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CONTENTS

MPISSR

Madhya Pradesh Journal of Social Sciences
(A Biannual Journal of M.P. Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain)
ISSN: 0973-855X (Vol. 27, No. 1, June 2022, pp. 1-12)
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Senior Citizens and Social Security Laws

Sanjay Lodha*, Puneet Bafna† and Rohan Samar‡

The social security laws for senior citizens are numerous and they have changed the dimensions of the social security provided to senior citizens. This article begins with the problems encountered by senior citizens in the current time and states about Constitutional Framework laying out social security of senior citizens and highlights the provisions of various Acts relating to the same. The objective of this article is to highlight the problems faced by senior citizens in the contemporary era and the existing provisions enacted by the legislature for securing social security for senior citizens. The authors have also tried to point out some of the lacunas existing in these provisions. By going through the above provisions it can be inferred that leaving aside some of the lacunas as highlighted in the article, there are sufficient provisions for the improvement of social, financial, and physical conditions of the senior citizens. The backbone of a country is its rule of law and the judiciary ensures the effective implementation of the rule of law. It can also be seen from the judgments cited in this article that the judiciary has a crucial part to play in the proper implementation of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 and other provisions guaranteeing social security for senior citizens.

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Introduction

The story of Ayyappa (The Lord of Sabarimala) who risked his life by going to bring Tiger's milk to save his dying stepmother is well known to everybody. His pious love and adoration for his mother stimulated him to menace his life. Although, there was no law at that time which made it necessary for a child to look after his aged parents.

Respecting elders has been a vital part of our culture and helping elders is considered a sacred service in our customs. This existed till we had a joint family system in India. The old culture and traditions of India are getting exhausted day by day.[1] Joint families are getting replaced by nuclear families which are not able to provide the same support and care to all members of the family (especially the elderly) which the former provided. The younger generation of India is caught up in the race of earning more and more so that they can upgrade their lifestyle and in this race, they are not able to give time to their parents and grandparents.

One-eighth of the World's Elderly Population resides in India. The demographic profile of India portrays that between the years 2000 and 2050, the total population of India will rise by 55 per cent while the number of people in the 60+ group will grow by 326 per cent, and in the 80+ group will grow by 700 per cent, which is also the fastest-growing group in the years to come.[2] In the present aging situation, there is a necessity for all facets of carefulness for the Oldest of Old i.e 80+ group namely, socio-economic, financial, health, and shelter.

Nonetheless, the condition of senior citizens is deteriorating day by day as the younger generations have started to see elderly people as a liability to them. As a consequence of this senior citizens have to face many problems like social, health, and financial insecurity. This has constrained the vast majority of the senior residents to rely upon their reserve funds or their provident fund and gratuity, whose worth is contracting constantly. This is getting intensified due to the absenteeism of operational safety nets for seniors. In this way, it has become essential that senior citizens should be provided with social security.

Difficulties Encountered by Senior Citizens

Old age comes with many problems. In old age body power declines, psychological constancy reduces, and earning ability starts to desolate together with carelessness from the younger ones. The problems faced by senior citizens can be classified as follows:

Economic Problems- It comprises of problems connected to money like income uncertainty, loss of employment, income insufficiency, etc.

Physical and Psychological Problems- It comprises of problems of health and absenteeism of physical substances like insufficient housing.

Physio-social Problems- It comprises problems linked with psychological and social maladjustment, also the problem of elder abuse.

According to John F. Thatil, Regional Director, Help Age India, "Elder abuse does not only mean being physically or verbally abused, it also includes being financially abused, neglected, or not being given appropriate medical treatment." As per the same NGO i.e. HelpAge India "four out of 10 elders are victims of abuse". However, these distressing figures do not provide a complete depiction as it is projected according to the report in "The Tribune" newspaper that only one out of six cases of elder abuse is reported. There are more than 90 million senior citizens in India and about 40 per cent of them live with their families which face abuse of one kind or the other, worse is the case that only one out of 12 cases comes to light. However, the Delhi High Court had tried to provide relief to the senior citizens by holding that children who stay with their parents in their house and abuses them could be evicted from the house. Further, Justice Manmohan in the same judgment held that the house need not necessarily be a self-acquired property, it can also be a rented property.[3] The eviction is not limited to the child only, his family members like wife, son, daughter, etc. can also be evicted for the same reason.[4]

It is estimated that by 2026 the population of senior citizens in India will reach the mark of 173 million or it can be said that about 12.4 per cent of the total population of India will constitute senior citizens. Though modern development has considerably increased the life span of an individual but it has failed to upsurge the quality of life of the elderly. At no time afore have the elderly sensed as insecure and isolated as they are nowadays.

Leaving aside the societal and financial difficulties what similarly worries the older people, particularly in cosmopolitan areas is the absence of safety and security. For example, Delhi, where more than a million senior citizens reside, has observed a growing number of crimes against senior citizens. A renowned social scientist Aruna Khatri has rightly pointed out the reason behind the same as "Changing family dynamics have left many elderly people feeling lonely and more vulnerable to crime. This is primarily due to a growing number of middle-class children moving out of their parental homes to live independently or go overseas to seek better work opportunities".

Social Security for Senior Citizens

Social security in its widest sense means the complete security of a person within every place like family, society, workplace, etc. It can be defined as actions intended to guarantee that citizens of the country meet the basic necessities like proper nutrition, healthcare facilities, shelter, clothes, education, etc., and also they are saved from exigencies like illness, death, illiteracy, old age, disability, etc. so that they can sustain an acceptable standard of living consistent with social norms. This too by insinuation comprises of security of incomes and assurance of work and satisfactory wages, as deprived of this, other exigency assistances have not any sense. Social security pacts with both total deficit, threat, and susceptibilities.

The banishment of the joint family system with the time which took proper care of every individual of the family has obliged social security benefits for senior citizens. For senior citizens, it can be done in many ways like providing better healthcare facilities and economic help to senior citizens. Social security for senior citizens functions as a protecting web that gives senior citizens security in the form of medical benefits and pension plans. It does not only protect senior citizens from social risks like illness and social exclusion but also with plans that provide income or increase the income of senior citizens. For Example - The policy of banks offers an increased interest rate, especially to senior citizens.

Social security provisions preserve social solidity and also preclude irretrievable harm to human capital. Senior citizens in rural areas are becoming poorer day by day and require the attention of the government. Therefore, this class of people requires social security in a large amount. A recent example of it is the farmer's protest going on in the country these days. Every measure by the government in this direction would help in achieving the Constitutional duty inculcated in Article 41 of the Constitution which states that "the state shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want" and also help the government to adhere to the directives of international law associated with the social security of senior citizens.

Constitutional Framework Laying Out Social Security of Senior Citizens

To begin with first of all Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and liberty of every individual, which also includes the right to live with dignity of senior citizens.[5] As mentioned above Article 41 of the

Constitution also obliges the government to make effective provisions for public assistance to elderly people. Further, Article 46 of the Constitution also levies an obligation on the government to "promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people". It also lays down that the government should safeguard them from all types of exploitation and social injustice. Though the above two articles are a part of the DPSPs that cannot be enforced in the courts according to Article 37 of the Constitution yet they oblige the State to take positive actions in this direction and are also elemental in the governing of the country.

Entry 9 in the State List of Seventh Schedule states "Relief of the disabled and unemployable"; Entry 20, 23, and 24 lays down "Economic and social planning", "Social security and social insurance, employment and unemployment", and "Welfare of labour including conditions of work, provident funds, employers' liability, workmen's compensation, invalidity, and old-age pensions and maternity benefits" respectively. Thus, the State and the Central governments have full authority and are also obliged to make provisions regarding the social security of the senior citizens.

Provisions under The Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 and The Muslim Personal Law

The ancient sacred Hindu texts oblige the sons to maintain their parents and take care of them. It imposes a duty on the sons irrespective of whether they had inherited the family property or not to maintain their parents who are not able to maintain themselves out of their own earnings and property. This duty got converted into a statutory provision when Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act, 1956 was enacted, which in its Section 20(1) lays down that "a Hindu is bound, during his or her lifetime, to maintain his or her legitimate or illegitimate children and his or her aged or infirm parents." This Section comes with an exception in Section 20(3) that was also present in the ancient Hindu texts that "the obligation of a person to maintain his or her aged or infirm parent or a daughter who is unmarried extends in so far as the parent or the unmarried daughter, as the case may be, is unable to maintain himself or herself out of his or her own earnings or other property."

It was laid down by the apex court of India in the case of Kirtikant D. Vadodaria v. the State of Gujarat[6] that under the old Hindu law the responsibility to take care of the aged parents was inflicted on the son only but under the present Hindu law the duty applies alike on the son and the daughter. Leaving aside any law even the Indian society imposes an

obligation upon the children to maintain their parents who are not in a condition to maintain themselves.[7]

Even under the Muslim Personal Law children are bound to maintain their parents. According to Mulla: "(a) Children in easy circumstances are bound to maintain their poor parents, although the latter may be able to earn something for themselves; (b) A son though in strained circumstances is bound to maintain his mother, if the mother is poor, though she may not be infirm; (c) A son, who though poor, is earning something, is bound to support his father who earns nothing."

Further, under the Muslim Personal Law, the grandchildren are also responsible to maintain their poor grandmothers and grandfathers, to the extent that they are responsible to take care of their poor fathers.

Provisions under The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

Sections 125 to 128 of the Cr.P.C. assist the father or mother to claim maintenance from his or her major son or daughter who "neglects or refuses to maintain" their parents. The two criteria for availing this maintenance are that the children should have "sufficient means" to maintain their father or mother and that the parents are not able to maintain themselves. The main object of Section 125[8] is to provide social justice to women, incapable parents, and children by mandating those who are capable of maintaining them and also have a moral obligation for providing such maintenance. This Section intends to avoid hardships and vagrancy for senior citizens. It also provides a quick remedy to senior citizens. The best part of this provision is that it is a secular law and applies to all religions. On the occasion the persons who are subject to this order do not remunerate the maintenance sum without any sufficient reason, execution proceedings can be filed and a warrant imposing a penalty for violation of the order can also be given by the court and the person may be detained.[9] Likewise, if a mother is subjected to domestic violence and wants to claim numerous reliefs she may file a petition against her son under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. Additionally, this court has also held that under Section 125 of the Cr.P.C. the stepson and the stepdaughter are too responsible to maintain their stepmother if the stepmother's real son or daughter, and the husband are not able to maintain her.[10] Further in Baban v. Parvatibai Dagadu Dange,[11] it was made clear by the Court that the expression "mother" in Section 125 includes "adoptive mother" also.

Provisions under The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

No specific Act in India addressed the problems of the senior citizens unless the enactment of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. This Act has imposed a statutory responsibility on children and heirs of the senior citizens to deliver them adequate maintenance. This responsibility can be extended to grandchildren also.[12] The objective of this Act is to safeguard and to offer operative provisions for the care and wellbeing of parents and senior citizens[13] and also to offer an "institutionalised mechanism for the protection of life and property of older persons."[14] The Act additionally aims to make provisions for state governments to set up old age homes in each district.

This Act obliges the relatives and children of the parents or a senior citizen to take care of them to the scope that they could live an ordinary life. Section 2(h) of the Act defines "senior citizens" as "any person being a citizen of India, who has attained the age of 60 years or above." The Act in Section 2(a) defines "children" as "sons, daughters, grandsons, and granddaughters but does not include a minor." Further, in Section 2(d) "parent" means "father or mother whether biological, adoptive or stepfather or stepmother, as the case may be, whether or not the father or the mother is a senior citizen." Under the Act, a senior citizen has the right to apply to the maintenance tribunal for a monthly allowance from his child or relative (depending upon whether he/she has a child or not) if he is not able to maintain himself on his earnings and property.[15] The application for maintenance can be filed by the senior citizen or the parent himself/herself or if he/she is not capable to apply himself/herself, he/she can also authorise anyone to apply on his/her behalf.[16] The maintenance tribunal can also start the procedure for providing maintenance.[17]

Additionally, this Act provides a novel provision in the form that it not only obligates children for the maintenance of their parents but also obligates relatives in the case of a childless senior citizen.[18] The Act defines "relative" as "any legal heir of the childless senior citizen who is not a minor and is in possession of or would inherit his property after his death."[19] Though, the Act does not impose a strict obligation on the relative as it further lays down that the relative from which the compensation is claimed should have sufficient means to maintain such a senior citizen.[20] The Act further lays down in the proviso to Section 4 that in the case that there are more than one relatives who is entitled to inherit the property of the senior citizen then the maintenance should be paid by the individual in the

proportion in which the individual will inherit the property of the senior citizen. The Act does not yet, answer about circumstances in which the senior citizen sells his property to a third party or when the relative who is going to inherit the property wishes to reject to receive it. Moreover, because wills are alterable, it is uncertain how one will decide who will inherit the property upon death and who should then be responsible to maintain the senior citizen.

One more contentious provision in the Act is Section 23, which deals with gift deeds. This section provides that when a senior citizen transfers his property to the transferee with a condition that the transferee will provide the senior citizen with basic amenities and physical needs and such transferee fails to do so then the transfer of property which took place shall be believed to be taken place by fraud or coercion or undue influence. The result of the same is that it can be declared void at the option of the senior citizen by the tribunal. This is inconsistent with what is given under the Transfer of Property Act.

It is very interesting to note that the Court in the case of Reju and Ors. v. The Maintenance Tribunal, Thiruvananthapuram and Ors.[21] has extended the scope of the Act by stating that the "welfare measures can be imposed against any person, based on the accepted relationship between the parties involving mutual obligations for a considerable time through such persons may not have a legal obligation to pay the maintenance. The maintenance, of course, can be ordered only against the persons mentioned as 'children' or 'relative' as defined under the Senior Citizens Act. Though, there is no special provision for providing 'welfare' to the senior citizen, the scheme of the Senior Citizens Act itself gives room for the Tribunal to protect the 'welfare' of a senior citizen. It is open for the Tribunal to impose a liability for providing 'welfare measures' on whom the Tribunal deems fit that it can be imposed, based on the accepted relationship between the parties. Otherwise, the very purpose of the Act would be defeated. Thus, it has to be concluded that the direction as ordered in the impugned order is only a direction to provide 'welfare measures' and not as maintenance and such measures can be imposed against any persons, whom the Tribunal deems fit in circumstances and for sufficient reasons, though, such persons would not come within the ambit of 'children' or 'relative' as defined under the Senior Citizens Act."

The Act also lays down that the application for a monthly allowance should be "disposed of within 90 days from the date of the service of notice of the application to such person."[22] Under Section 12 of the Act, a senior

citizen or parent is provided with an option to claim maintenance even under Section 125 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (as discussed above) but the claimant cannot claim the maintenance under both the Acts simultaneously. The main difference between both the options is that under Section 125 of the Cr.P.C. that there is no limit on the maximum amount that can be awarded as maintenance, while under Section 9 of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, the maximum amount that can be awarded is Rs. 10,000/month.

This Act puts the entire liability on the State Governments to establish tribunals and enact laws for the betterment of senior citizens.[23] Though the State Government is under an obligation to establish Tribunals to decide the cases related to senior citizens but, no provision in the Act mandates the government to do so. However, it is pleasing to note that the Court in the case of Yogesh Sadhwani v. Commissioner of Police[24] ordered the State Government "to file an affidavit stating the steps taken by the government (i) to establish tribunal under Section 7 of the Act; (ii) to designate Maintenance Officer under Section 18 of the Act; (iii) for the establishment of old age homes under Section 19 of the Act; and (iv) to give medical support to the senior citizens, as provided under Section 20 of the said Act; (v) for publicity, awareness, etc. for the welfare of senior citizen under Section 21 of the said Act."

Under the Act, only parents and senior citizens are given the right to appeal and no right to appeal is given to children and relatives.[25] As per the provisions of the Act, neither party can be represented by an advocate.[26] Though the parents and the senior citizens can be represented by a maintenance officer chosen by the State Government, there is no such provision for the children and the relatives.[27]

The provisions of the Act lay down numerous responsibilities of the State Government. It states that the State Government may establish at least one old age home in each district with a minimum capacity of 150 senior citizens.[28] Considering this provision and the object of the Act the Court in the case of Jharkhand Senior Citizen Advocates Service Sansthan and Another v. State of Jharkhand[29] directed the State of Jharkhand "to take immediate steps for identification of land admeasuring about one acre at least preferably in a residential locality for establishing one 'Old Age Home' for the parents and senior citizens at Ranchi." The State Government also has the authority to propose a scheme that states the standards and services to be given like that of medical care for the effective management of such old-age homes.[30] Further, it states that the State Government shall ensure that

separate queues are arranged for senior citizens, research and treatment of chronic elderly diseases is expanded, etc. These are the positive steps that shall be taken by the government but none of the provisions of the Act mandates the State to do so.

Conclusion

The objective of this article was to highlight the problems faced by senior citizens in the contemporary era and the existing provisions enacted by the legislature for securing social security for senior citizens. The authors had also tried to point out some of the lacunas existing in these provisions. By going through the above provisions it can be inferred that leaving aside some of the lacunas as highlighted in the article above, there are sufficient provisions for the improvement of social, financial, and physical conditions of the senior citizens. What is required is the proper implementation of these provisions. By accurate implementation of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 the "boundaries between morality and illegality would be covered in a simpler manner as the purpose of the common overlapping between the two is often to protect the most vulnerable section of the society."[31]

The backbone of a country is its rule of law and the judiciary assurances the effective implementation of the rule of law. It can also be seen from the judgments cited in this article that the judiciary has a crucial part to play in the proper implementation of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 and other provisions guaranteeing social security for senior citizens. Another important factor for the proper implementation of these laws is awareness of these laws in society. It can be seen that the legislators have acted very wisely in drafting Section 21 of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 Act for this purpose as it obliges the State Governments to take effective measures "to give wide publicity through public media including television, radio and by regular intervals periodic sensitisation and awareness on the issues relating to this Act to the public and police officers and the members of judicial services and to make effective coordination between the services provided by the concerned departments dealing with the law, Home Affairs, Health and Welfare to address the issue relating to the welfare of the senior citizens and their periodical review."[32]

End Notes

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Integrating Wisdom of Yoga into Casework Practice: Evidence from the Field

Digvijoy Phukan*, Bhumesh Kumar† and Archana Kaushik‡

Yoga is one of the six major schools of Bharatiya Darśana. It emphasises upon mental and physical discipline leading to the attainment of the state of Samādhi. Maharishi Patanjali in his thesis 'Yoga-Sûtra' has described in detail the Aṣhṭānga Yoga (Eight Limb Path). Adherence to this path can enable an individual can achieve liberation. Although the actual meaning of Yoga is not understood by most persons in the present times, the three limbs of Aṣhṭānga Yoga, namely, Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, and Dhyāna have gained worldwide acceptance. In view of the growing empirical evidence in support of the effectiveness of Yoga in ameliorating physical and mental problems faced by patients, social case workers in Bharat and also in the West have started including yogic techniques in the intervention plan designed for their clients. This article is an attempt to provide a framework for further integration of Yoga into social casework practice.

Introduction

We are in the midst of a global pandemic. While on one hand, this pandemic is causing unprecedented misery and pain, on the other hand, it is again making us question the consumption-driven model of development

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which originated in the West and was later adopted by countries across the world. Most problems we are encountering in the present times at micro, meso, and macro levels can be attributed to this model and the way of life associated with it. Faced with these problems, people from across the world have been searching for alternatives to this model of development and remedies to heal the wounds caused by this model to individuals, families, and communities.

Yoga and Āyurveda developed by our Rishi-s have the potential to heal this ailing world. Recognising the importance of Yoga in maintaining health, the United Nations (UN) has declared 21 June as the 'International Day of Yoga' by resolution 69/131. People from countries across the world are participating in the celebrations organised as part of the 'World Yoga Day'. The establishment of organisations like 'Arab Yoga Foundation' in the Arab World due to the laudable efforts of practitioners like Padma Shri Nouf Marwaai showcases the rising global popularity of Yoga. It can be stated that the potential of Yoga to heal the minds and bodies under tremendous stress due to the consumption-driven economic model has gained worldwide acceptance. This necessitates a deeper perusal of the meaning of Yoga.

Yoga: A Brief Introduction

Etymologically, the word 'Yoga' is derived from its Sanskrit root 'युज्' (Yuj) which means 'to yolk', 'to unite', or 'to join' (Basavaraddi, 2015). It is one of the six āstika (orthodox) schools of Bharatiya Darśana (philosophy) namely - Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta. Describing the aim of the schools of Bharatiya Darśana, Swami Vivekananda (1920) has observed: "All the orthodox systems of Indian philosophy have one goal in view, the liberation of the soul through perfection. The method is by Yoga. The word Yoga covers an immense ground, but both the Sankhya and the Vedantist Schools point to Yoga in some form or other." (p. xi)

While scholars may hold different opinions regarding the origins of Yoga, they are however in agreement over the fact that the Yoga-Sûtra is the foundational text of this school. Maharishi Patanjali undertook the task of compiling the Yoga-Sûtra-s (aphorisms on Yoga). According to Swami Vivekananda (1920), these aphorisms are the highest authority and textbook on Raja Yoga' (p.xi). Maharishi Patanjali defines Yoga in the first Chapter (SamādhiPadá) of Yoga-Sûtra as:

योग: चित्त-वृत्ति निरोध॥1.2॥

For attaining perfection, a graded discipline comprising of eight steps, called the 'Aṣhṭānga' of Yoga (Eight Limb Path) has been expounded in the Yoga-Sûtra:

यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टावङ्गानि ॥ 2.29 ॥

These eight steps according to this Sûtra are as follows: Yáma (restraint), Niyamá (observances), Āsana (posture), Prāṇāyāma (control of vital currents), Pratyāhāra (state of withdrawal), Dhāraṇā (concentration), Dhyāna (meditation), and Samādhi (total absorption).

Review of Literature

The scientific community across the world has taken a keen interest in Yoga and this is evident from the finding that the 'Search results' with the keyword 'Yoga' and 'Publication Date' filter of 'five years' in the PubMed database of the United States National Library of Medicine (NLM) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) contained 7,496 publications. A similar search in the ScienceDirect database showed 3,182 research articles.

A review of findings suggests that the practice of yoga can improve the physical condition of patients with acute myocardial infarction, epilepsy, chronic brain injury, arterial hypertension, musculoskeletal conditions such as muscular dystrophy, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, etc. (Prabhakaranet et al., 2020; Shawahna & Abdelhaq, 2020; Stephens, Puymbroec, Sample & Schmid, 2020; Cramer, Sellin, Schumann, & Dobos, 2018; Singh & Budhi, 2018; Greysen et al., 2017). It can prevent functional decline in older adults and lead to superior health status in physically inactive older adults (Kertapati, Sahar, & Nursasi, 2018; Tew, Howsam, Hardy, & Bissel, 2017).

It can also improve the psycho-social well-being of patients with epilepsy, high-risk antepartum women on hospitalised bedrest, persons with chronic non-communicable disease, HIV-positive individuals, people with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), physically inactive older adults, and breast cancer patients undergoing conventional treatment (Shawahna & Abdelhaq, 2020; Gallagher, Kring, & Whitley, 2020; Telles et al., 2019; Kuloor, Kumari, & Metri, 2019; Neukirch, Reid, & Shires, 2019; Tew, Howsam, Hardy, & Bissel, 2017; Rao et al., 2017).

Yoga was also found to benefit young adults in German secondary school settings, reduce life stress and increase the self-esteem of university students, decrease anxiety in school teachers, reduce substance use in people in reentry from prison or jail living with HIV and substance use problems,

significantly reduce acute depression severity in adults, prevent willingness to smoke cigarettes, as well as improving emotional self-control in females (Jeitler, 2020; Doi, 2019; Telles et al., 2018; Wimberley, Engstrom, Layde, & Mckay, 2018; Prathikanti, 2017; Bethany, LoRusso, Shin, & Khalsa, 2017).

These findings, based on the parameters of western science, have played a key role in the acceptance of Yoga as a 'comprehensive life discipline to harmonise body, mind, and spirit' (Prathikanti et al., 2017). Review of literature and analysis of secondary sources of information (websites and printed material provided by organisations offering Yoga courses) also reveal that while many people are acquainted with the concept of 'Aṣhṭānga' of Yoga and few practitioners are in pursuit of Samādhi. In reality, across the world, Yoga it seems has become synonymous with the practice of Āsana, Prāṇāyāma and to some extent Dhyāna. The review further highlights the fact that not only persons with physical or mental health issues, but healthy individuals are incorporating Āsana, Prāṇāyāma, and Dhyāna into their daily life.

'Chitta and Vṛitti Framework' for integrating Yoga and Social Casework

Medical practitioners and mental health professionals from across the world are including Āsana and Prāṇāyāma in their treatment plans for various ailments. Harvard Medical School in its 'Special Health Report' has stated that Yoga "can transform your health on many different levels" (Harvard University, 2016). It has also recommended 'Yoga' and 'Meditation' for coping with coronavirus anxiety' (Sharp, 2020). Given the increasing popularity of Yogic and mindfulness techniques, efforts have also been made by social work practitioners in the West to incorporate Yoga (Āsana and Prāṇāyāma to be more specific) into the profession. Sisk (2007) has discussed the possibility of Yoga (referred to as 'an ancient mind-body' method) becoming an 'integral part of social work practice'. Several practitioners have highlighted the benefits of integrating Yoga into social work practice (Bennett-Pasquale, 2013; Darroux, 2017). The need for the inclusion of Yoga in the social work education curriculum has also been highlighted (Mensinga, 2011; Grossman, 2019).

The roots of social casework can be traced to the unstructured methods adopted by the 'friendly visiting among the poor' associated with organisations like the Charity Organisation Society (COS) in the United States of America in the 19th century. Their attention was focused on individuals who were trapped in poverty and were psycho-socially distressed. It can be argued that their problems were closely linked to their

inability to adapt to the demands of the capitalist system of production. Pioneers of social work like Mary Richmond studied these methods and developed a 'single method' that was fortified with the existing theories of psychology. This new method was termed social casework and became almost synonymous with the emerging social work profession. Richmond (1922) provides the first tentative definition of social casework: "Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment." (pp. 98-99)

Social casework as a method of social work has undergone tremendous changes both in terms of theory and practice in its century-long journey. Hepworth, Roony, Rooney & Strom-Gottfried (2017) state that before 1970, when 'fields of practice' defined social work practice, social case work was the 'predominant social work method' (p.24). According to them: "Casework comprised activities in widely varying settings, aimed at assisting individuals, couples, or families to cope more effectively with problems that impaired their social functioning." (p.24)

As stated earlier, the proposed 'Chitta and Vṛitti Framework' for social casework practice is based on the Yoga-Sûtra-s of Maharishi Patanjali. This framework consists of three steps, namely, Assessment, Intervention, and Evaluation. It is necessary for the social casework practitioner to be well versed in the theory of Maharishi Patanjali's Yoga-Sûtra-s and also in the practice of Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā, the intervention to be implemented as part of this framework. We shall now discuss the three steps of this framework in detail.

(A) Assessment

This is the first and an important step of this framework. This step can be further divided into two stages. It goes without saying that the social caseworker can adapt this step depending on the client and prevailing situation. In the first stage, the caseworker develops a rapport with the client, assures the client that s/he will be able to overcome the situation successfully, and highlights the need for the client to have Aastha (faith) in the social casework process based on the 'Chitta and Vṛitti Framework' and the social work practitioner. In this stage, the social caseworker also determines the familiarity of the client with the Bharatiya tradition of Yoga. In case the client is not familiar, s/he explains the basic philosophical tenets underlying the 'Chitta and Vṛitti Framework'.

After this s/he seeks her/his consent to proceed with the social work process. The consent form should clearly mention that all interactions

between the social caseworker and the client with respect to this process shall be kept strictly confidential. After obtaining the consent, the social case worker gathers basic information from the client to assess the problem. This involves the preparation of the socio-economic profile and seeking information pertaining to the medical history of the client. Seeking medical information is important because the intervention plan which includes the practice of simple āsana and prāṇāyāma will be designed as per the physical condition of the client.

Once these preliminary interactions are over, the social caseworker moves on to the second stage of assessment, wherein s/he undertakes an in-depth exploration of the major concerns of the client, her/his feelings, the internal and external forces influencing her/his situation, and the coping strategies. The caseworker can also rely on a before and after assessment tool. The caseworker in this stage also ascertains the predominant form (Vṛitti) taken by the mind-stuff (Chitta) of the client. According to Swami Vivekanand, 'Vṛitti' is 'the waves of thought in the Chitta' (p.10). As per the Yoga-Sûtra-s of Maharishi Patanjali, there are five different forms of Vṛitti-s.

प्रमाणविपर्ययविकल्पनिद्रास्मृतयः ॥ 1.6 ॥

The five Vṛitti-s are Pramāṇa (Valid Cognition), Viparyaya (Misconception), Vikalpa (Imagination), Nidrā (Sleep), and Smṛtayaḥ (Memory). The caseworker needs to determine the Vritti of the client, as it is linked to the stress and anxiety being experienced by her/him in the present situation and forms the basis of the intervention to be administered in the next step. A brief discussion of the five Vṛitti-s is as follows:

- **Pramāṇa (Valid Cognition):** In this case, the client is experiencing stress due to her/his direct (Pratyaksha) experience of a situation, inference (Anumana) about the situation, or due to obtaining information about a situation from a trustworthy source (Agamah). Victims of domestic violence shall fall into this category. The anxious parent who has been informed by the warden of his child's hostel that his child is into substance abuse shall also fall into this category.
- **Viparyaya (Misconception):** According to Swami Vivekananda (1920), it is the 'false knowledge not established in real nature' (p.111). In this case, the root cause of the anxiety of the client is due to her/his misinterpretation of an object or situation. To provide an example of a client falling into this category, we can cite the case of the woman who is anxious because she suspects that her husband is having an affair on account of his secretive use of her mobile phone.

- **Vikalpa (Imagination):** In this case, the anxiety is linked to a thought in the mind of the client that is neither based on valid cognition nor misconception. The case of the person who was living in an imaginary fear of losing his job because his boss mentioned in a meeting that the company may face hard times due to the Covid-19 pandemic can be cited as an example of this category.
- **Nidrā (Sleep):** According to Maharishi Patanjali, sleep is also a Vṛittias it leaves an impression on the mind. The case of a person sleeping for more than the required span of time and avoiding the duties required to be performed at that time due to anxiety caused by losing his job or of another person after the loss of a near one can be examples of this category.
- **Smṛtayaḥ (Memory):** Mental retention of our experiences can also be the cause of anxiety. The client whose cause of anxiety is due to his recollection of the car accident in which he lost his family or the case of disaster survivor remembering the events that took place during that incident can be cited as examples for this category.

The caseworker concludes the assessment step after setting a mutually agreed goal to be achieved at the end of the social work process with the client. After this step, the caseworker initiates the process of intervention.

(B) Intervention

This is the second step of this framework. The intervention strategy discussed in this article is primarily aimed at reducing stress and anxiety in legally mandated, voluntary, or involuntary social work clients. It needs to be pointed out that the Chitta and Vṛitti Framework provides ample scope to the caseworker to design a multi-strategy intervention plan depending on her/his assessment of the client.

Before initiating the intervention, the caseworker needs to collect the duly signed consent form from the client. The social caseworker also undertakes the following actions:

- Explains the intervention strategy in detail
- Reiterates the mutually agreed goal of the intervention
- States the number of sessions required for the attainment of the goal
- Informs the client about the cost of the sessions

The details of the intervention strategy (Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā) which the social caseworker implements as part of this framework are depicted in Table 1. Twenty-seven sessions are conducted to implement this strategy.

One session is conducted every day at a fixed time and place. The social caseworker has to ensure that the ambience of the place is conducive to the practice of Yoga. The client should be informed that s/he should wear clothes conducive to the practice of Yoga and carry a towel. S/he should be also informed that there should be a gap of at least four hours between the last meal and the commencement of the session.

Table 1
Citta-Vṛtti Kriyā

Abhyāsa	Initiation of practice
Shraddha	Emphasis on the importance of conviction
Pranava	Three times chanting of 'AUM' followed by 108 jāpa
PrāṇavayuAbhyāsa	Pūraka- Rechaka (27 Āvartana)
Yáma	Explanation in the first three sessions followed by practice
Niyamá	Explanation in the first three sessions followed by practice
Lekhan Kriyā	Initiated from the fourth session
Āsana	Vajrasana, Mandukasana, Padamasana, Tadasana, Vakrasana, Bhujangasana, Shalbhasana, Makrasana, Shavasana
Prāṇāyāma	Kapalbhati Kriyā - (Maximum 108 Āvartana)
	Ujjayi (Maximum 03 Āvartana)
	Bhastrikā (Maximum 27 Āvartana)
	Anuloma Viloma (Maximum 09 Āvartana)
	Bhramari (Maximum 03 Āvartana)
Pratyāhāra	Explanation in the first three sessions followed by practice as shown in Table 3
Dhāraṇā & Dhyāna	Practice of Sthūla Dhyāna
Prārthanā	ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः। सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः। सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु। मा कश्चित् दुःख भाग्भवेत्॥ ॐ शान्तिः, शान्तिः, शान्तिः॥

Abhyāsa (Practice)

The caseworker initiates the client into 27 days long Abhyāsa. S/he confirms that the client has understood the strategy and explains the importance of Abhyāsa. According to the Yoga-Sûtra-s of Maharishi Patanjali:

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः॥1.12॥

Shraddha[1] (Conviction)

Along with Abhyāsa, the social caseworker explains the importance of Shraddha to the client.Yoga-Sûtra-s of Maharishi Patanjali states:

श्रद्धावीर्यस्मृतिसमाधिप्रज्ञापूर्वक इतरेषाम्॥1.20॥

This is essential because only when the client is convinced about this strategy and has faith in the centuries-old knowledge of Bharat that s/he can get the complete benefits from these sessions.

Pranava

It refers to the primal cosmic sound 'AUM'. According to the Yoga-Sûtra-s:

तस्यवाचकः प्रणवः ॥ 1.27 ॥

तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ॥ 1.28 ॥

Thus, Pranava is the sound that represents the Supreme Being and its repetition is one of the ways to steady the mind and attain tranquillity. Based on this understanding, the caseworker asks the client to sit in Sukhāsana or Padmāsana posture and perform three rounds of slow deep inhalation and exhalation with the sound AUM. This is followed by one hundred and eight jāpa (meditative repetition) of 'AUM'.

