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INTELLECTUAL RESONANCE

DCAC JOURNAL OF
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Double Blind Peer Reviewed)

Dec 2022, Volume 5

DELHI COLLEGE OF ARTS & COMMERCE

(UNIVERSITY OF DELHI)

NETAJI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110023



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About Intellectual Resonance

DCAC JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

The DCAC Research Journal *Intellectual Resonance* is an annual interdisciplinary, double-blind peer-reviewed journal that provides Faculty and Research Scholars an academic space to submit their unpublished research papers, book reviews, and research essays for publication. The Journal caters to the disciplines of Humanities and Social Sciences and is published in English. The Journal was started in 2013, with ISSN: 2321-2594. The Journal has an Editorial Advisory Board comprising scholars from Indian and Foreign Universities and Institutions. The Editorial Board comprises Prof. Rajiv Chopra, Principal DCAC, as the Editor-in-Chief and Dr. Smita Banerjee, Associate Professor, English Department as Editor, along with a few other faculty members of the College as Members. The interdisciplinary foci of the Journal enable dialogues and convergences across disciplinary domains ranging from Literature, Cinema, Finance, Public Policy, Media and Cultural Studies, Communication Studies, History, Marketing, and allied subjects to name just a few. This diversity and range provides the readers and researchers a vibrant and rigorous academic opportunity for fostering critical thinking and participate in creating new areas of interdisciplinary research and knowledge dissemination.

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EDITORIAL

It is with immense pride that we are presenting this issue of Intellectual Resonance: Annual Interdisciplinary Double-Blind Peer Reviewed, the DCAC Research Journal, ISSN: 2321-2594, Volume 5 for December 2022.

This issue carries ten Original Articles, one Research Essay and two Book Reviews. The articles carry interesting insights from various disciplines Social Sciences and Humanities.

The first two articles engage with pedagogical concerns regarding gender and the English curriculum as well as talking about historical experience, subjectivity and consciousness in contemporary graphic narratives from India. The next set of articles engage with significant insights that have emerged in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and its implications for patent waivers and leadership challenges during this difficult time.

This issue carries articles where the authors discuss a wide range of interventions which focus on industrial regulations and contractualisation from the early 1990s to emerging trends in virtual marketing and digital accounting systems, as well as reviewing the significant role of public sector banks in India.

The last set of articles foreground the troubled aspect of terrorism and narco-terrorism in the context of India and Myanmar, as well as glimpses of deconstructing poetic voices that arose in Sri Lanka during the troubled times of the armed conflict of the island nation.

In the research essay, we get a view about the fluidity of concerns governing the possibility of intersectionality as a theoretical framework to understand biographies of sex work and sex workers. We also look

at two interesting book reviews that draw upon biographies of Kathy Acker and Nariman Karkaria whose exploits during the first World war make for a very engaging read.

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COUNTERING PREJUDICE, CREATING RESILIENCE: CONCERNS IN DEVELOPING GENDER SENSITIVE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

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Abstract

The pandemic has acted as a critical event which has necessitated digital education on a hitherto unprecedented scale. At the same time, it has triggered and exacerbated anxiety and other mental health issues in an alarming manner and stretched people's -both children and adults'-coping mechanisms to the limit. In this context, language education is not just about learning to use a language to listen, speak, read and write the language but also about imparting life skills. The National Education Policy (NEP) advocates the curricular inclusion of inculcating psycho-social skills and aims to encourage holistic growth. In this context, the texts chosen are of utmost importance: at multiple academic levels-primary and middle school, high school, and college, in tertiary education sectors, as well as the ways in which we use the text to raise important and pertinent questions in the classroom. This article cites selective school textbooks for English to indicate the kind of study material, which is value based and gender sensitive, without being overly moralistic or preachy. At the same time, it will also attempt to suggest ways of creating workbooks/sheets which enable and encourage an active engagement with the text, while being alert to the risk of biases which tend to creep in. This essay is based on classroom exercises of English language and literature learning and pedagogy. It is partly founded on empirical research based on school workshops that I conducted and participated in.

Keywords: Literature Curriculum, Ethical Concerns, Pedagogy, Gender, Dialogue.

Introduction and Context

Without reiterating a cliched humanistic notion about the hallowed function of literature and what the literary can achieve, or how it could substitute for religion, the paper argues that literature imbues

us with greater empathy and at the same time, can give us emotional resilience. As an academic who is most comfortable working at the intersection of literature and gender, English teaching brings with it the responsibility to promote not only language competence but also something that brings with it a basket of concerns which could perhaps be classified as ethical, affective and political.

In English teaching, whether at the school and college level, we find that texts we choose for our curricula are extremely important as well as the way we teach it. In the context of higher education there might ensue a battle of the books of the kind that was witnessed in the Learning Outcome Curriculum Framework (LOCF) syllabus introduced in Delhi University in 2021, apropos the English syllabus. The significance of choosing particular texts and determining the way they are transacted becomes even more important in the context of school textbooks, given the fact that some of the centralized boards cater to a wide cross-section of heterogeneous students across the social spectrum. This heterogeneity may also translate into lack of access to digital education for students who can hardly acquire a smartphone, much less a computer. The five observations in this paper are mostly based on an experience when I was briefly involved in a consultatory capacity with a well-known publisher involved in writing/editing English textbooks for Grades 1-8 for the ICSE about four years ago. I was asked to investigate aspects of content, choice of texts as well the exercises framed around the text to mobilize and energize language learning. Gender, social differences, political correctness, both the metatext and subtext in a sense, came under our purview.

To energize and ensure language learning, the publishers also designed accompanying workbooks with writing exercises that could guide teachers as well as ensure engaged pedagogy and a system of learning by doing. I will here draw on a particular story that was taught and transacted at the middle-school level and in a sense, present a case history of what we-as teachers could suggest leading to an active and sustained engagement with the text. However, before I foreground the text and exercises to stimulate language learning, there are a few issues that one needs to keep in mind, perhaps a statutory warning that “our school textbooks cannot pretend” that they exist in isolation from social inequalities and that these inequalities do not “permeate them” (Nawani, *Indian Express*, Dec 1, 2021)

Concerns

In an earlier article, Disha Nawani, a Professor of Education at TISS, had expressed skepticism about the “joy of learning” saying that the joy of learning lies not in creating song and dance but about “creating a positive ecosystem that facilitates participatory education and teaches how to derive pleasure from the process of learning” (Nawani, *Indian Express*, Sept. 16 2021) In many instances these days we see a certain level of hate culture being peddled in social media through vicious trolling.

Underlying such actions/events are “deep rooted prejudices, stereotypes, expressions of self-righteousness, mistrust and hatred for those who are different from us-in terms of religion, gender, caste and class” (ibid). The author goes on to argue that schools do not exist in isolation but are a microcosm of the society around us. Thus, if there are rifts and “cleavages” in society, they will get reflected in schools. As an example, Nawani suggests that the experiences of a Dalit girl or a Brahmin boy would be different, even if the school happened to be the same. This is to emphasize that the subjective matrix of the experience cannot be dismissed. It is inevitable that the social reality outside of school would also impinge upon and impact, at an overt or covert level, what the learner experiences in school. An apparently innocuous issue like dropping last (often caste) names has different implications for an upper caste/class person and a lower caste/class person. Similarly, the upper caste person has the liberty to overlook caste difference though the obverse does not hold true.

In other contexts, too, it could be advocated that school education should be responsive to specific experiences. To suggest an example, many schoolchildren have lost at least one parent during the pandemic. Thus, at the most basic level, the textbook could tweak the idea of the normative family and give instances of caregiving by other family members or friends. Instead, there is often a tendency to impose a “one size fits all” picture of a prescriptive family, which may be different from a description of more flexible notions of family. The other issue is also the way many traditional textbooks visualize women (mother as a lady in a sari with hair in a bun) and gendered labour (Bhog 2002, 2011). Here, one can cite the importance of nursery rhymes and the stories they tell and the subliminal messages they carry.

Nawani in this context foregrounds other issues. In imposing a homogeneous set of expectations on the students, the school takes no note of stratification or diversity. The child's experiences are not allowed into the schoolroom. Moreover, representations of other cultures are done in a skewed way, their specificities either ignored or misrepresented. The school textbook consciously or otherwise, replicates patterns of discrimination which prevail outside. Lower castes or Dalits, disablism or trans-identities, minority cultures and practices tend to be represented in a poor light or in a tokenistic way.

In seeking to educate school pupils in the Humanities, we often become more dehumanized. This happens when we endorse the sacrifice of an "Eklavya" who gave his thumb to Dronacharya as "gurudakshina," rather than calling it out as an act of gross injustice and condemning it. Instead of interrogating Brahminical hegemony, we are upholding it. Similarly, every time we extol and glorify Sita's or any instance of maternal sacrifice, we are condoning gender injustice. The worldview that gets shaped explicitly holding up "one nation, one world." But the collectivity, the "we" it manufactures and creates, is a deeply fractured one. In all this, a child who experiences discrimination on a daily basis-the dalit, Muslim or tribal -runs the risk of having their everyday experiences negated and invalidated. As Nawani puts it, "prejudice becomes our lens, shaping the way we look at the world and others around us" (*Indian Express*, Dec1, 2021).

The New Education Policy

The National Education Policy (hereafter NEP) document in its vision statement aims to identify and "foster the unique capabilities of each student, by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote students' holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres. It also aims to promote flexibility so that learners could choose their own learning trajectories according to their talents and interests" without differentiating or drawing sharp lines between curricular and extra-curricular and creating silos between different areas of learning-the sciences, social sciences arts, humanities, and sports for a multidisciplinary and holistic education. It proposes to focus on promoting conceptual understanding rather than focusing on rote knowledge, innovation rather than regurgitative learning. Its stated intention is to encourage and foster/promote ethics, human and constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit and a spirit

of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice. It also aims to promote multilingualism with a view to communicate the power of language in teaching and learning processes.

Significantly, the NEP document also stresses on the importance of imbibing life skills such as communication, cooperation, teamwork, and resilience. Significantly, it articulates a resolve to respect diversity and the local context in all curricula, pedagogy, and policy.” Beyond diversity, it also pledges to respect values of equity, inclusion as the cornerstone of all educational decisions to ensure that all students thrive in the educational system. Moreover, the NEP document flags its concern with creating synergy in curriculum across all levels of education from early childhood care to school to higher educational institutions. Among other components it intends to encourage the pursuit, not of rote learning, but innovation and creativity in the teaching-learning project. It is on these ideas about innovation and out of the -box pedagogic methods that I now turn to.

Thinking about education has also been necessitated by the pandemic which has introduced and in fact, made digital education a possible and innovative way forward. And yet digital education is a challenge not easy to overcome, given our demographics, differential access to technology, smartphones and computers. These issues plague students and pose serious impediments and challenges to the teaching-learning process. Further, excessive screen time and work from home creates its own stresses that both teachers and students have to contend with. How can we promote language learning along with the values envisioned by the NEP document?

Designing Textbooks /Workbooks towards engaged pedagogy

In order to address some of these concerns that I have flagged in the previous section, I draw upon Mahashweta Devi’s short story, ‘The Why-Why Girl’.

In this story the protagonist, Moyna who is a “shobor”, a girl from a tribal community lives in a village. She displays boundless curiosity about anything and everything and displays a questioning spirit. In the village Samiti (a collective where the author also worked) school and in the context of her home and community, she stands out for the

probing nature of the questions asked by her. Some of these are both fundamental and foundational, not only her curiosity about natural processes but also social structure and relationships. In the first instance, Moyna asks why she cannot eat all kinds of snakes. The author tells her that not all snakes are edible. I would analyze this as a clever narrative manoeuvre, since this account makes space for naturalizing and even domesticating difference, without any comment about the social groups that hunt, forage and cook different kinds of food and meat. Though her poverty is not highlighted, it comes up in the context of her other questions when she asks why she cannot eat rice twice a day and why she cannot go to school in the morning but has to work for the village “zamindar” or landlord. Instead of accepting hierarchies and embodying an attitude of resignation, Moyna persists in asking some probing and sometimes uncomfortable questions.

Thus, she asks why the landlord/zamindar’s sons cannot do the work of herding animals, but have to have her, Moyna, or her brother do the work. The point about Moyna’s active mind, her refusal of any stance of passive acceptance of or passive acquiescence in the status quo is clearly illustrated by the author, Mahashweta Devi.

The task for the teacher is to enhance understanding, help to develop language competence and promote certain positive values like integrity and moral courage. Following the NEP vision document, parts of which have been quoted above, pedagogy would involve imparting and imbibing both certain life skills as well as criticality. What are the tasks that could be set in order to promote “conceptual understanding rather than focusing on rote knowledge, innovation rather than regurgitative learning”. How can the story be deployed “to encourage and foster/promote ethics, human and constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit and a spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality and justice”, communicate life skills, cooperation and innovation?

Invoking Paulo Freire’s (1968) idea of the pedagogy of the oppressed, a foundational text of critical pedagogy, I would argue that Moyna takes the first steps in questioning and critically reflecting on her situation and oppression. As an educator, one way of going forward with this story

may be to suggest and devise ways where students could be engaged in a participatory activity to energize the curriculum, as it were.

This could be done through creating a dialogic format and dramatizing the text. English language teaching practitioners have pointed out the significance of dialogue as a valid pedagogical method (Thornbury and Slade, 2006) I present my own attempt at reworking this story in a dialogic format.

‘The Why Why Girl’: Dialogue Format

Moyna: Do you know why the sky is blue? Why do girls have to do all the household work? And graze cattle? And work on the landlord’s farm?

Teacher: You have so many questions. And as for why girls have to do all the household work, earn a livelihood and supplement the family income is something we have to think about. It may be because of a system called patriarchy where men have effectively controlled the action and movements of women.

Moyna: But Ma’am there is a difference between men as well. The landlord and his sons are different from my father and brother. Why is that so?

Jharna (Moyna’s friend): You can’t stop asking questions. And that way the class will go on and on. It will never get over. There will be more things for us to learn. Can’t you keep your questions to yourself?

Teacher (who has overheard part of this conversation): On the contrary, it is a good thing that Moyna asks questions. You can say that it’s the most important part of the learning process.

Moyna: But that does not answer my question, teacher. Why do I have to get the cattle home for the landlord? Why can’t his sons work?

Teacher: The landlord and his sons have to manage the estate and do accounts. Moreover, as long as they have cheap and unpaid labour to do the work for them, they will avoid working.

Moyna (interrupting as if she has stumbled upon a new understanding): The labour will not be available once there are other ways for us to make a living and earn.... We will not be dependent on the scraps they throw our way... (turning to her friend Jharna and seeking approval from the teacher) That is why we need to learn, earn and make our way in the world.

Teacher: And perhaps help to change the world you live in. And you can start doing that by asking meaningful questions. Asking questions is a sign of an active mind which seeks solutions and answers, is ready to receive ideas and thoughts and absorb them more quickly than others.

Moyna (feeling somewhat triumphant): So there, I don't know why you people complain so much.(to her classmates). So, Ma'am, it is not a bad thing to ask questions, is it? My mother also complains that I ask too many questions.

Teacher: As I said, raising questions is one way to gain knowledge. The method of learning through asking questions is also called the "dialogic" method or the Socratic method. There was a philosopher in Ancient Greece called Socrates who used this method or mode of inquiry to discuss a lot of natural and social issues.

Moyna: Who is a philosopher? What does he do?

Teacher: A philosopher is a person who is trained to make us think about the meaning and purpose of life, how we should think, why it is important to be good, what makes us human and so on. So Socrates, one of the greatest philosophers of Ancient Greece, used this method. He would draw to himself many of the young men of Athens, and encourage them to ask questions. And through a series of questions and counter-questions, he would gradually lead them, logically and step by step, to discover the answers.

English textbooks: Pedagogic Tools and Functions

In the course curriculum from grades 1-8 there were quite a few noticeable features that were appreciable. The first item is the choice and selection of the chapters which were a mix of classic pieces along with some contemporary pieces developed by the authors. Before launching upon a detailed analysis of the selection of chapters/reading material used, suffice it to say that most of the exercises that have been developed based on usage, grammar and composition, demonstrate intelligent utilisation of the reading material. The pedagogic function of these chapters becomes quite clear when one realises the gradual but systematic and cumulative build-up of the language component across the different grades. There is a level of internal coherence and thematic unity that is evident in the systematic build-up from Grade 1 to 2 and so on. The thread of continuity is visible in several chapters. This attempt to build up themes at different levels of maturity and understanding is a sound pedagogic practice.

