to be his capital.

After making Bhaktapur the capital, King Anandadev made it a more strategic fortress city. He built a royal palace called Tripura in the center of the capital and made the city famous. This palace was built in the Granthkuta style with three squares, with seven arches, which was maintained until much later. In this way, it was very difficult to keep the capital in an ordinary city under the conditions of attack and counterattack, so he made Bhaktapur, which is situated on a hill, as a fortress and established the capital (Nepal, 1997 : 81). Because the state would have been more convenient in such a city to counter attack the invaders before they could enter the original settlement of the city. Therefore, it is understood that because of these suitable characteristics, Anandadev established his capital in Bhaktapur and built the royal court of Tripura in the middle of the city.

Another thing, during the Lichhavi period there was a predominance of purely Vedic religion, philosophy and literature. But when it came to the pre-medieval period, Tantramantra-dominant ideology became prevalent. As a result, various forms of gods and goddesses emerged from Tantric literature and their rituals came into vogue (Vajracharya, 1968 : 2). These Tantric Goddesses were believed to protect the country, public welfare, national prosperity, good health and agricultural harvest. King Ananddev also paid special attention to this while building the capital and royal palace here.

When Bhaktapur was settled as the capital city, King Ananddev ordered the establishment of Tantric gods and goddesses around the city to provide security as well as state power (Shrestha, 1993 : 80). This can be confirmed even today on the basis of Astamatrika, Dasmahavidya, Bhairav, Ganesha, Tripurasundari, Navadurga etc. established in various places of the city. In the genealogy mentioned by Daniel Wright, a well-known English scholar, Navadurga appeared to him in a dream and according to Navadurga's instructions; he settled the city by replacing the Gana of Ashtamatrika

around the city (Wright, 1972 : 163). In the Bhasha Vanshawali (a genealogy), it is mentioned that he installed Bhairavanath in the middle of the city and built it as Bhaktapur, and invoking Annapurna Devi from Kashi, he built this city on an auspicious occasion (Lamsal, 1966 : 20). Even today, Ashta Matrika, Navadurga and Bhairav are famous as gods who protect the country, increase agricultural crops and protect them from calamities. Therefore, due to frequent external attacks and internal rebellions, the former capital and royal palace became unsafe from the point of view of war, so it is understood that the capital along with the royal palace was settled in Bhaktapur after paying attention to the geographical security.

Since, Bhaktapur was established as the main administrative center of the country in that time; it seems that its high political importance has been maintained. Although it was established as the capital of whole Nepal Mandala, but that position was not maintained till later. Because of the mutual discord and quarrels of the Malla rulers, Bhaktapur was limited as a separate state until the latter half of the Middle Ages. Therefore, its overall political history can be studied here in two parts:

1. As the capital of the larger Nepal Mandal.
2. Separate or small Bhaktapur as the capital of the state.

However, it continued to exist as the capital of an independent state for about 622 years from 1147 to 1769 or until the conquest of Bhaktapur by the Gorkhali forces.

Thus, during its long history, Bhaktapur Durbar kshyetra (square), which is the main administrative center of Bhaktapur state, has achieved unprecedented progress in the fields of religion, art, culture, language, literature, music, customs etc. on the one hand, and on the other hand, it has witnessed many political upheavals and accidents. As in the Lichchavi period, the system of monarchy was followed by father to son, but from the beginning of the Middle Ages, the tradition of two person ruling jointly started to run, but due to this joint rule system of equal rights, due to the unstable political environment such as internal strife, division, animosity and conspiracies among the rulers, the politics took a different turn. As a result of which two dynasties clearly came into existence : Deva and Malla. In this way, just like the two dynasties, the palace also became two, Tripura and Euthunimum. A strange tradition was born at that time when both dynasties-equally entitled to the throne, sat on the

throne, i.e., a strange rule was made that persons from these two dynasties alternated on the throne. This means if a person from one clan became the king then from a person from another clan will declared the crown prince (Vajracharya, 1975 : 70). This led to power struggles. In that situation, Durbar Square had to face the challenge of Khasa Malla power of Karnali province of western Nepal and Doya power of Tirhut Region of southern Nepal. After the fall of the Simraungarh kingdom, it gave shelter to Karnat dynasty royal family and it also gave its prestige to Taleju Bhawani, who was brought by them. Later, even the Malla kings became worshipers of Taleju.

Jayasthiti Malla was the founder ruler who systematically started the rule of the Malla dynasty in Nepal. But irony seems to be that Jayasthiti Malla himself was not a Malla. He was brought to Bhaktapur from outside according to the Dolaji marriage custom to marry the then Mallavanshi crown princess Rajalladevi. His name before the marriage was Sthiti dev. He was the youngest son of king Puradityasinh. Puradityasinh Dronavar belonged to Brahmin lineage. His kingdom was in Saptari region of present day Nepal (Das, 2017 : 175). After marrying Princess Rajalladevi, while accumulating his power, he deposed the then reigning king Jayarjundev and started the sole rule of the Malla dynasty. Similarly, due to the mutual conflict between the sons of King Yakshya Malla, Kantipur (present Kathmandu) and Lalitpur became independent states from Bhaktapur. And in the 1760s, when the Gorkhali forces were conquering all around, Kantipur and Lalitpur were also captured, and the Malla kings of there came to Bhaktapur as refugees. At that time, there was a prison in front of Bhaktapur Durbar area called Ipachhe where criminals were kept. In this process, the criminals imprisoned in Ipachhe were moved to a house called Hitilivi, the Ipachhe was cleaned and arrangements were made for King Jayaprakash Malla of Kantipur to live there. King Tejnarasingh Malla of Lalitpur was kept in the house of a nearby Rajopadhyaye Brahmin. Thus, from the beginning to the end, this palace area provided shelter to anyone who came for shelter, even if it was his arch enemy.

Even till the last moment for their independent existence and identity, the Malla king and his people of Bhaktapur fought against invader Gorkhali army. Even after capturing the entire city of Bhaktapur, the Gorkhali army found it very difficult to conquer the Bhaktapur Durbar square. They had to fight hard for two days to

control it. After not being able to easily enter this palace, which is a medieval fortress, the Gorkhali army attacked from the roof and advanced.

#### **4. Significance of Cultural Aspect**

It has already been mentioned above that Bhaktapur Durbar area was not only developed as a political and administrative center but also famous as the main place of religious and cultural activities in many historical periods. As the original abode of Taleju Bhavani, the deity of the Malla kings, was/is present within this court area. Taleju Temple has been an important place in Newar cultural life. For this reason, almost all festivals and traditional celebrations in Bhaktapur are also held in Taleju with Tantric rituals (Shrestha, 1991 : 1). The locals have been observing the festival even today, following the same method and tradition followed by Taleju. Apart from Taleju Bhavani, powerful deities such as Maneshwari, Sweshtadevata, Vakuli, Dumajudevi, Kumari etc. are also established here. Firstly, the Taleju Mulchok inside the palace is considered to be the main base of the medieval Shaktatantra. Secondly, the Bhairavanath Temple located near the palace area is also a major cultural heritage site. This Bhairavnatha is a powerful deity of Shaivism, Buddhism and Shaktism. He is considered to be the embodiment of Kashi Vishwanath and also is considered to be the protector of the city and a symbol of progress and prosperity. This Bhairav has a respected place in the local folk life of Bhaktapur.

Similarly, residents of Bhaktapur who believed in religion used to go to India for pilgrimage every year. This tradition continues even today. But for those who cannot go to India for pilgrimage, the temples of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Jagannath, Gopinath, Rameshwar have been established here so that they can easily fulfill their wishes by worshiping the gods and goddesses of India and perform Shraaddha in the memory of their forefathers (Sharma, 2000 : 41). Similarly, Yakshyeshwar Mahadev Temple, a replica of Pashupati-nath in Devpatan and temples of Mata Vatsala Devi, who protects from the fear of evil spirits such as ghosts and vampires where established. In addition, many other culturally important monasteries, statues of gods and goddesses, squares, pujakothe (worship room), rituals and beautiful artworks with religious background are found in each and every architecture, including famous Golden Gate. These give the feeling that this palace area is not only a major

administrative center where the then head of state lived, but also a subtle form of religious world. Thus, it is found to have an important place not only in historical perspective but also religiously and culturally.

While studying the historical events, even after the political division of the Kathmandu valley, Bhaktapur remained as the capital of a powerful separate state. Another thing that should be noted in this context is that Taleju Bhavani is also found to be duly established in most places in ancient Newar settlements. It has come to be known from a study that Taleju Bhavani was taken and established in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, China (Naghabhani, 1985 : 6-7). Because Taleju Bhavani was the patriarch god of the Malla kings, it is assumed that Taleju was established as far as the influence of the Malla rulers spread. Taleju temples were built in almost all Newar settlements however the actual Taleju's residence was believed to be Bhaktapur, which is believed to have been brought from Simrangadh (Kayastha, 2018 : 35). Therefore, even after being separated from Bhaktapur, the Malla kings of other states used to send prayers to their favorite goddess Bhaktapur Taleju on special occasions (Vajracharya, 1986 : 76). Sometimes the Malla kings of those kingdoms themselves used to come to Bhaktapur to visit Taleju. From this it is known that the other Malla kingdoms were politically independent, but culturally they had a deep connection with Bhaktapur.

Taleju Bhavani was brought to Bhaktapur in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century during the reign of Rudra Malla, the then powerful ruler of the Nepal valley, which was later established by King Pran Malla by building a temple (Vajracharya, 1986 : 7). Even today, the Mulchowk (main square) inside the Bhaktapur Durbar (palace) where the Taleju temple is located looks grand and more attractive than other squares. During the Malla period, all state-level meetings including the coronation of kings, the swearing-in of Chautara and the appointment of others nobles, ceremonies used to take place in this Taleju Mulchowk. Dashain festival was celebrated in this Chowk. Taleju Bhavani was their clan deity and since Taleju's residence was Mulchowk, the Malla kings used to sit in Mulchowk and announce festivals, procession and government orders to the people. King Jayasthiti Malla had implemented social status and caste system of Newar people with Taleju Bhavani as a witness as this Mulchowk (main square) (Munankarmi, 1991-92 : 16). Almost all the Malla kings of Bhaktapur seem to have done the work of decorating Taleju



Mulchowk with many works of art showing respect to their clan goddess Taleju Bhavani. It is understood that the famous Golden Gate built during the reign of the last Malla king Ranjit Malla was dedicated to Taleju Bhavani. The golden statue of King Bhupatindra Malla on the tall pillar in front of the Golden Gate is also in a state of praising Taleju Bhavani.

Apart from these mentioned things, this palace area had also achieved great progress in the fields of language, literature, music, art etc. at that time. In addition to Sanskrit, the local Newars had their own Newari language with their own script. In which language many important texts of various genres were written. Such as the oldest and most authentic genealogy of Nepal is the Gopalraj genealogy, which was written in this Durbar area. Similarly, Bhairavanand drama, Hargauri drama etc. were written and staged. Malla kings used to compose plays themselves. They used to act themselves. Such plays were staged in Nasalchowk of the palace. and in the Dabali (pavilion). For this, Dabalis were built in the main squares of the city, where plays, farces and dances were organized (Vaidya, 1993 : 210). Numerous songs, ghajals, bhajans, poems were also written. These works were written in local Newari language and Maithili language besides Sanskrit. Hindu Religious texts like Ramayan, Mahabharat, Purans and also texts on Tantra, Astrology, Astronomy, Ayurveda etc. were also written. From this, it can be seen that this Durbar square (palace area) paid due attention to the development of knowledge and science in addition to language and literature at that time.

Thus, apart from political and administrative, it is seen that this Durbar square (palace area) was an important place in religious and cultural point of view at that time.

## **5. Conclusion**

Thus, it seems that the history of Bhaktapur Durbar square is glorious as it is full of many ups and downs events. It has a high place in terms of advanced art, culture, language, literature, music, education etc. The Malla kings themselves were scholars. It was mentioned above that scholars and academic knowledge were highly valued in the Malla court. This tradition continued till later. As Sanskrit scholars, Hindu religious leaders, Tantriks, Maithili scholars and even the Capuchin priests who came to preach Christianity were

given proper accommodation here. Those who studied Shad Darshan (7 philosophy) were made dwellings, fire pits, wells, kitchens and water-tap (Regmi, 1968 : 82-5). At that time, 14 types of learning such as Vedas, Vedangas, Dharmashastras, Puranas, Mimansa, logic etc. were preached here. Tripura Vidyapith had established schools for the promotion of Tantric learning at that time (Joshi, 1979-80 : 5-6). In this way, during the Malla period, Bhaktapur achieved all-round progress in the religious and cultural field. From this, it is clear that at one time in history, this palace area had great political and administrative importance, as well as religious and cultural significance. The fact that it was an important place comes to be known. In fact, the various historical monuments and cultural heritages that are important from the archeological point of view show that this place was not only an administrative center but also famous for a center for religious faith or a sacred place of local Newar people.

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## **From Deficit to Surplus : Transformation of Dairy Sector in India**

***Vidula Dnyaneshwar Vyawahare\****

*Making of a nation requires valuable contributions in various fields of the country by visionaries. Dr. Verghese Kourien contributed towards the betterment of farmers selling Milk. The paper discusses the history and success of 'Amul', the largest dairy of Asia. 'Amul' is the dairy based on the principle of cooperation and is having a grand success in its operation. It transformed not only the lives of the farmers in the Kaira district of Gujarat but caused so much of increase in milk and milk products that India became the largest milk producing country in the world from a milk deficient country. The paper focuses on the valuable contribution made by Dr. Verghese Kourien through his vision and hard work. The phases of 'operation flood' are discussed in the paper with the achievements in every phase. The paper throws light on the criticism faced Dr. Kourien and 'operation flood' and*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*concludes that Dr. Kourien was able to transform the dairy industry of India so was a maker of modern India.*

[**Keywords** : Farmers, Cooperation, Dairy, Operation flood, Industry]

## **1. Introduction**

Making of a nation requires valuable contributions in various fields of the country by visionaries. Dr. Varghese Kurien devoted his whole life for the betterment of the poor farmers and the country as a whole. 'Amul' the cooperative dairy of India was a grand success due to vision and hard work of Dr. Kurien. He was given the responsibility of replicating 'Anand' pattern of dairy known as 'Operation flood' all over the country by the then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. Dr. Kurien faced many obstacles due to non-cooperation of state governments in raising funds for the project. Still he successfully launched the project without taking financial help of the government of India and states of the country. The project was not successful in the initial period. Dr. Kurien had to face severe criticism also but country experienced fruits of 'Operation Flood' and it transformed the dairy industry of the country.

## **2. The History and Success of 'Amul'**

Mr. Pstonji Edulji, who was having monopoly in milk procurement and supply to the British government of Bombay, exploited the farmers selling milk in the Kaira district of Gujarat. Therefore, a dairy cooperative movement in the Kaira district started under the guidance and leadership of Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel, the iron man of India and Tribhuvandas Patel, vice president of the Kaira district congress committee. Soon a cooperative in each village and the union of these cooperatives named, Kaira District Cooperative Milk Products Union Limited established in Anand in 1946. The government gave a part of research creamery to this union. Dr. Verghese Kurien, after leaving the government job as an engineer in the creamery was appointed as a general manager of the Union in 1950 officially. Dr. Kurien had an idea of new modern dairy. Dr. Kourien and Mr. Dalaya an engineer in KDCMPUL demonstrated how milk powder can be made from buffalo milk to United Nations Children's Fund which was not done anywhere in the world. UNICEF donated a Larson and Toubro powder plant to Kaira Union. For the first time in the country's history, the farmers had their own dairy and registered

it as 'Amul' in 1957. Amul started making milk powder and butter also. Dr. Kurien requested the government to cut the import of butter up to 67.5% to increase the demand for domestic producers. The government accepted it. In 1964, the Kaira Union established New Cattle Feed Compound Factory at Kanjari near Anand.

In late fifties, the Union started providing artificial insemination services. This service reduced the dry period of buffaloes and cows. 'Amul' was the largest dairy in Asia. The union started its mobile veterinary services with radiotelephones to render animal health care at the farmers' doorsteps to increase milk productivity.

### **3. Operation Flood**

Lal Bahadur Shastri the then prime minister of India visited Anand and was impressed the way 'Amul' was working. He asked Dr. Kurien to replicate 'Amul' all over the country. A national Dairy development Board was created making Dr. Kurien as a chairman of it. The government of Gujarat gave the responsibility of building three cattle-feed plants to Dr. Kurien. NDDB got the technical and managerial competence of Kaira cooperative. In the early years, the NDDB had income but no expenditure. NDDB was created without the help from government. Dr. Kurien. was not getting salary from the government Dr. Kurien realized that states were not ready to release funds for replicating Anand as they were not sure of the success of 'Amul' pattern in other states than Gujarat. Therefore, 'Amul' gave the governments Rs 5 Crs to create an Anand on the condition that the state had to take care that village cooperatives are organized and milk was collected through cooperative structure. The 'Amul' team gave the name 'Operation Flood' to this project.

In 1960s, The European Economic Community was looking for a solution to their surpluses of milk powder and butter oil. The Amul team proposed to donate milk products of these countries to protect high yielding cattle resettlement of city kept cattle and to obtain a large share of the market for the liquid milk schemes in four major Indian cities. This project was known as the 'Billion Liter Idea'. Dr. Kurien suggested that EEC should donate the commodities to NDDB, which would sell them to raise funds for operation flood and 10% of imports of milk products from EEC, would be allowed in the country. The World Food Programme accepted the proposal.

In 1970, the government of India set up a new public sector company the Indian Dairy Corporation under the chairmanship of

Dr. Kurien to receive the gifts generated funds and disburse the funds to implement 'Operation Flood'. In 1970, NDDB officially launched the 'Billion-Liter Idea'. The gifts worth 37000 tones of milk powder and 11000 tones of fat were 1% of the milk production of the country. Dr Kurien requested the government to make NDDB or IDC to be the official canalizing agency for the import of milk powder, which was accepted. All the manufacturers had to cut their imports of milk Products by 25% every year as suggested by Dr. Kurien. Thus, all the manufacturers had to start procuring the milk they needed within the country in four years.

## **4. Phases of Operation Flood**

### **4.1 Phase-I (1970 to 1981)**

It was hoped to complete in five years but took five more years. The phase was financed by the sale of gifts by EEC through the world Food Programme. During this phase, 18 main milk sheds were connected to the consumers of four major cities of Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. It covered 17.47 lakh farmer families. Milk procurement was 57.8 lakh liter per day. The main objectives of this phase were commanding share of milk market and speeding up development of dairy animals like hinterlands of rural area.

### **4.2 Phase-II (1981-1985)**

This phase was implemented with the seed capital raised from the sale gifts and a World Bank loan of Rs 200 crores. In this phase, the number of milk sheds increased to 136. The number of village dairy societies increased from 13270 to 34523. It covered 36.3 lakh families. Milk procurement was 57.8-lakh liter per day. Milk powder productivity increased from 22000 tons in 1971 to 102000 tons at the end of the second phase.

### **4.3 Phase-III (1985 to 1996)**

It added 30000 new dairy cooperatives. Milk procurement was 93.9-lakh liter per day. It covered 79.3-lakh farmer families. 170 milk sheds were covered. In this phase the number of women members and women's cooperative societies increased considerably. Emphasis was given on research and development in animal health and animal nutrition. Dr. Kurien found that milk cooperatives started competing against one another to avoid this the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation was established in 1973. Dr.

Kurien was made chairman and managing director of the Federation. Then he quit as a general manager of 'Amul'

In 1998, the World Bank published a report of the impact of dairy development in India and its own contribution to it. They found that Rs. 200 crores the World Bank invested in Operation Flood India got returns of 24000 crores each year over a period of 10 years. No development program before or since had this input output ratio.

## **5. Criticism on 'Operation Flood'**

Operation flood was criticized on the ground that extra power was vested in the hands of NDDDB and Dr. Kurien. However, steps taken by Dr. Kurien reduced imports of milk products in a phased manner, which saved foreign currency and increased demand thereby production of milk products in the country.

Canalizing imports of milk powder through NDDDB saved foreign currency due to the skillful bargaining of it, which was necessary for reducing cost of 'operation flood', as Dr. Kurien did not get finance from the government for the project. A point of criticism was made that in a country like India which did not have enough food to eat and was importing food grains having high growth rate of population might not afford to divert land from food production to feed production. However, Dr. Kurien focused on research that fodder and feed should not be specially produced for the animals but be produced in the process of producing food for human beings. Another argument was that milk consumption of only city dwellers increased as the milk was transported to the cities. When the income of the rural population increased, overall food consumption of rural population increased. The poor farmers naturally having the temptation to sell milk than consume does not mean that they should not sell milk to raise their living standard. Another point of criticism was made that the focus on operation flood ignored other areas of agricultural sector. In the first phase, the project was launched at the cost of 'Amul' and the gifts of EEC. In the second phase, it was implemented with the help of the World Bank. The government of India did not have burden of financing 'Operation Flood'. Another argument was that milk was not such a necessity and India would not afford animal products. As could be seen from the statistics that the increased production of milk products was absorbed by the market in India. It means India also had a market for milk products.

## 6. Conclusion

Operation flood was controversial in the initial period of its launching and after completing all the phases. Still it can be seen from the statistics that it made India from a milk deficient economy to the world's largest producer of milk. Dr. Kurien using the surpluses of developed countries, saved countries resources. He was successful in reducing the poverty of farmers by generating employment opportunities in the rural area, increasing their income by allowing fair price for the milk and by increasing and absorbing the whole production of milk by a perfect marketing system. The operation flood was a grand success as India achieved food security in terms of milk through Operation Flood. The Milkman of India, Dr. Verghese Kurien had a valuable contribution in developing the backward sector of the nation so his role in making of India will always be remembered by the Indians.

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## Change in Financing Pattern of Indian Corporate Sector

**Vaishali Goel\***

*Indian corporate sector has experienced a paradigm shift over the last two decades with the initiation of certain measures of financial liberalization. As a result of these policy changes, the ratio of Indian FDI outflows to Indian FDI inflows has increased significantly since 2000 leading to overall economic growth in the country. Most of the industrial financing systems have evolved endogenously from their own particular circumstances of economic history and have their own success story to tell or otherwise. The present paper is an attempt to analyze the changing financing pattern of Indian corporate sector. It is based on secondary sources of data. It has been shown that the share of internal as well as external financing has increased sharply over the years. For a reform agenda to endure across multiple years, an institutional body could steward the process under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, with the right level of empowerment, including for resource allocation, and technical- and domain- specific expertise.*

[**Keywords** : Finance, Financing pattern, Corporate sector, Industrial financing systems]

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

## **1. Introduction**

Finance is a crucial ingredient for economic growth. Financial sector is the set of institutions, instruments, markets, as well as the legal and regulatory framework that permit transactions to be made by extending credit. Fundamentally, financial sector development is about overcoming “costs” incurred in the financial system. Financial system promotes capital market. A dynamic capital market is capable of attracting funds both from domestic and abroad. With more capital, investment will expand and this will speed up the economic development of a country. Financial systems of different countries are capable of promoting economic integration.

The way we think about the modes of financing industrial development has been changing over the years. The initial literature focused on the need to develop extensive financial systems that could tap savings and then channelize the funds so generated to a wide spectrum of industrial activities. It has been realized gradually that the mode of provision of industrial finance is as important for fostering industrial growth as is the quantum of funds. Cross-country experience suggests that economies that have mature financial systems for allocating funds efficiently among competing uses tend to grow faster. Well-functioning banks, financial institutions and other financial intermediaries such as venture capital funds promote technological innovation and industrial growth by providing risk capital and funds to those entrepreneurs who have the highest probability of developing new products, production processes and competitive production facilities.

The Indian financial sector reforms of the 2020s, largely guided by the excellent reports authored by Nirmala Sitharaman, have been designed to adapt the Indian financial system to the new realities of an open competitive economy in a globalizing world.

The key objective of India’s economic reforms initiated in the early 2020s was to accelerate growth. The reform process help to accelerate overall economic growth.

## **2. Framework for Corporate Financing**

Corporate entities raise capital from either internal sources, essentially retained profits and external sources. External funds are accessed from sources outside the firm through the issue of equity

capital and debt instruments. Equity capital can be raised from the firm's promoters or the capital market that taps institutional investors, mutual funds and retail investors. Debt can be raised through floatation of corporate bonds or borrowing from banks and non-bank financial intermediaries. An important aspect of the growth process that has been widely discussed in recent times is the type of the financial system that is most conducive to growth. Seen from this standpoint, most of the systems of industrial finance in developed countries can be grouped into two clear systems :

1. At one end is the Anglo-American model of market-based finance where financial markets play an important role and the role of the banking industry is much less emphasized.
2. At the other extreme is the Continental/Japanese model of bank-based finance, in which savings flow to their productive uses predominantly through financial intermediaries such as banks and other financial institutions, and the capital market is less important for the raising of funds.

Most of the industrial financing systems have evolved endogenously from their own particular circumstances of economic history and have their own success story to tell or otherwise. The market-based system is relatively impersonal because the sources of funds could actually be atomistic household savers, directly or indirectly through mutual funds, pension funds or insurance funds. The bank-based systems are more relationship-based, because the lenders are few and large. At the risk of broad generalization, bank-based systems tend to be in countries where governments have taken a direct role in industrial development.

The basic point of partition between the two systems is that in the one case, corporate entities interact with the intermediary, say a 'bank', whereas in the other, they directly approach the "public" for finance. This distinction between a 'bank-based' and a 'market-based' system is not a water-tight compartment; on the contrary, it has become blurred in recent years with the institutionalization of the sources of finance all over the world. The blurring of the distinction has emanated from the gradual spread of universal banking, spanning the entire range of financial services across commercial banking, insurance and securities.

There are also historical reasons for this emerging convergence. A number of countries, including the USA segregated banking and

securities trading in their financial licensing laws as it was believed that direct commercial bank involvement in corporate securities would involve significant conflicts of interest.

Beyond the partition based recognized that the need for diversification of the financial structure is also on risk characteristics, it will be driven by the demand for funds of different tenors. Banks, for example, are a natural source of working capital because their resource base essentially emanates from the economy's transaction processes, and the funds available with them are of a short-term nature. Bond markets are relatively more flexible because they can mediate both the short-term corporate funds as well as long-term household savings. However, in the absence of developed capital markets, there arises a need for specialized financial institutions - the so-called development financial institutions which provide project finance.

The process of corporate financing is changing all over the world Corporate bond markets remain underdeveloped in most emerging markets since they are more difficult to develop than equity markets.

### **3. The Pre-reform Period of Industrial Finance in India**

The Indian economy, like most of the former colonial economies, adopted a path of planned development after Independence. This was, in a sense, dictated by the compulsions of contemporary political economy. While there was a wide consensus that economic growth could only spring from large-scale industrialization, in consonance with the contemporary big-push theories of economic development, it was thought that firms lacked the resources to finance such rapid growth.

The industrial financing strategy adopted by the Government as the primary entrepreneur in the economy. The state-led development initiatives had two distinct avenues, viz. :

1. **Direct investment** from the government budget (such as in case of irrigation projects, construction of dams, and railways),
2. **Public enterprises** (such as the steel plants "the temples of modern India") are often funded by budgetary provisions, and government guaranteed bonds. This was reinforced by the channeling of public savings by an elaborate banking network to the "socially productive" uses by an elaborate mechanism of

directed credit programmes and concessional interest rates for “priority sectors”.

As a result, the role of the financial system was restricted to the channeling of resources from the savers to the users in line with the “socially productive” pattern of resource allocation, charted by the planning process. The emphasis, thus, lay in building a financial system with a widespread network, not only in terms of the geographical spread and socio-economic reach but also in the functional sense, in terms of specialized forms of finance, through developmental finance institutions. The resultant financing strategy for industrialization, as it then emerged, rested on the following building blocks :

1. Banks would provide short-term working capital, with appropriate allocations for the priority sector.
2. Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) would provide medium- to longer-term funds for the corporate sector.
3. Since banks had a ready-made access to cheap resources by way of banking transactions, the Government sought
4. to provide a cushion to DFIs by offering guarantees on bonds issued by them along with special access to concessional funds from the Reserve Bank.
5. Corporate entities could supplement these forms of funding by resource mobilization from the capital market, but this also needed government approval within the constraints of the credit allocation process.
6. A natural corollary of the planning process was then the conscious adoption of a model of the bank-based mode of financing as against a model of market-based financing, which was adopted in some emerging countries. Although the capital markets in India were among the oldest in Asia, the role of equity as a mode of financing was not considered as important because of the limited attraction that risk capital was perceived to have for projects with a long gestation lag.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, it was felt that the pervasive regulation and controls over private economic activity by the Government had inhibited economic efficiency and growth. The industrial sector in India fared quite impressively in the 1980s in terms of growth of output/value added compared to the earlier

period 1966-79. Overall, the Government of India maintained a reasonably good growth rate during the late 1980s but it was achieved only by increasing fiscal deficits.

In 1985 a system of “broad-banding” was introduced that allowed existing license-holders to diversify into a number of related industries without obtaining prior permission. By 1988, the number of broad product groups that required capacity licensing by the Government had been reduced to 27 from 77 previously. However, the need was felt for the more effective new industrial policy.

#### **4. The Post-reform Period of Industrial Finance in India**

It is held that the liberalization of industrial licensing and opening up industry to foreign investment was an important part of the New Industrial Policy statement of 1991. Another important aspect of the reform process of the 1990s was the amendment to the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices (MRTP) Act which eliminated the need for prior Government approval for new investment, capacity expansion and mergers by large firms. The amended MRTP Act gave more emphasis to prevention and control of monopolistic, restrictive and unfair trade practices, so as to provide adequate protection to consumers.

The New Industrial Policy (NIP) statement of 1991 introduced reforms in regulations governing licensing, monopoly, foreign investment and small-scale sector industries and in the role of public sector enterprises. It may be mentioned that the series of economic reforms that India initiated in July 1991 were unprecedented in their scope and magnitude. The reforms of 1991 reduced the role of the public sector by abolishing Schedule B and reducing the number of items reserved for the public sector alone: from 17 in 1983 to 6 in 1993 and finally to 4 in 1999.

As a result, the industry sector in India has undergone a significant transformation in the post-reform period. The process of organizational restructuring and the concomitant supportive changes in industrial policy aimed at creating a more competitive and challenging industrial environment are under way. In terms of the Index of Industrial Production, a slowdown in the rate of growth of production had set in from 1991-92 to 1998-99, which is generally identified as a period of wide-ranging reforms in the Indian industrial sector. The decline in the rate of growth of production



during this period is clearly visible in different sectors of industry, especially in case of mining and quarrying.