Prāṇavayu Abhyāsa

Swami Vivekanada (1920) states that 'Prāṇa' is not the breath but refers to the energy of the universe. According to the Yoga-Sûtra-s:

प्रच्छर्दनविधारणाभ्यां वा प्राणस्य ॥ 1.34 ॥

Thus, the mind can be steadied by adopting the technique of gentle exhalation and retention of the breath. For this activity, the caseworker asks the client to sit in Sukhāsana or Padmāsana posture and perform twenty-seven Āvartana-s of Pūraka (Inhalation) and Rechaka (Exhalation). This activity cleanses the body and pacifies the mind.

Vimarsh - I

After the completion of Prāṇavayu Abhyāsa, the social caseworker encourages the client to express the thoughts in her/his mind and allows the client to ventilate her/his thoughts.

Yáma (Moral Discipline)

Moral discipline is essential for attaining mental peace. As part of this Kriyā, the caseworker asks the client to adhere toahiṁsā (non-violence), Satya (truth), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacarya (continence), and Aparigraha (non-acceptance of gifts). The social caseworker explains the deeper meanings of these concepts as discussed in the Yoga-Sûtraand asks the client to make them an intrinsic part of their life.

Niyamá (Rules)

Adherence to rules is an important part of Yoga. The caseworker asks the client to follow sauca (cleanliness), saṃtoṣa (contentment), tapas

(austerity of body, speech, and mind), svādhyāya (study), and Īśvárapraṇidhāna (devotion to God). As part of this activity, the client is asked to cleanse the mind of kāma (lust), krodh (anger), lobha (greed), móha (attachment), īrṣyā (jealousy), and ahaṃkāra (excessive pride) through the practice of jāpa. The caseworker develops the feeling of contentment by drawing the attention of the client towards newer possibilities and a better future. The client is also asked to read at least one page from a dhārmika text and above all remain devoted to Īśvára.

Lekhan Kriyā (Writing)

In the first three sessions, the social caseworker orients the client towards Yáma and Niyamá. From the fourth session, the client is given a diary and asked to rate her/his ability to adhere to Yáma and Niyamá during the period ranging from the end of the last session to the commencement of the present session.

Āsana

The practice of Āsana is very important to harmonise and stabilise the body and the mind of the client. Vajrāsana, Maṇḍūkāsana, Padmāsana, Tāḍāsana, Vakrāsana, Bhujaṅgāsana, Śalabhāsana, Makrāsana, and Śavāsanaare practiced as part of Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā. The social caseworker has to ascertain the physical condition of the client before starting the practice of Āsana. In case the client has undergone a major or a minor operation, s/he is asked to practice only Śavāsana for one year and six months respectively. The practice of Āsana for clients with other physical ailments like heart patients etc. is done as per the advice of the medical professional.

Prāṇāyāma

Prāṇāyāma is much more than 'control of the breath'. It is the process of awakening the Prāṇā (vital energy). As part of Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā is Kapálabhati Kriyā, Ujjayi Prāṇāyāma, Bhastrikā Prāṇāyāma, Anuloma-Viloma Prāṇāyāma, and Bhramari Prāṇāyāma are practiced. The duration of each Prāṇāyāma depends on the physical ability of the client. In the case of clients with a medical history, Prāṇāyāma is also practiced as per the advice of the medical professional.

Pratyāhāra (Withdrawal of Senses)

Pratyāhāra leads to the development of mental strength and reduction in stress and anxiety. It is practiced through the steps shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Practice of Pratyāhāra

Duration	Activity 01	Activity 02	Activity 02
Between sessions 01 to 03	The client is prepared for any of this practice	--	--
Between sessions 04 to 09	06 hours vow of silence on any one day	Observe fast on any one day	Avoid usage of smart phones and social media
Between sessions 10 to 15	12 hours vow of silence on any one day	Avoid favourite food items	--
Between sessions 16 to 21	18 hours vow of silence on any one day	Avoid caffeine	--
Between sessions 22 to 27	24 hours vow of silence on any one day	Observe fast on any one day	Avoid usage of social media

Dhāraṇā & Dhyāna

When the client attains a state when s/he can sit in Dhyāna (meditative state) through the practice of Dhāraṇā, the stress and anxiety will reduce automatically. The social case worker introduces the client to Sthūla Dhyāna wherein s/he is asked to focus on an external physical object or its image in the mind.

Vimasrsh - II

After the practice of Dhyāna, the client is asked to reflect on her/his present situation.

Prārthanā

Each session will end with the Prārthanā -

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः। सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः। सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु। मा कश्चित् दुःख भाग्भवेत्॥ ॐ शान्तिः, शान्तिः, शान्तिः॥

Brahmānāda will be done for three minutes with hands in Jñānamudrā before the beginning of the Prārthanā and after its completion. This Prārthanā contains the essence of Bharatiya thought. It is important that the entire creation remains happy, healthy, and prosperous because all creatures are linked to each other and one can be happy only when the part of the creation around that person is also happy.

As discussed earlier, the Citta-Vṛtti Kriyā is aimed at reducing stress and anxiety in social work clients. In most clients, the social worker may be required to design an intervention plan comprising of multi-strategies based on her/his assessment of the case and identification of the cause which is triggering the Vṛtti in the client. In such cases, each session can commence with the practice of Citta-Vṛitti Kriyā. After the Prārthanā, the social caseworker can commence the practice of the other strategy.

(C) Evaluation

Evaluation is the third and final step of this framework. It comprises of evaluation of daily sessions and the final evaluation of the entire process after the completion of all the sessions. Daily after each session, the caseworker reviews the advancement made towards the attainment of the goal by asking the client to share her/his views pertaining to the progress made till that point in time. The client is encouraged to discuss if s/he has witnessed any change in her/his behaviour and the ability to cope with the situation. The caseworker also reminds the client to adhere to the daily practice of Yáma, Niyamá, and Pratyāhāra.

The final evaluation involves a discussion with the client regarding the outcome of the intervention and the effectiveness of the intervention in achieving the predetermined goal. In case the before and after assessment tool was used by the caseworker, then the post-intervention measurement is taken during this step. The client can also be asked to rate her/his overall experience and the individual components of the Kriyā. Feedback is also sought regarding the work of the caseworker.

After the completion of the evaluation, the caseworker terminates the process by reiterating that in order to derive maximum benefit, the client should incorporate Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā in her/his daily routine. Based on the willingness of the client, the caseworker can assist the client in preparing a daily routine. The caseworker can also schedule seven follow-up sessions with the client after 21 days. The client is also provided with relevant printed literature and e-contents elaborating the various concepts used in the intervention strategy. The relationship can end with the caseworker applauding the client for striving hard to achieve the goal of the intervention and encouraging him to continue the practice. It is also important for the caseworker to undertake a self-assessment after the completion of all the sessions conducted as part of this Kriyā.

Success Stories

Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā has been tried by several clients who have reported anxiety and stress. In this section, we present the cases of three clients who completed all the 27 sessions. The first case is that of a 32-year-old male who was worried about losing his job in a travel agency due to the ongoing pandemic. He had increased his intake of nicotine and alcohol to deal with the stress. He had lost his appetite and he also reported that he was unable to focus even on the routine office tasks. The second case is that of a 52-year old father whose child studying in Class IX was found in

possession of alcohol by the hostel warden. He had a lot of expectations from his son and was crestfallen. He felt as if his son will not be able to perform as per his expectations. His blood pressure has shot up due to the anxiety. The third case is that of the 35-year old female who suspected her husband of having an affair because of his secretive use of her mobile phone. She assumed that her marriage is going to end, and this thought gave her sleepless nights. After the assessment, all the three clients were ready to undertake the 27 days long Abhyāsa. The third client was also suggested 'couple therapy' to sort out the misunderstandings with her husband.

One of the major benefits of this Kriyā is that it is easily accepted by the clients. This could be because unlike western therapies it is rooted in our tradition. Even if not practiced, most people in Bharat are acquainted with Yoga. The clients also did not show any apprehension regarding this Kriyā as the practices were drawn from Yoga and its benefits were known to them. The biggest obstacle was the adherence to daily practice. Since benefits were reported only after at least two weeks of practice, it was difficult for the clients to retain their focus. All the three clients in the initial week felt like discontinuing, however, they were convinced that this Kriyā will eventually show positive results. Most importantly, they were certain that it will not have any adverse effects.

The practice of Āsana and Prāṇāyāma was done as per the physical condition of the client. Interestingly, all the clients stated that they were immensely benefited by the practice of Pratyāhāra. It was observed that in all the three cases, 'Vr̥itti' i.e., 'the waves of thought in the Chitta' were causing anxiety and stress. All three clients at the end of 27 days reported significant improvement in their sleep and lowering of anxiety. The average sleep had increased from three hours to five hours. The first client reported a reduction in the consumption of nicotine and alcohol. He was more focussed. The second client reported that his blood pressure had come down to the normal range. All three reported that they were no longer in fear of the future. They also reported a significant reduction in the negative thoughts regarding their future. All three of them could also talk about the problem bothering them and this improved their relationship.

Conclusion

Research has shown that Yoga can be very effective in improving the condition of persons with physical and mental health issues. Social caseworkers can adopt the Chitta and Vr̥itti Framework to integrate Yoga into social work practice. The practice of Chitta-Vr̥itti Kriyā focuses on Vr̥tti

which is the root cause of stress and anxiety in our clients. Controlling the Vṛitti-s through this Kriyā can lead to a state of reduced stress and anxiety. This enhances coping mechanisms, sharpens decision-making ability, and improves the physical health of the client. While the authors have noted the effectiveness of this Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā with few clients, it is important to undertake further empirical studies to establish the effectiveness of this Kriyā.

It has to be highlighted that any efforts to integrate yoga into social work practice have to be based on a deeper understanding of this ancient discipline. A social casework practitioner planning to use Chitta-Vṛitti Kriyā should understand that yoga is much more than stretching the body and controlling the breath with the purpose of obtaining health benefits. S/he should understand the eight-limb path discussed in Maharishi Patanjali's Yoga-Sûtra-s. In order to be effective in implementing this strategy, the social caseworker should also be a practitioner of this Kriyā. Further, to enable social workers to benefit from this ancient knowledge of Bharat, all SWEIs should design and teach a course on yoga to the students of social work.

End Note

1. This word cannot be translated. The English word 'conviction' comes closest to its meaning.

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Demographic Indicators, Occupational Pattern and Poverty among Tribals in Odisha

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Odisha occupies a unique position on India's ethnographic map with sixty-two distinct tribal groups for the country's largest number of tribal people. They have their own culture, traditions, religious practices, property inheritance, marriage system, healthcare practices, and magico-religious practices. The paper's objective is to present the trend of important demographic indicators of Scheduled Tribes in Odisha compared to India. It has also examined the changes in socio-economic parameters like literacy rate, occupation, and poverty of Odisha's Scheduled Tribes. The paper's findings show that the number of Scheduled Tribes has increased faster than others and that their share of the total population is also growing over the decades. Majority of tribal people are engaged in agricultural labour. The majority of farmers in the Scheduled Tribes are marginal farmers and small farmers. There is a positive shift in various socio-economic parameters, but this shift is not what is anticipated. Therefore, the government needs to make concerted efforts to improve the social and economic situation of the Scheduled Tribes by enhancing their level of literacy, providing alternative job opportunities, making enhanced farm technology available to those mainly engaged in agricultural occupations and improved health facilities.

Introduction

The tribal population is the indigenous inhabitants of our country. They are variously designated as Adimajati, Janajati, Adivasi, Vanajati,

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Girijana, etc. The origin of the term 'tribe' in India is linked to the rise of European colonialism, and it was during 1885, for the first time, the term tribe was used by the British Indian government to enumerate certain social groups in India (Ranjan, 2003). The official uses of this term continued till the 1931 census. The government of India Act of 1935 used the word 'backward tribe' to denote tribe, and later the constitution of India refer to them as 'scheduled tribe'. Various international forums such UN depicts tribes as indigenous (Roy Burman, 2006). Article 366(25) of India's Constitution refers to the Scheduled Tribes as the tribes scheduled under Article 342 of the Constitution. The Scheduled Tribes are reported in 30 States/UTs and the number of specific ethnic groups, etc. notified as Scheduled Tribes is 705 (MoTA, 2014). The country's tribal population represents 8.6 per cent in 2011, where 89.97 per cent of the population lives in rural areas and 10.03 per cent in urban areas, and a decadal rise of 23.66 per cent from 2001 to 2011, compared to 17.69 per cent in the population as a whole (Census 2011). Odisha has one of the largest sections of tribal communities in the whole country. There are 62 distinct tribal groups and 13 Particular Vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) spread over 30 districts and 314 blocks in the State. (Odisha Economic Survey, 2020). The demographic figures disclose that the tribal population is the most underprivileged, exploited, and abandoned lot in India. Development with equality and social justice' has remained on developing countries' development agenda for many decades, but, from a historical perspective, Indian society suffers from major inequalities in education, employment, and income, based on caste and ethnicity (Desai and Kulkarni, 2008). They are backward compared with the general population despite certain constitutional safeguards, and much worse than the people in Schedule Caste (SC) and Other Backward Class (OBC) (Xaxa, 2012). Most of the tribes that used to live in the remote forested areas remain scattered, untouched by civilization, and unaffected by the development processes. Over the years, this situation has improved significantly. Once the tribes have access to resources generated from the forest, they have no problem fulfilling their basic needs. On the other side, they want to protect the forest as it is their subsistence system. Yet large-scale industrialisation, urbanisation, and natural resource extraction due to deforestation have significantly changed the subsistence trend. This pattern has forced many tribes to migrate from their homes (Xaxa, 2012; Singh, 2012). Most of the tribal groups belong to the Australoid groups in ethnic history. They are the most vulnerable section of our society living in remote areas in the state's deep forest and hilly interiors. They live with their traditional values,

customs, and beliefs. There are wide-ranging diversities among them regarding languages spoken, population size, and mode of livelihood. The major tribes living in Odisha are the Santhals, Oraons, Gonds, and Kondhs. Kondhs are numerically the largest tribes in the State (Rout, 2015). The primary occupation of tribes depends on agriculture and wage labour and forest product collection as their principal means of livelihood. Most of tribal rely on the forest for their livelihood. They collect various Minor Forest Produce (MFPs) for their consumption and sales. With this background, the objective of the paper is trend analysis of the demographic profile and occupation pattern and the poverty level of scheduled tribes in Odisha

Materials and Methods

The paper is an analytical one. Secondary sources of data and information are used to explore to give answers to this paper's proposed research questions. Secondary data are used for the paper. Data on most of the indicators are collected from the Census of India reports, published by the Registrar General of India, Odisha Economic Survey, and Annual Reports of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India. Annual Reports of SC and ST Development Department, Government of Odisha, etc. are used to analyse the changing socio-economic parameter. In addition to the documents, different census reports, books, and journals are referred to and used.

Results and Discussion

Tribal Population in India and Odisha

The tribes occupy around 15 per cent of the country's total geographical area (MoTA, 2014). Looking at the various Census reports since the 1951 census their number shows a rising trend. In the 1951 census, the tribal population was 19116498, this was around 5.36 per cent of India's total population, their number rose to 29879249 (6.87 per cent) in the 1961 Census. In 1971, their number rose to 38015162 (6.94 per cent). By 1981, the Population of Scheduled Tribes rose to 5162638 (7.85 per cent) of the country's total population. According to the 1991 Census, the Scheduled Tribes' population was 67758380, which was about 8.08 per cent of the total population. According to the 2001 Census, the Scheduled Tribes' population was 84,326,240, which was around 8.20 per cent of the total population. As per the Census of India 2011, the total population of Scheduled Tribes was 10,42,81,034 persons, constituting 8.6 per cent of the country's population. The tribal population in India is scattered in different States. Madhya

Pradesh accounts for the highest percentage of Scheduled Tribes population to total STs population of the country (14.68 per cent) followed by Maharashtra (10.7 per cent), Odisha (9.19 per cent), Gujarat (8.55 per cent), Rajasthan (8.85 per cent), Jharkhand (8.29 per cent) and Chhattisgarh (7.5 per cent). Sixty-eight per cent of the country's Scheduled Tribes population live in these seven States. The proportion of the Scheduled Tribes to the Total population of the States/Union territories is highest in Mizoram (94.43 per cent) and Lakshadweep (94.79 per cent) followed by Nagaland (86.47 per cent), Meghalaya (86.17 per cent). Within the major states, Chhattisgarh (30.62 per cent) has the highest percentage of Scheduled Tribes population, followed by Jharkhand (26.2 per cent) and Odisha (22.84 per cent). These proportions are lowest in Uttar Pradesh (0.56 per cent), Bihar (1.28 per cent), Tamil Nadu (1.1 per cent) and Kerala (1.45 per cent) (Census 2011).

Odisha occupies a unique position in India's tribal map for having the largest variety of scheduled tribes. Among all the states of India, the largest numbers of tribal people are concentrated in Odisha. It consists of as many as 62. They constitute about 23 per cent of the total population of the state. These tribal people are mainly the inhabitant of the eastern-ghat hill ranges. More than half of the tribal population is concentrated in three districts such as Koraput, Sundergarh, and Mayurbhanj. The tribal people are the most deprived and vulnerable group in society. So, the analysis of demographic scenarios of tribal populations is a matter of concern. The total tribal population of Odisha is 8994967. It is about 22.84 per cent of the State's total population and 9.20 per cent of the country's tribal population (Census: 2011). Considering Odisha occupies the third position based on tribal population in the country as per the economic survey report, 2009. It is considered the habitat of 62 tribal communities, and from the 62 tribal groups, 13 sections are identified as primitive tribes. Discussing the district-wise tribal population, Malkanagiri occupies the first position with about 57.5 per cent of the tribal population, followed by Rayagada (55.8 per cent) and Nabarangapur (55 per cent). But, the Puri district has the lowest ST population which is about 0.3 per cent. The major tribes of Odisha are Kondhs, Gonds, Koyas, Gadabas, Oraon, Juangs, and Santhals, etc. and among them, the Khonds are the most populous tribe with a population of 1,395,643. They constitute about 17.1 per cent of the total ST population. Gond is considered the second largest tribe with a 7,82,104 population. It is about 9.6 per cent of the total ST population.

Table 1 shows the change in demographic structure in Odisha as well as in India. The table focuses on five censuses conducted by the

Government of India. It includes the census, namely 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2001 of Odisha and India. The census series provokes an exciting finding that the percentage of Scheduled Tribes to the total population shows an increasing trend from 6.85 per cent in 1961 to 8.81 in 2011. The percentage of STs in the total population shows a declining trend from 24.07 per cent in 1961 to 22.13 per cent in 2011 but a slight increase in 2011 i.e., 22.85 per cent. The increment rate is only 0.72 per cent from 2001 to 2011. This may be described as the result of a high mortality rate among the tribal population as they are more prone to diseases due to a lack of healthcare facilities. If it is, then it is a matter of concern in an era when each individual has a right to good health and education.

Table 1
Change in Demographic Situation in Odisha (In Millions)

Year	India			Odisha		
	ST	TP	per cent of ST to TP	ST	TP	per cent of ST to TP
1961	30.1	439.2	6.85	4.22	17.5	24.07
1971	38.0	548.2	6.93	5.07	21.94	23.11
1981	51.6	685.2	7.53	5.91	26.37	22.43
1991	67.8	846.3	8.10	7.03	31.66	22.21
2001	84.3	1028.61	8.19	8.14	36.80	22.13
2011	104.28	1210.56	8.81	9.59	41.97	22.84

Source: Annual Report 2013-2014, Ministry of Tribal Affair, Government of India and Statistical Abstract of Odisha (different years)

The Decade Growth rate in Odisha and India

The growth rate of the population does not show any systematic trend. The below table (Table 2) describes the decennial growth rate of the tribal population in Odisha. It also makes a comparison between the decadal growth rate of Odisha and India. If we analyse the population's growth rate during the pre and post-independence period, then the population growth rate during the decade 1941-51 was 6.38 per cent, which has raised to 19.82 per cent during 1951-61. The growth rate of the population was highest i.e., 25.05 per cent during the decade 1961-71. But if we look at the growth rate from 1971 to 81, it has declined to 20.17 per cent and a further decline has been depicted during 1981-91 to 20.06 per cent. The growth rate of the population was miserable during 1991-2001, 2001-2011 i.e., 15.94 per cent, and 14.05 per cent, respectively. A similar result has also been found in the case of India. The growth rates were 22.66 per cent and 17.69 per cent during 1991-2001 and 2001-2011 respectively.

Table 2
Decennial growth of Tribal Population in Odisha

Decades	Odisha		India	
	ST	TP	ST	TP
1961-1971	20.08	25.05	26.25	24.80
1971-1981	16.62	20.17	35.79	25.00
1981-1991	18.89	20.06	31.64	23.51
1991-2001	15.80	15.94	24.46	22.66
2001-2011	17.75	14.05	23.66	17.69

Source: Annual Report 2013-2014, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India

If we describe the growth rate of the tribal population in Odisha, the growth rate also does not show any systematic trend. The growth rate was the highest i.e., 20.08 per cent during 1961-1971. It has declined to 16.62 per cent from 1971 to 1981. The growth rates were 18.89 per cent, 15.80 per cent, and 17.75 per cent during 1981-1991, 1991-2001, and 2001-2011 respectively.

Sex Ratio in Odisha

The sex ratio is the most critical component in the demographic scenario in a state or a country. The following table (Table 3) shows the sex ratio among the tribal and non-tribal populations. According to the 2011 census, the sex ratio is 1029 among Odisha's schedule tribe and it was 990 at all India level. Similarly, the sex ratios among the non-tribal population in Odisha and India were 979 and 990, respectively. The above description shows that the sex ratio among both the tribal and non-tribal people was high in Odisha's case compared to the all India level. If we analyse data from the Census 2011, then we can find that the child sex ratio for the age group 0–6 is higher (979) compared to all STs at the national level (973). Culturally, there is more significant gender equity among the scheduled tribes compared with the general population. A higher sex ratio is observed in four districts of Odisha, such as Ganjam (1031), Kalahandi (1028), Koraput (1023), and Phulabani (1023).

Table 3
Comparative Sex Ratio during Different Decades

Year	Odisha		India	
	Total Population	Tribal Population	General Population	Tribal Population
1961	1001	1016	941	987
1971	988	1007	930	982
1981	981	1012	934	983
1991	971	1002	927	972
2001	972	1003	933	977
2011	979	1029	943	990

Source: Census of India

Literature Rate of ST and Total Population in Odisha

Considering Odisha has a low level of literacy rate. According to the 2011 census, overall, India's literacy rate is about 73 per cent, whereas it is 72.9 per cent in Odisha, below the national level. Having a look into the tribal population's educational status, and the literacy rate of scheduled tribes in a state like Odisha is a matter of concern. The literacy rate among scheduled tribes was about 37.37 per cent in 2001, increased to 52.24 per cent in 2011. The male literacy rate among the scheduled tribe shows an increasing trend from 2001 to 2011. It has grown from 51.50 per cent to 63.70 per cent. A similar condition is also found in the case of the female literacy rate. It has increased from 23.36 per cent to 41.20 per cent. Table 8 also shows that the female literacy rate among the tribal population is lower by approximately 22.8 per cent as compared to the female literacy rate among the general category of population. Literacy rates have shown an increasing trend over the years. This could have been regarded as the result of various programmes implemented by the Ministry as well as a voluntary and non-governmental organisation. But there still exists a huge variation in literacy rate among the general and ST populations. Suppose we make a district-wise comparison using the Census 2011 evidence. In that case, Sundargarh (52.76 per cent) and Sambalpur (52.00 per cent) districts show a greater proportion of tribal literacy rates, while Koraput district has the lowest percentage (19.98 per cent) of literacy rate among the tribal group during 2001. Table 4 shows that the male literacy rate is higher than the female literacy rate, both in general and tribal populations.

Table 4
Literacy Rate of General and ST Population in Odisha

Year	Scheduled Tribe			General		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1971	16.38	2.58	9.46	38.30	13.92	26.18
1981	28.32	5.81	17.01	47.09	21.12	35.37
1991	34.44	10.21	22.31	63.1	37.7	49.09
2001	51.50	23.36	37.37	75.95	50.5	63.08
2011	63.70	41.20	52.24	98.16	64.00	72.9

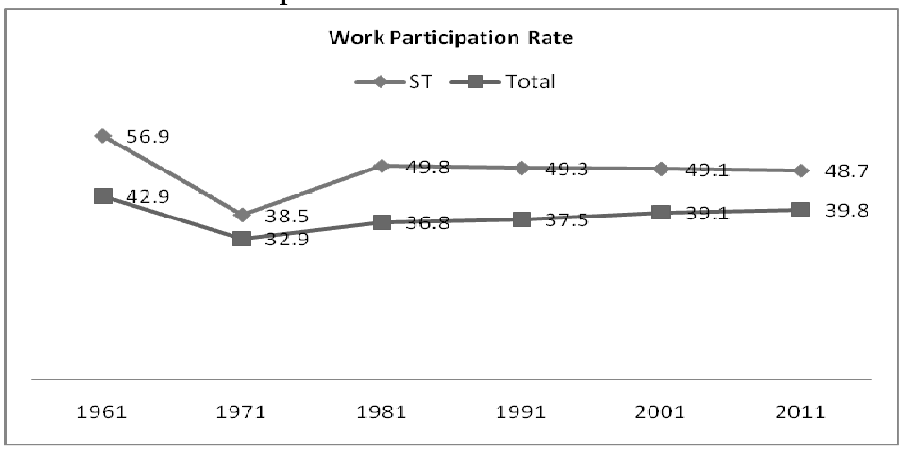
Source: Census of India, Odisha Economic Survey 2013-14

Occupation Pattern of Tribal India and Odisha

Any social group's occupational status reflects the relative dependency level of that group on various economic activities in an economy. Occupational status is also dependent on the occupational structure of the social group. So, it is inevitable to have an idea about the

occupational structure of an economy. An ongoing transition from the fundamental primary operation to all kinds of secondary and, to an even wider extent, tertiary development has taken place in every progressive economy (Fisher, 1964). We may generally divide occupations into three groups, firstly agriculture, animal farming, forestry, fishing, etc., collectively known as 'primary' activities. It is primarily because its goods are vital to human beings' lives and are carried out by the use of natural resources. Secondly, manufacturing industries, both small and large scale are known as 'secondary' activities. Third, transportation, communications, banking, finance, and services are 'tertiary' activities that increase efficiency in primary and secondary activities. Two words define the occupational trend, such as labour force and workforce participation rates. The labor force is described as the workers in the age group of 15-59. The work participation rate is characterised as the percentage of total workers in the total population.

Figure 1
Work Participation Rate of Scheduled Tribes in India



Source: Census of India

Figure 1 shows the trend and pattern of workforce participation rate among the STs and the total population from 1961 to 2011 in India. According to the Census of 1981, the work participation rate in India was 36.7 per cent. The 1991 Census has increased to 37.7 per cent, and during the 2001 Census, it again has risen to 39.1 per cent. It was 39.8 in the 2011 Census. The work participation rate of ST has increased by 8.2 per cent as against 3.1 per cent from 1961 to 2011. It is also important to note that the

WPR decreased significantly from 1961 to 1971 among all sections, as reflected in figure 2. In the case of all of India, it has declined from 42.9 per cent to 32.9 per cent (10 per cent decline) and in the case of STs, it has declined from 56.9 per cent to 38.5 per cent (18.4 per cent). The occupational structure portrays a lack of skills acquired through proper and formal education. Since most tribal people are engaged in these low-income occupations, they constitute a significant part of the BPL population compared to the general population.

Table 5
Work Participation Rate of Scheduled Tribe in Odisha (per cent)

Year	Total	Male	Female
1991	49.00	54.8	43.2
2001	49.36	58.94	39.81
2011	41.80	67.85	32.14

Source: Census of India

Table 5 shows the work participation rate among the scheduled tribe during 1991, 2001, and 2011 respectively in Odisha. The total work participation rate was 49, 49.36, and 41.80 during 1991, 2001, and 2011. The table also shows that the work participation rate among the tribal male is more than that of females. It was 54.8 per cent in 1991, 58.94 per cent in 2001, and 67.85 per cent in 2011. This is showing an increasing trend over the period. But contrary to this, the work participation rate among females is showing a declining trend. It was 43.2 per cent in 1991, 39.81 per cent in 2001, and 32.14 per cent in 2011.

Table 6
Percentage Distribution of Workers by Sex in India

Male/Female Workforce	STs		All		Gap	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Total Workers						
Male	53.2	55.6	51.7	68.9	1.5	-13.3
Female	44.8	44.4	25.6	31.1	19.2	13.3
Main Workers						
Male	43.5	63.9	45.1	75.4	-1.6	-11.5
Female	23.9	36.1	14.7	24.6	9.2	11.5
Marginal Workers						
Male	9.7	40.2	6.6	49.2	3.1	-9
Female	20.9	59.8	11	50.1	9.9	9.7

Source: Census of India 2011

Table 6 briefly illustrates the occupational distribution among the male and female workforce among ST and all categories in India. Out of 53.2

per cent of the total male workforce during 2001, 43.5 per cent and 9.7 per cent of the male workforce are included in the main and marginal workgroup. But in the 2011 census, the total female workforce (55.6 per cent), along with primary (63.9 per cent) and marginal (40.2 per cent) workforce has increased. On the contrary, in the 1991 census, the total female workforce participation was 44.8 per cent. The main female workers constitute 23.9 per cent, and female marginal workers constitute 20.9 per cent. Though the female workforce percentage has declined, both the main (36.1) and marginal (59.8 per cent) have shown a decreased trend.

Table 7
Occupational Classification of main workers (per cent) in India

Types of Occupation	Total						ST					
	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Cultivators	52.78	43.38	41.53	39.74	31.7	26.46	68.18	57.56	54.43	54.5	44.7	40.87
Agricultural Labourers	16.71	26.32	25.16	19.66	26.5	23.77	19.71	33.04	32.67	32.69	36.9	36.18
Household Industry	6.38	3.55	3.99	2.56	4.2	3.4	2.47	1.03	1.42	1.05	2.1	1.33
Other Workers	24.13	26.75	29.32	38.04	37.6	46.37	9.64	8.37	11.48	11.76	16.3	21.61

Source: Census of India

The occupational classification of main workers from 1961 to 2011 among STs and the total population in India is given in table 7. The occupational structure has been categorised into four distinct types viz. cultivators, agricultural labourers, household industry, other workers, etc. The data shows a similar trend in both categories for four decades from 1961 to 2011. At all India levels, the number of cultivators (52.78 to 26.46) and workers in the household industry (6.38 to 3.4) has shown a declining trend during these four decades. A similar trend has also been shown in the ST categories. The number of cultivators (68.18 to 40.87) and the number of workers in the household industry (2.47 to 1.33) have shown a declining trend. Although the number of agricultural labourers has increased in all categories, the percentage increase is more among the STs. Other workers' occupation includes the industry and services sector, which also show an increasing trend. The number of other workers has witnessed an increase in all main workers' sections though the rise in general categories has been much more than amongst ST. The poor involvement of tribal workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy denotes the backwardness of the tribal economy on the one hand and the insignificant role of modem methods of occupation in their economic life on the other.

Table 8 shows more significant variability in the occupational structure among the scheduled tribe in Odisha. In 1981, 52.15 per cent of the tribal population was acting as cultivators, but in 2011, it declined to 34.5 per cent. Similarly, other workers declined from 36.31 per cent to 44.5 per cent. But the percentage of agricultural laborers increased from 36.31 in 1981 per cent to 44.5 per cent in 2011. Similarly, household industry workers had increased from 1.43 per cent to 19.2 per cent in 2011. This shows that the tribal people are practicing a backward occupational structure, which hinders the community's developmental path.

Table 8
Occupational Classification of Main Workers ST in Odisha

Occupation Structure	1981	1991	2001	2011
Cultivators	52.15	50.7	33.35	34.5
Agricultural Labourers	36.31	38.3	46.85	44.5
Household Industry	1.43	1.6	4.77	19.2
Other Workers	10.11	9.4	15.03	1.8

Source: Census of India, 2011

Poverty Scenario in Scheduled Tribes in India and Odisha

Poverty is considered one of the chronic diseases in the Indian economy. While dealing with the characteristics of the Indian economy, it always occupies a place. Poverty is a situation where an individual does not possess the ability to fulfill his or her willingness. Poverty arises because of two reasons: lack of knowledge or skill and lack of desire to work. Traditionally, poverty is defined as a situation with general scarcity or the state of one who lacks a certain amount of material possession or money. It is not a single-valued function but rather multifaceted in nature. It includes social, economic, and political elements. Poverty can be described with the help of two terms, such as absolute poverty and relative poverty. Odisha is regarded as the second poorest state of India. If we discuss 1983, then the Head Count Ratio (HCR) of Odisha was 65.31 per cent, which has declined to 47.07 per cent in 2004-05. The rate of decline is insignificant. If it is the whole state's condition, then it is miserable to discuss the tribal people. Though Odisha's per-capita income has shown a significant improvement, unfortunately, the rate of poverty reduction is unable to match up. As per 1992 data, about 78.70 per cent of Odisha's total population lived below the poverty line. Tendulkar Committee revealed that the poverty level in Odisha is 32.59 per cent, which is higher than the national level (21.92 per cent) in 2011.

Table 9 represents the population below the poverty line in Odisha, both in the rural and urban areas. During 1973-74, rural poverty (67.28 per cent), urban poverty (55.62 per cent), and total poverty (66.18 per cent) in Odisha are relatively higher than the poverty level in India, i.e., 56.44 per cent in rural, 49.01 per cent in urban, and 54.88 per cent in total. Though the poverty rate has declined over the years, both in Odisha and India, the decline rate is not satisfactory. In 2011-12, the poverty rate in rural (35.69 per cent), urban (17.29 per cent), and total (32.59 per cent) in Odisha is also higher than the all India level, i.e., rural (25.70 per cent), urban (13.70 per cent), and total (21.92 per cent). Though the poverty rate is high enough in Odisha, from 2004-05 to 2011-12, poverty reduction is quite significant.

