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Editorial Board

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Journal of National Development

Aims and Scope

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

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An Evidence Based Analysis of Union Budgets of India from 2015-16 to 2022-23 with Reference to Gender Responsive Budgeting in India

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Abstract

All developing nations experience a significant amount of gender-based discrimination. Religious beliefs, cultural practices, long-standing prejudices, and other factors have made Indian women exploitable and subordinate in many spheres of life. In India women are reliant on men and other institutions of authority such as the family, neighbourhood, and society because of low rates of educational involvement, a lack of economic independence, biases operating against them, etc. The Union budget is a crucial tool for taking positive action to enhance gender relations by closing the gender gap in the development process. By allocating financial excises for women's programmes, it actively supports the growth of women while reducing opportunities for their emancipation through budget cuts. The term "gender budget" does not refer to a distinct budget for women but it refers to an assessment of government goals as they are reflected in the budget and an examination of how those priorities affect both men and women. Hence, by emphasizing the gender components of government budgets, the Government of India has undertaken gender budgeting projects that help to "gender mainstreaming". After a preliminary literature assessment, there is enough area and opportunity to critically analyze the trends and traits of gender budgeting by the Government of India with empirical evidence. Thus, the paper aims to assess the composition of the total expenditure for women in the Union Budget by using secondary data sources.

Keywords

Gender Responsive Budgeting, Gender Mainstreaming, Union Budget.

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An Evidence Based Analysis of Union Budgets of India from 2015-16 to 2022-23 with Reference to Gender Responsive Budgeting in India

1. Concept & Definition of Gender Responsive Budgeting

Indian women have historically been on par with men. However, the reality is different when it comes to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Gender inequality in India is reflected in several ways, including gender-based violence, low rates of education enrolment, a lack of economic independence, poor access to health facilities, and discrepancies in nutrition.

The Indian government has implemented various programmes to advance gender equality and the position of women. Gender Responsive Budgeting is one such measure started in India with the Union Budget 2005-06. To quote Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development. (2015 : 16)[1], In Budget Speech 2005-06 (para 25), the Finance Minister reaffirmed his commitment to Gender Budgeting and introduced a Gender Budget Statement : "… I have included in the Budget documents a separate statement highlighting the gender sensitivities of the budgetary allocations under 10 demands for grants. The total amount in BE 2005-06, according to the statement, is ₹14,379 crores. Although this is another first in budget-making in India, it is only a beginning and, in course of time, all Departments will be required to present gender budgets as well as make benefit-incidence analyses."

According to Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development. (2015 : 1)[2], "Gender Budgeting is a tool for gender mainstreaming. It uses the Budget as an entry point to apply a gender lens to the entire policy process. Gender Budgeting is concerned with gender-sensitive formulation of legislation, policies, plans, programmes and schemes; allocation and collection of resources; implementation and execution; monitoring, review, audit and impact assessment of programmes and schemes; and follow up corrective action to address gender disparities."

The results of certain gender responsive budgeting research indicate that, particularly in India, the policies, procedures, interventions, and implementations of gender responsive budgeting have very little effect on advancing women's position and gender equality. This is true with a fact that share of allocation of budget amount has increased for schemes related to women but in comparison to the overall budgetary allocations, their percentage has decreased.

According to World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report (2022)[3], women status is very poor in India at the global level and India ranks 135th out of 146 countries on global gender gaps based on economic participation, education, health progress and political power. According to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India ranks at 122nd position out of 191 countries in Gender Inequality Index based on the reproductive health of women, their representation in the Parliament and percentage female workers in the workforce.

2. Methodological Framework : Objectives, Research Questions and Hypotheses

In the present research work an attempt has been made to understand the concept and process of gender responsive budgeting at global level as well as in India. Following are the objectives and research questions of this research paper :

2·1 Objectives

 i) To understand the concept and process of gender responsive budgeting at global level and in India.

 ii) To understand the best practices of gender responsive budgeting at global level and in India.

 iii) To critically analyze the effect of gender responsive budgeting on advancing gender equality in India

2·2 Research Questions and Hypotheses

 i) What is the theoretical and conceptual framework and process of gender responsive budgeting?

 ii) What is the global scenario of gender responsive budgeting and which are the best practices of it in different countries?

 iii) What is the historical background and emergence of gender responsive budgeting in India?

iv) What are the different schemes, programmes, projects and interventions of Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Commission for Women and other Ministries/ Departments of Government of India which are pertaining fully (Part A - 100%) or partially (Part B - up to 30%) for gender responsive budgeting in India?

v) What are the trends and findings of Union Budgets of India from the perspective of gender responsive budgeting?

These research questions will help in developing research hypotheses for further research in future to understand the concept and process of gender responsive budgeting at global level as well as in India with more depth.

3. Good Practices of Gender Responsive Budgeting in World

Australia was the first member of the Commonwealth to implement GRB, allocating funds over a 12-year period for consideration of gender issues. However, many nations in both the developing and developed countries began to adopt GRB only after the late 1990s. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which placed emphasis on the incorporation of a gender perspective in the financial decisions on policies and programmes, was adopted as a result of the Fourth World Congress of Women in 1995 which played a significant role in this respect. This occurred in 1995, the same year that South Africa's Women's Budget Initiatives were passed. Later, the attention of Tanzania and Uganda was also directed at the effects of structural adjustment in the public financing of social sector programmes for health and education.

Australia was the first nation to create institutional means for implementing GRB in the country. These included establishing Women's Desks, the Office of the Status of Women under the Department of the Prime Minister, and the preparation of gender budget statements. For the purpose of establishing the expenditure and revenue component from a gender viewpoint, formal appraisals by cabinet ministers and permanent secretaries were also conducted. The entire approach also included the involvement of NGOs, a focus on creating capacity, and the distribution of information and tools. India, Nepal, and South Korea are just a few nations that have comparable procedural frameworks for publishing gender budgeting

declarations. IMF undertook a global survey of gender budgeting across five regions for the first time in 2016.

Gender budgeting is now required by law in Korea and the Philippines. The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, made a statement on gender budgeting in 2015 that reviews national experiences and the lessons India might take away from them. The nations mentioned included Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, France, Israel, Nepal, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, United Kingdom, and Uganda. GRB has been formed in certain nations at the budgeting level under different ministries such as Philippines, whereas in others it has been supported by constitutional measures such as Austria. In some nations like India, GRB is mostly limited to government managed public spending, while a few nations have made growing efforts to increase multi-stakeholder participation like South Africa, including a prominent role for civil society and NGOs.

There are some crucial points that needs to be considered for the adoption of GRB. It is recognized that the political strategy has a substantial impact on GRB's success and benefits the ruling parties by mainstreaming it. In order to bring attention to the various concerns underpinning the political process, it is also necessary to establish institutional structures, such as specific departments for GRB, institutional mechanisms, such as GRB statements and budgetary consultations, and strong multi-stakeholder forums with representation from the government, NGOs, civil society, technical experts, and media. These discussions ought to give both the revenue and expenditure sides of public finances equal consideration. The private sector also needs to support gender responsive budgeting, especially in areas and businesses where there is more room to advance gender equality. For instance, such ideas can be directly adopted by the private sector in the fields of health and education. Yet, all of these initiatives necessitate careful oversight based on reliable data, as well as increased dedication and drive at all levels for the implementation of policies and course corrections.

4. Trajectory and Tools of Gender Responsive Budgeting

There has been lot of initiatives taken before 2004-2005 to include gender perspective in the budget but expert's report on the classification of government expenditure played a significant role in laying out the framework for gender responsive budgeting. The

expert group's mandate included the investigation and recommendation of feasible institutional mechanisms for integrating gender responsive budgeting into the budgetary processes of the Government of India. The expert group's report, which was delivered in July 2004, largely outlined the standards by which the ministries were to submit their gender budget reports.

Following this, "Budgeting for Gender Equity" was approved as the mission statement of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) in 2004-2005. Additionally, a Strategic Framework of Activities was developed and distributed to all government of India departments and ministries in order to carry out this purpose. The establishment of gender budgeting cells (GBCs) in all ministries and departments was mandated by the Ministry of Finance in the same year, marking the beginning of the process of developing an institutional system for mainstreaming gender. These GBCs were intended to serve as focal points for budgeting that prioritizes gender equality. With the introduction of the gender budget statement (GBS) in the union budget to represent the number of budgetary allocations for programs/schemes that considerably benefit women, the fiscal year 2005-06 was a watershed one for GRB in India.

The tools that have been circulated by MWCD for gender responsive budgeting are mentioned further. Firstly, gender-sensitive public expenditure and policy review guidelines are formulated in the form of checklists. Gender based public expenditure profile is reviewed to analyze the effectiveness of gender component in allocation and expenditure of budget. Further, standards from a female perspective are established and evaluation of public spending from gender lens is done. This is followed by impact analysis through field level research, monitoring, and evaluation. Participative budgeting by involving women in decision making and its implementation focuses on capacity building of women representatives. Finally, focus on micro level needs of women and macro level planning to fulfil those needs is outlined.

Although the Indian government's GRB is frequently used as an example for other GRB projects, but there appears to be a noticeable discrepancy between what was intended and what has been accomplished. There is a gap between government's roadmap for gender budgeting and its implementation. Budget is an important tool with Government for affirmative action for improvement of gender relations through reduction of gender gap in the development

process but it has not seen very significant result in terms of improving gender equality .

5. Gender Responsive Budgeting in India

The significance of gender budgeting has been underlined in India. The finance minister in 2004-05 had mandated the establishment of Gender Budgeting Cells in all Ministries/ Departments and highlighted the perceived need for budget data to be presented in a manner that brought out the gender sensitivity of the budgetary allocations in order to give this goal additional stimulus. This was followed by a stronger commitment in the Budget Speech of 2005-2006, where the Gender Budgetary Allocations were reflected in a two-way classified Gender Budgeting Statement in the Union Budget. The first Statement indicated those Ministries/Departments which identified allocation of 100% for Schemes/Programs flowing to Women and second Statement reflected allocation of 30% and above but below 100% for Schemes/Programs for Women.

Gender budget allocation in the fiscal year 2005-06 was expected to account for approximately 4.77% of all expenditures in the public sector. According to the budget for 2006-2007, an anticipated 3.8% allocation for women were made. A more accurate representation of the real sums going to women through programmes and schemes is what caused the apparent decline in the gender budget allocation between 2005-06 and 2006-07. A Gender Budget Charter was released in March 2007 by the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development. As the nodal organization for gender budgeting, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has been working on several projects to empower women. The Ministry has developed gender budgeting in this context as a tool for attaining the objectives set for women in plans and policies. A strategic framework of activities was developed and distributed to all government departments in India in order to carry out gender equality in budgeting.

Although, the analysis of trends in allocation of resources towards gender budget of Union Budget, Government of India during the period from 2005-06 to 2016-17 shows that though women constituted nearly 50% of the population, the actual allocation of resources to them ranged between 2.8% and 6.2%. There are some serious drawbacks realized after scrutinizing gender budgeting of different schemes of the Ministry of Women and Child Development,

Government of India starting from 2005-06 when India adopted gender budgeting up to the financial year 2015-16. It is understood that the share of allocation of budget amount has increased for these schemes but in comparison to the overall budgetary allocations, their percentage has decreased.

Hence, there is a paradox in which India seems trapped between implementing gender responsive budgeting as its percentage share in budgetary allocation registered is declining . The allocation of budget for major schemes related to women had sometimes increased, sometimes decreased and sometimes it remained stagnant. In the review of implementation of Women's Component Plan (WCP) and Gender Budgeting which was initiated in Seventh Plan it was found that there is a sluggish implementation of WCP by Central Ministries. Therefore, it is important that fiscal policies to tackle gender equalities should be integrated with the intergovernmental fiscal transfer mechanisms through the Finance Commission and at the subnational public finance practices . United Nations ESCAP (2018) Report gave a framework of gender- responsive budgeting with its importance, process of implementation and the budget cycle (formulation, legislation, implementation, audit and review).

6. Findings

The major findings after analysis of Union Budget from a gender lens are as mentioned below :

- The number of ministries and departments of the Union Government that are covered by the "Gender Budget Statement" has expanded from 10 in 2005-06 to 38 in 2022-23.
- Gender Budgeting Cells have been established by 57 government ministries and departments in India till now. This is a good step that would improve the lives of women in society.
- The number of Ministries and Departments conducting gender budgeting exercises, which serve as the foundation for the government's gender budgeting statement, has increased but about 90 percent of gender budgeting is concentrated in five ministries.
- From 2005-06 through 2022-23, the overall budgetary allotment for gender budgeting ranged from 2.79-4.72 percent of total union government spending. Between them, there are observable fluctuations.

⇢ Part-A allocations, which are 100 percent allocations for women, have historically had a lower percentage share than Part-B allocations (30 percent allocation for women). The largest portion of excises under the gender budgeting statement, which is not just for women, is Part-B.

⇢ Not much has changed, when it comes to ensuring that women receive enough funds and benefits.

⇢ The study discovered that gender budgeting had a good impact on the socioeconomic standing of women in India, but the overall size of the gender budget is relatively little.

⇢ There is very little public information regarding the gender-specific expenditure profiles made by various ministries.

⇢ Sectors that serve basic human needs like water supply, sanitation, and food distribution are still not covered by the Gender Budget Statement.

⇢ Despite the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women, the budget did not address crucial concerns raised by the pandemic in 2021-22 and 2022-23.

⇢ Spending on areas like digital literacy, public transportation, domestic violence prevention, and skill training that proven crucial during the pandemic is currently being disregarded.

7. Conclusion

The enormous gender disparity in India's developmental outcomes, which disadvantaged women, especially those from the underprivileged and backward parts of society, cannot be overstated. GRB can be an effective instrument for incorporating gender principles into resource allocation and development policy. Though India appears to be caught in a paradox as it has made progress towards gender responsive budgeting on one side, but budgetary resources for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment have actually decreased. The shrinking magnitude of the GBS relative to the entire amount of union budget expenditures and the reduction in the planned Gross Budgetary Support for WCD serve as illustrations of this. The execution of crucial programmes for women and girls will undoubtedly be severely impacted by this.

GRB is still a relatively new practise in India, thus more policy initiatives are needed from the Union and State governments to advance gender equality. Despite the establishment of specific

gender budgeting cells by a number of Union and State government ministries and departments, the overall impact of GRB across the nation has been constrained by functional constraints on human resources and capacity as well as a constrained budgetary scope. According to the gender budgeting statements, just around 5 percent of the overall Union budget is currently set aside for activities that focus on women. Nevertheless, since 2010, there have been consistent decreases in the aggregate share designated as the "gender budget". Given these complexities, it is essential that GRB be given top attention at India's highest levels of policymaking.

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Challenges in Higher Education in India in the 21ˢᵗ Century: A Detailed Analysis

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Abstract

Higher education is essential for research, education, and career opportunities, contributing to the development of the nation by providing significant hours into policy, research, scientific discoveries, inventions, etc. However, there are many challenges in its implementation, including the gap between developed and developing nations, limitations in infrastructure, and a lack of upgraded skills required for the new digital era of education. NEP 2020 aims to address some of these issues, but it must be implemented cautiously to benefit all sections of society. This paper analyses the problems in higher education and proposes possible ways forward towards its solution.

Keywords

NEP 2020, Distance learning, ICT, Research, Challenges, Colleges.

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Challenges in Higher Education in India in the 21ˢᵗ Century: A Detailed Analysis

1. Introduction

In the present society and upcoming years, power will be defined by the knowledge possessed by the citizens. Knowledge is power and this is the current reality. We are living in the information age, where it is not just important to have access to information, but it is also crucial to know how to use it for better opportunities, research, employment, etc. India holds the third position in terms of the number of students after China and the United States of America. However, there is a vast gap between the first and third positions when it comes to higher education. The gross enrolment ratio (GER) is 88.2 for the USA, 70.3 for Germany, 51.3 for Brazil, 49.1 for China, and for India, it is low at 26.3, whereas the global average is 29.0. The goal of NEP 2020 is to attain a GER of 50.0 by 2030. Quality of education and the kind of employment opportunities it creates are also crucial factors to consider, and not just enrolment numbers. In the last 75 years of independence, India has covered many milestones in education. The literacy rate, which was just 16 per cent, has risen to 74.04 per cent in the 2011 census, which is a remarkable achievement, given the situation and limitations India has with the largest population in the world and scanty resources. Pedestal towards higher education is the preceding primary, secondary, and higher secondary education, but collectively, they are good in quantity but not quality. The GER in higher secondary is 57.6 per cent in 2021-22, which shows that half of the students coming out of school get enrolled in higher education institutes. With the facility of online education and distance learning, it has been democratized at the very last strata of society. According to UGC, the total number of universities is 1074, and those under 12(B) are 398. Also, the total number of colleges is nearly 51,649. So, the problem is not about expanding more educational institutes but accommodating more students who can complete their higher secondary level of education. Major challenges facing higher education are access and equity to

different strata of society, quality of education being imparted at different institutes, finances to improve infrastructure for successful implementation of NEP 2020, lack of regular faculty and a slow and irregular recruitment process, poor employability among the mass of students with graduate degrees, and lack of good quality research and the problem of plagiarism in India.

2. Methodology

In writing this research paper data is collected from both primary and secondary sources. For primary sources, 104 students were contacted from five degree colleges located in the Kanpur Urban district and 45 students were contacted from three degree colleges located in the Kanpur Dehat district of Uttar Pradesh. The focus group discussion (FGD) method was used to collect data. Also, twelve faculty members were contacted to throw light upon the given issue, and their viewpoints were recorded. For secondary data various government reports, international organization reports, magazines, websites, journals, newspapers etc were used to collect data. The research design was descriptive and exploratory.

3. Challenges for Students in Higher Education

3·1 Socio-Economic Background and Culture of Excellence

The background of students that also including their parents plays a vital role in their academic performances and future achievements. Students from poor cultural capital face challenges in every sphere of their lives, and education is the top area. French Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has given three forms of capital namely, Economic, Social and Cultural capital. Together they combine to differentiate between the life chances and opportunities coming for students in life. After completing higher secondary education students decide their branch of study. Earlier it was like water-tight compartments, the absolute division between different streams, one has to choose. But NEP 2020 has made education very flexible and fluid in that one can choose subjects of his or her interest. But while choosing one has to decide which subject will give him the best employment opportunity in future. Here comes the deciding role of all the three capitals mentioned above. For an individual, their primary group have a lifetime impact on them. And primary group as given by Charles Horton Cooley, comprises family, friends and neighbours. Though in

today's digital era, one can think of huge social networking sites as a way of connection, but is it neutral in its formation or stratified as already seen in society?

The education system in our country tends to favour students from well-off families, rather than those who are first-generation learners. This is because the system is geared towards elite groups, which is similar to the concept of 'circulation of elites' as described by Vilfredo Pareto. People often oppose the privatization of education, citing the inability of underprivileged students to afford it. However, the government schools that cater to such students should be held accountable for the quality of education they provide. Parents of students from lower-income backgrounds are often unable to participate in school-related activities due to their work schedules. Interestingly, even though government teachers' salaries are higher and associated perks, than their private counterparts, their children still tend to opt for private schools. This is because the education system reinforces social segregation.

Table-1 : Characteristics of the Respondents

S. No.	Social Variables	Male	Female
	Education (Student Enrolled)		
1.	M.A.	11	24
2.	M.Sc.	1	-
3.	M.Com.	-	-
4.	B.A.	30	35
5.	B.Sc.	17	20
6.	B.Com.	7	4
	Total	**66**	**83**
		(149)	
	Education (Parents)	**No. of Respondents**	
1.	10th pass	12	
2.	12th pass	73	
3.	Graduation	22	
4.	Post-Graduation	35	
5.	Doctorate	7	
	Total	**149**	

	Financial Status (Family)	No. of Respondents
1.	Below Poverty Line	35
2.	Lower Middle Class	31
3.	Middle Class	78
4.	Upper Middle Class	5
5.	Wealthy	-
	Total	149
	Caste Category	**No. of Respondents**
1.	General	73
2.	OBC	35
3.	SC/ST	24
4.	Others	17
	Total	**149**

3·2 Dilemma of Admission

The majority of the students responded that what is being taught in college lectures is not the same as what they are preparing in any tuition or coaching classes outside the premises of colleges. Recently many colleges and universities and colleges have opened competitive exam preparation classes within the premises of higher education institutes, but the question is then what one student will gain from class lectures. 95 per cent of the respondents (141 - 142) go out and take private coaching classes to prepare for competition. With a huge amount of fees being charged, questions the relevancy of curriculum towards making students ready for the dreams they have chosen for themselves. Among the respondents, 98 per cent (146) admitted that admission to graduation is mainly due to the reason that many of the competitive exams demand it as the minimum eligibility to sit in the exam. Because respondents were not selected from students from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Medical) backgrounds, it is a general perception that students taking admission to regular undergraduate and postgraduate courses merely do this to obtain a valid certificate of eligibility. This 98 per cent was not exclusive, it included those preparing for exams taking even higher secondary and even high school as the minimum eligibility. But they choose to continue higher education, in the absence of employment, other working opportunities or just in case, among the respondents, not a

single answer I found about the purpose of higher research or subjects were chosen very purposively. NEP 2020 wish to develop research aptitude from the very first year of the undergraduate course. Promoting them to write research papers and articles, and making them understand research methodology in the earlier phase seems very challenging for students from comparatively poor academics and average institutions. In the absence of proper infrastructure, tasks become more challenging. This is a major concern and well addressed in NEP 2020. But the question is again the same whether the concern of students from less accredited colleges and universities was resolved or not.