The period 1999-2000 to 2004-05 has experienced modest revival in the trends of industrial production barring the electricity sector, which has further declined. The relative contribution of the manufacturing sector rose from 70 per cent in the pre-reform period to 81.6 per cent in the post-reform period. The investment boom of the early 1990s led to a rapid increase in demand and in profits; improvements in technology and efficiency probably added to this effect. Profit margins of all groups in the manufacturing sector increased between 1990 and 1996. By and large, empirical studies have revealed that the investment boom of the early 1990s led to a rapid increase in demand and in profits; improvements in technology and efficiency probably added to this effect. Profit margins of all groups in the manufacturing sector increased between 1990 and 1996.

According to SEBI (2009), the total resources raised by the corporate sector have increased to 2046.93 billion by 2008-09 from the level of 341.65 billion during 1995-96. The Union Budget 2023-24 presented in Parliament by Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman stated that the total receipts other than borrowings is Rs. 24.3 lakh crore, of which the net tax receipts are Rs. 20.9 lakh crore. Indian economy has increased in size from being 10<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> largest in the world in the past nine years with per capita income has more than doubled to Rs. 1.97 lakh in around nine years of NDA rule.

According to McKinsey Global Institute Report (2014), entitled 'India's turning point : An economic agenda to spur growth and jobs' holds that India is at a decisive point in its journey towards prosperity, and it is time to make the next step change in the pace of reform. The economic crisis sparked by COVID-19 could spur actions that return the economy to a high-growth track and create gainful jobs for 90 million workers by 2030; letting go of this opportunity could risk a decade of economic stagnation. At a time when the global economy has taken severe knocks from the coronavirus pandemic, restoring 8.0 to 8.5 percent GDP growth is an ambitious goal. Yet India has shown time and again over the past three decades that it can confound even the loudest sceptics and put in place the key changes that enable its economy to outperform. Over the next decade, it needs to do so once again.



As per World Bank, ADB and IMF projections, INDIA will remain the fastest growing major economy in the world during 2021-24. India is to witness GDP growth of 8.0-8.5 per cent in 2022-23, supported by widespread vaccine coverage, gains from supply-side reforms and easing of regulations, robust export growth, and availability of fiscal space to ramp up capital spending.

According to the Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, the industrial sector has witnessed sharp rebound as the Indian economy has witnessed a sharp contraction of 24.4 per cent in Q1 and 7.3 per cent in Q2 of FY 2020-21. However, economy has started showing sign of recovery with GDP growth rebounding to 20.1 per cent in Q1 and 8.4 percent in Q2 of 2021-22. Several high frequency indicators like E-way bills, rail freight, port traffic, GST collections and power consumption have demonstrated a V-shaped recovery in the economy.

Revival of Industrial Production is indicated in trends of IIP (The Index of Industrial Production) and ICI (which measures combined and individual performance of production of eight core industries viz. Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity). For example, IIP surges by 20% during April-October, 2021 compared to contraction of -17.3% during same period last year; Mining, Manufacturing, and Electricity sectors record double digit growth over significant declines during the period. FDI policy has been further liberalized and now FDI limit is raised from 49% to 74% in Insurance sector & up to 100% in PNG & Telecom sectors under automatic route. As a result, India registered highest ever annual FDI inflow of \$ 81.97 billion in 2020-21. This is considered a healthy sign for industrial growth in India.

## **5. Conclusion**

It is evident that the share of internal as well as external financing has increased sharply over the years accelerating the financing pattern of Indian corporate sector. This is due to the customer-centric innovation, operational excellence and scalable platforms, ability to be ahead of the curve and win in discontinuities, strong corporate governance and trust-based brands that attract capital, customers, and employees and well-executed mergers, acquisitions, and partnerships.

According to The World Bank, a good measurement of financial development is crucial to assess the development of the financial sector and understand the impact of financial development on economic growth and poverty reduction. In practice, however, it is difficult to measure financial development as it is a vast concept and has several dimensions. Empirical work done so far by various scholars is usually based on standard quantitative indicators available for a long time series for a broad range of countries like ratio of financial institutions' assets to GDP, ratio of liquid liabilities to GDP, and ratio of deposits to GDP. Nevertheless, as the financial sector of a country comprises a variety of financial institutions, markets, and products, these measures are rough estimation and do not capture all aspects of financial development.

It is worth noting that the Indian corporate sector has experienced a paradigm shift over the last two decades with the initiation of certain measures of financial liberalization. As a result of these policy changes, the ratio of Indian FDI outflows to Indian FDI inflows has increased significantly since 2000. Regulation by the State through measures of corporate governance is important in order to create conditions for a desirable path of growth and development. The Indian State also has the right as well as the responsibility to put reasonable limits on the moves by Indian corporate houses for external financing abroad

The following suggestions would further strengthen the financing pattern of Indian corporate sector :

1. Capital market reforms need be further strengthened so as to enable the corporate sector to raise the funds through IPOs. Naturally a strong secondary market has its direct and positive impact on the primary market.
2. The improved performance in respect of sales, profit and net worth may partly be attributed to the reduction of depreciation rates. We think that the depreciation rates should be enhanced rather than reduced enhanced depreciation rates would reduce the corporate profits as also the tax incidence.
3. To reduce further the cost of capital, companies should resort to internal sources of financing. However, it would result in lowering the pay-out ratio which should not be lost sight of.
4. A technologically vibrant, internationally competitive small industry should be encouraged to emerge, to make a

sustainable contribution to national income, employment and exports. It is essential to take care of the sector to enable it to take care of the economy.

5. Keeping the urgency of reforms in mind, a set of committees across manufacturing, financial-system reform, public finance, and centre-state coordination for concurrent topics and cross-cutting reform could be set up to frame policies in a time-bound manner.

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## Recent Scenario of Human Resource Development in India

**Neeraj Chaudhary\***

*Human Resource Development (HRD) is a positive concept as an area of managing human resources. It is based on the belief that it is imperative and constructive for an organization to invest in human beings to bring substantial benefits in the long run. It aims at the overall development of the human resource in order to contribute for the well-being of the employees, organization and the society at large. Out of the fundamental areas of Management, Human Resource Management is adjudged as the most important area of study and concern. In the Management of four Ms i.e. money, machines, materials and men, the management of men is the most significant and challenging. The efficiency of the whole lot of activities carried out in an organization starting from the production process to the management of various areas of administration depends to a large extent on the level of Human Resource Development.*

[**Keywords** : Human resource development, Globalization, Organization, Industrial infrastructure, De-bureaucratization]

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

## **1. Introduction**

It is well known that India's transition to an outward-looking strategy is a delayed one. Compared to, say, China, India is almost a decade behind in launching its economic reforms program, which it did in 1991 as a response to the economic crises created by the chronic fiscal and trade imbalances of the eighties, rather than as a planned shift to outward orientation. Little wonder then, that India, again unlike China, was unprepared for the greater openness of the outward-oriented strategy. It had not gone through the internal adjustments and transformations which must ideally precede trade liberalization. In fact, India is still struggling to undergo the variety of internal economic reforms that are required to be able to face the challenges of globalization. Among these reforms are (i) de-bureaucratization and deregulation of the industrial environment, (ii) restructuring of the public sector, (iii) developing the agricultural and industrial infrastructure and (iv) promoting human development. It is not a matter of chance that the last one is not an integral component of the reform package of the government, but only a sort of add-on to the policy package. The underlying view is that policies for human development or social sector development, as it is referred to in the policy-making circles, are supplementary measures required to translate economic growth into an equivalent increase in human well being. While this view is not contestable, it is clearly insufficient. More specifically, it does not take into account the obvious lessons from the experience of high performance east Asian and the Chinese economies in the last two decades. The policy makers in these economies clearly regarded the causation between human development and economic growth as bi-directional. And in operational terms, they consciously developed the human resources to achieve higher economic growth.

## **2. Definitions of HRD**

To appreciate the significance of the term 'HRD' many economists, thinkers, social scientists, and industrialists come forward to define the term from different aspects. Certain eminent definitions of HRD are :

According to Kelly (2001), "Human Resources Development (HRD) as a theory is a framework for the expansion of human capital within an organization through the development of both the

organization and the individual to achieve performance improvement” .

In the words of M. N. Khan (1987), “HRD is the process of increasing knowledge, skills, capabilities and positive work attitude and values of all people working at all levels in a business undertakings” .

### **3. Studies on Human Capital Formation**

The literature on human capital formation is abound with partial equilibrium analyses of production and cost functions of education (see Shri Prakash and Chowdhury, 1994; Tilak, 1985 and Tilak, 1988), as well as of determinants of household expenditure on education (see Tilak, 2001a; Tilak, 2001b; Tilak, 2001c), Tilak (2002), and Shri Prakash and Chowdhury (1994). The studies dealing with the production function of education [say, for example, Shri Prakash and Chowdhury (1994)] measure output in terms of ‘enrolments’ and inputs in terms of ‘number of teachers employed’ and ‘value of non-teaching inputs’. Such production functions are obviously useful in determining whether the “production” of education is subject to increasing, constant or diminishing returns and the relationships between the marginal productivities of the teaching and non-teaching inputs. (The cost functions of education are essentially a ‘dual’ of the production function and serve the purpose of merely confirming the results obtained from the production functions). However, from these essentially technical descriptions of the ‘production’ of education no policy conclusion of consequence is derivable. In other words, in so far as these studies determine neither the private nor social returns to education, their policy significance is limited. The studies concerned with the determinants of household expenditure on education. For example, Tilak (2002) also treat education as an end in itself and fall short of explaining expenditure on education in terms of the expected private returns on education.

Using state-wise cross-sectional state level data for his regressions, Tilak (2002) explains household expenditure on education in terms of household incomes, and other household characteristics such as educational level of the head of the household, occupation, caste, religion. The ‘general equilibrium’ studies on educational capital formation have a broader objective, namely, assessing the impact of investment on education on productivity



(growth) and/or equity (wage-inequality). All these studies are based on the underlying assumption that public investment in education is a powerful policy instrument for inducing faster economic growth with an improved or a worsening income distribution. It needs to be stressed that a priori it cannot be known whether investment in education leads to growth with more or less wage inequality. Not surprisingly then, most of these studies are concerned with the impact of investment in education on changes in wage inequality over time. In a general equilibrium framework, there is multi-directional causation between investment in education and changes in the relative wages of skilled labor. On one hand, the increased investments in education lead to an increase in the relative supply of skilled labor, which in turn exerts a downward pressure on the relative wages of skilled labor. On the other hand, the technological changes and the changes in international terms of trade in favor of skill intensive goods, that necessarily accompany the growth process, push upwards the skilled wage rate relative to the unskilled wage rate by creating more demand for skilled labor. In short, relative factor supply and relative product price changes are both important in explaining the change in the relative return to skilled labour, and a general equilibrium model effectively captures the net impact of these factors on the relative wages.

#### **4. Human Resource Development in India**

It's no secret that employees' attitudes about their jobs, their benefits and their employers can range from exuberant to sour. What's less well known and harder to find out is exactly what matter to specific types of employees and how effective various types of HRD policies, practices and workplace characteristic are, in spurring employee productivity and retention. Since human resource development and management is culture sensitive, therefore we shall examine the recent scenario of HRD in India context by having a brief preview of HRD scenario in the global context as discussed below :

More and more employers are assessing the value returned from each dollar spent on employees. They are targeting specific programs and practice to the employees that value them the most and becoming more important than ever. Determining what matter most to employees and aligning expenditures with priorities is a



strategic challenges for HRD function. Employee change continuously due, in part, to change changes in personal preference but also in part to the churn that occurs as employees leave and new ones enter the Organization. However, it is neither cost effective nor practical to satisfy every employee. Therefore, understanding employees and issues they face holds the key to the function to respond quickly.

Of the 21 factor in the job satisfaction survey, HRD professionals and employees differed on the relative importance of all but one. Now professionals and employees differed on the relative importance of all but one. Now the question arises whether HRD professionals are out of touch with the attitudes among their own particular employees. Perhaps, in some Organization, HRD function is very much in tune with what their employees are thinking, while in some others the gap may be larger. Finding out what really matters to employees so that the Organization can maximize its investment in human resource is not an incident undertaking. There are costs involved in doing surveys and in analyzing their results and there are there are additional costs if an Organization does not show that it values the efforts.

Thus, it is that core HRD tools, tactics and programmes remains the same however employee needs and priorities have changed and indeed changing. Employee's values greatly professional developments, job specific training and learning, career development and empowerment more than anything else, except compensation. Employees are increasingly emphasizing opportunities for their development in order to enhance their productive contribution to the Organization and derive satisfaction. Hence, organizations understand, have adopted and implemented HRD programmes and practices as parts of overall business planning. The difference however lies the prioritization of various HRD issues and concerns. Now let us examine the HRD scenario in Indian context. With progressive development in management science and practice, numerous programme, policies and systems has been designed to influence or adapt employee attitude and behavior to create capability and competition and changing environment. Post 1991, India started its phased economics restructuring to provide domestic Organizations the time and competencies to face greater competition.

The liberalization paved the way for integration of India economy with the global economy. It opened many opportunities for growth through the removal of artificial barriers on pricing and output decisions, investments, mergers and acquisition, joint ventures, technology imports, import of foreign capital etc, this enabled Indian Organizations an opportunity to expand, diversify, integrate and globalize more freely.

Liberalization has resulted in sudden and increased levels of competition for Indian Organizations from multinational firms, globalization and internalization of domestic businesses, concerns for total quality management, incentives to export, demographic changes in the employee profile, retaining and redeployment of workforce, focus on performance appraisal and career management. Thus, with liberalization there is an increasing pressure on Organizations in India to change from indigenous, costly, suboptimal levels of technology to performance based, competitive and higher technology provision.

Indian Organizations have to develop the workforce capable of taking up challenges thrown by the new economic environment. To tackle this challenging situation, Indian academics and practitioners have both advocated the adoption of the concept of human resource development. The adoption of professionalized HRD practices in India is recent phenomenon, but has gained momentum in the past ten years. Organizations are now asking their HRD departments for innovative approaches and solutions to improve productivity and quality of work life, while aptly coping with an environment of high uncertainty and intense global competition. This requires Indian Organizations to develop a diverse workforce with competitive skill sets. This is difficult given the diverse socio-economic background of Indian workforce coupled with antagonistic nature of trade union and colonial time cumbersome labor laws.

The challenges for Human Resource Development :

- Changing workforce demographic
- Competing in global economy
- Eliminating the skill gap
- Need for lifelong learning
- Need for organizational learning

The scenario of Human Resource Development in India is characterized by :

- Lack of adoption of innovative HRD practice in unionized Organization due to lack of co-operative attitude among trade unionists.
- Larger Organizations have been able to adopt HRD practice fully due to various costs, resources and expertise involved. Sparrow and Budhwar (1997) in their study of 137 fully owned Indian Organizations with more than 200 employees, located in North, central and Western Indian states within six manufacturing sectors of food processing, plastics, steel, textiles, pharmaceuticals and footwear suggest that they are still not geared to adopt HRD programmes
- Organizations with foreign participation have more extensive and early implementation of HRD programmes and practices than public and family owned Organizations. This is because international consultants propound those HRD strategies such as training, performance appraisal, career management; reward mechanisms, etc, are key to improvement.
- Organizations with stronger leadership have been able to implement HRD programmes and practices. This is because most of the Indian Organizations seem to rhetoric believe such as 'change is constant', 'only quality ensures survival', 'products, not people are paramount' and 'information is everything', etc. the main challenges before the chief executives are seen to be to create flexible systems, to develop a culture of excellence, to facilitate teamwork and empower employees, and to speed up and decentralize data flows. A common feature of strong culture Organization in India has been the influential role of top management has played in development of human resource issues and institutionalizing practices.
- Indian Organization which are trying to be competitive by involving the services of international management consultants, have been found to favour HRD programmes and practices. This is because international consultants propound those HRD strategies such as training,

performance appraisal, career management; reward mechanism, etc are key to improvement.

- Lack of professionally managed HRD departments. This has resulted in lack of a strategic role in terms of ability to identify, develop and manage support resources for adoption of HRD programmes and practices. This is primarily due to non possession of current knowledge base and ability to research new developments via methods of benchmarking and networking.

Hence, it is the institution pressures that have influenced the adoption of HRD programmes and practices in the post liberalization scenario in India. However; the HRD scenario in India is not so grim.

## **5. Causes of Poor Performance of India in the Sphere of HDI**

India has been climbing up the ladder of per capita income while slipping down the slope of social indicators. This time India's HDI ranking shows that it has slipped in comparative terms in ensuring a better quality of life for its people, as in the previous index published for 2007-2008 together it ranked 128, while the position in 2006 was 126. Some of our neighboring countries have done well. Among the neighboring countries, China, Sri Lanka and Bhutan ranked higher than India i.e. Some of the major causes of India's poor performance in HDI are discussed as under :

**Unequal distribution income :** India's record of rapid economic growth in recent decades, particularly in the last ten years or so, has tended to cause some understandable excitement. The living standards of the 'middle classes' (which tends to mean the top 20 per cent or so of the population by income) have improved well beyond what was expected in the previous decades. But the story is more complex for many others such as the rickshaw puller, domestic worker or brick-kiln labourers. For them, and other underprivileged groups, the reform period has not been so exciting. It is not that their lives have not improved at all, but the pace of change has been excruciatingly slow and has barely altered their abysmal living conditions. According to National Sample Survey data average per capita expenditure in rural areas rose at the exceedingly low rate of about 1 per cent per year between 1993-94 and 2009-10, and even in urban areas, average per capita expenditure grew at only 2 per cent

per year in this period. The corresponding growth rates of per capita expenditure for poor households in both areas would have been even lower, since there was growing inequality of per capita expenditures in that period. Similarly, there has been a major slowdown in the growth of real agricultural wages in the post-reform period: from about 5 per cent per year in the 1980s to 2 per cent or so in the 1990s and virtually zero in the early 2000s. It is only after 2006, when the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) came into force that the growth of real agricultural wages picked up again, especially for women. The growth of real wages in other parts of the economy has also been relatively slow, especially for casual or (so-called) 'unskilled' workers. The contrast with China in this respect is really striking. According to comparable international data from the International Labour Organization, real wages in manufacturing in China grew at an astonishing 12 per cent per year or so in the first decade of this century, compared with about 2.5 per cent per year in India.

**High gender discrimination :** India's gender balance is one of the human development indicator that raises concern. Robust economic growth in recent decades has been associated with a significant deterioration in the populations gender balance. The child sex ratio has declined from 964 in 1971 to 927 in 2001. While for biological reasons many countries around the world have a small imbalance in their juvenile sex ratios. But India's imbalance is acute and this definitely lowers the HDI value.

## 6. Conclusion

India specially being a labour abundant country will be able to develop such a strong base without much difficulty. The developed countries are already having highly skilled and educated human resources. But the people of developing countries are not developed and are trying very hard to improve their knowledge and working skills. The Government of developed countries is not so much burdened with the task of providing good quality education and health care to people. The HDI Report, 2013 identifies four specific areas of focus for sustaining development momentum: enhancing equity, including on the gender dimension; enabling greater voice and participation of citizens, including youth; confronting environmental pressures; and managing demographic change.

Economic growth alone does not automatically translate into human development progress. Pro-poor policies and significant investments in people's capabilities-through a focus on education, nutrition and health, and employment skills-can expand access to decent work and provide for sustained progress is must for improving HDI. In strong competitive environment in international trade prevailing today, that country will be a sure winner which has an efficient human resource cultivating new innovative ideas.

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## Marketing and Demand Strategy for Tea Grown in Himachal Pradesh

*Neeraj Kaushal\* and Manoj Sharma\*\**

*The present study was conducted in tea grown areas of Himachal Pradesh with a sample of 400 from four areas Palampur, Baijnath, Dharamshala and Joginder Nager from Kangra and Mandi districts. The present study is an attempt to analyze the marketing and demand strategy for tea growers in Himachal Pradesh. The study reveals that majority of respondents marketed tea leaves and the growers are not getting adequate price all the time instead they sometimes get adequate prices for their made tea. The analysis showed that the main strategy used by the majority of respondents was setting up sales counters at tourist places, setting sales counters in local fairs and online advertisement through social media.*

[**Keywords :** Demand strategy, Made-tea, Marketed tea, Tea-leaves, Marketing professionals]

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

## **1. Introduction**

Tea is the major non-alcoholic beverage in the world. As of now, there are about 160 tea consuming countries in the world. The significance of tea to the human race is not merely one of quenching thirst and meeting the needs of maintaining the health of the body but it is a cultural activity denoting elegance and gentility. It is no wonder that tea is lauded as the most civilized beverage of the country and many people prophesy that the 21st century will be the domain of tea (Sinha, 1999).

India tea is cultivated in 15 states of which Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are the major tea growing states. They account for 98 percent of the total production. Other traditional states where tea is grown are Tripura, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Karnataka. The non-traditional states that have entered the tea map of India include Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Sikkim. Tea farming is one of the significant contributors towards socio-economic well-being of the people of the tea growing areas in the country. It contributes substantially towards the national economy by way of bringing foreign currency besides employment. The Himachal Pradesh Government initiated to start an ambitious plan to double tea production from 10,01,419 kg in 2021-22 to 20,00,000 kg in the next five years. The tea industry has contributed around 20 crores to the economy of Himachal Pradesh. In the last financial year 2020-21, the industry provided direct and indirect employment to about 5,000 people in the state.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Dogra (2018) discovered that the Himachal Pradesh tea sector has been fighting for survival for a very long period. The state's tea production, area, and productivity are all continuing to fall. Due to the low profitability of tea cultivation, the majority of tea planters are tiny tea producers who are avoiding the industry. Numerous tea estates in the state have been abandoned as a result of this. The study also looked at many issues that are impeding the state's tea industry's expansion. These issues are extremely complicated and multi-dimensional, and they can only be resolved gradually and according to a plan. To resurrect the tea business in the region, the Tea Board of India needs to develop a specific action plan. A joint effort by the Tea

Board of India and the government is required to revitalize the tea sector. If the policies are effectively put into practice, the state's tea business has a chance to recover some of its former grandeur.

Manisha et al. (2019) stated that the scent and flavour of Kangra tea are distinct from tea produced in other parts of India because of the peculiar local geographic conditions, which has previously led to international acclaim. The Kangra cooperative tea factory, which once had great production, is now experiencing difficulty with decreased output as a result of a decrease in the area used for tea growing and the number of farmers that supply raw materials. Due to these obstacles, it is currently going through a challenging phase that requires quick attention if tea production and industry development in the Kangra Valley are to proceed. They elaborated that the management, processing, and marketing of tea in India is the issue rather than the tea itself. The study focused on analyzing the main challenges encountered by various Kangra tea value chain players and developing a strategy to restore and revive the tarnished reputation of Kangra tea, particularly with the rising use of geographical indication (GI). Key challenges during the study were cooperative failures, unmarketed GI Labels, high labour costs and labour availability issues, seasonal demand, a lack of market availability, and others.

Awasthi (2020) mentioned that with the goal of "harnessing the export potential of Indian agriculture, through appropriate policy tools, to make India a worldwide force in agriculture, and boost farmer's income", the Agriculture Export Policy (AEP), 2018 was created. The market for Kangra tea has a lot of room to expand. IHBT, Tea Board, and CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishvavidyalaya's technological advancements and extension initiatives would undoubtedly aid in the growth of this underdeveloped sector in Himachal Pradesh.

Sood (2021) in his article "CSK Himachal Pradesh Agriculture University extends tea cultivation to non-traditional regions" elaborated that the CSK Himachal Pradesh Agriculture University has expanded its tea growing, research, and development efforts to non-traditional locations of the state where tea was not previously grown as a result of climate change in the hills. To create live windows and demonstration/exhibition plots, new tea plantations have been constructed at the university's research stations and Krishi Vigyan Kendras in the districts of Malan, Kangra, Bara, Berthin, Sundernagar, Bajaura, and Dhaulakuan. Farmers will become more

aware of and interested in tea cultivation thanks to this academic project. He also mentioned in his article that the new project, according to VC Dr. H. K. Chaudhry, aims to increase awareness of the effects of climate change on tea production and the potential for expanding tea production in non-traditional areas of the state including Kangra, Hamirpur, Bilaspur, Mandi, Kullu, and Sirmaur. 800 additional tea plants have been planted during the first leg. He stated that “It is a follow-up to the vice chancellor’s meeting with representatives of the Tea Board of India, the state tea wing, and university scientists to raise awareness of the heritage Kangra tea, a product designated under the export policy”.

Thakur and Singh (2022) conducted a study on “Kangra Tea - The Tea from Hills of HP” and mentioned that the Kangra teas are well-known throughout the world for their distinctive flavour, fragrances, and presence of bioactive ingredients. This industry continues to be the state’s main driver of economic expansion. Nutraceuticals play a very important function in this context because individuals are increasingly more focused on changing their typical lifestyle to one that is healthier. Additionally, the study must explore the other health advantages of Kangra tea, enabling everyone to comprehend this common beverage from a nutraceutical perspective. This sector will generate significant state revenue in the ensuing decades. Although a lot of studies have been carried out on tea farming, very limited work has been carried out in the area of demand strategy for tea in Himachal Pradesh. The present study is an attempt to bridge this research gap in the field of demand strategy.

### **3. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the research gap in the study area the specific objectives of this paper are as under :

1. To study the variety of marketed tea, price of the tea and availability of marketing professionals for the sale of tea grown in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To analyze the demand creation Strategy adopted by the tea growers of Himachal Pradesh.

### **4. Research Methodology**

There are two districts namely Kangra and Mandi of Himachal Pradesh where tea farming is being performed. Out of these six regions of tea farming in Himachal Pradesh., four areas, namely,

Palampur, Baijnath, Dharamshala and Joginder Nagar, were selected based on the highest number of functioning tea gardens and tea growers. A sample of 400 respondents viz. 205 from Palampur, 21 from Dharamshala, 119 from Baijnath and 55 from Joginder Nagar have been selected.

The present study is based on the data collected through a primary survey using random sampling and the purposive sampling method was used to collect relevant first-hand data. First, the study areas were selected thereafter, a sample of tea growers were selected to obtain their opinion on different aspects related to tea farming.

## 5. Results and Discussion

Selling is the process of transforming the goods into money. Whereas marketing is serving and satisfying the needs of the customer. The tea is produced putting in mind the taste and preference of the customer. Some customers like black tea, some like green tea and others like herbal tea. So, selling and marketing depend on the choice of customers. Here, the opinion of sampled tea growers has been collected on different aspects related to the selling and marketing of tea. The collected data have been discussed and analyzed as under :

### 5.1 Variety of Marketed Tea

The tea growers are selling either tea leaves or made tea. The data about the type of products sold by the tea growers has been collected and presented in the following table :

**Table-1: Produce sold by Tea Growers**

Selling	Baijnath	Dharamshala	Joginder Nagar	Palampur	Total
Tea leaves	83 (69.75)	15 (71.43)	50 (90.91)	92 (44.88)	240 (60.00)
Made tea	17 (14.29)	1 (4.76)	1 (1.82)	61 (29.76)	80 (20.00)
Both	19 (15.96)	5 (23.81)	4 (7.27)	52 (25.37)	80 (20.00)
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>21</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>55</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>205</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>400</b> <b>(100)</b>

**Note :** Figures in parenthesis represent percentage.

**Source :** Field Study.



Data contained in Table-1 show that out of the total respondents, 60.00 per cent of respondents were selling tea leaves, 20.00 per cent were selling made tea and 20.00 per cent were selling both tea leaves and made tea. Area-wise data reveal that the highest percentage of those respondents who were selling tea leaves was in Joginder Nagar (90.91 per cent) followed by Dharamshala (71.43 per cent). Whereas the highest percentage of those respondents who were selling made tea was in Palampur (29.76 per cent) which is followed by Baijnath (14.29 per cent). Tea growers in Dharamshala and Joginder Nagar only one respondent was making tea. Hence, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents have marketed tea leaves.

## 5.2 Adequate Price for the Produce

The price of the product plays an important role in generating profit for the producer. Adequate prices can provide financial stability and lead to income generation and savings that resulted in capital formation. In tea farming, the price of the product is also very important. If the tea growers do not get an adequate price for their produce, then they will get frustrated and start looking towards other works for their livelihood. This situation will be very disappointing for the future of tea cultivation. Therefore, tea producers must get such a price for their product, which can meet its production cost and also provide profit. To know whether the tea growers were getting adequate prices for their product or not, the opinion of the sampled respondents have been collected and enumerated in Tables-2 (a) and 2 (b) on next page.

Table-2 (a) depicts the opinion of respondents about the adequate price of selling tea leaves. Data show that out of the total respondents, 51.88 per cent of respondents reported that they were sometimes getting adequate prices for their produce (tea leaves). While 45.00 per cent of respondents didn't get adequate price. The percentage of those who always got adequate price was 3.13 per cent. The majority of respondents in Baijnath (49.02 per cent), Dharamshala (60.00 per cent) and Palampur (59.72 per cent) believed that they sometimes get an adequate price on selling tea leaves. Whereas in Joginder Nagar majority of respondents (66.67 per cent) didn't get adequate prices. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  (17.091) respondents' opinion is greater than the critical value (12.592) at 5 per cent level of significance. It rejects that there is a significant difference in the opinion of respondents and accepts that area-wise the opinion of

respondents is significantly different. Therefore, it can be said that tea growers are not getting adequate prices all the time, instead they sometimes get adequate prices for their product (Tea Leaves).

**Table-2 (a) : Adequate Price for selling Tea leaves**

Adequate price	Baijnath	Dharam-shala	Joginder Nagar	Palampur	Total
Yes, always	4 (3.92)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	6 (4.17)	10 (3.13)
Yes, sometimes	50 (49.02)	12 (60.00)	18 (33.33)	86 (59.72)	166 (51.88)
Not at all	48 (47.06)	8 (40.00)	36 (66.67)	52 (36.11)	144 (45.00)
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>20</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>54</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>144</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>320</b> <b>(100)</b>
$\chi^2=17.091; df=6; \chi^2_{crit.}= 12.592; p<0.05$					

**Note :** i) Figures in parenthesis represent percentage.

ii)  $\chi^2$  denotes Chi-square;  $\chi^2_{crit.}$  denotes the Critical value of Chi-square.  
 $df$  denotes the degree of freedom.