Table 9
Percentage of Population Below Poverty Line in Odisha

Year	Odisha			India		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
1973-74	67.28	55.62	66.18	56.44	49.01	54.88
1977-78	72.38	50.92	70.07	53.07	45.24	51.32
1983-84	67.53	49.15	65.29	45.65	40.79	44.48
1987-88	57.64	41.53	55.58	39.09	38.20	38.36
1993-94	49.72	41.64	48.56	37.27	32.36	35.97
1999-2000	48.01	42.83	47.15	27.09	23.62	26.10
2004-2005	39.80	40.30	39.90	21.80	21.70	21.80
2009-2010	39.20	25.90	37.00	33.80	20.90	29.80
2011-2012	35.69	17.29	32.59	25.70	13.70	21.92

Source: Economic Survey, 2008-2009, 2011-12

While analysing poverty, it is not enough to compare Odisha and India; instead, it is of paramount importance to precede the social groups' analysis.

Poverty by Social Groups

Table 10 shows the HCR among the social classes in the rural area from 2004-05 to 2011-12. The evidence indicates that the concentration of poverty among the STs and SCs is more than the other social groups such as OBC and Others. In 2004-05, HCR among the STs was 84.40 per cent, which was the highest among the social groups followed by SCs (67.90 per cent), OBCs (52.70 per cent), and others (37.10 per cent) respectively. Similarly, it was 63.52 per cent among the STs followed by SCs (41.39 per cent), OBCs (24.16 per cent), and others (14.20 per cent) respectively.

Table 10
Poverty Ratios (per cent) by All Social Classes Odisha-Rural

State	Head Count Ratio (per cent) by Social Classes				
Social Groups	ST	SC	OBC	Others	Total
2004-05	84.40	67.90	52.70	37.10	60.80
2009-10	66.00	47.10	25.60	24.50	39.20
2011-12	63.52	41.39	24.16	14.20	35.69

Source: Odisha Economic Survey, 2013-14

Inter Group Comparison

The following table (Table 11) shows the region-wise HCR among STs, SCs, and other social groups for the years 1999-2000. It describes the incidence of poverty among the social groups in various regions of Odisha. The HCR among the STs is highest i.e. 73.08 per cent. It is about 52.30 per cent among SCs and approximately 33.29 per cent among other communities of Odisha. The tribal people have the highest incidence of poverty in all three regions. About 92 per cent of the tribal people in the Southern part of Odisha are below the poverty line, while it is about 62 per cent in the Northern and 67 per cent in the Coastal region.

Table 11
Region-wise Head Count Ratio of Social Groups (Rural) in Odisha: 1999-2000

Regions	Social Groups			
	ST	SC	Other	All
Coastal	66.63	42.18	24.32	31.74
Southern	92.42	88.90	77.65	87.05
Northern	61.69	57.22	34.67	49.81
All (Odisha)	73.08	52.30	33.29	48.04

Source: Based on estimates by Haan and Dubey (2003)

Access to Basic Amenities

For a better standard of living, basic amenities are playing a significant one. Traditionally, basic amenities consisted of a few important things like food, shelter, cloth, and medicine. But nowadays, the scope has broadened. The following table (Table 12) is describing the basic amenities in India and Odisha among all the social groups and scheduled tribes. Discussing the first amenities, i.e., housing condition, is further divided into three categories: good houses, liveable houses, and dilapidated houses. The housing figures show that the tribal people are still not enjoying the housing facilities like other groups. The percentage of tribal availing good houses is meager in comparison to other groups. It is 40.6 per cent in all India levels, while only 19.07 per cent in the case of Odisha. The following information

shows that more tribal people are availing liveable houses than good houses. It is 53.3 per cent of the ST population against 41.54 per cent of other categories at all India level. Similarly, in the case of Odisha, the percentage is also higher in STs (72.33 per cent) than in other categories (62.13 per cent). 6.25 per cent of the ST population in India and 8.6 per cent in Odisha are living in dilapidated houses. The drinking water facility is considered as one of the essential components of basic amenities. God drinking water facilities are categorised by taking into account the premises of water availability. The data show that very few tribal people in India and Odisha are drinking water within the premises. About 46.6 per cent of other categories and 19.7 per cent of STs are drinking water within the premises. But in the case of Odisha, only 6.2 per cent of STs are availing of a similar facility. But the figure shows that about 46.7 per cent of STs in India and 49.2 per cent of STs in Odisha are getting drinking water near the premises. Considering the tribal people's sanitation facilities, most of the tribal people are used to open defecation rather than having sanitation facilities within premises. It is about 74.7 per cent in all India and 91.6 per cent in Odisha. Similarly, the percentage of scheduled tribe not having the sanitation facilities is highest among Odisha's STs (92.9 per cent). It is about 77.4 per cent in the case of India.

Table 12
Basic Amenities in India and Odisha - All Social Groups and STs (%)

	India		Odisha	
	All	ST	All	ST
1. Housing Condition				
Total houses	24,66,92,667	2,33,29,105	96,61,085	22,40,142
Good houses	53.1	40.6	29.53	19.07
Livable Houses	41.54	53.13	62.13	72.33
Dilapidated Houses	5.35	6.25	8.33	8.6
2. Household's main source of drinking water				
Within the premises	46.6	19.7	22.4	6.2
Near the premises	35.8	46.7	42.2	49.2
Away	17.6	33.6	35.4	44.6
3. Sanitation:- A Latrine Facility				
Households having within premises	46.9	22.6	22	7.1
Households not having within premises	53.1	77.4	78	92.9
Night soil removed by human	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.1
Open defecation	49.8	74.7	76.6	91.6
Bathing facility within premises	42	17.3	14.1	3.4

Source: Census of India 2011

Conclusion

Odisha has 22.85 per cent population as schedule tribes. The scheduled tribal population's growth rate is 17.75 per cent, whereas the state's total population growth is 14.05 per cent from the decade 2001 to 2011. The tribal population is mainly rural dwellers, 94.5 per cent live in villages. The STs' overall literacy rate is only 43.96 per cent compared to the state average of 67.71 per cent. The male population is more literate than female in both tribal and non-tribal population. The majority of tribals are working as agricultural labour and cultivators and struggle to get work even for six months in a year. The poverty rate is very high. The vast spread of poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and the absence of safe drinking water leads to dismal health in tribal communities. To decrease the higher concentration of poverty in tribal areas and the creation of employment, adequate funds should be diverted to the tribal development programmes by rectifying/ modifying the loopholes and problems associated with the presently functioning tribal development programmes. Awareness to use of current tribal group-oriented schemes and services is very much important. Training programmes may be introduced for the migrant, displaced, and unemployed scheduled tribes in compliance with labour market requirements. In line with tribal groups' needs, there is an urgent need to undertake unique, tribe-specific, action-oriented health research. Financial assistance and capacity-building training should be provided to farmers and artisans to preserve their skills and knowledge. Access to credit and banking services to the benefit of the tribes should be simplified. We need a grassroots strengthening of public health infrastructure or more personnel through a strategic strengthening of public health services to allow current healthcare structures and delivery practices. Technical and vocational training using the local resources must be promoted. The government, NGOs, CBOs, private sector, and SHGs must enhance support mechanisms and collaborations.

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The Politics of Land Redistribution in Madhya Pradesh

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This paper discusses three major shifts in Indian politics during the 1990s; first, the emergence of Dalits and Other Backword Classes (OBCs) politics in the 1990s; second, the integration of the Indian economy into the world economy or liberalisation; and the third emergence of radical conservative politics. Through the case study of Madhya Pradesh, this paper tries to understand these three trends and examine the rising demand for education and employment by the backward classes and the demand for land redistribution by Dalits and Adivasis. Indian National Congress (INC or Congress) and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) witnessed the representation from the Dalit and Adivasis and OBCs leadership in these two ruling parties. Congress tried to take Dalit and Adivasis into its fold by distributing land and BJP by accommodating OBCs leadership within the party could regain its position in the state.

Introduction

The land has been one of the key sources of power and prestige in any society. The distribution of land has been a crucial question. It was one of the major stacks of the interest of deprived classes which was never been taken up actively in the post-colonial state. The traditional power centre remained as they were, apart from the time when election-based mobilisations were required. The lower sections of the society who were

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deprived of land and education remain untouched by the progress made by the post-colonial state. The issue of land reform was taken up wherever there was a social movement by the communities who actively took up to its demand.

The social movement and political movement remained negligible as most of the princely states of Madhya Pradesh accommodated them into its fold. The ruling social classes dominated the politics of the state afterward. One of the strongest reasons behind the negligence of the land question in Madhya Pradesh politics was mainly under the control of princely states and landowning communities. And, the distribution of land met with the strong opposition. As a backward society, it was mainly dependent on the land by retaining traditional social relationships. The state of Madhya Pradesh has also been one of the states which have been deprived of any significant social and political movement challenging its bi-party system. Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP afterward) tried to make inroads in the state but could not make sufficient space in its movement, certainly democratised the Indian National Congress (INC or Congress afterward) by putting the pressure to accommodate the lower sections of the society within its fold.

The 1990s witnessed a crucial turn in the journey of the Indian state with the introduction of Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation (LPG). These neoliberal reforms have played a crucial role in shaping the idea of a welfare state in India. This development led to the duality in the Indian economy as some areas grew rapidly and other sectors declined. Agriculture and land have seen significant setbacks after the liberalisation. Since there was an assertion from the lower sections of the communities for education and job through the reservation, the ruling classes turned the direction of the development of the state. Other Backward Classes (OBCs afterward) who were associated with land, demanded reservation in education and employment which led to a new trend in the Indian economy. Therefore, privatisation was the only means to secure education and employment for the traditional ruling classes.

Land Question and Its Politics

The land has been a powerful means of status and power in the village society. In the context of the Global South, where industrialisation could not happen at the level of the Global North, agriculture has been the primary source of livelihood for the majority of people living in rural areas. And, land continues to be a crucial property in terms of privileges and deprivation. In India, most of the Dalits and Adivasis live in rural India, but

they are primarily deprived of landholding. They are marginal farmers and tenant labours and sharecroppers. The majority of the landlessness is seen in these two. Most of the Dalits (90 per cent), and Adivasis (77 per cent) are landless labourers, without any other assets and employment opportunities. Almost 87 per cent of landholders of Dalits and 65 per cent of Adivasis in India fall into the category of marginal and small farmers (Agriculture Census 2010-11).

Madhya Pradesh was constituted mainly of the former princely states and hence the former rulers remained politically powerful. Madhya Pradesh is a state where a right-wing political party has a traditional base. The state could not see the rise of the social and political movement from the marginal sections so the society. Much opposition came from the landed elites due to the land reform policies in the state (Mohanty, 2001).

Despite the statutory prevalence of the ryotwari settlement in Madhya Pradesh, the control of the princes and their retainers-mostly coming from the upper caste-over agrarian society was as strong as that of the Zamindars in the permanent settlement areas (Gupta, 2005). Mihir Shah and Vijay Shankar (2005) advocate for the redefinition and urgent requirement of the land reform agenda in Madhya Pradesh which would necessitate supplementing the conventional agenda of land distribution with two other types of reform; firstly, land-use reform and secondly land-record reform, along with this they also argue for a third requirement that the very meaning of the term 'Land' in Madhya Pradesh must be expanded to include the other natural common property resources. Equitable access to which is necessary to ensure livelihood security for the poorest section of the society.

Politics in Madhya Pradesh saw the rise of two-party systems. It was a tectonically shift in the politics where lower sections of the society were uniting them under their banner. The Congress tried to be the leader of the depressed section of the society under the leadership of Rajputs while BJP shifted its base from mere upper caste to the OBCs. The movement which could have been independently strangulated by the mere appeasement policies or identity of these two parties. BSP was emerging as a viable political alternative in this state but could not consolidate its position in the late 1990s itself.

Land use reform is urgently required because in case the maximum potential of the land ceiling provisions was to be realised, the final size of the landholding distributed to the landless labour would not be substantially viable, an estimate shows that every household would get only half hectare. Furthermore, it will accelerate the marginal and small landholding. Land use

reform is also a key to the 'watershed approach' in the diverse agro-ecological spaces of the state, which could be described as a total watershed planning approach. This approach would recognise the endowment and challenges of an environmentally stable, balanced and substantive growth vision for the state.

The objective of TWP (government planning for land) has been to stabilise the common resource base to locate its substantiation and utilisation. Archana Prasad (2014) argues that tribal land is more often on non-arable tracts and mostly the restoration of land to the Adivasi population has failed due to the dominant understanding that ownership of land or pattas needs to be accompanied by its improvement of the productivity of the land. There is a need to promote non-farm activities such as the plantation of mixed forests. With the cultivation of the ecological and medical plants, easy access for Adivasis to its knowledge, credit, and technological inputs. It is also to add value to the product which will benefit from such land use so that Adivasi income could go up and the prospects for expanding production will also improve. Collective farming should be encouraged among Adivasi communities and consolidation of land also needs to be done. The significance of the land reform will have to be realised only in this context to the Adivasi society.

Most commonly the farmers have been facing problems with outdated and badly managed land records which they have been tilling for years but they do not have their proper pattas. Several developments have contributed to the poor maintenance of various records at the time of independence such as the abolition of intermediaries, frequent transfer of land, adoption of the many revenue systems, and anomalies in the local land records. Also, former princely notables did not hand over their clearance record at the time of the merger. The negligence of accurate and adequate village records and maps, plus the systematic survey and mapping of vast areas of common land. At the time of transferring large area of land from the forest department have not been covered in the village maps.

Along with these anomalies, village commons have been defined as a 'community' natural resource where any member has usage and access facility with certain obligations without somebody having an exclusive right of property over it. The idea of commons or common resource property has been defined in the colonial period, originally as an unoccupied and 'uncultivated' wasteland.

By the 1890s the colonial government realised its revolutionary potential as wasteland would provide revenue and expand state control over

the people using these resources. However, the grazing land under British rule was deemed state property and it was common denoted not as community pasture and forests, as defined today. Though, demarcated pastures and forests with the village community were allotted for a common purpose. To govern the common and each village, the colonial state had the right to regulate its *nistar* (common use) for grazing on the payment of specific dues. The post-colonial state adopted this legal notion under the Madhya Pradesh Land Revenue Code, 1959. Therefore, all land belongs to the state but private property granted by law is recognised by the state and they had no right to any other wasteland that remained with the state.

The Land Redistribution Programme in 1998

The programme for land distribution began in 1998 when the Congress government decided to distribute Grazing (*Charnoi*) land to the Dalit and Adivasis in Madhya Pradesh. Although the land distribution programme was initiated at that time by the local administration which did not act on it immediately except in a few districts. A special committee consisting of a member from both the government and Ekta Parishad (a non-governmental organisation) was set up in 2000 that was to be the central coordinating, directing, and supervising agency for the land reform programme. Subsequently, a major portion of land allotted was distributed throughout the state in a massive Adhikar Abhiyaan (rights campaign) which began into March 2002 and continued up to January 2003 when a stay was ordered from the high court halted this programme.

The Madhya Pradesh Government took Grazing (*Charnoi*) land for distribution because it found that over the years powerful and big landowners were occupying the land in the villages. This Grazing (*Charnoi*) land was selected because unlike surplus land had to be identified for distribution which required legislation. The *Charnoi* land was identified in the record within each village and due to government land, this was under its direct control. The government did not require to pass any special legislation to distribute *Charnoi* land because this was under its executive control. The process was also much faster, as identifying and declaring surplus land would be difficult and time-taking. Whereas grazing land was marked in the revenue record since colonial times.

The government identified the beneficiaries under Section 237 of the Madhya Pradesh Land Code where certain land areas were declared as *Charnoi* land and kept aside in each village by the state. The executive provisions were made such that if the village had 1000 acres of the cultivable

area, a minimum of 10 per cent of the areas would be reserved for *Charnoi* purpose, later it was reduced to almost seven per cent. Most of the land was encroached upon by the powerful people, the government had decided to lower the size of *Charnoi* land and allotted it to the Dalit-Adivasi communities. The government amended an existing law, according to which a minimum of five per cent was to be set aside for *Nistar/Charnoi* (common use) purposes. Although, on August 16, 2000, that area was further reduced from five to two per cent. The target was to distribute land to maximum people and also no person would be given less than half a hectare.

The land titles (pattas) were to be in the name of both husband and wife and they have been described as the allotted land. The local land officer (patwari) was responsible for making the list of the people to whom land would be allotted in each village based on the rule made by the government. The list was to be checked by the Revenue Inspector (RI) and a sample check in the village under his jurisdiction was undertaken by the Tehsildar whose ultimate responsibility was to say whether the programme was correctly implemented or not. The district collector was responsible for removing any encroachment before allotting the land to Dalit-Adivasi and ensuring actual possession of the land by these groups.

This programme for land distribution was not much successful as there were many reasons like encroachment by upper-caste landowners who were not removed in so many villages before allotment making it impossible for the weaker section to take the possession. Even if they were removed in such cases their ejection led to conflict and violence. The absence of any voluntary group except Ekta Parishad to pressurise the dominant castes, inefficient administration, were the main reasons for its failure.

West Bengal is known for its successful land reform, Communist Party Marxist (CPM hereinafter) that sought to facilitate redistribution within the constraint of the upper-caste landed elite, its success to overcome all these constraints was their 'organisational unity' whereas other political parties failed. CPM used the party machinery to penetrate the village society run programmes like 'Operation Barga' where volunteers and activists of the party worked at the grassroot level to identify the beneficiaries, along with strong party organisation CPM penetrated villages through local governance which brought its cadre and sympathiser together which helped, to isolate powerful landlord and *Jotedars* (Tenants).

This signifies a power shift in rural society which enabled the CPM regime to implement land reform. Whereas in the case of Madhya Pradesh, a lack of political will is observed in the political parties and the interest of

political parties/leaders has been in priority over its population. So, one can say that the agenda of 'land reforms' remained as the agenda of 'vote bank politics' not the actual development of the marginalised.

The Congress Politics and the Bhopal Declaration

A process of democratisation was attempted by Arjun Singh as he assumed Chief Ministership in the state and tried to expand the social base of Congress, he tried to build the base among backward castes. The appointment of the Mahajan Commission in 1981 to establish a list of the backward castes and identify their need was the first attempt in this direction (Gupta, 2005). It could not make astir as much as Mungeri Lal did in Bihar. The OBC's representation also went up in this period prompting a further change in the social and political dynamics.

Madhya Pradesh has grown more slowly than the average in the 1980s and accelerated significantly after the 1990s. Digvijay Singh did realise that positive discrimination that had benefitted him and Arjun Singh earlier would get negated with the increasing retreat of the state. With the growing paradigm shift toward the market in the wake of reform, he further extended the principle of affirmative action to the local Mandi Samitis (Market Committees). Madhya Pradesh is also the first state which introduced the New Panchayati Raj system according to the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. It also introduced the Madhya Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act (Local Governing Bodies) 1997 giving 100 per cent reservation at all levels of the Panchayati Raj three-tier system (Gupta, 2005).

Several reform measures started by Digvijay Singh government had invariably inbuilt tension that was bound to crop up sooner or later. His policy of social engineering relied on weaving a 'coalition of extreme'– a coalition of Rajputs and Adivasis, as opposed to the Brahmin-Dalit combination of the earlier period. Many saw an attempt to marginalise the numerically stronger section of OBCs. The OBCs, though highly fragmented constituted more than 40 per cent of the state's population (Gupta, 2005). Dalit agenda has also been introduced with much more attention which in some ways created a rift between Dalits and OBCs groups. In the majority of the cases, land given to Dalits remains under the use of OBCs which has further antagonised their relations.

Whenever Dalits took possession of distributed land, OBCs made the distance from Congress (Gupta, 2005). It is also the reflection of the rise of the BSP to stop coming from the power in the northern Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. There was a decline in the Congress vote share in the

Chambal and Gwalior regions of the state. The decline in Congress vote by 8 per cent in the 2003 election did imply that only around 4 per cent vote went to the BJP and the remaining share to BSP which has shifted the political and social base of the state politics (Banerjee, 2005).

Saibal Gupta (2005) argues that "the vigorous attempts by the state in the more recent period to provide better representation to the weaker sections have failed to yield the desired results primarily because of two reasons. First, the traditional elites were attempting to create an alternative social base without providing actual power, and secondly, in the absence of any corresponding effort for economic development and the unprecedented depletion of the resource base, it created a situation beyond the control of the state. Neither Arjun Singh favoured the more avert policies by promoting a leader from the backward class to the post of the chief minister, nor Digvijay Singh who continue the policy of social engineering through the more covert means of institutional reform were being too radical when they advocated the policy of social engineering."

When Digvijay Singh tried to implement various policies enunciated in the Bhopal Declaration, also known as the Dalit agenda, especially those envisaged land distributions in favour of Dalits. It met with strong opposition, both within the party and outside. The interests of the emerging agro-capitalist, mainly the Dominant-Castes, came into violent conflict with Dalits. The incident of the massacre of Gujars as upper caste agro-capitalist in the fertile Chambal area by Rambabu Gaderia indicates the endemic caste and class divide, resulting from uneven land distribution (Banerjee, 2005).

The BJP Politics and the Mobilisation Patterns

BJP and its predecessor, the Jana Sangha till the 1960s, were more engaged in defending the fundamental rights of the princes whose overwhelming presence in their ranks was always used by the Congress to its advantage during the elections. BJP represented the aspirations of the upper caste until pre-1990. It has been a party that tried to be the representative of conservatives and manifests the interests of the powerful sections of the society (Jaffrelot, 1996) demonstrating the BJP's defeat in the 1996 assembly election in Madhya Pradesh was the result of the pro-rich policies. Tribal and OBCs shifted from the party led to the debacle of the party in the state. The main reason for the decline of the BJP in the state includes the absence of Hindu Mobilisation at that time and erosion of the party discipline was also one of the reasons behind the defeat in 1993. The absence of Ram Lahar such as in the 1990s was a major reason behind the

downfall of the BJP. Patwa government's anti-OBCs and tribal policies make it more prone to defeat in the 1993 election (Jaffrelot, 1996).

The interesting point is to note that BJP which was considered to be an upper caste party tried to correct the image by doing two things first; Hindu Nationalism and second; the pro-OBCs party. BJP succeeded in mobilising OBCs with the acceptance of Sanskritisation in the Hindu fold. The 1990s also witnessed the rise of the OBCs leadership in the BJP and also in the active campaigning of Ram Mandir. It was unthinkable as to how neoliberal economic policies were introduced by the active movement of the right in this period. It was certainly to divert the attention of the Dalits/Adivasi/OBCs from the real issues to the Hindu-Muslim polarisation in this period.

Despite the BJP's consolidation in the urban areas, the Party lost the 1993 assembly election. Post-election political development suggests that wooing OBCs under the saffron party was a prominent agenda. BJP tried to modify the upper caste image, which was an attempt of corrective move immediately after the election in 1993 (Jaffrelot, 1996). Vikram Verma a Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Dhar and a farmer from the Jat community was appointed as a leader of the opposition. Bherulal Patidar, a Kurmi farmer, and MLA from Mhow became deputy speaker, and Babulal Gaur from the Yadav community from Govindpura Bhopal was designated as chief whip of the BJP.

BJP brought Uma Bharti, Babulal Gaur and other OBCs leaders those who were not representing the voice of backward classes but to enter the helm of the backward votes. In the context of the overwhelming dominance of the upper caste in Madhya Pradesh, the polity in general and the successive quest of elites to enter into the marginalised section of the society by expanding their base by giving them nominal leadership (Gupta, 2005). BJP became the major political party in the state since the 2003 assembly election where it could mobilise the OBCs in its fold by giving Chief Ministership from these communities. Uma Bharti, Babulal Gaur, and Shivraj Singh Chouhan are the leaders of the OBCs of the BJP in the state while keeping the Brahmin leader's side nevertheless having decisive say in the decision making. BJP has a strong base in the trading Baniyas, Jain, and Savarana (upper castes) with the support of OBCs.

Since 2003, BJP retaining its power with an overwhelming majority in the state shows that Congress and other political parties failed to mobilise the OBC's votes under their banners. Congress completely failed in mobilising the OBC's votes in its favour while BJP being in the power still

building the confidence in the Tribes and Dalits. The traditional vote bank with traditional power relationships is still maintained which is solely responsible for BJP to constantly retaining its power in the state. "BJP tried to project a plebeian image by promoting OBC chief minister and appointing SCs leaders within the party since 2006 for instance, the President of the State Executive Committee is a Dalit, Satyanarayan Jatiya, upper-caste leaders remained very much in control, more than what the erosion of their share among the party MLAs may suggest" (Jaffrelot, 2009). BJP successfully mobilised the landowning communities against Congress for its land distribution programme and Dalit agenda.

The Role of Civil Society and the Land Question

There is a paucity of the proper studies of people's movement or resistance in the state of Madhya Pradesh but there has been a grassroots militant peasant movement under Congress Socialist Party. The peasants both in princely states and Ryotwari and Malguzari (land tenure systems) areas of the central provinces revolted against the heavy tax burden and bridge of free labour. Post- Independence, in the 1960s and 70s some Socialist and Communist organisations gained support from Vindhya Pradesh and Madhya Bharat. But they were crushed by the Congress government. The Bhopal gas tragedy and Sardar Sarovar Dam project on river Narmada engendered large scale and long-drawn movement in the 1980s. These movements received national and international media attention, the government succeeded in wearing out these movements by adopting the tactics of co-option and suppression.

The state has seen the emergence of lower strata of the society in state politics in 1990. On the one hand, Congress leader Arjun Singh set a commission in the name of its chairman Ramji Mahajan for the identification of OBC castes in the state. But they remained underrepresented in state politics till 1993 when Congress realised their importance after their defeat in the 1990s election. On the other hand, Madhya Pradesh saw the emergence of BSP in state politics. But BSP has hardly played any role, which has been properly documented, to mobilise the Dalit/Tribal for raising the demand for land distribution in Madhya Pradesh.

In the 1990s, the tremendous pressure by protests (*dharna*) made on the government and a '*Bhu-Adhikar* (Land Right) rally' was launched by the Ekta Parishad (EP) in 1996. With this move of Parishad, the Digvijay Singh government in 1998 decided to lower the Grazing land and its distribution to the weaker section. Again, the Ekta Parishad launched a '*Bhu-Adhikar Pad*

Yatra' (Foot March) from 10 December 1999 to 19 June 2000. Roughly four lakhs of people took part directly or indirectly in the rally led by the Parishad, which was a huge manifestation of the non-violent form of protest. The rally took 190 days and covered 3,800 kilometres, passing directly or indirectly through 1,500 tribal and Dalit-dominated villages.

The pressure of these movements and simultaneously the upsurge of the lower castes' politics in the region pressurised the then Digvijay Singh's government to take the issue seriously. Thus, he formed a Task Force with the help of government officials and non-government actors to assure the land distribution to the landless labourers in the state. It made a limited success to get some amount of land in actual possession to the beneficiaries whereas the government claimed to distribute more than 2.5 lakh acres of land. With limited success, the EP was able to take the pressure on the central government by its another rally in 2007 by landless Dalits and Tribal walking from Gwalior to New Delhi during Manmohan Singh government to announce the National Land Reforms Council on October 29, 2007. But it never saw its actual culmination by the United Progressive Alliance government.

The Shivraj Government showed its apathy for the land question. Neither did it further, extend any policy on the Bhopal Agenda which was the state government's motto for the inclusion of the Dalits and Tribal in the state economy nor did he provide any help for the poor people who were the beneficiaries of the land distribution in 1998. He is not interested in the development of the marginalised communities in the state but is dedicated to fulfilling the interest of Brahmin/Baniya communities in the state. In July 2016, 50 families of Dalit labourers asked for euthanasia from the Shivraj Singh government which was unable to give them the possession of their allotted land. The most interesting thing about the case is that these families were from the assembly seat of the Chief Minister in western Madhya Pradesh.

The present manifestation of the farmers across the country shows the government's apathy in the rural agrarian economy and more focus on the capitalist development policy which is creating a rural-urban divide and causes the agrarian distress and farmers' suicide as a common phenomenon in the country. But it shows a deep crisis in the Indian rural economy in general and Madhya Pradesh in particular, whose most of the population is dependent upon agriculture. The BJP government, whose focus is on Urban-Industrial development, has to think about this serious issue, otherwise, we are going into the dangerous phase of concentration of wealth and widening the inequality in society which may have posed a serious threat to the society.

Towards Conclusion

Land distribution remained contested in the Madhya Pradesh politics and met with violent resistance from the landowning communities in the state. The land question was even pushed out of the social movement not voluntarily by Congress and other political parties. Congress's attempt at an alliance with Dalit-Adivasi under the Rajputs' leadership could not work while the BJP formula of allying with OBCs under the leadership of Brahmin worked well in the state. BJP which had an image of upper caste corrected it by giving space for OBCs out of political pressure from the neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh.

The state of Madhya Pradesh experienced three major developments in the 1990s rise of the identity-based party BSP, liberalisation of the Indian economy, and rise of the right-wing politics. It has been observed that the rise of the BSP pressurised the ruling Congress and BJP to accommodate Dalits and OBCs. Land distribution has been one of the agendas which Congress introduced while the BJP opposed and took the benefit of OBC's resentment against this programme. The accommodation of OBCs in the BJP is one of the developments in the post-1990s where they only took the votes but did not provide anything as material gains. Congress mostly focused on Adivasi and Dalit who did not benefit much because they faced the opposition of the OBCs which ultimately went in favour of the BJP.

As it's apparent from the above discussion that the process of land distribution has not been successfully implemented in Madhya Pradesh. The key constraint was that the main political party of Madhya Pradesh had support from landed caste/classes. The lack of commitment and professionalism especially in lower bureaucracy was readily co-opted by the rural social elites. The judiciary has also opposed the programme of land distribution for the Dalits and Adivasis. The land distribution could only be successful when there was momentum for redistribution through political and legal consensus then only its objective of social equity can be achieved.

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The Evolution of Local Governance Institutions of Mysore: Lessons for Panchayat Raj Institutions

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The evolution of local governance institutions (LGIs) in Karnataka is analysed using the approach of historical institutionalism. LGIs in the medieval period had higher autonomy to regulate the local economy than in the successive periods. Fiscal pressures and state interventions transformed LGIs into informal appendages to the modern state. The critical junctures and contingencies of their transformation demonstrate how exogenous factors like military preparedness and endogenous factors like leadership traits influence LGIs. The relevance of LGIs depends on their ability to regulate the local economy. Such contextual understanding of LGIs provides useful insights into confronting the limited capacities of contemporary LGIs.

Introduction

Analysing the unique evolutionary pathways of institutions can provide historically sensitive explanations for the current predicaments of state institutions and administrative processes (Hodgson, 2002; Kaviraj, 2012a). Scholars have analysed the history of governance institutions in India during pre-colonial and colonial regimes to explain commonalities and divergence in processes related to state formation, political mobilisation, and

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economic management (Stein, 1985; Subrahmanyam, 1989; Sharma, 1991; Subramaniam, 1998; Kaviraj, 2012b) leading to different economic and development outcomes. This approach to the case of local governance in rural Karnataka is applied to further our understanding of the flailing nature of lower bureaucracy (Pritchett, 2009) and the persistence of patronage even with democratic decentralisation (Inbanathan & Gopalappa, 2003; Berenschot, 2014). We build a historically informed narrative around the evolution and current state of local governance institutions (LGIs)[1] in the erstwhile Mysore kingdom[2] in South India and argue that such contemporary governance challenges may have unique regional influences.

Mysore was known to be a 'model state' that pursued progressive reforms under the protection of the British (Manor, 1975a; Chancellor, 1997; Ikegame, 2013). However, the region's performance in the implementation of progressive policies during the colonial period and post-independence era remains average and is inferior to the development outcomes of other parts of the state (Manor, 1975a; Kadekodi et al., 2007). While literature explains the progressive nature of the pre-colonial state of Mysore and the post-independent state of Karnataka (Manor, 1975b; Chandrasekhar, 1985; Chancellor, 1997; Gowda, 2010), the evolution of its local political and bureaucratic institutions and their implications on the effectiveness of contemporary LGIs today is under-explained and can potentially shed insights on how disparities in local institutional capacities emerge.

The approach of historical institutionalism is used to trace the changes in LGIs across major regimes in the region to provide a nuanced explanation of the influence of structural pressures and endogenous conditions on LGIs across history and their influence on the unique traits and adaptations of front-line bureaucrats. This paper is arranged as follows: The next section summarises the methodology and major data sources used in this study, followed by tracing the evolution of LGIs in the Mysore region from the pre-colonial times till independence. Conclusion by summarising the relevance of this historical trajectory on PRIs today.

Methodology and Data Sources

There are considerable debates on the methods adopted to analyse the evolution of institutions across social sciences (Woolcock et al., 2011; McCants, 2020). Historical Institutionalism (HI) is an empirically driven approach that aims to provide 'effective generalisations' that combine exogenous factors and endogenous interaction effects to explain institutional evolution (Thelen, 1999; Hall, 2016), using analytical descriptors like critical

junctures, path dependence, layering, and drifting (Capoccia & Kelemen, 2007; Thelen & Conran, 2016).

Using HI, the contours of institutional change in LGIs across three distinct phases in the history of the Mysore region is explored: (a) the Wodeyar regime (17th Century - 18th Century), (b) the Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan regime (18th Century) and (c) the colonial period (19th Century - 20th Century). Changes induced by external factors and internal contexts and their influence on the local politics and bureaucracy are explained. Comparisons with neighbouring regimes with contrasting institutional settings are also made to accentuate these influences on the current characteristics of LGIs.

While the study does not present previously unexplored historical materials, it attempts to read together with the rich literature that describes the various phases of the history of the region and stitch a careful narrative of the evolution of LGIs in the Mysore state. The empirical material includes archives like Gazetteers and official documents of Mysore and the colonial state (pre-independence era), travelogues (like that of Francis Buchanan), and scholarly work of historians analysing local governance in specific phases of the region's history.