Some of the issues about which writers have to be sensitised are at two levels at least: one at the ideological level and the other at the level of metanarrative. Thus, in the later grades, the idea of including chapters on national flags, Independence Day and nationalistic sentiments, while invoking feelings and notions of patriotism should also suggest the porosity, the constructedness of borders and boundaries, rather than suggesting xenophobia/jingoism. There is a thin fine line that separates the two and that should emerge in the discourse. One way to tackle this problem is to include readings like Shiv Kumar's poem on "Border Guards" (Class 12) in a later grade. At a more complex level, there is Wilfrid Owen's "Strange Meeting." As authors and editors, we can consciously seek to introduce pieces on pacifism. Both Shaw's 'Arms and the Man' and Aristophanes 'Lysistrata' for later grades and high school are relevant texts, if maybe a little too long.

Secondly, the question of health and hygiene which has acquired tremendous resonance in the pandemic context could also provide a window to different modes of belief about health and hygiene which are culturally relative, for instance of the practice of smearing mud on huts and of using cow-dung as a cleaning agent. This in turn could set the stage and prepare the student for an introduction to tribal/rural life, belief and worldview instead of imbibing homogeneous ideas about modernity. Similarly, the chapters on hygiene which have been included across a couple of grades, can be used to develop their ideas and understanding about hygiene in a way where there is a cumulative build-up. The piece on "Manual Scavenging" could be used to interrogate notions and ideas about hygiene. As a matter of fact, this chapter could be used to generate a debate on ideas of 'cleanliness.' Sensitization to issues hitherto shrouded in silence is a very vital ingredient of our education. The educator could ask the students if making a documentary film on this issue is a good idea, in order to call attention to this spectacle of abjection? Or is it an instance of "poverty tourism", especially if such a film were to be shown outside India? Wherever possible, it might be a good idea to have the students debate on the topic.

Advertisements on fairness creams is a prickly and tricky issue and again a debate, oral or written, could be used as a pedagogic tool. On the one hand, the learner could develop his/her argument about the racist implications of such advertisements. On the other hand, the contrary view could develop the theme of freedom of choice, free market

etcetera. This chapter could also be used to generate a discussion about the “beauty” practices of different social groups and communities.

The continuity of theme is evident in the choice of a piece like “The Why-Why Girl” in Grade 5 and “Bholi” in Grade 6. The education of the girl child is obviously a vital issue and needs to be foregrounded. Similarly, sensitivity towards and understanding of other cultures, different ways of life, issues to do with environment, should be fully evident in the choice of texts. Another reading practice which encourages active engagement is where readers are encouraged to make analogies and read in an interconnected way. Classroom teaching and pedagogical exercises could be calibrated to develop this method of reading where the learner could learn to perceive interlinkages and could be encouraged to compare and contrast different ways of dealing with similar issues. Thus ‘The Why-Why Girl’ can be read in tandem with K.A. Abbas’s story ‘Bholi’ (<https://ncert.nic.in>jefp109>) develops the idea that it is important to educate the girl child.

The chapter on Food and Food Reviewing could be utilised as a launch pad to generate vocabulary exercises where the learners learn words, methods and processes associated with cooking, names of different ingredients, the food items of different regions and countries. Also, an oral exercise could be carried out where students describe the recipe of a favoured food item. This speaking exercise can be devised as a role play where they enact the role of a chef or a TV celebrity chef. The exercise of narrating a recipe is dependent on and encourages sequential thinking, using appropriate connectors, conjunctions and adverbs as well as alerting the learners to acquaint themselves with the manifold tasks associated with cooking.

Underlying literature teaching there is the idea of a value-based humanism. However, if we transact the concept or idea of “Heroism and the Human Spirit” uncritically through Rudyard Kipling’s “If”, we might fall into a trap of seeming to propound hegemonic masculinity. While conceding the declamatory value and literary merits of the poem, one might have a couple of caveats or reservations about this piece. Kipling’s undeniable imperialism made its way into my critical judgments. So, the key sentence that the poem ends with, “you will be a man, my friend” was problematic when viewed from the lens of empire, race and gender. As an articulation of the assertion of the

human spirit and heroism, the poem seemed a little dated, and limited in its universal applicability. Also in question was its confidence in its hegemonic masculinity. I found that the digital assets related to the poem focused on values, good manners and principles, all of which is of course appreciable and a necessary part of literature's ethical content. Perhaps discussion could be used to generate some questions about the finality of values and principles.

In the world that we live in, it is increasingly evident that we need to invoke our own humanity in multiple ways and learn to understand and accept other ways of being. Textbooks and digital material that help inculcate sensitivity and reflexivity are an invaluable resource in this context, imparted by teachers trained to both teach and arouse the joy of learning. Curiosity need not kill the cat, but arouse in learners the desire to ask more and more questions, which can lay the foundation for education beyond literacy. The claims and vision of NEP would then truly be realized and actualized.

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CONTEMPORARY INDIAN GRAPHIC NARRATIVES: TRACING INDIAN SUBJECTIVITY, CONSCIOUSNESS AND HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

In India Graphic Narratives have been a relatively less researched form within the magnum corpus of what is considered Literature in the contemporary age. Indian Literature itself eschews any straitjacketed forms or styles due to its historical longevity. Nonetheless, many of its most influential works of Graphic Fiction have proliferated at the turn of the century, or are simply post-millennial. This reflects a trend in the publishing industry and the spaces available for Indian Fiction. It is important because it can provide a sliver of reflection on the upcoming Indian social milieu. Graphic Narratives provide a different form of language for the author and artist to express themselves. This language is purely visual and is aided with text, usually the form of which, or its lettering also provides an important insight as to what is being conveyed through the narrative. Visual aesthetics within graphic fiction cannot simply be reduced to descriptions within written language, and that is what makes it a complex mode of expressing and understanding the world around us. This paper is an attempt to understand Indian Graphic Narratives and their importance in the contemporary literary and intellectual environment. The texts discussed are *The Hotel at The End of The World* by Parismita Singh, *Delhi Calm* by Vishwajyoti Ghosh and *Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability* by S. Anand.

Keywords: Graphic Narratives, Indian Graphic Narratives, Post Millennial Literature.

Introduction

Delhi Calm, *The Hotel at The End of The World*, and *Bhimayana* are important artefacts of Indian visual culture, constituted by Indian Graphic narratives. It is understood that these graphic narratives have a limited, English-speaking urban audience which transmutes into a

class of educated people being able to access these particular narratives within the larger canon of Indian Graphic Narratives. These three stories speak in the language of Indian Activism, where they can socially speak into the space of the History of trauma that people in India have faced within the different sections of society. *Delhi Calm* and *Bhimayana* are politically charged but speak of entirely different issues within History, namely state brutality and caste-based discrimination, which are relevant today as well. *The Hotel at The End of The World* focuses on memory and History told orally, along with the focus on the trauma experienced by Indian soldiers, and certain forgotten pasts.

The Re-imagination of the Emergency in *Delhi Calm*

Delhi Calm catalogues the Emergency years in India and through its artistic style of the visual mode, communicates to the reader the darkness of the time, along with the dictatorial sense of “calm” which was maintained during the time. The Emergency was imposed on June 26, 1975, during the tenure of Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister. The “Calm” in the title *Delhi Calm* can potentially refer to many things, along with the voices of dissent that were compulsorily silenced at the time. In the novel, Vibhuti Prasad and his friend Parvez embody the voices of dissent that have to camouflage themselves during the state of emergency in Delhi and their sense of idealism undergoes a myriad of challenges because of heavy state censorship. The calm is imposed through complete state control over the newspapers and the media, where no articles could be published that voiced themselves against state policies. The entire graphic novel has a unique art style with a blend of sepia tones with monochrome black and white sketches, that refer to the eerie state of the affairs in India during the time of the Emergency where free speech and basic human rights were usurped from the Indian citizens under the leadership of Indira Gandhi, who is referred to as “Mother Moon” in the text.

The graphic novel starts at a self-reflexive note, where it calls itself a work of fiction, proceeding to mention further that due to its nature of being categorised as “fiction”, where the resemblance to any people or events in what people consider to be reality is entirely coincidental, and thus it is a “self-censored” work. Censorship is a major theme that runs throughout the text and was a major component of the Emergency that lasted for a long period of twenty-one months in India. The time was

characterised by forced muteness of the people and due to no freedom of the press and assimilation of unlawful arrests within the realm of legality, the nation was forcefully put in a state of a metaphorical slumber where the everyday activities of the Capital, Delhi and its core atmosphere of political education, free expression and artistic freedom was forcefully curbed. The novel repeatedly refers to the radio announcements, stressing that “there is nothing to panic about” (Ghosh, 2010, p.3), which contributed to the ironical state of affairs during the time. The emergency was announced by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for her own self-interest, and the nation was plunged into a state of internal panic, heavy surveillance, bureaucratic violence and mass incarcerations, that the text focuses on. The government silenced all the criticisms against the Emergency era with the tool of censorship. Furthermore, it became another major component of the forceful suspension of the rights of Indian Citizens. The events that were proof of tyrannical state power were invisibilized through heavy censorship of the press.

Democracy is another major theme in the novel, and it is crucial to understand how the curtailing of democracy becomes detrimental to the safety, rights, and humanistic progress of the citizens of India in the country. The setting of the novel, as the title indicates, is Delhi. Delhi is referred to as the power polis of India by the narrator, and the nature of the term “power” is ruptured and faces a great degree of change within the text, as it did during the time of the Emergency. The infrastructure of politics, which is condensed in the tangible form of governance, called democracy, is not just a method of structuring the political power of the state. The structure of political democracy is a method of dissipating power among the citizens of a particular state. A democratic structure makes sure that if not evenly, power can at least be distributed at different degrees amongst all the citizens of a particular country so that accountability within a state set-up is not lost. During the time of the Emergency, the democratic distribution of power was curtailed leading to the concentration of power within the hands of the Prime Minister herself. This kind of concentration of power escaped the accountability of the government and paved the way for a kind of continuous fear among the citizens. Democracy becomes an important structure for the citizens of a country to form an active political society. A visible change in the period of the Emergency was the wilful expulsion of the Indian citizens from politically participating

in the democratic structure of the government, thus making Mother Moon almost immune to all forms of accountability.

The seventies were a unique period for Indian society. It was still a young democracy, trying to find an identity that would be more than its postcolonial characterization. Post-coloniality has been historically shared by many formerly colonised nations, but it is their economic, social and political infrastructures that move in and out of their anxiety of influence and characterise their individual state identities. India was also in the middle of its pre-cable-television era, where the radio was an important part of popular culture and its own infrastructure. It was also a means of spreading information and communication at a collective level. The late seventies and the early eighties would see the earlier attitudes of the Indian state towards an era of free market capitalism and its characterization of the meaning of “progress”. In such a malleable period that could be looked at from a point of retrospective gaze, Indian Democracy was turned into a collapsible caricature of itself and the Emergency was imposed. Through the lens of Vibhuti Prasad (VP), one sees Delhi as a representative space of the Indian Political; atmosphere and its quick metamorphosis during the emergency months. The Indianness of the graphic narrative, which removes it from its Western contemporaries, is represented through the spatiality of Delhi, its culture of poetry, street food, films and collective cultural ethos which also faced grave precarity during the emergency era.

The spatiality of the events of the text is another major component of the novel. Delhi is a site of freedom of speech, protests, and a freedom of exploration of oneself, where prescribed frameworks of morality can be questioned and navigated through. Delhi is represented through its street food vendors, local markets, *chaiwallas*, buses, public transport infrastructure, and the like. The spaces within the infrastructure of the urban space, namely Delhi, can be seen as spaces that can be open to signification and can be turned into what the inhabitants of the space want them to be. A significant example is that of the cinema hall, where people engage in a pleasurable voyeuristic gaze to understand their desires and not repress them. The spaces within Delhi are localised versions of significations for Indian citizens. The text represents those spaces within Delhi and then goes on to trace a state of radical change in those very spaces during the Emergency, where freedom is repressed and people face incarcerations without committing any

crimes. Addressing the city, as if all its infrastructural components were alive, VP remarks, “Bloody hell. This city I have almost adopted is now staring at me suspiciously. As suspicious as a new neighbour, not sure whether to smile but constantly gauging. I am surrounded by invisible eyes, watching only me. Trailing me, step by step. When did Delhi get this way?” (Ghosh, 2010, p.9) This becomes important because the city changes in terms of its nature and the way people inhabit its spaces. The food stalls of political discussion are stripped of their freedom and it also addresses the mass surveillance that took place during the Emergency years. Promod K. Nayar puts the change in the spaces of Delhi succinctly, pointing out:

When travelling on public transport VP wonders why a fellow passenger stares at him (Ghosh 8). Roads, buses and coffee houses have new décor: signs announcing silence and conformity (5). Intruding into public spaces are the regulatory, regimenting and disciplining call-ins such as ‘do not guess’, ‘do not think’, ‘punctuality is next to spirituality’, ‘an ideal family is made of four, don’t even think of more’, ‘no bargain in the times of emergency’, ‘no talking politics’ (Nayar, 2017, p.25)

The Emergency can be seen as an event in the History of India, that serves as a rupture in the middle of the chronological continuity of the Indian socio-political climate. The event is categorised by a sudden change in the social dynamics of Indian citizens during the time and the extreme changes of signification that followed after. The nature of development and progress changed radically during the time of the Emergency when Indira Gandhi pushed for hurriedly executed reforms. These reforms were situated in the ethos of the aesthetics of Late Capitalism. Neoliberalism reached its zenith of a structural framework in Indian society during the nineties. Nonetheless, as the text documents, the wiping out of slums and the aesthetic view of a progressive family of New India was situated in the social ethos of free market Capitalism. The nuclear family is an essential component of free market Capitalism and its policies around the family and housing. Multi-storeyed flats and residential high rises are a testimony to that. The rhetoric of “*hum do, hamare do*” or simply the idea of a couple needing no more than two children was actively disseminated by Indira Gandhi’s government. Slums were wiped out in Delhi, an early foreshadowing of Sanjay Gandhi’s politics during the time as well. This evidence harkens forward to the shape Neoliberalism would take in India in the post-nineties era. *Delhi Calm* as a graphic novel serves the

purpose of prolonging the event, which is the Emergency Era, within the mode of a graphic text. The event, in this context, is understood as a rupture within the everyday life of the common person in India, which was characterised by the Emergency. The mode and the event come together in a later time of the post-millennial era, that E Dawson Varughese traces the proliferation of Indian Graphic Narratives to, in *Visuality and Identity in Post-millennial Indian Graphic Narratives*.

The sterilisation drive by Indira Gandhi is also an important subject of discussion in the text. It is one example of the state exercising body politic over its citizens. Here, the biological intersects with the political. In the novel, an entire page is dedicated to the artwork of an umbilical cord attached to a baby, and it is surrounded by razor blades. Masked faces are directly looking at the baby, implying the danger that people's reproductive rights were at the time. The most marginalised people were targeted through the sterilisation drive, with meagre benefits offered in lieu of sterilising their bodies. This dystopian nature of the events surrounding the Emergency is effectively documented in the text and the art style of the panels in the text. The state being able to create subjects out of its citizens and enter their private sphere of existence, where they stripped them of their biological rights in the name of family planning, was a dystopian reality in which the citizens had to live during the time.

Delhi Calm can be viewed as a subjective reanimation of history as it played out in the retrospective gaze of the narrator, VP. It does not only offer an individual's subjective gazes but stands as a representational testimony of a collective national memory and experience. The dark tones in which Delhi is represented, and the imposing juxtaposition of the radio acting as a mouthpiece of the state are important to note in the text because its visuality indicates the experiences of fear as an everyday reality, and the symbol of the radio acting as an animated piece of propaganda of the government. People are represented as wearing smiling masks, which serves as visual irony to the reader because, in contrast to the smiling masks, the people embodying the government's narrative only carry out acts of violence and encourage suppression of freedom.

Popular culture and the objects constituting it become a site of repression and a mode of distraction in the text. The radio becomes a symbol of

authoritarian state power in the text where all the announcements of government reforms are made through it. It becomes a symbol of irony and fear simultaneously. Films become a site of suppression because there are police crackdowns in the theatres, as shown in the text. The radios keep on announcing a myriad of vague-sounding reasons for the imposition of the Emergency, which turns into a symbol of irony and propaganda at the same time. After the Emergency is announced to be over, people still live in the fear of something similar happening again, where one's power over oneself can potentially be taken away.

The Hotel at the End of the World and its Reformulation of Narratives

After understanding the historical significance of the graphic reimagination of the Emergency in India, one can shift their gaze to a different Graphic Novel of the Indian literary imagination, *The Hotel at The End of The World*. Written by Parismita Singh, and published in 2009, its focus is completely different, as it represents the stories of different travellers and the owners of a hotel, which in its literal sense, seems to be at the end of the world since its geographical location seems to be nowhere. The graphic text is divided into several stories, which are narrated by different inhabitants of the hotel. The text is infused with Indian subjectivity and harkens back to oral modes of storytelling. The shaping of a contemporary Indian identity is seen through a unique mode, where one can visually engage with, and read different kinds of narratives and History, and understand contemporary Indian subjectivity.