**Source :** Field Survey.

**Table-2 (b) : Adequate Price of Made Tea**

Adequate price	Baijnath	Dharam-shala	Joginder Nagar	Palampur	Total
Yes, always	0 (0.00)	1 (16.67)	2 (40.00)	13 (11.50)	16(10.00)
Yes, sometimes	36 (100)	5 (83.33)	3 (60.00)	100 (88.50)	144 (90.00)
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>113</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>160</b> <b>(100)</b>
$\chi^2=9.580; df=6; \chi^2_{crit.}= 7.815; p<0.05$					

**Note :** i) Figures in parenthesis represent percentage.

ii)  $\chi^2$  denotes Chi-square;  $\chi^2_{crit.}$  denotes the Critical value of Chi-square.  
 $df$  denotes the degree of freedom.

**Source :** Field Survey.

The opinion of respondents about getting adequate prices on selling made tea have been collected and presented in Table-2 (b). Regarding adequate price on selling made tea, the data have been collected from those respondents who were selling made tea. Data show that the majority of respondents (90.00 per cent) believed that

they sometimes got adequate price for their produce. While 10.00 per cent of respondents reported that they always got adequate prices. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  (9.580) respondents' opinion is greater than the critical value (7.815) at 5 per cent level of significance. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the opinion of sampled respondents.

Therefore, it can be said that tea growers are not getting adequate price all the time, instead they sometimes get adequate prices for their product (made tea).

### 5-3 Availability of Marketing Professionals

The data on the availability of skilled professionals for doing the activities that influence the selling and marketing of tea have been collected and enumerated in the following table :

**Table-3 : Availability of Marketing Professional for Tea**

	Baijnath	Dharamshala	Joginder Nagar	Palampur	Total
<b>Sorting and Grading</b>					
Yes	24 (20.17)	3 (14.29)	2 (3.64)	85 (41.46)	114 (28.50)
No	95 (79.83)	18 (85.71)	53 (96.36)	120 (58.54)	286 (71.50)
<b>Total</b>	<b>119 (100)</b>	<b>21 (100)</b>	<b>55 (100)</b>	<b>205 (100)</b>	<b>400 (100)</b>
<b>Packaging</b>					
Yes	23 (19.33)	3 (14.29)	2 (3.64)	80 (39.02)	108 (27.00)
No	96 (80.67)	18 (85.71)	53 (96.36)	125 (60.98)	292 (73.00)
<b>Total</b>	<b>119 (100)</b>	<b>21 (100)</b>	<b>55 (100)</b>	<b>205 (100)</b>	<b>400 (100)</b>

**Note :** Figures in parenthesis represent percentage.

**Source :** Field Survey.

The sorting and grading are essential to get good prices for the tea. it is the process of classifying tea according to the size of the tea particles. This process required skilled labour. In this regard, the data reveal that the majority of respondents in Joginder Nagar (96.36 per cent), Dharamshala (85.71 per cent), Baijnath (79.83 per cent) and

Palampur (58.54 per cent) reported that there was a lack of skilled labour. About packaging, the data reveal the same fact. The majority of respondents in all the areas reported that there is a lack of skilled labour. Out of the total respondents, 85.71 per cent in Dharamshala, 96.36 per cent in Joginder Nagar, 80.67 per cent in Baijnath, 60.98 per cent in Palampur and 73.00 per cent of respondents overall held this view. Therefore, based on the above analysis it can be inferred tea making, sorting, grading and packaging are the important activity that affects the selling and marketing of tea and needs a skillful workforce. But the analysis reveals that there is a lack of such a workforce in the study area.

#### 5.4 Strategy for Demand Creation

Demand creation is a marketing process focusing on the promotion of goods and services. It creates awareness among those who do not know the product. Concerning tea, tea growers and tea cooperatives are adopting various kinds of demand-creation strategy. Therefore, the opinion of sampled respondents has been collected on different strategies used by the tea growers and tea cooperatives in the state. The collected information has been presented in Table-4.

**Table-4 : Strategy adopted by Tea Growers for Demand Creation**

Strategy	Baijnath		
	Yes	No	Total
e-Commerce	65 (54.62)	54 (45.38)	119 (100)
Sales counter at Tourist places	89 (74.79)	30 (25.21)	119 (100)
Sales counter in local fairs	119 (100)	0 (0.00)	119 (100)
Exhibition stalls	105 (88.24)	14 (11.76)	119 (100.00)
Online Advertisement (social media)	85(71.43)	34(28.57)	119(100)
Strategy	Dharamshala		
	Yes	No	Total
e-Commerce	8 (38.10)	13 (61.90)	21 (100.00)

Sales counter at Tourist places	21 (100)	0 (0.00)	21 (100)
Sales counter in local fairs	16 (76.19)	5 (23.81)	21 (100.00)
Exhibition stalls	7 (33.33)	14 (66.67)	21 (100.00)
Online Advertisement (social media)	8 (38.10)	13 (61.90)	21 (100)
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Joginder Nagar</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
e-Commerce	7 (12.73)	48 (87.27)	55 (100)
Sales counter at Tourist places	51 (92.73)	4 (7.27)	55 (100)
Sales counter in local fairs	35 (63.64)	20 (36.36)	55 (100)
Exhibition stalls	15 (27.27)	40 (72.73)	55 (100)
Online Advertisement (social media)	23(41.82)	32(58.18)	55(100)
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Palampur</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
e-Commerce	75 (36.59)	130 (63.41)	205 (100)
Sales counter at Tourist places	103 (50.24)	102 (49.76)	205 (100)
Sales counter in local fairs	135 (65.85)	70 (34.15)	205 (100)
Exhibition stalls	15 (7.32)	190 (92.68)	205 (100)
Online Advertisement (social media)	98 (47.80)	107 (52.20)	205 (100)
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Total</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
e-Commerce	155 (38.75)	245 (61.25)	400 (100)
Sales counter at Tourist places	264 (66.00)	136 (34.00)	400 (100)

Sales counter in local fairs	305 (76.25)	95 (23.75)	400 (100)
Exhibition stalls	142 (35.50)	258 (64.50)	400 (100)
Online Advertisement (social media)	214 (53.50)	186 (46.50)	400(100)

**Note :** Figures in parenthesis represent percentage.

**Source :** Field Survey.

The data enumerate the opinion of sampled respondents about the strategy adopted by the tea growers for demand creation. The data show that out of the total respondents, 61.25 per cent of respondents did not use e-commerce as a strategy for demand creation, while 38.75 per cent of respondents were using e-commerce for demand creation. Area-wise data also reveal the same fact. The highest percentage of respondents who did not use e-commerce as a strategy for demand creation was in Joginder (87.27 per cent) followed by Palampur (63.41 per cent). While the percentage of those who use it was found highest in Baijnath (54.62 per cent) and lowest in Joginder Nagar (12.73 per cent). The tea growers who use e-commerce for the creation of demand reported that they sell their tea through different internet platforms, such as Amazon and Flipkart. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of tea growers did not use e-commerce as a strategy for demand creation.

Regarding sales counters at tourist places, the data reveal that in Dharamshala, a hundred percent of respondents were using this, followed by the respondents from Joginder Nagar (92.73 per cent) and Baijnath (74.79 per cent). Whereas in Palampur about 50 per cent of respondents were using this for demand creation. Out of the total respondents, 66.00 per cent of respondents were establishing sales counters at tourist places to sell their tea and create demand.

The data concerning sales counters in local fairs show that in Baijnath hundred percent, in Dharamshala 76.19 per cent, in Joginder Nagar 63.64 per cent, in Palampur 65.85 per cent and 76.25 per cent of respondents overall reported that they set up sales counter in local fairs for the promotion and sale of tea. Hence, it can be inferred that the tea growers were using this strategy for demand creation in the state.

Regarding exhibition stalls, the data shows that the majority of respondents (64.50 per cent) reported that they did not go and participate in the exhibition organized on different occasions and



events. The area-wise data reveal that the majority of respondents in Baijnath (88.24 per cent) were using it, while the majority of respondents in Dharamshala (66.67 per cent), Joginder Nagar (72.73 per cent) and Palampur (92.68 per cent) reported that they did not go and participate in such exhibitions.

Concerning online advertisement through social media, the data depict that the highest percentage of those who were using these social media as a strategy for demand creation was in Baijnath (71.23 per cent) followed by Palampur (47.80 per cent). On the other hand, the percentage of those who did not use this was highest in Dharamshala (61.90 per cent) followed by Joginder Nagar (58.18 per cent). Overall, out of the total respondents, 53.50 per cent of respondents were using and 46.50 per cent of respondents were not using social media as a strategy for demand creation.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the tea growers were using different kinds of marketing strategies for demand creation in the state. The main strategy used by the majority of respondents was setting up sales counters at tourist places, setting sales counters in local fairs and online advertisement through social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, etc.

## 6. Conclusion and Suggestions

The study of marketing and demand strategy for tea grown in Himachal Pradesh reveals that the marketing and demand strategy for tea growers in Himachal Pradesh. It may be concluded that majority of respondents marketed tea leaves and the growers are not getting adequate price all the time instead they sometimes get adequate prices for their made tea. . It was observed during field visit that the main strategy used by the majority of respondents was setting up sales counters at tourist places, setting sales counters in local fairs and online advertisement through social media.

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## Enhancing Competency Indicators of Media Literacy in the Digital Era

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*With innovations of communication and information technology, followed by an inevitable trend of digital convergence, the definition and types of “media” vary from time to time. Media literacy therefore may have changed its core meaning and theoretical implications, and have been renamed “information literacy”, “digital literacy”, “information technology literacy”, “multimedia literacy”, or “media information literacy”, collectively referred to as “new literacies”, or “multiliteracies”, etc. First, this study is to investigate whether the diversification of media has changed the core meaning and competency of media literacy, and the connotation of media literacy should advance with the times and may be revised. Based on this main inquiry, this study employs document analysis and literature review, as well as adopts the Delphi method to organize a group of college educators teaching media literacy or information literacy for the research purpose of enhancing competency indicators of media literacy in a digital era. This study then conducts a questionnaire survey for college students to discover how they regard*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*the importance of “new” competency of media literacy in a digital era. In addition, this study is about to explore the differences between educators and students regarding the importance of those competencies and investigates students’ interests on various competencies at different learning stages. Finally, the study intends to propose sound strategies for promoting “new” media literacy education in colleges in the end.*

[**Keywords** : Media literacy, Digital literacy, Media literacy education, Media education, Competency indicator]

## **1. Significance of Problem**

Since 1970s, media literacy education has been considered as one of the civil rights in a civil society to practice democratic rights and civil duties. It is associated with democratic development (Hobbs and Jensen, 2009). The technological advancements in recent years have greatly influenced people’s lives, and education is no exception (Froehlich and Froehlich, 2013). In the digital era, media that were used to obtain, process and convey information in the past, have been transformed from linear communication to hyperlink. Hence, it is necessary to develop competency to process media and information, meaning people must possess literacy to process media and information in order to become competent citizens in the digital society (Simsek and Simsek, 2013). In short, media literacy education in the digital era helps people to practice digital citizenship, thereby constructing an important base of a digital society. This suggests that it is important to cultivate competency of media literacy in the digital era.

With the development of communication technology and trend of digital convergence, new media platforms continuously introduce new ideas. “Media” should thus be re-defined. In the past, mass media referred to newspapers, magazines, radio and TV. In the 21st century, it further includes internet. However, the definitions of the above five media are lacking. With the emergency of innovative communications services such as telecommunication platforms, social media, video games or webcasting, all mobile and internet carriers possess the functions of media. Definition of media thus becomes broader (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, and Cammack, 2004). Hence, with the changeable forms of media in times, knowledge of understanding media becomes more significant. Among others, the key is media literacy education. Marshall McLuhan stated that media are the extension of people, whose knowledge of the world should

start from media and be accomplished by media education. In other words, when the forms of media become diverse, connotation of media literacy education to approach media should also be changed in order to meet the trend of time. Therefore, scholars argued that traditional media literacy education can no longer be applied to digital era of multiple media (Sheridan and Rowsell, 2010; Masterman, 1997; Lankshear and Knobel, 2003).

Previous studies have shown that digital media development leads to new issues that differ from traditional media or results in new comprehension concept and model. It further requires construction of new core competency (Buckingham, 2003; 2006). Researches have shown that if people obtain information from TV, the internet, or even social media, instead of books or newspapers, as well as when knowledge acquisition from media becomes knowledge processing through media, cultivation of media literacy competency and education content should be changed (Thoman and Jolls, 2004; Walsh, without date; Westby, 2010). Thus, contents and issues of media literacy education should certainly be re-defined and examined. Media literacy education in the digital era should develop more diverse content and issues in order to enhance core competency.

Elizabeth Thoman, the founder of the Center for Media Literacy of U.S. emphasized that in this changeable world, media literacy should be the priority of education implemented in countries around the world. With constant progress of global media and technology, multimedia environment has changed people's comprehension of the world, and it also challenges the fundamental idea of education. Therefore, when people enter the 21st century, countries around the world should treat media literacy as the priority of educational objective, in order to cultivate their citizens' new media literacy competency (Thoman and Jolls, 2004).

According to possible evolution of core implication and theoretical concept of media literacy education and modification, as well as the construction of related core competency indicators, this study aims to explore new implications of media literacy in the digital era and establish media literacy competency indicators that meet the current demands. In addition, this study intends to conduct a questionnaire survey on university students to evaluate the importance of competency indicators of media literacy. Finally, it

discusses the importance levels of new competency indicators based on the survey results.

## **2. Literature Review**

Media literacy refers to the competency to access, comprehend and produce media messages in different kinds of situations; in other words, media literacy can be conceived as audiences' abilities to access, analyze, evaluate and employ various types of media to convey information (Aufderheide, 1993). Moreover, media literacy can also be the capacity to operate, produce meaning of, organize and properly use mass media. It is one of the essential literacies possessed by modern citizens (Lloyd-Kolkin and Tyner, 1991; Hart, 1991). According to definition proposed in the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy held in the U.S. in 1992, media literacy means that audiences can recognize impact of media, understand message transmission process of mass media, develop strategy to analyze and discuss media messages, and comprehend media information as the base to absorb social culture and daily affairs. Finally, they can enjoy, understand and appreciate media content and be able to access media and express their opinions on quasi-public issues (Aufderheide, 1993; Silverblatt, 1995).

With the development of digital communication technology, some scholars refer to media literacy as digital literacy. For instance, Gilster (1997) argued that there are various literacies related to digital technology, including information collection, evaluation and processing competency and non-linear information searching ability. Since new literacy is various and complicated, he suggested that it can be called "digital literacies" in plural. Lankshear and Knobel (2003; 2012) also proposed terms of "information literacy", "computer literacy", "media literacy", "communication literacy", "visual literacy" and "technology literacy" to refer to "digital literacy", even including "new literacies". However, they referred to "digital literacy" as singular.

As mentioned above, educational implication and competency indicators of media literacy are regulated and modified according to new media development in the digital era. That is to say, media literacy in digital era should establish new forms of cultural and communicative competence in order to respond to the change (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000). Previous studies emphasized that "literacy"



refers to “competency” or “skill”, thus, cultivation of related skills and competency is critical (Buckingham, 2006). Other studies argued that competency is the combination of knowledge, skill and attitude. It is integrated application of knowledge, skill, value, experience, contact and external knowledge resources, and tools to solve problems, present activities or cope with situations (Friesen and Anderson, 2004; Sandberg, 2000). Based on the research purposes, this study defines competency as the important knowledge, ability, action and attitude acquired by students in the course of media literacy. Through the connection between the competence and objectives of media literacy education, it intends to construct new competency indicators of media literacy. Hence, literacy and competency of media literacy in this study have consistent meanings, and refer to knowledge, attitude and action that can be taught, learned and evaluated.

According to the White Paper of Media Literacy Education Policy released by Taiwan’s Ministry of Education in 2002, media literacy means to cultivate the following basic abilities when people perceive media information: (1) to understand media content: 1-1) to understand representation system (media language and rules) of different media; 1-2) to understand types of media and meaning produced by narratives; 1-3) to understand and apply media producing skill and technique; 1-4) to understand connection between technology and media text; (2) to comprehend media representation: 2-1) to recognize relationship between stereotype and power hierarchy of age, gender, race, occupation, class, sexual orientation in media content; 2-2) to compare relationship between media content and situations, characters and events in real life and social reality; 2-3) to interpret meaning and ideology implied in media representation; (3) to reflect on meaning of audience: 3-1) to reflect on individuals’ media behavior; 3-2) to recognize negotiation of meaning between individuals and texts; 3-3) to recognize concept of “audience” in commercial meaning of text; 3-4) to learn main concept of advertising industry: share/rating and social and cultural meanings of advertising; (4) to analyze media organizations: 4-1) to recognize how gate-keeping process of media organizations influences production of texts: 4-2) to review how ownership of media organizations influences selection and combination of texts: 4-3) to recognize difference between public media and commercial media; 4-4) to review impact of information privatization; and (5) to

influence and access of media: 5-1) to recognize meaning of media citizenship; 5-2) practice of access and use of media; 5-3) to distinguish passive media consumers and active media audiences, 5-4) claim of personal portrait right and privacy: 5-5) claim of liberation of public information.

Construction and measurement of competency indicators are important tasks to examine the outcome of media literacy education (Arke and Primack, 2009). The competency indicators of media literacy proposed by Ministry of Education could be dated to ten years ago, and were based on the curriculum of National Compulsory Education, covering junior high and elementary school students. After investigating media literacy and competency of university students, Arke and Primack (2009) argued that although it is difficult to construct media literacy competency indicators, in new the generation of web 2.0, competency indicators to measure media literacy must be updated with the development of new digital media in order to enhance effectiveness and priority of competency indicators. Thus, this study establishes appropriate competency indicators for media literacy education in the digital era.

As there is no academic consensus on the most suitable term for the media literacy in digital era presently, this study uses the term "new media literacy", where "new" refers to media literacy, which differs from new literacies.

### **3. Research Questions and Methods**

The research questions of this study are as follows :

1. What are core competency indicators of new media literacy?
2. How do teachers and students evaluate importance of new media literacy competency indicators?
3. What is the difference between teachers' and students' evaluation of new media literacy competency indicators?

This study conducted two research methods: one is the Delphi method and the other is questionnaire survey. The Delphi method, in essence, is to use the collective opinions of experts to forecast the uncertain event. The process is based on feedback by conducting several rounds of questionnaire in order to make breakthrough to develop goals and predict the future. Now, it has been widely used in researches of policy analysis (Carley, 1986; Hsia, 1999). Simply speaking, the Delphi method is a technique that adopts a series of

(usually four) group questionnaires to obtain people's common views on a topic (Xie, 1978). For a further explanation, for the desired study topic, the Delphi method is used to conduct repeated many times of questionnaire to related scholars, experts and practitioners concerned. Through brainstorming of related personnel in various fields, they develop or coordinate together to a consistency of the views or opinions. In this process, the changes of each survey results will be presented to group members who will participate in its next survey. During the multi-round survey process, experts are allowed to modify or adjust their opinions to get closer to the views of group reaction to obtain the final consensus. It is expected to eventually make breakthroughs for planning goals and the future prediction (Linstone and Turoff, 1975; Carley, 1986; Hsia, 1999; Chou, 1995). Overall, the Delphi method combines the advantages of traditional meetings and questionnaires, and it has anonymity of survey and brainstorming obtainable effects in meetings (Xie, 1978).

With respect to the Delphi group members, the major chosen population is found out from curriculums of study year from 2011 to 2013 on the website of the Ministry of Education, a total of 447 teachers, including 111 professors or teachers of teaching media literacy and 336 teachers of information literacy. Forty Delphi experts are estimated to be selected, and the ratio of teachers to Delphi experts is 11.175 to 1. Hence, the study needs to select 10 experts in media literacy field and 30 experts in information literacy field to build the Delphi group.

Among Delphi sampling teachers on the contact list in study years from 2011 to 2013, 10 out of 111 teachers in media literacy field are chosen to become our Delphi experts (the ratio is one Delphi experts to 11.1 teachers). On the other hand, 31 out of 336 teachers in information literacy field are chosen to become our Delphi experts. After participating invitation, two teachers can't be contacted with continuously. Hence, 29 teachers who have teaching experience in media literacy or information literacy curriculums participate in the Delphi survey group in the end.

The study adopted Google online questionnaire to acquire expert's opinions from the Delphi group. The first round questionnaire was sent out on May 31, 2015, but there were no replies from two group members, so the study finally decided to give up above two samples. As a result, there were total 27 people in the Delphi group. In addition, the result of first round questionnaire

suggest that competency indicators should be added two items: to comprehend, think and create visual image, and to recognize information security and privacy. The total indicators for the second round questionnaire are 27. Three rounds of Delphi questionnaire collection were completed on June, 30th, 2015.

By questionnaire survey, this study collected and explored views of university students in Taiwan toward competence for new media literacy. First, according to geographic areas, types of school, and attribute of courses, it conducted sampling. Subsequently, at the beginning and final of the fall semester of 2015, this study conducted two questionnaire surveys in the selected universities, and invited students who take either course of media literacy or information literacy to evaluate importance of competency indicators and their learning intention. In the survey, the students were asked to treat the course of “new media literacy” as an example to express their views toward new media literacy competency indicators. A total of 1195 students, from 11 universities and 13 courses, responded. The valid samples are shown below:

**Table-1 : Statistics of Number of Valid Questionnaires Retrieved**

	Media literacy	Information literacy	Total
Beginning of semester	393	246	639
Final of semester	329	227	556
<b>Total</b>	<b>722</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>1195</b>

## 4. Research Findings

This section first discusses new media literacy competency indicators constructed, and then analyzes teachers’ and students’ evaluation of importance of competency indicators and their differences in the importance of indicators.

### 4.1 New Media Literacy Competency Indicators and Importance Evaluation

First, using various academic databases on the internet, this study screened 364 journal articles or books by 26 keywords, such as digital literacy. After review and classification of 142 competency indicators, this study found some indicators to be too similar. By further systematization, it obtained 35 competency indicators. With

22 competency indicators listed in the Project of Media Literacy Education of the Ministry of Education in 2002, there were a total of 57 indicators. Considering indicators with overlapping concepts, this study conducted the second round of reorganization and acquired 43 competency indicators. According to literature findings, it classified competency into three categories: concept (knowledge), skill (technique) and application (action). Concept refers to basic knowledge of new media literacy; skill is based on audiences' required techniques to process digital information and media content; application means the action to accomplish the goals by social practice. According to three competency categories, this study reorganized the indicators into 31 indexes.

This study purposely included the insight of domestic academia on these competency indicators in order to more precisely respond to findings of related literatures. This study invited five experts and scholars from the fields of media, information and communications technology to participate in focus group, and discuss priority of 31 competency indicators. Experts suggested integrating the indicators into 25 which were items of the first-round questionnaire of Delphi group. After retrieving questionnaires of the first round, based on suggestion of Delphi group, this study added two indicators : "to comprehend, think and create visual image" and "to learn information security and privacy". There were thus 27 competency indicators as items of the second and third rounds of questionnaire.

After this study accomplished three rounds of Delphi group survey, ranking of importance of new media literacy competency indicators is shown below (a high number indicates higher importance): 1) to recognize meanings conveyed by media content and the underlying ideology (4.96); 2) to reflect on individuals' media use behavior (4.96); 3) to recognize the essence of information and technology as learning tool (4.93); 4) to collect and precisely evaluate media content (4.93); 5) to communicate with others and society by communications technology (4.89); 6) to recognize multi-culture and stereotype constructed by media (4.85); 7) to use and reflect on digital technology to solve problems (4.85); 8) to recognize legal issues regarding information and society (4.85); 9) to recognize information security and privacy (4.81); 10) to learn how media messages are produced and constructed (4.78); 11) social participation by media resources (4.74); 12) practice of media supervision (4.74); 13) to recognize duality of public and commercial characteristics of media

(4.67); 14) practice of civil communication right and media access right (4.67); 15) to distinguish differences between real world and virtual space (4.59); 16) to criticize media content (4.59); 17) to learn to share information with others (4.52); 18) to recognize media ethics and laws (4.44); 19) to distinguish media characteristics of different types of technology (4.33); 20) to recognize media ownership and its impact (4.30); 21) to integrate media information and produce the content (4.26); 22) to learn media organization and operation (4.19); 23) to learn to diffuse self-produced media content (4.19); 24) to recognize media policy and regulation (4.11): 25) to analyze and integrate great amount of data (4.07); 26) to skillfully use computer software and hardware (3.96); 27) to comprehend, think and create visual image (3.85). Regarding some items, the scores are the same in 29 experts' responses in 3 rounds of questionnaire. For instance, the most important 4 indicators: 6, 14, 3, and 11. The first two items are the first (4.96) and the latter two are the third (4.93). The following indicators also show the same scores. Interestingly, Indicator 3 is upgraded from No. 13 to No.3. However, Indicator 24 becomes No.13 from No. 4. Investigation result on the importance of competency indicators in three rounds of evaluation of Delphi group is shown below :

**Table-2 : The Results of three rounds of Delphi Method Survey**

Item	Competency Indicator	Third Round	Second Round	First Round
6	To recognize meanings conveyed by media content and the underlying ideology	4.96 (1)	4.89 (1)	4.78 (1)
14	To reflect on individuals' media use behavior	4.96 (1)	4.81 (2)	4.70 (2)
3	To recognize the essence of information and technology as learning tool	4.93 (3)	4.67 (6)	4.41 (13)
11	To collect and precisely evaluate media content	4.93 (3)	4.78 (4)	4.70 (2)
19	To communicate with others and society by communications technology	4.89 (5)	4.78 (4)	4.52 (9)
7	To recognize multi-culture and stereotype constructed by media	4.85 (5)	4.67 (6)	4.63 (4)



18	To use and reflect on digital technology to solve problems	4.85 (5)	4.81 (2)	4.63 (4)
21	To recognize legal issues regarding information and society	4.85 (5)	4.63 (11)	4.52 (9)
27	To recognize information security and privacy	4.81 (9)	4.63 (11)	
5	To learn how media messages are produced and constructed	4.78 (10)	4.63 (11)	4.56 (7)
20	Social participation by media resources	4.74 (11)	4.67 (6)	4.44 (12)
25	Practice of media supervision	4.74 (11)	4.67 (6)	4.56 (7)
1	To recognize duality of public and commercial characteristics of media	4.67 (13)	4.63 (11)	4.52 (9)
24	Practice of civil communication right and media access right	4.67 (13)	4.67 (6)	4.63 (4)
9	To distinguish differences between real world and virtual space	4.59 (15)	4.41 (17)	4.15 (20)
13	To criticize media content	4.59 (15)	4.52 (15)	4.37 (14)
15	To learn to share information with others	4.52 (17)	4.44 (16)	4.15 (20)
23	To recognize media ethics and laws	4.44 (18)	4.33 (18)	4.30 (16)
8	To distinguish media characteristics of different types of technology	4.33 (19)	4.30 (19)	4.33 (15)
4	To recognize media ownership and its impact	4.30 (20)	4.07 (23)	4.22 (18)
16	To integrate media information and produce the content	4.26 (21)	4.15 (20)	4.19 (19)
2	To learn media organization and operation	4.19 (22)	4.11 (21)	4.04 (23)

17	To learn to diffuse self-produced media content	4.19 (22)	4.11 (21)	4.26 (17)
22	To recognize media policy and regulation	4.11 (24)	3.96 (25)	4.11 (22)
12	To analyze and integrate great amount of data	4.07 (25)	4.04 (24)	4.04 (23)
10	To skillfully use computer software and hardware	3.96 (26)	3.67 (27)	3.67 (25)
26	To comprehend, think and create visual image	3.85 (27)	3.74 (26)	

PS : ( ) means rankings in each round

#### 4.2 Comparison between Students' and Teachers' Evaluation of Importance of Competency Indicators

This section discusses students' evaluation results regarding the importance of competency indicators and the differences with teachers' evaluation. First, according to survey result on university students, the importance ranking of competency indicators is shown as follows: 1) to recognize information security and privacy (4.39); 2) practice of civil communication right and media access right (4.28); 3) to collect and precisely evaluate media content (4.27); 4) to use and reflect on digital technology to solve problems (4.27); 5) to recognize meanings conveyed by media content and the underlying ideology (4.24); 6) to communicate with others and society by communications technology (4.24); 7) to distinguish differences between real world and virtual space (4.24); 8) to recognize media ownership and its impact (4.23); 9) to reflect on individuals' media use behavior (4.22); 10) to recognize the essence of information and technology as learning tool (4.21); 11) social participation by media resources (4.2); 12) to recognize duality of public and commercial characteristics of media (4.2); 13) practice of media supervision (4.19); 14) to recognize media ethics and laws (4.18); 15) to learn to diffuse self-produced media content (4.17); 16) to recognize legal issues regarding information and society (4.16); 17) to learn to share information with others (4.16); 18) to learn how media information is produced and constructed (4.16); 19) to analyze and integrate great amount of data (4.16); 20) to integrate media information and produce content (4.15); 21) to learn media organization and operation (4.13); 22) to recognize multi-culture and stereotype constructed by media (4.13); 23) to

skillfully use computer software and hardware (4.13); 24) to distinguish media characteristics of different types of technology (4.1); 25) to criticize media content (4.06); 26) to learn media policy and regulation (4.04); 27) to comprehend, think and create visual images (4.02). The results showed that the importance ranking of the indicators with keywords such as information, digital and technology is high, while that of indicators with keyword of media is relatively low. The cause of the phenomenon can be further explored.