Historical narratives embed often conflicting epistemes about imperial regimes and contentions exist on the choice of sources[3]. Given the potential use of the rich narratives and the possibility to triangulate multiple empirical explanations related to the local governance, it is believed that this approach of using historical sources provides useful insights into contemporary governance issues.

LGIs in medieval South-India

Epigraphic evidence shows that South India was governed by unique semi-autonomous, discursive local institutions called by various names like Sabhas, Mahajanas, and others (Stein, 1982, pp. 34-35). While imperial regimes influenced taxation and revenue collection targets, they did not interfere in the day-to-day transactions of these local governance institutions (M.S.N. Rao, 1983).

Vijayanagara empire changed the contours of these LGIs substantially (Morrison, 2001, p. 262). Its martial confederacy style of administration together with fiscal pressures of maintaining large standing armies (Stein, 1985) influenced the empire to take a corporatist approach leading to the expansion of the tank-irrigation network and temple-towns (Mahalingam, 1969), initiated by traders and Palegars[4] at a rate previously

unseen in South-India. Interventions by powerful outsiders in the local economy altered the earlier tradition of general non-interference in local administration. More than their discursive functions, the executive roles, and responsibilities of LGIs over the regulation of the local economy (like maintenance of records, adjudication of local disputes, revenue collection, water management, etc.) increased (Stein, 1985, pp. 398-399). Thus, the executive institution of Ayagars[5] rose to prominence during this period. Its decision-making office bearers; the Gowda and Shanbhog, who belonged to dominant castes had more power and influence in comparison to other positions.

LGIs During the Regime of Wodeyars of Mysore

The fall of the Vijayanagara Empire after the battle of Talikota in 1565 gave rise to several smaller, independent regimes, including the Wodeyars of Mysore who retained Vijayanagara's institutions and practices. They ruled over the land-locked core region of the current South-Karnataka districts and other neighbouring areas till 1761 when Hyder Ali usurped power from them. Like other regimes during this era, Mysore was either in war or was paying tributes to stronger regimes like Marathas and Mughals. The need to maintain high military expenditures continued to influence Mysore's state-LGI relationships as well. However, Mysore was not as large or as resource-rich as Vijayanagara. It drifted from the confederacy nature of administration towards a centralised structure, by curbing Palegars, mainly under Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar (1672-1704), who sustained high revenue extraction rates even when faced with stiff resistance from farmers and local bureaucrats (Subrahmanyam, 1989). Instead of Palegars, semi-hereditary, salaried bureaucrats loyal to the imperial regime called Subedars were appointed for key revenue collection positions.

The strategy of "military-fiscalism" of Chikkadevaraja was a critical juncture that prioritised direct revenue collection through the imperial bureaucracy, changing the power dynamics of LGIs and other political intermediaries. While this narrative is broadly applicable to many pre-colonial regimes across India (Stein, 1985, p. 390), several contextual factors led to the unique evolution of LGIs in the Mysore state.

The vast network of tanks and irrigation structures created through outsider intervention during the Vijayanagara era had eroded the autonomy and ability of LGIs and were now the responsibility of the imperial regime. Many of them were left unrepaired due to a lack of funds (Buchanan, 1807; Dikshit et al., 1993). Higher rates of revenue extraction reduced the

autonomy of LGIs and lack of responsiveness resulted in dissatisfaction and distrust against bureaucratic administrators among farmers across the province (Buchanan, 1807).

Further, the growing influence of Marathas and Mughal rulers and the inclusion of Muslims, Tamil, and Maratha Brahmins in the bureaucracy (Muddacharia, 1967; Hasan, 1970) meant that provincial administration had non-local officials serving in key positions, distancing the bureaucracy and general citizens further. With increased non-local bureaucratic control over the provinces and frequent raids and wars, LGIs lost their agency to regulate local economic activities. They became delegations pleading to the now patrimonial state, for its intervention in the repairs of tanks and canals and for allowing concessions and tax rebates. Although individuals like Gowda and Shanbhog retained political clout, remaining members of the Ayagar lost their agency (Dikshit et al., 1993, pp. 81-83). These institutional changes and their influence on LGIs are summed up in Table 2.

Table 1
Changes in LGIs during the regime of Wodeyars of Mysore

Status of institutions at the beginning of the regime	Critical Junctures	Changed institutional path	Effects
Mysore kingdom as a smaller, less resourceful independent regime, with the need for high fiscal expenditures, claiming its legitimacy through Vijayanagara practices	Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar's strategies of military fiscalism, revenue centralisation, and curbing provincial powers	Incremental bureaucratisation of the provincial regime and reduction in the influence of local chieftains	Changed perceptions on the role of the state in maintaining agricultural infrastructure, drifting the role of LGIs
		The amalgamation of bureaucratic practices from other regimes increased the complexity of bureaucratic practices	Widening distance between state bureaucracy and local communities, without influential intermediary actors.
			Village assemblies as delegations to plead with imperial authorities

LGIs During the reign of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan

With Haider Ali's ascendency, the administrative changes towards centralisation initiated by Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar intensified. Haider and Tipu removed Palegars from power and retained high rates of revenue extraction. They modernised agricultural production and introduced new economic activities (Habib, 2002). To maximise revenue generation, these efforts were coupled with policies like - (a) state monopolisation of the extraction and trade of resources; (b) levy of cess on different socio-economic

activities; and (c) state involvement in trade and economic development (Parthasarathi, 2011, p. 207).

Diversification of the state's revenues through support and regulation of industries and trade formed a critical juncture in the evolution of LGIs. By creating a precocious proto-developmental state, Tipu's regime expected lofty results from lower-level bureaucrats of the state like the Amaldars[6]. On one hand, the regulatory policies of the state warranted them to act against the local patronage networks of Inamdars and Jagirdars (influential local landlords who held vast amounts of rent-free lands). On the other, they were responsible to raise revenue and show progress across different trades and economic development activities. By the end of Tipu's regime, the provincial bureaucracy had complex roles to play in the economy. It was prone to rent-seeking, corruption, and fudging documentation[7]. Buchanan documents several such instances during his travel soon after Tipu Sultan's death (Buchanan, 1807, pp. 34, 71-72,114).

Though the Ayagar system retained its functions, by the end of the 18th century, its executive powers to regulate the local economy had declined substantially. The local bureaucracy regularly intervened in the village's socio-economic activities. Thus, the Gowda, Shangbhog, and Talavara[8] were seen as representatives of the state rather than members of LGIs. Panchayats were limited to adjudicators of local disputes. Other political intermediaries (like erstwhile Palegars) exercised influence with provincial bureaucrats. These institutional changes and their influence on LGIs are summed up in Table 2.

Table 2
Changes in LGIs during Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan's rule

Status of institutions at the beginning of the regime	Critical Junctures	Changed institutional path	Effects
Changed perceptions on the role of the state in maintaining agricultural infrastructure, drifting the role of LGIs	Tipu Sultan's state interventions: economic development and modernisation initiatives, removal of Palegars, and new regulatory practices	Layering new roles of modernisation and economic development for lower bureaucracy	Increased pressure on local bureaucrats for regulating the local economy and revenue generation leads to rent-seeking and corruption
Difficulty in accessing the state bureaucracy for local communities		Sequencing state monopolisation in trade and extraction of natural resources	Suspicion and mistrust about lower bureaucrats among local communities
Village assemblies as delegations to plead with imperial authorities			Gowda and Shanbhog saw as representatives of the government

The changes in North-Eastern parts of Karnataka during this period were different. These regions were under the Hyderabad Nizams where Zamindari and Jagirs were much larger in comparison to Mysore. Zamindars also tended to be Gowda/Patels. Thus, LGIs in the region did not have the autonomy that existed in Mysore. Although similar LGIs existed in the coastal districts of Karnataka, agriculture here was based on commercial crops. Revenue collection was in cash and local farmers and LGIs retained higher autonomy in comparison to the Mysore region.

LGIs During Colonial Control over the Mysore State

The death of Tipu Sultan in 1799 paved the way for the British suzerainty. Coastal districts of Karnataka were split among Madras and Bombay Presidencies of the British. During the 150 years of British influence, multiple reforms were introduced in the Mysore province. Policies like state control over trade and natural resources and placing non-local bureaucrats in key administrative positions were retained (Stein, 1989). Other policy shifts were based on the ideological beliefs of British and Indian administrators who pursued privatisation of agriculture, irrigation, modernisation of the state economy, and industrialisation. The first critical juncture during this period was the introduction of Ryotwari revenue assessment and centralised revenue collection. Through Ryotwari, the state entered a direct contract with the individual farmer, instead of the mediation by the Ayagars. The farmer gained formal ownership rights over the land, making Ayagars irrelevant. However, Ryotwari was difficult to implement due to the complexity of the existing land tenures, creating confusion and uncertainty under which caste and patronage networks thrived. The shadow influence of Inamdars and Jagirdars dominated the implementation processes (C.H. Rao, 1929, p. 2770; P. T George, 1970; Washbrook, 2004, pp. 503-505; Swamy, 2011, p. 7). Ryotwari concentrated land ownership across a few dominant caste elites of the village.

Only the 'Gowda- Shanbhog' pair of the Ayagars survived Ryotwari. The Gowda and Shanbhog became hereditary bureaucrats of the state and were termed as "village revenue officials", creating an enduring extractive relationship with farmers since there were no local checks and balances against their actions. LGIs transformed into informal Panchayats and called for help in resolving local disputes (C. H. Rao, 1929, pp. 33-42). They eventually transformed into caste/village Nyaya Panchayats with no legal standing but were still involved in settling local disputes outside the realm of the rational state institutions (Ananthpur, 2007).

Continuing with Tipu's policy of state intervention in the economy, Amaldars were given sweeping responsibilities in revenue assessment, collection, maintenance of law and order, and regulation of trade and economic activities while their powers were not commensurate. Being outsiders, they depended on local elites, Gowdas, and Shanbhogs to respond to local issues who in turn wanted leniency in the maintenance of records, remission of taxes, and other regulatory and development activities. This co-dependence of bureaucrats, local elites, and their local subordinates meant that monitoring exercises like Jamabandhi (scrutiny of village records and revenue performance by the Amaldar) were transformed into community festivals where scrutiny and approval were a small formality of reinforcing such perverse symbiotic relationships. The higher authorities of the state would not be concerned as long as reasonable revenues were extracted (Manor, 1975b, pp. 41-42).

With the reinstatement of the Wodeyars in 1881, Mysore state became extremely conscious of its image as a progressive modern provincial state (Manor, 1975b) and introduced multiple reforms (like democratically elected Panchayats, compulsory education and farmers cooperatives and irrigation) for rural areas of the state. Though more powers and democratic features were incrementally given to Panchayats (Rao, 1929a), their actual roles and powers, in comparison to that of the revenue bureaucracy, were minimal. The ideals of self-sufficient, democratic progressive panchayats were far from ground realities (Government of Mysore, 1941) since the administrative capacity of the Wodeyars at the local level was always limited due to its preference for outsiders in the bureaucracy. The regime neither had kinship ties with the local landed elite nor were these elites included in the state's bureaucratic structure (Chandrasekhar, 1985).

To balance the conflicting objectives of maintaining legitimacy with local landed elites and projecting the image of an ideal state together with meeting the demands of revenue collection, the administration preferred social stability over social justice (Manor, 1975a; Kumar, 1983, p. 215). It held a progressive policy outlook but remained silent on lax implementation of these policies in rural areas (Manor, 1975b).

Having this informal understanding that the state apparatus would not intervene in the local affairs as long as "a semblance of order" was maintained (Manor, 1975a, p. 18), the lower bureaucracy devised strategies to work around the system rather than confront the challenge of implementing progressive reforms detrimental to local landed elites. Thus, progressive policies were implemented in their de-radicalised forms at the

local level, without ruffling the local power structure. In turn, local elites adopted informal strategies like collective lobbying with higher officials and negotiating with the bureaucracy rather than non-participation and outright protest against policies that threatened their interests. These perverse symbiotic relationships at the local level were an indication of the local adaptations that would emerge against radical policies like land reforms introduced by a distant state but implemented by the unchanged local bureaucracy.

In the Madras Presidency, Panchayats served to extend the legitimacy of the colonial rule over local arenas. They had provisions for the local political actors to engage and assimilate into the provincial political sphere (Manor, 1975b, p. 48). Thus, coastal parts of Karnataka under the Madras presidency had vocal politicians in the pre-independence era. These features, land tenure systems, and sea-trade-related commercial activities made their LGIs more competent in managing the day-to-day regulatory functions of the village economy.

Thus, the lower bureaucracy had begun to display characteristics that were markedly different from its higher counterpart in the Mysore region. Even though it aimed to achieve development, its everyday work involved negotiating local patronage systems and political equations. Its multiple regulatory and development responsibilities were incommensurate with its official authority. Corruption, reliance on social and political patronage networks, and incorrect documentation were the prevalent strategies to cope with the demands of the state while at the village level, they were dependent on the Gowdas and Shanbhogs for realising state action.

With the limited scope for Panchayats to influence the local economy and the limited capacity of the state to enforce strict implementation of its policies, lower bureaucrats could ward-off pressures to deliver on the expanding role of the state in transforming rural society and instead, thrive in the status quo. This picture of the flailing lower bureaucracy during the colonial period and the first few decades of independent India is not only implied by academic literature like Manor (1975a) and Chandrashekar (1985) but also appears in memoirs of journalists and popular literature[9]. This salutary neglect had long-term consequences in setting organisational norms for local transactions between government officials and individuals. Table 3 summarises these institutional changes and strategies taken during the pre-independence period in the Mysore region with two critical junctures (Ryotwari and the introduction of progressive reforms without full

commitment to implementation). If these policies were pursued effectively, the institutional paths of LGIs in the region could have been markedly different in the Mysore region with long-lasting effects on future policy issues like land reforms and decentralisation.

Table 3
Changes in LGIs during the Wodeyar regime under the British

Status of institutions before the Colonial period	Critical Junctures	Changes in the Institutional path	Effects
Land administration as a mixture of different tenures	Ryotwari without reforming rural social order	Introduction of modern bureaucracy, judiciary and court system and the gradual side-lining of LGIs	Extinction of Ayagars and inclusion of Gowda-Shanbhog into government service
State involvement in economic regulation and development		Managing the discrepancies in implementation by favouring local elites	Traditional Panchayats became informal and outside the realm of state institutions
Mistrust about local officials among farmers			
Increasing powers of the Gowda-Shanbhog pair within LGIs	Progressive reforms like decentralisation and other welfare measures without full commitment to the implementation	Use of informal strategies of working around the system rather than confronting it among local political leaders and rural communities	The power relationship between the Gowda-Shanbhog pair and the new Panchayats tilted against Panchayats
Increased pressure on local bureaucrats for regulating the local economy and revenue generation leads to rent-seeking and corruption			Implementation of progressive policies in their de-radicalised form
Village assemblies as pleading delegations			The strong symbiotic relationship between lower bureaucrats and rural elites

Conclusion

This paper narrated the transformation of LGIs from their discursive, autonomous nature during the medieval period to that of informal appendages of the state at the time of Indian independence. State intervention in the economy and the expansion of the public sector created patronage-based extractive relationships between local bureaucrats and the rest of the village communities, thus eroding the control of LGIs over the local economy. The drift from autonomous regulation of the local economy

to the management of the local public sector economy reflects the shortcomings of PRIs even today, where even though Panchayats expend considerable funds from government schemes, they do not have substantive autonomy on these expenditures, revenue matters, agrarian issues or other facets that influence the village economy directly. This transformation also includes local officials, who were initially embedded in the local economy, but gradually changed into the representatives of a progressive state with limited abilities to transform rural communities but with large financial resources which invite patronage and collusion.

This evolution of LGIs is not only a result of exogenous factors like colonialism and military fiscalism but also it's moulding through the critical decisions of leaders and the local conditions that were essentially endogenous to this region. Contingent factors like outsiders placed in important bureaucratic positions, the regime's lack of kinship relations with the landed elite, its need to constantly reaffirm its administrative legitimacy, and its reluctance to change local power structures influence the social norms of local politics and bureaucracy in the region even today. Other parts of Karnataka experienced different trajectories of the evolution of LGIs. The coastal districts had differing agro-economic factors and a different political regime where the integration of local political actors into the provincial space meant that local political contestation was feasible, leading to the more programmatic implementation of state policies. In contrast, the north-eastern frontier districts of Hyderabad province had neither the scope for growth of LGIs nor the introduction of progressive policies as experienced by the Mysore state.

Even if we ignore the caveats related to the authenticity of historical sources, the status of LGIs is not a simple function of exogenous parameters (like agro-ecological constraints) or supra-regional political conditions (like invasions of competing regimes and colonial occupations). It is also conditioned on unique endogenous settings which co-evolved the strategies of local elites to engage with the LGIs and the state. These differing administrative histories are crucial in explaining the differing capacities and development outcomes of LGIs and thus require different solutions to improve the effectiveness of local state actors in different parts of Karnataka today.

End Notes

1. The term LGI is intended to cover all locally constituted institutions that regulate socio-economic activities of the village.
2. The Mysore kingdom covered about 13 southern districts of Karnataka state.

3. The differing opinions on Tipu Sultan's regime and the Wodeyars among colonial and post-colonial historians is well known.
4. Palegars were regional warlords who paid tributes to the King..
5. Ayagar was an institution that regulated village affairs, consisting of 12 hereditary positions; administrators, professional, artisan, labour and service castes. They were not paid but were provided with a share from the produce of each farmer and grant of agricultural lands (Wilks, 1810).
6. Amaldars were equivalent to contemporary Tehsildars and were generally outsiders.
7. References to corruption is not uncommon in the ancient history but is comparatively higher in historical sources after the fall of Vijayanagara empire (C. H. Rao, 1929; Subrahmanyam, 1989).
8. Ayagar position referring to the Village guard/police.
9. D.V. Gundappa's memoirs recount how administrators of Mysore state couldn't control the actions of lower bureaucrats in (Gundappa, 1971). Short stories like KiragurinaGayyaligalu (Rowdy Women of Kiraguru,) by Purnachandra Tejaswi depict the ineptness and nonchalance of local bureaucrats.

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Caste Driven Migration of SCs from Underdeveloped Region Marathwada of Maharashtra

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SCs from rural Marathwada are using migration as a compulsory practice to escape from the exploitative structure of caste. The caste identities play an essential role in their migration. Village society's hierarchical caste-based social and occupational structure makes life more vulnerable to people from these social groups. People from SCs communities mostly are landless labourers, marginal farmers who majorly migrate with industrial growth in urban centres. The backwardness of the Marathwada region badly affects SCs more than any other community. The migration of these communities for survival and better livelihood opportunities highlights the region's underdevelopment. The study aims to explore the role of caste in the migration of SCs in the region of Marathwada and point out developmental issues in the area. The study is based mainly on the primary data collected through the survey method.

Introduction

Migration in the contemporary period is one of the most contested and discussed phenomena. But, the migration of Scheduled Castes (SCs) is quite different from the migration of other social groups. It is influenced not only by economic deprivation but also by social deprivation too. Caste

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identities play a crucial role in the extreme poverty of SCs at their place of origin. This caste-based deprivation forces SCs people from rural to urban areas for better opportunities in life which would provide some economic and social freedom. Occupation of a person is determined by caste in India (Das, 1971). In Indian labour markets, caste is an important factor before the caliber of the worker to get employment. It creates unemployment in the economy, voluntary unemployment for upper castes, and involuntary employment for lower castes. Caste structure helps the particular community to accumulate resources of production, and for others, it denies. The possibility of selecting white collared jobs is higher in upper castes than SCs, while both are equally qualified (Thorat and Newman, 2009).

Many self-employed suffer from castes effects, like small contractors of construction and other building work (plumbing, electricity, furniture work, etc.), city roadways, and transportation work. Historically occupations of SCs were dirty jobs, and now they are engaged in an informal sector as casual labour (Deshpande, 2010).

Maharashtra has the most extensive migration within and from out of the state. The primary reasons for the general migration are heavy industrialisation and urbanisation in Maharashtra. Nevertheless, in this case, SCs migration push factors at the origin place are more responsible than pull factors at the destination. The SCs from the Marathwada region of Maharashtra are vulnerable to economic and social development. They are primarily landless labourers and marginal farmers migrating to urban centres of other areas of Maharashtra in the region's rural areas. Migration of these communities for their survival and better livelihood shows low and unequal development of the province of Marathwada on all fronts like agriculture and industrial development and employment generation in rural parts. Marathwada is comparatively underdeveloped than the rest of Maharashtra, Nashik division, and even Vidarbha (Kelkar, 2013). Low industrial development, low agriculture development due to high drought-prone areas (40 per cent) in the region, and unequal distribution of resources are significant reasons for unequal development, inequality in income, poverty, and unemployment in this region (Ibid). Another side of the migration of these communities is discrimination based on caste identities in villages, which pushes them to cities. This caste conflict, discrimination, and exploitation become significant obstacles to SCs' progress and consequently the region's development. To explore better options for survival and livelihood, most SCs are migrating to urban areas of the state (see table no. 2).

State Level Migration Scenario of SCs: Evidence from Census Data

Table 1
Comparison between total Migration and SCs migration in Maharashtra

Year	2001		2011	
	Actual Number	% to Total Population	Actual Number	% to Total Population
Total Migration	12,505,916	12.90	47,924,588	42.62
SC Migration	3,727,007	37.71	6,038,859	45.48

Source: Census of India 2001 and 2011

As per Census 2011, intra-state migration in Maharashtra increased from 1.25 crore (12.9 per cent) in 2001 to 4.79 crore (42.6 per cent) in 2011. Intra-state migration among Scheduled Castes (SCs) (45.48 per cent) is greater than the percentage share of total migration of the state of Maharashtra, 42.62 per cent. The SCs migration increased from 37.71 per cent to 45.48 per cent from 2001 to 2011 (see table no. 1). Post-1991 reforms in the economy helped revive the industrial sector in terms of growth in output and employment (Burange, 1999). The growth of industrialisation in the state pulls migrants to urban centres from rural parts.

Table 2
Rural-urban Migration among SCs

Year	SCs Migration		Total Migration	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
2001	1376649 (37.0)	2350358 (63.0)	5166502 (41.3)	7339414 (58.7)
2011	2701505 (44.7)	3337354 (55.3)	20090771 (41.9)	27833817 (58.1)

Note: Figures in the bracket are percentages.
Source: Census of India 2001 and 2011

Table 2 brings exciting facts about the SCs migration in Maharashtra. SC migration upsurges in rural and urban areas in terms of actual numbers. The contrary percentage share of SCs migration in urban areas increased from 37.0 per cent in 2001 to 44.7 per cent in 2011. On the other hand, rural migration of SCs declined from 63.0 per cent to 55.3 per cent from 2001 to 2011. Total urban and total rural migration in Maharashtra is more or less constant. During the 2001-11 large rural-based SCs population shifted to urban areas with the growth of modern industries. Urban centres provide them with different platforms for new job occupations, lifestyles, and social relations that are less based on caste identities. Migration helped these people leave the traditional caste occupations that failed to give them dignified life in rural society.

Methodology and the Tools

The nature of the study is descriptive and exploratory, highlighting the socio-economic condition of rural SCs migrants and how their caste identities are responsible for their migration, and how caste contributes to their migration decision. Both primary and secondary data are used for analysis—the secondary data extracted from the migration tables of Census 2001 and 2011. Primary data has been collected through extensive fieldwork in the city of Nashik. The town started growing fast after industries were not allowed to be established in Mumbai. Then new industries were moved towards the nearest better cities such as Pune, Nashik, etc. (Planning Commission, 2007). For this study, 205 sample households (HH) of SCs migrants were interviewed.

Table 3
Sample Households from different Communities of SCs

S.No.	Caste	Migrant Households	Percent
1	Mahar Buddhist	134	65.4
2	Matang	59	28.8
3	Chambhar	12	5.9
	Total	205	100

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017.

Table 3 is showing the share of three major SCs communities in the total 205 sample households. The communities are (i) Mahar Buddhist 134 HH (65.4 per cent), (ii) Matang 59 HH (28.8 per cent), and (iii) Chambhar 12 HH (5.94 per cent). A cross tabulation tool is used with the Chi-square test for the data analysis. The study used simple percentages to see the changes and comparisons.

Table 4
Migrants from different Districts to Nashik

S. No.	District	Migrant HHs	Percent share
1	Aurangabad	11	5.4
2	Jalna	115	56.1
3	Parbhani	56	27.3
4	Hingoli	6	2.9
5	Beed	14	6.8
6	Nanded	3	1.5
	Total	205	100

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017.

Table 4 shows that many migrants came from the district of Jalana and Parbhani, with their relative percentage shares of 56.1 per cent and 26.3

per cent. Jalna is declared one of the most backward districts in Maharashtra. According to the Census of India 2011, 80.73 per cent district population lives in rural areas. The district has little industrial development. The majority of the district population is engaged in agricultural occupations. Of total workers, there are 77.3 per cent involved in agriculture. Most of the cropped area is under soorghum (Jowar), wheat, cotton, red gram, and green gram (Census of India 2011, 2014). Parbhani is a dominant agriculture district were 74.5 per cent population agriculture sector. It has significantly less industrial development (Census of India 2011, 2014). More minor rainy seasons and droughts in recent years affect agriculture productivity and people in the district and the region of Marathwada. The district Beed is next to Parbhani with a 6.8 per cent contribution in total migration.

Reasons for Migration of Households

The study has found some critical reasons for the migration of SCs households from rural areas. The reasons are (i) employment: it constitutes employment-related all reasons, (ii) other concerns with conflict in the family, housing problems, (iii) water scarcity, (iv) education: explore better education options for children, and (v) health-related issues.

Table 5
Reasons for Migration of SCs Households

S.No.	Reasons for Migration	No. HH	Percent
1	Employment	172	83.9
2	Water scarcity	13	6.3
3	Education	8	3.9
4	Health-related Issues	6	2.9
5	Other	5	2.4
	Total	205	100.0

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017.

Table 5 shows the five primary reasons for the migration of households from the region. Many families (83.9 per cent) migrated to seek employment opportunities in urban areas; Second most crucial reason is recorded that water scarcity at their place of origin contributed 6.3 per cent share. Water scarcity highlights the severe problems of irrigation for agriculture and drinking water in many villages of the region (Kale and Gond, 2016). The issue of water scarcity in Marathwada has become severe in the last two decades. People from lower strata and lower castes are badly suffering. Because most of them are economically very poor and do not have their water sources. The decline of growth in the agriculture sector on the

one hand and the growing industrial sector after 1990 on the other hand, raise the migration of SC communities from villages of the Marathwada region for employment, high wages, and caste problems.

The Role of Caste in the Migration of SCs

Caste, social networks, and historical precedents play a decisive role in shaping migration patterns in India. Backward castes such as SCs, STs, and OBCs are heavily represented in migration, and they join informal sectors such as small industries, security services, construction work, etc. (Deshingkar and Farrington, 2006). Employment is found as a significant reason for the migration of rural SCs. However, their caste also plays a role in many aspects of their lives. It also affected SC's employment in villages and also in urban areas. Some castes factors push SCs to the urban area and some have pulled them into urban areas. The response of respondents to the involvement of caste is open-ended in nature.

Table 6
Role of Caste in Migration Decision of SCs from Marathwada (in per cent)

S.No.	Caste	No	Yes	Total
1	Mahar Buddhist	29.3	36.1	65.4
2	Matang	7.3	21.5	28.8
3	Chambhar	2.9	2.9	5.9
	Total	39.5	60.5	100

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017

Table 6 depicts the five scale preference of SCs migrant respondents regarding the role of caste in their migration decision. Of the SCs migrant respondents, 60.5 per cent replied 'Yes' to the involvement of caste in their migration decision. 36.1 per cent belong to Mahar Buddhists, followed by Matang with 21.5 per cent and 2.9 per cent belong to the Chambhar community. Contrary, 39.5 per cent replied 'No' role of caste in their migration. The Mahar Buddhist community is dominant in terms of population which is majorly rural-based. The agricultural labour and marginal farmers are the principal occupations of their survival. The Mahar Buddhists are comparatively progressive in education, holding means of survival, more united for social, political, and economic rights than the Chambhar and Matang. Matang community is vulnerable among all SCs in holding financial resources, education, and social status (Waghmare, 2010).

Table 7
Chi-Square Results for Cross Tabulation Role of Caste in Migration Decision

SC Communities		Role of Caste in the Migration decision			Chi-Square Distribution	
		No	Yes	Total	Chi-square	Cramer's V
Mahar Buddhist	Observed	60 (29.3)	74 (36.1)	134	7.006** (df=2)	0.185**
	Expected	52.9	81.1			
Matang	Observed	15 (7.3)	44 (21.4)	59		
	Expected	23.3	35.7			
Chambhar	Observed	6 (2.9)	6 (3.0)	12		
	Expected	4.7	7.3			
Total		81 (39.5)	124 (60.5)	205 (100)		

Note: Figures in the bracket are percentages. & ** 05 per cent significance level.

Above table 7 depicts the role of caste in the migration decision of SCs from the rural part of Marathwada. 60.5 per cent of respondents replied that the caste factors influence their migration. The respondents from the Mahar Buddhist community were larger; with a 36.1 per cent share. The results of Pearson Chi-Square distribution validate the role of caste in the migration decision of SCs'. Pearson Chi-square calculated value 7.006** (df=2) > table value 5.991 at 05 per cent significant level. Thus, the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted that caste has played a significant role in the migration decision of SCs from the Marathwada region.

Means of Caste Intervention: Situation of Migrants at Place of Origin

The study went with open-ended questions about describing how caste involves their migration decision. The respondents' responses identify in some ways, which leads to caste intervention. Caste involves the migration decision of SCs through bondage labour, discrimination in getting work, discrimination at workplaces and low wages, and lack of basic amenities at the colonies of SCs in villages. Humiliation and caste atrocities also were responsible for affecting the economic and social conditions of SCs. Most SCs depend on upper castes or landlords for employment and livelihood. Agricultural land is the primary source of the rural economy, which is less accessible for SCs. In village society, agricultural land ownership helps a household maintain higher economic and social status. The situation of SCs before migration is studied to measure their occupational level, incomes, wages and working hours, distribution of agriculture landholdings, condition of other SCs households in villages, relation with different castes, and caste discrimination at the workplace in villages.

Occupational Structure of Caste

The caste system ascribed low graded occupations characterised by low productivity. Ascription of occupation was based on caste that was determined by birth. The structure of caste does not allow occupation mobility. Consequently, this social group lives in poverty and misery (Sundaram and Tendulkar, 2003). Many migrant workers from SCs were bondage labourers in agriculture. In most cases, their landlords/masters belonged to upper castes Hindus. This system is an example of slavery and exploitation of workers, which forfeiture of freedom of employment and loss of economic rights (Nagesh, 1981).

Table 8
Occupation Status before Migration

S.No.	Occupation	No. HH	Percent
1	Agricultural Labour	138	67.3
2	Cowboy	11	5.3
3	Casual Labour	16	7.8
4	Unemployed	10	4.8
5	Farmer	08	3.9
6	Caste Occupation	10	4.8
7	Self Employed	4	1.9
8	Other	8	3.9
	Total	205	100

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017.

Table 8 shows the occupation status of SC migrants at their origin place. 67.3 per cent were agriculture labourers before migration. The households of Matang and Chambhar were performing their caste occupation. The caste occupation of Chambhar is repairing foot wares. Matang makes ropes, bamboo pots, sweeps steaks, plays musical instruments (Halgi, Sanai), removes and disposes of dead animals from villages (particularly from upper castes' houses), and collects dead animals' skin.

Agriculture Land Holdings among SCs Migrants at Origin

Agriculture land is the primary source of survival, employment, income, and social status in India's rural economy and society (Bandopadhyay, 1993). Table 9 explored agriculture land distribution among SCs migrant households at their origin places. There is 62.4 per cent of households do not have agricultural land. On the contrary, 37.6 per cent have agricultural land. In which marginal and small landholdings, farmers shared 35.2 per cent of the total sample. The size of land holdings decreases

with increasing household size, affecting total production and productivity per person.

Table 9
Agriculture land distribution among SCs migrants at origin place

S.No.	Land in Hectare	No. HH	Percent
1	No Agriculture Land	128	62.4
2	Less than 0.5 hectare	13	6.4
3	0.5 to 1 hectare	32	15.6
4	1.1 to 2 hectare	26	12.7
5	2.1 to 3 hectare	3	1.5
6	3.1 to 4 hectare	2	1.0
7	More than 4 hectare	1	0.5
	Total	205	100

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017.

Mostly farming is dependent on the monsoon rain and using traditional techniques. Output in agriculture is declined with the decrease in rainfall (Dev, 2012). Small holdings restrict the use of modern technology on the one hand, and large depending population increased disguised unemployment, which reduces per person productivity in agriculture and consequently decreases income.

Caste-based Rural Society

The nature of caste identities is very sharp and hierarchical in rural society. Caste discrimination and exploitation by the other Hindu castes are made the life of SCs more miserable. Since most of the income resources are concentrated in the upper castes' hands, their discriminatory approach took away opportunities for a better life from SCs. The relations among the castes in rural India are taken many low castes out of the villages (Gupta, 2005). Social harmony is an essential factor for the growth and development of society and the economy.

Moreover, it is reflected in social relations. As Indian society is divided into castes, it creates challenges for social equality and harmony in society and the economy. Many incidences of caste discrimination and atrocities from the region of Marathwada pointed out that the willingness of upper/dominant castes to accepting of marginal development of SCs is declining. The unrest for SCs in upper castes is increasing. The study tried to quantify social relations with SCs in villages of the Marathwada region.

Figure 1
Caste Relations in Villages

Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017.

Figure 1 has shared respondents' opinions regarding social relations of SCs with other Hindu castes at their origin places. 35.6 per cent of respondents believed that other Hindu castes' harmonious and cooperative behaviour. While 38 per cent of respondents experienced that other Hindu castes did not want to have any relation with SCs, they belong to historically untouchable/impure castes. Furthermore, according to 26.3 per cent of respondents, people from dominant castes discriminate against them, not allowing entry into village temples, restricting them from accessing public resources, paying low wages for more work, and suppressing them in the public domain. This discrimination is harmful to the socio-economic development of these lower castes and the entire region because it prohibits SCs from accessing means of livelihood at the origin.