Through the narrative of the graphic novel, it can be understood that it takes place somewhere in the North Eastern part of India, although one cannot deny the fact that the geographical location of the hotel is not specified. Moreover, the nature of the people being travellers also creates a dissonance in the sense of the geographical location of the text. The conversations and storytelling mention wars and delve into tales about the ghosts of soldiers. Nonetheless, it starts with a humorous note of a tale about the yak and the cow and how the former borrowed the latter's coat and failed to return it. The tone of the narrative establishes itself in the beginning where the gutters are extremely clear and panels usually do not intersect. The style is simple and it is a juxtaposition of bold black sketches on white background. The juxtaposition of black against white can be seen as similar to Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*. The similarity between the two graphic texts also lies in the fact that scenes that depict violence have stronger shades of black and hardly

any white background is visible. Page number 82 and 83 depict the violence that took place during the Battle of Shangshak. This takes place in “The Soldier’s Story,” one of the stories that make up *The Hotel at the End of the World*. According to Wikipedia, “The Battle of Shangshak took place in Manipur in the forested and mountainous frontier area between India and Burma, from 20 March to 26 March 1944. The Japanese drove a parachute brigade of the British Indian Army from its positions with heavy casualties, but suffered heavy casualties themselves” (*Battle of Shangshak*, 2022). These panels have bold shades of black and certain panels have entirely black backgrounds to depict the darkness that the soldiers faced during the war.

Promod K. Nayar argues that “As ghosts of political processes and decision making, the soldiers represent the haunting past of the entire region. It is a region populated by such ghosts from the wars that shaped the place, and the subjects of that place” (Nayar, 2017, p.37). This testifies to the fact that present-day attitudes of aspirations and morality, among other cultural aspects of a society, are deeply entrenched within such events and chronological ruptures and turns within history. It is also interesting to note that one soldier is shown as the representative of all the soldiers in the wars mentioned chronologically in the book, carefully picked from history. The depiction of suffering in war through one individual’s experiences shows the reader the monotony and similarity inherent in all wars throughout time. Each war fought within History has proved to alienate the soldier from his own individuality and identity. Parismita Singh goes on to say that this was not the war of the soldier which further implies the alienation of the soldier as a subject from the state and the soldier as an individual from the event called war. Here, the rupture within different courses of history is war and the subject that loses out on their own self-recognition are usually the people who experience it in an unmediated manner.

Nayar goes on to comment on how the art style within the graphic novel also depicts the burden of historical trauma one after the other on people who experience those historical events. According to him, the vertical sequence of panels juxtaposes one onto the other showing that very burden of chronological history. Nonetheless, one can go on to argue that it is not the only singular function the art style serves for the reader. It is important to note that page number 92 and 93 do not consist of any panels in “The Soldier’s Story”. The vertical sequence

of the panels functions in a horizontal manner. It is clearly divided into horizontal gutters. In simple words, the horizontal space taken up by the panels that make the vertical sequence possible shows us the larger background against which the soldier is juxtaposed. Nayar does mention that it is to show the weakness and vulnerability of the soldier against the larger background which is depicted by the hills. Nonetheless, I would like to argue that this is also a testimony of the deep solitude that a soldier goes through during war because of the isolation that he feels. Graphic depictions on page number 92 and 93 are important because there is no depiction of any background. This serves as evidence to showcase how the graphic novel engages the gaze of the reader to depict the pure isolation of the soldier. During the time of war, the soldier is separated from the normal sequence of events within his own country. War also forces many soldiers to go away from their places of residence. The soldier's identity is encapsulated only in the instinct of self-preservation and the annihilation of the "other". Having to exist in such bodily precarity without a clear means to identify oneself in a holistic manner forces soldiers within states of mental illness and isolation. The written narrative also mentions. "And then one day. . . he stopped. Looking around, he couldn't understand. . . . Where was the war? Where was his regiment? And the British, he couldn't see them anywhere. They had gone. There were other battles, he could see. But this was not his war. . . ." (Singh, 2009, pp. 92-94)

The historical perspective that one can understand in the graphic novel is extremely interesting because it engages with the history of India in the Global context yet manages to localise the events that took place within the part of Indian history which is mostly overlooked. The North Eastern states within India are mostly underrepresented and therefore their histories are usually given lesser space or are intentionally or unintentionally invisibilized. *The Hotel at The End of The World* through its oral narratives brings to life the recollections of a traumatic past that the people of the Northeast have had to face due to international aggressions and post-independence skirmishes at the Indian border.

"The Girl's Story" takes place in the present time as it can be easily noted that it is the only story which is not narrated and she is the youngest inhabitant of the hotel. It is an extremely interesting example of the intersection of history with the present. The girl is the subject of the present and the history of war is not her experiential history.

Nonetheless, when she goes to fetch water in the woods, she has visions of the soldiers running. A very interesting aspect of the graphic novel is that it is represented visually through all its panels. Thus, figments of imagination and fragments of objective reality within the graphic novel are all represented equally. The reading of the girl's story can be that of Magical realism or it can also be seen as psychological hyperrealism. One cannot determine if the vision of the soldiers is just imaginary or if it is real in terms of its materiality. The girl directly interacts with history when she is the one who goes inside the war tank and fires tank shots over the hotel. Her experience can be argued as an example of post-memory. Post-memory occurs within Art Spiegelman's *Maus*. In *Maus*, Spiegelman recounts the experiences of the Holocaust which were not directly experienced by him but were a recollection of the memory of his parents. The historical trauma is real for him because it is generational. He has authorial power over it because he comes from a past that he has to make peace with and understand the Holocaust as a part of his identity. Similarly, the girl graphically interacts with the soldiers and the tank as symbols of war which has been experienced by the generations before her. As she is born to a generation of a history of war, she is co-opted into it through the narratives told before. That is why she does not narrate her story directly but it happens to her and it is the last story of the novel. Post memory is extremely interesting because it is shared by a myriad of people inhabiting the newer generation. *Delhi Calm* becomes an interesting example of the reader engaging in their own post-memory. The Emergency of 1975 has been experienced by all the Indian people of that time. Interestingly the contemporary reader can only read *Delhi Calm* in the post-millennial era which makes it a very potent example of the reader engaging in post-memory.

Historical Experience of Untouchability in *Bhimayana*

Bhimayana is a graphic novel that broke most of the conventions of even graphic storytelling. It is important to emphasise that because even graphic storytelling is something that did not get immediate recognition as a medium that could be taken "seriously", in terms of defining it as a literary mode or "high art" form of storytelling. One can even observe that this kind of perspective is comparatively stronger in the West, as most forms of media and storytelling associated with graphic art mostly consisted of themes that could be consumed by children or teenagers, or could be easily commercialised, with flashy themes of superheroes and

the commonly perceived idea of what “nationalism” could mean, which was a strong subtext of what a superhero should embody. Contrarily, Japanese Manga for instance has been more liberal in terms of who its target audience was, what kind of themes they would handle, and also how the graphic works could convey the philosophical and/or political ruminations and leanings with the reader. We can take many texts to understand this, for instance, the almost never-ending *Marvel Comics* universe, which recently started diversifying its themes, versus different manga like *Akira* which was written in 1982 first, covering various themes, from political stagnation and religious revivalism to technology addiction and drug abuse. American storytelling chose the medium of films to cover cyberpunk themes instead.

This series of ruminations can go on but one must understand how *Bhimayana* is related to all the debates and ideas surrounding the larger climate of graphic storytelling and its position in the world of storytelling. *Bhimayana* tells the story of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar through the medium of graphic art, conveying the message that merely written storytelling in an already existing font cannot truly convey the story of Ambedkar that has unanimously represented the story of millions that have gone through caste-based discrimination, and a lot more people who throughout history have faced discrimination due to the prejudice in their society. It also appropriates a mode of storytelling that has been identified with popular culture, at once making itself a work that should be in the realm of common knowledge, almost like a book of bedtime stories or a highly famous work, which after a point has to become common knowledge for all. It can be seen as doing that, along with visual art and written material that deserves critical attention and can be used as a pedagogical tool to undo the injustices that take place to date in Indian society due to caste.

A comic book is usually divided into panels, and can also be defined as a sequential combination of pictorial art and text that conveys a story and within it a sense of time and instant visual engagement. According to Scott McCloud, even this definition can prove to be insufficient to truly understand graphic works. Many critics tend to separate the terms “graphic novel” and “comics” to convey the difference between the kind of material offered by the text in terms of its themes, and thus how seriously it should be taken. In the vein of the arguments made by McCloud, one needs to understand that these binaries simply cannot be

absolute. Thus, for the sake of the graphic novel and its art, and doing justice to its cultural importance, one can also see it as an extremely interesting comic dealing with the issue of caste and a novel attempt to bring it into the realm of global awareness.

The graphic novel is exceptional because it modifies the very mode it opts for in order to convey its story and ideology. As it is mentioned in the book itself, *Bhimayana* makes use of the Pardhan Gond Art and the creators made their own font which they used in the creation of the novel. It is a radical form of breaking away from what has already been established. Gond art is one that “does not represent, but signifies” and if one reads the graphic novel, this nature of Gond art is evident. Unlike most graphic novels, the art of *Bhimayana* does not try to use photorealistic images or even try to represent human beings, animals or objects in a realistic art form, or an abstraction that one is used to seeing within most eastern and western comics. On the contrary, it is highly symbolic in nature and uses anthropomorphism pretty extensively to convey its ideas about a more philosophical nature of understanding what humanness is. Attributes like kindness, sorrow, and empathy are time and again expressed through inanimate objects, to make the reader understand the nature of being a Dalit time and again. The answer to the how of truly being able to empathise with the plight of being a Dalit in India is through art, which is never violent in its graphic form, but one which constantly represents the state of being alone without much agency. Most people who communicate through the speech bubble of a bird are shown to be Dalits themselves or those who are against caste and its evils. The tragedy is that power is concentrated with those who love caste and derive power through it. The speech bubble represented by the scorpions does not only represent a binary of mere evil but rather is a larger symbol of oppressive power that also generates fear and anguish. There are various examples in all the three parts that the book is divided into, namely “Water”, “Shelter” and “Travel”.

One of the most important significations in the book is that of emotions expressed through inanimate objects and animals. The hierarchy of caste only exists in the human realm, which further makes one think about how hierarchies and power further mechanise human beings to act without sympathy or emotion in fear of social ostracization or losing their share of power if they do not partake in the wrongdoings that a social compartmentalization such as caste inherently can make

them do. An argument can also be made that reduces the most primal nature of humanity to something wholly bestial, evil and that which does not hesitate to kill or inflict the most torturous pain on others regardless of any logic or reason. Hate crimes are prime examples of this. It can also be said that due to social hierarchies not existing within the animal world or that of inanimate objects, they are the only ones who can truly feel the pain of wrongdoings, and especially their appropriation by caste Hindus to execute the evils that they act by.

Conclusions

Delhi Calm, *The Hotel at The End of The World*, and *Bhimayana* have visually executed important functions of taking a critical look at Indian politics and history alike. It is interesting to also note that these novels were published in the post-millennial era, signifying that Graphic narratives appealing to an intellectually oriented audience has found a place in India. More accurately, one can understand that the audience for graphic narratives who wanted to take a visual look at more sombre topics in a realistic vein was always present, and have started to find that with a diverse publishing market. Many times, simply written history, literary archives or even films are not enough to look at one's own past and national trauma, and graphic narratives can provide a viable alternative to understanding oneself in relation to collective histories and memories. These novels discussed above are a few out of many that have given artistic expression to memory and historical experiences.

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PHARMACEUTICAL PATENTS AND THE COVID VACCINATION PATENT WAIVER

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Abstract

The paper is aimed at analysing, historically and empirically, the importance of the use of pharmaceutical patents in promoting research and development and fostering innovation and inventions in the pharmaceutical sector. This debate became relevant in the wake of the covid 19 pandemic that was witnessed with peaks in 2020 and 2021 and the associated vaccine patent waiver that the World Trade Organisation undertook.

Section I gives a brief background on how the patents are the backbone of any pharmaceutical company as they provide the company the incentive to do Research and Development (R&D) activities for the production of new drugs. Section II traces the genesis of the patent regime in India and the provisions, especially with reference to the pharmaceutical sector, of the Indian Patents Act, 1970 and its amendments. Section III focuses on the covid vaccine patent waiver, first by presenting an overview of the vaccine status the world over and then a discussion of the genesis of the patent waiver argument along with the ensuing debate, with the social welfare vs the profitability argument discussed at length. Section IV provides the concluding notes of the waiver policy being finally adopted by the WTO in June 2022 and the reactions of the nations thereof.

Keywords: Covid, Pandemic, Patents, Pharmaceutical Sector, Vaccination, World Trade Organisation.

I. Introduction

The patents are the backbone of any pharmaceutical company. They provide the company the incentive to do Research and Development (R&D) activities for the production of new drugs. The research required

for producing the formula for any new drug involves huge cost outlays and by patenting these inventions, the drug companies ensure their profits by safeguarding themselves from their competitors manufacturing a similar drug. It is through patenting only that the costs spent on the R&D activities seem worthwhile to these pharma companies. There are some who argue that the R&D activities would be done anyway by these companies, which, without the profit motivation, seems a debatable argument in itself, especially in a market driven free economy (Yanni & Thomas, 2022). But even if one does give merit to such a school of thought, there is no denying the fact that such patents act as a catalyst for the drug companies to undertake these researches.

In a market driven free economy, especially in a high-cost industry like pharma, it is the profit earning motive that keeps the select firms alive and in business. Investment in the research for development of any new drug is akin to buying eggs in the hope of selling the chickens, albeit with some conditional probability. Not all eggs hatch, and even among those which do hatch, they do not give a homogeneous product to ensure uniform and high profitability. Similarly, investments in research of any new drug takes years and involve huge cost outlays and not all of these researches on new drugs culminate into patents for the same. Thus, without the motivation of profit, the companies would invariably shy away from making these investments (Jerry, 1994). By prohibiting their competitors from duplicating their drug formula, the patents act both as a cushion and an incentive to carry out these research activities that are necessary to develop and produce new drugs and formulas that have the potential to cure thousands of diseases and ensure a healthy survival of mankind and humanity at large.

II. Indian Patent Act, 1970 and its Amendments: Implications for the Pharma Industry

A Patent is a statutory right for an invention granted for a limited period of time to the patentee by the Government, in exchange of full disclosure of his invention for excluding others, from making, using, selling, importing the patented product or process for producing that product for those purposes without his consent (The Patents Act, 1970 and the Patents Rules, 2003). In the pharma industry, this ensures that the drug formula, using various components in prescribed ratios, is not duplicated by any other manufacturer.

The issue of patents rights in India is not a new one; such rights were introduced in India for the first time in 1856, called the Act VI of 1856. There were various amendments, addendums and deletions in the Act, till in 1970, The Patents Act, 1970 was passed, that repealed all other existing patent laws and acts in India. The Patents Act provides that any invention “that satisfies the criteria of newness, non-obviousness and usefulness” can be the subject matter of a patent (The Patents Act, 1970).

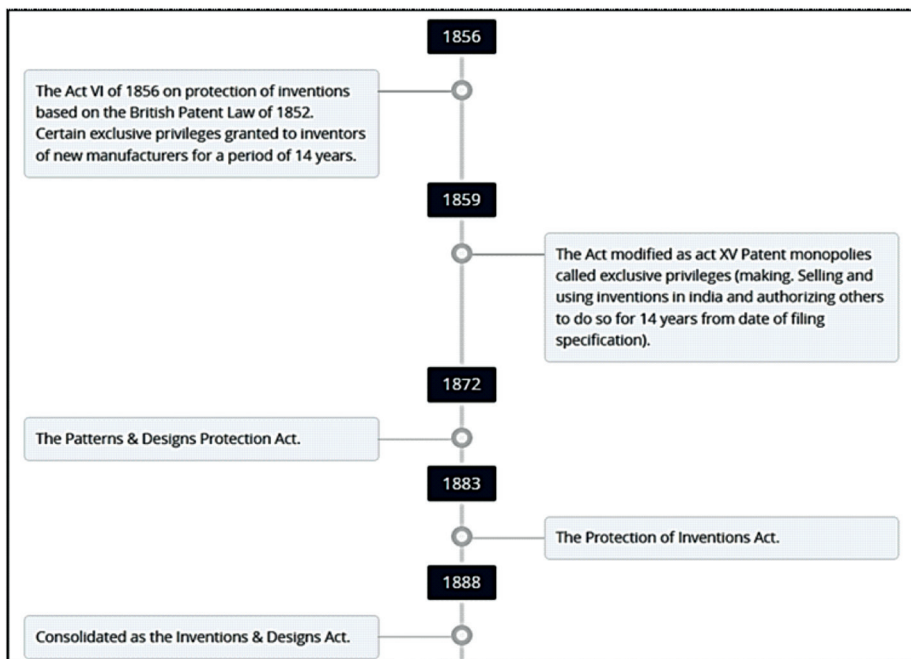
In the case of pharmaceuticals, the substances used in the drugs, that are, in themselves, capable of being used as food, stand-alone drugs or medicines, are not granted patents. It is when these substances are chemically processed, using a new formula, that leads to the formation of a new drug that has tested usefulness, that these drugs become eligible to be granted patents under The Patents Act, 1970. Thus, “methods of agriculture or horticulture, processes for the medicinal, surgical, curative, prophylactic or other treatment of human beings, animals or plants or substances obtained by a mere admixture, resulting only in the aggregation of the properties of the components, etc.” are not patentable as per the provisions of the Act (The Patents Act, 1970).