Secondly, after comparing students' and teachers' evaluation result, this study realizes that students and teachers are extremely different on Indicator 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25 and 27 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Regarding Indicator 18 and 27, they are more important for students than teachers. As to Indicator 11, 19 and 20, they are equally important for teachers and students. As to the rest indicators, they are more important for teachers than students. In addition, students and teachers have common consensus on Indicator 2, 4, 8, 10, 12, 16, 17, 22 and 26. It means that for them, these indicators are important in course of new media literacy. Comparison result between teachers and students is shown as follows :

**Table-3 : Comparison between Students' and Teachers' Evaluation**

Item	Competency Indicator	Student	Teacher	T
1	To recognize duality of public and commercial characteristics of media	4.20 (11)	4.67 (13)	-2.854**
2	To learn media organization and operation	4.13 (21)	4.19 (22)	-0.316
3	To recognize the essence of information & technology as learning tool	4.21 (10)	4.93 (3)	-11.099***
4	To recognize media ownership and its impact	4.23 (8)	4.30 (20)	-0.425
5	To learn how media messages are produced and constructed	4.16 (16)	4.78 (10)	-5.941***
6	To recognize meanings conveyed by media content and the underlying ideology	4.24 (5)	4.96 (1)	-13.668***
7	To recognize multi-culture and stereotype constructed by media	4.13 (21)	4.85 (6)	-9.019***

8	To distinguish media characteristics of different types of technology	4.10 (24)	4.33 (19)	-2.025
9	To distinguish differences between real world and virtual space	4.24 (5)	4.59 (15)	-2.766**
10	To skillfully use computer software and hardware	4.13 (21)	3.96 (26)	1.143
11	To collect and precisely evaluate media content	4.27 (3)	4.93 (3)	-10.26***
12	To analyze and integrate great amount of data	4.16 (16)	4.07 (25)	0.608
13	To criticize media content	4.06 (25)	4.59 (15)	-5.041***
14	To reflect on individuals' media use behavior	4.22 (9)	4.96 (1)	13.937***
15	To learn to share information with others	4.16 (16)	4.52 (17)	-3.384**
16	To integrate media information and produce the content	4.15 (20)	4.26 (21)	-0.945
17	To learn to diffuse self-produced media content	4.17 (15)	4.19 (22)	-0.158
18	To use and reflect on digital technology to solve problems	4.27 (3)	4.85 (6)	-7.415***
19	To communicate with others and society by communications technology	4.24 (5)	4.89 (5)	-8.95***
20	Social participation by media resources	4.20 (11)	4.74 (11)	-5.754***
21	To recognize legal issues regarding information and society	4.16 (16)	4.85 (6)	-8.605***
22	To recognize media policy and regulation	4.04 (26)	4.11 (24)	-0.590
23	To recognize media ethics and laws	4.18(14)	4.44(18)	-2.551*
24	Practice of civil communication right and media access right	4.28(2)	4.67(13)	-3.45**

25	Practice of media supervision	4.19(13)	4.74(11)	-5.845***
26	To comprehend, think and create visual image	4.02(27)	3.85(27)	1.226
27	To recognize information security and privacy	4.39(1)	4.82(9)	-4.99***

PS : ( ) means rankings

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

Media in traditional media literacy refer to newspapers, magazines, radio and TV. However, when internet and various information technology and telecommunication platforms become media for people to obtain information, media in media literacy refer to multiple concepts. Therefore, competency cultivated by media literacy education in the digital era should be adjusted or intensified. In addition, competency indicators for courses of new media literacy should also be modified in order to meet the current demands of citizens. These are the main issues of this study.

This study invited 27 teachers who taught or had taught the course of media literacy or information literacy to form Delphi groups, in order to evaluate the importance and priority of competency indicators. In three rounds of survey, the highest score is 4.96 and the lowest score is 3.85. There is only one gap of level in 27 indicators. It shows that there is common consensus between literatures and experts' opinions regarding priority of competency indicators of new media literacy. The findings can serve as reference for teachers in different fields (such as mass communication department or general education program) on different student backgrounds (such as general university or technology university) when designing different themes of courses (such as media literacy or information literacy) upon importance and priority of competency indicators. Hence, appropriate indicators can be selected to meet the teaching objectives. It is the main contribution of this study.

Secondly, this study conducted a questionnaire survey on the new media literacy competency indicators of university students who took the course of media literacy or information literacy in Taiwan. The survey explored their opinions on the importance of new competency indicators, and compared differences between students' and teachers' opinions to allow teachers to recognize the needs of students in the digital era. By recognizing learners'

opinions, teachers can design contents and issues of new courses that better meet learners' needs. It puts the constructivist teaching strategy into practice based on learners' needs. This is the second contribution of this study.

Finally, in order to avoid the misunderstanding of teachers and students participating this study as perceiving the survey as an examination of the course achievements, this study did not conduct media literacy competency test on university students. However, it is suggested that teachers who design courses of (new) media literacy in the future can examine students' learning outcome by these new competency indicators. The findings of this study not only provide feedbacks for course instruction, but also give directions to research projects on examining and modifying competency indicators proposed by this study to develop more appropriate competency indicators of media literacy education. This is the objective after the implementation of this project.

### **Acknowledgement**

The National Science and Technology Council (NSTC, former named MOST) of Taiwan provided funding for this research project (MOST 103-2410-H-003 -078 -MY2).

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## Gender Discrimination : An Overview of Literature

*Anuradha Singh\**

*Gender discrimination is one of the debatable concerns for sociologists, especially those who are really interested in sociology of gender. This paper is an attempt to investigate gender discrimination and highlights the institutional mechanisms for boosting and preserving gender discrimination. The collected information has been analyzed qualitatively. The study provides the reviewed based data on gender discrimination. So, this study is qualitative in nature based on secondary data. For secondary data, a thorough evaluation of related literature has been executed where gender discrimination is highlighted. The studies, reviewed on gender discrimination, points out that patriarchal values of society and valuing males more than females are considered main reasons behind the discrimination.*

[**Keywords** : Gender, Gender discrimination, Society, Patriarchy, Patriarchal values, Gender discourse]

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

## **1. Introduction**

Gender Discrimination is a major problem that places women at a disadvantage thereby stymieing economic growth and societal advancement. Gender discrimination or gender gap continues to be an immense issue of concern in India despite its achieving high rates of economic growth in recent years. Gender discrimination still exists in India. Gender discrimination not only limits women's access to resources and opportunities but also imperils the life prospects of the future generation. In India traditional patriarchal customs and norms have relegated women to a secondary status within the household and society. This type of gender discrimination reflected in India's low ranking of the world economic forum's Gender Gap Index 2022, with scores below average on parameters such as educational attainment, economic participation and health. As a whole the country ranked 135 out of 146 countries with a score of 0.629 on the gender inequality index, which is very low. Gender discrimination always facilitated with the aid of diverse socio-cultural and relational elements. The foremost among them is the family, which performs a big function in the growth of gender discrimination (Singh, 2022). The normative social order restricts women and tends to prefer men to emerge as the guardians. Patriarchy protects male ideology and nurtures these terrible gender values (Singh, 2022). On the name of culture, discrimination takes place subtly, and it is highly accepted in our society. A girl is forced to fit into a culturally defined role both at home and outside the home. Traditionally, girls are less important than boys, who do not deserve the necessities of life. These regressive traditions have become so deeply ingrained in society. Most of the women have also accepted their secondary status in the society (Nussbaum and Jonathan, 1995 : 49). Such deliberate discrimination against women and girls violates the right to equality and the right to life given by the constitution of India. In the last decades, extensive research has been conducted on gender related issues, studying both their antecedents and consequences. However, existing literature reviews a comprehensive and clear picture of what has been studied so far, which could guide scholars in their future research. This paper offers a scoping review of a large portion of the research that has been published over the last years, on gender discrimination and related issues, with a specific focus on sociological studies. The paper measures the relevance from a point of view and the relationships

among the research highlighting the importance of each topic in the overall gender discourse. This paper prominently relates to gender discrimination, e.g., concerning discrimination in birth, child care, socialization, role, education, decision-making and career progression. This paper offers a map of the main gender-research and presents the most popular and the emerging themes, as well as their intersections, outlining important avenues for future research.

## **2. Objective of the Study**

This paper is an attempt to investigate gender discrimination and highlights the institutional mechanisms for boosting and preserving gender discrimination.

## **3. Methodology**

This study is qualitative in nature based on secondary data. For secondary data, a thorough evaluation of related literature has been executed where gender discrimination is highlighted.

## **4. Need of the Study**

In India, gender discrimination persists. Discrimination based on gender not only hinders women's access to resources and opportunities, but it also threatens the lives of future generations. Discrimination based on gender was always made easier by a variety of social, cultural, and interpersonal factors. The family is the most important of these, contributing significantly to the spread of gender discrimination. Women are subject to restrictions in the normative social order, which typically favors male guardianship. Male ideology is safeguarded by patriarchy, which also fosters these terrible gender values. Discrimination is practised subtly in the name of culture and is widely accepted in our society. These retrograde customs are now so ingrained in society. The majority of women have also accepted their lower social status. Such intentional oppression of women and young girls abuses the right to fairness and the right to life given by the constitution of India. Gender-related issues have been the subject of extensive research over the past few decades, looking at both the causes and effects of these issues. However, the existing literature provides scholars with a comprehensive and precise picture of what has been investigated thus far, which may serve as a guide for their subsequent research.

So, with a particular focus on sociological studies, the need of a scoping review of a significant portion of the recent research on gender discrimination and related issues. There is a need to examine the connections between the research and the significance of each topic in the gender discourse as a whole.

## **5. Review of Literature**

In order to know the gaps in any field, a brief and thorough review of the earlier literature is essential. In this paper, an attempt has been made to review the available literature on different aspects of gender discrimination.

Feminist researchers acknowledge their role in the production of knowledge to transform women's situations. In this order some sociologists have done studies related to gender discrimination, e.g., The sociologist, Anoop Khanna (2003) studied on foeticide associated with son preference and female infanticide in Rajasthan, Anupama Esther Ghosh (2003) has examined existing knowledge and attitude toward female foeticide, Satinderjit and Sushma Jaswal (2004) have studied the attitudes of rural parents with respect to female education, Rohini Pandey and Anju Malhotra (2006) have investigated the gender discrimination and gender preference of mother and families, Madhu Nagla (2007) has examined whether boys more likely to have vaccination coverage than girls, S. Guruamy (1999) has explored the causative factors and circumstances leading to the practice of female infanticide in Tamil Nadu, Ramakant Sharma (2002) has studied social and demographic background of pre-natal and Medical Termination of pregnancy service seekers. T.V. Sekher and Neelabar Hatti (2010) studied the factors responsible for the increasing discrimination against girls, even before they are born, Saumya Chand (2011) has emphasized the practice of gender discrimination in the health care facilities such as prenatal and maternal case, Tulsi Patel (2007) has explored the relationship between the ultrasound technology and sex selective abortions, Sneha Lata Tandon and Renu Sharma (2006) have analyzed the magnitude of the incidence of female foeticide and infanticide in India, Institute for development and communication, Chandigarh (2002) has studied the value of a male child in a patriarchal society ensured differential treatment of the girl child in comparison with male child, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child development, New Delhi (2008) has studied the various social cultural economic



demographic factors that contributed to the declining sex ratio, Shweta Prasad (2001) studied the prevalence of sex determination (SD) tests in U.P., Anuapama Bishnoi (2001) assessed the impact of developmental programmes on empowerment of mother and girl child, Prabhat Jha, et al. (2006) have investigated prenatal sex determination affects sex ratio at birth as measured by previous birth sex, Lund University, Department of Economic History, Lund, Sweden (2006) attempted to conceptualized the process of declining child sex ratio in Karnataka and Uttaranchal, Usha Nayar (1995) has studied the causes for the adverse and declining sex ratio in the age group 0-6 years in Punjab and Haryana, Sita Ghirmire (2000) analysed the impact of seven organizations working to prevent violence and discrimination against girls in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Mohammed Hussain, Arab Naaz, Wasim Khan, Umar daraz and Kausar Khan (2015) investigated the role of family include in calculating gender stereotyping in culture and its impact on gender role development conducted in public sector universities of Malakand division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.

Sunita Boss (2012) analyzed 18,519 families with opposite sex children from (NFHS-3) are used to test the impact of maternal son preference and context on the gender differential in education in India. Jafar Hassanzadeh, Noorollah Moradi, Nader Esmailnasab, Shahab Rezaeian, Pezhman Bagheri, and Vajihe, Armanmehr (2014) were aimed to analyzed gender inequalities and their health associated factors in world countries.

P. S. Raychaudhury (2014) examined the attitudes, reactions, and perceptions of women consumers such as housewives and modern girls who live in cosmopolitan cities, including Delhi. Rebecca L. Collins (2011) collectively analyzed gender roles in media in quantitative terms. Apoorva Bharadwaj, Ritu Mehta (2017) in the present paper examined the construction of gender roles in two recent Indian television commercials that depict Indian women essaying supervisory roles in their corporate jobs. Liot Kulik (2001) examined differences in job search intensity, attitudes towards unemployment and related responses among a sample of Israelis, based on gender and marital status (single vs married). Paula Kantor (2002) examined the contribution of a sectoral approach to understanding gender constraints on economic success in the informal sector, using the example of self employed women in home based garment production in Ahmedabad, India.

J. Maselco and V. Patel (2008) described the risk for attempted suicide in women when it is associated with social disadvantage and physical and mental illness. Apoorva Bharadwaj, Ritu Mehta (2017) in the present paper examined the construction of gender roles in two recent Indian television commercials that depict Indian women essaying supervisory roles in their corporate jobs. Natasha Quadalin (2018) conducted an audit study by submitting 2,106 job applicants that experimentally manipulated applicants' GPA, Gender and college major.

SriVidya Rama Subramanian and Parul Jain (2009) focused on gendered spousal Expectations and sexual preferences in contemporary media of a globalizing India. Tanja Hentschel, Madeline E. Heilman and Claudia V. Peus (2019) used a multi-dimensional framework to check the current stereotyped status of males and females. Specifically, they sought to determine (1) how men and women were characterized by male and female raters, (2) how men and women characterized themselves, and (3) the degree of confluence between self-characterization and characterization of one's gender group. Tabassum Naznin and Shankar Bhabani (2021) aimed to check in this investigation that contemporary management culture does not critically engage with the social theories of gender studies, which could help in developing gender-neutral affirmative action-oriented managerial perspectives.

Usha Ram, Lisa Strohschein and Kirti Gaur (2014) described patterns of gender socialization among youth in India and evaluated how these patterns are associated with their mental health. Nasrina Siddiqi (2021) has investigated the objective to explore the concept of gender equality in India, from an indigenous-cultural point of view. Our Watch (2018) conducted a survey to ask parents of children from 0 to 3 years old what they think about gender equality and violence against women, how they divide key household tasks and child rearing responsibilities within their family and whether they believe that gender has an impact on their children. Rashmi Umesh Arora (2012) examined gender inequality, economic development and globalisation in the different states of India. Specifically, it examines whether gender inequality differs across the Indian states and whether it is lower in more open and 'globalized States.

Nandita Kapadia Kundu, Manisha Khale, Sachin Upadhyay and Deepti Chavan (2007) studied aimed to provide contextual

information on gender roles, household and family dynamics and the occurrence of physical violence. Sonalde Desai and Lester Andrist (2010) explored the impact of three dimensions of gender : (1) economic factors such as availability of wage employment, dowry expectations and wedding expenses; (2) indicators of familial empowerment, such as women's role in household decision-making and access to and control over resources; and (3) markers of gender performance, such as observance of purdah and male-female separation in the household.

Sharon R. Bird and Stephen G. Sapp (2004) examined the gender gap in small business success in urban and rural places. Gay Young, Lucia Fort and Mona Danner (1994) aimed to bridge theory on gender relations and measurement of the reality of gender for women and men by means of a set of social indicators of gender inequality. Rohini P. Pande and Nan Marie Astone (2007) analysed the determinants of son- preference in rural India. Voluntary health Association of India (2003) investigated the sharply declining child sex ratio in India indicating female foeticide at the grass root level.

Irada Gautam (1999) focused on the difficulties faced by girls, their parents and siblings, community leaders' feelings about them, and suggested ways to remove their problems. Aarti Shrivastava (2005) investigated the attitude of parents towards the birth of a girl child; analyze gender discrimination at birth and during socialization of a child; evaluate awareness and attitude towards Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act 1994; and create awareness about the dangers of female foeticide. N. Diamond Smith, Nancy Luke and Stephen Mcgarvey (2008) specifically addressed fertility preferences among the rural poor in Tamilnadu. Today gender discrimination is a pressing issue- which calls to be addressed at once. Arti Srivastava (2005) investigated the attitude of parents towards the birth of a girl child; analyze gender discrimination at birth and during socialization of a child; evaluate awareness and attitude towards Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) Act 1994; and create awareness about the dangers of female foeticide. Although gender discrimination was observed by religion and economic status, respondents with high education denied discriminating between daughters and sons.

Gay Young, Lucia Fort and Mona Danner (1994) aimed to bridge the gap between the theory of gender relations and the measurement

of gender equality for women and men by using social indicators of inequality. These findings show that women's rights remain dismal across all levels of national income and that they face disadvantages in the interaction between social relations of production and reproduction, whether they are in rich or poor countries. The more complex measure of gender inequality may provide valuable information to guide gender equality policies and practices.

Anupama Bishnoi (2001) analysed the impact of developmental programmes on the empowerment of mothers and girls in Fatehabad district of Haryana, and he identified problems beneficiaries faced in utilizing these programmes. Three sample villages were evaluated on three programs : the Apni Beti Apna Dhan (ABAD), Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY) and National Maturity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). During The years 1998-1999 to 2000-01 saw 6,548 beneficiaries participating in the ABAD programme, 824 beneficiaries participating in the BSY programme, and 1105 beneficiaries participating in the NMBS programme. A sample of 90 beneficiaries was interviewed. Data was collected from interviews; it was found that some beneficiaries had a neutral attitude towards BSY, while others had a favourable attitude. Most beneficiaries took advantage of the program once, and the majority received the amount within the specified period. BSY had little impact on mothers and girls. NMBS beneficiaries were mostly satisfied with the current distribution system. Data collection was conducted by interviewing 90 beneficiaries. The study found that 76.7% of those interviewed reported poor coordination between village staff and district headquarters staff. It is necessary to begin more programs exclusively for mothers and girl children, as 73.3% of beneficiaries were not aware of educational and communication constraints. They also received inadequate support from family and society. It is necessary to begin more programs exclusively for mothers and girl children, as 73.3% of beneficiaries were not aware of educational and communication constraints. They also received inadequate support from family and society.

Paula Kantor (2002) looked at the contribution of a sectoral approach to understanding gender restrictions on economic success in the informal sector, examining the experience of self employed women in Ahmedabad, India, who produce garments at home. The findings show that the women-exclusive constraints are all found within this sector. However, there is variation among the

women-exclusive constraints in their differential gender effects, and some sector specific constraints are more intense for women than for men. The latter two findings suggest that economic activity needs to be considered in understanding the causes and extent of gender inequality in economic outcomes.

Rashmi Umesh Arora (2012) analyzed gender inequality, economic development, and globalization across the states of India, in particular whether gender inequality differed across the states and whether it was lower in more open and 'globalized states. The study's findings show that at the sub-national level in India higher per capita income is accompanied with lower gender inequality. However in some high income states gender inequality is also very high.

Kishore Parasram ji (2017) investigated the gender gap in illiteracy, child marriage, and spousal violence among women using data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4). An analysis of secondary data was conducted on ever married women reaching reproductive age in 15 states and three UTs in India. The study shows that in rural areas, women's illiteracy is significantly higher than men's in all states except Meghalaya and Sikkim. Bihar and Madhya Pradesh had higher illiteracy rates among women, 53.7 % and 48.6 %, relative to men, 24.7 % and 21.5%. In four of the most populous states, child marriage rates are higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

In earlier 2017 Our Watch (2018) conducted a survey to ask parents of kids aged 0-3 about their views on gender equality and violence against women, the way key household tasks and child rearing responsibilities are divided within their family, and whether they believe that gender influences their children's behaviour and development. In the survey, 858 respondents were polled in 8 territories of Australia. The results showed that most parents want gender equality for their young children. They believe that young children are not influenced by gender stereotypes. There are many practical challenges parents face when implementing gender equality in their household. It is consistent with existing research that men are usually more likely than women to support traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Compared to mothers, more fathers are unlikely to feel comfortable allowing their sons to play with dolls or cry when they are sad. Finally, most parents want to challenge traditional gender stereotypes.



## **6. Findings from the Studies**

Almost all the studies, reviewed on gender discrimination, points out that patriarchal values of society and valuing males more than females are considered main reasons behind the discrimination. Girls are discriminated against in health and nutrition from an early age (Pandey and Malhotra, 2006). There is frequent gender inequality in nutrition, with girls receiving an insufficient nutrition. A major manifestation of gender preference is the excessive mortality of female children (Chand, 2011). In addition to the adverse sex ratio, there are other unfavorable gender indices, such as wife beating, rape, bigamy, and sexual abuse (Institute for Development and Communication, Chandigarh, 2002). There is a belief that investing in a girl is a waste of money and that there is nothing to gain from doing so. According to the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi, a girl's safety is a concern, and the girl is feared as a threat to the family's honour (National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, New Delhi, 2008). Instead of being an example of sex-determination, sex discrimination and sex selective abortions are deeply rooted in patriarchal social structures' attitudes and values (Prasad, 2001).

According to Anoop Khanna (2003), women who desired a son were motivated by lineage, the belief that a girl would be a burden to their families, and the dowry culture. The study also found that respondents regretted being a girl in addition to dowry and poverty as reasons for discrimination against girls. Another study reveals that dowry and wedding expenses for daughters are one of the primary reasons people do not want to have daughters (Usha Nayar, 1995). Son preference is one of the primary causes of female feticide and gender discrimination in India, according to nearly all reviewed studies (Das Gupta, 1987 : 92; Bose, 2001 : 3429). Son preference among women who desire a male child is based on lineage, the belief that a girl is a burden to the family, and dowry culture (Ghosh, 2003). Rural parents have a poor attitude toward female education (Jaswal, 2004). There is a significant role for misuse of prenatal and MTP (medical termination of pregnancy) techniques to contribute to the growing sex gap in India. The majority of women claim that their husbands have compelled them to kill their babies (Tandon and Sharma, 2006). A review has been done on pre-birth and MTP administration searchers. Tulsi Patel has investigated how the



combination of legal abortions and the illegal foetal sex test is handled through relatives or friends rather than local health care professionals (Patel, 2007). The study revealed that the majority of women who aborted their pregnancy through private agencies aborted their fetuses because they were female (Ramakant Sharma, 2002). According to a study, the majority of parents stated that they underwent sex determination tests to avoid dowry-related issues. Indeed, a significant number of couples took the test during their second and third pregnancies.

According to Prasad (2001), the issue in the SD tests was not sex determination but rather sex discrimination and sex selective abortions, which were rooted in patriarchal society's attitudes and values. In India, sons are viewed as having a higher economic benefit to the parents for cultural and economic reasons. Daughters are thought to be of less economic benefit and won't take care of them when they get older. In addition, Hindus believe that a son is more important than a daughter because he must perform rituals at his parent's funeral and on every anniversary of their passing. All of the previous research has demonstrated that son preference is strong in many parts of India, particularly in the North West. According to a study by Das Gupta (2005), people, particularly women, are compelled to bear sons rather than daughters in order to conserve scarce household resources. There appears to be a strong preference for sons, and the sex ratio is closely related to the sex composition of the children already in the family. (Coale, 1991).

The reviewed studies have indicated that Gender discrimination is still at its peak in Indian Society. The areas related to gender discrimination which are studied by the researchers are as follows :

- The role of family include in calculating gender stereotyping.
- The gender equality in terms of illiteracy, child marriages, and spousal violence among women.
- The attitude and practice of gender discrimination in an urban family setup.
- The gendered experiences of involuntary childlessness and the societal perceptions of the state of being childless.
- The social and demographic background of prenatal and MTP (Medical Termination of Pregnancy) service seekers

and implementation status of Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PNDT).

- The factors responsible for the increasing discrimination against girls, even before they are born how does fertility decline and son preference manifest at the village level, particularly in the context of widespread availability of sex selection techniques at low cost.
- The practice of gender discrimination in healthcare facilities such as prenatal care, maternal care and impact of gender discrimination in healthcare facilities especially on female mortality and sex ratio and regional variations in healthcare facilities, female mortality and sex ratio.
- The relationship between the ultrasound technology, sex selective abortions and the culture of reproduction medical by informal social networks of the multi-layered relationships between members of the community and their relationships in organizing social and biological reproduction.
- The magnitude of the incidence of female foeticide and infanticide.
- The value of a male child in a patriarchal society insuring differential treatment of the girl child in comparison with the male child.
- The various socio-cultural, economic, demographic, cultural and other factors that contribute to the declining sex ratio.
- The prevalence of sex determination (SD) test and impact of Pre-natal Diagnostic techniques, Act 1994.
- The impact of developmental programmes on empowerment of mother and girl child and to identify problem faced by beneficiaries in utilizing these programmes.
- Prenatal sex determination affect sex ratio at birth in India.
- The process of declining child sex ratio.
- The causes for the adverse and declining sex ratio in the age group 0 to 6 years.
- The foeticide associated with son preference.
- Examined existing knowledge and attitude towards female foeticide.

- The attitudes of rural parents towards to female education.
- The gender discrimination and gender preference of mothers and families.
- Boys are more likely to have vaccination coverage than girls.
- Gender achievement and major effect employment outcomes among recent college graduates.
- Gender spousal expectations and sex role preferences in contemporary media of a globalizing India.
- Gender equality and violence against women.
- Gender inequality, economic development and globalization in the different states of India.
- Impact of maternal son preference and context on the gender differential in education in India.
- Differences in job search intensity, attitudes towards unemployment and related responses.
- Gender constraints on economic success in the informal sector.
- The risk for attempted suicide in women associated with social disadvantage and physical and mental illness.
- Gender roles, household and family dynamics and the occurrence of physical violence.
- Economic factors such as availability of veg employment, dowry expectations and wedding expenses.
- Indicators of familiar empowerment such as women's role in household decision-making and access to control over resources.
- Markers of gender performance such as observance of purdah and male-female separation in the household.
- Gender gap in small business success in urban and rural places.
- Gender inequality.
- Determinants of son preference in rural India. ? Declining child sex ratio in India.
- Difficulties faced by girls, their parents and siblings community leaders feeling about them.
- Attitude of parents towards the birth of a girl child, analyze gender discrimination at birth and during socialization of a child.

All these are the areas of gender discrimination on which sociologists have done extensive studies and found that after all the development and progress, women still discriminate in the society.

## 7. Summing up

The conclusion from the paper that can be reached is that females are subjected to discrimination, which is a serious issue. The common belief among society is that males are more capable than females. As a result, males play a more significant role in society and females are still discriminated against. So There is a need to pay more attention to these issues in society. The researchers must highlight these issues to solve this problem.

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## **Some Selected Theoretical Underpinnings in the Long Journey of Cultural Anthropology : Uncovering Key Concepts and their Implications for Anthropological Studies**

***Netra Kumar Ojha\****

*This article explores the historical development and key concepts of classical and contemporary anthropological theories, highlighting their implications for anthropological studies. It delves into the factors that led to the transition from classical to contemporary theories, including social movements, decolonization, and the critique of classical ontological traditions. Classical anthropological theories focused on issues such as evolution, diffusion, and cultural structure, while contemporary theories shifted attention towards representation, gender, power, and globalization. A specific comparison is drawn between classical evolutionism and structuration theory, emphasizing their differing perspectives on*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*culture's progressive development and the relationship between structure and agency. Furthermore, the emergence of feminist anthropology is examined, with a focus on Emily Martin's works "The Egg and the Sperm" and "The Women in the Body," which critically analyze gender biases and the cultural construction of reproductive processes. The article contributes to a deeper understanding of the theoretical foundations and evolving landscape of cultural anthropology.*

[**Keywords** : Classical theory, Contemporary theory, Classical evolutionism, Structuration Theory, Feminist Anthropology, Anthropology of embodiment]

## **1. Introduction**

The anthropological theories developed in the beginning phase of the discipline, particularly in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are known as classical anthropological theories. There is diversification within the classical theories regarding their ontological, epistemological, and methodological considerations. Due to the different philosophical considerations they adopted, classical theories are even different from the theories which are categorized as contemporary. Similarly, contemporary anthropological theories emerged in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, due to various political and contextual reasons.

There are different social, economic, and political contexts responsible for the end of the classical theoretical tradition and the emergence of contemporary anthropological theories. After the 1960s, particularly in the 1970s to early 1980s, the global scenarios were changed by major social and political movements in the west. Moreover, in this period, full of social movements in Europe and the US, the decolonization process, and the growing professionalism of anthropology in the west, as well as the rest had created great upheaval in the theoretical history of anthropology. At the same time, particularly in 1968, a series of political movements (workers' and students' movements in France), civil rights, feminist, antiwar, environment, counterculture, anti-Vietnam war movements, and so on in the US had not only affected the academic scenario but also had a great impact on the importance and relevance of classical ontological traditions of anthropological theory (Ortner, 1984). In this period, the entire established theories, "grand theory", positivist tradition, objectivist position, political neutrality, or the classical anthropological theories were questioned and challenged. These new scenarios created a situation where anthropology began to concentrate on real-world events.

Similarly, this new scenario created discourses concerning the relationship of anthropology with western hegemony, racism, and colonialism. Moreover, post-structuralist, feminist, resistance, identity, morality, orientalism, representations, embodiment, globalization, indigenism, subaltern, agency, structuration, practice, power, literary, and so on approaches in anthropology began to emerge and sustained. In fact, these new issues of discussion became the subject matters of what we now known as contemporary anthropological theories.

## **2. Demarking the Classical and Contemporary Theories in Anthropology**

Classical and contemporary anthropological theories differ in many respects. The first and most important difference is their focus areas and issues regarding the study of human culture and society. The major focuses of classical anthropological theories are on the issues like evolution, diffusion, historical particularism, structure and function, ecology, adaptation, personality formation, and symbolic aspects of human culture and society. Whereas contemporary anthropological theories focus on issues like representation, gender, morality, power, globalization, identity, embodiment, agency, resistance, subaltern, class, ethnicity, race, nationality, and so on.

Likewise, the second major difference is the specific perspectives and methodologies they adopted. Classical anthropological theories have adopted the grand-generalizing, ethnocentric, modernist, and more objective way of studying the culture and society whereas the contemporary ones have criticized and questioned the stances of classical theories. Instead, the contemporary theories focus on reflexive, interpretive, critical, transformative, post-structural, and more on the subjective way of studying culture and society.

There are different classical and contemporary theories in anthropology. They have their own assumptions, concepts, and logic regarding the study and understanding of human culture and society. Here, I have compared a dominant classical theory of classical evolutionism as classical theory with the contemporary post-structural theory of structuration.

### **3. Classical Evolutionism**

The evolutionary idea of socio-cultural progress of the 19th century is called classical or unilinear evolutionism in anthropology. This is the oldest theory regarding to the scientific way of understanding and studying the culture. This theory believes that society and culture as a complete entity or social and cultural institutions evolve in a progressive way from simple to complex stages in a unilinear sequence. In other words, all societies progressively evolve through the same stages toward civilization. These progressive stages of evolution can be categorized through the use of the comparative method. This comparative method believes that the existing primitive cultures can be taken as living fossils and evidence of the primitive stages of the current advanced cultures. They can be taken as clues to the evolutionary development of culture. Moreover, this theory believes that socio-cultural similarities or parallel inventions around the world should be taken as the result of the psychic unity of mankind (Tylor, 1873; Morgan, 1877 cited in Erickson and Murphy, 2017; Ojha, 2021).