Discrimination, Humiliation, and Atrocities

Violence against SCs by the upper castes in Maharashtra is increasing due to their movement for emancipation and human rights. The upper caste does not tolerate the struggle of SCs for a dignified life; hence the humiliation and violation are increasing (Yerankar, 2011). These atrocities occur against SCs at workplaces when accessing common resources in villages.

Table 10
Caste Discrimination in Workplace before Migration

	Yes	No	Total
Caste Discrimination at the workplace	102 (49.8)	103 (50.2)	205 (100)
Caste Discrimination at the village	108 (52.7)	97 (47.3)	205 (100)

Note: Figures in the brackets are percentages.
Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017

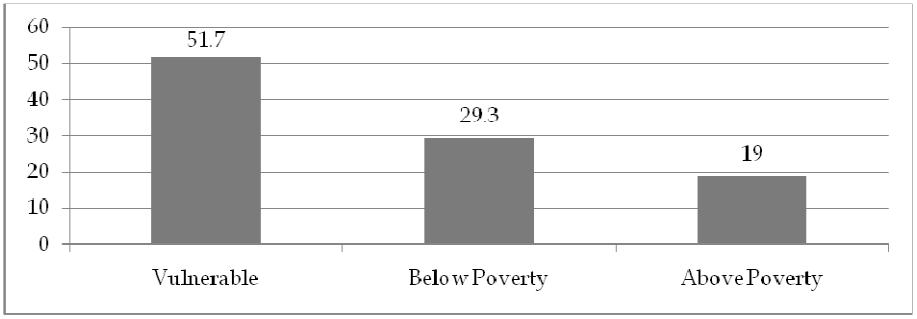
Discrimination against SCs at workplaces and residences is common even after 70 years of independence. Table 10 shows that 50.2 per cent of respondents experienced caste discrimination during work in villages.

Incidents faced by respondents are in terms of (i) disrespect and humiliation, (ii) practice untouchability at the workplace, separate arrangement of drinking water and place of lunch, (iii) assaulted for no or negligible mistake, (iv) paid fewer wages and forced to do more work, and (v) untimely payment for work. At the same time, 47.3 per cent went through incidents of caste discrimination at residence. As per the respondents' opinion, it was tough to accept that SCs are human beings and have equal rights to live dignified lives as upper-caste Hindus.

Low Income and Poverty

Workers from SCs are primarily agricultural and casual labourers. These occupations are low-paid in the labour market, leading to a low-income level. Moreover, the size of the family is more extensive, which widens the gap between expenditure and income, resulting in economic deprivation. Poverty is the unique feature of the SCs in rural areas (Sundaram and Tendulkar, 2003). Information about the condition of SCs in general in villages is collected from statements of respondents. The views are registered in three types such as (i) Vulnerable: Katcha house, poor condition of households, not having land and utterly dependent on others for job and livelihood, (ii) Below poverty, having marginal landholdings, working on other's land, getting minimum wages and lower-income, (iii) Above poverty, not a poor condition, having small/medium landholdings, semi pucca.

Figure 2
Economic Conditions of SCs in Villages



Source: Primary Field Survey by Author, 2017

Figure 2 illustrates the situation of SCs in villages through statements of respondents. 51.7 per cent of respondents said that the condition of SCs in their villages is vulnerable. Nearly 29.3 per cent of migrant households were living below poverty. In contrast, just 19 per cent of households were in good economic conditions.

Water Scarcity and Drought

SCs are treated as impure and polluted communities by the upper Hindu castes. This approach of upper caste prohibits SCs from accessing common natural resources such as water. Many violent incidents threatened SCs, which stopped them from accessing common resources. Droughts in the Marathwada region make their life more vulnerable (Adagale, 2020). The large numbers of SCs migrants from the Jalna district were affected by the water scarcity.

Table 11 depicts the results of the Chi-square of association between the caste discrimination against SCs and their migration decision. Part (i) of table 8 highlights people's behaviour from other castes with SCs before migration. 65.4 respondents said that other castes' behaviour was discriminatory and contributed to their migration decision. Chi-square calculated value for association between role of caste in migration decision and the discriminatory conduct of other Hindu castes towards SCs at villages 7.216**> table value 3.841. The hierarchical and discriminatory, caste-based relations are influenced the migration decisions of SCs in villages of the Marathwada region.

Table 11
Chi-Square Results of Associations between Socio-Economic Situations of SCs and Migration Decision

Role of Caste in the Migration Decision		Harmonious/ Equal	Maintaining Distance/ Discriminatory	Total	Pearson Chi-square
(i) Behaviour of other Castes with SCs in villages					
No	Observed	37 (18.0)	44 (21.5)	81(39.5)	7.216** (df=1)
	Expected	28.1	52.9		
Yes	Observed	34 (16.6)	90 (43.9)	124 (60.5)	
	Expected	42.9	90		
Total	71 (34.6)	134 (65.4)	205(100)		
(ii) Caste discrimination faced in any format at the village					
		Yes	**No**	**Total**	15.307** (df=1)
No	Observed	29 (14.1)	52 (25.4)	81 (39.5)	
	Expected	42.7	38.3		
Yes	Observed	79 (38.5)	45 (22.0)	124 (60.5)	
	Expected	65.3	58.7		
Total	108 (52.7)	97 (47.3)	205(100)		
(iii) Caste discrimination faced in the workplace					
		Yes	**No**	**Total**	14.447** (df=1)
No	Observed	27 (13.2)	54 (26.3)	81 (39.5)	
	Expected	40.3	40.7		
Yes	Observed	75 (36.5)	49 (24.0)	124 (60.5)	
	Expected	61.7	62.3		
Total	102 (49.7)	103 (50.3)	205 (100)		

Note: Figures in the brackets are percentages. **05 per cent significance level.

Part (ii) focused on caste discrimination faced by SCs and their migration decision has a significant association. Nearly 53 per cent faced caste discrimination personally. The association between caste discrimination and migration decision validated by Chi-square calculated Value 15.307** much higher than the table value. Section (iii) concerned discrimination and atrocities at the workplace, where 49.7 per cent of SCs respondents were victims of this injustice. The discrimination and atrocities at the workplace also influenced the migration decision of SCs. The chi-square value is 14.447** higher than the table value at the 05 per cent significance level.

Conclusion

Industrial growth has spread in developing countries, with the increasing globalisation. This industrial growth brought modern means of transportation and communication to rural areas. It helps to push migrants from the low developed to developed regions, better employment and livelihood opportunities (Chakravarty and Barua, 2011). The migration of SCs is driven by caste factors from the region of Marathwada, highlighting the social and economic underdevelopment of the area. Their employment opportunities are affected by their caste identities. Caste discrimination at workplaces, low income, lack of basic amenities at colonies of SCs, and minor possession of agricultural land are factors forcing SCs to move from their origin places. The dominant upper castes tried to control SCs with their social, political, economic, and religious power. This control by the upper castes curbs the freedom and liberty in the individual and social life of SCs. The absence of freedom and liberty due to the caste system forced SCs to migrate to cities for better social dignity and standard of life.

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Should India Change Its 'Health for All' Strategy? : Learning from the Covid-19 Crisis

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In every mature society, there used to be a clear issue in public policy discourse i.e., the health of its population. Universal health coverage has always been an important aspect of the national health policies of India. This paper aims to analyse the current Indian healthcare system's adequacy and preparedness for achieving the 'Health for All' target. India has framed National Health Policy, 2017, along the lines of SDG-3, as a strategy to achieve the health and wellbeing of its citizen. At the same time, the continuing pandemic Covid-19 has affected healthcare and human security severely and exposed the shortcoming of the healthcare system of India. Though various steps have been taken by the Government of India to counter the Covid-19 pandemic yet this health crisis has overburdened the already overstretched healthcare system. Therefore, the Indian healthcare system needs to be strengthened and expanded by increasing its expenditure as per NHP, 2017 set goals and WHO guidelines. This paper critically examines the developments dues to Covid-19 and the government's response to them. It also analyses the earlier health policies and suggests the future policy option that can be adopted for preparing healthcare facilities to handle a health emergency like situation too.

Introduction

Healthcare not just includes medical care but all dimensions of promotive and preventive care too. Generally, the public good is recognised

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at the centre of healthcare. That is why the delivery of healthcare services cannot be left unregulated or driven by private players only. Ironically, the private healthcare sector of India is one of the biggest and rapidly growing sectors in the world, with more than 80 per cent outpatient care which is supported by out-of-pocket health expenditure. Public healthcare is mostly concentrated on preventive and promotive health services especially in rural areas, whereas most of the curative services are provided by public hospitals in cities or by private hospitals. Therefore, a huge inequality persists between rural-urban areas and even among different states.

Since 1983, Indian National Health Policies have been striving towards universal health coverage or 'Health for All' goals for its people. Every time, an epidemic or pandemic hit the country makes this goal is more challenging to attain. These pandemics test the capabilities and strength of the public healthcare system and simultaneously make it weaker too. The bearings of the Covid-19 pandemic have been experienced across the world. It overshadowed the overall development activities in all spheres of life. In the post-pandemic period, most of the resources used to be focused on reviving economic activities, leaving the already shattered healthcare system in a wimpy condition (World Bank, 2021).

The Sustainable Development Goal-3 (SDG-3) aims at the health and well-being of all people across the world. Indeed, this health goal has become secondary due to the outburst of this Covid pandemic. The focus has shifted from chronic or acute diseases, women and child health to pandemic affected patients. The governments across the world could not predict the outbreak and duration of the Covid-19 crisis, even though they were not fully prepared for the crisis. The international collective efforts for health have been adversely affected by the pandemic.

While, India has already framed its National Health Policy, 2017, along the lines of SDG-3 to attain 'Health for All' by increasing access and improving the quality of health services at an affordable cost. Conversely, the immediate Covid-19 pandemic has made the healthcare system more fragile with massive deaths and infection cases. Thus, the critical question arises - Should India change its strategy for attaining the universal health coverage goal for its people?

Methodology

For this paper, the literature search was done to gather information from various databases like Google Scholar, Scopus, Medicine/PubMed, and Web of Science, especially for the Indian context. Data was collected from

various GoI websites, Niti Aayog, National Health Profile, RBI, reliable national and international newspapers for the Covid-19 developments, morbidity and mortality rate, and challenges faced by the healthcare system. The keywords used for searches were 'Covid-19', 'Indian Health System', 'National Health Policy', 'Lockdown', 'Healthcare', 'India's Response', 'Pandemics', and 'Health for All'. The review is based on the secondary data analysis and the findings are discussed in the following sections.

Background of National Health Policies of India

An important International Conference, which emphasised the need and recognition of primary healthcare, was held at Alma Ata, (formerly in USSR, present-day Almaty city, Kazakhstan) on 6-12 September, 1978. It was the first instance that declared the importance of primary healthcare. Additionally, the state is recognised as responsible for providing healthcare to its people and expressed the need to achieve the 'Health for All by 2000'(Alma-Ata, 2004). India did not have any formal health policy till 1983. In 1983, along the lines of the Alma Ata declaration, India had framed its first National Health Policy (NHP, 1983). It not only included the recommendations of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) but Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) also (Malakar, 2020). The NHP, 1983 was majorly targeted to achieve the 'Health for All by 2000' goal and stressed upon the primary health care. But it failed to achieve its goal, meanwhile, the government promoted the privatisation of healthcare due to LPG economic reforms in the 1990s, which further caused the exploitation of the poor.

According to a report on Macroeconomics and Health by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (2005), the second NHP, 2002 was focused on a more realistic and equitable people-oriented approach and also advocated the use of traditional medicines like Ayurvedic medicine, Unani medicine, and Siddha. But it is also proved inefficacious to provide basic health needs to people. The gap between rural and urban health care services had been increased. However, in 2005, the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) was introduced, which enhanced the health infrastructure and services in rural areas up to some extent. It was considered as the first step toward universal health care, but it could not achieve the Millennium Development Goals before its target year 2015, which were adopted in the year 2000 by United Nations (Reddy, 2019).

The National Health Policy, 2017 (NHP, 2017): 'Health for All'

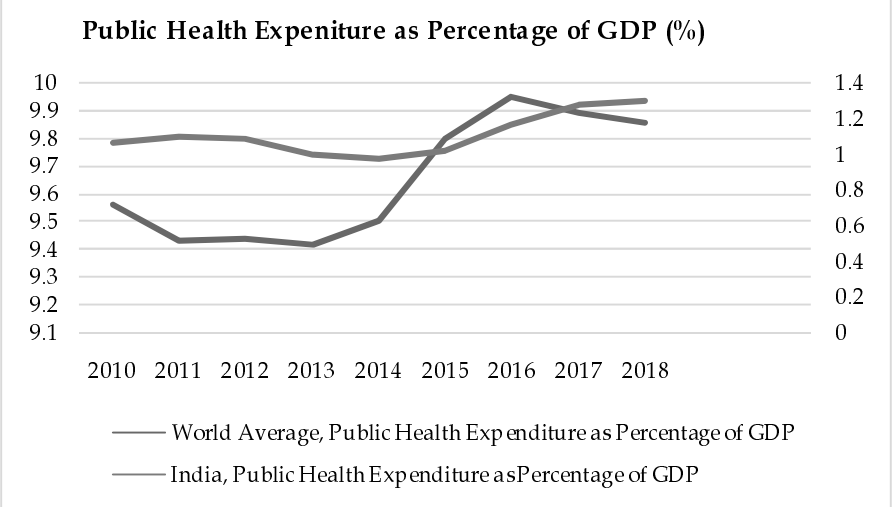
The (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2017) suggests that the NHP, 2017 aims, "To attain the highest possible level of health and wellbeing for all at all ages, through a preventive and promotive health care orientation in all development policies and universal access to good quality health care services without anyone having to face financial hardships as a consequence" (p. 1).

It also recommends health insurance schemes. Along the lines of the health insurance recommendation of NHP 2017, the National Health Protection Mission (NHPM) was launched by Government of India (also known as the 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme), in 2018. It is one of the largest healthcare schemes in the world (covering approximately 500 million people in India), popularly known as 'Modicare' like 'Obamacare' in the USA. Earlier national health policies like 1983, and 2002, mainly focused on communicable diseases and followed sick patient care policy. In NHP 2017, the focus has been shifted towards non-communicable and infectious diseases and to reach out the universal health coverage in a comprehensive way at an affordable cost.

NHPM consists of two major constituents: Health & Wellness Centres and Pradhan Mantri - Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY). PMJAY is a flagship programme, that aims to cover 100 million vulnerable households (of five members, i.e., 500 million people), which is approximately 40 per cent of the total population. It provides up to Rs. 5 lakh of health insurance coverage annually, to each family for secondary and tertiary healthcare services (Ministry of Finance, 2018). The total insurance coverages of the Indian population are only 37 per cent, healthcare spending per capita is $209, and out-of-pocket (OOP) health expenditure per capita is $136 with a life expectancy of 68.9 years (Gupta, 2020).

NHP, 2017 has proposed to reduce the out-of-pocket expenditure caused by healthcare costs and to reduce catastrophic health expenditure experienced by households, which further pushed them to poverty. Additionally, it also proposed an increase in government health spending from the current 1.15 per cent to 2.5 per cent of its GDP by the year 2025 and states' health expenditure increment to more than 8 per cent of their budgets by the year 2020 ((Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2017). The health expenditure percentage has been varying from 1.07 per cent in 2010 to 1.3 per cent in 2018, with the lowest point as 0.98 per cent in 2014. This percentage is far below the world average public health expenditure which is approximately 9.9 per cent.

Figure 1
Trends in Public Health Expenditure



Source: National Health Profile of India, 2019, from http://www.cbhidghs.nic.in/showfile.php?lid=1147 & World Bank, Retrieved August 11, 2021, from https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.CHEX.GD.ZS

RBI (2020) explains that the health expenditure by states and UTs, (2019-2020 BE), only Assam and Delhi have successfully achieved the NHP, 2017 target for states i.e., 8 per cent. While Punjab, Maharashtra, Haryana, Karnataka, and Gujarat are far behind the health expenditure target, West Bengal and Bihar states come under the lowest health expenditure per capita. The overall health expenditure by states and UTs is merely 1 per cent of GSDP. Notwithstanding the progress of centre and states in health expenditure in recent years, the universal health goal will remain a lofty dream. The healthcare sector direly needs increased spending by the government.

Public Health Infrastructure: Present Scenario

The report of the Bhore Committee (1946) has been considered a 'leading light' report for India in the healthcare sector. The existing health policies and health system have evolved from it. It recommended a three-tier model for preventive and curative services of healthcare in rural and urban areas. First is the Primary level: Sub-health centres and Primary Health Centres (PHC), at the Secondary level: Community Health Centres (CHC) and Sub-district hospitals, and Tertiary level: District hospitals and Medical

colleges (Chokshi et al., 2016). This was done to enable every individual, irrespective of his/her socio-economic condition could access primary healthcare services. As per the National Health Profile, 2019 of India, there are 158,417 Sub-centres; 25,743 PHCs and 5,624 CHCs are functioning nationwide.

Table 1
Number of Government Hospitals* and Beds (State/ UT)

States/UTs	No. of Hospitals	No. of Hospital Beds	No. of ICU Beds	No. of Ventilators
Uttar Pradesh	4,635	76,260	3,813	1,907
Rajasthan	2,850	47,054	2,353	1,176
Karnataka	2,842	69,721	3,486	1,743
Odisha	1,806	18,519	926	463
West Bengal	1,566	78,566	3,928	1,964
Kerala	1,280	38,004	1,900	950
Assam	1,226	17,142	857	429
Tamil Nadu	1,217	77,532	3,877	1,938
Bihar	1,147	11,664	583	292
Telangana	863	20,983	1,049	525
Himachal Pradesh	801	12,399	620	310
Maharashtra	711	51,446	2,572	1,286
Punjab	682	17,933	897	448
Haryana	668	11,240	562	281
Jharkhand	555	10,784	539	270
Madhya Pradesh	465	31,106	1,555	778
Uttarakhand	460	8,512	426	213
Gujarat	438	20,172	1,009	504
Andhra Pradesh	258	23,138	1,157	578
Arunachal Pradesh	218	2,404	120	60
Chhattisgarh	214	9,412	471	235
Meghalaya	157	4,457	223	111
Tripura	156	4,429	221	111
Jammu & Kashmir	143	7,291	365	182
Delhi	109	24,383	1,219	610
Mizoram	90	1,997	100	50
Goa	43	3,012	151	75
Nagaland	36	1,880	94	47
Sikkim	33	1,560	78	39
Manipur	30	1,427	71	36
Andaman & Nicobar	30	1,075	54	27
Daman & Diu,				
Dadra & N Haveli	17	859	43	21
Puducherry	14	3,569	178	89
Chandigarh	9	3,756	188	94
Lakshadweep	9	300	15	8
Ladakh	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	25,778	7,13,986	35,699	17,850

Source: (i) National Health Profile, 2019, MOHFW (ii) CDDEP
*These hospitals also included the Central government, State government, CHCs, and PHCs.

The seven states of India - Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Maharashtra, and Telangana have approximately 65.2 per cent of hospital beds and ICU beds of the total in India. On the other hand, there are 43,487 hospitals; 1,185,242 hospital beds; 59,262 ICU beds, and only 29,631 ventilators beds are available in private sector hospitals which shows that the public sector is saturated in its infrastructure capacity (Kapoor et al., 2020).

According to data given by WHO, India has only 9.28 medical doctors (in 2019) per 10,000 population. This ratio is very much below the limit, prescribed by WHO i.e., 1:1,000 (One medical doctor per 1,000 population) (WHO, n.d.). Precisely, per 1,000 population of India has only 0.8 practicing physicians; 1.5 nurses, and 0.5 hospital beds. Some states in India like Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Bihar, Odisha, and Jharkhand have even less than 0.5 beds per 1,000 population (Gupta, 2020). Thus, it could be concluded that the Indian health sector not only lacks infrastructure capacities but in human resources too. There are most of the private medical colleges and hospitals flourish in the country, which charges a huge amount of fees for medical studies and patients too.

Health Status Indicators

National Health Profile, 2019 shows that the Infant Mortality Rate, 2017 (IMR): 33 per 1000 live births, (74 in 1994), Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), 2016: 130 per 1,00,000 live birth, (178 in 2010), and the communicable disease that caused a high number of deaths during 2018 are Pneumonia, 30.65 per cent, Acute RespiratoryInfection, 27.21 per cent, Acute Diarrheal Diseases, 10.55 per cent, H1N1, 8.03 per cent, Acute Encephalitis, Syndrome, 4.63 per cent, Viral Hepatitis (All Causes), 4.25 per cent, Encephalitis, 3.86 per cent, Enteric Fever (Typhoid), 2.90 per cent, Others, 7.92 per cent. Whereas major non-communicable diseases that caused high mortality and morbidity during 2014-2018 are, cardiovascular diseases (CVD), Diabetes, COPD, Cancer, and Mental health disorder and injuries. There is a new trend noticed during the last decade, that communicable diseases have caused more mortalities and morbidities than non-communicable diseases. The research and testing in communicable diseases are lagging in India (NHP, 2019).

Simultaneously, the burden of the disease in India is disproportionality high and there is a wide disparity in healthcare access and quality among various Indian states. Simultaneously, China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Bhutan are ahead of India in Health Quality and Access

(PTI, 2018). Many times, it caused a huge embarrassment and loss of lives when our health experts are unable to identify the spread of diseases. In June 2011, there was an outbreak of a mysterious disease with symptoms like unconsciousness with high fever, which caused more than 500 children dead in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. But, the doctors and experts from the National Institute of Virology who visited those hospitals, were unable to identify the disease. That was believed to be Japanese Encephalitis (JE) disease (PTI, 2011).

Recently, in September 2021 again a mysterious fever caused havoc in Uttar Pradesh. Most of the patients who died because of this fever are children and several hundred have been admitted to hospitals from almost six districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Each year this unidentified disease, believed as Japanese Encephalitis, caused hundreds of deaths, but unfortunately, its causes are yet to be identified. As per the data presented by the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NCVBDC) of India, 6,173 patients died out of total 51,999 infection cases since 2014. It also monitors Lymphatic Filariasis, Kala Azar, Chikungunya, Dengue, and Acute Encephalitis Syndrome/JE cases in India (Biswas, 2021).

This is not new when epidemics outbreak has become a concern for the health sector. Earlier SARS-CoV (2003) and MERS-CoV (2015) were the Coronavirus outbreaks. Historically, India has already encountered many epidemics or pandemics due to malnutrition, the absence of sanitation facilities, and the public healthcare system. There is a long list of infectious diseases even if we consider only the 20th and 21st centuries: Influenza Pandemic (1918), Polio Epidemic (1970-1990), Small Pox (1975), Surat Plague Epidemic (1994), Plague of Northern India (2002), Dengue Epidemic and SARS Epidemic (2003), Meningococcal Meningitis Epidemic (2005), Chikungunya and Dengue Outbreak (2006), Gujarat Jaundice Epidemic 2009), H1N1 Flu Epidemic (2009), Odisha Jaundice Epidemic (2013), Indian Swine Flu Outbreak (2015) and Nipah Outbreak (2018) (Swetha et al., 2019). In the present scenario, the Covid-19 pandemic exposed the Indian healthcare system's capabilities and shortcomings.

The Covid-19 Pandemic and Indian Situation

Non-Covid diseases: Covid-19's first case was detected in India in January 2020 but the complete lockdown was announced on 22 April. This pandemic outbreak diverted the whole focus of the health system from acute and chronic disease to Covid-19 infection and active cases. OPD services and antenatal and neonatal care of women were disrupted; the treatment for TB,

HIV, diabetes, hypertension, etc. was compromised. Many patients are advised by hospitals to delay their treatment due to the rise in Covid infection. It was reported that a patient with a heart attack had to visit from one hospital to another in Delhi as he was denied treatment by RML and GTB hospitals. Various other cancer and cardiac arrest patients faced denial of treatment too which was highlighted by social media (Jain, 2020). As per another report on 8 April 2020, the super specialty hospital in Bengaluru postponed their chemotherapy treatment for cancer for a few weeks, and patients were advised to stay at home until they faced severe symptoms. Another issue faced by chronic disease patients was the shortage of blood in blood banks due to restrictions on the organisation of blood donation camps and the restricted movement of blood donors (The Hindu, 2020).

Covid-19 Situation

Most of the countries across the world have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic including India. In fact, India stood in second place while analysing the total infection cases of Covid. The following table shows the data of five countries with the top most infection cases, no. of deaths, recovered patients, active cases, etc.:

Table 2
Covid-19 Infection Cases (Cases as of 13 September 2021)

Country	Total Cases	New Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered	Active Cases	Total Tests	Total Population
USA	41,853,362		677,988	31,871,868	9,303,506	606,198,852	331,939,197
India	33,264,175	+633	442,907	32,447,032	374,236	543,014,076	1,386,530,639
Brazil	20,999,779		586,882	20,050,471	362,426	57,095,219	213,287,772
UK	7,226,276		134,200	5,788,918	1,303,158	282,141,831	145,964,778
Russia	7,140,070		192,749	6,389,657	557,664	183,200,000	5,343,395

Source: Worldometer, accessed on 13 September 2021, at https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries

Most of the human and institutional resources of the public health sector were working for the Covid-19 cases, which led to a crunch of resources for other health services. A critical shortage of hospital beds, ICU beds, oxygen concentrators, required lifesaving drugs and medicines for Covid-19, and delayed test results have been faced by patients. Private sectors either did not perform well since it was not fully equipped with facilities to take patients with Covid-19 infection or which had these facilities, charged a huge amount of money even for a single bed per day (Mirror Now, 2021). The private hospitals charged a high rate from Rs.

50,000 and Rs. 90,000 per day for the general ward and ICU respectively to 10 days bills up to Rs. 1.40 lakhs (Madhavan, 2020). Therefore, the High Court of Kerala intervened and asked the state government to check private hospital overcharges for Covid-19 patients and called it 'loot in a trying time'. Here, even the judiciary had to intervene for preventing arbitrary charges of private hospitals those further caused mental trauma for patients (Scroll, 2021).

There is additionally another risk faced by patients, the risk of infection in hospitals versus delaying treatment while there is a crunch of healthcare facilities, professionals, and health workers. Most of the health workers and doctors are overworked, without rest and sleep, and emotionally stretched, sometimes they have to face social exclusion and isolation. In this scenario, the healthcare worker and patients both are put in a situation where the healthcare system has surrendered to the Covid situation. Therefore, the question arises regarding the distribution of scarce healthcare resources among Covid patients or Covid and Non-Covid patients.

Indian Vaccine Drive and Shortage

India started the Covid vaccination drive in January 2021, with Covishield (developed by Oxford-Astra Zeneca and SII) and Covaxin (developed by Bharat Biotech) vaccine. At first, the four priority groups were aimed for vaccination: Healthcare workers, people over 50 years of age, public workers, and people with comorbidities and below 50 years of age. India even exported the vaccines to neighbouring and African countries. But in-home, only 30 million people got fully vaccinated till May 2021, which was approximately 2 per cent of the whole Indian population, and that period was the peak of the second wave of Covid-19. The situation was as gloomy as Covid cases crossed over 20 million and at least 2,26,188 deaths from the virus (Alluri, 2021).

It is argued that despite being the world's largest producer of pharmaceuticals and boasted as the 'pharmacy of the world', then why did India face a shortage of vaccines. Some critics allege that India should have stored the Covid vaccine for its population first than exporting it and the production of the vaccine should have ramped up before the second wave (Thiagarajan, 2021). In the wake of the crisis, the Government of India also approved the use of Russian Sputnik V, for better vaccination protection. There were some reservations also, in public while taking the Covid vaccine doses about its side effects and combinations of both vaccine doses.

National Task Force

A National Task Force (NTF) was constituted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in April 2020, to combat the Covid-19 pandemic systematically and effectively. The main objective of NTF was to focus on the research studies, diagnostics, testing strategies, treatments, and surveillance of Coronavirus. It also focused on the vaccine and drug development (Hindustan Times, 2020).

Lockdown to stop the proliferation and infection of Coronavirus:

The government of India took several preventive measures like the Janata curfew, travel restrictions, or lockdown to break off the infection continuity of coronavirus and the lockdown has been considered the most effective measure. On 24 March 2020, a nationwide lockdown (including national and international travel) was announced by the Government of India for 21 days, which was further extended several times till 30 June 2020. After that unlocking procedure was started as per prevailing conditions, with the government's guidelines, in a phased manner (Economic Times, 2021).

But in the next year, 2021, the second wave of Covid-19, again smacked India by February end, mostly caused by the careless behaviour of people and non-compliance to Covid protocols. While it was considered that India successfully handled the first wave, the second wave proved more devastating and claimed a large number of lives. Simultaneously, it exposed the Indian healthcare system which was reached the brink of collapse. From 5 April 2021, the night curfew and lockdown were imposed in a phased manner in different states (Kar et al., 2021).

Various experts have criticised the government for non-preparation for the second wave, exporting Covid vaccines to other countries, and lack of caution for Covid protocols in election campaigns.

Is the 'Health for All' Target: A Distant Dream for India?

'Health for All', is defined by the SDG-3 as the future target to be achieved by countries and India too. Around 90 million people were pulled out of poverty simultaneously, and around 60 million people were pushed into poverty because of huge out-of-pocket healthcare expenditures for availing services (NHP, 2015). A large part of the population is dependent upon poverty alleviation programmes, which rarely meet their targets unless they got financial protection against healthcare costs. NHP, 2017 aims to increase the government health spending to 2.5 per cent of GDP which is

considered a first step towards strengthening public healthcare services for common people. 'Health' should be recognised as a citizen's right India missed the opportunity while the proposed 'Right to Health' is removed from the draft of NHP, 2017 because the Indian healthcare system is not prepared for the same (Gopakumar, 2017).

According to (IBEF, 2017) India has the fastest-growing healthcare industry; it is expected to rank third in the healthcare market by 2020 and one of the most favoured investment sectors. In 2015, the healthcare sector of India has already become the 5th largest employment sector, which gave direct employment to 4,713,061 people. Despite all these developments, India has to face a serious shortage of doctors and nurses for establishing a conducive environment for universal health coverage. The migration of medical professionals, privatisation, and marketisation of health education or healthcare services are the major causes for the dearth of the healthcare workforce in India (Walton-Roberts, 2015). Now the question arises, how India is going to achieve its 'Health for All' objective with just 2.5 per cent of GDP expenditure and a lack of healthcare infrastructure and professionals.

The NHP, 2017 also paves the path for the private player to perform in coordination with the public healthcare sector. Indian private healthcare sector is one of the best service providers around the world, which also contributes to the country's GDP majorly through medical tourism. The provisions like referral mechanism from public hospitals to charitable and private hospitals and patients can be admitted there on free/subsidised beds, are proposed by NHP, 2017 (Bajpai, 2015). But one thing needs to be explained by policymakers here, how the government is going to balance the profit earning of private hospitals and providing healthcare services to people while they are usually unable to pay for these services.

While the 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme also provides public funds which are managed by private health insurance sectors, yet it does not provide coverage to the whole population of India, and other healthcare expenditures majorly caused by communicable diseases are not covered by it. The 'PMJAY' covered hospitals are mostly from Rajasthan, Gujarat, Kerala, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh. However, it's an irony that most of the private hospitals are empaneled under this, and admission of patients is higher in a private hospitals than in public hospitals. Therefore, it is argued that the public insurance funds are misused by fraudulent expenditure claims made by private hospitals. Moreover, most of the poor in India are not educated enough to understand the insurance schemes provided by the government leads to fraud by private hospitals (Saraswathy, 2019).

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the World Bank suggested that India should have prepared itself long before the breakout of the Covid-19. The availability of beds in hospitals or in ICUs and the number of hospitals providing Covid facilities fell short approximately by 40 per cent in both the private and public sectors. Most of the burden of positive cases was borne by public institutions; private hospitals fell short due to a lack of health facilities. Additionally, the current healthcare facilities and resources have proved insufficient, overstretched, understaffed, and unequipped to handle an emergency like Covid-19.

Since 'Health' is a State List subject therefore considered as the sole responsibility of states only. While the term cooperative federalism is used in policy documents to maintain coordination between state and centre healthcare policies, especially in pandemic responses. Therefore, the health should be transferred to the 'Concurrent List', where both the governments are responsible for making related policies and their implementation too. Additionally, the healthcare expenditure should be increased by at least 5-10 per cent of GDP in India. Here India has to higher the stack because of acute infectious and chronic non-communicable diseases (Jakovljevic et al., 2019). India follows a multilevel governance system both in the political and healthcare system, where each level of government has its responsibilities. Indeed, coordinated health governance at each level whether it is centre, state, or local, is the need of the hour. There should be informed and coordinated planning and decision making, data and reporting, capacity building among different levels of governance, and more power should be delegated to local governments.

However, the NHP, 2017 should be reframed to strengthen public healthcare facilities than be dependent on the private sector. We are mostly dependent on the private healthcare sector for curative services because of its advanced technology and world-class facilities. On the other hand, only a few medical colleges like AIIMS in the public healthcare sector have the above-said facilities which are very much insufficient to handle a large population of the country. The public healthcare sector of India should be focused not only on preventive but on curative cures too; the NHP and Ayushman Bharat both can perform a great role in strengthening the same. Research and development in healthcare play a crucial role in the advancement of cure, medicine, and vaccine development. Therefore, it should be funded adequately so that it would provide world-class facilities to the people of India.

Conclusions

The Covid-19 pandemic has proved as a multidimensional catastrophe for humanity. It has affected every aspect of life whether it is health or economy or social life and caused psychological stresses around the world. At the same time, it exposed the deep inequalities and inadequacy of the healthcare system of countries including India. The Government of India took several measures like the Janata curfew, lockdowns, travel restrictions, quarantine, and social distancing to counter Covid. However, the inadequacy of healthcare facilities, doctors, nurses and other medical workforce, hospital, and ICU beds, ventilators in hospitals or in primary or community healthcare centres caused huge distress in the time of crisis. It seemed to be an eye-opener situation, while the Indian healthcare system is not adequate in normal times, how it could handle a pandemic situation like Covid-19.