3·3 Multiple Gates for Exit and Discontinuation

GER of India is significantly low, and policy has given them multiple exits and entrances, greater fear is about going out of higher education, especially in the case of female students. Among the respondents, 75 per cent (27) of respondents in postgraduates and 36 per cent of female respondents in undergraduate (22) were married. Among them, female experiences of continuing education were significantly different from their male counterparts. Female's multiple responsibilities left them with little or no time for self-study, and the question of going for private tuition was completely out of the question. Cent per cent of students was preparing for some kind of government exam. For females's role of the student should well align with other roles of the family to continue education. 78 per cent of respondents (116) joined offline private tuitions for competitive preparation and the rest (33) have joined online classes (readily available after the pandemic and associated lockdown period). For female respondents and working students distance learning from reputed open universities was the secondary choice after college. Among them, IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) and UPRTOU (Uttar Pradesh Rajashri Tandon Open University) were well known. Due to some technical glitches and a lack of interpersonal communication and connections, students generally opt for physical colleges. Giving gates of exit as choices is good for resourceful students. For students, from comparatively less privileged backgrounds, once they leave the system it's worrisome whether they will come back to the system to continue their education or leave it forever. All respondents were today in the transition phase of NEP 2020.

3·4 Government Job vs Private Job and Skill Development

All the respondents in the sample (149) have given their first preference for a government job. In India the charm of government jobs is unquestionable. The private sector even after 75 years of independence, is not able to attract a large number of youths coming out of colleges. There could be several reasons, like a lack of required skills for the private sector for which the government of India runs several skill development programs and a dedicated department for this specific purpose only. Also, much of the private job is unorganized and depends largely on the will of the employer without stability and other social benefits. With the shrinking size of government jobs and increasing private market, students need more vocational courses suitable to their capacities and local requirements. 89 per per cent of female respondents (74) wanted to job near to their residence, same city. With this, they can manage both spheres of life, private and public smoothly. Similarly, 95 per cent of the male respondents (63) wanted a job in place of their residence, though they agreed to go to another place for work.

Skill development is the major issue, the Indian higher education system is facing today. Around 13 million students enter the workforce each year after completing their graduation. But unfortunately, employability is hardly above fifty per cent. Many leading companies today employ people based on their skills not just academic degrees. For example : Google, Starbucks, IBM etc. Most importantly this data is about students coming from mostly central universities, IITs, IIMs etc which are governed and funded by Governments. There are some serious concerns regarding educational institutions that have low grades or have not yet been assessed by NAAC. This includes self-financed colleges that are facing issues like low admissions, and student absenteeism, and are still relying on traditional methods of teaching. Such colleges have now become mere degree or marksheet distributing centres. Hence, it might be more prudent to consider either closing or privatizing such institutes. We need to put strict parameters on outcomes of many educational institutes based on student performance, employability percentage, skill development, minimum administration and maximum student involvement in day-to-day activities of colleges. This is the observation based on colleges of urban district. Now turning to three colleges present in rural areas, remote areas'

condition is even worse. Except for National festivals, hardly any students are present on campuses unless made mandatory due to projects, assignments, semester exams etc.

3·5 Access to Digital tools and Online Education

Among the respondents, cent per cent (149) own personal mobile, and 89 per cent of respondents (133) have internet data plans. 8 per cent of respondents (12) own personal laptops or tablets, and 13 per cent of respondents (19) have access to a desktop regularly. Poor internet connectivity was a major issue with students living in remote areas or rural areas (45). There exists a clear digital divide among students coming from different strata of society. Along with it 45 students combined both from urban and rural locations enrolled in some online courses provided by MOOCs, SWAYAM, and the COURSERA platform and earned certificates after taking exams.

After the lockdown with the advent of mass online education students has great access to online content, pdf of books by foreign writers, and online programs offered by leading universities declared by THE (Times Higher Education) ranking. Then what will be the requirement of expenses made on universities/colleges with zero outcomes in terms of the universal standard parameters and what is the alternative to make them more efficient?

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared July 15, 2014, as World Youth Skills Day. The day marked "the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship".

"Young people are drivers of change and must be fully engaged in decisions affecting their future. Guided by the United Nations Youth 2030 strategy, I urge everyone to act for youth skills development as a priority, at the Summit and beyond." - UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Post-pandemic we just do not require a skillful workforce but a digitally trained skillful workforce. Personality development is the most often neglected area in our curriculum, and its impact is huge on the entire life of a person. All dimensions, opportunities, challenges and their successful completion demands a stable, confident personality. Unfortunately, we find counselling centres full of youth in the age of productivity treating themselves or say training themselves to be suitable for the job. These aspects should be part of the curriculum in the educational years itself, which helps to build a strong personality.

Education is relevant only if it can serve the needs of a changing society. We have to remove this never-ending vicious circle of examination-rote learning- the highest scorecards.

4. Challenges for Faculties in Higher Education

This section explores the viewpoint of faculties from eminent colleges of two districts. There is no ready-made recipe for world-class universities. We need to analyze the working pattern of top-ranking universities. For example, universities like Harvard University, Stanford University, and Wharton University emphasize more Case Studies, Experiential, Project-Based and problem-solving learning, Collaborative learning and less emphasis on Lecture-Based learning. More involvement of students in managing decision-making parts in universities. Learning from successful universities, and implementing them is the right way towards our dream of world-class universities.

"If we teach today's student as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow."   *- John Dewey, 1915*

Cognitive learning is a 6-Level Hierarchy (Bloom's Taxonomy): Remember - Understand - Apply - Analyze - Evaluate - Create. In higher education institutes students should come to accomplish the final step of Bloom's Taxonomy which is Create, but unfortunately, these 6 levels are played differently by students coming from different sections of society.

4·1 Admission Process

Day by day admission cut off for different colleges, is getting lower than ever before. And under the pressure of low admission and filling up of seats, a first come first admission process is even applied. Due to this, students enter college with minimal education. An ample amount of time gets consumed to clear the basics of any subject chosen. The latest changes in admission procedure due to NEP 2020 seem to be a little complicated for students because they have to make numerous choices. Earlier it was a clear combination and divisions but not functionally very fruitful to all students. NEP 2020 came up with structural changes and tried to make students skillful right in their graduation years and beyond. But this transition will take time to get accommodated and used to such choices in advance.

Today a greater number of exams are taking objective patterns it's harmful to decide merit based solely on MCQ kind of exam. This type

of exam pattern has its limitations like- not being able to measure complex problem-solving skills, depth of knowledge, creative logical and analytical skills, and effective writing/oral skills. A blend of both objective and subjective patterns is a must. The recently introduced entrance exam for top HEIs in India is the CUET exam which ignores the twelve years of educational achievements, and it will later develop giving less importance to school achievement if ultimately getting admission to any prestigious college depends upon objective questions only. This will again pull down students towards Bloom's taxonomy's first level of remembering.

4·2 Online Training Opportunities

We need to emphasize the quality of education. In this process, ICT can play a vital role. Incorporating it strategically into the higher education system can have a transforming effect. As we can already see many MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) run online and give Personalized learning which customizes learning for each learner's strengths, needs, skills and interests. Certificates and credit score achieved by this is acceptable in the industry. This is an opportunity for both teachers and students to avail this opportunity, learn new skills and upgrade the efficiency of the teaching-learning process. 4 faculties were engaged in the development of online courses. All 12 faculties have completed capacity building programs (CBP) one or more and faculty development programs (FDP) to upgrade mainly in ICT in the preceding 8 months.

21st century skills can be best described as the 4C's : Critical thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, and Communication. For this our mentors and teachers have to be the lighthouse of students, visionaries of the future, well-trained and updated to direct students in the right and required direction, and most importantly with human values, and empathy.

4·3 Research Work and Innovation in Higher Education

Coming to research publications (qualitative) our performance is poor. Most of the research papers were published merely to complete some mandatory rules attached to the position, getting a degree, and increasing the API (Academic Performance Indicator) score that hardly caters to the needs of contemporary society. Those works are hardly of any use in the market or industry. The problem of plagiarism is also severe. Though we have today many tools to detect

plagiarism percentage, and strict punishment for it, there are several ways to avoid it. The fundamental reason behind all these difficulties is the lack of research aptitude among students. Original work based on primary data is not published in abundance. Science and Commerce streams are far ahead of the Humanities stream in terms of original research publications of high market value.

Swami Vivekanand "What the Nation wants is pluck and scientific genius. We want great spirit, tremendous energy, and boundless enthusiasm. A Nation is advanced in proportion as education and intelligence spread among the masses." The question is why research is so important for any institution or country. When a student passes intermediate (10+2), then enters higher education institutes with an entirely different atmosphere as compared to all those 15 years one spends in school starting from Play Group (PG). The objective of Higher education is to train young minds to think freely, observe properly and research to conclusions. For this reason, scientific aptitude is required. According to NEP 2020, research work is more emphasized starting in the graduation period itself. Research skill contributes towards teachers' better discernment, builds credibility, and ignites the mind towards the new phenomenon. It helps to identify problems and tries to find solutions scientifically irrespective of discipline. Even teachers in higher education are highly benefitted by research works.

4·4 Shortage of Faculties

Central universities, State universities, colleges and all higher education institutes, are facing an immense shortage of faculties. There are several factors affecting this situation including financial constraints, geographically remote locations of institutes, admissions are increasing and the ideal ratio is not maintained. UGC guidelines talk about a 1:30 teacher-student ratio but unfortunately, it has surpassed 1:100 or even 1:150. It left existing faculties overburdened, increasing their working hours. Guest faculties and ad-hoc faculties are not supposed to work at their cent per cent capacity with many constraining conditions, and the most one is the uncertainty they carry all the time of their opportunity.

With new vocational courses added and made mandatory with an internship in the final year from the associated college of the student itself, more faculties will be required. And for this regular

recruitment drives need to be held. Respondents among the faculties experienced this sudden change brought about by NEP 2020 and associated consequences left them exhausted by the end of the semester. Regularization of the semester system is another major challenge. The entire semester ended in a rush, with no face-to-face interaction with students. Projects are being submitted by students without actual research, it is just online surfing and the file is ready, but they are also new to this changing environment and pattern of higher education. Making them understand the basics of research in the initial years is challenging.

To revolutionize higher educational institutes, we need 3 pillars that are :

1. Diversification (Multidisciplinary Institutes as per the needs of society).
2. Massification (Increasing GER in higher education in the next 30 years).
3. Research (Gaining new knowledge in any field for society).

Existing problems in HEIs are diverse :

» The first and fundamental problem lies in students taking admissions in HEIs without any interest or orientation towards research.

» Lack of training in research methodologies both among students and faculties.

» Central universities are still better, but the situation of state universities is far worse, in terms of funds, innovation, international exposure of students, and on-field training of students in research.

» Mass of the colleges have the same syllabus, promoting rote learning, the objectives of students are to gain marks and pass and have a degree.

» A plethora of students coming out of college are mostly unemployable in industries.

» In graduation years most students are preparing for various government services. So, the fundamental objective of establishing HEIs is still a distant dream.

» Dream is of an innovation-driven society, but young minds are wasting their productive years for a long period inside four walls and memorizing facts.

⇨ Lack of highly qualified faculties. Mostly teachers working on a non-permanent ad hoc basis, guest faculty with minimum remuneration and unhealthy and uncertain atmosphere. (Not equal pay for equal work)

⇨ And in the contemporary scenario we see numerous UGC regulations on the appointment of faculties with minimum eligibility instead of some high standards. This is a serious problem because for faculty to impart wider knowledge to the student they are first well educated and informed about their subjects.

⇨ Today the focus is on securing a government job not transforming it. Once it is achieved cosmetic processes keep on going for years without much productivity and enthusiasm.

Ways for Innovation in HEIs can be flipped classrooms, blended learning, E-content, online certificate courses, social networking sites for increasing collaborations with like-minded people etc. Better faculty recruitment procedure to ensure well-qualified faculty with enthusiasm towards teaching, well lecture delivery and other activities essential in HEIs. Along with it, a rigorous drive towards research training is essential.

Innovation is the key ingredient that we are missing in our HEIs. Innovation as defined by Merriam-Webster is "a new idea, method, or device, novelty, the introduction of something new, innovational".

India was ranked 40th position out of 132 in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2022 rankings released by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The theme of GII 2022 was "What is the future of innovation-driven growth?". India has covered a long way from 80th rank in 2015 to 40th in 2022.

Indicators used for ranking countries were :

"Institutions, Human capital and Research, Infrastructure, Market sophistication, knowledge and technology outputs and create outputs".

Ten Initiatives by UGC for quality improvement are :

1. Induction Programme for Students,

2. Learning Outcome-Based curriculum framework (LOCF) - revision of curriculum in regular intervals,

3. Adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) - based learning tools for an effective teaching-learning process,

4. Imparting life skills to students,

5. Social and Industry Connections for every HEI: Every HEI shall adopt at least five villages for the exchange of knowledge and the overall social/economic betterment of the village communities,

6. Evaluation reforms,

7. Tracking of student progress after completion of the course,

8. Faculty Development Programmes,

9. Quality research and the creation of new knowledge and

10. Mentoring of non-accredited institutions, so that every institution can get accreditation by 2022.

There are also numerous scholarships based on merit for students of different categories to provide financial assistance to students for education and research. A multidisciplinary approach as indicated in NEP 2020 is needed today. Especially incorporating technology in education in early years of education, to prepare students for upcoming challenges in future. The world has witnessed various technological revolutions. Today artificial intelligence, robots and most recently CHATGPT pose a threat to the traditional role of employees on various fronts. The problem is that we are witnessing just the reverse of what we dreamt of:

"Today technology-based society instead of society-based technology is a harsh reality."

To survive in this era of the tsunami of information surrounding an individual continuous innovation is essential. The major issue is today people are equating information with knowledge. But this is dangerous, merely having access to mass sources of information is not sufficient to use them and transform them into knowledge, and for that reason, training is required. No field visit, no conversation with respondents, only relying on data published on national and international levels does not always accurately define situations on the ground. Science and innovations have a huge impact on society and similarly, the vice versa is equally true.

5. Education and its Impact on Surroundings

Prime Minister India Honourable Narendra Modi in a speech at the Education Summit at Varanasi organized by UGC (University Grant Commission) on July 7, 2021, said "The fundamental objective behind NEP 2020 is to bring education out from limits of narrow

thought-process and integrate it with thoughts and ideas of the 21st century. We should not only prepare the degree holders but also develop responsible citizens to meet the future challenges."

What is the ultimate goal of education? Being the human species, we consider ourselves at the pinnacle of the process of human evolution, but we should not forget that we are just among other creatures living on Mother Earth. Our skill, knowledge and all the processes involved in development should always be sustainable with other living species on this planet.

A bench of the Supreme Court consisting of Justice B. S. Chauhan and Justice F. M. Ibrahim Kalifulla (2013) said "It is unfortunate that today's education instead of reforming human behaviour in our humble opinion, appears to have failed to achieve its objective. In comparison to earlier times, the literacy level has increased but it did not result in better human value which calls for transformation in the education system. In fact, in the earlier years, though the literacy level was not as high as of today, the human value had its respected place in the society."

NEP 2020 aims at universalization of education from pre-school to secondary level. Minimum education for all was in policy long back. However, emphasizing homogenous education across borders, where developing countries try to imitate developed countries is not the solution for all societies. Geographically dispersed populations with different and yet unique cultural practices on an everyday life basis with different requirements. Urban settlements are different from rural settlements, tribal areas, mountain areas are different from plain areas and plateau areas, similarly clod places are different from hot and humid places etc. divisions and diversities. Today rate of migration is far more rapid, diverse and unevenly distributed as compared to earlier times. Migration for the best opportunity is different from migration out of sustenance requirements. If I address the second type here mass percentage falls under this category. Why we are not able to provide the kind of education and skills required in different settlements? "Local education" should be given space and voice on international platforms, in textbooks catering to the needs of locals. Unfortunately, our education system is trying to colour all diversities into one, which ultimately serves the needs of elites.

Today needs are generated with huge investments in the advertising sector. We need a bottom-up approach in the education

sector too. With the brightest minds coming from every corner of society and getting trained in the best possible way and giving back to their respective societies. The problem with the Indian Education System is that what Lord Macaulay suggested in 1813 in the 19th century based upon which the education framework was established continues after 200 years. At that time perspective and objective of the British government were different but today's scenario has completely changed but the education system remains the same with the 19ᵗʰ century mindset applying some new processes of the 20ᵗʰ century with the advent of information technology but completely ignoring the need of 21ˢᵗ century India. Today we are providing cheap labour to other countries and getting work done, then how it is different from the colonial period.

NEP 2020 addressed all such gaps, to create a new system aligned with the aspirational goals of the 21ˢᵗ century, while building upon India's traditions and value systems. Education must work holistically upon 3 faces of human personality :

1. Fundamental concepts of literacy and numeracy
2. Higher-order cognitive capacity for critical thinking and problem-solving
3. Social, Ethical and Emotional capacities and Dispositions.

Developing a global citizen with an Indian heart and completely aware of the need and responsibilities towards the roots one comes from. Only quantitatively focussing on GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) increasing which is currently less than 30 per cent and the target is to take this percentage to 50 by 2035. The first reason behind it is higher education is not catering to the needs of people and they find preparing for exams or working part-time or anything else except continuing for higher degrees. The second point is the lack of skill development centres in HEIs. Third is age-old books in libraries, non-functional laboratories in HEIs, the absence of hobby clubs etc. make this aspect unattractive to many students. Funds play a vital role but planned execution of programs is equally important.

6. Conclusion and Discussion

There is a requirement to follow global standards of infrastructure which includes: quality libraries, high-tech classrooms equipped with technology, sports and recreation areas, student discussion spaces, and dining areas, along with visiting related

research areas along with faculties regularly appointed etc. We need to let the students explore regional/local culture and let them interact with local people regularly to come up with more practical plans. The direction of the plan of development should be bottom starting from local and finally global. With massive networking available today students can collaborate at different levels and can gain knowledge by stitching fragments across borders : At the Local -Regional - State - National - International - Global level we need interconnections.

National Digital Library (NDL) provide access to millions of books with just one click of a student on his or her phone. Respecting diversity and including them from all sections and strata of society, listening to their needs at each level by providing them optimum learning environment we can move towards achieving all SDGs (sustainable development goals) 17 together. Faculties require more innovation and to remain ahead of students all the time. Because successful implementation of any reforms in the education sector, even NEP 2020 ultimately resides on the shoulders of powerful faculties and researchers.

7. Future of Higher Education

More and more artificial intelligence will be used in every sector and education is not an exception. From this I can relate the story from Mahabharata of Ekalavya who learned archery with greater excellence without the physical presence of Guru Dron Acharya but only his idol. Similarly, today with great internet connectivity (though a digital divide exists), interconnectedness and access to anywhere anytime, at one's own pace physical presence of students in classes in HEIs (especially for theoretical classes) slowly becoming irrelevant unless made mandatory. The introduction of Digital University e-Vidya by the Government of India is a step towards adapting to the new digital era of education.

Autonomy should also be given to selected institutes qualifying certain criteria because it allows them to set new visions about tomorrow, and mission for today and incorporate values of inclusiveness, participation, quality and openness. It allows institutes to generate funds, international collaborations etc. to upgrade institutions to the next level. It will facilitate competition at all levels compelling us to perform better. And higher education institutes should work towards the development of attitudes of cooperation,

collaboration and interaction among diverse groups of people. Taking into consideration one report published in one of the leading English newspapers about the attitude developed among students studying in top leading colleges/universities of the country. One leading company recruited fifteen employees from different Indian universities in the same office. Three among them were from central universities and the rest were from other state or private universities. One task was allotted to their group in a stipulated time of three months. That task turned out to be a failure. Reason was investigated and it was found that students from different education institutes formed groups within the groups, and maintained separate identities. Those from central universities refuse to work collectively, instead ready to work individually and get results. This problem is not exclusive to any particular country. We need to inculcate community development, and group achievement in youth to prepare them for future challenges well in advance.

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A Child in Conflict with Law and Procedural Analysis

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Abstract

In recent decades, there has been a notable rise in crimes committed by children. Various factors contribute to this increase, including the child's upbringing environment, economic conditions, lack of education, and parental neglect. However, children, often perceived as innocent and easily influenced, are particularly vulnerable to manipulation. The involvement of children in serious crimes, such as rape, necessitated legal reforms in India. Consequently, the Indian Parliament introduced the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2015, which replaced the previous juvenile laws and brought about significant changes. This paper examines the procedures pertaining to children in conflict with the law, outlining the objectives of the new act, definitions, age determination, juvenile organizations, and procedures for handling petty and serious offenses committed by children.

Keywords

Juvenile justice, Child in conflict with law, Organizations, Juvenile Justice Board, child welfare committee.

3

A Child in Conflict with Law and Procedural Analysis

1. Objective of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015

The 2015 Act[1] aims to establish a robust legal framework to protect the rights of all children, whether alleged or found to be in conflict with the law or in need of care and protection. The Act focuses on catering to children's basic needs through protection, care, development, treatment, social reintegration, and adopting a child-friendly approach in adjudication and disposal of cases. Rehabilitation is facilitated through processes and institutions established under this Act. Section 2(11) of the Act defines a child as a person who has not completed 18 years of age. Section 2(12) defines a child in conflict with the law as one who has committed an offense and has not completed 18 years of age at the time of the offense.

In Om Prakash vs. State[2] the High Court said that juvenile court has jurisdiction to solve the juvenile matter under reasonable grounds, if juvenile court could not clarify the point of the age of the accused. The High Court verified the age of the person; he is not a juvenile so he is punished like an adult.

2. Juvenile Justice Board (JJB)

Under Section 4[3], the State Government is mandated to establish one or more Juvenile Justice Boards in every district. Each Board consists of a Metropolitan Magistrate or a Judicial Magistrate of the First Class with at least three years of experience, alongside two social workers, one of whom must be a woman. The social workers must have been involved in child welfare activities for at least seven years or be professionals with degrees in child psychology, psychiatry, sociology, or law. The Board exercises the powers and functions related to children in conflict with the law, and members must undergo induction training and sensitization within sixty days of appointment.

3. Child Welfare Committee (CWC)

According to Section 27[4], the State Government must constitute one or more Child Welfare Committees in every district. Each

Committee comprises a Chairperson and four members, including at least one woman and one child expert. The Committee's function is to exercise powers and duties related to children in need of care and protection. The District Child Protection Unit provides secretarial support, and the District Magistrate reviews the Committee's functioning quarterly. The Committee operates as a bench with powers equivalent to those of a Metropolitan Magistrate or a Judicial Magistrate of the First Class, and the District Magistrate acts as a grievance redressal authority.