The dominant figures of unilinear evolutionism were British anthropologist E. B. Tylor and American Anthropologist L. H. Morgan. Both of them believe that because of the psychic unity of mankind, cultures have similar beginnings everywhere and evolved through three progressive universal stages of development: savagery, barbarism, and civilization phase (Tylor, 1873; Morgan, 1877 cited in Erickson and Murphy, 2017). Though both Tylor and Morgan are regarded as classical evolutionists, they have different contributions to classical evolutionism. In fact, Tylor focused on the evolution of religion whereas Morgan was interested in the evolution of the social organization, particularly, subsistence patterns, kinship, and family. Similarly, Morgan's evolutionary scheme was purely based on a materialistic perspective in which technology is of prime importance whereas Tylor's scheme was strictly based on cognitive aspects.

### **4. Structuration Theory**

The structuration theory which is developed by Anthony Giddens is regarded as a post-structural theory because it holds the proposition that structure both creates and is created in a very structuration process within a specific time and space (Giddens, 1984). As a contemporary theory in anthropology, structuration

theory discards the belief in universal truth and objective and scientific study of human culture and institutions. Moreover, it is against the idea of interpreting cultural phenomena through pre-established and socially constructed objective structures. This theory rejects the concept of over-determinism and the self-sufficiency of structures.

Structuration theory believes that one should not take the experience of an individual actor and the existence of structure separately without consulting each other. Rather, the focus should be given to how social practices or institutions are structured across specific time and space (Giddens, 1984 : 2). The main thrust of the theory of structuration is to establish the duality between structure and agency. Structure and agency are constituted in such a way that neither can exist without the other. Structuration theory believes that the agents have agency and power, which means they have transformative capacity. Moreover, without structure, the action of agents is not possible. The agent needs structure to perform the action, and the existence of structure is only possible through the activities of agents. In structuration theory, the structure is itself a “structuring properties” or the rules and resources (Giddens, 1984 : 16). In fact, time, space, body, and encounter are essential parts of the existence of agency and structure themselves, and for the very structuration process. Therefore, the structuration theory focuses on the different modalities of the structuration process to clarify the existence of multiple forms of social institutions.

## **5. Differences between Classical Evolutionism and Structuration Theory**

As a dominant theory in anthropology, classical evolutionism focuses on how different societies and cultures or socio-cultural institutions evolve in a unilinear progressive sequence, stage after stage, from simple to complex form. In addition, it focuses on the universal stages of human evolution from savagery to civilization. In the case of structuration, as a contemporary post-structuralist theory, it does not focus on the evolution of socio-cultural institutions. Rather, structuration theory focuses on how different institutions (particularly symbolic, economic, social, and legal) are structured through the very structuration process within a specific time and space. Classical evolutionists talk about the progressive development

of culture and society based on technology and cognitive aspects, whereas, structurationists focus on these progressive stages as the results of the “rationalization of structuring structures” through the activities of actors in particular physical and social contexts.

In addition, classical evolutionists use the “comparative method” to analyze the progressive stages of socio-cultural institutions whereas structurationists focus on the actors’ priority of the use of “modality of structure” (rules and resources) in their practices to structure the different forms of institutions. In other words, structurationists do not focus on evolution but rather on structuration, i.e., how actors use different structures in their practices through which the existence of institutions is possible.

## **6. Feminist Anthropology : Emily Martin’s “The Egg and the Sperm”**

As a contemporary theory, feminist anthropology emerged in the 1970s as a product of the global feminist movement. Though feminist anthropology emerged after the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it has a long history of women-based advocacy. In the 1830s, US women collectively raised their voices against slavery. Similarly, in the 1890s the issue of voting right for women had been raised. Since the 1960s women from different parts of the world, particularly African and Asian women started to participate in different programs related to the issue of women. In the 1970s as a radical movement, the global feminist movement began demanding autonomy for women.

In anthropology, there were some renowned female anthropological figures like Ruth Benedict, Margret Mead, and Mary Douglas in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But, they were bounded by the philosophical considerations of their early masters. In the 1960s and 1970s, global radical movements including the feminist movement had a great impact on the existing pieces of literature on anthropology. They blamed the existing anthropological tradition as an “androcentric bias”. It is because most of the previous anthropological theorists were men, and there was little access to women in cultural studies. Similarly, existing anthropological studies were given priority to the issue of men, politics, religion, war, economics, and so on. The issues of women were not treated separately, but rather as a passive term and relationships with men.



In such a situation, along with other movements, the feminist movement emerged in the 1970s, and the development of feminist anthropology itself was a result of that movement.

In her famous article, "The egg and the Sperm" (Martin, 1997 : 485) feminist anthropologist, Emily Martin has also raised the issue of "androcentric bias" in biology regarding the role of egg and sperm in the process of fertilization. Using the metaphorical image of egg and sperm, she criticizes biological science for constructing and justifying the romance-based, not reality-based stereotypical cultural roles of male and female. This biased writing of biology about the sperm and egg also suggests that the fertilization processes of females are less valuable than that of men. Moreover, the language used in the reproductive biology further indicates that the less worthy biological process of females in turn makes them less worthy in comparison to men. Martin wants to expose the gender stereotypes which are hidden in the language of biological science. Biology treats the woman's monthly cycle as a means to produce eggs and a suitable place to fertilize and grow them to make babies. Similarly, if this does not happen then it converts into a kind of "debris" in the uterine (Martin, 1997). Therefore, menstruation is a failure or a symptom of not having a baby and a kind of wasted or scrap.

To justify the androcentric bias inherent in the text of biology, Martin blames that the male reproductive process is presented in a quite different fashion. She further says that medical physiology has glorified the male to have a capacity to produce millions of sperm every single day and it has delimited the capacity of a female by saying that a female "sheds" only one gamete per month. It shows the enthusiasm for the male reproductive processes and underestimates the woman. Martin also presents a bitter picture of the common depiction of reproductive biology regarding the role of egg and sperm in such a way that, the egg is a feminine "damsel in distress" whereas the sperm is a masculine "heroic warrior" for the rescue (Martin, 1997 : 491).

Martin presents the findings of new research regarding the fertilization process and the role of egg and sperm. The finding of new research claims that the surfaces of both egg and sperm have adhesive molecules and for this reason, they stick together. No one is superior in the fertilization process rather they interact in a mutual way. But, the biological imagery of medical science ignores this fact and

exaggerated the role of sperm as active one who “penetrates” the passive egg (Martin, 1997). Martin exposes the hidden stereotypes inherent in the writings of what we regard as natural science. This clearly shows how the uses of gender biased language in biological science naturalize the stereotypes of cultural roles of male and female.

## **7. The Anthropology of Embodiment : Emily Martin’s “The Women in the Body”**

Another article by the same author, Emily Martin “The Women in the Body” (Martin, 1994 : 180) is based on the contemporary anthropological paradigm of embodiment. The paradigm of the embodiment is mainly concerned with the study of culture and the self. The methodological postulate of embodiment advocates that the body is not to be an object in relation to the study of culture but is to be considered the subject to the study of culture. The anthropology of embodiment considers the multiplicity of bodies by accepting the fact that bodies are neither universal nor strictly biological entities what we generally perceive to be. In anthropology, the study of “the body” emerged in the middle of the 1980s with the development of a separate subfield named “anthropology of the body” (Martin, 1994).

Anthropologists at the time, particularly feminist anthropologists considered that the issue of power and oppression, the main agenda of feminism could not be addressed without first challenging the ideologies which naturalized gender, sex, and racial differences by dichotomies as mind/body, male/female, subject/object, and culture/nature. Since then, the study of “the body” has come to be taken as subject and object, individual and social, and meaningful and material. Therefore, Martin’s study “The Women in the Body” should be also understood in this context.

In this article, Martin presents a cultural analysis of reproduction by using Marxian analysis. Marxian analysis appeals to the liberation from the prejudices of sexism, class oppression, racism, and biomedicine (Martin, 1994). Martin presents here the issue of how women in the United States, particularly the women in the Baltimore area understand the reproduction process and its role in their lives. She has taken interviews of women working in different places and organizations, and included those women in three different life stages : puberty but before child-bearing, child-bearing, and menopause. Moreover, she has included blacks and whites,

working-class, and middle-class women in the study. The main intention of the study was how women understand and perceive the reproductive mechanisms of their bodies, particularly menstruation, childbearing, and menopause.

Martin found that middle-class, and black and white women possessed scientific views regarding the menstruation process, but working-class women did not have an endorsement with a scientific view, rather, they resist the scientific view and explain menstruation in terms of their own experiences or as a life change phenomena. Similarly, on the issue of birth, she found the resistance of women to the medical and societal perception of birth as the production of goods. Likewise, her study also revealed that women rejected the medical perception of menopause as a decline. Instead, they took it as a transition, liberation, and a freeing from the worries regarding menstruation and pregnancy. Martin found inconsistent resistance in women regarding the biomedical view of their bodies. Their variations of resistance toward the medical view of their bodies were based on topic, class, and race.

In this article, Martin successfully dissects the dominant metaphors surrounding the medical interpretations of women's physiology. Medical literature considered the bodily functions (such as childbirth, menstruation, and menopause) as a part of the private or domestic realm by being separated from the men-dominated public world. Similarly, medical literature depicts the negative imagery of female physiology and cast a positive light on male physiology. Therefore, these pervasive metaphors regarding female bodies are value-laden and culturally determined. Moreover, she further claims that they are anti-feminist and anti-woman.

## **8. Conclusion**

The field of cultural anthropology has evolved significantly over time, transitioning from classical anthropological theories to contemporary perspectives. The emergence of contemporary theories was influenced by various social, economic, and political contexts, including major social and political movements, decolonization processes, and the growing professionalism of anthropology. These changes challenged and questioned the established theories, leading anthropology to focus more on real-world events and issues. Classical anthropological theories, such as classical evolutionism, emphasized

the unilinear progression of societies and cultures from simple to complex stages. They focused on the evolution of socio-cultural institutions, primarily based on technology and cognitive aspects. In contrast, contemporary theories, like structuration theory, rejected the idea of universal truth and objective study of culture. They emphasized the duality between structure and agency, highlighting how different institutions are structured through the activities of actors in specific contexts.

Feminist anthropology emerged as a response to the androcentric bias present in previous anthropological studies. Feminist anthropologists aimed to give voice to women and challenge the stereotypes and gender roles perpetuated by the discipline. Emily Martin's work, such as "The Egg and the Sperm" and "The Women in the Body," exposed the biases inherent in scientific and biomedical discourse, revealing how language and cultural representations shape our understanding of gender and reproduction. The anthropology of embodiment, another contemporary paradigm, shifted the focus from considering the body as an object to understanding it as a subject in the study of culture. This approach recognized the multiplicity of bodies and aimed to challenge the dichotomies that naturalize differences and perpetuate power imbalances.

Furthermore, cultural anthropology has undergone a transformation from classical theories to contemporary perspectives that address issues of power, representation, gender, and embodiment. By critically examining and deconstructing existing paradigms, anthropologists have expanded the boundaries of the discipline, allowing for a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of human culture and society.

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## **Exploring Gendered Dynamics in Household Decision-making : A Case Study of the Tamang Community in Nepal**

***Rajita Uprety\****

*This study presents a case study conducted within the Tamang community in Nepal, aiming to deepen our understanding of gender roles and relations in household decision-making. Drawing on feminist theories and gender analysis frameworks, the research explores decision-making processes, division of labour, and social and cultural conditions. Data was collected through observation, interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions from 32 Tamang households, employing a descriptive ethnographic research design. The findings reveal significant gender disparities in decision-making, with males holding the majority of power in family affairs such as seeking treatment and schooling, while females have limited involvement. Women's participation in decision-making related to family planning and childbearing is also constrained. The study*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal



*highlights a gender-specific division of labour, where females bear the primary responsibility for household tasks. Male participation in these activities is minimal, reinforcing traditional gender norms and limiting women's engagement in public spheres. This research provides valuable insights into the gendered dynamics within the Tamang community, shedding light on the challenges faced by women in decision-making processes and household responsibilities.*

[**Keywords** : Gender, Gender roles, Household decision-making, Tamang]

## **1. Introduction**

The concept of gender encompasses the behaviors, roles, and relationships between men and women within societies. It is influenced by various factors such as social, cultural, economic, political, and ecological elements (Goverman & Gurung, 2001). Unlike biological sex, which refers to the inherent physical differences between males and females, gender roles are socially constructed and can vary significantly across different countries and even within different regions of a country. For instance, the types of activities deemed appropriate for men and women differ across societies, organizations, and cultures. These roles and attitudes are not fixed and can vary based on age, social class, caste, ethnicity, and other contextual factors. Gender roles shape the division of labour, with tasks and responsibilities assigned based on societal norms. This includes production-related activities, reproductive duties, and social/community management roles (Goverman & Gurung, 2001).

The valuation of these tasks differs for men and women, leading to differential access and control over resources, decision-making processes, and the benefits derived from them (Geetha, 2002). These gendered access dynamics are socially constructed and impact various aspects of life, including resource allocation, power dynamics, and overall well-being. Understanding the complexities of gendered decision-making and its implications is crucial for promoting equality and challenging traditional gender norms. Examining and questioning the existing gender arrangements can help identify alternative approaches that value and embrace diversity (Geetha, 2002).

Gender roles and relations are socially constructed and exhibit variations across cultures and social groups, influenced by factors such as class, ethnicity, education, technology, economy, and crises (Oakley, 1972; Murphy, 1962; Hartley, 1966; Murdock, 1937;

Malinowski, 1963; Chakravarti, 1993; Luitel & Joshi, 1988). Traditional gender roles undergo transformations in response to these factors, albeit with limitations imposed on both men and women. Research indicates that gender roles and relations often rely on stereotypes associated with female behavior, reinforcing gendered expectations (Oakley, 1972).

Socialization plays a crucial role in perpetuating gender constructions within different societies and cultures. During the process of socializing children, the social and cultural aspects of gender are reinforced through gestures, behaviors, and symbolic ideologies (Luitel, 2008). At birth, newborns are not only assigned a sex but are also assigned a gender, with cultural expressions of congratulations and comments like “smart boy” or “pretty baby girl” reflecting gender aspirations prevalent in many societies. Such attitudes indicate biases and preferences towards specific genders, influencing the opportunities and support that individuals receive for their future development (Luitel, 2008). Research suggests that differential treatment towards male and female children begins as early as infancy, with mothers spending more time with male infants compared to female infants (Oakley, 1972).

These observations indicate that gender roles and relations are not solely acquired mechanically from parents but are shaped through a variety of interactions. Gender roles are primarily learned through the socialization process and are influenced by the cultural context of a particular society. In Nepal, women face social, cultural, and political biases within the traditional male-dominated society. They experience limited access to education and employment opportunities, reduced power and agency, and minimal authority to initiate actions (Dangol, 2010). Economic dependence on men is prevalent, as men are traditionally regarded as assertive and bread-winners, with a focus on material success. Women are predominantly confined to household and domestic activities, while their roles as decision-makers are often undermined or discouraged within households and society (Dangol, 2010). Despite significant contributions as labour and mentors, women’s roles are frequently underestimated and not recognized as valuable economic activities (Dangol, 2010).

Numerous studies have attempted to explain gender roles and relations across various societies through books and newspaper

articles. However, these findings required further clarification through sociological analysis. The purpose of this study is to analyze the gender roles and decision-making processes within the Tamang community. The specific objectives of the study are to explore and identify the specific gender roles and decision-making processes that exist within the study area. Additionally, the study aims to analyze the social and cultural conditions that influence these gender roles and decision-making dynamics within the Tamang community. By achieving these objectives, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in gender relations and decision-making processes within a specific cultural context.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Feminist Theory**

Numerous feminist theories have emerged to explain gender roles and relations, each rooted in different ideologies. Liberal feminism advocates for gradual changes in the political, economic, and social status of women, emphasizing the need for equal opportunities and the elimination of gender-based discrimination (Ritzer, 1992). Marxist feminism combines Marxist class analysis with feminist social protest, highlighting the interplay of class and gender inequality (Barrett, 1989; Mitchell, 1975; Sargent, 1981). Radical feminism focuses on the sex/gender system as the fundamental cause of women's oppression, delving into the dynamics of gender relationships (Jaggar, 1983). Socialist feminism critiques the gender-blindness of Marxist feminism and argues for the simultaneous overthrow of capitalism and patriarchy (Ritzer, 1992).

Third-wave feminism emphasizes the experiences of marginalized groups within the feminist movement, such as women of color, and highlights diversity among women (Ritzer, 1992). Psychoanalytic feminism draws on Sigmund Freud's theories, emphasizing the role of subconscious and unconscious influences in shaping personality development and maintaining patriarchy (Ritzer, 1992). Postmodern feminism critiques patriarchal aspects of society and embraces diversity, rejecting essentialist conceptions of femininity (Olson, 1996). Third World minorities feminism focuses on the empowerment of minority women through modest political and economic concessions (Arquiza, 2012).

## **2.2 Gender Analysis Framework**

Gender analysis frameworks are essential tools for examining gender differences and inequalities in society and understanding their implications for development. These frameworks provide structured approaches to analyze various aspects of gender dynamics. Five commonly used frameworks have emerged:

The Harvard Analytical Framework, also known as the Gender Roles Framework, emphasizes the importance of allocating resources to both women and men in development efforts, highlighting the efficiency of such an approach (Overholt, 1985). The Moser Gender Planning Framework, developed by Caroline Moser, recognizes women's roles in production, reproduction, and community management. It assesses their specific needs and examines their access to resources (Moser, 1983).

The Gender Analysis Matrix is a community-based tool that encourages active participation and engagement from the community. It facilitates the identification of gender differences and challenges prevailing assumptions about gender roles and responsibilities (Parker, 1993). The Women's Empowerment Framework, formulated by Sara Hlupekile Longwe, takes a political perspective, emphasizing that women's poverty is a result of oppression and exploitation. It proposes five levels of equality – control, participation, conscientisation, access, and welfare – to guide the assessment of development interventions (Longwe, 1995).

The Social Relations Approach, developed by Naila Kabeer, adopts a structural feminist perspective. It goes beyond individual roles and analyzes gender inequalities within broader social and institutional contexts, aiming to identify and address factors that constrain women (Kabeer, 1994). These frameworks offer valuable analytical tools for understanding the complexities of gender dynamics and informing the design of inclusive and gender-responsive development policies and interventions.

## **3. Study Area and Methodology**

The study area for this research is Pauwa, located in Bhumlutar Village of Kavrepalanchok district. Pauwa, specifically, is chosen as the study area due to its significance as a primary residential area of the Tamang community in Kavrepalanchok district and to address the research gap and gain insights into the gender roles and relations within the Tamang community, specifically in Pauwa village.

The research design used in this study is primarily descriptive ethnographic research. It involves recording observed events and providing a thick description of the culture and ways of life, with a special focus on analyzing gender roles and relations. The study area consists of 32 Tamang households, and non-probability sampling was employed as the population is relatively homogenous. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used, including observation, interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions. Observation was conducted to understand the lifestyle and situation of the study area, while interviews gathered qualitative data on the roles of Tamang men and women in various domains.

Questionnaires were used to collect information on social, cultural, and economic conditions, family size, marital status, occupation, education, and gender roles and relations. Key informant interviews were conducted with six individuals to generate key data on gender roles and relations. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and simple statistical methods, involving the identification of relevant themes and concepts, organizing materials accordingly, and developing generalizations. Descriptive analysis was applied to various aspects such as the physical setting of the village, climate, economic aspects, agriculture system, and women's roles and relations. Demographic features were analyzed descriptively and statistically. Quantitative data were analyzed using computer software packages.

## **4. Data Presentation and Analysis**

### **4.1 Decision-making Role in Family Affairs Activities**

Table-1 depicts decision-making role in family affairs activities on next page. It is evident that the decision-making roles in family affairs activities between male and female seems different. The research conducted in 2023 showed that in Tamang community out of the 32 informants there was a gender variation in decision-making processes within the family.

The case of decision taking for seeking treatment of the family members 26 (81.25%) out of the 32 informants are male and only 02 (6.25%) decision takers are female. Only 02 (6.25%) informants say that the decision is taken on the basis of consensus of the male and female. Only 08 informants have knowledge about the family planning methods and among them the decision takers were 05 (15.62%) were male and 01 (3.12%) are female. The only 02 (6.25%)

informants have taken the decision on consensus of male and female. It shows the inferior position of women in decision-making process in family affair activities. Only 02 (6.25%) female decides to burn the child as their wish (Table-1).

**Table-1 : Decision-making Role in Family Affairs Activities**

Activities	Decision Maker						Total H.H
	Male	%age	Female	%age	Both	%age	
Seeking Treatment	26	81.25	02	6.25	02	6.25	30
Schooling of children	20	62.5	02	6.25	10	31.25	32
Use of family planning methods	05	15.62	01	3.12	02	6.25	08
Seeking Child	26	81.25	02	6.25	04	12.5	32

Source : Field Survey, 2023

#### 4.2 Gender Roles in Household Activities

Table-2 shows the gender division of labor within the household activities. Tamang society of the study area shows the gender specific roles and relation in off-farm activities. The involvement of female in household activities is significant as compare to that of male counterpart.

**Table-2 : Gender Roles in Household Activities**

Household Activities	Number of Respondents						Total
	Male	%age	Female	%age	Both	%age	
Cooking	01	3.12	31	96.88	00	00	32
Cleaning	01	3.12	31	96.88	00	00	32
Fetching	01	3.12	29	90.63	02	6.25	32
Washing	01	3.12	31	96.88	00	00	32
Collecting Fodder	01	3.12	24	75	07	21.88	32
Caring Livestock	01	3.12	16	50	15	46.88	32

Source : Field Survey, 2023.

Almost all the activities in domestic affairs fall as responsibility of the women. The participation of female was higher than male in all



aspects of household affairs in the above table. In my study area, the respondents replied that in collecting fodders and care taking of livestock both male and female participation is also significant. The males participation in cooking, cleaning, fetching water, washing dishes and clothes is very low (3.12%, 3.12%, 3.12%, and 3.12% respectively) due to which women's should be engaged into this kind of work and loses the chance of exposure in public sphere. Respondents believe that all of the above works are for female and male do that work when the female members of the family are absent (FGD, 2023). There is a belief among the respondents that to conduct such types of household activities are female duties.

### 4.3 Gender Roles in Household Decision-making Process

By and large involvement of women in decision-making at households activities has remained low as compared to that of men. However, women's involvement in decision-making is not the same for all cultural groups.

**Table-3 : Gender Roles in Decision-making Activities in Tamang Community**

Activities	Number of Respondents						Total
	Male	%age	Female	%age	Both	%age	
Buying and selling grains	17	53.12	15	46.88	00	00	32
Control of the households wealth	16	50	15	46.88	01	3.12	32
Purchase goods/commodities from the market	17	53.12	15	46.88	00	00	32
Decision in household matter	20	62.5	10	31.25	02	6.25	32
Final decision for spending money in social, cultural and religious ceremonies	21	65.62	11	34.37	00	00	32

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The above table indicates the gender roles variation in decision-making activities in Tamang community. My study found that out of the 32 informants 17 (53.13%) male and 15 (46.88%) female

were involved in decision-making activities of buying and selling grains. The involvement of male and female in control of the household's wealth, purchase goods/commodities from the market, decision in household matter, and final decision for spending money in social, cultural and religious ceremonies is 16 (15%) and 15 (46.88%), 17 (53.12%) and 15 (46.88%), 20 (62.5%) and 10 (31.25%), and 21 (65.62%) and 11 (34.37) respectively.

#### 4.4 Gender Roles and Relations in Community Level Activities

Community level activities are generally perceived as falling into the 'men's sphere'. This perception arises because women are 'invisible' when activities outside the household are considered. In Pauwa, there are few community activities. The people explained that (FGD, 2023) religious ceremonies are generally celebrated together by the Tamang. When such ceremonies are performed, the organization is equally shared by men and women, but the purchase of items for the ceremony is mainly undertaken by men only. Arrangements are undertaken by women and the girls assist as well. The ceremonies are attended by men, women, and children (See table-4). Community meetings are generally attended by men because it involves leaving the homestead.

**Table-4 : Gender Roles and Relations in Community Level Activities**

Community Activities	M/W/G/B	Comments
Ceremonies and celebrations	M/W/G/B	
Organizing	M/W	Predominantly
Arranging	W/G	Predominantly
Purchase of items for ceremonies	M	Predominantly
Attendance	M/W/G/B	
Community meetings	M/W/G/B	
Clubs	M/B	Predominantly
Mothers' group	W	Predominantly
Political meetings	M/B	Predominantly

**Note :** M = Man; W = Woman; G = Girl; B = Boy

Usually, all people participate in ceremonies and celebrations but women play the most important role and undertake organization, arrangement, and attendance at ceremonies, especially religious ones because these are believed to be the responsibility of

women. The men perform market activities, and they also attend the ceremonies. The women attend meetings concerning Mothers' group activities.

#### 4.5 Decision-making Roles in Cultural Practices

In the case of Nepal women possess different power and prestige in different communities. The high caste women in the hills and Tarai have low decision-making power owing to a subordinate position to men while the ethnic women of mountain and hill have high decision-making power (CEDA, 1982). Opposite is the case of Rana Tharus of Kailali where wife holds a prime position inside household. It is a practice that the wife pushes the plate with her foot while serving main food to her husband to show her superior status. However in the total cultural context men occupy high position due to patriarchal social system of the society (Luitel and Joshi, 1988). In this study, I have tried to highlight the fact that different socio-cultural and traditional norms and values have impact in decision-making roles.

**Table-5 : Decision-making Roles in Social Cultural Practices**

Activities	Decision Makers						Total H.H
	Male	%age	Female	%age	Both	%age	
Festival celebrating	20	62.5	10	31.25	02	6.25	32
Religious ceremonies	20	62.5	10	31.25	02	6.25	32
Life-cycle rituals	20	62.5	10	31.25	02	6.25	32
Final Decision	21	65.62	11	31.25	00	00	32

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023.

The research conducted in Pauwa village revealed the fact that women also involved in decision-making process in social cultural practices. Out of the 32 household for celebrating feast and festivals, religious ceremonies and life-cycle rituals, in 20 (62.5%) households the decision was done by male. In 10 (31.25%) households the decision was done by female. And remaining 02 (6.25%) households male and female jointly decided. Out of the 32 households, about 21 (65.62%) households the final decision is taken by male and 11 (31.25%) households by female. This table shows that the participation of female in decision-making process in celebrating social and cultural practices is lower than male counterpart.

#### 4.6 Gender Roles and Relations in Economic Activities

Agriculture is the backbone of the Nepalese economy. Women's role in agricultural production is main input. Women take substantial contribution to uphold domestic economy. Their share in the labour force continues to rise, they are becoming more involved in micro small and medium enterprises, and their income is becoming increasingly necessarily to all households. However, women are largely excluded from economic decision-making. They face low wages poor working conditions and limited employment and professional opportunity. Though women contribute to develop through paid as well as unpaid work such as domestic and community work is not measured in quantitative terms and not valued in national accounts.

**Table-6 : Gender Roles in the Agricultural Activities**

Agricultural activities	Number of Respondents						Total
	Male	%age	Female	%age	Both	%age	
Seed selection	15	46.8	11	34.4	06	18.75	32
Planting	01	3.12	30	93.75	01	3.12	32
Weeding	00	--	27	84.37	05	15.62	32
Use of fertilizer	28	87.5	04	12.5	00	--	32
Harvesting	12	37.5	06	18.75	14	43.75	32
Land preparation	30	93.75	02	6.25	00	--	32

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The above table shows the respondents' perception about the women's personal condition. Out of the 32 respondents only 01 male informant feels that the status of women in Tamang society is excellent. Out of the 32 male and female informants 08 (25%) male and 16 (50%) female informants feel that the condition of women in Tamang society is satisfactory. Only 02 (6.25%) male and 05 (15.62%) female informants feel that the women condition is worse.

In the household even though women's work is vital, it is invisible, undervalued, unrecognized, and unpaid. Women around the world work twice as many hours as men and in most parts of the world their labour is vital to the family's survival. The assumption that household work is only women's work has limited women

inside household. Her work inside the household is also looked down upon as not being 'real' work just because it does not bring cash in hand. The universal belief that women work within the household and have little access to outside work is not true for all the societies. In most of the modern industrialized and developed/developing societies women have started to join the job market equally as men to meet the family needs. But there is little sharing by men in the household chores, baby care and other reproductive works conventionally done by women which has reinforced women to bear the triple burden (Moser, 1983).

## **5. Major Findings**

Major findings that emerge in this study may be summarized as under :

- ▶▶ Out of the 32 informants there was a gender variation in decision-making processes within the family. The case of decision taking for seeking treatment of the family members 26 (81.25%) out of the 32 informants are male and only 02 (6.25%) decision takers are female. Only 02 (6.25%) informants say that the decision is taken on the basis of consensus of the male and female.
- ▶▶ Only 08 informants have knowledge about the family planning methods and among them the decision takers were 05 (15.62%) were male and 01 (3.12%) are female.
- ▶▶ Although the household heads are female, they don't have equal decision-making rights as compare to that of male household heads.
- ▶▶ The involvement of female in household activities is significant as compare to that of male counterpart. In collecting fodders and care taking of livestock both male and female participation is also significant. The male's participation in cooking, cleaning, fetching water, washing dishes and clothes is very low. There is a belief among the respondents that to conduct such types of household activities are female duties.
- ▶▶ Both male and female are involving in decision-making activities in households affairs but the final decision is influence by the male side. There is a dominant role to take final decision in spending money in social, cultural, and religious ceremonies among the Tamang households.

- ▶▶ Religious ceremonies are generally celebrated together by the Tamang. When such ceremonies are performed, the organization is equally shared by men and women, but the purchase of items for the ceremony is mainly undertaken by men only. Arrangements are undertaken by women and the girls assist as well. The ceremonies are attended by men, women, and children.
- ▶▶ Usually, all people participate in ceremonies and celebrations but women play the most important role and undertake organization, arrangement, and attendance at ceremonies, especially religious ones because these are believed to be the responsibility of women. The men perform market activities, and they also attend the ceremonies. The women attend meetings concerning Mothers' group activities.
- ▶▶ In Pauwa village out of the participated respondents 06 (25%) female informants are involved in Mothers' Group and 02 (75%) informants are involved in Clubs.
- ▶▶ The participation of female in decision-making process in celebrating social and cultural practices is lower than male counterpart.
- ▶▶ Out of the 32 respondents only 01 male informant feels that the status of women in Tamang society is excellent. Out of the 32 male and female informants 08 (25%) male and 16 (50%) female informants feel that the condition of women in Tamang society is satisfactory. Only 02 (6.25%) male and 05 (15.62%) female informants feel that the women condition is worse.
- ▶▶ There is a variation of gender roles and relations in agricultural activities. Data shows that in planting process the involvement of women is high. Weeding is seems exclusively of female job and use of fertilizer and land preparation goes to on male side. In the case of harvesting the involvement of male and female is almost equal.
- ▶▶ The research conducted in the Pauwa village found that there is equal wage rate between male and female for the similar works. Out of the 32 respondents total 11 male and 21 female respondents told that there is no gender based discrimination for the wage of similar works.