The NHP, 2017 set a limit for the healthcare expenditure and the doctor-patient ratio has not been reached. Simultaneously, the passivity of the private healthcare sector is very disappointing; they either do not have adequate facilities or work for making huge money even in a time of crisis. People tried to get admitted to costly private facilities instead of public hospitals due to a lack of trust and a high rate of infection in public hospitals. The recent challenges faced by the Indian healthcare system are low healthcare expenditure, shortage of healthcare professionals (doctors and nurses), shortage of healthcare infrastructure, and the government programmes for universal health coverage, not covering the whole population.

Thus, Indian healthcare needs to be strengthened and expanded by increasing its expenditure as per NHP, 2017 set goals and WHO guidelines. The private healthcare sector has not proved reliable in emergencies. Therefore, public healthcare facilities should be made more adequate and inclusive, especially for rural and poor populations and India has a substantial portion of the same. It will reduce their out-of-pocket health expenditure; consequently, it will help them to pull out of poverty. Therefore, it is suggested that India should revisit its National Health Policy to reframe the strategy for achieving the 'Health for All' target for its citizen.

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Household Coping and Women during Drought in Bundelkhand Region of Uttar Pradesh: With Special Reference to the Jhansi District of Uttar Pradesh

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This paper finds that the women in NGO intervened and government-supported villages are much more capable to cope up with the worst affects of drought in comparison to those where no external organisational support is available. The women in Manpur village better handle the water crisis and have various skills regarding water harvesting. Multi-hazard profile of the selected village Baghaura makes it more vulnerable. It is revealed through the study that the women majorly adopt the short-term coping methods like reducing food intake, using less water for hygiene, etc., while males tend to migrate permanently or temporarily.

Introduction

Disasters are defined as "a catastrophe, mishap, calamity or grave occurrence in any area, arising from natural or manmade causes, or by accident or negligence which results in substantial loss of life or human suffering or damage to, and destruction of property, or damage to, or degradation of, environment, and is of such a nature or magnitude as to

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beyond the coping capacity of the community of the affected area" (Disaster Management Act, 2005). Disasters are categorised into a manmade and human category depending on the basis of their origin. However, drought is one such hazard that is the result of both natural and manmade actions. Though it is broadly considered a natural disaster but modern viewpoint sees it as the 'Mismanagement of Water'.

Drought is often defined as a period of below-average precipitation in a given region, resulting in prolonged shortages in water supply, whether atmospheric surface water or groundwater. It is weather linked natural disaster that is mingled with the impact of human activity in the present day. IMD classifies drought as moderate or severe drought depending upon the rainfall deficiency.

Drought directly affects the social and economic sector and has a very long-term effect. It is very difficult to demarcate its onset and end. And this is the very reason that the government and different regional and international organisations lose their interest in taking action during drought or initiating rehabilitation and recovery actions in the drought-affected area.

South-East Asia is frequently affected by drought and its impacts. From 2015 to 2020, the entire ASEAN region experienced at least six months of drought (UNESCAP). Though India frequently faces flood which leads to vast visible direct impact, however, drought ranks first among natural disasters throughout the world in terms of the number of persons directly affected. The empirical evidence has shown that women suffered more in disasters and their specific needs were largely ignored. The various conventions at National Level such as Sendai Framework 2015-2030 also talk about building the resilience of the communities and thus, its priority actions suggest taking a more proactive approach and working systematically on mitigation and resilience building. Disasters are taken as a new opportunity to build back better, and thus, this new approach focuses on development considering the hazard profile of the region.

The Bundelkhand region of India is a newly emerged hotspot of drought. Demographically Bundelkhand has a total population of 18.3 million of which 79.1 per cent of the population lives in rural areas (Census 2011) and more than one-third of the households in these areas are considered to be Below the Poverty Line (BPL) which renders the region highly vulnerable. Thus, Bundelkhand which was once the highly developed region of Uttar Pradesh is now much backward and faces a severe water crisis which leads to several livelihood challenges. The drought in Bundelkhand is considered the result of the manmade activity. Drought as a

disaster is not a new natural phenomenon; it was witnessed in the past too and the ancient rulers had their traditional mechanism to manage its impact. For instance, the Bundela and Chandela rulers have built numerous water channels, reservoirs, ponds, and wells. But, its renovation or maintenance was not done which led to several water issues in the region.

Since the region is highly dependent upon rainfed agriculture; the drought in the region severely affects its economy. The income opportunity crisis in the region forces the males to migrate to different cities like Delhi, Punjab, and Mumbai, and thus, women are overburdened with the agriculture activity along with livestock rearing and family responsibilities. Apart from this, they spend 4-5 hrs daily on unproductive work like fetching water.

Drought adaptation refers to the strategies which are developed or implemented to enhance a system's ability to adjust to the changing climate and related events (e.g., drought) by avoiding potential damages and losses, and taking advantage of the opportunities or coping with the consequences UN ESCAP (2020). Since women are left behind they become the first responders in addressing the drought situation in the community. This paper thus looks into how women at the household level cope up with the drought situation.

Objectives of the Study

The study was aimed to study the socio-demographic profile of women experiencing drought and to analyse the drought coping mechanism of the women in the selected villages.

Review of Literature

The previous studies related to coping and adaptation by women or the innovations done by women have been reviewed. All these studies conducted by Academic Institutions, Government Agencies, Research Scholars, or NGOs have been included in the review.

The study by Udmale and others (2014) in Maharashtra State shows that farmers prepare themselves in different ways based on their resources and opportunities. Reducing expenses, keeping production for self, storing fodder for livestock, migration, selling livestock, and taking up off-farm income sources are other strategies adopted by farmers during drought apart from changing crop calendar, reducing water wastage, etc. The study further concludes that coping patterns highly depend upon the educational level of the family as the highly educated farmers were more conscious of drought

preparedness activities. Low education, small land holding size, and low income are major constraints in adaptation strategies.

An NGO Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) proved the capability of women and poor communities in rural India in handling disasters and addressing the urgent issues such as credit, food security, water and sanitation, health, education, and social infrastructure by initiating demonstration projects, community planning, and skills training, and by increasing their participation in local governance.

An analytical study done by Gokhale (2008) concludes that women do possess capacities and can be change agents. It further says that women had been the intermediaries and played a significant role in the monitoring and management process in the 1993 Latur earthquake and the 2001 Bhuj earthquake.

The study done by FAO and Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) on the livelihood adaptability to climate variability during drought in Northwest Bangladesh in 2006 looked into the local coping capacities and existing adaptation strategies. After assessing the situation at the field level it was found introducing long-lead climate forecasting, capacity building and training of community representatives, knowledge enhancement of community regarding drought loving crops, strengthening CBOs, market linkages and easy accessibility are few of the good practices for reducing drought impact.

UNICEF and RedR India (2016) in their study found that in Uttar Pradesh the families adopt one or more of the following coping strategies – 1/4th of families borrow money/food from others, 15 per cent cope up by collecting wild fruits and other produce, 30 per cent still practice barter system/exchange of goods for food, 20 per cent of people depend on PDS and 70 per cent purchase food with existing resources and earnings from work.

Prasad, (2016) analysed the 2015-2016 drought in nine states of India and found that a high degree of stress is prevalent in the disaster-affected area. People often adopt negative strategies like reducing the number of meals or reducing the number of times they eat to overcome the problem of food security. And the Indian culture which is one real example of patriarchy is well known for the women still eating the leftovers.

A qualitative study done by Segnestam Lisa (2017) following the case study method finds that short-term coping was more common among the women especially the female heads of the households while adaptive actions were common among men. Thus, it concludes that men being able to adapt have fewer vulnerabilities and women experience a downward spiral

in capacity which is indirectly dependent upon the gendered inequalities in tapping the resources.

Methodology

Descriptive cum Diagnostic research design is used in the study as enough literature related to preliminary studies on drought is accessible. The universe of study is the Manpur and Baghaura village of Babina block of Jhansi district of UP part of Bundelkhand region. As per census data 2011, Manpur village has a total of 446 households and Baghaura village has 388 households. Thus, 10 per cent of the total village households that is 45 respondents from Manpur and 39 respondents from Baghaura were selected. Only the women who were married were selected as the respondent. This study uses purposive sampling to interview respondents in the selected study villages. These villages were selected based on the village's vulnerability to drought and one of the two villages being intervened by an NGO. Both primary and secondary sources of data were collected The interview schedule, interview, focused group discussion, and observation were used as the tools and techniques to collect the primary data. Then the processing of data was done followed by analysis and interpretation.

Study Area Profile

In this study, the Babina block from the eight development blocks has been selected. And from the Babina block, out of the total of 50 Gram Panchayats, two GPs were selected, and from each GP one village was selected.

Babina Block

Babina is a block in the Jhansi district of UP state. Its headquarter is Babina (Rural) town and belongs to the Jhansi division. It is at an elevation of 285m. Its latitude is 25 degrees 15'0.00" N and 78 degrees 28'12.00" E. Total population of the rural area of the block is 1,49,966. Of the total population, 79,451 are males and the female population is 70,515. Babina rural spreads in 482.27 sq. km. and has 27,232 HHs. (District Gazette Census 2011) Hindi is the local language here, and very few people here speak Urdu also. BJP, SP, and BSP are the major political parties here.

Village Manpur

Village Manpur is located in the Manpur gram panchayats of Babina block of Jhansi district. This village is only 50 metres from the main road. It has a total of 446 HHs and the village is spread over 584.83 hectares. Manpur

as per census 2011 has a total population of 2,121 of which 1,099 are males and 1,022 are females. There is a total of 279 children in the age group 0-6 years of which 148 are males and 131 female children. Of the total of 2,121 persons, 937 are illiterates which is majorly the women that are 609. This indicates the very poor rate of education among females. There is a total of 946 workers in the village of which 601 are the main workers. Of the total 357 female workers, only 198 are main workers. The main workers are defined as the person who has worked for more than six or more months in economically productive activity (District Gazette Census 2011).

Baghaura Village

Baghaura village is an interior village in the Babina block of the Jhansi district. Baghaura village spreads in 700.7 hectares and it has a total of 388 HHs. The total population of the village is 2,301 of which 1217 are males and 1,084 are females. There is a total of 462 children in the age group 0-6 years of which 245 are male children and 217 are female children. There is a total of 1,257 illiterates in the village of which 770 are females and 487 are illiterate males. There is a total of 595 workers of which only 29 female workers are there. There are 562 main workers in the community and of them, only two females are the main workers. (District Gazette Census 2011)

Findings and Discussions

This section of the paper highlights: The socio-economic characteristic of the respondents who were interviewed across two villages of Babina block of district Jhansi; and The different coping strategies that women adopt during drought.

Here the various variables such as respondents' age, marital status, education, family type, head of the family, family occupation and respondents occupation, landholding, annual income of the family, housing conditions, ration card, debt position, and sources of borrowing money are discussed under the socio-economic profile of the respondent.

1. Profile of the Respondents

In this study, married women who were selected from two villages in the Babina block were the respondents. 44 per cent of respondents belong to the age group 30.1-45 years followed by 29.8 per cent of women between 18-30 years of age and 14.3 per cent of respondents belonging to age 45.1-60 years and only 11.9 per cent of women were above 60 years of age. All the respondents in the study expressed their faith in the Hindu religion. 32.1 per

cent of these respondents belong to the scheduled caste and 31 per cent to other backward classes followed by 22.6 per cent from the general category and 14.3 per cent from the scheduled tribe. 84.5 per cent of respondents do not have any differently-abled in the family followed by 15.5 per cent of respondents who have differently-abled dependents in their family. The study analysis on education shows that more than 1/3rd of the respondents that are 77.4 per cent of the respondents are illiterate followed by 21.4 per cent having completed primary education and only 1.2 per cent were graduates. The marital status of the respondents shows that 77.4 per cent were married while 22.6 per cent of the respondents are widows. 53.6 per cent of respondents have a joint family followed by 46.4 per cent of respondents belonging to a nuclear family. Majority of the HHs that is 59.5 per cent are headed by females followed by 40.5 per cent of males heading the family. The majority that is 65.4 per cent of the women prefer working as a farmer, agriculture labourer, and labourer followed by 31 per cent as labourer and 3.6 per cent as business women or artisans during the normal year while during drought years labour work become their primary source of income and farmer or working as agriculture labourer becomes their second preferred source of livelihood. The annual income of the family decreases during a drought year. 50 per cent of respondents' families earn less than Rs. 50,000 during the normal year which increases to 66.7 per cent during a drought year and 23.8 per cent earn between Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1 lakh during a normal year which decreases to 14.3 per cent. 11.9 per cent of respondents' families earning between Rs. 1-1.5 lakhs increases to 14.3 per cent during a drought year followed by 9.5 per cent of respondents' families earning between Rs. 1.5- 2 lakhs decreasing to 2.4 during a drought year and 3.6 per cent of respondents' family earning between Rs. 2-2.5 lakhs during normal year decreases to 1.2 per cent during a drought year and 1.2 per cent respondents family earn more than Rs. 2.5 lakhs during a normal year, however, 1.2 per cent respondents family have no income during a drought year. Thus, all the data reveals that the income of the respondent's family decreases during drought year. 50 per cent of the respondents have a Kaccha house while 33.3 per cent have a pucca house followed by 14.3 per cent have a thatched roof, and 2.4 per cent live in a hut. 56 per cent of the respondents have an APL card followed by 22.6 per cent having Antyodaya and 20.2 per cent of respondents have a BPL card and 1.2 per cent had no ration card. 42.9 per cent of the respondents do not take debt during the normal year which decreases to 32.1 per cent of respondents not taking debt during a drought year. This data thus reveals that the number of respondents taking debt

during drought years increases. 23.8 per cent of respondents borrow money from the bank while 14 per cent take from neighbours and 8.3 per cent take a loan under Kisan Credit Card and 7.1 per cent of respondents borrow money from relatives followed by 14.4 per cent borrowing money from multiple sources like CBOs, KCC, neighbours, baniya, relatives, etc.

2. *The Coping Mechanism Adopted by the Women*

Adaptation measures not only avoid losses but also generate co-benefits. Capacity is inversely proportional to vulnerability. Thus, enhancing the communities' capacity may reduce future vulnerabilities. The below-drawn tables show the different measures taken by respondents to cope up with the drought crisis.

Table 1
Respondent's period of work

Period	In place working		Working at Migrated Place	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Less than 3 months	33	39.3	11	13.1
3-6 months	32	38.1	14	16.7
More than 6 months	17	20.2	22	26.2
Don't work	2	2.4	37	44.0
Total	84	100.0	84	100.0

The above table 1 shows the period for which the respondents work in their own place and the period for which they migrate and work. 29.3 per cent of respondents work for less than 3 months in their place and 13.1 per cent work for less than 3 months at their migrated place. 38.1 per cent of respondents work for 3-6 months at their own place and 16.7 per cent migrate for the same period. 20.2 per cent of respondents work for more than 6 months at their place and 26.2 per cent work for more than 6 months at their migrated place. Only 2.4 per cent of respondents do not work at their own place and 44.0 per cent do not migrate to work. This data shows that 56 per cent of women folks also migrate for a certain period. These women migrate only when they have no income source in or around the village.

Table 2
Number of Meals taken during Normal and Drought Year

Meals	Normal Year		Drought Year	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Twice	18	21.4	24	28.6
Thrice	50	59.5	40	47.6
More than 3 times	16	19.1	20	23.8
Total	84	100.0	84	100.0

The above table 2 shows that 21.4 per cent of respondents eat twice during normal years which increases to 28.6 per cent during drought years while 59.5 per cent of respondents eat thrice during the normal year which decreases to 47.6 per cent during drought years followed by 19.1 per cent eating more than 3 times during the normal year which increases to 23.8 per cent during a drought year. The data is thus quite contradictory in comparison to previous findings as it reveals that many women reduce their food intake while there is a rise in number of meals for few respondents as they say we do not get work "*to khali baithe to aur bhook hi lagti hai*" and laughs. That is why we eat many times during the day. Women also said that they store both food to be cooked and raw food. Raw food like chuda, puffed rice, gram, etc. which can be directly eaten while wheat, rice, maize, and pulses are stored to prepare themselves for fighting drought situation if it emerges.

Table 3
Measures are Taken to Face Drought with Family

Face Drought with Family	Frequency	Percent
Wait for the rain	60	71.43
Wait for rain and use agri-tech to fight drought	5	5.95
Migrate and sell assets	17	20.24
Reduce food consumption	2	2.38
Total	84	100

The above table 3 shows that 71.43 per cent of the respondents and their family wait for the rain followed by 20.24 per cent of respondents who migrate and sell assets. 5.95 per cent of the respondents wait for the rain and use modern agriculture related technology to fight drought while 2.38 per cent reduce food consumption.

Table 4
Measures taken to Manage Water Shortage during Drought

Water Shortage Management Measures	Frequency	Percent
Give less water to livestock	14	16.7
Reduce HH consumption	61	72.6
Give less water to livestock and reduce HH consumption	9	10.8
Give less water to livestock, reduce HH consumption and use less for hygiene	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0

The above table 4 shows that very high majority of the respondents that is 72.6 per cent reduce water in household consumption such as

changing WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) practices, not washing clothes daily, using less for utensils etc. followed by 16.7 per cent respondents who give less water to livestock and 10.8 per cent give less water to livestock as well as reduce water consumption at HH level followed by 1.2 per cent respondents who take multiple measures including less water for livestock, reducing HH consumption and less for hygiene.

Table 5
Manage Money Scarcity during Drought

Measures to manage Money Scarcity during Drought	Frequency	Percent
Reduced food intake	20	23.8
Migrate to different place	10	11.9
Don't give outside food to children	13	15.5
Reduce nutritious supplements in diet	5	6.0
Don't spend money on self and don't buy costly things	14	16.7
Reduce food intake and don't buy costly things and migrate	22	26.2
Total	84	100.0

The above table 5 shows that 26.2 per cent of the respondents reduce food intake, do not buy costly things and migrate followed by 23.8 per cent respondents who reduce food intake and 16.7 per cent respondents do not spend money on self and do not buy costly things while 15.5 per cent respondents do not give outside food to children and 11.9 per cent migrate to different place followed by 6 per cent respondents who reduce nutritious supplement in diet. Thus, data shows that affected women and their family adopt multiple measures to manage money crisis during drought.

Table 6
Manage Food Expenses during Drought

Manage Food Expenses during Drought	Frequency	Percent
Earned money	52	61.9
Sometimes takes loan	28	33.3
Always take loan	1	1.2
Other	3	3.6
Total	84	100.0

Table 6 shows that 61.9 per cent use earned money to manage their food expenses followed by 33.3 per cent who sometimes take loan to fulfill their food expenses while 1.2 per cent always take loan and 3.6 per cent use some traditional methods like barter system (exchanging the type of crop/food with the other family) or asking help from neighbours.

Table 7
Manage Health Expenses during Drought

Manage Health Expenses	Frequency	Percent
Earned money	47	56.0
Sometimes take loan	30	35.7
Always take loan	3	3.6
Sell the family assets	2	2.4
Earned money and sell the family assets	2	2.4
Total	84	100.0

The above table 7 shows that 56 per cent of the respondents use earned money to manage their health expenses followed by 35.7 per cent respondents who sometimes take loan and 3.6 per cent respondents always take loan. 2.4 per cent respondents sell the family assets to meet their health expenses and same per cent of respondents use earned money and also sell the family assets. However, in case of severe poor health most of the respondents have to take loan or sell their family assets.

Table 8
Water Harvesting Initiatives

Take Water Harvesting Initiative	Frequency	Percent
Yes	25	29.8
No	59	70.2
Total	84	100.0

The above table 8 shows that very high majority that is 70.2 per cent respondents have not taken any water harvesting initiative at household or community level followed by 29.8 per cent respondents who have taken some water harvesting initiatives like renovation of ponds and wells and reusing water for alternate purposes.

Conclusion

The data in this study shows that the respondents and their family income decreases during drought due to decreased livelihood opportunities. This also pushes them towards migration which brings them plethora of vulnerability and challenges. The study concludes that most of the respondents adopt negative strategies like taking loan, or visiting Jhola chaap doctors or tantric for health treatment. Changing WASH practices is very common among the respondents to meet the water crisis and also they challenge their dignity and start open defecation during drought due to

limited piped supply. Observation and focused group discussion also revealed that Manpur village is highly drought resilient in terms of routine water availability as the NGO Parmarth have been working there for last few years and has sensitised the community on water issues and renovated the community pond which acts as their backbone in fighting the water crisis in the village . Also, the village being near to the road enjoys the government borewell facility and thus, have access to tap water after every few metres. While village Baghura is much more vulnerable as it is prone to both flood and drought. This, multihazard profile of the village makes it very much sensitive to drought. Also, it was acknowledged that the women do not have any knowledge regarding drought loving crops variety, or water saving techniques like dip irrigation or crop rotation. Women in both the villages do not posses any other learned skills to help them positively manage the drought situation. CBOs though exist in the community, but are not self sufficient and also do not have any business vision or external handholding support. These CBOs thus only have little savings to which only its members have access. Thus, it can be concluded that if any NGOs, Government or voluntary organisation work in the village on need based issues including community participation, it can help the community become resilient upto a large extent.

Also, if Government policy and programmes recognise the women's capability and identify them as the community resources, the implementation of the programmes would become much easy and the resources could then be efficiently utilised and the indigenous knowledge could be revived.

Suggestions

There is a need for the government and organisations working in the area to formulate need based programmes specific to the local needs. Also, if the Ajeevika mission is interestingly implemented with full handholding support, it can help control migration in the community upto a large extent and reduce the economic vulnerability of the women.

Scope of Further Studies

This paper opens further scope for analysing drought specific programmes from gender lens and role of SHGs in financially strengthening the community.

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Livestock for Strengthening Nutritional Security in India: A Study of Indigenous Livestock Farming With Special Reference to Bihar

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Various official reports on hunger and nutrition suggest that India has made significant improvement in achieving hunger free and nutrition secured nation since independence. However, much is left to be desired in terms of stunting, wasting and anaemic syndrome of malnutrition. This paper is an attempt to understand interstate nutritional status, where livestock has been playing a significant supplementary role to achieve nutritional securities. A district level analysis of a field study of seven villages of Nalanda district of Bihar suggests that indigenous livestock farming has been contributing to promote nutritional securities for poor landless, marginal and small holdings.

Introduction

India has witnessed significant improvement in food grains production, and distribution through various schemes, and thereby improvements in food security and nutritional status over the years since independence in general and after the Green Revolution in particular. National and global reports on nutrition suggest that India has made rapid strides in improving rates of under and malnutrition. Between 2006 and 2016, stunting in children below five years declined because of inter alia

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development initiatives, positive policies, effective implementation, research, technological breakthrough, etc. As a result, India could come out from an alarming zone, yet continues to have one of the world's largest child undernutrition rates, impacting the child's health and development, performance in school, and productivity in adult life. And still, India is located at the serious scale of the Global Hunger Index (GHI) in 2020, particularly, when only a decade is left to attain zero hunger, a sustainable food system, and improved nutritional security. This country is still ranked 94th in GHI in 2020 out of 107 countries in the world (GHI, 2020:09). Corona Pandemic has made it further difficult to attain the commitments of ending hunger and improving the nutritional status of the people in general and poor households in particular, as the lockdown and decelerating performance of the Indian economy has taken away jobs of the millions of workers (CMIE, 2020).

Post-Independent India laid the foundation of the welfare state and the Preamble of the Indian Constitution reminds us about the vision, goals, and determination for upholding the fundamental rights to life and values of equalities and justice to every citizen against all kinds of discrimination based on caste, colour, and creed. Needless to underline that food and nutritional insecurity have been concerns of policymakers and directly or indirectly remained in Indian discourse linked with poverty (Sukhatme; 1965; 1977). Planned intervention prioritising agriculture to overcome challenges of food security in the very First Five Year Plan was the testimony of its significance. Technological intervention in agriculture through the Green Revolution made a significant dent in food self-sufficiency. Public distribution system and food for work to reach the poor with food grains were important initiatives to address food security and culminated in National Food Security Act (NFSA). Focussed analysis and regional patterns and variations in the implementation of NFSA by various studies (Dev et al. 2013; Drez et al., 2015, etc.) and nutritional distribution were analysed during the 1980s and 1990s (Vishwnathan and Minakshi, 2006). World Food Programme made an exhaustive analysis of food and nutrition security in 2019. The impact of undernutrition on target groups, i.e., children and women were also analysed (Vepa and Vishwanathan, 2020; Krishnaraj, 2006). However, the latest available data on malnutrition raised serious concerns too (GOI, 2020). Sectoral contribution and nutritional linkages have also been brought into analysis where a weak linkage between agriculture and nutrition was dealt with (Pandey & Gautam, 2021; Pandey, 2021).

Needless to emphasise that agriculture has shown appreciable resilience despite lockdown and livestock has a supplementary role in improving nutritional status. The majority of livestock farming has been carried out by small and marginal holdings and landless labourers. These livestocks are of indigenous variety. Hence, the contribution of the livestock sector to improving nutrition linkages between the indigenous livestock sector and nutrition needs careful analysis. This paper is an attempt to understand the indigenous livestock economy and its contribution to improving the nutritional status of poor livestock farmers. This paper has been divided into four sections. The first section deals with interstate nutritional status in India followed by the second section on indigenous livestock farming. The third section will discuss briefly preliminary insights from the field study of five villages followed by the conclusion.

Section I

The world community through United Nations resolved to set agenda for Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The second agenda is to "end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition status and promote sustainable agriculture"[1]. India has taken up many initiatives to achieve this goal and improved its nutritional status significantly[2]. Wethungerhilfe and Concern Worldwide have been bringing out GHI composite scores with four components, population with malnutrition, children stunted, wasted, and child mortality rate. In the year 2000, India was in an alarming zone with 38.9 scores of composite scores, which was reduced marginally to 37.5 in 2006. By 2012 India was brought from alarming status to serious status, i.e., 29.3 which was further reduced to 27.2 by 2020. These indices show significant improvement in the status of nutrition security. The latest three rounds of NFHS data also indicate improvements in infant mortality rate (IMR), which has declined from 57 to 41 per cent, and IMR under 5 (IMRU5) was reduced from 74 to 50 per cent. Stunted children under 5 declined from 48 to 38.4, but wasted children under 5 increased from 19.8 to 21 per cent. The percentage of anemic children in age from 6 months to 59 months declined from 69.4 to 58.6 per cent. Anaemic pregnant women declined from 57.9 to 50 per cent (GoI, NFHS 3 & 4).

Interstate variations between rounds 3 and 4 suggest a reduction in stunting children. However, data available so far from NFHS 5 sound alarming, as select nutritional indicators, such as children stunting (low height for age) and wasting (low weight for height), anaemic children and pregnant women, etc., in 11 states out of 17 states have worsened (Tables 1 to

4). Stunting, which is an indicator of undernutrition has increased in Telangna, Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal. So far the status of wasting is concerned Telangana, Kerala, Bihar, Assam, and Jammu & Kashmir have witnessed an increase in acute undernutrition, and Maharashtra and West Bengal have stagnant status. These reversals have a severe adverse impact on the cognitive development of children. The anaemic situation among children and women has also worsened. Generally, these indicators do not worsen but rather gradually get reduced if the economy and governance perform better. Data for NFHS round 5 phase II indicate interstate variations with different trends (GoI, NFHS 3, 4 & 5).

Table 1
Interstate Percentage Distribution of Stunted Children U5 in India

S.No.	State	NFHS 3	NFHS 4	NFHS 5
1	Andhra Pradesh	38.4	31.4	31.2
2	Assam	46.5	36.4	35.3
3	Bihar	55.6	48.3	42.9
4	Chhattisgarh	52.9	37.6	NA
5	Gujarat	51.7	38.5	39.0
6	Haryana	45.7	34	NA
7	Jharkhand	49.8	45.3	NA
8	Karnataka	43.7	36.2	35.4
9	Kerala	24.5	19.7	23.4
10	Madhya Pradesh	50	42	NA
11	Maharashtra	46.3	34.4	35.2
12	Odisha	45	34.1	NA
13	Punjab	36.7	25.7	NA
14	Rajasthan	43.7	39.1	NA
15	Tamil Nadu	30.9	27.1	NA
16	Uttar Pradesh	56.8	46.3	NA
17	West Bengal	44.6	32.5	33.8
18	India	48	38.4	NA

Source: GoI: NFHS Reports, various rounds.

Table 2
Interstate Percentage Distribution of Wasted Children U5 in India

S.No.	State	NFHS 3	NFHS 4	NFHS 5
1	Andhra Pradesh	14.9	17.2	16.1
2	Assam	13.7	17	21.7
3	Bihar	27.1	20.8	22.9
4	Chhattisgarh	19.5	23.1	NA
5	Gujarat	18.7	26.4	25.1
6	Haryana	19.1	21.2	NA
7	Jharkhand	32.3	29	NA
8	Karnataka	17.6	26.1	19.5
9	Kerala	15.9	15.7	15.8

S.No.	State	NFHS 3	NFHS 4	NFHS 5
10	Madhya Pradesh	35	25.8	NA
11	Maharashtra	16.5	25.6	25.6
12	Odisha	19.6	20.4	NA
13	Punjab	9.2	15.6	NA
14	Rajasthan	20.4	23	NA
15	Tamil Nadu	22.2	19.7	NA
16	Uttar Pradesh	14.8	17.9	NA
17	West Bengal	16.9	20.3	20.3
18	India	19.8	21	NA

Source: GoI: NFHS Reports, various rounds.

Table 3
Interstate Percentage Distribution of Anaemic Children 6-59 Months in India

S.No.	State	NFHS 3	NFHS 4	NFHS 5
1	Andhra Pradesh	79.6	58.6	63.2
2	Assam	69.4	35.7	68.4
3	Bihar	78	63.5	69.4
4	Chhattisgarh	71.2	41.6	NA
5	Gujarat	69.7	62.6	79.7
6	Haryana	72.3	71.7	NA
7	Jharkhand	70.3	69.9	NA
8	Karnataka	70.3	60.9	65.5
9	Kerala	44.5	35.7	39.4
10	Madhya Pradesh	74	68.9	NA
11	Maharashtra	63.4	53.8	68.9
12	Odisha	65	44.6	NA
13	Punjab	66.4	56.6	NA
14	Rajasthan	69.6	60.3	NA
15	Tamil Nadu	64.2	50.7	NA
16	Uttar Pradesh	73.9	63.2	NA
17	West Bengal	61	54.2	69.0
18	India	69.4	58.6	NA

Source: NFHS Reports, various rounds.

Table 4
Interstate Percentage Distribution Anaemic Pregnant Women 15-49 Years in India

S.No.	State	NFHS 3	NFHS 4	NFHS 5
1	Andhra Pradesh	58.2	52.9	53.7
2	Assam	72	44.8	54.2
3	Bihar	60.2	58.3	63.1
4	Chhattisgarh	63.1	41.5	NA
5	Gujarat	60.8	51.3	62.6
6	Haryana	69.7	55	NA
7	Jharkhand	68.5	62.6	NA
8	Karnataka	60.4	45.4	45.7
9	Kerala	33.8	22.6	31.4
10	Madhya Pradesh	57.9	54.6	NA

S.No.	State	NFHS 3	NFHS 4	NFHS 5
11	Maharashtra	57.8	49.3	54.5
12	Odisha	68.1	47.6	NA
13	Punjab	41.6	42	NA
14	Rajasthan	61.7	46.6	NA
15	Tamil Nadu	54.7	44.4	NA
16	Uttar Pradesh	51.5	51	NA
17	West Bengal	62.6	53.6	62.3
18	India	57.9	50.4	NA

Source: GoI: NFHS Reports, various rounds.

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, and Karnataka have shown a declining trend in stunting of the children whereas Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal have witnessed an increase in stunted children (Table 1). So far situation of wasted children is concerned it gives mix picture as shown in Table 2. Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu witnessed a decline in wasted children between 2005-06 and 2015-16. The situation of wasted children worsened in the remaining states. Between 2015-16 and 2019-20, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Karnataka witnessed a decline but the remaining states witnessed an increase in 2019-20. There was a significant reduction in anaemic children from 6 months to 59 months between 2005-06 and 2015-16. However, the inter-state situation was aggravated between 2015-16 and 2019-20 (Table 3). The percentage of anaemic pregnant women between the age of 15 to 49 years declined significantly between 2005-06 and 2015-16. Kerala had the lowest percentage. However, there was a sharp increase in anaemic pregnant women between 2015-16 and 2019-20. The situation of malnutrition in Bihar has worsened in terms of wasted children, anaemic children, and pregnant women (Table 4). Thus, the latest survey indicated aggravating the alarming situation of nutritional insecurity.

This situation was of pre-Covid-19, which must have worsened further during Covid-19, as there has been a huge loss of employment and income. The Indian Economy has been decelerating after demonetisation. In 2016-17 the growth rate was 8.26 per cent, which receded to 7.04 per cent in 2017-18, 6.12 in 2018-19, and 4.2 per cent in 2019-20. The economy witnessed the worst so far in 2020-21 when it registered a negative growth rate to the tune of -7.3 per cent (GoI, NSO, MoSP1).

In view of the alarming situation of malnutrition discussed above, this paper intends to explore available nutrition resources for people in general and poor households in particular, the majority of whom live in a rural areas and survive on agriculture and allied sectors. Besides protein

intake from common property resources (such as fish, snails, cancer, farm ponds, rivers and water bodies, roots, green leaves, etc. from fields) agriculture and animal husbandry sector provides a fairly large amount of protein from crops and species for nutritional support. Cereals constitute 10 per cent protein, rice less than 7 per cent, wheat 10 per cent, leaf, vegetables, tuber, etc., 2 per cent, Soyabean has 40 per cent protein, animal food including milk and milk product after discounting water 20 per cent, pulses, vegetables, etc., are drawn from agriculture and livestock produce, such as meat, eggs, milk, and milk products are drawn from livestock sector. Protein provides 10-12 per cent energy, 30 per cent energy comes from fats, and 60 per cent from carbohydrates (Gopalan, 1989). Thus, the nutrition insecurity of the poor household needs to be analysed carefully with CPR and livestock.