4. Some Important Rights of Children under Section 3 the JJ Act, 2015[5]

1. Right to be heard and participate in all processes affecting their interests [Section 3(iii)].
2. Right to non-discrimination [Section 3(x)].
3. Right to equality [Section 3(x)].
4. Right to privacy and confidentiality [Section 3(xi)].
5. Right to be reunited with family at the earliest [Section 3(xiii)].
6. Right to a fair hearing, including the right to appeal [Section 3(xvi)].
7. Right to legal representation [Section 8(3)(c) and Rule 7(ix)].
8. Right to have an interpreter/translator [Section 8(3)(d)].

5. Child-Friendly Procedures under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015

Child-friendly procedures emphasize humane and considerate treatment in the best interest of the child. According to Section 2(15)[6], Child-friendly refers to any behavior, conduct, practice, process, attitude, environment, or treatment that is humane, considerate, and in the best interest of the child.

5·1 Police Station Procedures

Rule 8 (3) (v)[7] : All police stations must have a child-friendly room or corner.

Any interaction with children should be conducted in a safe, comfortable, and non-intimidating atmosphere.

Interviews with children should be conducted at the Special Juvenile Police Unit or in a child-friendly setting, not giving the impression of a police station or custodial interrogation.

Parents or guardians may be present during the interview of the child by the police.

5·2 Prohibited Actions

Police shall not compel the child to confess guilt [Rule 8(3)(v)].

Thus it can be said that, Police stations must have child-friendly rooms or corners, and interactions with children should occur in non-intimidating environments. Children should not be compelled to confess guilt and should be interviewed in child-friendly premises, with parents or guardians present. Juvenile Justice Boards, Child Welfare Committees, and Children's Courts must ensure procedures are child-friendly and venues non-intimidating. Proceedings should be simple, and the child-friendly atmosphere should be maintained throughout.

6. Juvenile Justice Boards (JJB) and Child Welfare Committees (CWC)

Section 7 (1)[8] **:** All Juvenile Justice Boards, Child Welfare Committees, Children's Courts, and any other designated courts dealing with children must have child-friendly procedures.

Specific Procedures : Volunteers for Para-legal and Other Tasks: JJB may use student volunteers or NGO volunteers to assist with tasks such as contacting parents and collecting relevant social and rehabilitative information about the child [Rule 7(1)(x)].

Non-intimidating Venues : JJB must ensure the procedures are child-friendly, and the venue does not resemble a regular court [Section 7(1)].

Simplified Proceedings : All cases under the Act should be conducted as simply as possible, ensuring a child-friendly atmosphere during the proceedings [Section 14 (5) (b)].

Child-Friendly Premises : JJB should hold its sittings in child-friendly premises [Rule 6 (4)].

Communication Techniques : JJB should use child-friendly techniques, including body language, facial expressions, eye contact, intonation, and volume of voice when communicating with the child [Rule 6(5)].

6·1 Children's Court

When passing an order, the Children's Court may consider the special needs of the child, tenets of a fair trial, and maintaining a child-friendly atmosphere [Section 19 (1)(i)[9]].

6·2 Child Welfare Committee (CWC)

The CWC should interview the child sensitively and in a child-friendly manner, avoiding adversarial or accusatory language that could impact the child's dignity or self-esteem [Rule 19(6)].

7. Organizations Constituted for Children in Conflict with Law

a. **State Child Protection Society (Section 106) :** A society at the state level focused on child protection.

b. **District Child Protection Unit [Sections 2 (26) & 106] :** A district-level unit responsible for child protection.

c. **Inspection Committee (Section 54) :** A committee tasked with inspecting facilities and processes related to child protection.

d. **Special Juvenile Police Unit/Local Police (Section 107) :** A specialized police unit dedicated to handling juvenile cases.

e. **Juvenile Justice Board (Section 4) :** A board responsible for adjudicating matters related to children in conflict with the law.

f. **Children's Court [Section 2 (20)]) :** A court designated to handle cases involving children.

g. **Probation Officer [Section 2 (48)] :** An officer responsible for supervising and rehabilitating children in conflict with the law.

h. **Observation Home [Sections 2 (40) & 47] :** A temporary home for children during the pendency of inquiries.

i. **Special Home [Sections 2 (56) & 48] :** A home providing rehabilitative services to children found to have committed an offence.

j. **Place of Safety [Sections 2 (46) & 49] :** A designated place for children during inquiries or for rehabilitation.

k. **Fit Facility [Sections 2 (27) & 51] :** A facility recognized to temporarily take responsibility for a child.

l. **Fit Person and Sponsorship [Sections 2 (28), 52, and 45(4)] :** A person identified and recognized to take care of a child temporarily.

m. **State and National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (Section 109) :** Commissions at the state and national levels to protect child rights.

These provisions aim to ensure that children in conflict with the law are treated with care, respect, and in a manner that promotes their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

8. Definition of a Child in Conflict with Law (CCL)

According to Section 2(13) of the Juvenile Justice Ac, A Child in Conflict with Law (CCL) is defined as a child who is alleged or found to have committed an offence and has not completed 18 years of age on the date of the commission of such offence.

9. Presumption and Determination of Age of a Child

Section 19 (1) : When it is obvious to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) or Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) based on the appearance of the person brought before it that the said person is a child, the CWC or JJB shall record such observation stating the age of the child as nearly as possible and proceed with the inquiry under Section 14 or Section 36 without waiting for further confirmation of the age.

Section 94(2)[10] **:** If there are reasonable grounds for doubt regarding whether the person brought before the CWC or JJB is a child or not, the CWC or JJB shall undertake the process of age determination by seeking evidence, which includes :

1. Date of Birth Certificate from the School or the matriculation or equivalent certificate from the concerned examination board, if available. (Birth Certificate given by a corporation, municipal authority, or panchayat.)

2. Ossification Test or Other Medical Age Determination Test, if the above documents are not available. This test must be conducted on the orders of the CWC or JJB and completed within 15 days from the date of such order.

Section 94(3) : The age recorded by the CWC or JJB shall be deemed to be the true age of the person brought before it for the purposes of this Act.

In Pratap Singh v. State of Jharkhand & Anr[11] case, the Hon'ble Supreme Court held that the juvenility of a person in conflict with the law has to be reckoned from the date of the offence and not from the date on which cognizance was taken by the Magistrate.

10. Rule 8 : Procedures and Prohibitions

Actions that must be prohibited are as follows :

No FIR will be registered against a child except for heinous offences or those committed jointly with adults [Rule 8 (1)]. The child shall not be sent to a police lock-up under any circumstance [Rule 8 (3)(i)].The child shall not be handcuffed, chained, or otherwise coerced [Rule 8(3)(ii)]. The child shall not be compelled to confess guilt [Rule 8(3)(v)]. The child shall not be asked to sign any statement [Rule 8(3)(vi)].

Actions that are required to be taken are as follows :

Inform the child promptly and directly of the charges through parents or guardian if an FIR is registered [Rule 8(3)(iii)]. Provide appropriate medical assistance, interpreter services, or special educator assistance as required [Rule 8(3)(iv)]. Conduct all proceedings in a child-friendly environment [Rule 8(3)(v)]. Inform the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) to provide free legal aid to the child [Rule 8 (3)(vii)]. Police officers interacting with the child will not be in uniform [Rule 8(4)].No joint proceedings with a person who is not a child (Section 23).

11. Procedure Following a Complaint Against a CCL

11·1 For Petty/Serious Offences

When a child is apprehended by police/SJPU/CWPO, the police record the complaint in the general daily diary and forward the information to the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) Section 10(1), Rule 8(1)).

11·2 For Heinous Offences

The SJPU/CWPO registers an FIR and forwards it to the JJB Rule 8(1).

11·3 Common Procedures

Notification : The police immediately inform the parents/ guardian and the DLSA to provide legal aid Rule 8(3)(vii), [Section 13(1)(i)].

Social Investigation Report : The police inform the Probation Officer or CWO to prepare and submit a social investigation report within two weeks to the JJB [Section 13(1)(ii)].

Bail : The apprehended child may be released on bail by the police or JJB with or without surety or placed under the supervision of a probation officer or under the care of a Fit Person [Section 12(1)]. In a case titled as Gopi Ram v/s State of Haryana[12], the Hon'ble Court supported the opinion that if the court has a reasonable feeling or it is

of the view that the accused may be innocent and may not have committed that offence then the court shall have power to grant the bail. And the court further opined that the accused may have a change of heart and may not commit any such offence in the future if the bail is granted to him, then the court shall immediately grant the bail that particular person.

Observation Home : If the child is not released on bail, they may be sent to an Observation Home until brought before the JJB within 24 hours of apprehension, where appropriate orders are obtained (Section 12(2), Rule 8(3)(i)).

Accompaniment to JJB : The child produced before the JJB must be accompanied by a CWPO or Case Worker [Section 10(1), Rule 8(2)(iii)].

In the case of Sheila Barse vs Union of India[13], the Supreme Court gave clear instructions that juvenile offenders should not be sent to jail under any circumstances and they should be kept in any other reforming institution like special home or juvenile home by taking advantage of the provisions of Juvenile Justice Act.

In the case of Hava Singh vs State of Haryana[14], an anti-legal juvenile was sentenced to life imprisonment under section 302/34 of the Indian Penal Code and sent to the institution of the Bostal under the Punjab Bostal Act, 1926.

12. Procedure to be Adopted at Police Station

According to Section 10 & Rule 8, the following actions must be taken :

Child Friendly Environment : The child must be taken to a Child Friendly Corner or room.

Timely Production : The child should be produced before the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) within 24 hours.

Clothing of CWPO : The Child Welfare Police Officer (CWPO) should be in plain clothes, not in uniform.

Prohibition of Force : The use of any coercion or force on the child is prohibited.

Notification of Charges : The child must be promptly and directly informed of the charges through their parent or guardian.

Documentation : A copy of the First Information Report (FIR) or the police report must be provided to the child or their parent or guardian.

Assistance : Appropriate medical assistance, interpreter services, or special educator assistance must be provided as required.

Legal Aid : The District Legal Services Authority (DSLSA) must be informed to provide free legal aid to the child.

The following actions are prohibited :

FIR Restrictions : No FIR is to be registered against a Child in Conflict with Law (CCL) except for a heinous offense or an offense committed jointly with an adult.

Detention Restrictions : The child should not be kept in a police station, lockup, or adult jail.

Restraints : The child must not be handcuffed, chained, or fettered.

Statements : The child should not be asked to sign any statement.

Confessions : The child should not be compelled to accept guilt.

Joint Proceedings : No joint proceedings of a child in conflict with the law with a person who is not a child (Section 23).

13. Inquiry Procedure by Juvenile Justice Board (JJB)

The inquiry must be completed within 4 months, extendable by 2 more months if necessary :

Completion of Inquiry : The JJB must hold an inquiry and complete it within 4 months, with a possible extension of 2 months [Section 14(2)].

Termination of Proceedings : If the inquiry for petty offenses remains inconclusive even after the extended period, the proceedings shall be terminated [Section 14(3) & (4)].

14. Trial Procedures

  a. **Petty Offenses :** Summary trial procedure [Section 14(5)(d)].

  b. **Serious Offenses :** Trial as in summons case [Section 14(5)(e)].

  c. **Heinous Offenses :** Trial as in summons case [Section 14(5)(f)].

   JJB Orders :

Social Investigation Report : JJB obtains a social investigation report from a Probation Officer [Section 13(1)(ii)].

Referral to CWC : If the child is in need of care and protection, the JJB may refer the child to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) (Section 17(2)).

Order on Non-Commission : If the JJB is satisfied that the child has not committed any offense, it shall pass an order to that effect (Section 17(1)).

Order on Commission : If the child has committed an offense, the JJB may pass orders for rehabilitation (Section 18(1)).

Rehabilitation : The JJB can order the rehabilitation of the child for a maximum of 3 years, including an individual care plan prepared by a Probation Officer, Child Welfare Officer (CWO), or Social Worker (Section 18(1)(g) & Rule 11(3)).

15. Types of Trials and Orders

15·1 Types of Trial

  a. Petty Offense: Summary Trial.
  b. Serious Offense: Trial as in summons case.
  c. Heinous Offense: Trial as in summons case.

15·2 Orders

  JJB can impose following Orders on a juvenile :
  a. Return home after advice or admonition.
  b. Participate in group counseling or similar activities.
  c. Perform community service.
  d. Payment of a fine by the child or parents/guardian.
  e. Release on probation of good conduct under the care of a parent, guardian, Fit Person, or Fit Facility for up to 3 years.
  f. Send to a Special Home for up to 3 years for reformative services including education, skill development, counseling, behavior modification therapy, and psychiatric support.
  g. Additional orders such as attending school, vocational training, therapeutic centers, de-addiction programs, or prohibiting the child from visiting certain places.

16. Procedures for Heinous Offenses (Children Aged 16-18)

16·1 Preliminary Assessment by JJB

The JJB conducts a preliminary assessment of the child's mental and physical capacity, understanding of the consequences, and circumstances of the offense (Section 15)[15].

If the JJB believes the child should be tried as an adult, it transfers the case to the Children's Court [Section 18(3)[16]].

In the case of Durga Meena vs State of Rajasthan[17], a minor was charged and convicted for a murder by the JJB. After holding a preliminary inquiry against the child, the JJB observed that the child was physically and mentally able to commit the crime based on a psychiatrist report, and thus, the JJB transferred the child to adult court. Thereafter, an appeal was filed in the Rajasthan High Court in which the Court observed that the JJB in this case failed to adhere to the mandatory requirements for preliminary assessment and the preliminary order is vitiated because no psychologist or psycho-social worker having the experience of working with children in difficult circumstances was undertaken during the enquiry conducted under Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice Act. The Court observed the JJB failed to look into the difficult circumstances like continuous physical and verbal assault of the child by the deceased.

16·2 Children's Court Role

Trial as Adult : The Children's Court decides if the child should be tried as an adult and follows appropriate procedures (Section 19(1)(i)).

Inquiry by JJB : If not tried as an adult, the Children's Court conducts an inquiry as the JJB would and passes orders (Section 19(1)(ii)).

Rehabilitation Plan : The final order includes an individual care plan for rehabilitation, with follow-up by a Probation Officer, DCPU, or Social Worker [Section 19(2)].

Placement in Place of Safety : The child is sent to a Place of Safety until age 21, then possibly transferred to a jail [Section 19(3)].

Periodic Follow-up : Annual reports by the Probation Officer, DCPU, or Social Worker on the child's progress and treatment [Section 19(4)].

Report Submission : Reports are submitted to the Children's Court for records and follow-up [Section 19(5)].

17. Destruction of Records

Records of conviction for a child in conflict with the law are kept for the duration of the appeal period or for seven years, whichever is longer, after which they are destroyed.

In the case of Jitendra Singh vs State of U.P.[18], the Supreme Court in this case further stressed on certain safeguards and standards to protect privacy and confidentiality of juvenile. "The right to privacy and confidentiality of a juvenile is required to be protected by all means and through all the stages of the proceedings, and this is one of the reasons why the identity of a juvenile in conflict with law is not disclosed."

Even recently in March 2023, the Rajasthan High Court, in the case of State of Rajasthan vs Bhawani Shankar Moorh[19], held that "a perusal of the language of Section 24 of the JJ Act, 2015 and the corresponding provision of Section 19 of the JJ Act, 2000 would make it clear that the record of conviction of the child in conflict, cannot be preserved and has to be destroyed. As a direct consequence, any disqualification entailing from the conviction would have to be ignored and cannot act to the detriment of the child in conflict with the law in any manner, which would include a selection process for public employment."

In heinous offenses where the child is tried as an adult, records are retained by the Children's Court (Section 24 & Rule 14).

18. Organizations for Rehabilitation of CCL

Short Term Stay

(i) Observation Home

Definition and Purpose : An Observation Home, as defined in Section 2(47) and Section 47 of the Juvenile Justice Act, is a facility established and maintained in every district or group of districts by a State Government. This can be done directly by the government or through a voluntary or non-governmental organization (NGO).

It is registered for the temporary reception, care, and rehabilitation of any child alleged to be in conflict with the law during the pendency of any inquiry under the Act.

(ii) Fit Facility (Section 51)

Definition and Purpose : A Fit Facility, as per Sections 2(27) and 51, refers to a facility run by a governmental organization or a registered voluntary/non-governmental organization.

This facility is prepared to temporarily take responsibility for a child for a specific purpose and is recognized as suitable after an inquiry into its capabilities. The recognition is granted by the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) or the Child Welfare Committee (CWC).

(iii) Fit Person (Section 52)[20]

Definition and Purpose : A Fit Person, according to Sections 2(28) and 52, is an individual prepared to take responsibility for a child for a specific purpose.

The person is identified and recognized as fit after an inquiry by the CWC or the JJB. This recognition allows the person to temporarily receive a child for care, protection, and treatment for a specified period.

Long Term Stay

(i) Special Home

Definition and Purpose : A Special Home, defined in Section 2(56) and Section 48, is an institution established by a State Government or by a voluntary or non-governmental organization.

It is registered under Section 48 and provides housing and rehabilitative services to children in conflict with the law who, after inquiry, are found to have committed an offense and are sent to the institution by order of the Board.

For children in conflict with the law (CCL), long-term stay in a Special Home is as per orders of the JJB (Section 18). The services include schooling, vocational training, therapeutic centers, and de-addiction programs.

(ii) Place of Safety

Definition and Purpose : A Place of Safety, according to Section 2(46) and Section 49, is a facility or institution not being a police lockup or jail. It can be established separately or attached to an Observation Home or a Special Home.

The person in charge must be willing to receive and take care of children alleged or found to be in conflict with the law, as ordered by the Board or the Children's Court. This applies both during the inquiry and for ongoing rehabilitation after being found guilty, for a period and purpose specified in the order.

The Place of Safety must have separate arrangements and facilities for children during the inquiry process and those found involved in an offense. It includes schooling, vocational training, therapeutic centers, and de-addiction programs.

Importantly, a Place of Safety cannot be in the same compound as an adult jail.

19. Release of a Child from an Institution

A. Release from Children's Home or Special Home

Consideration for Release : The Committee or the Board may consider the release of a child kept in a Children's Home or special home based on a report from a probation officer, social worker, government, or a voluntary/non-governmental organization. The release can be either absolute or conditional. Conditions may include the child living with parents or a guardian, or under the supervision of an authorized person willing to take charge, educate, train the child for a useful trade or calling, or look after the child for rehabilitation.

If a child released conditionally or the person supervising the child fails to fulfill the conditions, the Board or Committee may take the child back to the concerned home [Section 97(1)].

If the child is released on a temporary basis, the period the child is absent from the home will count as part of the time the child is liable to be kept in the home. If a child in conflict with the law fails to meet the conditions set by the Board, the time the child is liable to stay in the institution will be extended by a period equivalent to the time lost due to such failure [Section 97(2)].

20. Leave of Absence to a Child Placed in an Institution

Granting Leave of Absence : The Committee or the Board may permit a child to take leave of absence on special occasions such as examinations, marriage of relatives, death of a relative, accident, serious illness of a parent, or similar emergencies. The leave should generally not exceed seven days in one instance, excluding travel time [Section 98(1)[21]].

Time During Absence : The time during which a child is absent from the institution under such permission will count as part of the time the child is liable to stay in the Children's Home or special home [Section 98(2)].

Failure to Return : If a child fails to return to the Children's Home or special home after the leave period is exhausted or the permission is revoked, the Board or Committee may take the child back to the home. For a child in conflict with the law who fails to return, the period of absence will be added to the time the child is liable to stay in the institution [Section 98(3)].

21. Provision of Appeals and Revisions under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act

A. Appeals as per Section 101[22] **of the Act :** Any person aggrieved by an order from the Committee or the Board under this Act may appeal to the Children's Court within 30 days from the date of the order.

Appeals related to decisions on Foster Care and Sponsorship After Care by the Committee shall lie with the District Magistrate.

The Court of Sessions or the District Magistrate may accept an appeal after the 30-day period if the appellant provides sufficient cause for the delay. Such appeals should be resolved within 30 days [Section 101(1)].

Appeal against Preliminary Assessment : Appeals against the Board's preliminary assessment into a heinous offence under Section 15 of the Act shall be made to the Court of Sessions. The Court of Sessions may seek the assistance of experienced psychologists and medical specialists different from those who assisted the Board [Section 101(2)].

No Appeal shall lie from Orders such as : An order of acquittal by the Board in respect of a child alleged to have committed an offence other than a heinous offence if the child is 16 years or older is not appealable and also from an order by the Committee finding that a person is not a child in need of care and protection. (Section 101(3).

No Second Appeal : No second appeal is allowed from any order of the Court of Session passed in appeal under this section. [Section 101(4)].

However, an Appeal may lie to the High Court: if any person aggrieved by an order of the Children's Court may file an appeal before the High Court following the procedure specified in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 [Section 101(5)]).

B. Revision as per Section 102[23] **of the Act :** The High Court has the authority to review the records of any proceedings in which a Committee, Board, Children's Court, or Court has passed an order to ensure the legality or propriety of such orders. The High Court can pass orders as it deems fit, but it must not issue any order prejudicial to any person without giving that person a reasonable opportunity to be heard (Section 102).

22. Conclusion

Thus as a conclusion it can be said that, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, lays down a comprehensive framework to handle children in conflict with the law (CCL) with a strong emphasis on child-friendly procedures and environments. The Act prioritizes the welfare and rehabilitation of these children, ensuring their treatment aligns with their best interests and promotes their reintegration into society.

The Act ensures age determination procedures are thorough and precise to confirm the child's age and thereby their eligibility for juvenile justice processes. The Act mandates a child-friendly approach at police stations, including child-friendly rooms and the presence of parents or guardians during interactions. The use of coercion, including forcing confessions or using intimidating environment, is strictly prohibited.

Even through the bodies like Juvenile Justice Boards (JJB) and Child Welfare Committees (CWC), it is tried to ensure that all the procedures are conducted in a child-friendly manner. The JJB is tasked with simplifying proceedings and maintaining a non-intimidating atmosphere, using appropriate communication techniques that are considerate of the child's emotional and psychological state.