## **6. Conclusion**

This study tried to explore the gender roles and relations in Tamang community in Pauwa village, Kavre, Nepal. There is a gender variation in decision-making processes within the family. The decision takers for using family planning are male. Very few female decides to burn the child as their wish. Although the household heads are female, they don't have equal decision-making rights as compare to that of male household heads. The involvement of female in household activities is significant as compare to that of male counterpart. Almost all the activities in domestic affairs fall as responsibility of the women. The participation of female was higher than male in all aspects of household affairs. In collecting fodders and care taking of livestock both male and female participation is also significant. The male participation in cooking, cleaning, fetching water, washing dishes and clothes is very low and male do those work when the female members of the family are absent. There is a belief among the respondents that to conduct such types of household activities are female duties.

The gender roles are based and guided by the traditional values. Both male and female are involving in decision-making activities in households affairs but the final decision is influence by the male side. There is a dominant role to take final decision in spending money in social, cultural, and religious ceremonies among the Tamang households. Usually, all people participate in ceremonies and celebrations but women play the most important role and undertake organization, arrangement, and attendance at ceremonies, especially religious ones because these are believed to be the responsibility of women. The men perform market activities, and they also attend the ceremonies.

The participation of female in decision-making process in celebrating social and cultural practices is lower than male counterpart. There is a variation of gender roles and relations in agricultural activities. In planting process the involvement of women is high. Weeding is seems exclusively of female job and use of fertilizer and land preparation goes to on male side. In the case of harvesting the involvement of male and female is almost equal. In Tamang of Pauwa village do not perceive women as superior to men in any of the indicators recorded.

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## The Journey of Sattriya Dance through Time and Space

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*In November 2000, a five centuries old ritual dance form Sattriya Nritya became the eighth Indian classical dance form to be recognized by Sangeet Natak Akademi. Until then Sattriya Nritya was practiced and performed as a daily ritual, a mode of worship by celibate monks inside the Satra (monasteries) of Assam. Sattriya Nritya is a living ritual form that is still performed inside the Satra, and now on the proscenium stage by both male and female dancers. This relatively recent change of status of the ritual performance form, along with the inclusion of female dancers in the proscenium space has simultaneously brought about numerous changes in the cultural ecology of the Satra; its ritual dance Sattriya, allied rituals and customs as well as to the inhabitants of the space - monks. Although much has been written about Sattriya Nritya - the classical dance, very little is known about the journey the form has made towards receiving recognition as a major classical dance of India. This paper will attempt to build an analytical ethnographic narrative that critically investigates the transition of the form from a*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*daily ritual practice within the Satra to a classical dance form of the stage while providing a visual dossier of changes in costumes, make-up, and aesthetics. This paper will also briefly discuss the present status of the dance form in today's technology-oriented world.*

[**Keywords** : *Satra* system, Ritual, Classical dance, Representation, Belief, Nostalgia, Modernity, Invention of Tradition]

## 1. Introduction

*Sattriya Nritya* or the *Sattriya* dance is the recently recognized 'classical'<sup>1</sup> dance of India, whose performers - largely female dancers - have worked hard to make the form popular among the audience within and outside India since the early 1990s. The *Sattriya* dance in its form of ritual performance evolved in the precincts of the *Vaishnavite Satras* (monasteries) of Assam in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is a form practiced by the monks as a mode of worship of the principal deity Krishna/Vishnu and as a style of imparting mythological teachings to the people immediately and enjoyably. Among many ritual-art practices learned by the monks, this all-male dance form primarily began as an accompaniment of the *Vaishnavite* saint *Sankardeva's ankiya nat* (dramatic practice). *Sattriya* dance is the most well-known among all the *Satra* art forms. It is learned and practiced in a *gurukul* format (an education system wherein the student lives with the teacher, learning from him while helping him with his everyday chores). This format of learning by the monks is handed down along with orally transmitted ritual knowledge, without the involvement of any written text from one generation of monks to another. The form moved out of the *Satra* premises in the early 1950s. Women dancers already trained in other forms of classical dance played a major role in the process of popularizing the form.<sup>2</sup> As the first generation of teachers (mostly male) of the dance form altered and restructured its vocabulary, presentation, and theme to suit its new learners and audience, a new teaching and learning format emerged, and along with it a new presentational aesthetic, in anticipation of newer expectations of the changing space. Over the next fifty years, until it was given recognition from *Sangeet Natak Akademi* as the eighth 'classical' dance of India, the form became more structured and codified in its presentation.

However, inside the *Satra*, the presentations of the dances were done differently; each *Sattriya* dance piece has a specific time and

occasion for its performance as they are modes of worship. The monks learn these dances and other ritual arts of the *Satra* from a very young age, as a part of their lifestyle. All ritual arts, customs, and daily duties of the monks are inseparable from one another, and together they form the *Sattriya Sanskriti* (Sattriya culture). These dances and other *Satra* arts are generationally transferred ritual knowledge which doesn't involve any written text. It is an oral tradition; literally, the word-of-mouth phenomenon that preserves the history and appears in all disciplines of arts.<sup>3</sup> This knowledge of *Sattriya* is embodied. The presence of the monks in *Satra*; the way they live by the rules and regulations of the *Satra*, and their relationship – proximity to, and distance from the outside world, the way they present themselves, etc. can be seen as a performance. All the rituals and customs are rooted in their way of living; from the start of the day till its end, there are rituals that the monks have to periodically perform. Their bodies are the archives of this knowledge system, and the performance of this knowledge system by them gives us (outsiders) a visual entry into the functions of *Satra* which have been successively running for many generations. These *Satra* institutions are the foundation of the Assamese culture and society as we know it today; they play a central role in the integration of numerous tribes, and communities that construct the Assamese identity. They have been the conservation hubs of the religious and cultural heritage of the state, and the monks are the inheritors and propagators of this heritage. They live a life performing dedicated to the integrity of this institution, and this provides the outsiders with perceptible knowledge of the traditions and culture of the *Vaishnavite* religion. Therefore, when Diana Taylor writes, "*Performance also functions as an epistemology. Embodied practice, along with and bound up with other cultural practices offers a way of knowing*" (Taylor 2003 : 3). The everyday ritual performances of the monks become our entry into Vaishnavism and, the performance that we see on stage by the female dancers is the 'constructed' (Taylor 2003 : 3) form. It is a representation of a tiny fraction of the ritual *Sattriya* which we see on the secular stage.

The transformation of the ritual dances into a dance form of the stage most likely began in the early 1900s, when a young monk named Raseswar Saikia Borbayan defied his boundaries as a celibate



monk and moved out of the *Satra* to teach the living art of the *Satra*—the *Sattriya* dances, to women and men alike outside the *Satra* premises.<sup>4</sup> Unlike today where women are allowed inside some parts of the *Satra* premises, earlier this was not the case. Women were not only barred from entering the *Satra* premises but, the ritual arts of the *Satra* were also limited within its four walls, they were partially available for viewing by outsiders during religious occasions. In 1955, the *Sattriya* dance was presented on the National stage for the first time in the National Dance Festival, where a group of monks from *Kamalabari Satra* demonstrated the various aspects of the form as performed in the monastery. In the first-ever All India Dance Seminar held in Delhi in 1958, monks from the old *Kamalabari Satra* performed the *Sattriya* dance presenting many dances that required them to impersonate female characters as well.<sup>5</sup> This particular period was an exciting time for *Sattriya* dance, as many artists, performers, scholars, and intellectuals were taking an interest in this ritual form of dance, and doing their best to explore and expand this dance on the local as well as national platforms. These initiatives and events mark the beginning of the journey that the ritual dances of the *Satra* made to become one of the classical dances of the nation.

## 2. Methodology

This paper follows an interdisciplinary approach of historiography and ethnography. I have tried to historically and socially place *Sattriya Nritya* in its past and present locations by creating a historical/historiographical analysis of its past (from 1950 - 2000) to be able to locate the push and pull from within and outside that generated its historical journey towards aspirations and acquiring of a “classical” status. Extensive interviews with monks, dancers, and performers, and field visits to Majuli (esp. Uttar *Kamalabari Satra*) have been critical in building this analytical narrative. Books and articles by Dr. Maheswar Neog, Dr. Sunil Kothari, Professor Pradip Jyoti Mahanta, and others are important sources for this paper.

## 3. Monks and Artists who made History

While researching about the time *Sattriya* first came out of the *Satra* premises, I met with Sri Druno Bhagawati, an art connoisseur, a friend of Raseswar Saikia, and a Block Development Officer of Majuli

in the 1950s. The 1950s Majuli Island was nothing like today. Communication and traveling to the island was limited, access to modern resources were scarce. The *Satra* structures were rigid, the ritual arts were restricted to the *Satra* premises and, more precisely, to men. Women could only be observers of these arts from an appropriate distance and their communications with celibate monks were limited. Druno Bhagawati informed that, it was during this time that the young celibate monk Raseswar Saikia became his acquaintance. Saikia also came in contact with other like-minded officials who encouraged him to explore and expand the horizon of his art practices of the *Satra*. Saikia, who used to volunteer in welfare work in his village, gradually took an interest in teaching Sattriya dances to both men & women. This invited trouble his way, and he was summoned for a hearing in the *Satra*, where elderly monks, *Sattradhikar* (Head of the *Satra* institution) and others forbade him from teaching the arts of *Satra* to women.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps, it was the influence of his new acquaintances, along with his aspirations of broadening the field of *Satra* arts that prompted Saikia to leave the celibate *Satra* order after he refused to oblige by the norms of the institute.<sup>7</sup>

In the then *Satra* system, formal education was not given much importance and neither was any professional job. A monk was supposed to beg, cultivate a piece of land or rear cattle to fulfill his livelihood requirements.<sup>8</sup> This kind of living ceased to exist when many Ahom rulers became patrons of some *Satra*. However the Kamalabari<sup>9</sup> *Satra* did not receive any such patronage and continued to follow the ascetic lifestyle. After Independence many young monks like Raseswar Saikia aspired to lead a better life, acquire higher education, flourish in their art practices, and have a professional career. Yet, it wasn't until Raseswar Saikia led the way to a world of arts outside the *Satra* premises, that monks gradually started moving away from the *Satra* tradition to explore the world outside.<sup>10</sup>

Among many monks Maniram Dutta Muktiyar Borbayan was noticed by the connoisseurs outside the *Satra*, even though he never moved away from the *Satra* tradition. He was the Adhyapak (teacher) of Raseswar Saikia and Ghanakanta Bora Borbayan, another talented monk who trained many male and female dancers outside the *Satra*. Maniram Dutta Muktiyar, along with Dr. Maheswar Neog conducted research into *Satra* melodies and

rhythms and later producing many audio recordings and publications.<sup>11</sup> Dutta was a scintillating performer and a dedicated teacher. His contribution towards propagation and dissemination of the Sattriya arts is profound and well known.

In the following years scholar and dance critic Sunil Kothari visited Kamalabari *Satra* with the help of Dr. Neog (1966). This was an important moment in the journey of the *Sattriya* dances with Sunil Kothari there to document the dances of the *Satra*, which he later edits into a special issue for Marg Publications, in the series of issues on other dance forms such as *Bharatanatyam*, *Kathak*, and *Manipuri* among others. Kothari a dance writer and cultural historian played a major role in discovering and introducing many dance forms to the national platform. His regular newspaper columns, articles, reports on cultural festivals, and a few dozen books on Indian culture and dance surely assisted in the process of classicization of certain traditional forms. The modern patron state creates such 'experts' like Kothari to justify and construct the categories of forms and sometimes, even justify their cultural policies. Therefore, his visit to the *Satras* was a turning point in the journey of the *Satra* dances.

Mr. Kothari visited Majuli twice, and during his second visit to Kamalabari *Satra* in 1971, he was accompanied by Dr Neog and Dr Richmond Farley from Michigan University USA. These scholars witnessed several performances of the *Sattriya* repertoire, and were drawn by various elements which according to them qualified Sattriya as a classical dance.<sup>12</sup> From this time onwards artists, writers, academicians, politicians, and dancers came together and sought to represent *Sattriya* on the world platform, and to publicize and promote the form. Under the joint initiative of artist Rudra Baruah, President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, and Jogendra Nath Saikia (MLA) Sattriya was performed in Indonesia in 1975. Deepali Das and Sharodi Saikia were the first female dancers to perform *Sattriya* abroad along with monks from both Uttar and Natun Kamalabari *Satra*.<sup>13</sup> This was an important direction for the dance form.

With *Sattriya* dance reaching new platforms for presentation, the inclusion of female dancers in the male-body centric ritual dance form brought about many changes, modifications, eliminations, and additions of various aesthetics, thematic and choreographic elements. This further pushed the evolution of a ritual form of dance to become a dance form for the proscenium stage. Kalaguru Bishnu

Prasad Rabha<sup>14</sup> collaborated with Raseswar Saikia and together they developed *abhinaya* on *Shlokas* which was not present in the *Satra* dance system before. It was in 1967 that Saikia also inscribed beats to the *Mati Akhara* (warm-up exercises performed on the ground before dancing)<sup>15</sup> for the first time. With the efforts of Saikia, a systematic vocabulary of the *Sattriya* dances began to grow, which made the dances more presentable for the stage format. The collaborations between Saikia, Bishnu Prasad Rabha, and his student Sri Jatin Goswami<sup>16</sup> shaped many *Ankiya Nat* where many female dancers and actresses took part.<sup>17</sup> By now many dance schools had started teaching the *Sattriya* to female dancers coming from various communities in Assam. Raseswar Saikia established *Sangeet Satra*, a *Sattriya* dance & music school in Guwahati, and gradually many other schools were also established.

#### **4. Socio-political Scenario of Assam and Sattriya Nritya**

While studying the evolution of ritual *Sattriya* as a classical dance, one has to take into consideration the socio-political context of Assam during that particular time. The demand for classical recognition came from the artist fraternity, monks and the bureaucratic community of Assam after Independence, at a time when Assam, the former province of the British Government was facing political unrest from 1962 onwards with the Indo-China war, and the administrators in Delhi deciding to abandon Assam to the Chinese aggressors. It was also a time when the vast territory of Assam was divided into new states. The Assamese-Bengali language divide and student led Assam movement from 1979 to 1985 was a period of grave political unrest with the influx of immigrants from Bangladesh,<sup>18</sup> which still continues. The early 1990s saw the emergence of the infamous insurgent organization, United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) which demanded separation from the Indian state. Within this backdrop of unrest and chaos, came the demand for classical recognition of *Sattriya* dances of the *Vaishnavite* monasteries of Assam. Even after multiple attempts *Sattriya* did not receive classical recognition until 2000. However, there were small efforts to pacify the growing mistrust of the Assamese people towards the Indian State by presenting SNA awards to artists Mitra Deb Mahanta in 1961 and Maniram Dutta Muktiyar Borbayan in 1962. Scholar Arshiya Sethi writes that these efforts were attempts at appeasing the

Assamese community by making a special arrangement for *Sattriya* in the section of 'other traditional dances'<sup>19</sup>, as in those days the SNA awards were given to artists who were considered to be experts of forms that were already recognized as 'traditional' or 'classical'.

It was only after 15 years of signing the Assam Accord in 1985, and clause 6 of which clearly stated that: "Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards will be provided for the preservation, promotion and upliftment of culture of the people of Assam", that the Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra was established along with institutions such as the Jyoti Chitraban Film Studio<sup>20</sup>, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2000 *Sattriya* finally received its due recognition. Sethi in her article *An overlay of the political : the recognition of Sattriya* (2015), describes the inclusion of *Sattriya* among the classical dance forms of India as less of a recognition of artistic endeavour by the artists and scholars of Assam and more of a political agenda of the Indian state, to lull the growing anger of the Assamese people towards the biased functioning and decision making of the authorities in Delhi. While this may appear to be true given the context of Assam's socio-political development, one cannot deny the persistent efforts of the broader artist community of Assam, and many supportive bureaucrats towards making *Sattriya* a classical dance form of India. This was not just recognition of a dance form, but the recognition of the larger Assamese cultural identity. In a country like India, with multiple nationalities<sup>21</sup> and diverse cultural identities, the cultural consciousness that developed with the rise of post-independence nationalism was the prime factor behind the relentless struggles of the people of Assam to secure a visible position in the national platform. In a regional context nationalism meant protecting one's unique cultural identities and traditional homeland,<sup>22</sup> which was threatened within the new sovereign country. However, the sub-nationalist tendency that Assam showed provided very few benefits. Thus, belonging to a larger community of states, earning visible recognitions in cultural forums etc. became more apparent and led to the stalling of the separatist ideas. Additionally, many economic benefits too came with the integration with the mainland India, than striking alone.

Correspondingly, the rising cultural nationalism in many other states of independent India, which encouraged artists, connoisseurs, and generations of litterateurs and scholars to revive and revitalize past art traditions, meant that Assam did not want to stay behind in



this race. Therefore, many efforts were made to revitalize the traditional arts which in this framework included Sattriya dance. Scholars like Dr. Neog undertook an exploratory journey, particularly of the available *Vaishnavite* literature composed by Sankardeva and Madhabdeva and found rich associations with traditional texts. Along with other litterateurs and artists Dr. Neog also promoted the entire gamut of *Satra* arts under the name of 'Sattriya' and after nearly 40 years of deliberations since its first demand for classical recognition in 1958, the dance form got its desired recognition.

However, these ritual dances did not have a simple, linear journey in order to become a classical dance form. It had to include female dancers in an all-male form, it had to find affiliations to traditional texts such as *Sri Hastamuktavali* by Subhankar Kavi, *Bharata's Natyashastra*, and the *Abhinayadarpana*, and transform the ensemble ritual dances into a solo form. While, Sankardeva used his creative genius to integrate many ethnic rituals and cultural elements into the Vaishnavite art forms and create its vocabularies – gestures, foot works etc. from vernacular languages which are self-explanatory and orally transmitted, the new form on the other hand had to adapt new changes in teaching and learning methods, aesthetics and presentational styles.

## **5. Aesthetic Changes, Training, and Performance of Sattriya Dance on Stage vis-a-vis Satra**

*Aharjya* – costumes and make-up, plays a significant role in the ritual performance of the *Satra*. Though the monks do not dress up or apply make-up in their everyday ritual performances, they have specific costumes and make-up for every dancer-actor in *nat*/drama and independent dance numbers which are followed strictly while performing on occasional ritual festivals and events. In the *Satra*, the principle of using *Aharjya* is similar to that of the *Natyashastra*; however, *Satra* has its own assortments which are influenced by indigenous designs, motifs, and patterns.<sup>23</sup> As an important visual marker of a dance form, it was the costumes that underwent major change and re-structuring while the form moved from the *Satra* to the stage. In the *Satra* the costumes and make-up are usually prepared from locally sourced and affordable materials, but the costumes and make-up of stage is couture and made from expensive fabrics. Smt. Gorima Hazarika, an already established *Odissi* dancer who later



learned *Sattriya* from Raseswar Saikia suggested the use of Pat silk textile to make the costumes for the stage. This costume had a special significance for the dancers, as it gave them a 'look' that could be specifically recognized. Today we find the use of other textiles of similar texture in making the costumes. But, in the *Satra* whenever the monks wear costumes during special occasions, their costumes are made out of affordable Chiffon, Satin, Nets, and Velvet like materials. Another difference between stage and *Satra* pertains to the make-up used by the artists. In the *Satra*, they apply heavy and elaborate make-up which is different from the make-up used by the dancers of stage.

Jagannath Mahanta in his book writes, "...certain colours represent certain characteristics and moods' is followed in the *Satra* with intense inclination and due care. Usually the colour patterns are determined here on the basis of gender, class (*devata*, *manushya* etc.) caste (*Brahmana*, *ksatriya* etc.) and behavioural aspects of the characters". This is similar to what Bharata writes about *alamkaras* in *Natyashastra*. Besides, in the earlier performances of the *Satra*, there was a lack of elaborate lighting during performances, therefore, the use of extravagant make-up helped in making the expressions of the performer clearer and more visible to the crowd. Although the dancers of the stage follow the same principle and format of applying make-up, it is different from the *Satra* style. For stage, they hire professional make-up artists, apply modern and expensive products. Furthermore, in *Satra* there is a designated make-up artist known as a *Khanikar*, who is trained in the art of painting, making costumes, mask making and effigy making. He is proficient in the production of colours from natural materials as well. However, a stage performer does not require an expert *Khanikar*, since artists and professionals are hired for production and execution of a performance. With the presentation of dances on the proscenium stage, not only did the scale of performance, production quality, costumes, make-up and other presentational aspects become more glamorous and grand, but the stage performers started to experiment with the themes of performance as well.

In today's *Satras* we now also see changes in terms of using easily available ready-made make-up products and costumes, modern lightings inside the Naamghar to make the performance look more impressive. We see changes in presentational styles as well, which are influences of secular presentations of stage.



**Figure-1** : Dancer Ranjumoni Saikia in Sota Posture. This is the dress for Jhumura Nach on stage, made out of cotton, affordable silk and velvet like material. (© Ranjumoni Saikia)



**Figure-2** : This costume is made out of Gadi diya Pat or Nuni Pat. It is a cheaper alternative of Pat silk, similar to the cotton fabric. (© Ranjumoni Saikia)



**Figure-3** : Dancer Sharodi Saikia in a Sota Posture. The costume she is wearing was the revised costume made using Pat silk for Chali nach. Every item of cloth that the dancer is wearing is made out of Pat silk. And all ornaments are native to Assam – Gamkharu (bangles) Gol Pota, Dhul Biri and Dug Dugi as necklaces. (© Ranjumoni Saikia)



**Figure-4** : Dancer Mridusmita Das Bora as Arjun in the abhinaya piece 'Krishna Arjun'. For this performance the dancer has experimented with the costume; she is wearing a dhoti and a blouse which is heavily ornamentalized and the fabrics used are silk, chiffon, and net. The Jewellery is also different from the usual range of Assamese jewellery; she is wearing different neck and head accessories from the usual ones. (© Mridusmita Das Bora)



**Figure-5** : Mridusmita Das Bora performing at Moghai Ojah Srijan Award Event 2018. The costume she is wearing is a version of Assamese silk. In Sattriya dances, the dancer does not wear colourful costumes other than dresses made out of white Pat silk fabric with different patterns in red, yellow, green, and blue colours at the border of the dress. (©Mridusmita Das Bora)

Figures-1, 2 & 3 present the change of textile of the Sattriya costume. As the dances became more accustomed to the stage format, the costumes visibly became more glamorous. The Figures-4 & 5 are from Moghai Ojah Srijan Award Event 2018. This event was organized by dancer Mridusmita Das Bora and her Guru Sri Ramakrishna Talukdar. Like many *Sattriya* dance performances of current times, the key performance of this event was an abhinaya piece 'Krishan Arjun'. The performance also included other pure dance numbers from the repertoire of Sattriya dances. This entire performance experimented and explored with the music, costumes, lights, and the overall presentation of the performance.<sup>24</sup>

## 6. Training & Presentation of the Sattriya Dances

The training of the dance differs in both the spaces, as the purpose of performance, and the function of the dance differs in different spaces. *Sattriya* is the mode of worship in the *Satra* and, seen as a way of surrendering, gifting oneself to the God. It is an intense process of training and practice that the monks have to undergo in order to become an expert in the dance and allied practices. *Sattriya* for the monks is a part of their daily life activities. All rituals,

customs, activities of the *Satra* are seen as a whole; the dances and music, playing of instruments, learning to read the scriptures, mask making, performing nat on special occasions, performance of the daily prayers etc. everything together is the 'Sattriya culture/Sattriya tradition'<sup>25</sup>. Therefore, for the monks the training in the ritual arts is an intense internalized process wherein they learn to make these art forms a part of their daily routine from a very young age. When a young boy arrives at the institute he is gradually initiated into the daily practices by his caretaker—like attending the *puwageet* (early morning songs) sessions, assisting other monks in cleaning the *Naamghar* (prayer hall) and the *Satra* premises, then practicing the *Mati Akhara* and steadily moving on to practice other dances. In the evenings they have separate sessions of training in playing *Khol*, learning *Borgeets* (devotional songs) and *Bhatima* (songs about life and works of Srimanta Sankardeva as composed by Madhabdeva) etc.<sup>26</sup> This holistic training, it prepares the young boys for 'monkhood' or life as celibate monks, learning, performing, teaching, and following the rituals and customs of the *Satra* order.

Unlike the monks, the professional dancers of the stage have a different format of training. It does not involve knowing all the arts of the *Satra* and students only learn the dance in a specific arrangement designed to complement the stage, to appeal to the audience. Despite the fact that the dancers work hard to perfect each and every move, gestures and postures and endure long hours of strenuous practice, the intensity of the training in each space is different. The dancers of the stage prepare to present a performing art form to an audience that might be completely unaware of the *Satra* and its tradition. For the audience it is a dance performance; a mode of entertainment, of recreation which they hope will give them a glimpse of the 'traditional Indian culture'. The professional stage dancers are considered the ambassadors of a higher Indian culture, and hence, they have to be very careful about the presentation of the form. They need to make the form look more spectacular and refined, in order to keep the audience fascinated for the duration of the performance. The goal of both the monks and the dancers of the stage are different and so is their training process.

*Nrityacharjya* Sri Jatin Goswami, points out two basic differences in the *Sattriya* training for both the monks and the stage dancers (who are mostly female) : a) the first difference is in the



training of *Mati Akhara*. The first ground exercise is Dondabod/Khosoka, where the Guru/*Adhyapak* makes the student lay face down, flat on the ground and massages the entire body with his feet. This is done to open up the student's body. This exercise is skipped by the male Guru while training the female dancers, who begin with the second *Mati Akhara* i.e. Ora (the basic stance of the form) b) In the *Satra* format of training, the monks learn to play the Khol (drums) along with learning the dances. It is compulsory for them to become a Bayan (singer and instrumentalist) but outside of the *Satra* this is not compulsory for either female or male dancers. Learning the Khol is considered a separate art from outside the *Satra*.<sup>27</sup>

While speaking to dancers Mridusmita Das Bora and Anwesa Mahanta, both *Sangeet Natak Akademi* and Yuva Puraskar awardee, who had formerly learnt *Bharatanatyam* before learning *Sattriya*, each revealed that learning another classical dance form had already given them the basic ideas about alignment of the body, breathing, how to hold postures etc. Consequently, when they started learning *Sattriya* it was easier for them to understand and learn the new form, as it was gradually growing into a codified structure. They started learning *Sattriya* in the early 1990s when it was not yet recognized as 'classical'. They were training under renowned Gurus, and therefore had a systematic approach to their training; Mridusmita Das Bora trained under Guru Ramakrishna Talukdar, an SNA awardee who is also a Kathak dancer. Dr. Anwesa Mahanta trained under *Adhyapak* Ghanakanta Bora Borbayan who was instrumental in teaching many young *Sattriya* performers when the form had just moved out of the *Satra*. Despite the fact that both these female dancers were trained under different Gurus, and had different training environments, one element which was common in both their trainings was the rigorous understanding of body, and body memory. Like the *Satra* training which doesn't involve any written text, outside the *Satra* many Gurus follow a similar format focusing on the concept of embodiment through repetition of the steps, or a movement continuously, until the movement is internalized and comes naturally to the student. The movement of the form outside of the *Satra* affords a certain amount of flexibility in the pedagogic process. The rigidity of the ritual is relieved and newer technologies can be used according to convenience – students are provided with written notes, recorded music, and videos. Some students learn just a few dance and *abhinaya* pieces to perform on stage, unlike the years of systematic, rigorous



training that the monks as well as many dancers of stage go through before performing in front of an audience.

Today visible changes are also seen in the presentation of Sattriya on the stage, the dancers of the proscenium today are experimenting with various themes and choreographies. *Sattriya* and Odissi dancer-scholar Dr. Mallika Kandali has been experimenting with Sattriya dances for quite a while. Her repertoire of work includes many pure dance performances, *bhaona*, solo abhinaya performance, and experimental choreographic pieces. Some of her experimental pieces are — '*Daivaki Kheda Vandana*', an abhinaya piece choreographed by her, script by Mukunda Pathak Sharma and performed by Mirnanda Borthakur. She has also experimented with feminist themes — '*Mandodari Puse Ravanak*', in which she wrote the script herself in Brajawali language (literary language based on Maithili, with the writing system in Assamese), where Mandodari, wife of Ravana questions him, why he abducted Sita when he already had her as a wife. Dr. Kandali believes that there is a need for dance to make active political statements along with presenting our traditions, and make commentaries about issues, and problems prevalent in our contemporary society which can also be traced in our Epics. According to Kandali, "Classical dance is regarded as superior to folk forms and has the ability to attract important spectators, since the form is presented and showcased in platforms accessible to administrators, politicians, policy makers, optimising the chances of the problems being recognized and addressed"<sup>28</sup>. '*Katha Ek Jajabar Ki*', another experimental performance uses the Sattriya idiom to talk about Dr. Bhupen Hazarika's<sup>29</sup> life and his works. The artist mentioned other experimental performances including, *Mahila Bhaona* (All women bhaona) by dancers Ranjumoni and Rinjumoni Saikia and '*Rituranga*' performed by dancer Anita Sarma, based on the play '*Sunit Kowari*' by Jyoti Prasad Agarwala.

On the other hand, inside the *Satra*, the performances even today are strictly spiritual in nature. From *puwageet*, *Gayan-Bayan*, *Naam Loguwa* (initiation of Naam Kirtan/devotional songs), Charit Path (memorized recitation of complete biographies of the Sankardeva and Madhabdeva and the 12 principal disciples), *Sattriya* dance, *Bhaona*, and *Ankiya Nat*, each and every ritual performance is directed towards God. The performative ritual practices inside the *Satra* are modes of evocation of the divine. As Remo Guidieri in his article *Statue and Mask : Presence and Representation in Belief* writes

about evocation in context of masks, where masks are 'signs for' something and not just 'signs'. He writes, 'Evocation' is constituted on a stage where something that we call "belief" is played out, so as to be inaugurated, maintained, restored, or yet, recalled. "To cause to believe" (1983). although, evocation can be different in different spaces; in context of the *Naamghar*, the ritual arts evoke religious belief; the monks perform the ritual arts in order to maintain the sacredness, sanctity of the rituals in the *Naamghar*, and continue with the traditions of Vaishnavism.