Section II

Livestock has been an important segment of farming in India for ages. Livestock is the second major land-based livelihood opportunity sector. This sector plays a significant role in generating employment and supplementing the income of marginal farmers and landless labourers towards meeting nutritional and other requirements, as livestock contributes significantly in many forms, such as milk, meat, eggs, fish, draught power, energy for rural households and maintaining soil fertility, etc. (Mishra and Sharma, 1990; Sharma 2004). Livestock, inter alia, has been contributing significantly to promoting food and nutritional security and supplementing farm income. The livestock economy plays a significant role in the growth of sustainable agriculture and the Indian economy.

The total livestock population consisting of Cattle, Buffalo, Sheep, Goat, Pig, Horse, Ponies, Mules, Donkeys, Camels, Mithun, and Yak, in the country is 535.78 million in 2019. Although the overall livestock population has decreased by about 4.6 % over the previous census 2011, the total Bovine population has increased by 1 per cent, total cattle by 0.8 per cent, female cattle (cow) by 18 per cent, indigenous/non-descript female cattle by 10 per cent and total exotic/cross bred cattle by 26.9 per cent over the previous census. However, total indigenous cattle (descript and non-descript) have declined by 6 per cent in the 2019 census. The pace of decline has been slower between 2007 and 2012 (i.e., 9 per cent). Total milch animals (in milk and dry) have increased by 6 per cent in 2019 over the previous census in 2012. The population of sheep has increased by 14.1 per cent, goats 10.1 per cent, pigs 12.03 per cent, mithuns 30 per cent, yak 24.67 per cent, horses and ponies 45.6 per cent, mules 57.1 per cent, donkeys 61.23 per cent, and camels

by 37.1 per cent. Total poultry has increased by 16.8 per cent, backyard poultry has increased by 45.8 per cent and commercial poultry has increased by 4.6 per cent in 2019 over 2012.

The livestock population has increased in West Bengal (23.32%), Telangana (22.21%), Andhra Pradesh (15.79%) Madhya Pradesh (11.81%), Bihar (10.67%), Karnataka (4.7 %), and Maharashtra (1.6 %). However, the decline in the population of livestock has been witnessed in Rajasthan (-1.66%), Uttar Pradesh (-1.35%), and Gujarat (-0.95%). (GoI: 20th Livestock Census - 2019 all India report).

The population of cattle has increased substantially in Jharkhand (28.1%), Bihar (25.18%), West Bengal (15.18%), Assam (5.29%), Rajasthan (4.41%), and Chhattisgarh (1.63%). However, this has declined in Odisha (-15.01%), Maharashtra (-10.07%), Madhya Pradesh (-4.42%), and Uttar Pradesh (-3.93%). Among major states, the buffalo population has increased in Madhya Pradesh (25.88%), Uttar Pradesh (7.81%), Rajasthan (5.53%), Bihar (2.02%), Telangana (1.59%), Gujarat (1.52%) and Maharashtra (0.17 %), whereas it witnessed a sharp decline in Haryana (-28.22%), Punjab (-22.17%) and Andhra Pradesh (-3.76%). The population of goats has increased significantly in West Bengal (41.49%), Jharkhand (38.59%), Madhya Pradesh (38.07%), Karnataka (28.63%), Maharashtra (25.72%), Tamilnadu (21.43%) and Bihar (5.49%). Whereas, Uttar Pradesh (-7.09%), Rajasthan (-3.81%), and Odisha (-1.84%) registered a decline in goat population in 2019 over 2012 (20th Livestock Census 2019).

In rural areas, the overall population of cattle decreased by about 3.14 %, Yaks by 8.15 %, Sheeps by 8.37 %, Goats by 3.18 %, Donkeys by 28.09 %, Camels by 22.09%, and Dogs by 42.5% over Census 2007. In urban areas, there is negative growth of cattle by 18.34%, Buffalo, 15.11% Mithuns 78.10%, Sheep 33.90%, Goat 15.66%, Donkeys 22.29 %, Camels 1.80%, Pigs 9.06%, Dogs 15.42% and Poultry by 25.06 population over Census 2007. However, in rural areas, there is positive growth in Buffalo by 4.18 %, Mithuns by 24.56 %, Horses and Ponies by 1.31 %, Mules 46.23 %, and Poultry by 15.02 % over the previous Census 2007. In urban areas, there is positive growth in Horses and Ponies by 11.68 %, and Mules by 13.26% over the previous Census 2007 (GoI: 19th Livestock Census - 2012 all India report).

Section III

Bihar stands 5th so far in percentage increase in livestock population in 2019 over 2012 livestock census is concerned. It is 2nd in cattle, 4th in buffalo, and 7th in goat population (GoI, 20th Livestock Census 2019).

Livestock Census of Bihar witnessed a drastic decline in the number of cattle and goats after 1982 and it was yet to regain the level of 1982 until 2012. However, they registered a marginal increase by 2019. The population of pigs, sheep, horses, and ponies decreased. Overall livestock population, which was 3.56 crores in 1982, declined to 2.7 crores in 2003, 3.02 crores in 2007,3.29 crores in 2012, and by 2019 it was 3.64 crores (GoB, 2016:66; 2020:94). Bihar has 6,22,000 hectare forest area, 15,000 hectares of permanent pasture land besides, current fallow of 9,61,000 hectares, other fallow of 1,19,000 hectares, and culturable wasteland to the tune of 44,000 hectares (GoB, 2017:56).

In terms of GSVA, livestock contribution has increased from 5.4 per cent in 2013-14 to 5.6 per cent in 2018-19. The value of GSDP of livestock in Bihar, which was Rs. 9812.5 crore in 2004-05 at constant 2004-05 prices, increased to Rs. 12349.5 crore in 2009-10, Rs. 16436.7 crore in 2015-16, and quick estimate for 2018-19 was increased to Rs. 20,308.4 crores. The annual average rate of change between 2004-05 and 2015-16 was 6.14 per cent and if one takes quick estimates of the latest data available so far for 2018-19 into account annual average rate of change was about 7.0 per cent. Although during 2004-05 to 2009-10 it was 5.17 per cent and during 2009-10 to 2015-16 this rate improved marginally by 0.35 per cent and the rate of change was 5.52 per cent. It is interesting to note that number of livestock has declined but value addition has increased. This implies that the productivity of this sector has increased significantly.

Looking at the district level data on livestock, it was found that backward districts of Bihar have an invariably higher number of livestock along with a higher number of workers. This indicates the survival strategies of the households and investments as well. Low per capita GDDP explains low productivity and poor economic condition despite hard labour. Lower female literacy rates are the indications of the constrained ability of the workforce in the district to enter into a better labour market for gainful employment with a few exceptions (see Appendix -1). The highest number of livestock was found in Araria, Madhepura, Gaya, East Champaran, Madhubani, Katihar, Supaul, and West Champaran, respectively. One can find a strong positive correlation between district-wise total workers and livestock population (Table 5). The correlation between per capita GDDP and the number of the worker was also found positive. Per capita GDDP and female literacy also were positively correlated. Livestock and female literacy has a negative correlation. Livestock and per capita GDDP also has a negative correlation.

Table 5
Correlation Matrix

	Livestock	Total worker	Female literacy	PCGDDP	LS/W
Livestock	1				
Total worker	0.666	1			
Female literacy	-0.417	-0.13	1		
PCGDDP	-0.417	0.357	0.399	1	
LS/W	-0.052	0.357	-0.39	-0.306	1

This further suggests that this sector was growing significantly and has still potential to grow better, which can supplement farm income especially, small, marginal holdings and landless labourers, if a proper farming environment is created. This requires a study with analytical rigour for understanding production, marketing, consumption, inputs, credits, backward and forward linkages, and the policy environment for livestock farming in Bihar.

Bihar has three basic endowments - good quality fertile soil, an abundance of sweet water bodies and river networks, and labourious people. The government has been putting its efforts through development and plan expenditure. Quality of expenditure becomes important and until the 1980s plan expenditure did not play a significant role in development rather it was non-plan expenditure (Diwakar, 1986). This has affected the growth of the Bihar economy largely in terms of infrastructure and social overhead capital. Later, improvement in infrastructure and social overhead capital has been witnessed to some extent. Bihar's economy in terms of Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) has grown on an average of 2.9 per cent per annum and per capita, NSDP has increased by 0.8 per cent from 1951 to 2012 at a constant price 2004-05 (GoB, 2017:49) but still fact suggests that agriculture remained backward amidst intermittent floods and droughts. It is a predominantly rural agrarian economy, where about 96 per cent of the holdings is of marginal and small farm size. Farming in Bihar is generally dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon as the level of irrigation is poor and cropping intensity is low. As a result, the level of self and wage employment is very low in agriculture. This has serious implications for the production, productivity, and viability of marginal and small farm sizes (Diwakar, 2011:7-39). Although livestock could be one of the major sources of supplementary income to landless, marginal, and smallholdings, it is generally indigenous livestock farming, which lacks modernisation and a proper environment for livestock farming, and this sector remained neglected despite having the potential to increase the supplementary income of the peasants through modernisation of this sector. Therefore, livestock is a

significant sector constraint and challenge which need to be examined and analysed for innovative experiments, practices, and policy to augment the production system and supplement farmers' income in Bihar.

It is a matter of serious concern that the overall population of livestock has declined, especially, cattle, sheeps, goats, pigs, and poultry, which are directly linked with livelihood and protein. Thus, there is a need to study the possibility of livestock farming to promote livelihood as a supplement to the income of the household in the agricultural sector. There are many initiatives and programmes, targeted at the improvement of the livestock sector. There is a need to assess the efficacy of the institutional initiatives, technological applications, and their benefits, investment patterns, production system, i.e., from breeding to marketing, and income transfer in terms of their requirements, infrastructure, technology, support system, and services, inputs, production, marketing, distribution networks, institutional structure, etc. Needless to emphasise that livestock census report suggests that cattle, goats, pigs, and backyard, poultry are most commonly kept by the underprivileged and these get very little development research support. In Bihar too, little has been achieved in this regard so far, which requires to explore the possibilities of sustainable livestock farming in Bihar.

Section IV

Livestock sector, which includes, livestock and livestock products, i.e., breeding and rearing of animals and poultry besides private veterinary services, production of milk, slaughtering, preparation and dressing of meat, production of raw hides and skins, eggs, dung, raw wool, honey, and silkworm cocoons, etc., plays a significant role in generating employment supplementing the income of marginal farmers and landless labourers towards meeting the nutritional requirement.

Although, green revolution has made a significant contribution toward food self-sufficiency, declining income from agriculture (Radhakrishna, 2002) along with fatigues in institutional arrangements, technological advancements and policies gradually trapped agriculture in low productivity, lower employment and lower-income syndrome of deep agrarian crises (Diwakar, 2017: 375-393). The majority of the holdings are of marginal and landless poor households, who are constrained to supplement their nutrition through available low-quality indigenous livestock resources from agriculture and allied sectors for want of enough purchasing power at their disposal. In this section, we intend to map the livestock economy and its potential to supplement nutrition for poor households.

This has also been observed that the green revolution technology was primarily focused on the crop sector, but later gradually the share of livestock in total agricultural output started increasing. The share of livestock to GDP of agriculture was below 15 per cent during 1969-70. The spread of green revolution technology turned out to be equally favourable to the growth of the livestock sector as well as the crop sector. As a result, the livestock sector continued as a good performing sector as part crop sector and the share of this sector grew to 17.28 per cent by 1979-80. After 10 years during the era of economic reforms, this sector witnessed a further increase in the share of livestock GDP to agriculture. This share of livestock in agricultural output was close to one-fourth during the 1990s, i.e., to the level of 21.5 per cent. During 1980-81 livestock contributed 5.47 per cent of the GDP of the country. The share increased to 5.88 per cent during the 1990s but declined to 4.48 per cent in recent years, which is a matter of concern. There is a need to explore the reasons as to why the share has declined.

Livestock has been generating and supplementing employment and income of farmers, especially those having small and marginal holdings and no land, i.e., landless households. Needless to emphasise the majority of the farms (i.e. about 93 per cent) are of landless, marginal, and smallholdings (NSSO, 2013). For them, investment in livestock remains an investment for future returns, an asset, and a source of supplementary income (Diwakar, 2000: 211-12).

The contribution of the livestock sector consists of many things, such as draught power, energy for rural households, and maintaining soil fertility, which is of great importance (Mishra and Sharma, 1990; Sharma 2004). This has unique terms of employment opportunities, as two-thirds of the female workforce in rural India is engaged with livestock. It is also an integral part of the diversification of the mixed farming system. It is found that strong growth in the livestock sector is likely to continue for the increasing demand for animal food products (Delagado et al., 1999; Rao et al., 2004).

In rural India, livestock supplements the livelihood of the majority of the households. More than four-fifth of rural farming households have various types and species of livestock. It is a major source of nutrients for crop production and for sustaining soil fertility and it is also an important source of livelihood for small landholders therefore, there is a concentration on livestock production (Kumar and Singh, 2008). This sector is one of the important sources in meeting the nutritional requirement. Livestock production is an important contributor to sustaining agricultural growth, and also to improving household nutritional security, generating

employment, and reducing poverty (Mishra and Sharma, 1990; Sharma, 2004). However, agrarian crises have impacted livestock farming adversely.

Livestock is an important saving or investment for the poor household and it provides security or insurance in various ways in different production systems (Kitalyi et al., 2005). Even it is more important to marginal areas, such as arid rain-fed regions. Moreover, it is also an important source of supplementary income for the rural economy of India. Hence, it is needed to find out means and ways to augment feed and fodder resources to keep livestock growing. It is also necessary to identify demographic factors, which may have influenced households' decision to keep livestock growing.

It has been argued that India needs to pay serious attention to developing infrastructure for the livestock sector, because, it has a large population of livestock but productivity is very low. The main reasons for this condition inter alia are poor feeding, low quality of an animal, inadequate veterinary facility, and other factors. It is also argued that growth in infrastructure, output, marketing, institutions, and price incentive changed the scenario and generated rising demand for livestock products, and harnessed the potential of this sector. Similarly, the income in the livestock sector needs to be improved through better connectivity of rural areas, urban centres, and institutional arrangements through dairy, cooperatives. It needs to increase public sector investment and support to the livestock sector. There is a need to understand the livestock structure and factor, responsible for the development of the livestock sector, as it affects the growth of the livestock sector (Chand and Raju, 2008). There has been a disconnect between livestock and nutrition (Pandey & Gautam, 2021).

Insights for Nutritional Linkage from Livestock Farming

To understand ground realities in villages of Bihar we have selected seven villages, namely, Raghunathpur and Thekha from Thatthari Block, Laxmibigha, Saidanpur, and Sakrurha from Nagarnausa block, and Bhurkur and Barbigha from Hilsa block in Nalanda district of Bihar for field insights. Altogether 91 households were selected randomly for a preliminary understanding of the nutritional linkages of the livestock farming households. Out of surveyed households, 73.63 per cent were landless or near landless and 26.37 per cent were with a certain amount of land. About 15.38 per cent were marginal holdings and 1.1 per cent of the household was medium holding. Mix species of cows were found in the villages. Those who have resources, prefer to own hybrid jersey cows. Those, who are

resourceless, still have indigenous cows. About 14.29 per cent were having an indigenous cow, whereas 13.19 per cent of households had a jersey cow. About 50.55 per cent had buffalo and 3.3 per cent of households had a goat. Most of the poor households did not consume milk themselves. They used to sell their milk and survived on their proceeds for their day-to-day expenditure. However, the majority of the households used to keep part of the produce for their personal consumption. It varies from a half kilogram to two kilograms. Indigenous milch cattle had a little surplus and therefore, a maximum of half a kilogram consumption was reported which was not sufficient for adequate nutritional support. In the case of cows with high-yielding varieties, home consumption reported up to 2 kilograms. Even those households, which did not report direct consumption of milk and milk products, got nutritional support on an exchange basis, i.e., they used to buy meet out of proceeds of milk and milk products. About 53.85 per cent consumed milk and 14.29 per cent consumed meat. Thus, about 60.44 per cent of households reported nutritional support from livestock.

Conclusion

During the freedom struggle, it was realised that the cattle would be an economic burden, dooms, and disaster, if India did not use cattle wealth properly (Gandhi, 1962:91). This paper brought the fact home that there had been significant improvement in the status of nutrition security and support. However, India was yet to come out of the serious location of nutrition support. Interstate variations were much more alarming. Malnutrition and undernutrition in backward states like Bihar have increased on many indicators, such as stunting, wasting, and anaemic indicators. Intra-district distribution of livestock and related variables, such as total workforce, female literacy, and per capita GDDP, suggested that livestock was supported by the total workforce and inversely related to female literacy. Interestingly backward regions had a higher number of livestock with lower per capita GDDP. Female literacy had an inverse relation with livestock farming. So far field insights are concerned, contrary to general perception and findings, livestock provided directly and indirectly significant nutritional support to poor farming households. Thus, in a given situation of nutritional deficit, a comprehensive policy for composite indigenous livestock farming is required to bridge the nutritional gaps keeping in view of the poor livestock farming households in consideration.

End Notes

1. See United Nations: Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, A/RES/70, retrieved from www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org on 06.07.2021.
2. See United Nations in India, retrieved from www.in.un.org on 06.07.2021

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Appendix 1
District-wise distribution of Livestock, Total Workers, Female Literacy, and per capita Gross District Domestic Product at Constant Price 2004-05 in Bihar.

Livestock district	Livestock	M+M Worker	Fliteracy Rate	PCIGDDP	Lstock/W
Patna	830808	1882000	61.96	63063	0.44145
Nalanda	683095	1045000	53.01	12561	0.653679
Bhojpur	675626	822000	58.03	12459	0.8219
Buxur	453352	538000	58.63	11289	0.84266
Rohtas	1092174	925000	62.97	13909	1.18073
Kaimur	592648	511000	58.4	10412	1.15978
Gaya	1490844	1664000	53.34	11897	0.89594
Jahanabad	303669	365000	55.01	11182	0.83197
Arwal	182502	236000	54.85	9125	0.7733
Nawada	691637	817000	48.86	9560	0.84656
Aurangabad	811243	838000	67.67	11012	0.96807
Saran	721247	1040000	54.42	10615	0.6935
Siwan	696046	932000	58.65	10685	0.74683
Gopalganj	521437	728000	54.6	12129	0.71626
Muzaffarpur	1193491	1548000	54.67	15402	0.77099
E Champaran	1447993	1738000	42.12	10735	0.83314
W Champaran	1243276	1479000	44.77	9971	0.84062
Sitamarhi	711182	1115000	42.41	9538	0.6378
Sheohar	184398	216000	45.25	7092	0.85369
Vaishali	685101	1060000	56.72	12490	0.6463217
Darbhanga	793980	1224000	45.23	10932	0.64868
Madhubani	1324190	1637000	46.15	9241	0.8089
Samastipur	1102378	1343000	51.51	10762	0.8208
Munger	398091	426000	62.08	22051	0.9345
Begusarai	701915	938000	55.2	17587	0.7483
Sheikhpura	183289	225000	53.4	9687	0.8146
Lakhisarai	298880	327000	52.57	13073	0.9140
Jamui	932273	728000	47.27	10166	1.2806
Khagaria	563688	561000	49.55	11515	1.0048
Bhagalpur	1293295	984000	54.88	17324	1.3143
Banka	1109169	771000	47.66	9269	1.4386
Saharsa	821085	650000	41.68	12197	1.2632
Supaul	1272744	878000	44.77	8492	1.4496
Madhepura	1578406	778000	41.74	8609	2.0288
Purnea	1167353	1143000	42.34	10099	1.02131
Kishanganj	884364	529000	46.76	9928	1.6717656
Araria	1985211	1070000	43.93	8776	1.85534
Katihar	1316521	1014000	44.39	11278	1.2983
Bihar	32938601	34725000	51.5	14574	0.94856

Source: DES-BTF2017 Tab. 79 Page.122 | DES-BTF2017 Tab.15 Page.17 | DES-BTF2017 Tab.29 Page.39 | BES2020 Tab A1.6 Page.19

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From 'Imagined' to 'Invented' Communities

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The idea of a public sphere has been understood in terms of separate nationalities and very less deliberations have been done on the way we conceive the idea of a public sphere. One of the unique interpretations of the idea of a political community has been given by Benedict Anderson, through his idea of imagined communities. However, the idea seems to have outgrown its context, and there is a need to revisit the process that is behind the formation of contemporary political spheres. This paper discusses how the understanding of the public sphere has changed in the 21st century and how modern technology has enhanced the capabilities of the individual to affect the public opinion of not only one's immediate environment but of the global public culture as well. This change in the nature of the public sphere could give rise to another dimension of e-activism in the process of democratisation.

Introduction

Populism has become the buzzword for the democratic societies of the 21st century. The social and political movements are the driving force that keeps this populist trend alive. Such movements were conventionally carried out through mass participation of individuals and groups who would flock to the political grounds to voice their concerns. But things have changed radically in the 21st century. Today, social activism is transforming into e-activism, which has significantly altered the meaning and scope of such movements. The advances in Information Technology (IT) have given

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each of us the capability to not only imagine but also to invent the public sphere in which we find ourselves. As a result, the contemporary public sphere is subject to a continuous process of reinvention. This ongoing process of reinvention makes it pertinent to revisit our understanding of the nature of political society.

A common lapse while attempting to understand the political society is the tendency to take for granted the existing heritage of information and philosophy. The purpose of political theory is inherently subversive rather than satisfying (Abramson, 2009, p. 10). Such unexamined acceptance of the existing perceptions often neglects the role of the latest processes that shape and influence the political society. Through this paper, an attempt is made to understand how the nature of political society has changed through the indirect and informal processes happening in and outside the public sphere itself.

The discussion on the nature of political society makes a primary borrowing from the idea of imagined communities by Benedict Anderson (2006). It is interesting to note that Anderson came up with the idea of imagined communities as an appendage to his understanding of the growth of nationalism. While the primary focus of Anderson's work was not the idea of imagined communities per se, the idea holds the potential to understand and elaborate on the nature of political society in today's scenario. In the course of this discussion, It is argued that Anderson's idea of an imagined community might have outgrown its context and acquired new dimensions which make the study of the public sphere more interesting. Having established the relevance of the idea of imagined communities, I shall attempt to excavate and evolve the idea to support my understanding of the political societies of the 21st century. I shall argue, through this paper, that the way the public sphere is understood and shaped by the actions of the individuals and groups has changed significantly over the years, and that these stakeholders have a greater role in defining the public sphere today than in earlier centuries. I have tried to understand the outgrowth of Anderson's idea of imagined communities in terms of invented communities as it better reflects the enhanced ability and access of the individuals and groups to affect the imagery of the political society. Such a revisit to the understanding of political society would make its meaning more inclusive and adaptive and would help broaden the horizons of our understanding so as to better adapt to the emerging pluri-cultural societies.

The reinvention of the political society appears to be taking place under the aegis of digital advancements (Castells, 2010). These technological

changes have transformed society in such a manner that gives individuals and groups better capacity and capability to reimagine their surroundings. The logical repercussion of such change makes the democratic processes fiercer and more participatory. These changes in the perception of political society are also changing our understanding of the public and private spheres. Mahajan captures this change in the individual capability and identifies it with the process of democratisation. She also argues that this critical appraisal of all received knowledge and beliefs is what maintains the sanctity of the private sphere amidst the public sphere (Mahajan & Reifeld, 2003, p. 13).

The political society of the 21st century offers better access to historical and contemporary epistemic resources. As a result, the individual has a virtual acquaintance (or at least the capacity to have such acquaintance) with not only other members of the society but with the members of the global public order. This is where Anderson's conception of political society outgrows and acquires a broader context. In a lego-political sense, a political society might be restricted to certain political boundaries but as a socio-political process, it opens up to the international order and communicates with the digital world (Anderson, 2006, pp. 6–7; Castells, 2010).

Invented Communities of the 21st Century

Here's an illustrative example of the nature of the public sphere in the 21st century: recently there was a massive movement against racialism in the US (BBC News, 2020b). This was not something new in the history of the USA, as there have been long and fierce movements against racialism in the American continent (See Stern, 2000). However, the recent movement picked up a radical momentum in no time. What began as a local protest against police action against black individuals, suddenly turned out to be a global movement. The most astonishing fact about this spread of the movement was that it took place with the help of social media (hashtags)[1] and the virtual participation of the global citizenry (Highfield & Leaver, 2016). As a result, even a poor student sitting in some remote location in a developing country, like India, could register her participation. This virtual participation no longer remains passive but becomes an effective means of change. These virtual participations trigger a chain reaction that percolates to every aspect of society and ultimately leads to a change in the public imagery of the political society.Such a radicalisation of public sphere had never been witnessed and conceptualised. And this is what I understand as invented communities.

The above example shows the radicalised nature of the public sphere wherein the momentum of exchange of ideas is happening on an instantaneous basis, and the public sphere is equally affected by factors both inside and outside the public sphere. This radicalisation of the public sphere has made it an interesting area of study. Scholars like Mahajan (2003) and Gutman & Thompson (2004) have viewed this radicalisation in terms of the unfolding of the project of democracy. Failure to capture and explore these trends in contemporary democracies forces us to remain content with the existing beliefs and accede to the arguments which believe in the end of history for the political discourse (Fukuyama, 2012).

A contemporary reading of Anderson's idea of imagined communities suggests that the idea is originally naïve and simplistic. Keeping in mind the contextual limitations of the original idea, our task, in revisiting the idea of imagined communities, is to incorporate the contemporary trends and factors that add to the public imagery of our political societies. While the plasticity of the political society has remained unchanged, it is the momentum and process of reform which has transformed the nature of the contemporary political societies. The contemporary public sphere is an alloy of several colliding interests that may or may not fit together peacefully. An interesting feature of the political societies of the 21st century is that they have broken the limitation of space and are now involved in an open interaction with the global public sphere. Fraser (1997) has contemplated such a scenario and discussed the possibility of a plural public sphere wherein different interest groups deliberate peacefully to decide the common fate of the polity. Such is the direction in which our political societies appear to be heading.

The process of invention of the political society has multifarious dimensions. However, in what follows, I shall try to discuss some of the factors which, I believe, play a crucial role in the reinvention of the political society today.

Changing the Role of Time-Space

Anderson attributed the diversity in the nature of political societies to the local factors. The understanding of the political society, thus, becomes an outcome of the dialectic[2] evolution of the human society which is not fatalistic in nature but sets its own tune and pace. This trajectory of evolution is determined within the restraints of time and space. This aspect of time and space has a significant role in determining the nature of the political society in the 21st century.

The 21st century has made possible a virtual churning of the time-space conundrum wherein the individuals and societies are now better positioned to influence and be influenced by an event happening, not only in their vicinity but, across the world at a seemingly instantaneous rate. With the loosening of the shackles of time-space, the human imagination is now able to spread wider. As a result, the world of possibilities for any political society has expanded manifolds.

While it is possible to contest whether the spatio-temporal considerations are still equally relevant, one must remember that our sense of imagination is still carved within our spatio-temporal context. What has changed is the territory of the space that now has a bearing upon our imagination and the speed (time) with which the process of imagery proceeds. While it might still be difficult for our political imaginations to venture into the future, it is possible today to get exposed to the wide spectrum of information available across the world at an almost instantaneous rate (Castells, 2010).

Traditionally, the process of democratic unfolding was comprehended in terms of a linear trajectory that grows from the past to the present. However, the contemporary understanding of such unfolding has now changed. The unfolding of the democratic process takes place in multifarious directions now. There is greater communication and exchange with the externalities affecting the nature of the political societies. This causes a kind of chain-reaction among the several public spheres of the world, wherein events happening in one political society start to affect the others.

Gidden (1990) understands this change in the impact of time in terms of the 'emptying' of time. Time is emptied when it is no longer understood as connected to a particular locale. He further believes that space subsequently becomes universalised and disembedded through the separation of space from the place. This development has a significant implication for the understanding of the political society as it opens the scope of interpretation beyond the conventional boundaries of meaning.

Some scholars have tried to understand this dynamism of the public sphere in terms of a changing perception of time and space. It implies that what is true today might not remain so forever. This phenomenon has been termed as Transience[3]. Kaal (2015) understands transience in terms of a culturally determined qualifying aspect of meaning which activates spatial reasoning. This spatial reasoning maintains the uniqueness of each culture and accounts for differences in interpretation. The social facts and

information generally filter through the public memory and ways of understanding. This process of filtering information transforms a simple fact into an opinion or judgement. This also explains why and how some event from a distant place becomes a point of reference to another society which ascribes meanings that have nothing to do with the original event.

Impact on Public Memory

A major outcome of the radicalisation of the public sphere in the 21st century is the change in the nature of the public memory which has become radicalised and stunted at the same time. While there is no denying the fact that the availability of information has become [almost] universal and eternal, it has become equally difficult to maintain the interest of the masses on any particular issue for longer durations. As a result, the 21st century civil society witnesses a rapid emergence and decline of the social movements. The age of IT seems to offer a paradox of, what I call, the invisible presence of information in society. By this paradox, I mean that the information and knowledge are readily available to every citizen of the society, but what has been reduced is the span of attention. Thus, a social fact becomes visible only when it is brought under the spotlight of public attention. Due to the access to information across the world and the parallel happening of events, the duration of attention is shrinking. An outcome of such a shrinking of the span of public attention is that an issue becomes virtually erased from the public memory, as soon as it is removed from the spotlight of attention. However, it is not necessary that such issues would never arise again in the future. The event remains latent only until the next opportunity to come to the limelight.

These dynamics of the public memory could be captured through a reference to the recent issues trending in media. The global media has been aggressively pursuing the COVID-19 pandemic across the world to the extent that every news channel and media discussion was centered around the impact of COVID-19. But this attention and engagement got shifted to the Ukraine-Russia tensions and suddenly the priorities of the global media and the various civil society groups appeared to have changed. The topic of debates and special feature shows on television quickly sensed the changing attention among the masses and adapted astutely.

Another interesting aspect of a dynamic culture of public memory is the rate through which local news spreads beyond its immediate context. Take, for instance, the news on the death of a pregnant elephant who died after eating something mixed with explosives in India (BBC News, 2020a).

The issue got spread globally in such a manner that it kickstarted a number of debates and discussions on animal rights. But again, the issue got faded away from the public memory sooner.

But how does this volatile nature of public memory affect the nature of the contemporary public sphere? This volatility and dynamism point toward the radicalisation of the public sphere itself and highlight the temporality of issues affecting the public sphere. With greater volatility in public memory, there are more attempts to invent the socio-political reality rather than simply partaking in the historical imagination. These attempts to invent and mold the public memories in certain ways might be motivated by vested interests but there always remain such tussles to carve the popular emotion in certain ways. These attempts and tussles often become visible as populist appeals and actions by various public figures.

One of the side-effects of this inventive process in the public sphere is that the truth can be fabricated by influential groups. The state, in this context, is amongst the major manipulators. It often indulges in inventing or erasing some memories to suit its purpose.Vaidhyanathan (2018) has studied the role of social medial services, especially Facebook, in affecting political and social movements. While highlighting the role of Facebook in catalysing contemporary social movements, Vaidhyanathan argues that 'the presence of Facebook does not make protests possible, more likely, or larger. But Facebook does make it easy to alert many people who have declared a shared interest in information and plans. It lowers the transaction costs for the early organisation. Most important, Facebook has the ability to convince-perhaps fool-those who are motivated and concerned…' (Vaidhyanathan, 2018, p. 130). This ability to manipulate reality and project a certain perspective as true accounts for a major source of power in the 21st century.

Impact of Globalisation

Globalisation has acted as a catalyst in the process of the transformation of the public sphere. The significance of globalisation is more from the perspective of inventing political societies because the imagination process, though takes due caution of the idea of nationalism and nation-state, is not limited by the constraints of national boundaries. Thus, the political imaginations of society freely transact with any group and in any aspect of its multifarious culture. Thus, there could be empirical sites having sameness of political imagery in the most contrasting societies as well.

Globalisation has come to play a key role in shaping and influencing the nature of political societies. Giddens (1990) has understood globalisation

in terms of changes in time and space and views it in terms of an 'intensification of worldwide social relations' (p. 64). Giddens further understands the stretching, separating, and recombination of time and space as the three core dynamics of modernity. The unfolding of modernity expands the possibility of change and allows the locals to communicate and respond to the global. This process, Giddens argues, radicalises history in the sense of the appropriation of the past to shape the future (pp. 20-21). While several variants of theories of globalisation and modernity focus on the systemic changes at the global level, the starting point of the unfolding of such change is the political society and the process of political reinvention.

Robertson understands globalisation, on lines similar to Giddens, and views it as 'the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole' (Robertson, 1994, p. 8). He further proposed the idea of glocalisation to suggest the mutual interpenetration of the global and the local. Increasingly over time the ''local'' is not created in isolation but with reference to the global. Examples of such interpenetration of global and local could be seen through the various online trends that pass different regions with the same level of participation and excitement. These 'viral' trends, while creating waves of similarity in different regions, affect the public imagery of different political societies through an intensified consciousness. Wiggins and Bowers (2015) have discussed this 'virality' of social media as an important factor in changing the political understanding of society.

The next trend of the unfolding of evolution in the digital age is towards an instantaneous era of change that might have been ushered by the social media revolution. Vaidhyanathan (2018) recollects the statement given by Facebook's founder Mark Zuckerberg in the 2017 manifesto when he highlighted the Indian Prime Minister Modi's speech insisting his ministers to share meetings and information on Facebook so that they can hear direct feedback from citizens. 'Zuckerberg wrote… Just as TV became the primary medium for civic communication in the 1960s, social media is becoming this in the 21st century' (p. 2). This shows the level of interconnectedness that has emerged due to social media. The deep reach of social media is effectively able to convey the social messages and appeals on an instantaneous basis.

Digital Deliberations and E-activism

The virtual compression of the time and space dimensions cannot be observed in a literal sense. It can only be observed through the ways our lifestyle has changed. The advances in information technology have made it

possible for the world to witness and experience any event, in any part of the world, on an instantaneous basis and thus, have a lived experience in a virtual capacity. The lived experience of the masses, today, is not solely dependent upon the channels of print media or conventional ways of information. The political society of the 21st century is being imagined and invented instantaneously. This, however, shall not be seen as a break from the past, but as active involvement and interpretation in the present.