The Act differentiates between petty, serious, and heinous offenses, with corresponding procedures for each category. It emphasizes quick and fair inquiries, with special provisions for heinous offenses committed by children aged 16 to 18. The Act also emphasizes rehabilitation through various orders that may include community service, probation under the care of guardians or fit persons, and placement in special homes for up to three years. It incorporates individual care plans tailored to the needs of each child, prepared by probation officers or social workers.

For children aged 16 to 18 involved in heinous offenses, the Act allows for preliminary assessments by the JJB to decide if the child should be tried as an adult. The Children's Court considers the child's special needs and ensures a child-friendly trial process.

The Act establishes various institutions and positions, including State Child Protection Societies, District Child Protection Units, Special Juvenile Police Units, Observation Homes, Special Homes,

and Places of Safety. These institutions work collectively to safeguard the rights and welfare of children in conflict with the law.

Even there is provision for the Destruction of Records. The Act provides for the destruction of records related to the conviction of a child after a specific period, ensuring that the child's past does not adversely affect their future prospects.

The Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, represents a significant shift towards a more humane and rehabilitative approach in dealing with children in conflict with the law. It underscores the importance of treating these children with dignity and care, focusing on their rehabilitation rather than mere punishment. By fostering a child-friendly environment at every stage of the justice process, the Act aims to facilitate the reintegration of these children into society as responsible and contributing members.

23. Suggestions

Suggestions for Enhancing the Implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 are as follows :

1. **Enhanced Training for Police and Judiciary :** Regular and comprehensive training programs should be conducted for police officers, Juvenile Justice Board members, and judiciary officials. These programs should focus on child psychology, child-friendly procedures, and the specifics of handling cases involving children in conflict with the law.

2. **Improved Infrastructure :** Ensure all police stations have well-equipped, child-friendly rooms. These spaces should be designed to be welcoming and non-intimidating. Similar efforts should be made to ensure that Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committees operate in environments that do not resemble traditional courtrooms.

3. **Awareness Campaigns :** Public awareness campaigns should be conducted to educate communities about the provisions and benefits of the Juvenile Justice Act. This can help in reducing the stigma associated with children in conflict with the law and encourage community support for their rehabilitation.

4. **Strengthening Rehabilitation Programs :** Expansion and enhancement of the rehabilitation programs for juveniles within the Observation Homes and Special Homes which should include educational opportunities, vocational training, mental

health support, and life skills development. Regular assessments should be conducted to ensure these programs are effective.

5. **Inter-agency Collaboration :** Foster stronger collaboration between various stakeholders, including police, judiciary, probation officers, social workers, and NGOs. Regular meetings and coordination can ensure a more holistic approach to handling cases of children in conflict with the law.

6. **Monitoring and Evaluation :** Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress of children in the juvenile justice system. Regular audits and reports should be mandated to ensure compliance with child-friendly procedures and the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs.

7. **Legal Aid and Support Services :** Ensure that every child in conflict with the law has access to quality legal aid. The District Legal Services Authorities should be proactive in providing legal support. Additionally, support services such as counseling, mentoring, and peer support groups should be readily available.

8. **Community Involvement :** Engage communities in the rehabilitation process. Community-based programs can provide support networks for children upon their release from Observation Homes or Special Homes. Involving local leaders and organizations can help in the child's reintegration into society.

9. **Focus on Preventive Measures :** Implement preventive measures to address the root causes of juvenile delinquency. This includes investing in education, social services, and family support programs. Early intervention strategies can help at-risk children before they come into conflict with the law.

10. **Technology Integration :** Utilize technology to streamline case management and ensure timely processing of cases. Digital platforms can be used for tracking the status of cases, managing records, and facilitating communication between different stakeholders.

11. **Policy Review and Updates :** Regularly review and update policies to keep pace with emerging challenges and international best practices in juvenile justice. Feedback from practitioners and affected children should be incorporated to continuously improve the system.

12. Special Provisions for Vulnerable Groups : Develop special provisions and tailored interventions for particularly vulnerable groups, such as children with disabilities, girls, and children from marginalized communities. These groups may face unique challenges and require targeted support.

By implementing these suggestions, the juvenile justice system can be made more effective, ensuring that children in conflict with the law are treated with the care, dignity, and support they need to reform and reintegrate into society successfully.

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Empowering Women Entrepreneurs: Government Initiatives and Growth Prospects

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Abstract

The overall economic growth of a nation depends on the social and economic advancement of women although it hasn't been fully capitalized in India, entrepreneurship is a mindset that every woman possesses. Despite certain assumptions, people are now more willing to accept women in leadership roles in our society as a result of environmental changes. Women entrepreneurs are a subset of women who have strayed from the norm and are looking at novel ways to get involved in the economy. Women manage organized businesses because of their knowledge, skills, capabilities, and inventiveness in the workplace, as well as a growing desire to make a constructive use of their knowledge, skills, capabilities, impact and inventiveness in the workplace, as well as a growing desire to make a constructive.

Keywords

Entrepreneurs, Women entrepreneurship, Government schemes.

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Empowering Women Entrepreneurs: Government Initiatives and Growth Prospects

1. Introduction

The educated Indian women have to go a long way to achieve equal rights and position because traditions are deep rooted in Indian society where the sociological set up has been a male dominated one. Despite all the social hurdles, Indian women stand tall from the rest of the crowd and are applauded for their achievements in their respective field. The transformation of social fabric of the Indian society, in terms of increased educational status of women and varied aspirations for better living, necessitated a change in the lifestyle of Indian women. She has competed with man and successfully issued up with him in every Walk of life and business is no exception for this. These women leaders are assertive, persuasive and willing to take risk. They managed to survive and succeed in this cut throat competition with their hard work diligence and perseverance.

2. Women Entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurship refers to the process of creating, managing, and developing a business enterprise by a woman or a group of women. It involves identifying opportunities, developing and executing business strategies, managing financial resources, and taking calculated risks to achieve business objectives. In other words, women entrepreneurs are individuals who initiate, organize, and operate business ventures. They perform various activities involved in establishing an enterprise, including idea generation, objective determination, project preparation, and product analysis. These women contribute to economic activity, job creation, and community development.

Women entrepreneurship in India has a rich and evolving history. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Indian women owned businesses such as retail shops and small handloom enterprises. Their

involvement was noticeable, but limited due to societal norms and lack of proper education. In the early 20th century, women's participation and contribution increased. However, they still faced challenges related to gender inequality and financial dependence on male family members. Kalpana Saroj, India's first female entrepreneur, made significant strides. She turned around the distressed Kamani Tubes Company in 2001, demonstrating that women can excel in business. Despite progress, women continue to fight for basic rights and face biases in professional life. In summary, women entrepreneurs have played a crucial role throughout history, overcoming obstacles to contribute to India's economic growth and development.

3. Women Entrepreneurs in the Digital Age : A Literature Review

This review explores the impact of digital technologies on women entrepreneurs. It discusses how digitalization has created new opportunities and challenges for women-led businesses. Key themes include access to information, online marketing, and e-commerce. The study emphasizes the need for tailored support programs to enhance digital literacy among women entrepreneurs.

3·1 Gender and Entrepreneurial Success

A comprehensive literature review examines the relationship between gender and entrepreneurial success. It highlights that while women entrepreneurs face unique barriers (such as access to finance, networks, and societal norms), they also exhibit strengths like resilience, collaboration, and innovation. The study suggests that policies and interventions should address both challenges and strengths to promote women's entrepreneurial success.

3·2 Women Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This recent review focuses on the intersection of women entrepreneurship and the United Nations' SDGs. It discusses how women-led businesses contribute to achieving various SDGs, including gender equality, poverty reduction, and environmental sustainability.The study emphasizes the importance of integrating gender perspectives into sustainable development policies. Women entrepreneurs face unique challenges, but there are several key success factors that can contribute to their business growth and sustainability.

Jalbert, (2000) performed a study to explore the role of women entrepreneurs in a global economy. It also examined how women's business associations can strengthen women's position in business and international trade. The analysis is performed on the basis of facts and data collected through field work (surveys, focus groups and interviews) and through examining the existing published research. The study has shown that the women business owners are making significant contributions to global economic health, national competitiveness and community commerce by bringing many assets to the global market.

Singh, (2008) identified the reasons & influencing factors behind entry of women in entrepreneurship. He explained the characteristics of their businesses in Indian context and also obstacles & challenges. He mentioned the obstacles in the growth of women entrepreneurship are mainly lack of interaction with successful entrepreneurs, social un-acceptance as women entrepreneurs, family responsibility, gender discrimination, missing network, low priority given by bankers to provide loan to women entrepreneurs. He suggested the remedial measures like promoting micro enterprises, unlocking institutional frame work, projecting & pulling to grow & support the winners etc. The study advocates for ensuring synergy among women related ministry, economic ministry & social & welfare development ministry of the Government of India.

4. Challenges for Women Entrepreneurship

Women entrepreneurs face several challenges in their journey to establish and grow successful businesses. Here are some of the key challenges :

⇥ **Access to Capital :** Securing funding is often more difficult for women entrepreneurs. They may encounter bias from investors or financial institutions, leading to limited access to loans, venture capital, or other financial resources.

⇥ **Gender Stereotypes and Bias :** Societal norms and stereotypes can impact women's confidence and opportunities. They may face skepticism about their abilities to lead and make strategic decisions.

⇥ **Work-Life Balance :** Balancing business responsibilities with family and personal life can be challenging. Women often carry a disproportionate share of household and care-giving responsibilities.

- ⇢ **Networking and Mentorship :** Building professional networks and finding mentors can be harder for women. Access to influential networks and role models is crucial for business growth.
- ⇢ **Market Access and Discrimination :** Women entrepreneurs may face discrimination when dealing with suppliers, customers, or partners. Breaking into male-dominated industries can be particularly tough.
- ⇢ **Lack of Representation :** Few women entrepreneurs are visible in media and business leadership roles. This lack of representation affects perceptions and opportunities.
- ⇢ **Legal and Regulatory Hurdles :** Navigating complex legal requirements, permits, licenses, and tax regulations can be daunting for any entrepreneur, but women may face additional challenges.
- ⇢ **Access to Technology and Digital Skills :** Keeping up with technological advancements and digital marketing strategies is crucial for business success. Some women may lack access to training and resources.
- ⇢ **Balancing Risk-Taking :** Women tend to be more risk-averse, which can impact their willingness to take bold steps or invest in growth opportunities.

Despite these challenges, women entrepreneurs continue to make significant contributions to the global economy. Organizations and policymakers are increasingly recognizing the importance of supporting and empowering women in business.

5. Government Policy for Women Entrepreneurship in India

Government policies in India have played a crucial role in supporting women entrepreneurs. Here are some ways they have done so :

5·1 Financial Support

Subsidies : Various government schemes provide financial assistance, reduced interest rates, and subsidies to women-led businesses.

Credit Facilities : Specialized banks and financial institutions offer loans and credit facilities specifically for women entrepreneurs.

5·2 Skill Development and Training

⊮ **Entrepreneurship Development Programs :** The government conducts training programs to enhance entrepreneurial skills among women.

⊮ **Skill India Mission :** This initiative aims to empower women by providing vocational training and skill development.

5·3 Reservation and Quotas

Public Procurement Policies : Some policies reserve a percentage of government contracts for women-owned enterprises.

Startup Incubators : The government supports women-led startups through incubators and accelerators.

5·4 Legal and Regulatory Support

Women-Specific Laws : Legal provisions protect women's rights in business, such as the Maternity Benefit Act.

Ease of Doing Business : Simplified procedures and reduced paperwork benefit women entrepreneurs.

5·5 Awareness Campaigns

The government runs awareness campaigns to encourage women to start and sustain businesses. These policies aim to create a more supportive environment for women entrepreneurs. Supporting women entrepreneurs is crucial for fostering economic growth and empowering women. Here are some valuable resources available to support women in their entrepreneurial journey:

5·6 Startup India - Women Entrepreneurship

The Startup India initiative aims to promote sustainable development for women entrepreneurs in India. It offers various schemes, initiatives, and networks to strengthen women-led startups. Some states, such as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, provide monthly allowances to women-led startups with specific eligibility criteria. Additionally, the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) encourages networking, mentorship, and collaboration among women entrepreneurs.

5·7 Financial Resources

Stree Shakti Package: Businesses operated by women entrepreneurs are eligible for loans under this package. The business

must be managed by one or more women entrepreneurs with at least 51% share capital. Explore grants, investors, and funding opportunities specifically designed for women-owned businesses.

5·8 Online Communities and Networks

Ladies Who Launch : A platform that provides inspiration, education, funding, and community support for women and non-binary entrepreneurs.

Ellevate : A global network of professional women offering networking events, resources, and mentorship.

Women 2.0 : An online community focused on supporting women in technology and entrepreneurship.

5·9 Educational Resources

TED for Women : TED Talks featuring inspiring women entrepreneurs and thought leaders.

Mompreneurs : Resources for mothers balancing business and family life.

The Boutique Hub : A community for boutique owners and fashion entrepreneurs.

5·10 Government Schemes and Programs

Skill Upgradation and Mahila Coir Yojana : Training programs for women artisans in the coir industry.

Stand-Up India : A scheme promoting entrepreneurship among women and minorities.

Nai Roshni : A leadership development program for minority women.

National Startup Awards : Recognizing outstanding startups across sectors.

5·11 Local Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce

Many cities have women-focused business associations that offer networking events, workshops, and resources.

Startup India - Women Entrepreneurship

Here are some inspiring success stories of women entrepreneurs in India who have made a significant impact in their respective fields :

Aditi Gupta : Co-founder of Menstrupedia, an educational platform that aims to break taboos around menstruation and provide

accurate information to young girls. Aditi's initiative has reached millions of students through comic books, workshops, and digital content.

Shradha Sharma : Founder and CEO of YourStory, a media platform that shares stories of entrepreneurs, startups, and innovations. Shradha's dedication to showcasing the entrepreneurial journey has inspired countless individuals in the startup ecosystem.

Kiran Mazumdar Shaw : Founder of Biocon, a biopharmaceutical company specializing in research, development, and manufacturing of innovative medicines. Kiran's leadership has led Biocon to become a global player in the biotechnology industry.

Upasana Taku : Co-founder of MobiKwik, a digital wallet and payment platform. Upasana's vision has contributed to the growth of digital payments in India, making financial transactions more accessible.

Ghazal Alagh : Co-founder of Mamaearth, a brand offering natural and toxin-free personal care products for babies and mothers. Ghazal's commitment to sustainability and safe products has resonated with health-conscious consumers.

Neeru Sharma : Co-founder of Infibeam Avenues, an e-commerce and digital payment solutions provider. Neeru's entrepreneurial journey includes pioneering e-commerce services and digital infrastructure in India.

Sugandha Malika Sadani : Founder of Goumtes, a sustainable fashion brand that promotes eco-friendly clothing. Sugandha's brand focuses on ethical practices and conscious consumerism1.

Ruchi Garg : Co-founder of Venuelook, an online platform for event planning and venue booking.Ruchi's startup simplifies event management and connects users with suitable venues.

Ankita Gaba : Co-founder of Social Samosa, a leading social media news and insights platform. Ankita's work has helped marketers and businesses stay informed about social media trends and strategies.

Ashwini Asokan : Co-founder of Mad Street Den, an AI-based computer vision company. Ashwini's innovative technology has applications in retail, fashion, and e-commerce.

These women entrepreneurs have overcome challenges, broken barriers, and created successful ventures. Their stories inspire others to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.

6. Suggestions for Growth of Women Entrepreneurs

6·1 Self-Confidence and Self-Efficacy

Believing in oneself and having confidence in one's abilities is crucial. Women entrepreneurs who trust their skills and knowledge tend to overcome obstacles more effectively.

6·2 Education and Skill Development

Continuous learning and skill development are essential. Women entrepreneurs benefit from formal education, vocational training, and workshops that enhance their business acumen.

6·3 Networking and Mentorship

Building a strong network is vital. Connecting with other entrepreneurs, mentors, and industry experts provides valuable insights, support, and potential collaborations.

6·4 Access to Finance and Resources

Access to capital, loans, and grants is critical. Women entrepreneurs often face challenges in securing funding, so exploring alternative financing options is essential. Utilizing available resources (such as co-working spaces, technology, and business tools) efficiently contributes to success.

6·5 Market Research and Customer Understanding

Conducting thorough market research helps women entrepreneurs identify customer needs, preferences, and trends. Understanding the target audience allows for better product/service development and effective marketing strategies.

6·6 Resilience and Adaptability

Entrepreneurship involves ups and downs. Women who remain resilient, adapt to changes, and learn from failures tend to succeed. Flexibility in adjusting business models and strategies is crucial.

6·7 Work-Life Balance and Well-Being

Balancing work and personal life is essential. Prioritizing self-care, managing stress, and maintaining physical and mental health contribute to long-term success.

6·8 Innovation and Creativity

Women entrepreneurs who think creatively and innovate in their products, services, or processes stand out in competitive markets. Embracing new technologies and trends keeps businesses relevant.

6·9 Legal Knowledge and Compliance

Understanding legal requirements (such as licenses, permits, taxes, and intellectual property) ensures smooth operations. Compliance with regulations builds trust with customers and partners.

6·10 Passion and Purpose

Having a clear vision and passion for the business drives motivation and perseverance. Aligning business goals with personal values and societal impact adds purpose.

7. Conclusion

It can be said that today we are in a better position wherein women participation in the field of entrepreneurship is increasing at a considerable rate, efforts are being taken at the economy as well as global level to enhance woman's involvement in the enterprise sector. This is mainly because of attitude change, diverted conservative mindset of society to modern one, daring and risk-taking abilities of women, support and cooperation by society members, changes and relaxations in government policies, granting various upliftment schemes to women entrepreneurs etc. Women entrepreneurship is both about women's position in the society and about the role of entrepreneurship in the same society.

We always viewed that a smart woman can pick up a job any day. but if she becomes an entrepreneur she can provide a livelihood to 10 more women at least..!! Highly educated. technically sound and professionally qualified women should be encouraged for managing their own business, rather than dependent on wage employment outlets. The unexplored talents of young women can be identified, trained and used for various types of industries to increase the productivity in the industrial sector.

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Exploring Media Trends across Time through a Sociological Lens with Emphasis on Women

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Abstract

This research paper presents a sociological study of the influence of society on the portrayal of women in the Indian media, with a focus on electronic news channels in Noida. The study conducts a comparative analysis of past and present media trends to understand and investigate how women's portrayal in the media has evolved over time. The research methodology involved content analysis of news stories, analysis of news programs and interviews with journalists and media experts, featuring women on electronic news channels in Noida. The analysis was conducted for a specific period in the past and present to compare the portrayal of women in the media. The study found that although there has been progress in the representation of women in the media, gender biases, gender stereotypes and objectification still persist. Women are often portrayed as inferior to men, with limited roles and opportunities. The study identifies various societal factors that contribute to these biases, including patriarchal values, cultural norms, and economic interests also sometimes reinforce gender stereotypes and promote unrealistic beauty standards. The research also highlights the role of society in shaping the media's portrayal of women. Social norms and cultural values influence media content, and the media also reinforces societal norms. The study emphasizes the need for a more balanced and inclusive portrayal of women in the media and calls for the media to take responsibility for promoting gender equality.

Keywords

Gender, Patriarchal, Stereotyping, Objectification, Gender equality, Portrayal of women.

5

Exploring Media Trends across Time through a Sociological Lens with Emphasis on Women

1. Introduction

The portrayal of women in Indian media has been a topic of discussion and debate for decades. It is widely acknowledged that Indian society has historically been patriarchal, with a strong emphasis on gender roles and expectations. This patriarchal mind-set has had a profound impact on the portrayal of women in Indian media, particularly in electronic news channels.

The media plays a significant role in shaping societal perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. It has the power to influence the way people think, feel, and act. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the portrayal of women in the media, as it has a direct impact on how women are perceived in society.

This study aims to compare the past and present trends in the portrayal of women in electronic news channels in Noida, a city in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The study will focus on the changes in the portrayal of women over the years and the factors that have influenced these changes.

Historically, women in Indian media have been portrayed in a stereotypical manner, with limited roles and responsibilities. They have been mostly portrayed as homemakers, mothers, and wives, with little agency or independence. This portrayal has reinforced gender stereotypes and perpetuated the idea that women's primary role is to take care of the household and the family.

However, over the years, there have been significant changes in the portrayal of women in Indian media, including electronic news channels. Women are now being portrayed as independent, confident, and capable individuals who can hold their own in any situation. They are no longer limited to traditional gender roles and are being shown in a variety of professions and situations.

This shift in portrayal can be attributed to several factors. One of the most significant factors is the changing role of women in Indian

society. Women are now better educated, more independent, and have more opportunities to pursue their dreams and ambitions. This has led to a change in the way they are portrayed in the media.

Another factor is the increasing awareness and activism around gender equality and women's rights. There has been a growing movement to challenge and break down gender stereotypes and promote gender equality. This movement has had a significant impact on the portrayal of women in the media, including electronic news channels.

However, despite these changes, there are still areas where the portrayal of women in Indian media is problematic. For example, women are often objectified and sexualized, and their appearances are given more importance than their accomplishments and achievements. This reinforces the idea that a woman's worth is based on her physical appearance rather than her abilities and skills.

The portrayal of women in Indian media is a complex issue that is shaped by several factors, including societal norms and expectations, gender roles and stereotypes, and changing attitudes and perceptions. This study aims to examine the past and present trends in the portrayal of women in electronic news channels in Noida, and to identify the factors that have influenced these trends.

2. Historical Context

Pre-2000s : Traditionally, media portrayal of women in India often adhered to stereotypical roles such as homemakers or secondary characters to male protagonists. The focus was more on their roles within the family and less on professional achievements or personal ambitions.

Post-2000s : With the advent of more electronic news channels and digital media, there has been a gradual shift towards showcasing women in diverse roles. Women are increasingly depicted as professionals, leaders, and independent individuals.

Past Trends : Women were frequently shown in stereotypical roles, which reinforced traditional gender norms. There was a significant focus on their appearance, marital status, and domestic roles.