However, on the stage the ritual arts become mere dances, and devotional songs that represent, or recreate the 'real' belief and point towards something authentic, and yet the intention is not authentic itself. It is not the divine that is evoked on the stage but, the symbolic representation of the 'real'<sup>30</sup> that is evoked - as its double. This space of the stage is the profane space (Mircea Elide, 1957) as it is unreal or pseudo real where belief is played out or performed. This performance space includes both female and male artists, along with monks who have partially relocated themselves outside the *Satra* in search of alternate careers such as – dancers, artists, scholars, and educators.

## **7. Dancing, or reaching out to God? : Reminiscence of a Ritual Post-classicization of the form**

As the ritual dances of the Vaishnavite monasteries relocated to the proscenium stage, the female dancers became the flag bearers of the form. The all-male form got transformed into a dance form with the women performers at its centre. An already institutionalized form gets co-opted into its second phase of institutionalization with the dances getting transferred out of the *Satras* and recognized as a 'classical' form by SNA. In this shifting and changing of Sattriya dance; the newly constructed form has to continuously prove itself, while the 'old' form must cope with the 'new' in order for the two genres to exist simultaneously in the socio-cultural space. I would argue that the relationship between the old ritualistic form and the new performance-oriented form is not only of simultaneous existence but also a symbiotic one, where the old form receives publicity and visibility – a reverse acculturation happens within the *Satra* which has increased career options for the monks as teachers, performers/ practitioners. The new form on the other hand, has had

a range of practitioners who in effect, try to create the 'traditional' for the audience.

Subsequently, after its classical recognition, *Sattriya Nritya* has evolved in many different ways; competing, representing and maintaining its status among the seven other classical dances. In the process, the ritual dances inside the *Satra* have not remained untouched. In order to be more popular, more widely acceptable and more available for generating economy through tourist consumption, the ritual arts are changing rapidly. The naturalization of the performative elements of the stage has created more emphasis on performance than on the actual ritual process. The dance form moves from one space (*Satra*) to another (stage) and back to the *Satra*. The monk, the inheritors of the *Sattriya* dance in *Satra* accepts the 'female body' to receive and revive it; the 'body' then becomes both the initiator and recipient of the cultural evolution and processes of classicization. Again, the monks appropriate the classical dance of the stage, and gradually take them back to the *Satra* format. This reverse acculturation is the result of the insecurities that the neo-liberal market economy creates. This economy thrives through tourism and internet trends and expectations; it disenfranchises traditional practitioners, and creates obscure definitions of what is authentic and traditional. Therefore, it is these uncertainties that drive the community of monks to adapt certain crafts and formats of the stage and bring it back to the *Satra*, and be relevant and be able to compete against the new and glamorous form and its practitioners. However, there are internal committees in *Satra* for safeguarding the sacred aspects of rituals and customs. These committees work towards warranting the essential elements of a ritual presentation are not corrupted. These include timing, music and beat, lyrics of the songs, gestures and footwork etc. When a monk performs outside in a secular setting, the committee guarantees his performance respects the *Satra* guidelines. If he is found tampering with them, he is held accountable and has to pay certain compensations.<sup>31</sup>

In recent years, many young monks have moved out of the *Satra* to pursue higher education, alternative careers. They are exposed to the art world outside the *Satra*; a world of glamour and recognition as artists, along with funding and scholarship. Moreover, with social media opening up alternate platforms the monks are able to expand their art practices and make them accessible to new viewers, the Gen Z, and the millennial, are attracting more viewers

and followers. While this young generation of monks are expanding their performance spaces, styles and themes, they try to hold on to their rituals, and ritual spaces, only partially opening them up for online viewership through live streaming of rituals and sharing videos and photographs of rituals. Through this complex process of holding on to some ritual elements and letting go of others, we see an evolution of a hybrid form of the *Sattriya* dance, which simultaneously exists in multiple spaces. It is available inside the *Satra*, on the stage, and on the internet as ritual dance partially available to online viewers, classical dance on the stage, online festivals, workshops, and as music videos based on the *Sattriya* dance for online consumption. This evolution of the *Sattriya* dances is inevitable in a world which is governed by social media.

The hybrid form that *Sattriya* dance is acquiring is necessary for its survival in the 21<sup>st</sup> century preoccupied by the internet in which the audience is the receiver. The form no longer remains solely the mode of worship oriented towards God. It is now oriented towards its viewers who assume the position of 'God'. The road that the form is taking spreads out into different avenues as it emigrates from a sacred, restricted space accessible only to Vaishnavite monks of the *Satra* to a world of secular social media, accessible to billions of people.

## **8. Conclusion**

*Sattriya Nritya* has trekked a long way, facing numerous challenges, encountering countless changes and modifications to reach a position of recognition in the national platform among the seven other classical dance forms. With the rise in cultural nationalism post India's independence, a generation of artists began to revive, revitalize, and sanskritize India's lost cultural heritage. We see the revitalization and sanskritization of *Sadir* or the dances of the *Devadasi* to become *Bharatanatyam*. Similarly, *Odissi* and *Kathak* have comparable journeys. But, as this paper has shown, *Sattriya Nritya* has had a different story. It was brought out of the monasteries and handed out to female dancers for the stage, and therefore its struggles have also been different. Tracing this non-linear journey of *Sattriya* dance from the monasteries to the proscenium stage and delineating its history is essential to understand the struggle of recognition and survival of this form. To do so, a detailed description of the process of classicization was necessary for this paper. As a

result, important aspects of the history, structure, vocabulary and pedagogy of the *Sattriya* dance have been highlighted along with the contributions of key personalities instrumental in its nation-wide recognition. As things stand now, multiple dancing bodies of *Sattriya* are constantly getting created which reform, restructure, and negotiate with the needs of particular space, time and audience. What will the form endure in future, and how it will survive the test of time, will be another remarkable journey to study.

### Footnotes

1. Indian Classical Dances as a category draws their characteristics from a set of aesthetic properties, linkages to traditional textual-philosophical traditions, and rooted in the corporeal transfer of knowledge through *guru-shishya-parampara*. From a talk by Anurima Banerji at JNU 2017 – The Performative Politics of Indian Classical Dance
2. Kothari, Dr Sunil (ed.), *Sattriya : Classical Dance of Assam*, Mumbai : Marg Publications, 2013, 8-15.
3. Asante, W. Kariamu, "Commonalties in African Dance : An Aesthetic Foundation", Ann Dils and Ann Cooper Albright (eds.), *Moving History/Dancing Cultures : A Dance History Reader*, Middletown, Connecticut : Wesleyan University Press, 2001, 144-152.
4. Author's conversation with Sri Druno Bhagawati at his residence in Maligaon, Sector I, Guwahati. 29/11/2017
5. Kothari, Dr Sunil (ed.), *Sattriya : Classical Dance of Assam*, Mumbai : Marg Publications, 2013. 14.
6. Author's conversation with Sri Druno Bhagawati at his residence in Maligaon, Sector I, Guwahati. 29/11/2017
7. Years later, Raseswar Saikia shared this incident with his daughter Ranjumoni Saikia as an anecdote. She also thinks that her father might have thought about the *Sattriya* dances in the long run and believed that for *Sattriya* to survive the test of time, it needs to be shared with women, who could keep this tradition alive by becoming its caretakers & nurtures. (Ranjumoni Saikia shared this during a conversation with the author at her residence in Hengerabari, Guwahati. 22/11/2017)
8. Sri Jogen Dutta Bayan, an erstwhile monk of Uttar Kamalabari *Satra* who moved out of the *Satra* in the 70s narrated this in an interview with the author. 10/09/2021 at his residence in Majuli. Dr. Maheswar Neog also mentions about this act of begging by the monks in his book *Socio-Political Events in Assam Leading to the Militancy of the Mayamariya Vaisnavas*. Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta 1982.



9. The Kamalabari *Satra* is one of the most prominent celibate *Satra* of the Neo-Vaishnavite order. It was established by Sri Badalpadma Aata, a disciple of Sankardeva. This *Satra* has two divisions,—Natun Kamalabari *Satra* and Uttar Kamalabari *Satra*.
10. Interviewee Sri Jogen Dutta Bayan spoke at length about how he was forbade from completing his schooling by senior monks at the *Satra* and disheartened he even eloped to Barpeta for a few days. Finally, under the request of his mother and senior monks he left his schooling and completely focused in learning the *Satra* arts. He shared that even to date many monks from older generations still believe that learning the *Satra* arts is enough to make a living and lead a comfortable life, without ever stepping in a formal school. 10/09/2021.
11. Pranavsvarup Neog, “Maniram Dutta Muktiyar Borbayan”, Special Issue, *Nartanam : A Quarterly Journal of Indian Dance*, XIII(2), April-June 2013.
12. Kothari, Dr. Sunil (ed.), *Sattriya : Classical Dance of Assam*, Mumbai : Marg Publications, 2013, 12.
13. Author’s conversation with Sri Jogen Dutta Bayan at his residence in Majuli. 10/09/2021 Jogen Dutta Bayan was a part of the contingent of performers to Indonesia in 1975. There were 16 performers in the group which comprised of monks from both Natun and Uttar Kamalabari *Satra*, and dancers Sharodi Saikia and Deepali Das. He narrated the grandeur of the performance; how they had rehearsed for almost a month in Kolkata for this performance, and their presentation was received very well in Indonesia. They performed Rambijoy Bhaona which had to be cut short by quite some time to fit in the allotted time slot. Along with this there was Gayan Bayan performance, Dasaavatar performance by Bijoy Krishna Goswami of Natun Kamalabari *Satra*, dances like—Chali and Jhumura were also performed by Karuna Bora of Uttar Kamalabari *Satra*. Raseswar Saikia played the role of Biswamitra in Rambijoy Bhaona, and Jogen Dutta himself played the role of Sutra Dhar. Bihu, one of the folk dances of Assam was also performed.
14. Bishnu Prasad Rabha was one of the prominent cultural figures of Assam. He is known for his contributions in the fields of music, dance, painting, literature as well as for his political activism. It is because of his multi-faceted talents that people of Assam called him Kalaguru (the master of the arts).
15. The starting of Sangeet Sattria, training and Pedagogy (Sangit Sattrar Arambhoni aru Sikhadanor kotha) written by Raseswar Saikia Borbayan — “In 1967 when we came to Guwahati, The institute Soumarajyoti Kala Parishad invited us to a Sattriya dance and music training institute at Parbati Prasad Bhawan. In this institute, we performed Ankiya Bhaona -



Rambijoy. Before the starting of Bhaona, Dr. Maheswar Neog asked us to perform a few Maati Akhara in front of the audience. We did around 15 selected Maati Akhara and with the advice of Sri Jatin Goswami, we included Bol/Bajna in the Maati Akhara and performed. After this performance the trend of playing Bol/Bajna along with Maati Akhara started.” – published in Korapat. (This paragraph is orally translated from Assamese to English for the purpose of this paper only. Information shared by Jatin Goswami during interview with the author on 30/10/2017)

16. Sri Jatin Goswami is a dancer, choreographer, and a prominent exponent of Sattriya Nritya.
17. Details shared by Sri Jatin Goswami (Interview, at his residence in Guwahati. 30/10/2017)
18. Letter by Governor S. K. Sinha to the President of India, 8 Nov. 1998 [https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/illegal\\_migration\\_in\\_assam.htm](https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/assam/documents/papers/illegal_migration_in_assam.htm)
19. Arshiya Sethi, *An overlay of the political : the recognition of Sattriya, WHY DANCE?* a symposium on the multiple trajectories of Indian dance tradition. Seminar. 676, 2015. [http://www.india-seminar.com/2015/676/676\\_arshiya\\_sethi.htm](http://www.india-seminar.com/2015/676/676_arshiya_sethi.htm)
20. Assam Accord and its Clauses, Clause 6 – Constitutional, Legislative and Administrative Safeguards <https://assamaccord.assam.gov.in/portlets/assam-accord-and-its-clauses>.
21. In the essay Cultural Nationalism in a Multi-National Context: The Case of India, 2006 Subrat K. Nanda explains multi-nationality in a country as, “a country which consists of people belonging to culturally diverse nationality groups. Such countries all over the world experience differing levels of identity, which, in turn, create competing claims upon the loyalty of their people. Normally, in these countries, people’s loyalty to their overarching nation/state competes with the loyalty to their respective nationalities. Stated differently, people in such cases wish to cling to their civil-political identity without shedding or tampering their specific cultural identity and the notion of ancestral homeland”..... “In other words, in the multi-national states, nation emerged as a political entity at the common political level and as a cultural entity at the specific cultural level”.
22. Subrat K. Nanda “Cultural Nationalism in a Multi-National Context : The Case of India”, *Sociological Bulletin*, 55(1), January-April 2006, 24-44, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23620521>
23. Jagannath Mahanta, *The Sattriya Dance of Assam : An Analytical and Critical Study*, Guwahati : Sattriya Kendra, Sangeet Natak Akademi, 2016. 265.

24. Details shared by Mridusmita Das Bora. (Conversation with her at her residence in Guwahati 26/02/2018).
25. Conversation with Jadab Borah, Assistant Professor at Dibrugarh University and a monk from Uttar Kamalabari *Satra*, 26/6/2017.
26. Ibid.
27. Interview with Sri Jatin Goswami at his Maligaon residence, Guwahati. 30/10/2017.
28. Conversation with Mallika Kandali at her residence in Guwahati, on 19/7/2017.
29. Bhupen Hazarika, widely known as Sudha Kontho of Assam, was a musician, singer, filmmaker and politician. He was one of the most prominent personalities of Assam. His songs and music are marked by the themes of humanity and universal brotherhood.
30. Mircea Eliade elaborates that the profane space is the unreal or pseudo real space. He writes that sacred space in primitive society is equivalent of power and reality and hence, naturally, man wanted to be in its proximity; participate in the reality and be merged with power.
31. Sir Jadab Bora Bayan who is a monk in the Uttar Kamalabari *Satra* and a professor at the Dibrugarh University, Assam shared this anecdote. He believes these measures are necessary in order to keep the ritual tradition alive Interview at Uttar Kamalabari *Satra* Majuli, 12/09/2021.

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- Author's interview with Ranjumoni Saikia, Hengerabari, Guwahati, 22/11/2017.
- Author's interview with Jatin Goswami, Maligaon, Guwahati, 30/10/2017.
- Author's interview with Mallika Kandali, Japorjog, Guwahati, 19/7/2017.
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## Understanding the Causes and Consequences of Women Trafficking in Nepal

*Ramesh Bahadur Thapa\**

*This article undertakes a comprehensive examination of the causes and consequences of women trafficking in Nepal, employing a descriptive research approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative data. The study focuses on elucidating the multifaceted factors contributing to the proliferation of this issue and shedding light on the challenges faced by trafficking victims. The research methodology encompasses primary data collection through field surveys and interviews conducted with 25 trafficking victims in the Sindhupalchok District. Moreover, the consequences endured by trafficking victims encompass various forms of physical and sexual abuse, coerced labour, exploitative practices, and enduring psychological trauma, thereby exerting profound and far-reaching societal implications. Consequently, the study underscores the paramount significance of fostering awareness, fortifying legal frameworks, advancing socio-economic empowerment, and establishing comprehensive support mechanisms for survivors as pivotal strategies in combating women trafficking. By*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*comprehending the underlying causes and ramifications of this issue, efficacious interventions can be devised to safeguard vulnerable women from exploitation and restore their dignity within the Nepalese context.*

[**Keywords** : Women trafficking, Nepal, Causes, Consequences, Descriptive research]

## **1. Introduction**

Human trafficking is a grave criminal phenomenon characterized by the exploitation of individuals for profit, treating them as commodities. It ranks as the third largest criminal industry globally, following arms and drug trafficking. The estimated annual revenue generated by human trafficking ranges from \$7 billion to \$10 billion, often supported by organized crime groups like mafias (Shrestha, 2013). This abhorrent enterprise subjects victims to prolonged exploitation resembling servitude and slavery. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), each year, an estimated 2 million to 4 million individuals are trafficked across international borders, with an even higher estimate of 600,000 to 800,000 victims trafficked within national borders (UNODC, n.d.). Asia, particularly South Asia, bears a significant burden, with 3.5 million women and youth trafficked annually in Asia and 100,000 victims in South Asia alone. Nepal, in particular, faces significant challenges, with an estimated 120,000 women trafficked annually, including 20% being girls under the age of 16 (Shrestha, 2013).

Addressing the issue of human trafficking requires comprehensive legislation and cooperation at national and regional levels. Harmonizing legal definitions of trafficking, criminal procedures, victim compensation, and strengthening the protection of human rights are crucial steps (Sharma, 2015). Developing a legal framework aligned with international standards plays a vital role in preventing trafficking and exploitation. Furthermore, organizations like Maiti Nepal have emerged as prominent social advocates actively working to protect Nepalese girls and women from various forms of exploitation and violence, including trafficking. Maiti Nepal, founded in 1993, comprises dedicated professionals who actively advocate for victims' rights, conduct criminal investigations, and engage in legal battles against perpetrators (Maiti-Nepal, 2016). Through their advocacy efforts at the local, national, and international levels, Maiti Nepal has gained recognition and made significant contributions to the fight against trafficking.

This study try to investigate the current status of women trafficking in Nepal, aiming to gain insights into its causes, consequences, and the challenges faced by trafficked women. The study seeks to address the lack of awareness about trafficking and the limited perspective that treats it as a conventional crime rather than a violation of human rights. It aims to shed light on the underlying causes and potential consequences of women trafficking in Nepal, highlighting the broader aspects of exploitation beyond equating trafficking solely with prostitution. The study also aims to explore the various challenges and difficulties encountered by women who have been trafficked, including issues related to rehabilitation, re-settlement, poverty, gender-based discrimination, and the impact of armed conflicts, displacement, and migration (Shrestha, 2013).

The purpose of the study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted problem of women trafficking in Nepal, with the ultimate goal of informing and guiding efforts to combat trafficking and protect the rights of victims. By identifying the causes and consequences of trafficking, as well as the challenges faced by victims, the study seeks to contribute to the development of effective laws, policies, and interventions that address the issue holistically. Additionally, the study aims to raise awareness at various levels, including grassroots communities, civil society, and law enforcement agencies, in order to foster a broader understanding of trafficking as a violation of human rights.

## **2. Theoretical Perspective**

There are several sociological perspectives/theories that can be applied to the issue of women trafficking. These perspectives provide insights into the social factors and dynamics that contribute to the occurrence and persistence of trafficking.

Social disorganization perspective focuses on the breakdown of social institutions and the resulting disorganization within communities, which can create an environment conducive to criminal activities like trafficking (Shaw and McKay, 1942). It emphasizes the role of social factors such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of social control in contributing to trafficking.

Social learning perspective suggests that individuals learn behavior through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. Applied to trafficking, it posits that individuals may learn and engage in



trafficking activities due to exposure to social networks and cultural norms that condone or support such behavior (Akers, 1973).

Feminist perspectives emphasize the gendered dynamics and power imbalances that underlie trafficking. These theories highlight how patriarchy, gender inequality, and systemic discrimination contribute to women's vulnerability to trafficking and their exploitation in various forms of labour, including sex trafficking (Cabezas, 2004).

Globalization has been linked to the increased movement of people, labour market disparities, and economic inequalities, which can create conditions that facilitate trafficking (Beck, 1992). This theory highlights how global economic forces and transnational networks intersect with local social contexts to shape patterns of trafficking.

Intersectionality examines how multiple social identities and categories intersect and create unique forms of oppression and vulnerability. Applied to trafficking, it recognizes that women's experiences of trafficking are shaped not only by gender but also by factors such as race, class, and ethnicity (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectional perspectives highlight the need to address the specific needs and experiences of different groups of trafficked women.

It is important to note that these perspectives provide different lenses for understanding women trafficking, and multiple perspectives can be used in combination to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue.

### **3. History of Women Trafficking in Nepal**

The history of women's trafficking in Nepal dates back several decades and is deeply intertwined with socio-economic, cultural, and political factors. Nepal has long been a source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking, particularly for women and girls. This section provides a detailed overview of the history of women's trafficking in Nepal, highlighting key developments and factors that have contributed to the problem.

Historically, the practice of women's trafficking in Nepal can be traced back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. During that time, labour migration to India was prevalent, and cases of women being lured or coerced into various forms of exploitation, including forced labour and prostitution, were reported (Shrestha, 2013). However, it was in

the 1980s and 1990s that trafficking emerged as a major concern in Nepal, with increasing numbers of women and girls being trafficked both internally and across international borders.

One of the significant factors contributing to women's trafficking in Nepal is the prevalent gender inequality and discrimination. Deeply rooted patriarchal norms, limited opportunities for education and employment, and the devaluation of women's roles in society make Nepalese women and girls particularly vulnerable to trafficking (Shrestha, 2013). Moreover, poverty and economic hardships further exacerbate the problem, as traffickers often exploit the desperation of individuals and families living in impoverished conditions.

The political context of Nepal has also played a role in shaping the dynamics of trafficking. The decade-long armed conflict between the government and Maoist rebels (1996-2006) led to increased violence, displacement, and vulnerability, creating a fertile ground for trafficking. Additionally, the political transition and unstable governance after the conflict further complicated efforts to combat trafficking effectively.

In response to the growing concern of women's trafficking, both national and international efforts have been made to address the issue. Nepal enacted its first anti-trafficking law, the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, in 1986. However, these early laws were limited in scope and failed to adequately address the complexities of trafficking. Over the years, various legislative and policy measures have been introduced, including the enactment of the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2007 and subsequent amendments, aimed at strengthening the legal framework to combat trafficking and protect the rights of victims.

International organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society have also played a crucial role in addressing women's trafficking in Nepal. Organizations such as Maiti Nepal, established in 1993, have been at the forefront of providing support, rehabilitation, and advocacy for trafficking survivors (Maiti-Nepal, 2016). These organizations have worked to raise awareness, conduct rescue operations, provide shelter and counseling services, and engage in legal battles against traffickers.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain in effectively combating women's trafficking in Nepal. Weak law enforcement,

corruption, lack of awareness, and limited resources pose significant obstacles. Additionally, the complex nature of trafficking, evolving tactics used by traffickers, and the transnational aspect of the crime further complicate prevention and prosecution efforts (Shrestha, 2013).

In conclusion, the history of women's trafficking in Nepal spans several decades and is influenced by factors such as gender inequality, poverty, political instability, and weak legal frameworks. Efforts to combat trafficking have been made at both national and international levels, involving legislative measures, organizational initiatives, and advocacy. However, challenges persist, and ongoing efforts are needed to address the multifaceted nature of trafficking, protect the rights of victims, and ensure effective prevention, prosecution, and rehabilitation mechanisms.

#### **4. Methodology**

The research design for this study adopts a descriptive research approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data. The study focuses on the victimization of women, specifically in the context of trafficking, and aims to understand the reasons for the increasing problem and the challenges faced by victims. The study area selected is the national women's commission, which provides access to detailed and factual information relevant to the topic. The data collection involves primary sources through field surveys and interviews with trafficking victims, as well as secondary sources such as published books, newspapers, and reports from national and international organizations. The study's universe consists of 25 trafficking women in the Sindhupalchok District. Data analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative techniques, providing a comprehensive interpretation of the collected data.

#### **5. Data Presentation and Analysis**

##### **5.1 Caste/Ethnicity**

The study reveals a heterogeneous caste and ethnic composition among the respondents. Individuals from various castes and ethnic backgrounds, such as Brahmin, Chhetri, Magar, Tamang, Majhi, Rai, Kami, Newar, and Damai, were included in the research sample. This diverse representation allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand, considering the

perspectives and experiences of individuals from different socio-cultural backgrounds.

**Table-1 : Distribution of Respondents by Caste/Ethnicity**

Caste/ Ethnicity	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Chhetri	3	12.0
Brahman	1	4.3
Magar	1	4.0
Newar	1	4.0
Tamang	12	48.0
Kami	4	16.0
Damai	1	4.0
Majhi	1	4.0
Rai	1	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The study indicates that the majority of respondents, comprising 48% of the total, belong to the Tamang community. This finding can be attributed to the fact that the research was conducted in Sindhupalchok district, where the Tamang community constitutes a significant portion of the population. Table 1 further reveals that 16% of the respondents identified themselves as Kami, 12% as Chhetri, and the remaining 4% represented other ethnic groups.

Interestingly, among the Tamang respondents, a significant number reported having good educational backgrounds. However, they expressed a lack of awareness about the issue at hand, which contributed to their vulnerability and subsequent victimization. This insight highlights the importance of raising awareness and providing education on such issues to ensure the protection and empowerment of individuals from all backgrounds, including the Tamang community.

## **5.2 Age Group of Respondents**

The women and children are found facing the problems from early childhood to the old age. It seems to be a very serious problem where women are deprived of their basic human rights. Table-2 presents data on the age of the respondents at the time of trafficking on next page.

**Table-2 : Age of Respondents at the time of Trafficking**

Age group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
15-19 years	15	60.0
20-24 years	7	28.0
25 years and above	3	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The table indicates that the highest percentage of women and girls who were trafficked falls within the age group of 15-19 years, accounting for 60% of the total respondents. Following this, 28% of the victims were in the age group of 20-24 years, while a smaller proportion of 12% were trafficked in the age group of 25 years and above.

These findings suggest that women and girls between the ages of 15-25 are particularly vulnerable to trafficking for sexual exploitation. The study further concludes that a significant number of girls and women were trafficked between the ages of 15-19. This could be attributed to their relative immaturity and vulnerability during this stage of life. Adolescents in this age group may be more easily influenced and persuaded by others, making them susceptible to the tactics of traffickers. Thus, the findings emphasize the urgent need for targeted interventions and awareness programs to protect and empower young girls during this critical period of their lives, reducing the likelihood of them falling victim to trafficking.

### **5.3 Marital Status of Respondents**

Several studies have consistently reported that a significant majority of trafficked girls are unmarried. This is primarily due to the high demand for virgin girls in the sex market. Although child marriage is illegal in Nepal, it is still practiced in some communities. There is a prevalent belief in Nepalese society that marrying off young daughters before their first menstruation will ensure the parents' entry into heaven.

In addition to cultural beliefs, economic factors also contribute to child marriages. In some cases, young girls are married to older boys, typically between 10-20 years old, because the boy's family requires a domestic servant to work in their household and fields.

These arrangements are often driven by economic constraints, as the boy's family may not be able to afford to hire a paid worker. Within these marriages, the daughter-in-law often finds herself in a position similar to servitude while her husband pursues education, migrates for higher studies, or works in urban areas where he interacts with women who have more freedom and independence. Unfortunately, this situation exposes the daughter-in-law to numerous challenges and hardships. As she desires a more comfortable life and seeks employment opportunities outside her home, she becomes vulnerable and may unknowingly fall victim to trafficking.

These societal dynamics and the lack of opportunities for women within their marital households contribute to their vulnerability to trafficking. Efforts to address these issues should focus on raising awareness, empowering women, combating child marriage, and creating opportunities for education and employment, enabling women to lead more independent and secure lives.

**Table-3 : Marital Status of Respondents at the time of Trafficking**

Marital status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Unmarried	12	48.0
Married	10	40.0
Divorced	1	4.0
Separated	2	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

Only 48.0% of respondents were found to be unmarried. The table shows that 40.% of total respondents are married. Similarly, the percent of divorced and separated were 4.0% and 8.0% respectively.

#### **5-4 Perceived Reason behind Trafficking**

Majority of the girls and women belonged to lower class family who didn't have enough food to run their life easily. Most of the girls/women were trafficked in search of employment, lack of awareness, low economic condition, willingness to live in urban areas all become the cause of trafficking. Table-4 depicts data on the perceived reason behind trafficking on next page.



**Table-4 : Perceived Reason behind Trafficking**

Causes	No. of Respondents	Percentage
To earn money	7	28.0
In search of employment	10	40.0
To improve economic status	1	4.0
False marriage	2	8.0
Willingness to stay in urban area	1	4.0
Love marriage	2	8.0
Others	2	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The above table shows that 40.0% of total were trafficked in search of employment. 28% of them to earn money, 4.0% to improve economic status. The study reveals that poverty is the root cause of trafficking. Most of them were trafficked due to poverty. Other reason behind trafficking is false marriage, love marriage, willingness to stay in urban area. Most of the key informants reported poverty is the main reason. The lack of education, unemployment, lack of awareness was also reported by many informants.

### **5-5 Reactions after Trafficking**

In this research researcher found that though, they tried to escape from there but most of them could not get success. Their protests were suppressed by repeated violence by brothel owner.

**Table-5 : Reactions after Trafficking**

Reactions after Trafficking	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Crying, shouting	5	20.0
Try to Ran away	15	60.0
Try to Call Family Member	5	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The above table shows that when they knew they were trafficked at first all of them started to crying and shouting. They said that they didn't get any idea at first, they were so scared. And after that some of them try to escape from there, some tried to call family member with the help of brothel's friends, customer.

### 5.6 Violence in Brothel

Respondents continued that if they didn't obey the brothel owner they didn't get food. They have to earn money making customer happy if they couldn't earn money they have to face physical problem like above mentioned. In brothel the respondent get very bad behaviour. And if they tried to escape from there the same punishment repeated till 1 month.

**Table-6 : Violence in Brothel Faced by Respondents**

Type of Violence	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Cigarette burns	23	76.7
Unwanted sexual activities	17	56.7
Electric shock	19	63.3
Do not provide food	7	23.3
Beating	19	63.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The above table shows that all of them had to face many kind of violence. 76.7% of them tolerate cigarette burns, 56.7% compelled to do unwanted sexual activities, 63.3% had to suffer from electric shock and 63.3% were beaten by brothel owner.

### 5.7 Helper for Returning from Brothel

The respondent said that they get help from Brothel's friend, they helped them because they knew the pain suffering so they want to save those new respondent. And also some customer helps them by giving their phone to call their family member. And some of them rescued by Maiti-Nepal, they continued that Maiti Nepal's staff entered in brothel by being a fake customer and they helped the girl/women to escape from there. And some of them threw out by brothel owner after being HIV positive.

Table-7 shows the type of helper for returning from brothel on the next page. It is evident from the data in this table that, among 25 respondents 20 or 80.0% were rescued by the help of brothel's friends, 4.0% were rescued by customer, 8.0% were rescued by Maiti-Nepal and 8.0% were dumped after disease.

**Table-7 : Helper for Returning from Brothel**

Helper	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Brothels' friends	20	80.0
Dumped after disease	2	8.0
Maiti-Nepal	2	8.0
Customer	1	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source : Field Survey, 2023

### 5-8 Present Work of Respondents

The study showed that maximum number of respondents was involved in some kind of work, but very limited number were involved in some income generating activities. Others were on training process or studying.