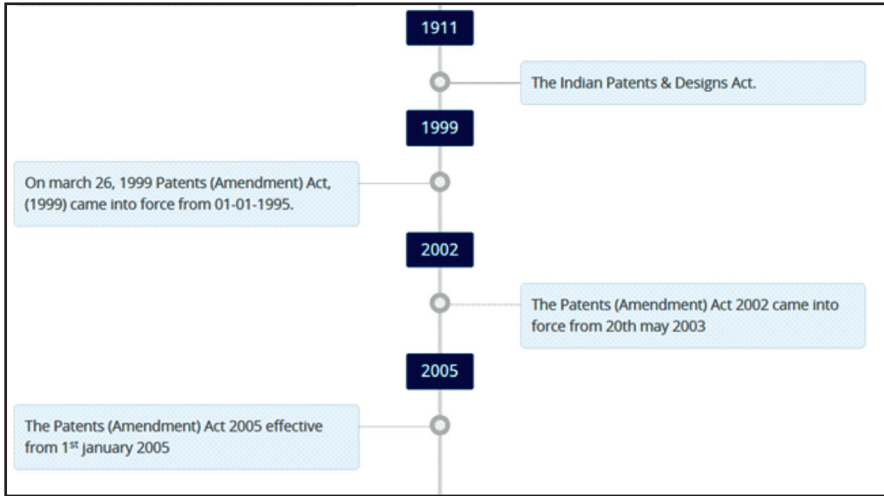
Having major implications in the pharmaceuticals industry, significant changes in the Indian Patents Act occurred after the formation of World Trade Organisation (WTO) when India signed the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement in 1995. Being a signatory to this Agreement, India was under obligation to make its Patents Act corroborate with the provisions of this agreement, and therefore brought about three major amendments in 1999, 2002 and the final one in 2005.

The Patents Amendment Act, 1999 was brought into force retrospectively from 1st January, 1995. The amended Act provided for “filing of applications for product patents in the areas of drugs, pharmaceuticals and agro chemicals, though such patents were not allowed.” However, such applications were to be examined only from 2005 onwards and in the interim, the applicants could be allowed Exclusive Marketing Rights (EMR) to sell or distribute these products in India. The second most important amendment came about by way of The Patents Amendment Act, 2002, though this was implemented with effect from 20th May, 2003. This amendment provided for a uniform term of a patent for

a time period of 20 years, to be counted from the date of filing of patent application. This was a very important amendment as far as the pharma industry was concerned, having long term implications on the way drug trials are being held. The third amendment was introduced through the Patent Amendment Ordinance 2004 that came into effect from 1st January, 2005. This amendment provided patentability of pharmaceutical substances to the extent that patents would apply to new chemical entities. Section 3(d) of the Patents Act, 1970, explains that a new form of a known substance, new property / new use for a known substance and the mere use of a known process are not patentable and are not considered distinct from the known substance. Based on this principle, inventions using known substances were not to be henceforth patentable, unless the invention would have displayed “a significant increase in efficacy” (The Patents Act, 1970 and the Patents Rules, 2003). The last set of amendments in this Act were made in 2006 that were primarily to do with decentralised administrative facilitation and process-based mechanisms.

Exhibit 1: Diagrammatically shows the history of the Indian Patent System through the years





Source: Office of the Controller General Patents, Designs & Trade Marks, GoI website (<https://ipindia.gov.in/>)

One of the major fallouts of The Patents Amendment Act, 2002 is that the drug industry has fostered close associations with the medical institutions for their medical trials, as the drug companies have money and the resources to finance the drug trials, but they do not have the patients required for the same. Since usually the drug companies go in for the last stage of trials, i.e., the human trials, after they have obtained the patents, this directly eats into the time they have left of the patent period of 20 years to market and publicise their drugs. The human beings then become guinea pigs for these pharma companies, with complete understanding and tacit collusion of the medical practitioners. The long queues of ‘medical representatives’ of the big Pharma companies, waiting outside the clinics of popular doctors, is something that we all have witnessed and their motives, we are well aware of.

Delhi based independent civil society group All India Drug Action Network (AIDAN) in its study in 2019 (Rao, 2019) had claimed that illegal and unethical bounties, running into crores of rupees annually, are being offered to doctors under guise of consultancies, lectures and the like. Taking cognizance of many such prevailing practices, the Government of India has inserted Chapter III, Amendments to Direct Taxes, in the Finance Act of 2022, which states that “The legal position is clear that the claim of any expense incurred in providing various benefits in violation of the provisions of Indian Medical Council

(Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2022, shall be inadmissible under section sub-section (1) of section 37 of Act being an expense prohibited by the law” (The Finance Act, 2022). In simple terms, this means that such an expenditure incurred by the Pharma companies cannot be claimed as a deduction for tax purposes, which will immediately lead to jacking up of the company’s profits and thereby the payable taxes. This, it is hoped, shall have a dampening effect on such illegal and unethical practices being followed by the Pharma companies, in order to move around the provisions of the amendments of 2002 of the Patents Amendment Act.

A look at the Economic Survey of India’s data (Economic Survey of India, GoI, 2021-22) with respect to the number of patents filed and granted in India will give a picture of the huge costs involved in the R&D process, yet resulting in less than half percentage of patents being granted.

Table 1: No. of Patents filed and granted in India between 2010-11 to 2020-21

Year	No. of Patents Filed	No. of Patents granted	% of patents granted vis-à-vis filed
2010-11	39400	7509	19.05%
2016-17	45444	9847	21.67%
2020-21	58502	28391	48.52%

Source: Author’s own compilation using the Economic Survey of India 2021-22 data

Though this is a remarkable progress in recent years, the number of patents granted in India are still a fraction compared to patents granted in China, USA, Japan and Korea. According to World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the number of patents granted in China, USA, Japan and Korea stood at 5.3 lakhs, 3.52 lakhs, 1.79 lakhs and 1.35 lakhs, respectively for the year 2020 (Economic Survey of India 2021-22, Chapter 9). In the context of the Patent Act, it is noteworthy that a substantial amount of investment is done in R&D before the patents can be filed. Hence, less than half of the patent applications getting approval also have the direct implication on the profitability of the Pharma companies and the underlying pressure of making profits to sustain the organisation from among the drugs that actually make it to the market after the rigorous R&D and the patenting process. The

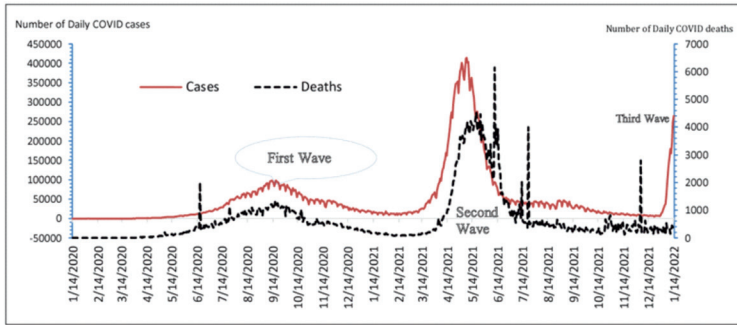
patents therefore do act as a cushion, crucial to Pharma companies’ existence and profitability.

III. Covid Vaccine Patent Waiver

III.1 The Background: The extent of the disease and the vaccination status

Year 2019 saw the advent of the Covid-19, which was soon to take the world by storm in 2020 and this generation witnessed, what is being called by many, one of the world’s worst pandemics ever. The covid-19 pandemic exposed the world over, all the vulnerabilities that existed in the social infrastructure, especially the health sector. Survival itself became a challenge and saving lives and livelihoods became mammoth tasks for governments the world over. Health response, especially of densely populated countries like India, became critical to controlling and mitigating the spread of the pandemic. Crucial to this was the development of covid-19 vaccines and their dissemination to the masses at highly subsidised rates or preferably, for free, by the governments, especially in thickly populated underdeveloped or developing nations.

Exhibit 2: Daily COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in India



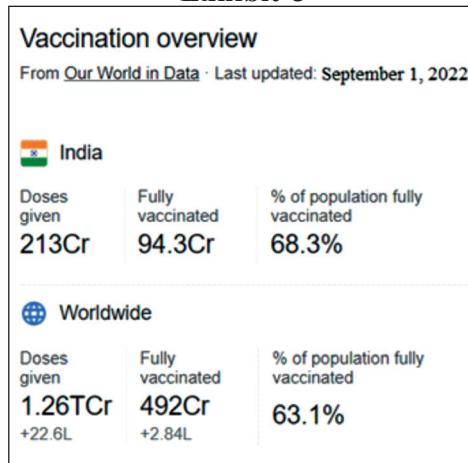
Source: World Health Organisation, as taken from Economic Survey 2021-22

Like the scenario was the world over, India too faced two massive waves of the pandemic, the second being deadlier than the first, both in terms of casualties and in terms of associated co-morbidities and impacts on peoples’ health. Exhibit 2 shows the peak time of the two waves in India, in terms of surges in the number of daily deaths and cases. As per the Economic Survey of India 2021-22, during the first-wave, the cumulative number of COVID-19 cases started rising progressively from the month of May 2020, and peaked in mid-September 2020.

Thereafter, the country faced a massive surge in COVID-19 cases starting March 2021, with a peak of more than four lakh daily cases in May 2021 and more than 4400 daily deaths by the end of May 2021.

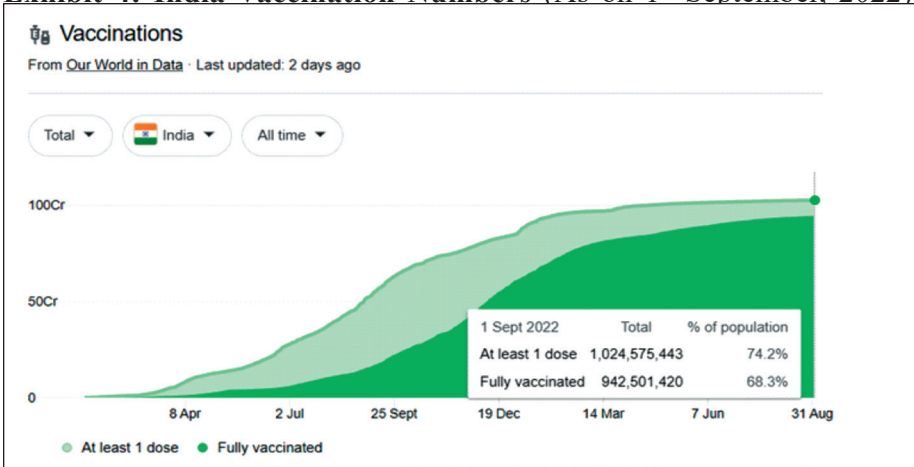
A fresh surge of cases and a new variant Omicron had surfaced in December 2021, but its effects were not felt as sharply as the first two waves, perhaps due to the vaccination drive launched by the country in its health response through the ‘Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan’ packages and other related initiatives to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic. As on the date of writing this paper, i.e., till 1st September, 2022, 74.2% of India’s eligible population had been administered at least 1 dose and 68.3% is fully vaccinated, which is higher than the 63.1% of the world eligible population figure. Exhibit 3 and 4 show the covid vaccination status in India and its overview.

Exhibit 3



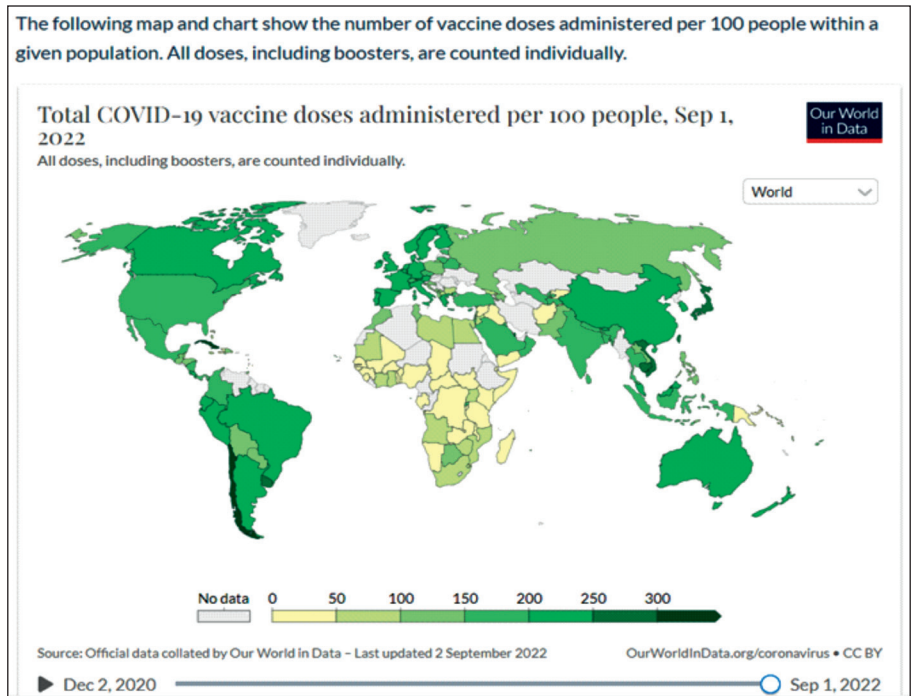
Source: “Our World in Data”, Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford.

Exhibit 4: India Vaccination Numbers (As on 1st September, 2022)



Source: “Our World in Data”, Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford

Exhibit 5

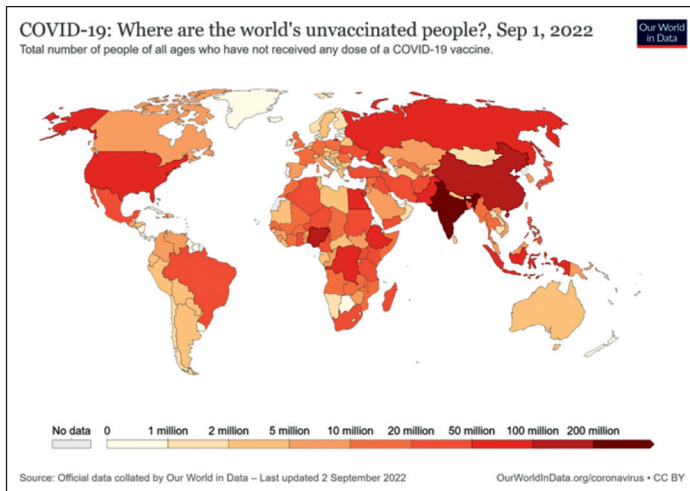


Source: “Our World in Data”, Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford

India, despite being a thickly populated country, has so far fared well in terms of covid vaccine accessibility and administration. However, when one looks at the world comparative pictures regarding the covid vaccines administered and the number of people still not vaccinated across countries, we get the real picture of how mammoth a task this is, both for the covid vaccine manufacturers to keep up the supply and for the governments to administer these doses free.

The exhibit clearly depicts how almost all of the countries of the African continent have not even been able to vaccinate 50% of their population.

Exhibit 6



Source: "Our World in Data", Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford

These figures give us the real picture of where the world is in terms of covid vaccination. This brings to the fore the issue of accessibility and affordability by the nations, in the wake of the vaccines being patented, especially to those in Africa and other not so developed countries of the world.

III.2 The Genesis and the Debate: Issues of Covid Vaccine accessibility and affordability

After its initial outbreak in 2019 and the alarming heights it took in wake of the first wave in 2020, many activists, especially in the developing

world, dwelled on the contention that the World Trade Organisation's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime limits access to vaccines by all, especially to those in the poor world. In the wake of the same, in late 2020, some countries, led by the initiative of India and South Africa, presented a proposal to the WTO to temporarily waive off the IPR protections, especially the patent-based protections for 'essentials', to combat the covid 19 pandemic. The waiver was demanded for pandemic-related health essential products and technologies, including vaccines, diagnostics, therapeutics, and personal protective equipment (PPE). WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala had herself said in a public address that it was necessary to end the "morally unacceptable" inequity of access to Covid-19 vaccines. Pope Francis too had tweeted at that time that an equitable access to safe and effective vaccines should be fundamental to save lives and livelihoods and that Africa must not be left behind in providing access to covid vaccines, as according to him, no one was safe until everyone was safe.