Due to the universal reach[4] of IT, it has become possible for a layman to voice one's opinion on public forums. This universal access and ability could not be imagined in the earlier centuries when the dissemination of information took place through print media. In fact, the culture of print media, somehow, sets a qualification for being able to participate in the political imagination of the society.[5] When the ideas are being increasingly spread through digital communication, it appears that the qualifications for being a participant in the process of political imagination have been lowered, if not removed. As a result, the spectrum of those involved in the act of deliberation has widened. This shows a positive move towards, what Gutman and Thompson call, deliberative democracy (Gutmann & Thomson, 2004). This could also be seen as a welcome change as it has brought the political imagery out of the coterie of social manipulation.[6] With more stakeholders and interest groups emerging, the imagery of the political society is an outcome of an interface between different interests and identities. Fraser (1997) views such deliberation between different interest groups as a sign of plurality of the public sphere and refers to such groups as 'subaltern counter publics (p. 82). She also terms such a notion of society as 'radical democracy' (p. 181).

The digitalisation of political experiences has certainly become a major factor in determining the nature of modern politics. Instead of simply learning and reading about the events happening around the globe, the masses are now able to participate through virtual and digital means. Virtual participation[7] allows the individual to break the barriers of space and participate at several political sites simultaneously. The enhanced capability to experience (virtually) the socio-political framework of different political communities and get involved in the political imagination in such distant communities has given the masses a taste for political activism. This e-activism is a peculiar feature of contemporary societies because the individuals are now able to participate in the deliberative processes without putting their own interests at stake. Simple participation in an online event or a charity for a social cause in a distant state could have a significant

impact when seen through a broader picture (Vaidhyanathan, 2018). What starts as a casual involvement for an individual turns out to be a significant change when seen as a continuum.

Vaidyanathan (2018) has noted some of the social movements managed through digital channels. In 1997, the Zapatista movement in Mexico used emails as a prominent means of communication. In 2000 thousands of protesters in the Philippines filled the streets and squares of Manila to protest electoral malfeasance and government corruption. Similar movements occurred in Ukraine where the Orange Revolution of 2004-05 overthrew the allegedly corrupt government. New forms of communication allowed for that discovery and connectivity with low marginal cost, unprecedented speed, and flexibility that felt significantly different from protest movements of the past (p. 140). Similar examples could be found in India as well where social and political activism is now taking a digital shape. It is also not uncommon to find the state restricting the use of digital technologies to curb the spread of ideas and activism (See India Today, 2019).

Due to the pervasiveness of digital technology in our lives, the digital aspect of our lives has become an indispensable part. Thus, an individual's digital identity becomes proof of one's existence. Any individual without a digital presence is seen as non-existent and incapable. What has added to the political imagery of society today is the fact that socio-political change is beginning to flow through the actions in the virtual world. Thus, proximity to the subject is no longer a qualification for being involved in social action. The digital identity of an individual has become a virtual embodiment of the consciousness of the individual. Virtual participation in socio-political events is now treated at par with physical involvement in socio-political affairs.

There are also platforms that kickstart the online campaigns and register participation from across the world. Such platforms are referred to as Public Benefit Corporation (PBC) in the US.[8] An example of one such PBC is 'change.org' which is working in more than 12 countries and was able to reach about 265,786,771 users and saw 603,903,062 signatures from across the world in 2018 (Change.org, 2018, p. 5). Imagine the capacity and reach of such numbers upon any democratic society. Given the mammoth-sized numbers of participants, no policy maker is able to ignore such campaigns. And this is how they succeed in bringing social change.

Social media has established a virtual existence of the individual, wherein all the aspects and dimensions of one's life could be lived and shared. This also appears to have given rise to the e-version of the public

sphere and civil society. Parallels could be drawn between the conventional means of sarcasm and satire and the modern forms of memes (Wiggins & Bowers, 2015). These imageries play a similar role in offering a critique of society through mobile and visually appealing images. Every imagery sent out in the digital world becomes a contribution to the political imagery of the society. Highfield and Leaver (2016) have studied the nature and impact of social media and concluded that- Visual content is not just social media artifacts - isolated and individual - but is surrounded by debates and discussions that take on political, legal, economic, technological, and socio-cultural dimensions (p. 49). Due to these roles, social media artifacts, including the trend of memes, are now seen as channels of participatory digital culture (Wiggins & Bowers, 2015, p. 6).

It would not be incorrect to argue that the 21st century world is connected more virtually than physically. The compression of time and space has certainly brought our concerns together. However, it is the ability to participate and project one's opinions and beliefs in the public forums which has transformed the nature of political society today. Whether our political views are progressive or not is a different issue altogether, but what is certain is the fact that the political imagery is no longer static but a result of deliberation and involvement of multifarious stakeholders.

Conclusion

The constituents of the political society, today, are better capable to influence and shape the political imagery of the society. The element of anonymity and equality of conditions (in the digital space) has ensured that the programme of socio-political reimagination does not remain an esoteric task. Access to the digital world invites individuals and groups, belonging to different walks of life to discuss and deliberate on every issue. These deliberations and involvement open up the way for a collective body of citizens (Mahajan & Reifeld, 2003, p. 22) and toward a plural public sphere (Fraser, 1997). Fraser (1997) further describes the contemporary wave of democracy as 'radical democracy' which is characterised as a rubric for mediating various struggles over multiple intersecting differences (p. 181). These intersecting differences appear to have both magnified and dissipated due to digital activism. These interests are magnified due to the enhanced capability to voice and share such interests. At the same time, they are partially dissipated due to the dispersion of attention to multiple issues.

The implications of all these processes, for democracy, are far-reaching and decisive. The idea of imagined communities, given by

Anderson (2006), offers an underlying explanation of the processes through which democratic societies adapt to time and space. However, an underlying notion of democratic societies to be found in the idea of imagined communities could be observed in the understanding of democracy as an empty place (See Lefort, 1988). Lefort (1988) viewed democracy as an arrangement characterised by markers of uncertainty that keep the lawmakers on their toes and maintains a balance among different groups (p. 19). What Lefort believed is akin to the understanding of Anderson regarding the evolution of the imagined political societies. The imagery of the political community is like a floating island upon the waters of different rivers. The revamped nature of the political societies in the 21st century makes the political society a site for contestation for ideas. However, what distinguishes the earlier centuries from today is the culture of political participation wherein the involvement in political imagery is an integral aspect of the 21st century. Through our intended or unintended actions, we contribute to the process of political imagery in ways that surpass our expectations.

While it is true that the public space does not belong to any specific person or group (Lefort, 1988, p. 41), it also does not remain neutral to the dynamics of the different individuals and groups. When the nature of political society is understood in the context of the 21st century, it is fair to believe that the political society has been radicalised through the enhanced participation and involvement of the masses. The digital spaces have not only added to the layer of democracy but also contributed to the unfolding of the process of democratisation. The enhanced capability and access have certainly added a dimension of the invention to the understanding of the political society. The idea of invented communities holds a key to understanding the changing nature of the public sphere and the factors that define it.

End Notes

1. Hashtags have become a part of the communication language of the contemporary youth in such a way that it is often used outside the social media to imply an emphasis upon a work, an emotion or a theme. Thus, it is common to observe the youth writing their ideas and ending the arguments with a series of hashtags containing the emotion and themes related to the underlying arugment.
2. The term dialectic, here, is not used in the sense used by Marxist theorists, but to refer to the constant attempt to find the truth or the best suiting answer to the human society.
3. Dictionary meaning of the term transience is 'the state or fact of lasting only for a short time'

4. I agree that the access to the IT services might not be literally universal as a large number of individuals are still unable to afford and use these services. While there is no physical barrier for accessing the digital heritage, the obstacle is created by the economic costs that are to be paid to use these services.

5. Publishing a book or a newspaper entails some investment, and thus, only the selected works and opinions are printed and circulated. Such a framework often neglects the ones who are unable to offer the standardised texts. It leads to the exclusion of the masses who are not so quaint with the styles and expectations of the market. This made the process of spreading the idea of political imagination a privilege of an esoteric coterie.

6. Although some scholars believe that this trend has in fact increased the influence of the powerful groups to manipulate the public opinions. Through sensationalisation of any issue, even media can play the role of manipulator of the public opinion. What I have tried to argue here is that the capability to influence and share in the public sphere has been made open now. It no longer remains an exclusive right of the powerful.

7. I refer to such participation as e-activism, as it based on a virtual or digital participation with the socio-political institutions. The enhanced opportunity and capability available to the individuals have created a greater involvement in the project of political invention and reinvention of political communities.

8. A Public Benefit Corporation ("PBC") is a new form of legal status in the US for mission-driven companies. the company's mission is legally enshrined in its Articles of Incorporation and directors are legally required to consider all stakeholders when making decisions – including users, staff, the environment, and the surrounding community.; See Change.org Impact Report 2018;

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Gender Differences, Women and Leprosy: A Review Study

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Gender differences and issues associated with health have a vital impact on women's health. In the case of the disease leprosy, gender issues or inequalities are a more prevalent and serious, and mostly stigmatised disease. This paper presents the inequalities based on gender in case detection rate, deformities, and its reactions found among leprosy-affected people in India and other countries of the world. The significant reasons responsible for those differences will be discussed. This paper will also highlight a few of the most important recommendations for further research on issues related to gender in leprosy.

Introduction

Leprosy is a chronic and neglected tropical disease caused by Mycobacterium Leprae. It is classified mainly as paucibacillary (PB) or multibacillary (MB). The types of disease mainly depend on the number of skin lesions and nerve involvement. Paucibacillary is a milder type, having few that is up to five hypos pigmented, pale and reddish, anesthetic skin lesions. Patients with multibacillary leprosy are having more than five skin lesions, plaques, or diffuse skin infiltration. Women's health issues in particular till today received little or no attention from health managers,

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policymakers, and researchers. Gender inequalities in health require greater attention in the planning of health facilities, services, and management.

Leprosy is a disease that has an impact on the physical, psychological and social health of the people affected by leprosy. In developing countries, women seek health care very late for health-related problems or issues. There are lots of stigmas attached to the health-seeking behaviour of women, which includes traditional beliefs, the status of women, poor knowledge about the disease leprosy, etc., are some of the causes responsible for not reporting the case of women. The factors associated with the neglect of leprosy cases in women were illiteracy, early marriage, heavy workload pressure, low financial support or status, and poor knowledge and awareness of the clinical signs of leprosy and its treatment. Gender is not only the sexual differences, but it also includes various social, economic, and cultural variables which are responsible for and attributed by social structures to men and women (Rathgeber & Vlassoff, 1993). The social roles, responsibilities, and expectations are different than those of men and women. Women experience different exposure to disease and infection, due to socio-cultural and economical aspects. Women come across the different impacts of disease in a medical sense as well. Women generally have lesser access to health care services as compared to men. Women may be treated differently than men in the Indian society and thus the disease may manifest differently, they require a different approach to treatment.

Gender and Leprosy

In a few of the tropical neglected diseases, such as leprosy and filariasis, gender issues and related inequalities play a greater role due to their effect on appearance physically and attached social stigma and discrimination associated with the disease. True that the number of cases of registered leprosy cases has reduced drastically in the past years, still leprosy is such a disease that is endemic in so many countries. The global prevalence rate of registered leprosy cases was 1.7 per 10000 population in 1996. There is a vast difference between the registered cases and the actual number of leprosy cases. The most important concern till now is treatment defaulting. On an average 5-20 per cent of the total registered patients do not complete treatment and they are the biggest sources of infection to spread the disease. Leprosy is considered as a public health problem and is expected to remain on earth for the next decade.

There is always a considerable difference between registered incidence rates between males and females. Sex differences and disparities are also found in case of prevalence rates of deformities related to leprosy.

Detection Rates of Cases and Gender Differences

All over the world, the detection rates of leprosy cases are different for women as compared to men. It has been always seen and found from various studies across the globe that the case detection rates are more among men than women, clinically, and the ratio is 2:1. According to a study conducted in different African countries (Morocco, Senegal and Morocco, and Tunisia), the male and female ratio was found to vary between 1.5:1 and 2:1. If we see in some of the African countries, the case detection rate is almost the same for men and women or sometimes even higher for women. However, the above-mentioned sex ratio is an exception. For example, in Kenya the male and female rate of leprosy is similar (1:1).

Deformity Rates and Gender Differences

Deformities due to leprosy have significant frequency differences, epidemiology, and types of deformities amongst males and females. According to a study conducted in India, it was declared that the incidence of deformities in males is more, even two times double than females both for grade I as well as grade II deformities (n=2285). In studies carried out in West African Countries, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Malawi (Ponnighaus et.al., 1990), and China revealed almost similar findings.

Gender Differences and Type 1 Reaction

Instead of the predominance of male in the case of leprosy-affected patients, one of the important findings is that type 1 or the reversal reaction are very much common among the female population. According to a study in Thailand, type 1 reaction occurred with significantly greater frequency in the female with 47 per cent against 26 per cent in the male population. It does not appear and is even not influenced by age or onset of the disease leprosy (cohort study, n=176).

The data mentioned above on sex and gender variance in case detection rates, rates of deformity, and type 1 reaction suggest that males and females face different risk factors among people affected with leprosy and they do not get equal opportunities to access the health care services.

Now, let us discuss some of the most important reasons/factors which can have a major impact on gender differences will be discussed for

different aspects of leprosy patients and their health services opportunities: manifestations of disease, appropriate use of health services, methods of case detection, compliance of treatment and the outcome of the disease. The focus is on the major commonly observed differences in leprosy-affected populations concerning gender differences are that the case-detection rates are higher in the male population than for the female population in most of the countries.

Gender Differences and Exposure to Disease

The differences in gender and exposure to the disease leprosy may depend upon the biological and socio-cultural factors associated with this disease. The incidence of leprosy is a biological factor that might be a reason for influence. Occupation and socio-economic status are also main reasons that influence differences in exposure to the disease leprosy.

Immunological Response to the Disease

Women have the power to appear and develop stronger and possibly more effective immune reactions against the Mycobacterium Leprae in a sub-clinical setting as compared to men. This type of immunological response is also found and presents for diseases like tuberculosis according to various studies. This means that it is not only limited to Mycobacterium Leprae.

In the cases of pregnancy, the immunological response used to get suppressed. The effects of pregnancy and lactation were studied in detail in Ethiopia and was found a diminished and unstable immune response among 114 leprosy affected patients during their pregnancy. Women who are pregnant, are at high risk to develop neuritis, and relapse, whereas the relapse rates are usually higher among men (Saha & Das, 1992). According to another study, it was found that adolescent girls have a higher risk of relapse of cases of leprosy, as compared to the men who belong to the same age group.

Occupation

In most countries, women usually work in their households. This is one of the reasons which might reduce their risk of infection in the women group of population. For example, in Brazil, leprosy case detection among the women group has been found increasing, as they have started moving outside in search of work and they started working. And as a result, their ratio is 1:1 for both men and women. For instance, if the women stay at home

with the symptoms undetected, their health issues will remain undiagnosed and will become the source of infection for others. It is most often seen and assumed that the risk, as well as the prevalence of infection among women is often ignored.

Socio-Economic Status of Women

The socio-economic status is one of the major factors which is recognised for the exposure of risk of any diseases so it goes for the leprosy as well. According to a study in Venezuela, it was found that leprosy is six times higher and its prevalence rate in areas of people living with low socio-economic status as compared to the people living with a high level of socio-economic level. Nearly, about 75 per cent of cases of leprosy among 8,608 females were found to be associated with low living standards with regard to their low socio-economic status, level of nutrients, hygiene and living conditions, and culture. One of the studies in India found that the proportion of illiterate at the same time unemployed females affected with leprosy is considered at higher risk. There are very few sociological and analytical studies that have assessed and measured these elements in detail.

Health Care Services and their Utilisation

The gender differences which are observed in rates of case-detection, may be due to the reasons that female have limited access and they also on the other hand uses very less health care services. There are many studies on gender, which have shown that women as compared to men have lesser access to health services and their utilisation (Jakman et.al., 1995). There are several factors, which influenced access of health services for women. They are services and their availability, the cost involved for the services, social structure, care, and its quality, mobility, and most important the decision-making power of the women.

Services and its Availability

In India, a study has found that the case detection rates for both the males and females are similar as per the reports of urban settings (1:0'9), whereas it differs very much in the rural settings (1:0'7), and (1:0'6) in the tribal areas. The differences are most probably due to the lack of services in the rural and tribal areas.

Awareness and Rate of Literacy

The above study and many other studies have found that women were generally having lesser awareness than men regarding the symptoms

of the disease leprosy and also there is a lack of availability of leprosy services. According to a study in Nigeria, the women's spouse is one of the most important sources of information for leprosy (30 per cent). Only 22 per cent of the women get the information from the health care providers as compared to the men population of Nigeria.

Women and their Decision-Making Power

In most countries, health care access to women is mostly determined by the status of women in the family. In India, the decision to consult or call a doctor is mostly taken by men or the mother-in-law of the women in the family. Married women are often delayed to seek treatment because of their husband's apathy and also due to the reason of jealousy of their mother-in-law. These types of decision-making power for women are also seen in many countries of the world like Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Mobility of Women

The mobility of women is also one of the reasons for the limited access to health care services for the disease leprosy. They lack decision-making power, time, and money, and also an unwillingness to disrupt the duties of their household or due to the absence of any caretakers for their children. Women are the main caretaker and at the same time health providers for their families, whereas they are the greatest sufferer of the disease and its impact. Most of the time they carry out and look forward the caring for the other members of the family when they are ill. The family plays a greater role as when women can seek health care. In India, there is a long gap between noticing a symptom for the first time and to make it confirm that it is leprosy. Also, there is a longer gap between suspicion and seeking medical consultation and confirmation in the case of women as compared to men. A similar kind of finding was found in one of the studies in India (31 months of delay in case of detection in women vs 17 months of delay in men). These are not only the specific factors involved in the utilisation of leprosy services, but it affects the patients affected with leprosy drastically because of the longer time duration of treatment processes which are involved.

Services and its Quality

The women's access to health care services and their utilisation also depends on the perceived quality of services. Women most of the time feel hesitant to seek treatment as they feel to be treated in an inferior way by the

health care service providers. In many countries, in particular, Islamic countries, women are not allowed and most of the time they are hesitant to get examined by male doctors physically. In the Indian situation as well, most of the leprosy clinics are having only male staff.

Leprosy and Stigma

The stigma which are attached to the leprosy disease is one of the major barriers, which is responsible and not allowing the people affected with leprosy to get proper medical care. When women might seek medical care, having suspect leprosy cases, this might be the reason several times which reduces their marriage and it might also affect their role and status in the household when get married. For example, in Nepal, the tear of stigmatisation was found one of the major reasons for some of the ethnic group's patients who have visited to the treatment centres or hospitals far away from their homes. The number of leprosy patients hiding their symptoms is considerably lesser than before, but it is still prevalent in today's time as well. According to a study in India, it was found that 18 per cent of women try to hide their symptoms, and another study conducted in India found that women generally tend to hide their symptoms more often than the men population. Another study conducted in Thailand and the Philippines on the topics of the stigma that is attached to leprosy has revealed that stigma is one of the major obstacles to seeking the time-to-time treatment.

Methods of Case Detection in Leprosy

The men and women are having the same risk to get infected with the disease leprosy, and also have equal opportunities to access to and make use of health benefits and services as men. But still, the differences in case detection are found due to the gender differences and gender insensitivity in society.

In India, it is often found the lower-case detection rates among the female population than in the male population. It is found in various modes of detection that female was detected more in number during the general survey and contact surveys as compared to the detection done at referral centres or medical institutions (Rao et.al., 1996). In that same study conducted, it was also observed that the proportion of self or voluntarily reporting done among the female population is generally lesser than among the male population.

The case detection rates which are passive in nature could also result in significant differences in rates as per age group. According to a study in India reveals that the passively detected girls' population during their age puberty (11 to 17 years) is mostly half of that among the boy's population from the same age group (13 and 24 per cent respectively). Whereas, in the female age group of 18 to 35 years, the case detection rates are higher than men of a similar age group (32 and 25 per cent respectively) (Rao et.al., 1996). The association of low rates of case detection of any specific age group may be the result of religious and cultural barriers and taboos like girls and women should not be allowed to show their parts of the body to male medical practitioners or health workers before their marriage or after the marriage. Hence, due to all these reasons, they mostly not even visit the health institutions and make themselves behind on the proper diagnosis and treatment.

Complications of Treatment

Complications of treatment may exist due to gender differences. Different studies conducted in India and Pakistan have revealed that female is mostly more compliant than male (95 per cent in female and 83 per cent in male) in the case of India and (Rao et.al., 1996). This is proved and attributed to females as they are more socialised and conform to prescribed social behaviour. However, socio-cultural perceptions and beliefs can influence compliances. Among the traditional medical practices, one of the major causes of illness for the behavioural point of concern often causes lapses by women, which prevents them from availing of on-time treatment and continuing proper treatment to overcome the disease.

Leprosy is a disease that is believed wrath of God in many societies, might be one of the major reasons for delaying in treatment before the measures such as fasting and sometimes offerings made to God and Goddesses. It is found that 18 per cent of females did so as compared to 6 per cent of the male population. In an Indian scenario, most women after getting diagnosed with leprosy disease and despite medication of MDT, usually rely on their religious and traditional beliefs and sources of its occurrence. In the colonies of leprosy mainly 10 per cent of women are not ready to take and start any treatment despite awareness of the leprosy disease.

Most women are hesitant to take medication for leprosy for various reasons, like the side effects of drugs. For example, Rifampicin is one of the Multi-Drug Therapy (MDT) medications for the disease leprosy, which turns the colour of urine darker. Most of the women were so much concerned

about this change of colour and thought that it is associated with jaundice, because of the side effect of the MDT medication. Jaundice is considered one of the most dangerous and deadliest among all diseases. Due to a lack of proper understanding, they tend to consult a 'Jaundice expert' and stop the medication of leprosy treatment on the advice of the doctors. This is the study conducted in Pakistan, which only included the women group of the population and there is no clue or report as to whether the same types of fear were also associated with men. In this study, it was also found that it is a major problem for most of the women to take Clofazimine, because of their dark skin colour which is associated with Clofazimine. It is a similar kind of feeling for the women as compared with lower social status. Also, the medicine Dapsone is one of the major problems for the women to consume as it looks similar kind to a contraceptive pill (Mala D.) which is a popular brand. When the Dapsone is provided in blister packs it has very similar and even more looks like the contraceptive pill. So, the health workers always have to face their mother-in-law who generally does not allow their daughter-in-law to take MDT thinking that it is contraceptive pills.

According to a study in Nepal, the quality of services is also found and related to treatment compliance. This does not prove as to what extent these examples of compliance which are poor in nature have a negative impact on the treatment of the disease and its outcomes.

Disease and its Outcome

The disease and its outcomes are generally measured in both medical and socio-cultural parameters. The consequences of the disease leprosy can have different grades of disabilities as well as deformities but also been found that it leads to social expulsion and social isolation from the families of women. There always exist significant differences in the outcome of diseases. Deformities are found to be most common among males than females. The reasons for these types of differences are biological, which may be due to the fact and also the explanation that multibacillary (MB) leprosy is responsible for increased deformities risk and is most common among men. In a different study conducted in Venezuela and Ethiopia, it was found in both the countries that Multibacillary and its predominance was more common in men as compared to women.

The rate of deformities and disabilities are found to be mainly associated not with and due to sex and disease types MB and PB, whereas it is associated with involvement of the trunk and the disease duration.

Disabilities in leprosy patients ascertained in a total population survey in Karonga District, northern Malaŵi (Ponnighaus et.al., 1990).

The different occupations of men and women are the reasons for a socio-cultural explanation and the observed gender differences. This reveals from the two studies which attribute the difference in gender and the reasons for deformities that happened to men working outdoors with the help of their both feet and hands. In the case of India, according to research, it was found that men are more affected in the feet, and women get affected in their hands due to the disease of leprosy. In the practice of agriculture and many other outdoor occupations, feet are often more exposed and used while in indoor and household activities hands are more exposed. In many societies, women also do outdoor activities such as collecting firewood and potable water, working in the paddy fields, and many other activities. As a result, their feet also get affected as it is exposed all day long for work. So, when we consider socio-cultural reasons and their outcomes, many studies have shown that women are more vulnerable and affected due to leprosy. Mainly women suffer from isolation, rejection, and denial from their spouses, relatives, and even children. In India, women have more restrictions, and they lose the freedom to touch as compared to men (Rao et.al., 1996). Women if they get affected by leprosy, it is more likely that they will have lesser opportunity to get married. According to a study conducted in Brazil, women prefer to be single and gets separated from their husband, families, and relatives, and the reason for separation from their own families is the disease leprosy.

Discussion

According to the many review studies, it reveals that gender differences, socio-cultural and biological reasons are mostly associated with the disease leprosy. However, the data are not in uniform nature. The ratios of case detection for the disease leprosy vary to a considerable extent. It is not only applicable for both the sexes, but also in different countries, as per their socio-economic groups, their age, and periods. One of the major barriers to analysing differences in gender in the case detection method and ratio is the routine of collecting data for case detection. It is not at all desegregated for the sex. Due to the scarcity of data available on sex differences regarding case detection are lesser as compared to the diverse geography area.

The case detection rates vary over time is considered a complicated reason within the same country as well and it depends mainly on the

methods which are used for case detection. In India, active case finding involves house-to-house surveys which are carried out in schools and among girls have resulted in an increased rate of case detection over the past couple of years.

Therefore, it is very hard to explain the sex differences and their reasons as to why and how it exists within a particular country or among different countries on the same continent. For example, in some African Countries, let us assume that any explanation or reasons can be given for the reversed conditions. However, there is a strong indicator that differences in sex concerning case detection rates are significant and further research is required to quantify and explain all these differences. To know and understand whether they are mainly because of the sex or gender differences which are related or if the combination of both the groups has a definite factor to play the role. To compare the data of case detection rates of various countries, it is really necessary to have multicentre studies, which use a standard and scientific research methodology. And further, it will be used as a method of case detection.

To understand the responsible factors, it is most important to know if gender differences in case detection are significant. There are various reasons for potential variables, socio-cultural as well as biological, with many of the contrasting data, really making it difficult to establish the main contributors or factors for the observed variations. The data which are available are too less to find any conclusions. The review of literature that is available on the topic of gender and its issues regarding leprosy reveals that the biological and the socio-cultural factors are mainly responsible and plays role in the lesser case detection rates among the women group population. Further, more researches are the need of the hour to determine the importance of factors and group of factors, which are biological, community-related factors, or may be related to health services. Again, within each of the groups, more knowledge and insight are required on the main factors responsible for gender-related inequalities for addressing such problems. How health facilities can be improved to increase their utilisation by a female? How have the health awareness, education, and messages improved to reach the high-risk groups, like women? Both the qualitative and as well comparative scientific research studies are needed for addressing all such questions.

It is an important point to note that mainly studies that are done on leprosy including this particular review are mostly from the Asian and Latin American countries. On the other hand, very few studies are also found in

African countries. If we consider the gender variations as an observed factor in many of the countries are significant, it is also important to understand the reasons why few of the African countries show a considerably different picture. To better understand all these differences, qualitative, quantitative, and comparative studies are much needed.

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Book Review

Women Voters in Indian Elections: Changing Trends and Emerging Patterns

Sanjay Kumar

Routledge, (2022) South Asia Edition, Pages 190, Rs. 695 (Paperback)

Ranjana Upadhyay*

Democracy abides by the representation of the people and if half of the population is underrepresented, it makes the whole concept questionable. The book 'Women Voters in Indian Elections: Changing Trends and Emerging Patterns' edited by Sanjay Kumar, Professor, Centre for the Studies of Developing Societies (CSDS), presents the varied aspects of women's participation in Indian Politics, as party candidates, workers, legislatures in general and voters in particular. The level of political participation of women has been assessed in the book, on the parameters of caste, class, religion, age, marital status, education level, and rural-urban division. Divided into seven chapters, this book presents a top-drawer data analysis based on survey research conducted by CSDS, in 11 states of India after the 2019 General Elections. Beginning with the judicial and executive interventions for gender parity in property rights, employment opportunities, and age for marriage in the introductory chapter, the author describes the electoral participation of women, especially emerging as decisive voters in Indian elections. He presents an account of changing

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trends in women's turn-out in India, especially the narrowing gap between men-women turn-out since the 2014 General Election onwards, and argues, justifying through various studies that the increased mobility, social networking as well as technological advancement has helped to increase the voting percentage of women. He discusses the issues of representation of women vis-a-vis their reservation in legislative bodies in India, with an alternative of reserving the seats for women by the political parties voluntarily. The author acknowledges that the 73rd and 74th Amendment of the Indian constitution has had a positive impact on the degree of women's participation in electoral politics overall, albeit he takes concern about how the Two-Child Law policy in Rajasthan, in 1992 has made it difficult for women to participate in the grassroots politics in the state because the deeply rooted patriarchal norms do not allow women to decide their sexuality and reproductive rights. He points out that the socialisation pattern, awareness about political issues, level of education and employment, and marital status are the major determinants of women's political involvement.

In the second chapter, 'Participation in Politics: Voting Behaviour and Engagement in Political Activities', Jyoti Mishra and Sanjay Kumar exclusively write about election-related activities done by women like contesting in elections, participating in political parties, meetings and campaigns, contributing and collecting money for their respective parties. The authors have presented different levels of electoral participation of women by various data. They have pointed out the more active role of rural women in comparison to urban counterparts in electoral activities and the reason behind this as they have mentioned may be the panchayati raj institutions which have politically empowered women at the grassroots level. They have tried to find out a relation between the level of education and electoral participation of women but unlike in USA, they found no linear relationship between women's education level and the degree of electoral participation in India. They have also mentioned that women from upper caste and adults participate comparatively more in political activities. The chapter describes women's political awareness through social media platforms like watching videos related to politics and expressing their political opinions through Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, though these all are confined to urban educated women. The authors have also pointed out that women's engagement in different associations like NGOs, civil society organisations, etc. (for example in Mizoram and Kerela), improves their political awareness and helps them to express their political concerns. It might be helpful if such engagement of women is presented in northern states also as the voting percentage of women is also at par with the states mentioned. By and large, the chapter concludes by depicting socio-cultural-economical hurdles which prevent women's active participation in politics.

Vibha Attri in her chapter, "Individual and Motivational Factors Affecting Women's Political participation", talks about supply-side and demand-side as two features of the political system, which affect women's entry into politics, while the supply-side factors belong to personal competency, ambitions and knowledge level of the women, the demand-side is all about the characteristics of the electoral process and political parties in the concerning system. The author also talks about the three facilitations – institutional, contextual, and individual which are the conditions that facilitate women's empowerment in politics. The author has meticulously described the different interests of women according to their class, caste, age group, education level, and marital status. She has deliberately written about the role of social media in making women aware of political issues and says that women who are capable of accessing social media platforms are more exposed to socio-political concerns. By analysing data through various National Election Studies done by CSDS, the author has put forward that gender stereotypes act as a major barricading in women's political participation.

Manjesh Rana and Neel Madhav in the fourth chapter, "Political Socialisation at Home: Locating Women in Personal Spaces" describe, the level of decision-making rights among women depending on their age, caste, class, religion, marital status, educated- non-educated, urban-rural household across different states in India. They have explored women's autonomy regarding household purchasing, attaining education, employment, marriage, and political activities. The authors state that women with greater autonomy in the household and other personal-related activities become comparatively more active in political participation.

In the fifth chapter, "Internalized Patriarchy: Socio-Cultural and Economic Barriers to Participation of Women in Politics", Manjesh Rana describes the type of patriarchy and says that internal patriarchy has become a natural trail for women as they admit their secondary position in the society while Neel Madhav in the chapter "Politics as a Career" depicts that caste, class, religion, education level and marital status decides the entry of women in the political life. Adult women having a political lineage opt for politics as a career more than women from a non-political background. The author critically analyses the role of political parties in enhancing women to join the political field. Further, he expresses his views that women leaders in the legislative bodies can bring a drastic change in governance and also motivate other women to join the political spheres. Through his findings, it has been found that the women of Jharkhand and Bihar have a greater concern about women's reservation Bill than women of other states, despite the lower literacy rates in these states. This contradicts the idea established by authors in the previous chapters that the more educated the woman, the more is her political awareness.

The last chapter, 'Public Opinion, and Attitudes: Issues and Party Preferences', presents the factors which influence the women voters when they vote for any particular party. The authors discuss three major reasons which have a decisive impact on women's voting behaviour - first the development-governance-welfarist approach of the party, second the effective leaders, and the third, the ideology, programmes, and beliefs of a political party. Portraying itself as a 'party with a difference' BJP has a little edge over other parties, followed by the Left and Congress and further expanding its votes among women of weaker sections, Muslim women, and also in rural women. The chapter also discusses women's perceptions about the prevailing challenges in the country and surprisingly, women's issues are of low priority for women voters than the problem of unemployment, poverty, price-rise, and corruption. Similarly, they are rarely influenced by the candidate's age and gender rather than the work done by him as well as his/her party's affiliation. Women also have expressed their opinion on the issues of beef consumption, capital punishment as well as freedom of speech. Women from religious minorities have been in favour of individual liberty regarding eating habits and freedom of speech while supporting a ban on literature and movies which hurt religious sentiments. It has been observed that women in some states are more vocal due to the social, educational, and economic development level of the state concerned. The chapter concludes with the remark that women, as an emerging vote bank in Indian politics, have been put on the top electoral priority and no party would like to take a risk by ignoring them.

With an outstanding approach, this book gives a detailed account of women's political participation in India with a major focus on women as electorates. Largely depends on the survey conducted in some states in India, it creates a curiosity among the academicians and researchers to find out similar trends in women's voting behaviour in the other states especially, the northern states of the country where political mobilisation has been intensifying, and the most favoured party of women voters, BJP, as is mentioned in the book, has a comparatively stronger hold. This reading leaves with a question, as women are considered not a homogenous group and electoral politics in India has been largely caste and identity based since the 1990s, what are the reasons women voters are inclined towards a particular party and now reverting again the Indian politics, towards one party-dominance.

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