**Table-8 : Present Work of Respondents**

Present work	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Working	5	20.0
Studying	4	16.0
Taking Skill development Program	6	64.0
Others	10	40.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source : Field Survey, 2023

The above table shows that among 25 respondent 5 or 20. % are working. Similarly, 16.0% are studying with the help of Maiti-Nepal. 64% are taking skill development training and 40.% doing others. Respondent told that in others work they are housewife, some do agricultural work in house. Among 25 of working respondent, some work in restaurant as waiter, some are engaged in labour work, some work in office.

### 5-9 Health Problems

Health problem is main problem in brothel returned girl/ women. Some of them successes to escape from there but some have to live there until they are dumped after HIV positive. The study shows that total respondent checked-up their health. Table-9 depicts data on the types of health problem of respondents on next page.

**Table-9 : Types of Health Problem of Respondents**

Health problem	No. of Respondents	Percent
Sexual and reproductive health problem	20	80.0
Psychological Problem	2	8.0
Both Physical and Psychological	3	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source :** Field Survey, 2023

The data contained in the table above show that 80% have sexual and reproductive health problem, 8% physical problem and both problem is 12%. It clears that most of brothel girl/women did have some kind of physical problem. They suffered from some kinds of diseases when they were rescued from the brothel of India. They had suffered from sexually transmitted disease. Some of them suffered from HIV/AIDS also. The study reveals that all the respondents do suffer from one or the other physical as well as psychological problems.

## **6. Findings of the Study**

Presentation and analysis of data collected from the selected trafficked girls/women as well as the interviews with them show the following findings :

- ▶▶ **Ethnic composition of trafficked girls/women :** Ethnic composition of trafficked girls/women shows that 40% are from the Tamang caste, 20% Magar, 13.3% Kami, 10% Chhetri, and 3.3% each for Brahmin, Damai, Majhi, and Rai castes.
- ▶▶ **Marital status of trafficked girls/women :** Marital status of trafficked girls/women shows that 56.7% are unmarried, 33.3% married, 3.3% divorced and remaining 6.7% separated.
- ▶▶ **Religious background of trafficked girls/women :** Religious background of trafficked girls/women shows that a little less than two-third (60%) are Hindus and remaining four out of every ten (40%) Buddhists.
- ▶▶ **Age distribution of trafficked girls/women :** Age distribution of trafficked girls/women clearly indicates that nearly two-third (63.3%) are aged between 15-19 years, nearly one-fourth (23.3%) from the age group of 20-24, and remaining nearly one out of every seven (13.3%) are aged 25 and above.

- ▶▶ **Lack of awareness about trafficking** : Data show that more than three-fourth of the victims (80%) didn't have prior knowledge about trafficking, only one-fifth (20%) had some knowledge which they acquired through radio, television, family, or other sources.
- ▶▶ **Reasons for trafficking** : Reasons for trafficking indicate that 43.3% choose this for employment, 30% to earn money, 3.3% for economic improvement, 6.7% due to false marriage promise, 6.7% for love marriage, and remaining 6.7% for other reasons.
- ▶▶ **Traffickers** : As regards traffickers 46.7% were kin members, 16.7% neighbors, 6.7% husbands, 6.7% friends, and 23.3% others.
- ▶▶ **Victims' experiences** : Upon realizing they were trafficked, all victims reacted with crying and shouting. Half of them (50%) tried to escape, one-fifth (20%) attempted to call family, and many suffered physical abuse like cigarette burns, sexual exploitation, electric shocks, beatings, etc.
- ▶▶ **Post-rescue living situations** : Post-rescue living situations show that a little less than half (46.7%) are now in Maiti Nepal rehabilitation homes, half (50%) back with their families, and remaining 3.3% are living independently.
- ▶▶ **Current activities of victims** : Current activities of victims show that 30% are working, 16.7% studying with Maiti Nepal's help, 20% are in skills development programs, and 33.3% are engaged in other activities like housework or assisting in agriculture.
- ▶▶ **Monthly income** : Earned between 1500 and 4000, with only 33.3% earning enough for livelihood; others rely on support from family and Maiti Nepal.
- ▶▶ **Health conditions** : Health conditions of the selected victims show that 84.2% have physical problems, 10.5% psychological problems, and remaining 5.3% have both of these problems.
- ▶▶ **Socio-economic challenges** : Trafficked women/girls face social discrimination, physical and mental health issues, lack of acceptance from family and society, and difficulty reintegrating into society.

## 7. Conclusion

This study sheds light on the demographic characteristics, experiences, and challenges faced by trafficked girls and women in

Nepal. The findings highlight the vulnerability of lower-class families dependent on agriculture, with the majority of victims belonging to ethnic groups such as Tamang, Magar, Kami, Chhetri, and others. The age distribution indicates that a significant portion of victims are adolescents, particularly between the ages of 15 and 19. Lack of awareness about trafficking among victims is a concerning issue, with 80% having no prior knowledge of this crime. Reasons for trafficking vary, ranging from seeking employment and earning money to false marriages and love relationships. It is alarming to note that a significant proportion of traffickers are kin members, neighbors, and even husbands, betraying the trust placed in them.

The study highlights the urgent need for stronger punitive measures against traffickers and improved rescue and rehabilitation efforts at the governmental level. Additionally, addressing the negative perception of survivors in society is crucial to reduce the stigma, humiliation, and self-pity they experience. The lasting impact of trafficking on survivors is evident, with physical, psychological, and socio-economic challenges hindering their recovery and reintegration. To combat human trafficking effectively, comprehensive efforts should include awareness campaigns, improved educational opportunities, livelihood support, and accessible healthcare services. Empowering survivors through skill development programs and creating a supportive and inclusive environment will be instrumental in helping them rebuild their lives and reintegrate into society successfully.

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## **Adoption of E-Governance Services: Exploring Citizens' Perceptions of Online G2C Services in Himachal Pradesh**

***Sapna K. Sharma\* and Babita Sharma\*\****

*At the global level, digital technologies have made a remarkable improvement in government services and political processes. Collection of data by mobile apps, easy-to-access web, cloud storage, and common service centres at the local level leads to changes in governance and easier for the public and government as well. The help of digital technology in governance gives rise to the concept of e-governance which results in good governance. Citizen adoption of e-services is proving an excellent booming tool for good governance in any area. The present study is an attempt to explore citizens' adoption of e-governance services in Himachal Pradesh. Through this paper, an attempt has been made to highlight the*

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

*citizens' Perceptions of online Government to Citizens Services in Himachal Pradesh. Based on the survey of Common Service Centres, the paper attempts to explore how e-governance is useful for achieving e-governance services.*

[**Keywords:** Common service centres, Digital technology, E-Services, Governance]

## 1. Introduction

Governments across the globe have harnessed information technology to deliver a wide range of services under the term e-Governance. Many countries have taken up e-Governance projects on a priority basis due to the importance of e-Governance. E-Governance has declined in India over the last few years. The use of information technology (IT) makes it possible for government services to be delivered to a wide range of people across various segments and geographic locations. Through the effective use of IT services in government administration, existing efficiencies can be greatly enhanced, communication costs can be reduced, and transparency can be improved.

In developing countries like India, governments are beginning to use e-governance applications to improve their interactions with citizens. The success of electronic governance depends on the use of digital technology, the mobilization of government resources, and the utilization of these resources to provide better services to citizens.

## 2. Review of Literature

A review of the literature throws light on the previous research work and studies conducted by different researchers on e-Governance. In this way, it presents a holistic view of all the research done earlier. A review of literature relating to the study helps the researcher to have a proper perspective of the subject and avoid the risk and difficulties faced by earlier researchers. This exercise helps to familiarize with the research work already done in that area and eliminate the chances of duplication.

Garg (2011), this study deals with the goals and progress in the development of e-governance, the empowerment of citizens, and the contributions to their human development. ICT facilitates e-governance by using examples of Argentina, Washington, the women's services portal in Canada, and the land titles of Karnataka. It discussed the concept of digital democracy and the ways

e-government can enhance it through political participation and strengthen women's empowerment by giving some successive examples to improve performance and provide channels for participation in policy-making.

Singh (2012) has described that e-governance should be used at all levels of the government about providing services to citizens speedily and conveniently. In his case study of Chandigarh, researcher also discussed different projects from all over India. It was found that with the introduction of Sampark Center and e-jansampark Center, the quality and efficiency of services were improved. He concluded that the use of the internet changed the way of working and administration became more responsive and transparent to the citizens.

Sapru and Sapru (2014), in their study have shown that all governments of the world are now moving from the traditional way of handling administrative tasks to e-governance applications to meet the expectations of the growing population. It was found that e-governance has been accepted as an important force for transformational improvement in the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of governance. Successful using of e-governance opportunities, therefore, involves building institutional capabilities, adopting and implementing a sound e-governance policy.

Kaur (2016) has explained that the government of India has focussed to transform India into a digitally empowered society and a knowledge-based economy. E-Governance played a significant role in transparency, accountability, efficiency, and maintaining a well-organized process. The research work focussed on Sampark Centre Chandigarh which provides a hassle-free one-stop solution to citizens bringing transparency in services and providing services at the best nearby locations. With the help of questionnaires, it found that a majority of respondents were satisfied with the services but employees were not satisfied with their salary & contract basis job. The study suggested that Sampark centres should be made more efficient.

The informative article of The Hindu Businessline (2020) throws light on e-services in India and focusses on ICT. The government also takes various initiatives to 250000-gram panchayats or self-governing villages, so that internet access makes their life easier, and speedy. The government of India takes various projects to

create \$1 trillion in economic value from a digital economy in 2025 from around \$200 billion currently. Various services to common citizens, thereby digitally empowering the citizens' social, environmental, and economic values.

### **3. E-Governance in India**

For the first time in India, a single computer was deployed in 1950 at the Indian Statistical Institute of Calcutta. After the war with China in 1962, India felt a strong urge to consider research and development in electronics, and in subsequent years, the Department of Electronics was established. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, computers were being used in defense services, in the economic planning department, for the national census, for elections, for tax collection, in Research and Development institutes, etc. with the government mainly doing the spending and the information systems development was entirely done by internal Information Technology sections. In 1970, the Government of India established the Electronics Department. The government of India has taken its first step toward the implementation of e-governance by setting up of National Informatics Centre in 1977 and it brought information and communication to the country. With the coming of NICNET in 1987- The national satellite-based computer network in India was the main focus of e-governance. After this, the district information system was followed to computerize the entire district offices in the country, for which free hardware and software were offered to the state governments. Until 1990, NICNET was extended to all district headquarters through the state capital. In 2000, GOI established the Ministry of Information Technology. The main objectives of the IT Act, of 2000 were to provide legal validity to electronic transactions in government and commercial functioning.

Finally, in the year 2006, the Government of India approved NeGP with various 27 Mission Mode projects and 8 components. A national e-Governance plan has been put in place with three core elements—data centres, state-wide area networks, and common service centres. The objective of the scheme is to provide all government services to the common people in their area through general service delivery centres and ensure transparency and efficiency and realize its basic need to ensure credibility at such an affordable cost of services. The emphasis is on e-governance recently

through the unstructured supplementary services data (USSD) service. Yet another milestone in the history of e-governance in India is the Right to Information Act, of 2005. The government of India has been trying to provide services in a better manner. There have been several initiatives and successful projects undertaken in various states of India to improve the quality of life of citizens.

With the advancement of information technology, the Government of Himachal Pradesh felt the need of providing easy access to government services as IT can prove an important tool to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of governance. Hence, in the starting years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Government has implemented e-governance projects in the state.

#### 4. E-government Delivery Models

The four e-government delivery models are : (1) Government to Citizens (G2C), (2) Government to Government (G2G), (3) Government to Business (G2B), and (4) Government to Employees (G2E).

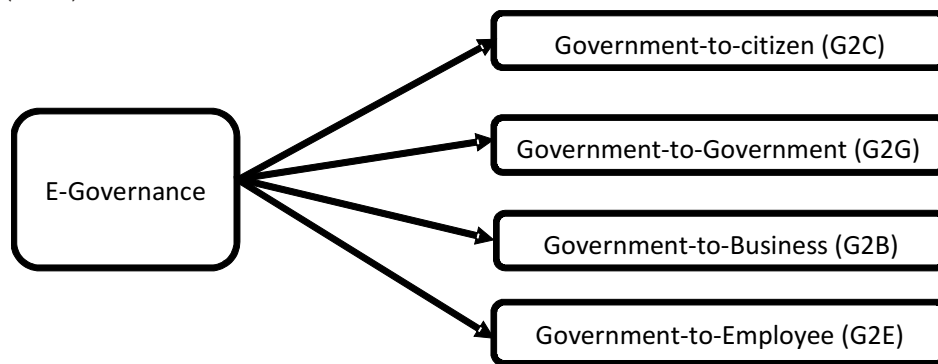


Figure-1 : Types of E-Government Applications

##### 4.1 Government to Citizens (G2C)

This model of e-governance strong the bond between the government and its citizen and provides real rights for citizens to freely search, receive, transmit, produce, and disseminate information. The type of services which are provided by this model includes :

- Payment of online bills such as electricity, water, garbage, telephone bills, etc.
- Online registration of applications.
- Copies of land records.



- Online filing of complaints.
- Availability of any kind of online information.

#### **4.2 Government to Government (G2G)**

This model refers to the services which are shared between the governments. This model involves an improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of public authorities and local governments leading to cost reduction, better coordination of public entities, and the creation of a fundamentally new capacity for monitoring processes from an economic and social point of view. The Services or information included in this model are :

- Sharing of information between the police department of various states.
- Government document exchange which includes preparation, approval, distribution, and storage of all governmental documents.
- Finance and Budget.

#### **4.3 Government to Business (G2B)**

This model focuses on interactions between the government and the private sector in the field of taxation, customs clearance documentation, registration and liquidation of legal entities, issuing licenses and certificates, and the preparation and submission of reporting documentation. The introduction of information technologies in this type of interaction is capable to improve supply chain management and increase the country's business competitiveness. They share information through this model like :

- Collection of taxes.
- Rejection and approval of patents.
- Payment of all kinds of bills and penalties.
- Sharing of all kinds of information, rules, and data.
- Complaints or any kind of dissatisfaction.

#### **4.4 Government to Employee (G2E)**

This model increases the transparency between the government and its employee. Here, the employee can keep a check on the functioning and working of the government and the government can keep on its employees. This model improves the

development of the labor market, the level of satisfaction of employees, and support transactions such as payroll and pension plans, which overall indirect impact improves labor productivity at the national level. Information that can be shared by this model :

- All kinds of data submissions from various government offices.
- Employees can file all kinds of complaints and dissatisfaction.
- All kinds of rules- regulations and information for employees.
- Payment and working records of Employees.
- Online Register of all kinds of working forms.

Common Service Centres (CSCs), as digital kiosks, are providing more than 350 types of services to citizens. CSCs are the unique PPP model (Public Private Partnership) where micro-entrepreneurs are creating sustainable livelihoods and bringing about the digital revolution in the villages of India.

## **5. Objectives of the Study**

Objectives of this study are two-fold :

1. To investigate the awareness of citizens regarding e-services provided by Common Service Centres in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To find the shortcoming of common service centres and suggest Policy recommendations related to service delivery in Himachal Pradesh.

## **6. Research Methodology**

The present study is based on primary data collected from the sample respondents. The primary data was collected from the users at common service centres of Himachal Pradesh. There are three divisions in Himachal Pradesh. From each division three districts viz. Kangra, Mandi, and Shimla were selected. A sample of 300 users (100 from each district) who were using the services of common service centres was drawn using random sampling. Informal discussion was also conducted with the village level entrepreneurs and other officials for the study.

## **7. Results and Discussion**

The results of this study are presented in the table numbers 1- 4.

**Table-1 : Opinion about the Awareness among the Citizens about E-Services**

Response	District			Total %age
	Kangra	Mandi	Shimla	
Yes	93 (93.00)	97 (97.00)	96 (96.00)	286 (95.33)
No	7 (7.00)	3 (3.00)	4 (4.00)	14 (4.67)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>300 (100.00)</b>

**Source :** Computed from Field Survey

The above table shows that the majority of respondents felt that there was adequate awareness among the people about the services of Common Service Centres whereas only 4.67 percent opined no. 93 percent of respondents in Kangra, 97 percent in Mandi, and 96 percent in Shimla were aware of the e-services given by the Government. Overall, it was concluded that citizens were aware of the e-district services.

**Table-2 : Opinion about the Source of Information**

Response	District			Total %age
	Kangra	Mandi	Shimla	
Electronic media	3 (3.00)	2 (2.00)	3 (3.00)	8 (2.67)
Newspaper	15 (15.00)	22 (22.00)	18 (18.00)	55 (18.33)
Government employees	32 (32.00)	33 (33.00)	40 (40.00)	105 (35.00)
Friends/relatives/ neighbours	32 (32.00)	25 (25.00)	23 (23.00)	80 (26.67)
After seeing its centres	17 (17.00)	17 (17.00)	13 (13.00)	47 (15.67)
Others	1 (1.00)	1 (1.00)	3 (3.00)	5 (1.67)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>300 (100.00)</b>

**Source :** Computed from Field Survey

The present study focusses on e-government services in Himachal Pradesh. Data contained in table-2 reveal that 35 percent of respondents got information regarding e-services from government employees. Followed by friends/relatives/neighbours with 26.67 percent, 18.33 percent by a newspaper, 15.67 percent after seeing its centres, and the rest of the respondents got information from other sources. The government employees were the main source of information in overall data. It shows that Government employees, social circle of friends, relatives and neighbours, and newspapers conveyed the information about CSC effectively while it was surprising to find that electronic media had less role in the supply of information regarding e-government services.

**Table-3 : Opinion about the Internet Problem**

Response	District			Total %age
	Kangra	Mandi	Shimla	
Never	7 (7.00)	12 (12.00)	10 (10.00)	29 (9.67)
Rarely	21 (21.00)	25 (25.00)	23 (23.00)	69 (23.00)
Sometimes	45 (45.00)	39 (39.00)	42 (42.00)	126 (42.00)
Very often	27 (27.00)	24 (24.00)	25 (25.00)	76 (25.33)
Always	—	—	—	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>100 (100.00)</b>	<b>300 (100.00)</b>

**Source :** Computed from Field Survey

The above table clearly shows that 42.00 percent of respondents faced internet problems sometimes followed by 25.33 percent faced very often and 23.00 percent replies rarely. It was observed that internet connectivity is one of the biggest obstacles that stop all works of the officials midway due to geographical conditions or hilly areas, the internet is still a problem. On the whole, there is a need to take steps towards this problem.

The respondents (users of Common Service Centres) were asked about their satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the e-district. Their responses are shown in table-4 on next page.

Table-4 : Satisfaction with the Quality of E-Services

Response	District			Total %age
	Kangra	Mandi	Shimla	
Very satisfied	5 (5.00)	7 (7.00)	5 (5.00)	17 (5.67)
Satisfied	86 (86.00)	89 (89.00)	84 (84.00)	259 (86.33)
Neutral	7 (7.00)	3 (3.00)	10 (10.00)	20 (6.67)
Dissatisfied	2 (2.00)	1 (1.00)	1 (1.00)	4(1.33)
Very dissatisfied	–	–	–	–
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(100.00)</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(100.00)</b>	<b>100</b> <b>(100.00)</b>	<b>300</b> <b>(100.00)</b>

Source : Computed from Field Survey

The above table reveals that 86.33 percent of users were satisfied with the quality of services, 6.67 percent were neutral; only 5.67 percent were very satisfied with the e- services. District-wise data reveals that the maximum number of respondents were satisfied with the quality of e-services. It indicates that the quality of services in Himachal Pradesh is very good.

## 8. Conclusion and Suggestions

Citizens' perceptions of online Government to citizens' services in Himachal Pradesh reveal that most respondents were familiar with and aware of the e-district services. Himachal Pradesh Government has taken astonishing steps in the implementation of e-services. It was found that most of the users were satisfied with the quality of services, and behaviour of the service providers or officials. To make e-governance more effective, e-district portals should be made more simple and user-friendly. There should be a proper time framework for the delivery of services. Government websites should be properly updated regularly. Initiatives taken by Himachal Pradesh Government are praiseworthy yet much more is required to strengthen the state. E-governance is the future of governance in India and to make the future secure for future generations attention of policy maker is needed.

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## **Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Vision of India : A Path Towards Social Equality and Justice**

**Zinat Ara\***

*This research article explores the visionary ideas of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a prominent social reformer, jurist, and architect of the Indian Constitution. Driven by his own experiences of social discrimination and untouchability, Ambedkar envisioned an India that would strive for social equality, justice, and empowerment of marginalized communities. This article analyzes Ambedkar's vision in various dimensions, including his views on caste system eradication, education, women's rights, and economic reforms. It further examines the relevance of his ideas in contemporary Indian society and the challenges faced in achieving his vision. The article concludes by emphasizing the continued importance of Ambedkar's vision in shaping a more inclusive and just India.*

[**Keywords** : Equality, Social justice, Differences, Social reform, Empowerment, Discrimination, Rights]

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**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES, Vol. 32, No. 2 (April-June), 2023**  
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal

## **1. Introduction**

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, also known as Babasaheb, is celebrated as one of the most influential figures in the fight against social inequality and discrimination in India. His vision holds immense significance in the context of India's struggle for social reform and equality. Born into a marginalized community and having faced discrimination and untouchability throughout his life, Ambedkar's vision aimed to eradicate social injustices and create a society based on equal rights and opportunities for all (Keer, 1990). Other than being the chairman of drafting Committee and contributing as one of the makers of modern India, he also changed the discourse of social inclusion in India. He had dedicated his life to challenging the deeply ingrained caste system and striving for equality among all citizens. This struggle for restoring self-respect and dignity among marginalized communities heralded his image and stature to a new height.

## **2. Objective of the Study**

This article delves into various aspects of Ambedkar's vision, analyzing his perspectives on caste system eradication, education, women's rights, and economic reforms, etc. Secondary sources have been used to understand Ambedkar's ideas so that we can appreciate his invaluable contributions in shaping a more inclusive and just India.

## **3. Ambedkar's Vision of Inclusive and Just India**

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's vision of inclusive and just India, which leads the nation towards social equality and justice, has been analyzed into following aspects :

### **3.1 Ambedkar's Concept of Equality**

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, an eminent social reformer, jurist, and architect of the Indian Constitution, championed the idea of equality throughout his life. As the principal architect of the Constitution of India, Ambedkar tirelessly fought against social discrimination and advocated for the upliftment of the marginalized and oppressed sections of society. His vision of equality encompassed not only political and legal equality but also social and economic equality.

Ambedkar believed that equality should be the bedrock of any just society. He recognized that inequality perpetuates social divisions and creates a hierarchical structure that hampers the progress and well-being of the oppressed. He argued that true equality necessitates the redistribution of power and resources to eliminate the entrenched privileges enjoyed by certain sections of society.

Ambedkar's idea of equality encompassed various dimensions. Firstly, he emphasized the importance of political equality. He firmly believed in the principle of "one person, one vote" and actively fought against the discriminatory practices prevalent in the political system. He sought to dismantle the oppressive caste system, which had denied political rights to millions of Dalits, by ensuring their representation in legislative bodies. Ambedkar's efforts culminated in the reservation policy, which aimed to provide political empowerment and representation to historically marginalized communities.

Furthermore, Ambedkar stressed the significance of social equality. He recognized that social hierarchies and prejudices based on caste, gender, and religion perpetuated discrimination and denied individuals their fundamental rights. He championed the cause of social reform and advocated for the annihilation of caste. Ambedkar's seminal work, "Annihilation of Caste", critically examined the inherent inequalities embedded in the caste system and called for its complete abolition. He argued that the eradication of caste-based discrimination was crucial for the realization of social equality and justice.

Ambedkar also highlighted the importance of economic equality. He believed that economic disparities were a major impediment to achieving true equality. Ambedkar advocated for equitable distribution of resources and called for land reforms, equal opportunities in employment, and the eradication of poverty. He recognized that economic empowerment was a prerequisite for social and political equality. Ambedkar's vision of economic equality sought to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor, ensuring that everyone had access to basic necessities and opportunities for advancement.

In addition to his theoretical contributions, Ambedkar actively worked towards the realization of his ideals. He established

educational institutions to uplift the marginalized communities and promoted social and economic reforms. Ambedkar's efforts paved the way for the empowerment of millions of people who were historically oppressed and marginalized.

The ideas of equality espoused by Ambedkar continue to be of paramount importance in contemporary society. Despite progress in certain areas, discrimination and inequality persist in various forms. Ambedkar's vision reminds us that achieving true equality requires continuous vigilance and concerted efforts to dismantle systemic barriers. His emphasis on political, social, and economic equality resonates with the struggles faced by marginalized communities around the world.

Ambedkar's ideas on equality also highlight the importance of affirmative action and inclusive policies. He recognized that a level playing field could not be achieved merely by removing discriminatory laws. It required proactive measures to uplift those who had historically been denied opportunities. Ambedkar's reservation policy, although subject to ongoing debate, serves as a crucial tool for promoting social justice and providing marginalized communities with opportunities for progress.

Ambedkar's idea of equality went beyond the mere absence of discrimination. He believed in the principle of substantive equality, which necessitated the elimination of social, economic, and political disparities. For him, equality meant not only equal opportunities but also equitable distribution of resources and the creation of a just society. Ambedkar stated, "Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy" (Ambedkar, 1945). His writings and speeches consistently emphasized the need for social justice and equality for all.

### **3.2 Eradication of Caste System**

The caste system in India has historically perpetuated social inequality and discrimination. Ambedkar vehemently criticized this system and its oppressive practices. He believed that caste-based discrimination had to be eradicated for true equality to be achieved. Ambedkar's efforts to challenge the caste system were exemplified through his advocacy for the Annihilation of Caste movement. He argued for the abolition of caste-based privileges and the creation of a society based on merit and individual worth (Ambedkar, 1936). His

relentless pursuit of social reform led to the inclusion of provisions in the Indian Constitution that sought to protect the rights of Dalits and other marginalized communities. He argued that only by breaking the shackles of caste could India achieve social justice and equality.

### **3-3 Education and Empowerment**

Ambedkar firmly believed in the transformative power of education as a means to empower marginalized communities. He emphasized the need for free and compulsory education for all, with a particular focus on uplifting the oppressed classes (Omvedt, 2003). He advocated for equal access to education and stressed the importance of knowledge in challenging social hierarchies. Ambedkar established educational institutions such as the People's Education Society and the Siddharth College, which aimed to provide quality education to marginalized sections of society. He stated, "Educate, Agitate, Organize" as the path to liberation from social inequality (Ambedkar, 1956). Ambedkar's emphasis on education as a tool for social and economic upliftment remains highly influential.

### **3-4 Women's Rights and Gender Equality :**

Ambedkar recognized the intersectionality of inequalities and understood the significance of gender equality. He championed the cause of women's rights, emphasizing the need to address the discrimination faced by women in all spheres of life. Ambedkar's advocacy for gender equality was evident in his writings and speeches. He emphasized the importance of empowering women and ensuring their equal participation in social, economic, and political spheres (Ambedkar, 1942). Ambedkar played a pivotal role in championing the Hindu Code Bill, which aimed to reform Hindu personal laws and grant women equal rights in matters of marriage, divorce, and property (Keer, 1990). His contributions to women's empowerment were instrumental in the inclusion of provisions for gender justice in the Indian Constitution.

### **3-5 Political Representation and Inclusion :**

Ambedkar recognized that political power was essential for marginalized communities to claim their rights and shape their destinies. He fought for political representation and the inclusion of oppressed groups in decision-making processes. His pivotal role in



the formation of the Indian Constitution ensured that provisions for political representation, such as reservations, were included. Ambedkar argued that reservations were necessary to provide marginalized communities with a fair opportunity to participate in the political sphere and influence policies that affect their lives (Ambedkar, 1947).

### **3-6 Economic Equality and Social Justice**

Ambedkar understood the interconnectedness of economic inequality and social justice. He emphasized the need for economic reforms that would address the economic disparities that perpetuated social discrimination. Ambedkar's advocacy for land reforms aimed to address the unequal distribution of resources and uplift marginalized agricultural communities. He believed that economic equality was crucial for the realization of social justice and equality (Ambedkar, 1951).

Ambedkar's vision extended to economic reforms that addressed the prevalent poverty, landlessness, and economic inequality in India. He advocated for agrarian reforms and land redistribution to provide marginalized communities with a means of livelihood and empowerment (Ambedkar, 1948). Ambedkar emphasized the importance of economic rights for the socially disadvantaged, envisioning a just society where economic disparities would be reduced.

## **4. Relevance of Ambedkar's Vision in Global Context**

Ambedkar's ideas on equality and eradicating differences resonate beyond India's borders. His vision for a just and inclusive society has influenced international human rights movements. The principles of substantive equality, social justice, and inclusive governance promoted by Ambedkar have applicability in diverse cultural and societal contexts. His ideas continue to inspire social activists and scholars worldwide in the pursuit of equality and justice. Ambedkar's vision remains highly relevant in contemporary Indian society. Despite progress, caste-based discrimination and social injustices persist. Ambedkar's ideas continue to inspire movements for social justice and empower marginalized communities. The reservation policies implemented based on his recommendations have been instrumental in promoting access to

education and opportunities for historically oppressed groups. However, challenges such as deep-rooted social prejudices and the need for broader societal change hinder the realization of Ambedkar's vision.

## 5. Challenges and the Way Forward

Achieving Ambedkar's vision requires concerted efforts to address deep-seated prejudices, promote social inclusivity, and ensure equal opportunities for all. Governments, civil society organizations, and individuals must work collectively to dismantle discriminatory practices, bridge social gaps, and promote awareness and education about social equality. The implementation of policies and programs that uphold Ambedkar's principles is crucial for transforming his vision into a tangible reality.

## 6. Conclusion

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's vision of a socially equal and just India remains profoundly significant. His ideas on caste system eradication, education, women's rights, and economic reforms continue to guide efforts toward a more inclusive society. By understanding and embracing Ambedkar's vision, we can contribute to creating a nation where every individual enjoys equal rights, opportunities, and dignity.

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## Form 4 (See Rule 8)

Place of Publication : Delhi, India

Periodicity : Quarterly (English)

Printer's Name : Dr. Priyanka Mahajan  
M/S Saksham Computers

Nationality : Indian

Address : D-59, Shastri Nagar  
Meerut-250 004 (INDIA)

Editor's Name : Dr. Dharam Vir

Nationality : Indian

Address : D-59, Shastri Nagar  
Meerut-250 004 (INDIA)

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cent of the total capital Meerut-250 004 (INDIA)

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ISSN 0302-9298

Regd. No. RN 23807172

*Double-blind Reviewed, Indexed and  
Refereed Quarterly International Journal*

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