This was, however, not for the first time that the WTO had been met with such a demand. Earlier too, for various life-saving drugs, especially for poor nations, it was demanded to have the patent protection waiver to ensure mass production of such drugs. Doha Ministerial Declaration of 14 November 2001, which came into effect from 2003, laid stress upon and provided validation for the use of 'compulsory licences' for the manufacture of such essential drugs and vaccines (The Doha Declaration, 2001, WTO). Under its provisions, the governments could issue compulsory licenses to allow other companies to make a patented product or use a patented process under licence without the consent of the patent owner, but only under certain conditions, aimed at safeguarding the interests of the patent holder. In essence, under a compulsory license, an individual or a company seeking to use another's intellectual property can do so without seeking the rights holder's consent, and pays the rights holder a set fee for the use of the specific license. However, for a pandemic of this proportion and magnitude, it was felt by the activists of public health that the compulsory licence route is too tedious, time consuming and piecemeal and would not have the desired result to increase the supply to meet the vaccine shortage that was felt in 2020.

The advocates of such a waiver felt that it would boost the production of the vaccines and, as a result of the same, the acute shortage that was

being experienced the world over could be eased. They also stressed that most of these pharma companies, including the big ones like Pfizer, BioNTech SE and Moderna, had been sponsored through generous government funding to support their research aimed at development of a safe and effective vaccine for covid, especially in a fast-paced manner. They advocated, that not only for the covid vaccination related research, but in general too, these pharma companies receive generous funds to undertake research from governments the world over and that over the past decade at least, their profits have always been on an upward trajectory. (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Report, 2020; Kansteiner, 2021 & Siripurapu, 2021)

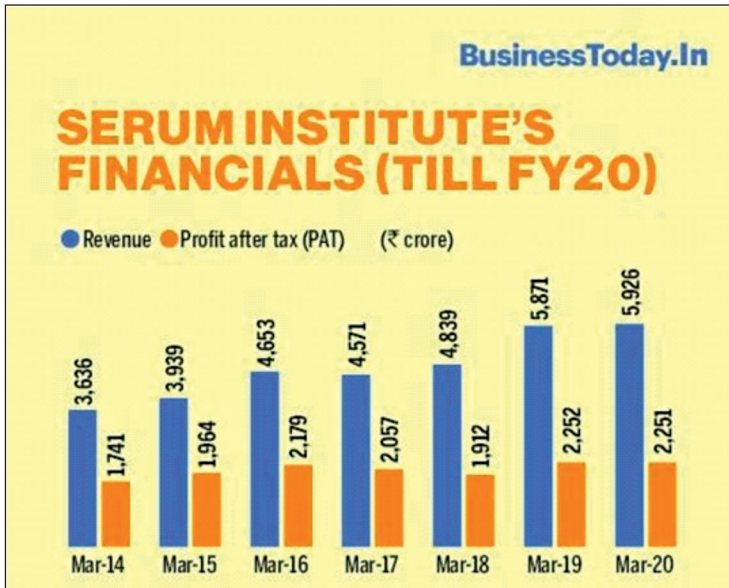
To get a deeper understanding of the profit positions of the big pharma companies in recent years and to get a picture of the steadily rising profits of various pharma companies the world over, a brief report of the case of Serum Institute of India (SII) has been analysed here in this paper. This profit-making pattern that has been observed in the case of SII, is similar to most of the big pharma companies of the world.

Pune based SII of India is the world's largest vaccine manufacturer and has recorded a surge rise in profits after the covid pandemic hit the world (Business Today Study Report, 2021). SII obtained the licence to manufacture and supply Oxford and AstraZeneca's vaccine, marketed with the brand name Covishield, and had received an overwhelming order for the production of the same.

Presented below in Exhibit 7 is a summary of SII's Financials, specifically the revenue and the Profit After Tax (PAT) values, till financial year 2020.

It is clear from Exhibit 7 that the company's income and net profit have been on the rise for a decade now. What is worth noting is that the company declared a growth of 158 per cent in disbursement in 2022, which stood at Rs 9,494 crore (SII statistics, 2022). A look at the growth figures of all major pharma companies of the world reveals similar patterns.

Exhibit 7



Source: Study by the Business Today group, sourcing from 'Prowess IQ'

On the other hand, those opposing this move of patent waiver, argued that it is not the patent, but the low manufacturing capacity and the distributional bottlenecks that create the problem of accessibility of essential drugs in some countries. They felt that such a move will provide a disincentive to many pharma companies to henceforth invest in breakthrough medicinal research and those at the final stages of trials of covid vaccines too would feel the heat of such a waiver. They also stressed that the route of compulsory licence was always available to the governments that actually felt that there was a manufacturing shortfall for such drugs or vaccines.

They further argued that it was not the patent protection that had led to the vaccine shortfall in 2020-21, but the access to critical ingredients that was in short supply. It was also stressed that without the technical know-how and the expertise to produce such vaccines, a mere patent protection waiver would not really boost the manufacturing in the countries that were supporting such a move. Some even argued and criticised the USA for hoarding these vaccines, which they felt, was one of the primary reasons for geographical inequality in vaccine access.

III.3 Covid Vaccine Patent Waiver Granted: Provisions and Possible Implications

After a two year long effort, in June 2022, the WTO did grant a patent waiver for covid vaccine manufacturing. However, India and the other countries that had led this move, call this stance half-baked and too late. It was felt that the negotiations at WTO took too long and it was only a timely intervention that could have prevented mass scale covid deaths, especially in the peak of the second wave. Presently, it was felt the world over, that there is no supply side constraint on the availability of the covid vaccines. The same is evident as per the data released by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations, that, as of May 2022, there were 2.1 billion excess doses of Covid-19 vaccines and their production had outpaced the number of doses administered in recent months (European Council Reports and Publications, 2022).

It was also felt that since this five-year waiver was limited only to COVID vaccines and exempted the treatments for those with the virus, such as antibodies and antivirals, as well as the covid testing kits, the pressing issue and need of the hour had again been side-lined and this patent waiver was more like a paper tiger and a political gimmick. India's Commerce and Industry minister Piyush Goyal was quoted as reporting in mid-June 2022 that "only 14 percent of people in low-income countries have been vaccinated with one dose, while in November last year, the People's Vaccine Alliance reported that Pfizer, BioNTech and Moderna, the companies behind two of the most successful COVID-19 vaccines, were together making \$65,000 every minute. In another distressing fact, pharma giants like Pfizer and BioNTech had delivered less than 1 per cent of their total vaccine supplies to low-income countries, while Moderna had delivered barely 0.2 per cent." (Goyal at WTO Ministerial Meet, June 2022)

IV. Conclusion

Patents indeed are the backbone for any industry, especially more so for the pharmaceutical companies, as the R&D for their products are both extremely costly as well as time consuming. However, despite this, there is no denial to the fact too that the pharma companies do find ways to ensure profitability of the company and have in the past managed to manoeuvre around deftly some of the clauses of various Acts, including the Patent Act, 1970 and its amendments.

A policy like patent waiver is indeed a tightrope walking, where all sides of the argument seem meritorious. The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations (IFPMA) had pointed to other “real challenges” that exist in scaling up production and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines. These include trade barriers, bottlenecks in supply chains, scarcity of raw materials and ingredients in the supply chain, and the unwillingness of rich countries to share doses with poorer nations. The scarcity of raw materials has been a growing issue for ramping up production; several manufacturers have been relying on specific suppliers, and alternatives are limited. Also, countries like the US had blocked exports of critical raw materials used in the production of some Covid-19 vaccines using regulations like the American Defence Production Act.

The present covid 19 wave seems to have been tided over and so does it seem that the vaccine shortage problem has been addressed too quite effectively in the present time. However, should such a health issue of this mammoth scale and intensity arise again in near future, the critical question remains whether patent waivers can resolve the issue of vaccine shortages. This is a complex question to which there is, so far, no clear answer. Besides merely patent issues, there are other considerations associated with vaccine manufacturing. Technology transfer is integral for commencing production. For instance, Pfizer had pointed out that its vaccine requires the use of 280 components from 86 suppliers and highly specialised manufacturing equipment. There is also the principle of scale operations that point out that it takes a considerable amount of time, even several years, for any producers’ plants to become operational at optimal capacity. This raises the question of whether today’s vaccines would even be relevant at that point in time, especially if new variants prove resistant to vaccine formulations currently available. Furthermore, in parallel to the waivers, a transfer of personnel, raw materials and equipment to developing nations also becomes necessary with such a waiver. This will involve waiver or total relaxations in various WTO agreements and treaties, which, if ever undertaken, shall open another Pandora’s Box of its own. The question of equity versus profitability has always been merit driven upon individual cases and circumstances and the same holds true for drug patent waivers too. One can however conclude that the covid patent waiver, though too late and too little, has at least paved the way for future negotiations on the matter on similar lines, should the need arise.

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SPIRITUALITY AS CHAPERONE: OVERCOMING LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES POST COVID

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Abstract

The Covid 19 crisis and the economic havoc it has wrought are harbingers of the extraordinary challenges that organizations will face. The social and economic landscape has dramatically reshaped itself in the backdrop of huge migration flows, climate change and technological advances which led to disruption of industries, economies and the nations. Post COVID, the need for blended ethical decision making based on the philosophical tenet of Utilitarianism (Bentham, 1781) and business-oriented pragmatism became an imperative. In order to maximize value creation for society, cognitive limitations (Kahneman, 2011) should be confronted. A parallel two system view of ethical decision making: intuitive and deliberative (Greene, 2015) enables comparisons creating more value. Business leaders need to shape the environment of ethical behaviour. Effective nudging in behavioural research has been studied deeply. It can make the world a better workplace as people follow the behaviour of others, especially those who are in positions of power and prestige. Caring for others and society at large tilts decision-making in favour of creating values for all stakeholders. As new ethical challenges have been emerging in post covid times, building a new ecology which is purpose driven is the pathfinder through the haze of uncertainty. Focus on ESG concerns and SDGs require a compelling mission at the heart of every company's efforts to enhance its positive impact on the environment and the society. Taking an intergenerational perspective that extends beyond the tenure

of any management team requires moving from intention to results. The global society is facing enormous challenges and those who outperform others in this new era will survive. Spirituality refers to the “healing power” (Marx, 1987) that awakens a human being from his “indifference” toward others and makes him responsive in all of her/his manifestations. This paper posits that in post Covid times, organizations who follow System 2 (Kahneman, 2011) of deliberative thinking, which is slower, conscious, effortful, and logical will come much closer to rationality leading to more ethical behaviours. Spirituality-based management seeking balance between the extrinsic and intrinsic motivations will help check unfettered strategic rationality promoting spiritual engagement in dealing with indispensable moments of management.

Keywords: Spirituality, Leadership Challenges, Covid 19 Pandemic, System 1 and System 2 Thinking, Chaparone.

“There are decades where nothing happens and there are weeks where decades happen.” (Vladimir Lenin)

1. The Covid Crisis

Lenin’s words have never held more meaning than in the current times. The Covid 19 crisis and the economic havoc it wrought are harbingers of the extraordinary challenges that organizations will face. The social and economic landscape has dramatically reshaped itself in the backdrop of huge migration flows, climate change and technological advances which has led to disruption of industries, economies and the nations. The Covid 19 Pandemic brutally exposed the fragility of our existence. The robustness of economies, businesses, and communities is being sorely tested by the Pandemic even today. No other event since World War II has had worldwide fallouts of such great magnitude as this crisis, bringing even the biggest economies and most powerful nations to their knees. Its ability to affect the masses in a non-discretionary manner makes it even more pernicious. The business and economic scenario has altered permanently. As organizations restructure and improvise themselves to sail through this crisis, prescribed formulas and materialistic solutions will not be the total answer to organizational problems.

The expostulations for the business world in the aftermath of Covid 19 pandemic are multifaceted. Huge migration flows, supply chain disruptions, continuing adverse impact of long countrywide lockdowns, purchasing power reduction and shift in demand patterns in societies, are the socio-economic dilemmas being experienced across the board. As corporations have a supererogatory work force and mulled over

layoffs, it not only hurted individuals but societies at large with growth and innovation taking a back seat.

Contrary situations and ethical dilemmas are grappling decision makers where they are confronted with one of the most challenging exigencies in recent times having economic, social, emotional and ethical overtones. How they have responded to the situation, shall be reminisced by the coming generations. Organizations are faced with a need to reorient their whole business purpose. With current businesses losing their anchorage with changing business environments, some are using some portmanteau to stay onboard, not only to sustain through the crisis but also contribute constructively to help society sustain the crisis. As new economic and ethical challenges continue to emerge in post covid times, building a new ecology which is purpose driven will be the pathfinder through the haze of uncertainty.

2. Post Covid Business direction

The kind of leadership proficiencies that are required today are not to be found in the leadership playbooks which were originally designed for authority and control. Leadership model that fits this age of disruption cannot be bereft of new forms of pedagogy which are personal, intimate and experiential too. The situation needs to be reviewed from multiple vantage points. Humans have an inherent capacity to reinvent themselves post any crisis. Clearly the leadership has to draw from the watchwords of human history: We Rebuild, We Heal, We Grow and We Learn. Leaders have to act as Chaperones helping their communities to rebuild, heal, grow and learn as best as they can, managing moment by moment, day by day. A Chaperone must possess qualities like flexibility, maturity, being sacrificial, teachable and prepared (Small, 2019) in keeping the journey moving in a positive direction. Chaperoning through this crisis requires leaders who have understood that Deliberate Calm and Bounded Optimism (Mckinsey Insights, Reimagining the way businesses operate, 2020) will be the keys to cope with uncertainty making organisation and leadership resilient and resourceful. Our paper also indicates that blended ethical decision making, based on the philosophical tenet of Utilitarianism and business oriented pragmatism must be woven into the culture of the organisations. We understand that Utilitarianism has faced its own criticism, hence adeptness at improvisations and heuristics, will require

moral thinking in conflicting situations by weighing the pros and cons of each alternative and thinking critically.

Post Covid, as a bruised, grieving, anxious, stressed workforce returned to workplaces the need to heal and rebuild was even greater. Old school management principles, rooted into capitalistic thought and behaviour needed to be blended with the obscure teachings of the sacred to infuse spirituality in the corporate culture making way for corporate convalescence from the multifaceted crisis and also encourage employees to delve into their personal growth in a broader perspective. Most people are completely oblivious of the belongingness and connection to the one Universe. The Employees must be encouraged to bring moral concerns into the business conversation (Bowles, 2020). John Hope (John Hope, 2010) argues that love not only has a place in business but also is absolutely central to sustainable success. Wisdom of love, justice, dignity and respect are not just traditional spiritual ideas, they are also New Management Virtues needed in the contemporary workplace (Marcic, 1997)

3. Trends observed in Covid and post Covid times

The organisational culture and behaviours are expected to experience some foreseeable trends that are likely to emerge in the coming years for businesses to thrive. The areas that are drawing the attention of organisational leadership are vast. As researchers we attempt to list the most prominent ones:

- a) **Wellbeing:** Remote work increased feelings of isolation and loneliness, and managers of virtual teams made an all-out effort to combat that by fostering connection and belonging (Pitstick, 2020). Online reduced informal communication channels and at times team cohesiveness. Workforce, especially those who worked from home, were more vulnerable to encroachment of personal space. Continuous working from remote locations gradually reduced informal communication channels and at times team cohesiveness.
- b) **Sense of belongingness among employees:** Employees have a greater sense of belonging to a team where they are respected (De Cremer & R. Tyler., 2005), heard, receive fair procedural treatment (De Cremer & Blader, 2006) and feel connected to

the larger goals of the organization. They feel that their skill sets and strong points can contribute to the larger purpose of the organization. The coming time belongs to the cross-border organisations functioning in a world that is divided by geographical, political, ethnic, economic and social differences and binding the workforce cohesively is a major task for management. The feeling of belongingness to the team and organization makes people cross their distinctive socio-cultural-mindset templates to fulfill their commitment towards the greater goals, this in fact, can be an asset to a culturally diverse organisation. Approbation of contribution towards the organisation can help cultivate a sense of belongingness in a highly diverse and even polarized world (Volini, et al., 2020).