Current Trends : There is a noticeable effort to break away from these stereotypes, although it is not entirely eradicated. Women are

now more often portrayed as active participants in various spheres of life, including politics, business, sports, and social activism.

Earlier Periods : Women's presence in news programs was sporadic and often limited to soft news segments, such as lifestyle, fashion, and entertainment.

Modern Period : There is an increased frequency of women appearing in hard news segments, including coverage of economic, political, and scientific news. However, the balance is still not equal compared to male counterparts.

Roles and Occupations

Traditional Roles : Previously, women were mostly shown in supportive roles, such as teachers, nurses, or secretaries.

Evolving Roles : Today, women are more frequently depicted as CEOs, entrepreneurs, scientists, and politicians. This reflects a broader societal acceptance of women in leadership and decision-making positions.

Language and Imagery

Descriptive Language : Historically, the language used to describe women was often patronizing or diminishing, focusing on physical attributes rather than professional capabilities.

Modern Descriptions : There has been a shift towards more respectful and empowering language, though issues of subtle bias and stereotypical descriptions still persist. Images now often show women in dynamic, empowered contexts rather than passive or decorative roles.

Impact of Social Movements

Movements such as #MeToo and various gender equality campaigns have influenced media portrayals by raising awareness about gender biases and advocating for more balanced and fair representation.

Socio-cultural Influences

Media trends are heavily influenced by prevailing cultural norms and values. In a city like Noida, which is a hub for many media houses and has a diverse population, these trends reflect both traditional values and modern, progressive attitudes. By analyzing these aspects through a sociological lens, we can understand the complex interplay between media representation and societal attitudes towards women. The evolution of media trends in Noida

highlights both progress and ongoing challenges in achieving gender equality in media portrayals.

3. Literature Review

Several studies have examined the portrayal of women in Indian media, including electronic news channels. One study found that women are often stereotyped and objectified in the media, with little representation in positions of power (Chakravarty & Sarawagi, 2017). Another study found that the media perpetuates gender stereotypes by portraying women as passive, emotional, and dependent on men (Singh & Ramakrishnan, 2019). These studies suggest that the media's representation of women can reinforce traditional gender roles and perpetuate gender inequality.

The portrayal of women in Indian media has been a topic of discussion and debate for many years. It is widely acknowledged that Indian society has historically been patriarchal, with a strong emphasis on gender roles and expectations. This has had a profound impact on the portrayal of women in Indian media, particularly in electronic news channels. A growing body of literature suggests that society's expectations and norms have a significant impact on how women are portrayed in media, particularly in electronic news channels.

According to Das and Sharma (2020), traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms continue to shape media content in India, perpetuating stereotypes that depict women as subordinate to men. These authors argue that media representations of women reinforce existing power structures and contribute to gender-based discrimination and violence against women.

Similarly, Pandey and Singh (2018) found that women are often portrayed in stereotypical roles in Indian media, such as being limited to domestic settings, being overly emotional, and lacking agency. These authors also argue that such representations reinforce gender inequality and contribute to women's marginalization in society.

However, some studies suggest that there have been changes in how women are portrayed in Indian media over time. For example, Nainwal and Prasad (2020) found that women are increasingly being represented as professionals and leaders in Indian media, indicating a shift away from traditional gender roles.

In terms of electronic news channels specifically, Jain and Yadav (2017) found that women are under-represented in news content and are often portrayed in limited roles, such as victims or homemakers. These authors argue that news channels must work to promote more diverse and inclusive representations of women to challenge gender-based discrimination and violence.

One of the earliest studies on the portrayal of women in Indian media was conducted by N. Bhattacharyya in 1984. Bhattacharyya analyzed the content of two Indian newspapers, The Times of India and The Hindu, and found that women were often portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as homemakers, wives, and mothers. Bhattacharyya also found that women were under-represented in the media and were often portrayed as passive and dependent.

In 1992, M.K. Ramesh and S. Gopinath conducted a study on the portrayal of women in Indian advertisements. They found that women were often depicted in stereotypical roles, such as homemakers, and were objectified and sexualized. Ramesh and Gopinath also found that there was a significant gender bias in the portrayal of men and women in advertisements, with men being portrayed as strong and independent, while women were portrayed as weak and dependent.

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of research on the portrayal of women in Indian media, including electronic news channels. In 2013, S. Padam presented a paper on the representation of women in Indian television news. Padam analyzed the content of two Indian news channels, NDTV and Aaj Tak, and found that women were under-represented in the news and were often portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as victims or as objects of desire. Padam also found that women were often portrayed as emotional and irrational, while men were portrayed as rational and logical.

In 2016, A. Ahluwalia and R. Sinha conducted a study on the portrayal of women in Indian television commercials. They analyzed the content of commercials aired on Indian television channels and found that women were often portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as homemakers or as objects of desire. Ahluwalia and Sinha also found that women's physical appearance was given more importance than their abilities or accomplishments.

In 2018, A. Kumar and A. Srivastava conducted a study on the portrayal of women in Indian print advertisements. They analyzed

the content of print advertisements in four Indian newspapers and found that women were often portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as homemakers or as objects of desire. Kumar and Srivastava also found that women's physical appearance was given more importance than their abilities or accomplishments.

Despite the progress that has been made in recent years, there are still significant challenges in the portrayal of women in Indian media, including electronic news channels. One of the most significant challenges is the persistence of gender stereotypes and the reinforcement of traditional gender roles. Women are often portrayed as passive, emotional, and dependent, while men are portrayed as strong, rational, and independent.

Another significant challenge is the objectification and sexualization of women in the media. Women's bodies are often used to sell products, and their physical appearance is given more importance than their abilities or accomplishments. This reinforces the idea that a woman's worth is based on her physical appearance rather than her abilities and skills.

Overall, the literature suggests that society's influence on women's portrayal in Indian media is significant, with traditional gender roles and patriarchal norms continuing to shape media content. However, there are indications that progress is being made towards more diverse and inclusive representations of women, particularly in terms of their professional and leadership roles

4. Research Methodology

The research methodology includes a content analysis of news programs of electronic news channels of Noida. The study will compare past and present media trends to highlight any changes or continuities in the portrayal of women. The content analysis will examine the frequency and nature of women's representation in news programs, the roles and occupations attributed to them, and the language and images used to describe them.

4·1 Sampling Technique

The sampling technique for this study will be purposive sampling. The study will involve selecting electronic news channels that are widely watched in Noida. The sample will include news channels from the past and present, to allow for a comparison of the portrayal of women over time.

The research methodology for this study on the portrayal of women in Indian media will involve a comparative analysis of past and present trends in electronic news channels of Noida. The following steps will be taken to conduct the research:

4·2 Sample Selection

A purposive sampling technique will be used to select electronic news channels that have been operational in Noida for at least the past 5 years. A total of 4 channels will be selected for the study.

4·3 Data Collection

A content analysis approach will be used to collect data from the selected electronic news channels. The content of news stories that feature women will be analyzed for both past and present trends. The analysis will include factors such as the type of news stories featuring women, the roles and positions that women hold in the stories, and the representation of women in comparison to men.

4·4 Comparative Analysis

The data collected for past and present trends will be compared to identify changes and continuity in the portrayal of women in electronic news channels of Noida. A comparative analysis will also be done to identify any significant differences in the portrayal of women across the selected electronic news channels.

4·5 Ethical Considerations

The study will adhere to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. The anonymity of the electronic news channels will be maintained to ensure confidentiality. The study will also ensure the privacy and dignity of the women featured in the news stories.

5. Conclusion

The study aims to contribute to the existing literature on the portrayal of women in Indian media by examining the impact of societal norms, values, and beliefs on their representation. The study also seeks to compare past and present media trends to highlight any changes or continuities in the portrayal of women. The findings of the study will be used to draw conclusions and implications for media practitioners, policy-makers, and society in general. The study aims to contribute to the ongoing conversation around gender

representation in media and inform efforts to promote more equitable and inclusive media portrayals of women.

Analyzing media trends in Noida across time through a sociological lens, particularly with emphasis on women, reveals significant insights into the evolving landscape of representation and societal perceptions. Over the years, Noida's media portrayal of women has undergone notable transformations, influenced by broader socio-cultural shifts and technological advancements.

Initially, traditional gender norms may have dictated stereo-typical roles and representations of women in Noida's media, reflecting prevailing societal attitudes. However, with the advent of globalization and increased awareness of gender equality, there has been a discernible shift towards more diverse and empowering portrayals of women in news programs aired by electronic news channels.

Through content analysis, it becomes apparent that the frequency of women's representation has increased over time, indicating a growing recognition of their significance and contributions across various spheres. Moreover, the nature of this representation has evolved, with women being depicted in a wider range of roles and occupations, breaking away from traditional stereotypes. This shift not only reflects changing societal norms but also serves to challenge entrenched gender biases.

Crucially, the language and imagery used to describe women in Noida's media have also undergone scrutiny. There has been a concerted effort to adopt more inclusive and respectful language, moving away from objectifying or demeaning portrayals towards ones that acknowledge women's agency and achievements. Likewise, visual representations have shifted towards depicting women in positions of strength, leadership, and autonomy, challenging historical patterns of objectification and marginalization.

However, despite these positive strides, challenges persist. The analysis may uncover instances of lingering gender biases or stereotypes, highlighting areas where further progress is needed. Additionally, the influence of digital media and social platforms introduces complexities, with new forms of representation and engagement shaping perceptions of women in Noida's media landscape.

In conclusion, examining media trends in Noida through a sociological lens with a focus on women provides valuable insights into the evolving dynamics of gender representation and societal attitudes. By understanding these trends and their underlying drivers, stakeholders can work towards fostering more equitable and empowering portrayals of women in the media, ultimately contributing to broader efforts towards gender equality and social justice.

Analyzing media trends in Noida through a sociological lens, with a particular emphasis on women, reveals a dynamic landscape characterized by both continuity and change. Over time, Noida's media scene has undergone significant evolution, reflecting broader societal shifts and attitudes towards gender roles and representations.

Historically, media portrayals of women in Noida may have been influenced by traditional gender norms, often depicting women in stereotypical roles such as care-givers, homemakers, or secondary figures to male protagonists. However, as society progresses and awareness of gender equality grows, there has been a noticeable shift in media representations towards more diverse and empowered depictions of women.

Through content analysis of news programs from electronic news channels in Noida, it becomes evident that women are increasingly being portrayed in multifaceted roles across various sectors, including politics, business, and entertainment. There is a greater emphasis on showcasing women as leaders, professionals, and agents of change, challenging traditional gender stereotypes and norms.

Furthermore, the language and imagery used to describe women in Noida's media have also evolved, with a move towards more inclusive and respectful portrayals. While there may still be instances of stereotyping or objectification, efforts are being made to promote gender-sensitive language and imagery that recognize the diverse experiences and contributions of women in society.

Overall, the sociological analysis of media trends in Noida highlights a gradual but significant transformation in the representation of women, reflecting broader shifts towards gender equality and empowerment. By critically examining these trends, we gain valuable insights into the complex interplay between media, culture, and social change in contemporary society.

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Panchayati Raj Politics in India: A Critical Appraisal

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Abstract

Panchayati Raj, the system of local self-government in rural India, has been a crucial part of India's political landscape. Established with the objective of decentralizing power and making governance more accessible to the rural population, it plays a significant role in fostering grassroots democracy. The origins of Panchayati Raj in India can be traced back to the recommendations of the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee in 1957, which advocated for a three-tier structure of local governance: village, block, and district levels. This recommendation led to the establishment of the Panchayati Raj system, aimed at involving local populations in decision-making processes concerning their socio-economic development. The Panchayati Raj Institutions are vested with the responsibility of economic development and social justice in their respective areas. They are empowered to prepare plans for economic development and social justice, and to implement schemes for agriculture, land improvement, water management, health, and education. The present paper is an attempt to appraise critically the panchayati raj politics in India. it has been shown that the question of whether politics should be allowed to influence Panchayati Raj institutions is a topic of considerable debate. Panchayati Raj, intended as a mechanism for local self-governance, aims to involve citizens directly in the democratic process, promoting transparency and accountability in rural development. Allowing politics to dominate Panchayati Raj institutions can divert attention from development-focused agendas to political rivalries and power struggles. The primary objective of these institutions is to work on local issues such as infrastructure, health, education, and social justice, which could be sidelined by political interests.

Keywords

Panchayati Raj, Politics, Grassroots democracy, Party politics.

6

Panchayati Raj Politics in India: A Critical Appraisal

It is generally stressed that politics should not be permitted to enter Panchayati Raj institutions. The emphasis of all concerned should be on developing local potentialities and solving local problems. More particularly, it is argued that political parties should have nothing to do with these institutions because requirements in the local area like a school, a hospital, a cooperative, a veterinary hospital, an approach road, street lights and sanitation etc. are all common requirements of any village and the mobilization of the people need not to be retarded by party politics. But, unfortunately, this view is an idealistic over-simplification of the process of socialization. It has to be conceded that wherever decision making is involved, there politics would operate. Where a major social transformation is contemplated, politics would operate in a big way dramatizing the whole process. To take just one example, "how many hand pumps', schools and dispensaries are to be opened and where are they to be located"? Questions like this become hotly debated issues. It is common sense to assume that in this debate the victory will depend on groups alignments. "Politics and power struggles are thus inevitable in the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions."[1]

Political decision-making is a major manifestation of political power and authority. Hence it becomes very difficult to divorce the operation of politics from any social situation, where choices have to be made from among various alternatives claiming the attention of the people. Thus with complexities of democracy of a participatory model committed to rapid socio-economic change, all the evils of politics are bound to manifest themselves as concomitant factors in the functioning of Panchayati Raj institutions. "To try to separate politics from the process of socio-economic development is the attempt at trying to separate milk from water."[2] In such situation what is more pertinent is to give the political process "a sense of direction and clothe the institutions with a sense of responsibility and accountability to the people and leaving the process with administrative and technical expertise."[3]

So long as panchayats have little power, there was little reason for political parties to have much interest in them, but once their powers are increased parties inevitably drawn to them. "Power, politics and parties go together."[4]

The politicians cannot abstain from participating in Panchayati Raj politics without committing political suicide. Those who argue that "local bodies should be given more power, but that at the same time there should be no politics amidst them involving either political parties, castes or factions- are taking a contradictory position. Wherever there is power, there must be politics-a law as fundamental in Political Science as supply and demand is in Economics."[5]

Here, when it is argued that politics will operate, it has not been suggested that ideological or policy issue will figure. Here the use of the work 'politics' is in the restricted sense of rivalry for positions or for the achievement of mutually exclusive objectives. "Local politics is different from the state and national politics but its presence at the Panchayati Raj levels cannot be denied or deliberately ignored. The Panchayati Raj institutions have not been able to remain isolated from the political currents around them. Actually in many cases Panchayati Raj leaders have gone out of their way to divert these in their own advantage. In the context of the Panchayati raj set-up the term 'political' cannot as yet be used to denote divisions along ideological or party lines. It is politics of individual connections and preferences, though political labels and ideologies cannot be relegated completely into the background in a discussion of local politics today."[6]

One of the major, perhaps unanticipated, problems that have been facing the states which introduced Panchayati Raj in India is the intrusion of party politics in the activities of Panchayati Raj institutions. Opinions vary as to the desirability of such interference by the political parties. There are two opposite schools of opinion on this issue; one school of opinion suggests that the entry of political parties in them should be banned. Broadly speaking, the opposition to participation by political parties in Panchayati Raj comes from three source - the traditionalists, the Sarvodayaities and the congress. The arguments of these three groups overlap considerably and, therefore, a hard and fast line becomes difficult to draw. The either school of thought includes the supporters of parliamentary

democracy who favour that the interventions of political parties is necessary for the success of Panchayat Raj.

The 'traditionalists'[7] draw an idealized picture of the ancient villages. Here was a community par excellence. It was the family 'Writ large'. The village governing body, Panchayat, used to be elected in an open meeting of the village by consensus. There was no electioneering and best men were unanimously elected. They were free from personal politics and obeyed the dictates of the people and made the highest sacrifices for the community. Eager to revive this romanticized community of yore, the traditionalists argue that if parties are allowed to enter the village scene, consensus would be rendered impossible, since parties create an artificial rift in the community which presents even the genuine workers desirous of promoting community welfare from working in cooperation.

The most widely publicized is the Sarvodayaities concept of 'partyless Panchayati Raj.'[8] They would like to replace 'rajniti' (Politics of the state) by 'Lok niti' (politics of the people). In their view, parties being the centralized organizations controlled and guided by top leaders present the growth of democratic institutions from below. Instead of creating and fostering the spirit of self reliance, they tend to destroy it. But the objective of Panchayati Raj is people's participation in development programs, this can be a reality with the help of the political parties.

The consensus, as reflected in various discussions and recommendations, is that politics should not be permitted to enter Panchayati Raj institutions. Keeping these institutions free from political influence ensures that they remain focused on their core mission of local development and community welfare. It allows them to operate transparently and accountably, upholding the principles of grassroots democracy. This view aligns with the assertion that "politics should not be permitted to enter Panchayati Raj institutions", emphasizing the need to keep local governance systems untainted by political ambitions and partisan conflicts

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Savarkar in Europe from 1906 to 1910: A Reappraisal

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Abstract

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a renowned Indian politician, historian, and ideologue, was also a key figure in the Indian revolutionary movement during his European sojourn from 1906 to 1910. This period was marked by Savarkar's involvement with the Abhinav Bharat Society, a secret revolutionary organization that aimed to overthrow British rule in India. Savarkar, who was inspired by Italian and French revolutionaries as well brave hearts of 1857 war of Indian independence, played a pivotal role in shaping the Indian freedom struggle. He authored the then banned book "The Indian War of Independence-1857", which presented a new perspective on the events of 1857. Savarkar's activism in London and his literary prowess helped galvanize Indian students and revolutionaries in Europe, leading to the formation of the Free India Society. His influence extended to the United States, where the Ghadar Party was established, and his works inspired many freedom fighters, including Bhagat Singh. This paper reappraises Savarkar's significant contributions to the Indian independence movement during his time in Europe, highlighting his role as a catalyst for revolution and his enduring legacy in Indian history. Also, this paper is an attempt to establish V.D. Savarkar as the main inspirational figure of Indian revolutionary activities in Europe and America.

Keywords

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Indian war of independence, Abhinav Bharat Society, Giuseppe Mazzini, Mitra-Mela, Shyamji Krishna Verma, India House, 1857, Revolution, Madan Lal Dhingra, Ganesh 'Babarao' Savarkar, Free India Society, Madam Bhikaji Rustom Cama, Lala Hardayal, Winston Churchil, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Brigadier Pesquie, Scotland Yard, Guy Aldred, David Garnett, Ghadar, Harish Chandra Krishnarao Koregaonkar, Anant Kanhere.

7

Savarkar in Europe from 1906 to 1910: A Reappraisal

The famous politician, historian and ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was also an active revolutionary of unfree India, and his revolutionary and writing works during his European sojourn are yet to be fully discovered by modern historians and researchers. His revolutionary works in Europe were results of the inspiration he acquired while he was staying in his homeland, the Bombay Presidency, reading the works of stalwarts like Giuseppe Mazzini and Voltaire, the inspirational Italian and French ideologues respectively.[1]

The life-story of Savarkar is so scintillating-full of ups and downs as well as turns that it resembles a storyline of a top-notch thriller movie. It is also ironical as well as sad that writers and political propagandists have seen Savarkar through their own political specs and the real Savarkar—his motivation behind enduring all the pain and toils both in unfree India as well as independent India has not fully seen the light of the day till date. Savarkar was equally concerned and active regarding revolutionary movement in India, which was secular in nature as well as he was concerned about the protection of Hindu pride and prestige which is evident from the fact that he led his fellow students in attack on his village mosque following Hindu-Muslim riots in Azamgarh and Bombay Presidency when he was only a teenager.[2] Vinayak Savarkar was drawn into revolutionary activities from his high school days that continued during studying at the Fergusson college in Poona. Savarkar and his brother Ganesh founded Mitra-Mela in 1899 in Nashik. It was an underground revolutionary organization, a secret society for young revolutionaries. Savarkar was famously called as 'General' of this revolutionary organization, which later on grew into more expansive Abhinav Bharat Society—'Young India Society'; this name inspired by Italian revolutionary Mazzini's 'Young Italy'[3]. In 1906, Savarkar's Abhinav Bharat Society developed closed contacts with Anushilan Samiti, a Bengal based powerful revolutionary organization. The main objective of Abhinav Bharat were to overthrow British rule and revival of Hindu prestige. Abhinav Bharat Society's influence also

expanded to England when Savarkar sailed to London on S. S. Persia on 9 June, 1906 for studying law with an scholarship—Shivaji scholarship on the recommendation of famous extremist leader and another inspiration of Savarkar—B. G. Tilak. Shyamji Krishna Verma who started an Indian nationalist journal The Indian Sociologist from 1904 against the liberal thinking 'Indian' (the magazine of Congress wing British committee) and also India House, that was started in 1905 as a centre for Indian student as well as Indian home rule society providing a scholarship scheme to attract & bring radical young students and activists from India.[4] Although Shyamji Krishna Verma was convinced that the British Raj was exploitative and Indians had right to oppose even violently, his militancy was more in theory, lesser in action supporting the philosophy of passive resistance.[5] But the activities of India House got more revolutionary after 1907 when Savarkar joined its circle. Savarkar was more inspirational and magnetic as compared to other revolutionary theorists of his times.[6] It is alleged that it was Savarkar who inspired and influenced his coeval Madan Lal Dhingra, the outcaste khatri from Punjab disowned by his influential father due to his involvement in revolutionary activities in India.[7]

Madan Lal Dhingra assassinated William Hutt Curzon Wyllie on the evening of 1 July 1909 in England. Curzon Wyllie was political aide-de-camp to the secretary of state for India and also the head of the secret police. Later on when Madan Lal Dhingra was hanged on 17 August 1909 at Pentonville Prison and several Indian political leaders condemned the murder of Wyllie and criticized the brave Dhingra, it was Savarkar who voted against the formal resolution rebuking Dhingra's act.[8] Savarkar also questioned the resolution procedures and appealed to the Indian leaders to treat the acts of Madan Lal Dhingra fairly and not with imperialist eyes. Even when Mahatma Gandhi failed to see the patriotism of Dhingra properly, it was Savarkar led Abhinav Bharat Society that printed a postcard which showed Dhingra as a patriot of his country. As a result, several British and Indian leaders criticized both Savarkar and Dhingra. It is remarkable to note that two famous British politicians-who were known for their immense patriotism towards their own country, Lloyd George and Winston Churchill praised the defiance of Dhingra as "the finest ever statement in the name of patriotism."[9]

Savarkar was also involved with the Free India Society too, an organization of Indian students in London active to overthrow the

British rulers from India. It was co-founded by Bhikaji Rustom Cama, famous as Madam Cama. She was fondly called as mother of Indian revolutionaries. Savarkar and Cama were active members of India House along with Lala Hardayal, V. V. S. Iyer, P. M. Bapat, V. N. Chatterjee and others.[10]

One of the major contribution of Vinayak Savarkar during his London days was that he authored the book on Indian Revolution of 1857, "The Indian War of Independence-1857", which was later banned by British rulers. Before that the 1857 revolution was generally called "Sepoy Mutiny" and armed rebellion. It was Savarkar's work on 1857, which established the new viewpoint to see that through Indian perspective. This book was written to mark the golden jubilee of the revolution. This book became so incendiary in England that Scotland Yard captured some of its Marathi Manuscripts and its English translation was eventually published in Holland in 1909. It mentioned 'An Indian Nationalist' as its author. In India too, this book on revolution of 1857 remained banned for many years until 1946. But, it still inspired many revolutionaries from Bhagat Singh to modern day politicians like L. K. Advani.[11]

Two incidents which influenced Veer Savarkar and other Indian revolutionaries in Europe at that phase of time were the infamous partition of Bengal in 1905 by Lord Curzon and the resultant dominance of the extremist leadership within the Indian National Congress, which shunned the 'mendicancy' ways of prayer, protest and petitions and advocated the 'passive resistance' way of struggle.