- c) **Humanity's precedence over technology:** Even before the pandemic, there was shifting propensity towards greater automation and digitalization of work, Advances in information technology and changes in social and economic relationships have led individual workers and organizations to explore various types of distributed work arrangements (Venkatesh & Vitalari, 1992). Covid-19 just accelerated the trends. Digitalization of work is rendering even the most skilled workforce obsolete with technological advancements taking place at a phantom pace and the only way to thrive is to build a workforce with a learning mindset which is open to renew and upgrade its skills and is keen on innovating. The advancements in technology led to the development of Tele-Health which was predicted to replace humans (Korzep, 2010). However, it must be understood that technology can amplify and supplement work but can't be a replacement for human intellect and commitment. The humane side exhibited by the healthcare workers during the pandemic is awe inspiring and showed that Technology shall be seen as an augmentative and synergistic tool to amplify human efforts rather than substitute for it.
- d) **Stakeholder capitalism:** The capitalistic theory propounded by Adam Smith no longer holds ground. Balance between economic interest and greater good is the only way to thrive in the long

run. Leaders need to recalibrate organisational and personal goals towards stakeholders, building trust between organisation and its various stakeholders. However, a bounded oculism towards direct stakeholders only will no longer serve the purpose. The pandemic and its aftermath has paved way to a more capacious perspective towards stakeholders than the current philosophies of being responsible towards stakeholders through CSR and sustainable business practices.

- e) **Building trust** - Reliable behaviour, good communication, sincerity, competence, integrity and goal congruence (Karlsen, Græe, & Massaoud, 2008) are the cornerstones of building trust between the organisation and the pool of stakeholders. A clear and truthful communication can lay the foundation stone for trust building as it creates an environment for sincere mutual codependency. Growing skepticism towards organisations makes leadership, communications, trust, corporate performance and reputation inextricably linked (Beslin & Reddin, 2004).

4. Spirituality: A Chaperone post Covid crisis

“ Great leadership begins with being a whole human being ” (Tony Schwartz).

What are we looking for in the Leader in such tumultuous times! Who is and who can be a whole human being?

Successful leaders are more fluid in their approach towards decision making. They conjugate their teams through common goals instead of flow of authority in a top-down approach. Such an approach gives the team members autonomy to deliberate over situations and provide input and take decisions instead of following a chain of command. Studies have suggested the qualities that are expected of leaders in times of crisis and how they should operate to bring their people together and sail through the crisis as a team (Popovics, 2022) (Banerjee, 2014) (Datskovska, 2020). Much less has been said about how a leader should equip himself to cope with the pressures that may emerge with uncertainties and surprises that essentially define any crisis. The recent crisis has made everyone realize that those who do not have spiritual moorings may lose their way buckling under pressure as their patience runs out and frustration sets in. As Covid continued to lash out at all

economic activities and no activity could be undertaken, big or small without accommodating this factor into account, there seems to be no immediate end to this crisis. It takes a great deal of consciousness from leaders in the midst of crisis and upheaval to maintain a balance that is neither too negative nor overly optimistic (Mckinsey Insights, May 2020). Amid the storm, there needs to be an anchor to hold and this role has to be played by the leader in the organisation. This role is not only to take balanced decisions, but also inculcate a culture where the leader takes the clan forward towards a balanced approach amid crisis.

There is extant literature which has looked at theories of spiritual leadership. Spirituality, which has been long neglected particularly because of capitalist pursuits of the organizations and the leaders. Fry (2003) was first to incorporate spirituality into leadership theories, thus propagating the concept of spiritual leadership, the essence of which emphasizes motivating oneself intrinsically and also the others. The leader’s values, attitudes, and behaviors are its three components (see figure 1).

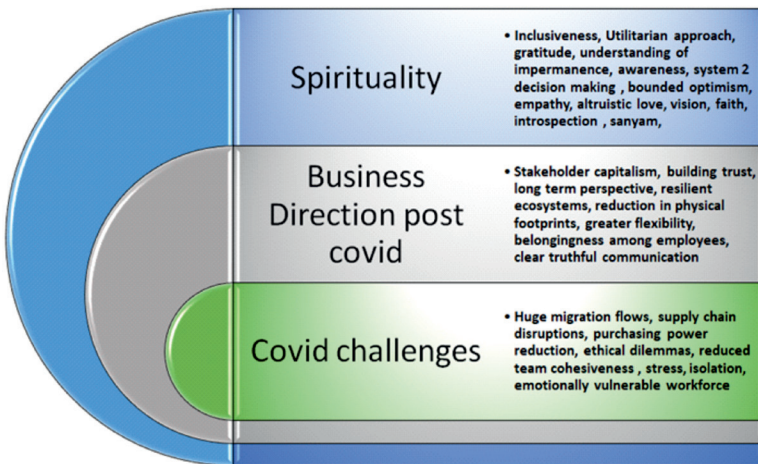


Figure 1: Spirituality as Chaperone

In complex situations, where there is time to do so, we must try to rise to the more reflective and deliberative critical level and ask what action we should endorse. What really is the right answer? Hare argues that in such situations we should employ utilitarianism (Hare, 1981).

Behavioural economist and psychologist Daniel Kahneman has done extensive research on how people think and make decisions. He construed that people use one of two systems for decision making depending upon the speed of taking decisions (see figure 2). **System 1** is the fast-thinking process, often done unconsciously and effortlessly. Human thinking process is affected by cognitive thinking and heuristics, in routine and easy tasks mostly decisions are taken instinctively, quickly based on past experiences, resemblances and rule of thumb. Emotion may play a pivotal role in these decisions. System 1 thinking is generally applied and useful where the situation warrants quick decisions and decision stakes may be low. However, it may not be the best way of handling difficult or novel situations (Kahneman, 2011). **System 2** thinking in contrast is a conscious thinking which gets triggered when awakened. This awakening would occur when we have to deal with problems that are not mundane and require deliberations. When more informed choices have to be made the need to usher in factors that will support these choices kick in. These factors require analysis and controlled slow paced focus and penetration. Thus it is often said that System 2 thinking is lazy and entails costs as it will not awaken naturally. Managers face constant dilemmas and their choices would be based on how swiftly and competently they are able to awaken System 2 thinking. (Rzeczynski, 2014)

	System 1	System 2
Characteristics	Fast Effortless Unconscious Triggers emotions Associative Looks for causation Looks for patterns Creates stories to explain events	Slow Effortful Conscious Logical Deliberative Can handle abstract concepts
Advantages	Speed of response in a crisis Easy completion of routine or repetitive tasks Creativity through associations, so good for expansive thinking	Allows reflection and consideration of the "bigger picture", options, pros and cons, consequences Can handle logic, maths, statistics Good for reductive thinking
Disadvantages	Jumps to conclusions Unhelpful emotional responses Can make errors that are not detected and corrected, such as wrong assumptions, poor judgements, false causal links	Slow, so requires time Requires effort and energy, which can lead to decision fatigue

Figure 2: Kahneman’s System 1 and System 2 Decision making model

Source: (Rzeczynski, 2014)

Translated to any crisis situation, System 2 thinking will essentially require people to suppress their instincts, question their assumptions and think deeply about the situation. This System 2 thinking, as mentioned

earlier is unfortunately more time consuming and more demanding than making a rapid evaluation and following the rules. And in the pressure of the moment people default to their intuitive thinking mode (Kaplan et al., 2020).

How does one trigger this effortful, conscious, logical and deliberative System 2 thinking?

System 2 thinking can be inculcated through tapping into mindfulness and spirituality. Imbibing the spiritual dimension of mindfulness into management treats organizations as a value-based system, maintaining constant interaction with the environment. The journey of personal growth through self-development and self-transcendence needing deeper commitment to existential realities can build a foundation stone for system 2 thinking at individual level. System 2 thinking can't be imposed by any outside means, it's more of a self-inculcated way of functioning. It is this aspect where spirituality can play a very important role as it has shown in several studies that a spiritual quest and deep understanding of spirituality leads to individual transformation of human beings. (Pruzan, 2011). Spirituality is neither religion nor rituals, philosophy or dogma, it is rather an internal experience and a process of walking towards self-transformation. Conceptually, vision, hope/faith, and altruistic love can be the three components of spiritual leadership translated in the form of a leader's values, attitudes, and behaviors, respectively. Vision refers to a future with a meaning lending intrinsic self-value and life purpose to the employees. Hope/faith is built upon the confidence of the leader in his ability to achieve the said vision. High levels of a leader's confidence can push the subordinates to attain the organizational mission. Altruistic love arises out of a series of leader behaviors which pegs itself on mutual care and respect and produces a heightened feeling of being understood and appreciated by organizational members, thus forging a favorable organizational culture. In this spiritual leadership model, Vision gives intrinsic purpose to the existence (Chen & Yang, 2012) and is spiritually rooted when employees have a sense of hope/faith that the common vision will inspire them to achieve future goals (Wang et al., 2019, Fry & Cohen, 2009). In its purest form, this feeling becomes the intrinsic reward for employees to create firm beliefs and encourage the pursuit of a meaningful organizational vision (Chen & Yang, 2012, Wang et al., 2019). Here, authors would like to state that workplace spirituality can come through its leadership as they are the

biggest actors who can shape the culture of the organisation. Hence our paper postulates that the cascading effect of Spiritual leadership is vast and multifold spreading over to the workplace, employees and in all activities of the organisation.

Spirituality is concerned with the matters of spirit. Spirituality originates from the Latin word *spiritus* which means “breath of life”. Spirituality refers to a search for meaning that transcends material well-being. It is a focus on basic, deep-rooted human values, and a relationship with a universal source, power, or divinity (Pruzan, 2011). Mindful and deliberate thinking for a long time has a tendency to transcend beyond the object and process, and capture a bigger picture for greater long term good. A sense of detachment in the thinking process helps in keeping the egoistic thinking at bay and hence decisions can be in harmony with common good. Patanjali’s Yoga sutras bring forth the concept of *sanyam* whereby one can use a combination of simultaneous practice of *Dhāraṇā* (concentration), *Dhyāna* (meditation) & *Samādhi* (union) to get to the root of thought process transcending the object and process, giving a complete knowledge of the subject to the thinker. A thinking and decision making approach on these precepts is expected to be more deliberative. *Sanyam* as per yoga sutras works at sensory, mental and spiritual level and gives a deeper understanding of the object (Indradevi, 2020) (Rajvanshi, 2020)

Another aspect that spirituality imbibes into human beings is compassion and inclusiveness. A widely used term **वसुधैकुटुम्बकम् (Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam)** is a Sanskrit phrase that means that the whole world is one single family. This idea is widely accepted in Hindu philosophy, this itself is a path to inclusiveness when you consider all a family, the differences reduce and acceptance increases. Another aspect is Faith and fearlessness. These are also the cornerstones that are developed by imbibing a spiritual outlook. The belief that faith brings fearlessness and hence ability to focus on issues at hand, fearlessness is a common trait amongst great leaders. Faith in oneself or in some higher identity acts like a pillar of psychological support and hence fearlessness. The common concept of *Leap of Faith* gives a sense of feeling that whatever happens is for the greater good and hence releases from the pressure of expectations based on numbers fueled with gains maximization and hence greed. Faith helps us adopt the strategy followed by mother Nature which focuses on giving rather than accumulation. Reduction

in greed and stress will lead to sustainable living and happiness. (Rajvanshi, 2020)

योग:कर्मसुकौशलम् - Yog Sutra advocates that spirituality should be a way of life whether in professional sphere or private. Spirituality is more of a process than an end. Long term recovery of the organisations no doubt is a long haul and may need accommodating and nurturing what they have constantly skirted. The organizations will do well to consider what truly nourishes them along the way. A new order of the organizations which hails an integrative worldview is a harbinger of the space meant to harbour the aspiration of oneness. Organizational leadership that promotes self management will unleash individual energies as people set higher inner standards which need to be met and constantly upgraded through continuous learning. The development of the self of the decision makers forms the prerequisite for creation of such organizations. A state of consciousness which is embedded in everyday activity will reinforce oneness in the organizations. The Spirituality in management perspective extends traditional reflections on corporate purpose and focuses on a self-referential organizational-existential search for meaning, identity and success (Mitroff, 1998). The foundation of better organizational decisions lies in the development of decision makers who are more inclusive and have a peaceful consciousness. The broader the concept of self, the more the decision maker moves towards being an empathetic and all-encompassing manager. Spirituality can serve as a vehicle to reach such states by managerial decision makers, building a strong foundation for the organizations, economies, ecosystems and world in general. Ending on the note that lessons taught by Covid crisis should not be forgotten and should remind us that together we can surmount all challenges. The organizations must root its leadership into spirituality to remain sustainable. Such leaders will truly act as chaperones navigating its people successfully through turbulent times.

Conclusion and Implications for the Post Covid period

The scenario that we are witnessing today is far more challenging in every aspect compared to the pre covid era. The workforce behaviour and needs as well as expectations from employers have been reset. The pre-covid business scenario aiming at growth and profits based on Kahneman's System 1 approach to leadership supported by systematic, fast, unconscious pattern-based leader responses has to give way for a

more subtle System 2 approach being more slow, effortful, conscious and deliberative decision making the leadership handle abstract situations in the post covid era. The solutions are not readily available as the ability to have deep insights into the minds of the employees, workers and fellow colleagues post covid is relatively untested. This paper tries to invoke System 2 thinking by inculcating spiritual leadership traits. Spirituality can be a means to achieve the conscious system 2 leadership that can be the chaperone post covid crisis by triggering in the leaders of the organization who are mainly seen as the vanguards of maintaining the workplace. Various dimensions of spirituality across different cultures project toward altruistic love, inclusiveness, utilitarian approach, vision, faith, impermanence of all things and emotions, introspection, and bounded optimism. Adoption of these spiritual accouterments by the leaders can serve to be the tools for a more conscious organization which can be better equipped to handle unprecedented crises like the covid situation which is still raking the world to find solutions for a better future.

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INDUSTRIAL REGULATIONS AND CONTRACTUALISATION IN ORGANISED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY SINCE THE EARLY 1990s: A STATE LEVEL ANALYSIS USING ASI DATA

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Abstract

In the post reforms decade of the 1990s, there have been many changes that have dotted India's economic landscape. Among them, declining quality of employment growth has been a very noticeable phenomenon. Contractualisation of the workers in the manufacturing industry is a matter of grave policy concern from the perspective of inclusive growth. It has been observed that contractualisation has intensified particularly after 1994. This paper attempts to examine how industrial regulations have uniformly contributed to the contractualisation phenomenon across major states in India. Was it due to the policies that were pursued in the pre-reform period (1950-1990) or only an outcome of the New Economic Policy of 1991?

Keywords: Contractualisation, Manufacturing, Industrial Regulation, Economic Reforms.

1. Introduction

Even as contractualisation in India's organised manufacturing sector intensified in the post reforms period, it can't be attributed to the policies of the economic reforms alone. The mainstream literature blames labour legislations solely (Table 1). However, the empirical evidence does not support this argument if analysis of contractualisation is done at the state level. We observed that the forces and pattern of contractualisation at state level are akin to their nature at the national level.

Table 1: Main labour legislations in India

Category of legislations	Central labour legislations
Related to Industrial Relations	The Trade Union Act, 1926
	The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2011
	The Industrial Disputes, 1947
Related to work conditions	The Industrial Employment(Standing Orders) Act, 1946
	The Factories Act, 1948
	The Building & Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment & Conditions of Service)Act, 1996
	The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition)Act, 1970
	The Shops and Establishment Act,
Related to wages	The Payment of wages Act, 1936
	The Payment of wages (Amendment) Act, 2005
	The Minimum Wages Act, 1948
	The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965
	The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
	The Dock Workers(Regulation of Employment)Act, 1948
	The Plantation Labour Act, 1951
	The Mines Act, 1952
	The Merchant Shipping Act, 1958
	Related to Social Security
The Workmen’s Compensation (Amendment)Act, 2000	
The Employees’ State Insurance Act, 1948	
The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972	
Related to Women and Children	The Unorganised Workers’ Social Security Act, 2008
	The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961
	The Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation)Act, 1986

Source: Singh (2022)

The growing firm size, capital intensity, and rising technical efficiency have actually constrained growth of regular employment in the organised manufacturing sector (Singh, 2022). As the wage differential between regular and contract workers widened, contractualisation grew in the entire manufacturing sector. It has increased both in capital and technology intensive industries (like coke & refined petro-products, other non-metallic products, and other transport equipment, basic metals, and chemical industries). Therefore, the scope for growth of regular

employment for huge size of unskilled labour is very limited given internal and external challenges of the organised manufacturing sector. We argue that the variation in extent of contractualisation across states is caused by state specific factors in addition to impact of industrial regulations.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 2 gives a theoretical background of contractualisation in the manufacturing sector. Section 3 discusses the role of economic reforms policies in influencing contractualisation across states. Section 4 describes the research methodology adopted to carry out this study. Section 5 introduces the database that has been used for econometric analysis. Section 6 presents results and analyses the causes and forces of contractualisation in manufacturing industries at factory level. Section 7 presents the conclusions.

2. Industrial Regulations and Contractualisation: Theoretical Background

Even though contractualisation in India's manufacturing sector has been pushed by global factors, the roots of the problem lie in industrial policy interventions since the decade of 1970s. It was an outcome of multiplicity of labour legislations, low education level among labour and high capital intensity across industries. Despite positive spill over effects for the formal sector, contractualisation has made economic growth less inclusive, although there are contrasting views about this in the existing literature.

Some studies argue that the multiplicity of labour legislations and their arbitrariness has constrained performance of the manufacturing sector. On employment protection legislations (EPL), many economists have argued for diluting the jaws of these legislations to improve performance of the sector (Fallon and Lucas, 1991; Lucas Jr, 1993; Besley and Burgess, 2002; Dougherty, 2008). In India's context, there are many other studies that have underlined the severity of labour legislations (Ghose, 2005; Roy, 2004; Panagariya, 2008).

However, others refuted these arguments for several flaws in the methodologies used (Nagraj, 2004; Schmidt, 2005; Chaudhari, 2015; Anant et al., 2006; Sakthivel and Joddar, 2006; Sood et al., 2014).

They also argue that there were instances of blatant violations of these laws in the post reforms period. There are several others who denounce labour market informality by saying that it leads to income inequality as labour has weak bargaining power (Jose, 2008; Sharma, 2006; Rutkowski, 2006). Other studies argue that the increasing use of capital-intensive production methods by manufacturing industries has displaced regular labour (Mundle, 1993; Deshpande, 2004). The industrial concentration across states was not determined by quality of business environment only in the post-reform period. Rather this has to do with the persisting regional imbalance in industrialisation over several decades (1950-1990), which was also caused by these policy interventions (Papola, 1994b). This is revealed by Table(2). The percentage share of only three states -Maharashtra, Gujrat, and Tamil Nadu, increased sharply over after 1999-00. It is surprising that none of them is among top achiever states in terms of ease of doing business ranking. Top ranking states include Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Haryana, Jharkhand, Gujrat as per 2018 report of World Bank. See <http://www.doing business.org>.

Table 2: State wise share in industrial distribution (2018-19) (%)

States	GVA	Mfg GVA	Workers in total industrial emp	Workers in Mfg Emp	TPE to industrial emp	TPE to total Mfg emp
Gujrat	14.6	14.84	10.05	10.08	10.14	10.2
Maharashtra	21.46	22.17	12.72	12.58	13.93	13.74
Karnataka	6.35	6.24	6.76	6.73	6.85	6.81
West Bengal	2.61	2.51	5	5.05	4.77	4.81
Tamil Nadu	10.02	10.2	15.72	15.9	15.12	15.32
Panjab	2.24	2.37	4.65	4.74	4.45	4.54
MP	2.4	2.22	2.29	2.27	2.38	2.35
AP	2.54	2.29	3.97	3.81	3.86	3.7
Rajasthan	3.07	3.02	3.41	3.4	3.47	3.46
Uttarakhand	3.98	4.03	2.99	2.97	2.86	2.86
Haryana	4.19	3.91	4.48	4.57	4.52	4.64
UP	5.71	5.39	6.72	6.69	6.74	6.69
Others	20.83	20.81	21.24	21.21	20.91	20.88
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Author’s calculations based on ASI data

*TPE-Total Persons Engaged

Without scratching into the nitty-gritty of the index, we find that these states have done well in industrial performance. However, there are structural characteristics of every state that determines its industrial performance factors (Factors such as productivity level differences, capital investment, infrastructure, human resources, regulatory framework, and human development). This index may not have captured all such factors. Papola (1994a) argued that industrial growth has diverged across states after reforms. The states like Gujrat, Maharashtra, Haryana, and Tamil Nadu were the most industrialised in 2008-09 in terms of share of the manufacturing sector to gross state domestic product. He argued that while most of states have displayed structural shift from agriculture to other sectors, Rajasthan, Orissa, and Gujrat have registered largest shift in favour of the manufacturing sector. Industrial productivity does vary across states and capital intensive is essential to raise it.

Even as capital intensity is essential for adding to productive capacity, productivity must be raised to enhance economic growth efficiently (Lewis, 1954). However, the need for more doses of capital can be avoided for improving manufacturing value added if efficient human capital is available in an economy. This will promote labour absorbing industrial growth. The chronic shortage of skilled manpower is another decisive factor underlying contractualisation. As skill formation was not among core concerns of industrial policies even in the pre-reforms period (1950-90), reform measures comprising amendments in some industrial regulations can't account for the phenomenon of contractualisation. We argue that contractualisation was not caused by the economic reforms of the early 1990s rather it resulted from lack of holistic industrial policy interventions of pre-reforms period largely.

3. Economic Reforms and Contractualisation Across States

Contractualisation across states is not impacted by amendments in industrial regulations as attempted by some states. Rather it is due to factors like import penetration, rising profit share has also contributed to extent of contractualisation particularly after 2005. Dougherty (2008) argued that amendments to industrial laws have enabled industrial performance in Indian states (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab, Gujrat, and Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Madhya Pradesh), who amended key industrial regulations, including the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and the Factories Act, 1948. The Contract Act, 1970 has been amended

in states like Rajasthan, Karnataka, Gujrat, Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, and Orissa} in addition to the previous group of states.

It was observed that the states having better industrial relations have recorded an improvement in their industrial performance. This improvement has served interests of employers as profitability has increased.

We observed that profits in organised manufacturing sector increased sharply. The percentage growth in profits was to the tune of 3900 percent during entire period 1990-91-91/2014-15. Whereas emoluments increased by 1400 percent only over this period in nominal terms over 1990-91/2014-15. Profit share in distribution of value added increased sharply and highest from 1999-00 onwards which started to decline after 2007-08 only. It is but natural to conjecture that rising profit share might have induced contractualisation.

In addition to the rise in profit share, wide wage gap between regular and contract workers added to the share of contract workers. The latter earn 45 percent less than regular workers. The empirical results do validate this causality for all firms. Bhandari and Heshmati (2005) argued that wage gap between regular and contract workers is determined by factors such as education level, skills, union membership, and migration. They argue that factors like difference in labour productivity and weak bargaining power of contract workers. Table(3) reveals that wage gap for regular and contract workers is huge. Real wages of regular workers were higher than that of contract workers. The regular workers earn three fourth of total wage bill across industries barring a few industries (like food, wood, other non-metallic, leather, electronic, and fabricated metals).

The disparity in level of contractualisation across states may be due to its growing importance for industrial performance and inflow of foreign direct investment. Few states/union territories namely Maharashtra, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujrat which have collectively received more than 54 percent of total FDI approved since 1991. Figure (1) reveals that states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujrat, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh have contractualisation level above national average. Among them, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana have recorded highest level. The state of Andhra Pradesh has allowed use

of contract workers in non-core activities of any establishment under the State Amendment Andhra Pradesh Contract Labour(Regulation and Abolition) Act, 2003. However, these establishments are engaged in production activities which are normally done by contractors, do not require permanent workers, and are subject to market instability.

**Table 3: Wage gap between regular and contract workers
(at 1991 prices)**

Industry	1999-00	2005-06	2009-10	2018-19
<i>low tech industries</i>				
Food products & Beverages	46.33	39.75	52.96	75.81
Tobacco products	-263.35	-203.00	-90.76	35.99
Textiles	80.73	76.48	76.21	84.97
Apparels, Dressing & Dyeing of fur	80.86	65.53	71.15	84.74
Tanning and dressing leather	62.09	50.70	61.95	77.03
wood & products	62.76	24.15	41.51	64.96
Paper & paper products	68.94	66.67	71.41	78.89
publishing, Printing & recorded	93.76	88.53	84.68	87.71
Furniture & mfg.	62.57	78.04	76.41	83.76
<i>Medium tech industries</i>				
Coke & refined petro products	89.03	85.08	84.89	94.43
Rubber & plastics	79.98	66.84	73.33	73.25
other non-metallic products	31.61	9.97	25.79	40.69
Basic Metals	83.77	80.92	76.06	84.92
Fabricated metal products except machinery equipment	62.39	42.06	58.06	71.50
<i>High tech industries</i>				
Chemicals& Chemical products	80.37	71.05	70.28	76.65
Machinery Equipment	55.98	24.45	22.47	65.19
Office, accounting, computer	97.90	95.73	80.94	84.32
Electrical equipment	90.51	78.25	73.53	80.29
Medical, precision and optical instruments, clock & watches	94.75	86.75	79.39	92.70
Motor Vehicles, trailers, semi trailers	92.55	82.16	78.64	82.60
Other Transport Equipment	88.73	71.08	69.28	75.77
All manufacturing sector	72.92	64.58	66.09	77.52

Source: Author's calculations based on ASI data

The lack of uniformity of the labour legislations has much influence on contents of amendments and their purview. There are dissimilar benchmarks in its application of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 across these states. While it applies to all establishments employing ten or more workers in Gujrat and West Bengal, the threshold of workers is fifty in Rajasthan for this Act to apply. It may appear that favourable investment climate must have induced contractualisation. However, there is no such homogeneity in nature of contractualisation at state level. We argue that state specific conditions have influenced extent of contractualisation there which is shown by empirical analysis in subsequent sections.

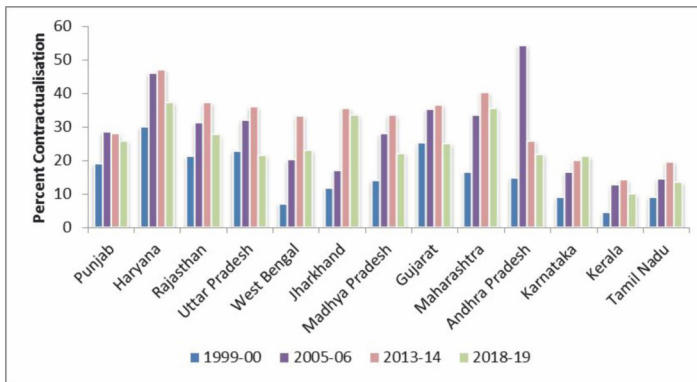


Figure 1: Contract workers in total workers in organised manufacturing across states, 1999-2019

Source: Author's estimates based on ASI data

4. Research Methodology

In comparison to empirical studies on analysis of productivity growth, there is relatively lesser literature on contractualisation and casualisation in India's manufacturing sector. Many research studies have estimated productivity to study its implications for employment growth. We have used Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method for running multiple variable regression models (Model-I & Model-II). Model-I was framed to check significance of contract workers for the manufacturing output at different points of time. Model 2, was framed to examine significant of relevant explanatory variables.

These regression models have taken four different points of time (1999-00, 2004-05, 2009-10, and 2013-14). We have used NIC-1998 classification in this study. Appropriate concordance has been done. The influence of multi-collinearity and endogeneity on estimates was thus minimized by making it a cross-sectional study. Given the huge volume of observations for every variable across the years in post reforms period, we decided to study contractualisation phenomenon at four points of time as mentioned in the beginning of this section.

Regression equation(2), has been used to find out significant determinants of contractualisation at factory level in organised manufacturing sector. In order to get BLUE estimates (Gauss Markov theorem requires a particular dataset to meet standard assumptions to satisfy the best linear unbiased estimates(BLUE) property), we have made a zero conditional mean assumption. In addition, we have assumed that error term to have equal variance E has equal variance. As data on many variables in this database suffers from problem of outliers, their values were winsorised.

The Ramsey RESET (11 Regression specification error test (RESET) which is used to detect misspecification of functional form of a regression model) and Linktest (For empirical analysis, this test is used to rule out misspecification of explanatory variables) were carried out to check for model specification and ruling out error of omitted variables from the model. There was no multi-collinearity as the value of VIF (It shows that how much coefficients of estimated variables are inflated vis-a-vis predicted variables, was very low (Wooldridge, 2015). In order to deal with it, heteroskedasticity-robust estimation was done. The estimation has been done for contribution of contract workers to output of all firms at unit level.

5. Data

We have used select variables from the Annual Survey Industries (ASI) data which Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) publishes annually for the organised manufacturing sector. We have chosen the Annual Survey of Industries database for its coverage, accessibility, and availability at the firm level. It is a large database and is updated annually. The raw data of ASI for fifteen years (1998-99 to 2014-15) was arranged in usable format for processing with STATA-statistical software- as per tabulation programme that comprises information on twenty-seven variables of organised manufacturing sector for each year. Questionnaire

and flow chart of technical programme carry details to extract and match data with publish reports of Annual Survey of Industries.

5.1. Description of sample

The ASI database provides data on most of the variables for organised manufacturing industries. However, it does not collect data on tariff rates, skilled manpower, and investment climate etc. In this research, we have developed two modelsto test study significance of contract workers for the manufacturing output growth and find out determinants of contractualisation at factory level.

5.2. Construction and description of variables

We have used different indicators of the manufacturing sector performance as given in ASI data for the empirical analysis. We have used physical capital formation, imported inputs, wage gap between regular and contract workers, and supervisory staff as proxies for industrial investment climate, tariff rates, labour cost, and skilled manpower respectively.

6. Empirical results and analysis

Objectives

- 1 Examining impact of policy shift on growth of employment in manufacturing sector during 1999-00 to 2018-19
- 2 Assessing empirically determinants of contractualisation in the organised manufacturing sector.

We hypothesised that relatively easier access of large firms to imported inputs in post reforms period replaced regular work by contractual employment. In addition, factors growing profit share and higher wages of regular relative to contract workers put pressure on job quality. For a precise understanding, these dimensions have been captured in both the models that we have framed for empirical analysis.

Table 4: Description of variables used for empirical analysis

Variables	Label used	Description
CONTRACT	Contra	Contractualisation
IMPTCOM	imp_share	Import Competition
LABCOST	cw_share	Wage gap between regular and contract workers
COSFINCAP	intt_cost	Interest cost of finance capital
INVESTCL	newcapital	Investment climate
PROFT	profit_shr	Profitability
OUTPT	log_output	Output
PHYCAP	log_invested	Total invested capital
ENERCO	log_fuels	Energy cost
LABFLEX	c_workers	Contract workers for labour flexibility
SKILLAB	super_staff	Supervisory staff

Source: Author's estimation based on ASI data

Hypotheses

1. High capital intensity induced contractualisation across the manufacturing production
2. Imported inputs displaced regular workers by contract workers
3. Labour cost is not a significant factor of contractualisation
4. Financial liberalisation has induced contractualisation
5. Rising profit share in manufacturing value added induced further contractualisation

Model I

$$\log Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \log X_{1i} + \beta_2 \log X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \epsilon_i \quad (1)$$

$$\beta_0 > 0, \beta_1 > 0, \beta_2 > 0, \beta_3 > 0, \beta_4 > 0$$

where, Y_i = output of i^{th} firm, X_{1i} = invested capital of i^{th} firm, X_{2i} = fuels of i^{th} firm, X_{3i} = contract workers of i^{th} firm, X_{4i} = supervisory staff of i^{th} firm

Model 2

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \epsilon_i \quad (2)$$

$$\beta_0 > 0, \beta_1 > 0, \beta_2 < 0, \beta_3 > 0, \beta_4 > 0, \beta_5 > 0,$$

where, Y_i = contrac of i^{th} firm, X_{1i} = profit_shr of i^{th} firm, X_{2i} = cw_share of i^{th} firm, X_{3i} = intt_cost of i^{th} firm, X_{4i} = newcapital of i^{th} firm, X_{5i} = imp_share of i^{th} firm

A model similar to our Model-I has been used by Rajeev (2009) for finding out contribution of contract workers to the industrial output though it was a panel data study. Unlike it, we have framed the model-II to understand determining factors and processes of contractualisation. The dependent variable, CONTRACT, defines contractualisation as proportion of contract workers out of total workers that are engaged in each industry. The independent variables include: *PROFT*, *LABCOST*, *COSFINCAP*, *INVESTCL*, and *IMPTCOM*. The variable *IMPTCOM* has been used as a proxy for import tariffs to see as to how import competition has influenced contractualisation. With trade liberalisation, the share of imported inputs has increased manufacturing production.

The variable *COSFINCAP* is used for studying impact of financial liberalisation on use of contract workers. It is hypothesised that financial liberalisation tends to raise capital intensity in production due to declining interest cost of institutional credit. The relatively easier access of big industries this type of credit prompts them to respond actively to slight changes in interest rates. Hence, declining interest rate tends to encourage producers to replace labour factor with machinery and capital in production process.

The variable *INVESTCL* is used to know the statistical significance of investment climate for contractualisation of workforce. Last but not the least, *LABCOST* was included to find out whether wage gap between regular and contract workers has enhanced use of contract workers largely. As wages of regular workers go up, employment of contract workers will go up. Thus, contractualisation will increase in medium and big industries and, in turn, which would impact feasibility of realising inclusive growth in the country.