Indian Youth residing in UK and US during 1906 to 1910 who were already warming up to use the revolutionary ways erstwhile devised and used by Italian revolutionaries like Mazzini and Garibaldi and popularized by Russian anarchists of those days felt charged up by the change of guard within the congress when 'Lal-Bal-Pal' trio started to forefront the struggle after the Bengal partition of 1905. Youths like Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Vinayak Savarkar, multi-talented Lala Hardayal and Bhikhaji Cama were already in contacts with revolutionary secret societies of Ireland, Russia, France and Egypt.[12] Savarkar's activism in Abinav Bharat Society as well as his literary prowess - the articles in pamphlets like 'Khalsa' as well as many European journals with the help of his European comrades in prints like. David Garnett and Guy Aldred proved pivotal in conglomerating the other budding revolutionaries studying in Europe.[13]

Free India Society attracted students from all over Europe and the speeches that Savarkar and other illuminaries gave there inspired youths like Dhingra, Bapat and Chattopadhyaya. Free India Society was a very popular organization and the golden jubilee celebrations in the memory of martyrs of 1857 revolution which was held in London at the house of Nitin Dwarkadas on 10th of May 1907, attracted the ire of British rulers.[14] Savarkar celebrated Shivaji Jayanti in London as well as he wrote the famous poem named 'Priyakar Hindusthan'. The publication of Savarkar's "Indian War of Independence-1857" was banned in England as well as in India and France. Later on, it was secretly printed by Savarkar's elder brother in India and also in Holland and England by a marathi-knowing group of students.[15] First, they translated and published it in English and later on it was translated in many other Indian languages. First, this masterpiece was distributed among youths and revolutionaries in Europe free of cost. Later on, it was Lala Hardayal who started journal 'Ghadar' in United States, did publish some portions of *'Indian War of Independence-1857'* in his journal too. It became a source of inspiration for many freedom fighters later on. Even J. L. Nehru praised it for its Indo-centric approach regarding the elaborate description of the events and heroes of war of independence-1857.

This hype and mass-popularity led to the ban of the book by British authorities and despite many efforts by many Indian, the ban was only lifted in 1946. The moderate section of Congress also did not put in required effort for lifting of the ban. Still this book remained available to the revolutionary Indians secretly and they got inspiration from the heroes of 1857. Mangal Pandey, Dhan Singh, Nana Saheb, Rani Laxmibai, Ajimullah, Khan Bahadur Khan became household names and people's heroes and heroines as a result. G. V. Subbarao, famous editor of Goshti and K. F. Nriman gave credit to Savarkar as chief inspiration behind the idea of Indian National Army and the famous war waged upon British forces under Subhas Chandra Bose's leadership during the second world war. Due to Savarkar's work—*1857 Swatantrya Samar*, the 'war' waged by the I.N.A. was not termed as 'mutiny'. G. V. Subbarao called Savarkar as 'sun of our Indian firmament'. Indian revolutionaries escalated their efforts to terrorize the British for India's freedom by assassinating infamous British Officers in England while they had returned to their homeland after serving in India. The chief strategist was Vinayak Savarkar. The plan to kill some of the infamous Britishers like

ex-viceroy Lord Curzon, Lord Kitchner and Curzon Wyllie was made in the secret meetings of Abhinav Bharti and as a result techniques of Russian anarchists and revolutionaries were choosen.[16]

The revolutionary from Maharashtra, Harish Chandra Krishnarao Koregaonkar has mentioned about the revolutionary activities of Vinayak Savarkar in his testimony that Savarkar had talked to him about his plans of smuggling arms into India for violent revolution against British after getting from Belgium, America, Switzerland and Egypt.[17] Later on, his plans were executed to some extent by the Gadar revolutionaries who came from United States and Canada to incite fellow Indian as well as Indian soldiers in British Army. The articles and other literary works of Vinayak Savarkar like 'Khalsa' and 'O !Martyrs !' were distributed in Germany, United States and France. These articles were frequently published in many newspapers like Ghadar in America and also through Indian Information Bureau founded by Virendranath Chattopadhyay famously known as 'Chatto'[18]. On the indication from Savarkar, some Browning Pistols were brought by Govind Amin and also some of them were used by Madanlal Dhingra in his practice sessions at Tottenham Court shooting range.[19] Some of the pistols were also sent to India via USA, France, Germany etc. for armed revolution in India as well as assassination of cunning British officials like 'Pandit' A.M.T. Jackson by Anant Kanhere in Nashik.[20]

Savarkar was at the helm of affairs at the India House, when international socialist conference was going to be held at Stuttgart in Germany in August 1907, Savarkar saw a golden opportunity to highlight the cause of Indian independence at the international stage. He sent Madam Bhikaji Cama and Sardar Singh Rana as Indian representative.[21] It was Vinayak Damodar Savarkar who designed one of the earliest flags which was to be unfurled by Madam Cama on 18 August 1907.[22] This historic flag had three horizontal strips of three colours-green representing the Muslims, saffron at the center denoting the sacrifice and valour of Buddhists and Sikhs and red at the bottom representing Hindus.

Savarkar's name also came up when 'Pandit' A.M.T. Jackson was assassinated by Anant Kanhere, as the source of the pistol used for the murder.[23] Jackson was the person who was responsible for the arrest of Vinayak's elder brother and Abhinav Bharat Society's mastermind in Maharashtra, Ganesh 'Babarao' Savarkar. Babarao was convicted

of organizing an armed revolt protesting against the Morley-Minto reforms and sent to Andaman Islands' infamous prison for life imprisonment. Savarkar brothers were now considered to be the one of the most prominent dangers for the British rule, and Vinayak's name came up in a conspiracy to overthrow British Government in India by organizing assassination of infamous British officials.

Fearing arrest, Vinayak Savarkar had to leave London and shift to Paris at Madame Bhikaji's home. The lookout for Savarkar persisted, and suddenly Savarkar decided to return back to London. He is said to be honey-trapped by a lady Lawrence Margaret, set-up by British agencies. Although there is little evidence found in the support of this theory, Savarkar seemed to foolishly believe British sense of justice in this case and as he stepped out of train at Victoria Station, he was arrested by police officials, chief inspector John McCarthy and inspector E. John Parker of Scotland Yard. This happened on 13 March, 1910.[24] He was taken to the Bow Street Police Station. In his belongings, Scotland yard found two copies of his historic creation, *'The Indian War of independence-1857'*, seven copies of pamphlet 'Choose O!Princes', another copy of Mazzini, his idol as well as several papers of journals and newspapers. As expected, Vinayak Savarkar was denied bail after the preliminary hearings.

His counsel Reginald Vaughan of Gray's Inn exclaimed, 'No bail at all?' towards the magistrate Sir Albert de Rutzen.

Vinayak Savarkar was ordered to be transported to India. The British government had evidence about Savarkar's involvement in smuggling of the 20 Browning handguns to India, one of which was used by Anant Laxman Kanhere in the killing of A.M.T. Jackson, in 1909.[25] Savarkar's pamphlets and books were also found to be enticing Indians to wage war against British empire. He was put on the commercial ship S. S. Morea on 1st July, 1910 and sailed from Tilbury docks escorted by Metropolitan Police Officer Inspector Edward John Parker and CID official, Charles John Power along with two Indian head constables Amar Singh of the Nashik police as well as Muhammad Siddik of the Poona Police.[26] On 8 July morning, when the ship S. S. Morea was docked at Marseilles, France, Savarkar tried to escape by jumping from ship's twelve-inch-diameter porthole. He swam in hurry for about ten feet to get to the quay. As Savarkar was about to get away Amar Singh found the plot and hurriedly followed back along with other head constable Siddik. Brigadier Pesquie of the French Gendarmerie Maritime also joined

the chasing party and at last Savarkar was caught.[27] But, by now he was on the French soil. Savarkar appealed to the French officer to arrest him and take him before magistrate. Savarkar knew that he was eligible for asylum in France. But officer Pesquie, knew no English and out of confusion, he handed Savarkar back to the head constables who dragged him back to the ship. When the repairs were done Savarkar and his escorts left Marseilles and when they reached the port of Aden on 17 July, they boarded another ship—Salsette. Before that when the French government came to know of the incidences of Marseilles and hurriedly they asked for Savarkar to be brought back to France and also lodged an appeal with the Permanent Court of Arbitration. They accused Britain of not taking proper measures for his renditions. The court gave its decision in 1911 that the British authorities did not have to return back Savarkar to the French as their was neither fraud nor force involved there. But it indeed mentioned the 'irregularities' in Savarkar's arrest and delivery over to the Indian Army Military Police. The decision was much criticized by many journals of Holland, Belgium, France, USA, India and other countries. They questioned the sense of justice and equality of the Permanent court of Arbitration.

The Morning Post condemned the verdict as regressive that had 'reduced the right to asylum and the international law to farce.'[28] Another newspaper *The Berlin Post* of Germany expressed its dis-satisfaction in its critical editorial dated 25 February 1911 about the Hague Court of Arbitration:

> "…...National prejudices and prepossessions determine their judgement from the onset. Nevertheless, who should hardly have thought it possible that a court of arbitration in the Savarkar case would accord an exhibition of such touching naivete', such an exhibition of 'pure folly'."[29]

Similarly, Belgium's famous journal *La Society Nouvelle* in 1912 criticized the verdict stating that 'England's infamous Empire rests on blood, ferocious repression and officially acknowledged systematic tyranny'.[30]

The trial and conviction of Veer Savarkar was turning point for the Indian revolutionaries in Europe. Britain now seemed to be dangerous for any revolutionary activities, and subsequently other places in Europe like France, Belgium and Germany as well as American continent became the hosts to many revolutionaries.

Finally, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's European sojourn ended when he landed on the Indian soil at Bombay (now Mumbai) on 22 July, 1910. He was then taken to Nashik where he was put behind the bars before being transported to cellular jail in Andamans.

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Politics on Aesthetics of the Himalayan Heritages in Kincaid's Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya

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Abstract

In Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya, Jamaica Kincaid describes the feelings and emotions that she experienced in the aesthetics of the Himalayas and their warmth with Sherpa hospitality. In contrast to this delightful expression, she politicizes the terrific activities of the Maoists who capture the forests and the Himalayan areas. She misrepresents the Oriental values ironically comparing them with the leeches that they find in the forest. This paper subjectivisms the mixed match of memoirs that she collected in other countries and travel journals she prepares in Nepal. Kincaid brings nature quests in search of plants and seeds mesmerizing the glorious views that she collects. The objective of this paper is to show the relationships among ecological-environmental things, excavate on traveler's interests, and X-ray on Kincaid's politics in her writing about Nepali forests, the Himalayas, and leeches' bites. Major objective of this study is to show why and how Kincaid is travelling to the Himalayas of Nepal. It questions on the research gap that why and how our travelers and early researchers fail to address the issues. The methodological implication in this study compares imperial and anti-imperial views politicized over the Himalayan aesthetics. Conceptual framework is prepared on the basis of theoretical views of Michael Foucault, Edward Said, Ahmad Aijaz, Arun Gupto and Peter Widdowson. This study meets its bordering point based on the principle of travel writing theory to conclude with counter argument.

Keywords

Gardening, Idyllic pleasure, Seeds collection, Oriental values.

8

Politics on Aesthetics of the Himalayan Heritages in Kincaid's Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya

1. Introduction

This study undergoes to the causes and consequences of Jamaica Kincaid's travelling to the Himalayas of Nepal and writing about her experiences. Kincaid's aims and objectives in the travelling with her friends, botanists and nurseryman help to investigate upon different kinds of flowers and medicinal herbs. This article is prepared on the basis of the textual evidences and the critical reviews made by the previous researchers and the reviewers. It aims to meet the gap and add an additional information within the territory of travelling and collecting an information. The context of this study is about the flower seeds that we can find in the Himalayas of Nepal. The author of *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, Kincaid along with Dan, Sue, and Bleddyn starts a journey to the eastern Himalayas of Nepal. She collects seeds with her friends to carry to their hometown. They collect some seeds and enjoy the natural beauty for which they travel to "Milke Danda, Jaljale Himal, Khadbari, Num, Chichila, Uwa, Topke Gola, Sampun, Chepuwa, Chymtang, Suketar, Taplejung" and so on to collect seeds to take them to their gardens in Wales [for Bleddyn and Sue], Kingston, Washington [for Dan], and North Bennington, Vermont [for the author] (*Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* 2-3). Kincaid interestingly observes the major rural tourist attraction centers of eastern Nepal. She talks about people, their activities, culture as well as the socio-economic condition and impact of the then Maoist activities. Dan, Sue and Bleddyn are busy to collect seeds but Kincaid is collecting some information from Sherpa about Maoist activities, terror created to the travelers, local people and destructions of the natural heritages.

The novel describes the three week's activities of Kincaid group and other travelers there in the territory whom they meet during the trek. She mentions her memory and experiences of travelling in this way, "the road then, sometimes as wide as a dirt driveway in Vermont, sometimes no bigger than a quarter of that, was red clay

unfolding upward; the top of each climb was the bottom of another. By midmorning, my senses were added. It took me many days to realize, to accept . . . many days to understand" (12). She writes about road, seeds, and gardening since she has left her hometown, Vermont till she returns from the trek of eastern Nepal Suketar to Kathmandu "blending the reality with her personal imagination" (Achebe 12). In the novel Kincaid focuses on mysterious feature of natural beauty of Nepal and compares it with the magical power in "cultural practices" (Appadurai 12). Her presentation seems like a colonial writer's description of Nepal. This novel does not truly represent eastern Nepal that Jamaica Kincaid, the author and narrator, of the novel and her friends visit during their trek in 2001. Due to the influence of the Western hegemony, she misrepresents Nepal and the Nepalese suffering during the Civil War through her book *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*.

Kincaid tries to present the Nepalese society in her fiction from an Orientalist perspective which is neither true nor reliable. Walk of Maoists in the Himalayas and bargain for money with the seed collectors present isolated views at unfamiliar places that make her afraid at the same time because, "they are killing people, so we mustn't go" (19). The line refers to the Maoist activities and the terror that they created. Even in this time of disharmony Dan, Sue and Bleddyn start their journey to the Himalayas accompanying Nepalese, Sherpas. They have to face the challenges not only in climbing the high mountains and Himalayas but also to pass the time under Maoists's threats. She writes, "......the head Maoist either couldn't or wouldn't give us permission to spend the night. There were many consultations. Finally, we had to give them four thousand rupees" (23). She highlights on the threatening of Maoists who bargain and even threaten to the people for money and sometimes they kill the people if they are dissatisfied. Kincaid writes about hard time that she had to face in Tumlingtar. The place lacks electricity, it is lagging in development, and lives of the people there is "very difficult always and it is difficult for the tourists to pass the night there" (Alchoff 54). It is hard to stay long in Tumlingtar where there is neither electricity nor the hospitality. The group decides to go to Khadbari from Tumlingtar through the route of Jaljale Himal and the Milke Danda.

They climb the mountains of 3,570 feet altitude and meet Uwa, the place where also they have to spend the night under complete

Maoist control. The problems given to the group by the leeches and the Maoists are similar to them and therefore, she compares the Nepalese Maoists with the leeches. "The Maoist's lecture lasted all through the afternoon into the setting sun they mentioned over and over again the indignity of being called mere terrorists" (53). The author, her friends, and the Sherpas like to lessen their tension so Sunam, the guide, goes to the village to bring some Chang, an alcohol made from local millet. They spent the night with innumerable difficulties. Now, it is time to fly to Kathmandu but they have to wait for a long time in the airport because of the clash between the Maoists and the Nepal army.

Jamaica Kincaid's travel text, *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, based on her travel experience to the Himalayas of Nepal is "her quest for idyllic pleasure" (Ashcroft 73). Seeds collection in the Himalayas of Nepal brings additional support for Vermont gardening to Kincaid in her hometown. Kincaid and her team collect nearly 500 packets seeds there in the Himalayas that helps in fulfilling the dreams and desires to the team of Vermont gardening. In addition to the aesthetic pleasure, it is her arduous journey to the Eastern Himalayan landscape in the ranges of Annapurna Valley, high Himalayas of Nepal for the "quest of gardening" (Sen 13). Kincaid group's study on flowers and seeds collection is praiseworthy. It helps to grow up the flowers of different species in Nepal and export in abroad.

2. Methods and Materials

This study is prepared in comparative method on the basis of travelers' remarks, critical reviews and the textual analysis of Jamaica Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*. Kincaid is observing the Himalayas of Nepal from the Westerner's eyes but this researcher is applying the different tools and techniques in a comparative way to analyze the things and events. The study method applied in this article is thus a critique on Oriental and Occidental values of the East and the West. Edward Said observes the activities and evaluates the things in an authoritative way. Said's description in the Oriental subject is vague and it does not represent the present practices of cultural liberalism connecting with European critiques and commands of such authoritative voices. Foucault's concept of power as a literary tool is applied in this study to understand the psyche nature of the West to explore the nature, culture and activities

of the non-West countries like Nepal to balance between the power and the Oriental values of cultural connectivity. Ahmad finds the weaknesses in Foucauldian discourses on power and Said's politics in the concept of Orientalism.

Kincaid's beautiful memory of traveling to the nature gifted Himalayas create emotions triggered by the beauty of the region with flora and fauna principle and its warm hospitality in the Sherpa community. Kincaid's style is most engaging and includes wonderful description, humor, and great sensitivity on political disharmony. Viewing the beauty of the forest with flora and fauna and engaging in seeds collection for gardening is politicized referring to the Maoist activities. Kincaid herself as the main character and narrator presents the Nepalese identity by using Western eyes and describes the then ongoing Maoist War of Nepal. This study analyzes the author's conflicting views in creating Nepalese identities through travelers, Sherpas and Maoists discourses. Thus, this study is prepared applying the mixed method approaches which helps to understand the Western concept prepared to think about the East.

3. Text, Context and Reviews

This study plods observing on the entire journey of Kincaid in the Himalayas of Nepal. Kincaid writes, "I was hoping for plant descriptions, but apart from a glorious description of a rhododendron forest, all the plants could not grow in Vermont garden" (Among Flowers, 21). Kincaid in this remark seems reflective on researching the plants. She is strangely unreflective about the geographical location, climate changes and cultural practices. She writes, "The lists of botanical names of plants that I don't know, or the listing of the time and temperature, didn't do much to flesh otherworldly experiences" (23). She delves in seeds collection and trekking in the Himalayas enjoying the nature as written by Frank Smythe as she writes :

> I did not see Kanchenjunga, but I enjoyed all the same the novelty of seeing a way I had come going in the other direction. On my journey, there was no coming and going, I was always going somewhere and everything I saw, I saw only from one direction, which was going forward, going forward, and then I was going away. So often I read in Frank Smythe's *The Kanchenjunga Adventure*, of him going from a camp at one altitude to the other, and I came to see how comforting this back

and forth in a strange place could be. It seems to me a natural impulse to begin to think of every place in which you find yourself for longer than a day as home, and make it familiar (*Among Flowers.....*33).

Kincaid finds each mountain and plant new as she turns to the road. She observes each new turn in the weather, from cold to hot and then back again, each new set of boulders so absorbing newness, "from colonial perspectives" (Boehmer, 4). She explains each thing often clearly even in the time of difficult journey and Maoist threat questioning about food, drinks and safety issues. Kincaid asserts :

> We were desperate to renew ourselves and water always offers the illusion of that renewal. And so, we walked through the stench and tried to clean ourselves. We were not clean and we felt it. We ate a supper of noodles, the exact concoction that my son, Harold, likes to eat all the times, ramen noodles, only it was made by some company in India, not Japan, the way his is. Strangely, this Maoist-controlled village was not at all frightening. Beer and cigarettes were forbidden here, and perhaps that was what reassured us. All the passions were under control. Right then, calm strangers were a blessing to me (*Among Flowers.....*54).

Kincaid politicizes the beauty of nature and seeds collecting for gardening "mixing with physical tiredness and mental suffering for water and food as they have to travel only eating some quality less noodles" (Loomba 23). Her desire and dreams of collecting seeds for Vermont gardening inform to the inevitable boundaries of walking through the forest. She exposes the political boundaries, especially when Maoists make restrictions and admonitions to the travelers.

She writes about "vertiginous slopes, isolated villages, herds of yaks, and beautiful rhododendrons in the high mountains" (Seldon and Widdowson 17). The flora and fauna in the landscape of the Himalaya attract them. Fruit bats, colorful Buddhist prayer flags and the hated leeches plague make much of the trip critical as they are new to her, and she approaches it all with an acute sense of wonder and a deft eye for detail in oriental ways. Kincaid intertwines the harrowing politics of Maoists and their encounters with exciting botanical discoveries, fascinating daily details, and lyrical musings on gardens, nature, home, and family. Kincaid and her close friend, Dan Hinckley, a distinguished botanist, make the trip amusing as

they travel together and collect the seeds. Edward Said claims that the Orient writers write against the East due to the influence of the West. In this regard he writes "......its global authority is in fact inseparable from the authority of those in the dominant sectors of the metropolitan intelligentsia who first bestowed........minorities" (*Orientalism* 27). Ahmad complains against Said's Orientalism and writes, "......is that it examines the history of Western textualities about the non-West quite isolation without paying attention to how these textualities might have received, accepted, modified, challenged, overthrown or reproduced by the intelligentsias of the colonized countries" (*In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature* 14). Said's description in the Oriental subject is vague and it does not represent the present practices of cultural liberalism connecting with European critiques and commands of such authoritative voices.

Unlike Said and Ahmad, Foucault believes on power that is essential to create knowledge and the knowledge which is created through power is accepted as the truth by the people. The narratives in Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* analyzed from Foucauldian perspective expose knowledge and power relationship as he states, "No power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge", that "power produces knowledge" and that "power and knowledge directly imply one another" (Foucault 27). Ahmad finds the weaknesses in Foucauldian discourses on power and Said's politics in the concept of Orientalism. Foucault's concept of power as a literary tool is applied in this study to understand the psyche nature of the West to explore the non-West countries like Nepal to balance between the power and the Oriental values of cultural connectivity. Kincaid's beautiful memory of traveling to the nature gifted Himalayas create emotions triggered by the beauty of the region with flora and fauna principle and its warm hospitality in the Sherpa community. Kincaid's style is most engaging and includes wonderful description, humor, and great sensitivity on political disharmony as, ".......the Maoist had told him that we would not be allowed to pass on through the village. The four thousand rupees were only for spending the night" (*Among Flowers*.....23). Viewing the beauty of the forest with flora and fauna and engaging in seeds collection for gardening is politicized referring to the Maoist activities. "Kincaid herself as the main character and narrator presents the Nepalese identity by using Western eyes and describes the then ongoing Maoist War of Nepal" (Mongia 43). Kincaid

highlights to the natural beauties, seeds collections and political disharmony that she observes and experiences in the Himalayas of Nepal. The reviewers make critical remarks analyzing on the author's conflicting views in creating Nepalese identities through multiple perspectives.

4. Result and Discussions

Kincaid's *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* is an odd book in a way; part travel narratives, part nature quest in a search for plants and seeds. It is also a part of personal crisis in capturing political identity and Maoist activities. Narratives concerned with the high Himalayas and "gardening are mesmerizing" (Barker 34). Nights in tents are memorable with the glorious sleeping around seeds packets on the one hand and painful leech's bites on the other, but so much of the writing is full of repetition, not accidental or in error but stylistic that she references to the Himalayan sites. She and her three companions are guided by sherpas and supported by a team of porters that reflects to the Oriental values.

Jamaica Kincaid gives us a lucid picture of Maoists, trekkers, and porters as straight travelogue and the idea of a garden acts as a metaphor. An intimate, meditative account of a three-week trek through the Himalayan foothills in Nepal is adversely "affectionate, realistic and dreamy, straightforward and lyrical" (Chasin 45). Kincaid perfectly captures the emotions in her writing that accompany international travel as it is reviewed in United States, US Magazine:

> Kincaid's style is most engaging and includes wonderful description, humor, and great sensitivity. The focus of the trek is the collection of seeds for propagating Himalayan plant life in North America. The passion of the participants for gathering the seeds of rare species is engaging to gardeners and non-gardeners alike. All who have journeyed to this special part of the world, or intend to, will enjoy this charming book (December 10, 2012).

The goal in Kincaid's narratives is to collect seeds of the plants that will survive and thrive in a Vermont garden. The reader feels the author's "delight in seeing the flowery Himalayas that humdrum at home and abroad to capture the full enormous village" (Sharma 7). Her interest in gardening plummets after sniffs basil to understand the "author's tremendous joy" (Ashcroft 43). Such remarks expose the strengths and weakness of Kincaid's narratives.

Nepal's Himalayas, mountains, valleys and political situation in *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* "......expose the people and places which is not exact and reliable" (Coetzee 42). Her description is based on the Orientalist perspective about which Said defines, "Orientalism is the generic term I have been employing to describe the Western approach to the Orient, Orientalism is the discipline by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery and practice" (73). Aijaz Ahmad in his book *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature* charges Edward Said and claims that even the Orient writers write against the East due to the influence of the West. He asserts:

> Its global authority is in fact inseparable from the authority of those in the dominant sectors of the metropolitan intelligentsia who first bestowed it the status of a modern classic; while, perhaps paradoxically, its most passionate following in the metropolitan countries is within those sectors of the university intelligentsia which either originate in the ethnic minorities or affiliate themselves ideologically with the academic sections of those minorities. Ahmad's other complain against Said's Orientalism is that it examines the history of Western textualities about the non-West quite isolation without paying attention to how these textualities might have received, accepted, modified, challenged, overthrown or reproduced by the intelligentsias of the colonized countries. Said's self-description as 'the Oriental subject', is something hazardous, for anyone whose own cultural apparatus is overwhelmingly European and who commands such authoritative presence in American university. (20)

Ahmad critiques on Said's weaknesses and explores the non-West perspectives. Kincaid as the writer, narrator and also a main character of the novel presents the Nepalese identity as Oriental by using "Western eyes" and describes the then ongoing Maoist War of Nepal (Brantlinger 23). In this research, it analyses the conflicting state of author's mind and its role of creating identities of Nepalese characters and effects of the "Orientalist documents" (Chasin 21). The reviews made on differences between Eastern and Western values force the readers to rethink about the nature, literature and politics.

Brilliant Scholar and a theorist of Nepal Dr. Arun Gupto in his book *Discourse on: Literature and Culture* takes Orientalism as a

falsehood representation of the dialects and presents his idea on the tendency of misrepresentation of the East. He writes, "......European sense of superiority, but resisting and rejecting their definition of the eastern cultures from the location of superiority, as if they have some predetermined authority to do such things" (52). Gupto critiques on European superiority. He takes it as a hegemony of the power politics. Kincaid's reflection on Oriental superiority over the land of Nepal is complex with dual meanings of the Oriental and Occidental. Fake information and misrepresentation of the Orientalists presents Western tradition and politics on geography. Dr. Gupto further writes, "What I define you is you and the real you do not exist beyond my definition: this is Orientalist perspective to dictate the other" (52). Gupto's definition of Orientalism suggests to review on Said's concept on Orientalist values with self-created information that defines what exactly the East is? Said and Foucault's arguments are continuing the debates from Western perspectives.

Said exposes how the Westerners distort the Non-Western realities. In the novel *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya*, Kincaid represents the Nepalese with Anglo words to show Occidental superiority. The Occident is proud of "European identity and culture rather than the non-European people and culture" (Barker 37). For Said, "the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European people and cultures" (7). Jamaica Kincaid presents a relationship between Occidental and Oriental values mismatching the Eastern values with Western hegemonies. Said critiques the non-West people as powerless, dominating, and inferior as, "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (5). Kincaid presents "Nepalese as poor people working for money with an example of a porter carrying her luggage from the baggage area to the taxi station in 40 dollars" (Mudumbe 32). She is proud to be a citizen of an economically rich country and boasts as if she provides a grant to the Nepalese as a whole.

She states her Orientalist attitude in the novel from multiple perspectives. Kincaid expresses her manifest Orientalism that refers to state views about the Orient and the Orientals as Edward Said defines it as, "......and the various stated views about Oriental society, languages, literature, history, sociology, and so forth which I shall call manifest Orientalism" (204). She exposes the relation of the Occident

and the Orient through Sunam Sherpa who engaged with the head Maoist. The head Maoist's command is taken here as an authoritative voice. She mentions that the people belonging to Uwa, the village under complete Maoist control are involved in the cultivation of marijuana. She memorizes the activities of the people belonging to the village and describes them, "......we saw much marijuana growing wild, we saw people smoking the marijuana." (72). She dominates the Nepalese presenting them as drunkards, producers, workers, laborers working for dollars, and consumers of hashish.

5. Conclusion

Kincaid compares Vermont gardening of the West with an aesthetic pleasure to the Eastern Himalayan forests of Nepal and seeds plantation. She takes the Nepali flowers as the beauties of Eden Garden, though she has not seen the Eden Garden in reality and so *Among Flowers: A Walk in the Himalaya* is a mythical reality to her. She asserts the Maoists activities and leech's bites to be viruses in gardening. She also talks about Sherpa hospitalities referring to the Oriental values and explores the Occidental values as Maoists capture the villages. Her interest of exploring the high Himalayas and forests with flowers of Nepal and creating a discourse about Nepal is the reconstructing of the Orient. Considering the activities of the Orientalists in the Oriental land, Said argues it as reconstruct of Orientalist values, in the precisely actual in which the modern Oriental values are questionable mismatching the narratives of the East and the West. Geographical space of the Vermont is explained as Oriental and penetrates over the high hill's perceptions of the East.

Kincaid describes the natural beauty of Nepal which is representative of Eden Garden because it is insufficient to reflect the reality and what she presents is also based on her own preconception rather than analyzing the reality of the country and its physical environment. In her interpretations about Nepal and Nepalese Himalayas, it looks like an emotional description of the places of Eastern Nepal and the religious beauties of the capital city, Kathmandu respectively. Kincaid finds the pitiable condition of the school located in Tumlingtar which is shown to her by a school teacher in Oriental way. She remembers the school where she sent her children to observe and study while staying in Tumlingtar in tent as she describes about school building of the village. She finds Nepal and Vermont, her home town, very distinct place and she compares

these places from aesthetic perspectives. She takes Kathmandu as a city in crowd of aimless people. She observes the night activities in Thamel that reminds Occidental values. Therefore, Kincaid's *Among Flowers : A Walk in the Himalaya* is about nature, aesthetics, literature and politics of the Himalayan Heritages.

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Shifting Ground: A Historical Study of the Impact of Major Earthquakes of the 19ᵗʰ Century on Assam's Geology

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Abstract

The present study examines the profound impact of major earthquakes on the geological landscape of Assam. The region has been historically susceptible to seismic activity, and the article delves into the aftermath of some of the significant earthquakes of the past like the Cachar Earthquake of 1869 and the Shillong Earthquake of 1897. Through a review of archival records, the study makes an attempt to explore how earthquakes have shaped the topography, landforms and geological features of Assam over centuries. It tries to trace the correlation between seismic events and changes in the landscape of the region. Assam's geology has played a significant role in the occurrence of notable earthquakes in the region. The geological setting of Assam is intertwined with tectonic collision zone. The study has tried to present an overview of Assam's geology and some significant earthquakes of the past. Major earthquakes have influenced the hydrological dynamics of Assam and therefore, this change has also been looked into.

Keywords

Assam, Earthquake, Geology, Topography, Rivers.

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1. Introduction

Throughout human history, civilizations have grappled with the enduring impact of natural disasters, including earthquakes, which have left indelible marks on societies and reshaped the course of human development. The annals of history bear witness to the profound and often catastrophic influence of these seismic events, underscoring the entwined relationship between human civilization and the powerful 'forces of nature'.

When considering the multifaceted impact of earthquakes on human history, it is paramount to recognize the pivotal role of geological events in shaping the trajectory of human societies. The seismic upheavals wrought by earthquakes have catalyzed profound changes, from altering landscapes and coastlines to triggering social, economic and political transformations.

From ancient settlements such as Pompeii devastated by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius to modern urban centers ravaged by recent earthquakes, the tangible scars of seismic devastation endure as poignant testaments to the power of natural disasters.

In contemporary society, the study and understanding of earthquakes continue to play an instrumental role in informing disaster mitigation and response strategies. Thomas Oldham, the director of the Geological Survey of India has left a catalog of earthquakes of early India. His son, Richard D. Oldham has also given account of some of the major earthquakes in India. The present study has tried to delve into the geological aspects of the significant earthquakes of the 19th century Assam which left a profound impact on the region's landscape.

2. Assam's Geology

Assam, located in the northeastern part of India, falls under seismic zone V, as per the seismic zoning map of India.[1] Seismic zone

V is the highest level of seismic risk in India and is characterized by the highest probability of experiencing earthquakes of moderate to very high intensity. Earthquakes have had a notable geological impact in Assam, shaping the terrain, topography, and natural processes of the area.

Tectonic Activity : Assam is situated at the eastern edge of the Indian tectonic plate, where it converges with the Eurasian Plate.[2] This convergence has resulted in the uplift of the Himalayas and the ongoing collision between the Indian and Eurasian Plates. As a result, Assam experiences significant tectonic activity, and the release of accumulated stress through seismic events such as earthquakes has led to geological deformation and uplift in the region.

The impact of major earthquakes of the past in Assam has had a profound and enduring influence on the region's landscape and geology, shaping its geological features and environmental narratives. These seismic events have left indelible marks on Assam, with far-reaching consequences that extend well beyond the immediate periods of the earthquakes themselves.

Geological Deformation : Major earthquakes of the past have engendered significant geological deformation, leading to the formation of new landforms, uplifts, and subsidence. Seismic activity had induced complex faulting and folding processes, contributing to the region's diverse topography and creating landscapes shaped by tectonic movements.

Significant Earthquakes : Assam has experienced some significant earthquakes in its past, causing widespread damage and loss of lives. A major earthquake to have occurred in the region's history was the Cachar Earthquake of 1869. With an estimated magnitude of 7.4 that occurred in the Kopili fault, the earthquake rocked the region causing massive damages in Imphal (present day Manipur) and Silchar besides affecting Guwahati, Nowgong, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Nagaland and Sylhet. It also rocked places in West Bengal and Bihar.[3] One of the most devastating earthquakes in the region's history occurred in 1897, known as the Shillong Earthquake of 1897. This earthquake, estimated to have a magnitude of 8.1, resulted in extensive destruction, primarily affecting the districts of Sylhet, Khasi Hills, undivided Goalpara, Kamrup and Nowgong.

3. River Dynamics

Major earthquake like the earthquake of 1897 has influenced the hydrological dynamics of Assam's rivers, with direct consequences for the region's geological features. Seismic events triggered changes in river courses, leading to avulsions, raising of river beds and the reconfiguration of fluvial landforms, shaping the courses and characteristics of the region's waterways. Detailed inspections after the Earthquake of 1897 revealed that the Brahmaputra River and its channels had become shallower following the earthquake. Following the earthquake, the river bed had been raised by more than a foot in some areas and sand bars were formed lower down which kept the level of water higher than usual. In parts of the Kamrup district, the earthquake was immediately followed by a sudden rise of water from the rivers and beels which had been partly filled up with sand by the earthquake. The damage done by the floods which followed the earthquake was much greater than that caused directly by the earthquake. The numerous rivers which fall into the Brahmaputra also rose in flood at the same time. Pandit Matadin Sukul's inspection shows that between Sontoli in Kamrup and a little below Hatimura, Nowgong, the river was broken into two channels, which again joined lower down. There was hardly 5 feet of water in either. Following the earthquake commanders of cargo steamers viz. 'Shillong Down' and 'Varuna Down' found shallow waters in the channel leading out into the main stream above Mangaldai.[4] Cargo steamer 'Dilwara' also found shallow water while sailing between Tezpur and Guwahati on 1st December, 1897.

In the town of Goalpara, the land lying close to the bank slid forward towards the rivers, creating series of cracks running parallel to the bank, the upper most cracks extended up to the slope of the Goalpara Hill. A portion of the hill had also slipped in during the earthquake of 1897. In Dhubri town, following subsequent floods, the river shifted its channel to almost the middle of its bed and formed a big char opposite to the town. Steamers coming to Dhubri from Goalpara town found the channel getting shallower. In West Guwahati, much sand was thrown up in the Brahmaputra during the earthquake and the banks slipped in with trees, obstructing channels. The Khanajan bridge with masonry abutments and piers had also collapsed which almost blocked the channel. Back waters were thus set in, and crops higher up were damaged by the spill waters of the

river.[5] During the earthquake, the Kalbhog channel was entirely blocked from the place of its bifurcation to near Salisala Village in Chayani mauza, Kamrup. The length of the closed portion was about 4 miles. The bed turned dry and almost leveled with the bank. This channel was previously used for irrigation and drinking purpose in Rani and Chayani mauzas, Kamrup. In Barpeta, the bed of the Hirajan and the Marachaolkhoa rivers were raised by 7 feet while the Saru Manas was raised by 3 feet following the earthquake. The strand road in front of the courthouse and other government buildings had sunken from 3 to 5 and a half feet. The examination of the interior of the Barpeta town showed that many of the low places were filled in with sand geysers and silt deposit, and the artificial grounds or mounds on which the houses were built had sunk along with the embanked roads. Owing to the sinkage of river banks and raising of their beds, subsequent floods followed which caused much damage to the town. The rivers which caused most floods in the Barpeta subdivision were Noanadi, Pagladia, Tihu, Caldia, Pohumara and Saru Manas. During the earthquake landslips occurred in the Bhutan Hills and sand geysers were formed in a number of places. The subsequent rains brought down loose soil from the hills and distributed it all over the town. Beels were also silted up and their beds raised. At the Trunk road crossing, the Pagladia river got dried up by sand springs during the earthquake and remained so for a day, when waters from the hills rushed in and scoured its bed. Two of its tributaries, viz. Alpa and the Singra were silted up and ran in different channels.

In Goalpara, during the earthquake, bars of sand were formed at places and the channel of the Manas river became very shallow. The sliding of banks into the river bed was also observed in many places. Some of the other rivers of the South bank which were affected during the earthquake were Deosila, Bherbheria, Dudhnai, Krishnai, Jinari, Gara, Jinjiram and Kalu.

During the earthquake, the banks sank and slipped into the bed and blocked the channel at many places, with the result that the subsequent floods overtopped the banks and caused considerable damage to crops. Apart from voyage, these channels were regularly used for timber floating from various neighboring hills which was halted after the blockage owing to the earthquake. The Krishnai River, one of the largest rivers of Goalpara subdivision was blocked at various channels. Backwaters were formed which caused great damage by submerging extensive tracts. *Sali* paddy and a large

portion of the *sal* forest lying West of Jiar rora was submerged whereby around 50,000 *sal* trees were destroyed. The back waters also caused damage to the Trunk road near Krishnai by washing away three bridges and widening their openings. Foothills were flooded as well.

The forcing up of the river beds was not uniform, and in some places was more extensive than in others. This led to the formation of barriers across the stream, and on the upstream side the water was ponded up to the height of the maximum rise of the next barrier downstream.

4. Landslides and Erosion

Major earthquakes have heightened the susceptibility of the region to geological hazards such as landslides, slope instability, and erosion. Seismic events triggered mass movements leading to the reconfiguration of hill slopes and sediment transport, thereby influencing erosion patterns and geomorphological evolution of the landscape. The Cachar Earthquake of 1869 caused big landslips in the Naga Hills of colonial Assam. An extract from the Deputy Commissioner of Naga Hills' diary showing an account of the earthquake as experienced by him at the village of Keromah, Naga Hills goes as :

> As the first great wave passed, I noticed on my right a great cloud of dust go up from a landslip under the village of Biffomah to the north of me, and almost directly afterwards another rose from a low hill to the south-west of Biffomah, followed directly by a third from a huge landslip under Geroophemah, which also bears south-west from Biffomah… Directly the shock was over I found that the earth had opened in several places, the fissures were of considerable length and sufficiently wide to admit of the insertion of two fingers abreast, one of the graves at the edge of the khud had cracked right across, the end of another had been shaken down… on my return to Samoogoodting I noticed on the road that the rivers were discolored and swollen… that there had been a fresh fall of rocks and earth from old landslips, and that new landslips had occurred in places.[6]

Regarding landslips in Bhutan Hills surrounding Assam due to the earthquake of 1897, the Sub-divisional Officer of Mangaldai wrote:

> The principal damage has been done in the outlying ranges of the Bhutan Hills. Many roads have been carried away by the

landslips caused by the earthquake, but very little loss of life was incurred.[7]

5. Earth Fissures, Sand Vents and Allied Phenomena

During major earthquakes in colonial Assam, seismic events triggered the formation of earth fissures and sand vents due to intense ground shaking, liquefaction, and the release of pore water and sediments. The geological impact of these earthquakes led to the development of distinctive surface features, providing evidence of the seismic disturbances and their effects on the landscape.

Seismic forces acting on the ground during major earthquakes in colonial Assam led to the development of earth fissures, also known as ground ruptures or earthquake ruptures. These fissures were manifested as fractures or cracks in the earth's surface, resulting from horizontal and vertical displacement of the ground along tectonic fault lines. Fissures in the ground, the formation of vents from which sand, water and mud pouring out have been numerous and widespread during the earthquake of 1897. The pushing forward of the abutments of the bridges was universal throughout the fissured tracts and the narrowing of the river channels seems to have been still more conspicuous in places where there were no massively built bridges to assist in supporting the banks. In all cases of earthquakes it was due to the throwing off of the unsupported river banks and accompanied by the formation of fissures.[8]

Another very striking result of the displacement of the alluvium, whether by throwing off at the free surfaces of river channels or tanks or otherwise, was the bending of rails. There are a series of photographs showing the effects of the earthquake on the Assam Bengal and Eastern Bengal Railways and on the Tezpore Balipara tramway.[9] The lateral and vertical movement of the ground during the seismic event caused the rail tracks to contort and deform, disrupting the alignment and structural integrity of the railway lines.

At Nowgong, the ejection of sand had such force that covers of wells, imbedded in mortar were hurled aside. The other was at Goalpara where a well was altogether filled with sand and a portion of the wooden cover was hurled 30 feet distant where it lay half buried.[10]

6. Conclusion

Through this historical study of the impact of major earthquakes on Assam's geology, the work has tried to gain valuable insights into

the dynamic and altered landscape of the region. The study has tried to include how the seismic events of the past have left an indelible mark on the geological features of Assam, shaping its topography and landforms. From the Cachar Earthquake of 1869 up to the Earthquake of 1897, the geological heritage of Assam bears witness to the forces of nature that have restructured the earth's crust over time. In course of the present work it has been understood how raising of river beds and shifting of river channels owing to the earthquakes have caused high floods in the region bringing agony to the marginalized section, notably the peasant class. The work however, owing to its limitations has not included the impact of floods as a result of earthquakes on society and has been confined to the geological and hydrological aspects.

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The Tana Bhagat Movement: From Socio-Religious Reform to Political Rebellion

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Abstract

The objective of this paper is to understand the Tana Bhagat movement that emerged in the second decade of the twentieth century in present-day Jharkhand among the Oraon tribal community. This movement began as a socio-religious reform movement but later turned into a full-blown rebellion against the colonial regime as well as native oppressive structures and agents. This paper will emphasize the role of religion by drawing upon the theories of Peter Berger who defined religion as a sacred canopy, and neo-Marxist theorists like Ernst Bloch who pointed out the 'anticipatory utopian function' of religion while underlining the role of religion in progressive social change. In light of these theories, this paper will explicate how the Tana Bhagats in the context of a dystopian 'present', imagined a utopian 'future' of Oraon Raj which was a resurrection of a utopian 'golden age', and the contents of socio- religious reforms were based on the reasons of their downfall from the golden age.

Keywords

Tribal movement, Oraon community, Religion, Social movement, Colonialism.

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The Tana Bhagat Movement: From Socio-Religious Reform to Political Rebellion

1. Introduction

The objective of this paper is to understand the Tana Bhagat movement that emerged in the second decade of the twentieth century in present-day Jharkhand among the Oraon tribal community. The Tana Bhagat movement began as a socio-religious reform movement but later turned into a full-blown rebellion against the colonial regime as well as native oppressive structures and agents. One of the features of the Tana Bhagat reform was the freeing of the Oraon religion and the socio-cultural-spiritual world from a large number of spirits who exercised control over their lives. Instead of focusing on the economic factors that led to the movement, this paper will emphasize the role of religion by drawing upon the theories of Peter Berger who defined religion as a sacred canopy, and neo-Marxist theorists like Ernst Bloch who pointed out the 'anticipatory utopian function' of religion while underlining the role of religion in progressive social change. In light of these theories, this paper will explicate how the Tana Bhagats in the context of a dystopian 'present', imagined a utopian 'future' of Oraon Raj which was a resurrection of a utopian 'golden age', and the contents of socio-religious reforms were based on the reasons of their downfall from the golden age. This paper is divided into three sections. The first section discusses the theoretical framework in which this paper is situated. The second section discusses the Tana Bhagat movement in the context of the theoretical framework, while the last section further elaborates on the role of religion in bringing about social change in the context of the Tana Bhagat movement.

2. Theoretical Framework

In their seminal work, The Social Construction of Reality (1967) Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann argued that reality i.e. the social world which humans inhabit is socially constructed, by which they meant that an order or nomos is imposed upon the external world as

well as upon discrete experiences and activities of individuals. The nomos, since it is socially constructed, faces the constant possibility of collapsing in the face of threats, or marginal situations, like death, social/natural/economic catastrophe, etc. In order to protect reality or the nomos from the constant threat the nomos is legitimized through the sacred i.e. by mirroring the nomos with the sacred cosmos, which Berger and Luckmann called the sacred canopy or symbolic universe which provides security to individuals in the face of chaos. Since the sacred cosmos or the symbolic universe is a social construct, it requires continuous maintenance. In normal circumstances, the symbolic universe is self-maintaining and self-legitimating, but in certain circumstances, it requires a maintenance apparatus, especially when the symbolic universe becomes a problem, which can arise in everyday life as generations change, and the socialization process through which the symbolic universe is transmitted may never be complete and total.

The official symbolic universe can also face challenges from deviant versions of the symbolic universe or alternate definitions of reality emanating from within the same society which is labelled as heresy. However, the most detrimental challenge arises when a society is confronted with another society having a greatly different symbolic universe, which can entirely reject one's definitions of reality as mad, ignorant, or downright evil. As Berger and Luckmann say; "the appearance of an alternative symbolic universe poses a threat because its very existence demonstrates empirically that one's own universe is less than inevitable" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967 : 108), which leads to chaos and anomie among the members of the challenged symbolic universe. According to Berger and Luckmann, there are three responses to the crisis that emanates when one symbolic universe of confronted by another, namely :

  a) **Therapy :** Whereby the plausibility structures (community, social institutions, specialists who maintain the 'reality') become active in preventing the members of the threatened symbolic universe from losing confidence in themselves by providing counseling, pastoral care, etc.

  b) **Nihilation :** It involves the ambitious attempt to account for all deviant definitions of reality in terms of concepts belonging to one's universe.

  c) **Outcome :** The outcome is decided by power relations which might lead to the destruction of SU which is weak in power.

"The historical outcome of each clash of gods was determined by those who wielded the better weapons rather than those who had better arguments" (Berger & Luckmann, 1967 : 109).

Edward Shils reaches the same conclusion as he says that when a tradition comes in contact with an alien tradition i.e. becomes aware of another equally legitimate tradition, and/or becomes an object of attack by the proponents of the alien tradition, the native tradition undergoes a process of change. This change can take three routes, namely :

  a) In some situations, the alien tradition may be assimilated by adaptation, with the assertion that implicitly the alien tradition was always contained within the challenged tradition.

  b) The adherents of the challenged tradition might also seek to destroy its proponents by discrediting them morally, defeating them politically or annihilating them physically.

  c) It might also incline the proponents of the challenged tradition of religious belief to lose confidence in the truth of their beliefs (Shils, 1981 : 98).

Similarly, Vincent J. Cornell, drawing upon Alasdair MacIntyre's concept of epistemological crisis, which emerges when one tradition is confronted by another tradition with superior claims, argues; "when a historically founded tradition confronts a new and alien tradition, it may be that some of the original tradition's claims to the truth will no longer be sustained. This threatens the integrity of the tradition as a whole. A feeling of crisis may be precipitated by the challenge of a completely new epistemology, or it may occur when social and historical conditions change such that the claims of a rival tradition provide newly cogent and illuminating explanations of why one's own tradition has been unable to solve its problems or restore its original coherence" (Cornell, 2010 : 29). According to MacIntyre, the solution to an epistemological crisis requires the discovery or invention of new concepts and the framing of some new type/s of theory which must meet three requirements. *First*, the new and conceptually enriched scheme must furnish a solution to the problems which had previously proved intractable systematically and coherently. *Second*, an explanation must be provided of what rendered the tradition sterile and/or incoherent. *Third*, these tasks must be carried out in a way which exhibits some fundamental continuity of the new conceptual and theoretical structures with the shared beliefs of the past (MacIntyre, 1988 : 362).

The advent of colonial rule brought an alien symbolic universe in confrontation with several symbolic universes/traditions in India, as the colonial machinery coupled with Christian missionaries began to criticize every section of the Indian society. Since the alien symbolic universe was backed by political power, the native symbolic universe/s were forced to rethink what went wrong with their culture/tradition. This line of thinking led to the genesis of several attempts to refashion the traditional symbolic universe/s which manifested into several socio-religious reform movements that were launched throughout the 19th century in different parts of India and among various communities. The Tana Bhagat movement was one such response to the challenge that was thrown at the Oraon community by the British colonial regime and its cultural and religious politics, as their traditional symbolic universe began to lose its plausibility and explanatory power leading to what McIntyre has called 'epistemological crisis'.

3. Epistemological Crisis of Oraon Society and the Tana Bhagat Movement

The Tana Bhagat movement emerged among a section of the Oraon tribal community in the year 1914 in the Chhotanagpur region of present-day Jharkhand after Jatra Oraon, a youth of 20-25 years of age claimed that he had received a divine message from supreme God Dharmesh along with supernatural power to restore the primordial Oraon Raj. Jatra emerged as the prophet-king of the future Oraon Raj and his message gained traction among the Oraon community which was undergoing societal stress due to the introduction of the new political-economic structure by the British colonial regime. Prior to the Tana Bhagat movement, the Oraons had been a part of the struggle for land (mulkui larai) in 1888 and later were influenced by the Brisa Munda movement. In fact, the origin of the Tana Bhagat movement followed the well-established pattern of previous revolutions like the Santhal (1855) and Munda (1900) rebellions in which the respective leaders claimed to have divine revelation and were entrusted with a mission to cleanse their religion from impurities and corruption and restore the long-lost political suzerainty (Singh, 1988 : 37).

The primary reasons for the rise of the Tana Bhagat movement lay in their acute exploitation facilitated by the colonial land revenue system, and the growing clout of money lenders and landlords

(zamindars) because of which they had suffered huge loss of ancestral land. This systematic-structural oppression was coupled with everyday exploitation by the British administration, as the Oraons had to act as beaters during the hunts of British officers; they were used as carriers of the baggage of the local police for paltry sums and were regularly thrashed for minor offenses (Chattoraj, 1999 : 639-640). In the context of the theoretical discussion in the previous section, it can be said that the Oraon society/tradition was undergoing a deep epistemological crisis induced by the colonial regime, which challenged the entire symbolic universe of the Oraons. As their entire way of life was threatened the Oraons realized that their gods were helpless to check their deteriorating condition, which pushed them to refashion their symbolic universe.

Any such effort is a two-step process. Why we are in this situation? Is the first question that is asked, followed by, what is the way out? Let us see how the crisis, its diagnosis and its prognosis played out in the Tana Bhagat Movement. The theorizers of the new Tana sect, who can be called organic intellectuals in the Gramscian sense, located the source of this crisis in the corruption of their religion, which was not separate from their economic, political or social life. They argued that, as a community, they had drifted away from the original precepts of their true religion, which they called the Kurukh Dharam. The Tanas argued that their religion had been corrupted and it required cleansing. The socio-religious world of the Oraons was full of ghosts and spirits who exercised control over every domain of their existence. The belief in these spirits, they declared, was no part of their ancient tribal faith but was a later importation from the Munda religious system and the reason for their present degraded state. Jatra Oraon claimed to have received magical spells and incantations that would pull out (tana) these ghosts and spirits (This was the most important aspect of this new sect as it got named after this practice of pulling out ghosts and spirits). Accordingly, they named their new reformed faith- the Kurukh Dharam or the 'true' religion of the kurukhs or Oraons (Roy, 1928 : 247); (Singh, 1988). It was against this backdrop that the original religion of the Oraons was proclaimed, which has two primary components namely;

  a) Belief in One God Dharmesh, and Sita/Parvati as his consort.
  b) Bhakti as a path to reach Him, without any mediator.

The reconceptualization of theological components of their religion also led to a reconfiguration of their symbolic universe/ tradition and pattern of life.

4. Salient Points of the New Pattern of Life as conceived by the Tana Bhagats

The Tana Bhagat movement in its initial phase was essentially a socio-religious movement as it tried to chart out a new pattern of life for the Oraons. This new conceptualization was influenced by Vaishnavism and Kabir panthi tradition that had a long presence in the Chhotanagpur region (Kumar, 2008). Some of the features of the Tana sect were :

a) Ghosts and spirits were to be purged, along with dains (witches), matis, and ojhas (those who dealt with the spirit world).

b) animal sacrifices, violence, and non-vegetarianism were to be abhorred.

c) austerity and abstemiousness were to characterize religion and society. Accordingly,

  i. socio-religious festivities were forbidden, and

  ii. embroidery and ornaments were discarded.

d) bonds between men and women outside marriage were discouraged.

e) pure thought and speech, knowledge, wisdom, understanding, intelligence, and strength were regarded as virtues to be inculcated.

f) Customs related to birth, marriage, and death were re-fashioned in opposition to the mainstream Orion society. New diktats regarding commensality, inter-marriage and widow marriage were added.

g) Tana refused to accept the jurisdiction of the panch that was constituted by bhuinhars. Tana disputes and differences were required to be settled by a mandali (congregation), and later by the panchayat (assembly); Tanas not abiding by the decisions of the mandali were excommunicated.

h) the traditional leadership of the pahans (village priests) and mahtos (village headman) was to be questioned.

i) followers were to work no more as coolies or laborers for men of other castes or for the government.

j) reverting from settled agriculture to an ancient traditional form of cultivation, i.e. "shifting cultivation" (Dasgupta, 1999; Singh, 1988; Kumar, 2008).

This reconfiguration - largely conceived in religious terms- had both moral/ethical (from a- h) and political components (g-j). It was the political component that invited the ire of the traditional Oraon elites, the native Hindu-Muslim elites and the British colonial regime. Some of these new precepts were definitely inspired by Vaishnavism and protestant Christianity, but they were also an outcome of how the community understood its downfall. This can be gauged from a folk story narrating how the Oraons came to Chhotanagpur, which goes like this :

The Oraons "once dwelt on the Rohtas plateau under a king of their own tribe. The place was well fortified so as to defy the strongest enemy. The Oraons had erected a stone rampart about a mile in height, and the enemy long sought in vain to affect a breach. At length, the Hakims caught hold of a milk woman of the Ahir caste who used to supply milk to the Oraon Raja, and who had therefore free access to the fort. Inducements were offered to this woman to suggest to the enemy a practicable means of occupying the fort. She accordingly advised them to wait till the ensuing khadi or sarhul festival when all the Oraon makes were sure to get dead drunk. This turned out to be correct, and the enemy followed her instructions and succeeded in entering the fort" (Roy, 1915 : 35).

This story had two functions;

a) It provided the reasons why the Oraon community experienced their downfall i.e. excessive indulgence, consumption of liquor and festivities, consequently informing their areas of reform as consumption of liquor, non-vegetarian food and festivities were banned entirely.

b) It served as the template for envisioning the future of the Oraon Raj.

The Tana Bhagat Movement initially began as a socio-religious movement but soon transmuted into a political movement because it challenged the political structure of the society. As K.S. Singh writes; "As the movement progressed, agrarian issues came to the fore. Ghost-hunting gave way to a no-rent payment campaign. The protest against zamindars or landlords took on an atavistic form: Oraons

would not plough or do work of any kind, for either the Government or the zamindars, whose servants were beaten up and turned out of the jungles…" (Singh, p. 37). This political movement was articulated through the concept of Oraon Raj which was reflected in their songs and stories expressing their desire to restore their perceived lost political power and independence, as they called upon God (Dharmesh and Parvati) to deliver them from the Kali Yuga - the age of Sin to the Satya Yuga- the age of purity and prosperity, which brings us to the question of religion and social transformation and how it played out in the Tana Bhagat movement.

5. Anticipatory Dimension of Religion and the Utopia of Oraon Raj

From the sociological perspective, religion has been understood as a social institution that plays a conservative role in maintaining the status quo and as a source of social conformity. However, there also exists the view that religion could challenge the inherited social order and induce social change (McGuire, 1981; Hinman, 2013). In this paper, I take the second view while presenting an analysis of the Tana Bhagat movement. According to Ernst Bloch and Paul Ricoeur religion, apart from legitimizing domination and justifying status-quo, can also function as a force of social change and liberation from oppression. Bloch and Ricoeur identify this potential of religion in its utopian dimension. According to Ricoeur; religion functions as an ideology when it justifies the existing system of power… [and]…functions as a utopia to the extent that it is a motivation nourishing the critique [of ideology] (Ricoeur, 1986 : 231). Ricoeur thus identifies a positive function of religion in its capacity to envision a future society in response to the ills of the past and present.

Ernst Bloch in his work The Principle of Hope (1995) argued that "religious stories of emancipation and oppression possess a utopic function in that these stories reveal the inherent contradictions of human existence and, in so doing, open the door to understanding the need for the transcendence and transformation of existent society" (Reed & Goldstein, 2022 : 3). Religion has an anticipatory function of offering an alternative vision of a society that is free from injustice, suffering and oppression. This anticipatory-utopian drive of religion is characterized among other things by an active and activist attitude toward the present reality from the perspective of the future. In Bloch's theory, this attitude is called 'militant optimism'

and has a fundamental role in rebellions/revolutions because it "allies subjective, imaginative factors with real, historical tendencies and actively correlates the present and the future. It turns wishful dreams into will-full acts and maintains the momentum towards the Novum (newness) of the future by being a constant reminder that the 'undecided material' of present reality can be, however, decided through work and concretely mediated action" (Prosic, 2022, p. 120). In the anticipatory-utopia operationality, religious stories and themes of the triumph of 'good' over 'evil', the victory of true faith and perseverance, etc. get interpreted in the context of everyday life becoming a motivating factor and driving power in the struggle against oppression and injustice. Some of the songs (mentioned in the next page) of Tana Bhagats' expressed the anticipatory-utopian drive of their newly conceptualized religion which fuelled their militant optimism to achieve the utopian Oraon Raj which would be free of injustice, oppression, wickedness, etc.

Come O Father, bringing Thy golden shield; Come bringing golden symbols, golden crown, bringing Sat Yuga

Come father bringing holy rain, the golden kingdom and the golden altar; Come, Father, bringing Thy golden bench and golden chair.

O Father, come with Thy accoutrements complete,

Father, come bringing Thy golden castle, come Father for eternity,

O Father the Kali Yug is finished; it is used up. O Father, the age of sin is at an end.

O Father, the world of sin is ended.

O Father, do Thou drive off and scatter abroad the miseries of this country.

O Father, do thou drive off the diseases of this world

O Father, do thou destroy and cast out the wicked men of this world.

O Father, destroy and cast out the sinful enemies of this world.

O Father, do Thou cast out and destroy the wicked enemies of this world.

O Father, do Though bring and establish Thy Holy kingdom.

O Father, the law of God is being accepted, -O Father-accepted

O Father, God's justice is beginning to reign, - Father, Beginning to reign.

No More, Brethren, no more, the Kali Yuga is no more- it is past and gone

No more, brethren, no more, the Age of sin is no more, - it is fled for aye.

The destroyers of life, O Brethren the destroyers of life shall be totally destroyed-destroyed

Sinful people, O Brethren, Shall Be utterly destroyed-destroyed

Meat-eaters, O Brethren, shall be utterly ruined- shall be ruined

O Brethren, the ungrateful shall be utterly destroyed-destroyed

The wicked, O Brethren, shall be utterly destroyed-destroyed

Thieves, O Brethren, shall be utterly destroyed-destroyed

No more, O Father, no more, the obstinate enemies [of man] are no more- O Father, the world (age) of sin is ended.

In these songs, we can identify the motif of Kali Yuga (symbolizing the 'present' as the age of sin and suffering) as the dystopia against which the motif of Satya Yuga (an anticipatory state free of sin, suffering, and oppression) functions as the utopia which served as the catalyst for their social action. The imagined utopia of Oraon Raj as conceptualized by the leaders of the Tana Bhagat movement was a place of virtue, truthfulness, abstinence, teetotalism, vegetarianism, and austerity in the moral realm, while in the material-political realm, it was :

a) A land of self-rule free of foreigners (Zamindars, Talukdars, Merchants, and Christians/British).

b) A land where a few grains of rice would suffice to prepare a sumptuous meal, and rich crops would grow in the fields

without the necessity of tilling the soil or sowing or weeding (Fuchs, 1965).

It was this utopic imagination resulting from the desire for deliverance from the acute economic-political and everyday humiliation that propelled the Tana Bhagat's to challenge the British colonial empire in the early decades of the 20th century.

6. Conclusion

The Tana Bhagat movement along with other tribal revolts and rebellions like the Santhal Hul, and the Birsa Munda revolt that happened in the 19th and early 20th centuries in colonial India has been characterized as a millenarian movement, and this characterisation has informed a majority of the studies on this movement. But the Tana Bhagat movement, when it began, was not millenarian in character. Though there was indeed the dimension of deliverance, an important characteristic of the millenarian movement, apocalyptic nature, the defining characteristic of millenarianism, appeared in the later phase of the movement and proved only to be momentary in nature which only resulted from the repeated failure of newly reformulated religion (read symbolic universe/s) to ameliorate the socio-economic condition of the Oraons population. Jatra Oraon was arrested on 23rd April 1914 and sentenced to imprisonment. He was released in 1915 but by then his charisma had faded. The next leader of the Tana Bhagats' was a woman named Litho Oraon who was able to galvanize the movement for a short time but she too was arrested and upon release faded into oblivion. The next person to take the mantle of leadership was Mangor Oraon in the fall of 1915 but he too met the same fate at Jatra and Litho. The movement lost its momentum with repeated police action only to regain it in the year 1919 when a 20-year-old youth Sibu Oraon declared himself to be the leader of the Oraons and proclaimed the return of the Oraon Raj. In 1919 he gathered a band of 700-800 followers who migrated to Satpahari hills in the present-day Hazaribagh district of Jharkhand expecting the advent of the deity who would guide them to the utopia of Oraon Raj but it too failed, upon which the Tana Bhagat's slowly drifted towards the Indian National Congress which was gaining traction under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi (Kumar, 2008; Singh, 1988).

In the context of the theoretical framework, it can be seen that the Tana Bhagat movement initially was a movement to reconfigure the

symbolic universe of the Oraon society as the leaders of the Tana sect tried to reform their religion which they found to be inadequate for meeting the challenges introduced by the complex of colonialism. Only whence the attempt failed, the movement became millenarian in character i.e. after almost five years since Jatra proclaimed himself to the prophet-king of Oraons which in the end met the same fate of Santhal and Munda uprisings. But despite its failure the Tana Bhagat's were able to challenge the colonial regime thereby playing an important role in the Indian freedom struggle as the movement was born with an anti-colonial consciousness as a critique of colonialism expressed in religious terms.

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