6.1. Determinants of contractualisation across states

The growing profit share and higher labour cost of regular workers are two key factors that have expedited contractualisation of the manufacturing jobs across states with some exceptions(Singh, 2022). We find that if it has to anything to do with rigidity or flexibility of industrial regulations. In states such as Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Karnataka, which have flexible regulations have seen no lesser degree of contractualisation than that in Bengal, Odisha, and Maharashtra where industrial regulations are rigid.

We also find that in case of Tamil Nadu and Gujrat it was wage gap which was statistically significant as revealed by table(5c) and table(5a). The process of contractualisation is influenced by many factors at state level. In case of Gujrat, it is wage gap that was that main catalyst for contractualisation as shown by table(5a).All other factors simply did not matter. Unlike inference made by Hirway and Shah (2011),capital intensity is not statistically significant. They had argued that industries in the state had become more capital which led to informalisation of jobs.

Table 5a: Contractualisation in Gujrat

Contra	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
imp_share	na	376.80	-34.59**	-873.90	0.160***
		-281.00	-12.30	-615.70	-0.0133
intt_cost	na	0.00	0.00	-0.0450*	-0.13
		0.00	0.00	-0.02	-0.0677
profit_shr	na	0.00	0.0000126**	0.00	-0.000522***
		0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.0000673
cw_share	na	0.802***	-0.0000878***	0.00	0.226***
		-0.02	0.00	0.00	-0.0111
newcapital	na	-19.85	0.00	0.01	-82.17***
		-87.98	0.00	-0.02	-17.59
_cons	na	0.220***	0.00261***	1.001***	0.179***
		-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.00421
N		1059	1503	60	11008
R2		0.661	0.004	0.238	0.204

Source: Author's estimates, Note: Standard errors in parentheses

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

Unlike Gujrat, all explanatory variables were influential in deciding the quantum and pace of contractualisation in Maharashtra. Table(5b) shows that the impact of wage gap, import competition, and investment climate was maximum for all these years in explaining this phenomenon. However, year 2004-05 stands out in this respect as the coefficient value of these variables were very high. The value of R^2 was also high.

Table(5c) reveals that in case of Tamil Nadu, contractualisation process was not influenced much by variables in the model. We find that except 2009-10, variables were not statistically significant. For this year, factors such as imported inputs, profits, labour cost were instrumental for contractualisation.

Table 5b: Contractualisation in Maharashtra

Contrac	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
imp_share	na	-210.5*	58.53***	-221.7***	0.0861***
		-82.60	-10.35	-63.78	-0.0151
intt_cost	na	-0.0520*	0.0195***	0.00273***	-0.204***
		-0.02	0.00	0.00	-0.0282
profit_shr	na	0.000217***	0.0000152***	0.00	0.000364
		0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.000431
cw_share	na	0.816***	-0.0000625***	-0.0217***	0.123***
		-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.00603
newcapital	na	561.50	0.000766*	0.00	-335.9***
		-2470.20	0.00	0.00	-49.03
_cons	na	0.218***	0.00265***	1.021***	0.429***
		0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.00484
N	na	4095.00	4788.00	548.00	11736
R2		0.75	0.05	0.61	0.099

Source: Author's estimates, Note: Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5c: Contractualisation in Tamil Nadu

Contrac	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
imp_share	na	376.80	-34.59**	-873.90	0.160***
		-281.00	-12.30	-615.70	-0.0133
intt_cost	na	0.00	0.00	-0.0450*	-0.13
		0.00	0.00	-0.02	-0.0677
profit_shr	na	0.00	0.0000126**	0.00	-0.000522***
		0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.0000673
cw_share	na	0.802***	-0.0000878***	0.00	0.226***
		-0.02	0.00	0.00	-0.0111
newcapital	na	-19.85	0.00	0.01	-82.17***
		-87.98	0.00	-0.02	-17.59
_cons	na	0.220***	0.00261***	1.001***	0.179***
		-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.00421
N		1059	1503	60	11008
R2		0.661	0.004	0.238	0.204

Source: Author's estimates, Note: Standard errors in parentheses

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

Table(5d) discloses that for state of Karnataka, factors such as imported inputs, interest cost, profit share, and wage of regular workers were significant for 2004-05 and 2009-10. However, only imported inputs and profit share mattered for contractualisation in 2013-14.

Table 5d: Contractualisation in Karnataka

Contrac	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
imp_share	-0.06	2462.8***	40.56***	-732.8***	-0.116***
	-0.03	-327.40	-11.11	-33.60	-0.017
intt_cost	0.534***	-0.686***	0.0125**	0.00	-0.397***
	-0.12	-0.11	0.00	0.00	-0.107
profit_shr	0.0290***	0.0312***	0.000104***	-0.000111***	-0.00127***
	-0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.000289
cw_share	0.00000999***	0.851***	-0.000446***	0.00	0.159***
	0.00	-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.011
newcapital	-3793.5***	8795.10	0.00	0.00	-0.00454***
	-912.90	-6583.40	0.00	0.00	-0.0000811
_cons	0.122***	0.177***	0.00169***	1.002***	0.338***
	-0.01	-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.00704
N	266	450	487	132	6224
R2	0.785	0.839	0.283	0.908	0.142

Source: Author's estimates, Note: Standard errors in parentheses

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

Table 5e: Contractualisation in Andhra Pradesh

Contrac	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
imp_share	-0.09	376.80	-34.59**	-873.90	0.156***
	-0.06	-281.00	-12.30	-615.70	-0.0235
intt_cost	-0.07	0.00	0.00	-0.0450*	-0.123
	-0.04	0.00	0.00	-0.02	-0.133
profit_shr	0.00616*	0.00	0.0000126**	0.00	-0.00202***
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.000544
cw_share	0.00000752***	0.802***	-0.0000878***	0.00	0.146***
	0.00	-0.02	0.00	0.00	-0.0133
newcapital	8525.7***	-19.85	0.00	0.01	-46.89**
	-2066.70	-87.98	0.00	-0.02	-14.29
_cons	0.212***	0.220***	0.00261***	1.001***	0.308***
	-0.02	-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.0101
N	326	1059	1503	60	2504
R2	0.473	0.661	0.004	0.238	0.158

Source: Author's estimates, Note: Standard errors in parentheses

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

The scenario changed for Andhra Pradesh where only labour cost has emerged as the only factor behind this phenomenon as shown by table(5e).

Table 5f: Contractualisation in Rajasthan

Contra	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
imp_share	0.0729	2462.8***	40.56***	-732.8***	0.0509
	-0.0458	-327.4	-11.11	-33.6	-0.0302
intt_cost	0.0246*	-0.686***	0.0125**	0.0039	-0.127
	-0.011	-0.105	-0.00455	-0.00401	-0.162
profit_shr	0.00577	0.0312***	0.000104***	-0.000111***	0.00197
	-0.0033	-0.00458	-2.46E-05	-0.0000313	-0.00184
cw_share	0.0000110***	0.851***	-0.000446***	-0.000363	0.355***
	-0.000000465	-0.014	-4.82E-05	-0.00207	-0.0302
newcapital	596.8	8795.1	0.00127	-0.000012	-575.0***
	-1895.4	-6583.4	-0.0013	-0.00000683	-101.4
_cons	0.104***	0.177***	0.00169***	1.002***	0.286***
	-0.016	-0.0103	-0.000112	-0.00223	-0.0109
N	194	450	487	132	2704
R2	0.722	0.839	0.283	0.908	0.216

Source: Author's estimates, Note: Standard errors in parentheses

* p <0.05, ** p <0.01, *** p <0.001

There were other factors like imports and profits were also responsible in the year 2009-10. The state has carried out substantial labour reforms¹⁶ in past few years. As shown by table(5f), in case of Rajasthan, all factors except invested capital were significant for all years except 2013-14 in which imported inputs and profits only contributed to contractualisation.

Contractualisation across firms was pulled up by factors like rising import penetration, profit share, labour cost of regular workers, and declining cost of finance capital. However, the impact of wage gap on contractualisation was highest as the value of R2 increased fast as we included wage gap in the regression. Across states, contractualisation was caused by factors like investment climate, profit share, and labour cost. The empirical results bring home the point that amendments in the industrial regulations that were carried out in some states have not enabled them to achieve any decline in contractualisation.

Unlike the existing studies, we have endeavoured to explore find an answer to the question as to what are the specific factors that contributed to contractualisation at firm level in post reforms period. As suggested by other studies that decision to hire contract workers is procedures for issuing a license to contractors has been made less time consuming.

The amendments made to the Factory Act,1956, the ID Act,1947, and the Contract Labour(Regulation and Absorption) Act,1970. The definition of a factory has been changed for both power using and without power using units. Under the Industrial Disputes Act, the threshold of workers for lay off and retrenchment has been increased from previously 100 workers to 300 workers. The use of contractual workers has got a policy push as administrative not just about inefficiency in labour use(Bhandari and Heshmati, 2005). It can't be about investment climate and business environment either. Had it been so, industrial performance would have remained low in states such as West Bengal, Odisha, and Maharashtra which are known for relatively more rigid labour laws.

In our results, we find that factors like growing import penetration, profits ,declining cost of financial capital, and high wage gap of regular workers were statistically significant for all firms in general. Thus, rapid growth of contractualisation in the manufacturing industries was attributable to them. Contrary to the inferences Besley and Burgess (2002), we have found that industrial relations environment does not matter much for deciding the quality of manufacturing employment growth across states. They concluded that pro- worker regulations tend to cause low investment, employment, productivity, and output in registered manufacturing industries. In our empirical results, we found that the states that have made substantial amendments to the Contract Act(Regulation and Absorption)1970 have not seen any improvement in quality of employment.

The way forward

Contractualisation of the workers in India's organised manufacturing sector has risen rapidly since early 1990s.It is reflected by trends in industrial database of Annual Survey of Industries(ASI).The empirical results that overall factors such as import penetration, profit share, labour cost, and cost of finance capital were key determinants of contractualisation across organised manufacturing sector. We have also

observed that productivity and small size of India's manufacturing sector have resulted from inappropriate industrial regulations.

In addition, nature of determinants did change for cross state contractualisation. Nonetheless, it is certain that policies of economic reforms were not accountable solely for contractualisation. Across states, contractualisation was caused by factors like investment climate, profit share, and labour cost. We have found that amendments in the industrial regulations have not enabled the concerned states to achieve any decline in contractualisation. On the basis of our empirical results we may recommend that urgent policy interventions must be initiated to remove multiple industrial regulations that constrain the performance of the manufacturing sector. The relevant industrial regulations must be amended so as to facilitate faster industrial growth.

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INFLUENCER MARKETING: A NEW TREND OPENING UP NEW VIRTUAL PROSPECTS

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Abstract

The development of the use of social media has changed the way people communicate in which companies connect with their customers. The capacity of important influence (also known as influencers) to interact with targeted customers to buy a company's goods is being leveraged by modern businesses, which are trying to recognize and utilise the capacity of these individuals to showcase their goods via social media. What inspires individuals to follow these influencers, on the other hand, is still mostly unknown. The current research seeks to fill this knowledge gap in the existing literature by attempting to comprehend influencer marketing. It was decided to write this paper about influencer marketing since, as previously said, it is a highly real challenge. There has been some influencer marketing in the past, but the concept seems to be more popular than ever before since social media currently provides so many opportunities for influencer marketing. However, it was still extremely difficult to locate scholarly studies or papers on the subject. Most likely, this was the case since influencer marketing is still a very new concept, and was not even recognized as a separate sector just a few short years ago.

Keywords: Marketing, Influencer, Social Media, Digital, Promotion, Relationship, Customer.

Introduction

Influencer marketing is a kind of marketing that has grown in popularity significantly over the last few times. Influencer marketing is a tremendous stage to engage in, particularly now that social media is such a significant phenomenon. There are several various influencer accounts to be found on various social media platforms, including those of celebrities, bloggers, YouTube stars, and ordinary individuals who have many followers. A large number of the accounts are owned by people who collaborate with other businesses to market their goods and services. It seems that the phenomena of influencer marketing are not going away anytime soon as such partnership postings continue to surface on social media networks on a regular basis.

Influencer marketing is the technique of paying someone to actively promote the brand, often via social media platforms including Instagram and YouTube, among other places. As per a 2017 poll conducted by a Team of National Marketers External, 75 percent of organizations use influencer marketing as part of their overall promotional plan. Some colleges are providing degrees in influencer marketing methods and influencer-related public relations as the influencer marketing sector continues to expand. Influencers are individuals who can reach and connect with a big number of people, the number of that audience might vary. For example, Mega-influencers are well-known celebrities who have more than a million followers on social media and are well-known for their acting and other heavily publicized activities and have more than a million followers on social media. In most cases, macro-influencers are “popular on social media,” and they are often what people are referring to when they speak about “influencers”. They usually have between 100,000 and 1,000,000 (million) followers. Micro-influencers are much more specialised, well-known in their sector, and can have follower counts ranging from 1,000 to 100,000; Nano-influencers, have a more instant relationship with the people, either because of their subject matter or locational concentrate and typically have less than 1,000 followers (Hayes et al., 2020), are also available.

This article gives a good overview for anyone who is interested in learning more about influencer marketing, including its advantages, disadvantages, and statistics.

Objectives

The research aims to fulfil the following objectives:

- To study influencer marketing' a number of advantages and disadvantages.
- To study influencer marketing, content platforms which are classified into many categories and using social media platforms.
- To study influencer marketing and some highlights on statistical data by using secondary sources.

Methodology

Social media has transformed business-to-consumer communication. These influencers may engage with specific customers, develop ideas through digital word-of-mouth, and urge their own followers to buy things from a firm via social media. This study uses secondary data from reputed journal publications, various government reports and companies' statistical reports. It is ambiguous why people follow these influencers. To fill this information gap, this research seeks to comprehend influencer marketing.

Influencer Marketing

Although the phrase influencer marketing may be described explicitly, if someone does not already know what it means, it is not hard to figure out the core meaning of the phrase by simply reading those two terms (Senn, 2020) if one does not already know what it means. An influencer originated from the term "influence," which simply means to influence someone or something. This leads to the conclusion that the term "influencer" refers to a person who influences another individual as well as things. Marketing people, on the other side, work in a broad field, but the fundamental principle behind their work is to answer the wants of clients in a lucrative manner in many circumstances. A corporation may employ various marketing tactics to increase sales by promoting the product or service. Put all together, these two points lead to the conclusion that influencer marketing, in its most basic definition, refers to the use of individuals who have an influence over other persons to advertise products or services.

An industry's ability to develop deep customer connections with its customers is very significant, and influencer marketing is an extremely

successful method of accomplishing this goal. In light of the fact that consumers play a key role in marketing, it may be worthwhile to consider including them in one of the marketing tools. Furthermore, portraying an organisation's goods as well as service to a customer through the use of influencer marketing can be effective even though influencers can be regarded reassuring as well as amiable, and particularly if they accommodate a product, it can boost the confidence and goodwill of a customer in goods or services, and ideally, at the final moment of the day, turn them into prospective consumers (Kumavat, 2012).



Figure 1: Influencer marketing

Source: Author

Influencers in the Marketing of Influence

In this context, influencers are individuals which other people follow or who influence other people's choices. Influencers include, for example, celebrities, bloggers, Instagrammers, i.e., individuals who use the Instagram platform, and YouTubers, i.e., people who upload videos to the YouTube platform (Burnaz et al., 2021). Essentially, these are those who are well-liked by a huge part of the followers. Influencers are readily connected with social media these days since the platform provides a fantastic platform for influencers to work on. As social media has grown in importance in daily life, influencers have become more visible.

Why is it beneficial to concentrate on a single influencer? Because an influencer has a greater impact on many customers than the marketing does on a small number of consumers. The reason for this may be that when an influencer offers and informs about just goods or services, customers may believe him or her to be highly trustworthy and compelling in their decision. It is particularly effective when a celebrity influencer is well-known, and others see him or her as a role model or hero. This might encourage customers to make a purchase choice because they may want to acquire the same things as the influencer and, in this manner, connect to them or be like them. Overall, the connection between influencers and his / her followers is at the heart of influencer marketing, and this is where the magic happens. Consumers can also assume what types of people might buy using a service or product which an influencer promotes through all the usages of an influencer as well as an issue that is encouraged through influencer marketing, and because many customers buy things that are comparable to things that the individuals they appreciate might have, an influencer can use this to boost the effectiveness of his or her promotion.

In accordance with the extent of their reliability, knowledge, and attractiveness, celebrities have been demonstrated to be able to affect purchasing behaviour as well as brand sentiments or opinions towards advertising. Influencer marketing is effective because superstars may influence customers' decision-making processes, as seen by success.

In the same way that various brands are distinct from one another, so too are various influencers from one. The picture of a given brand does not always correspond to the picture of every influencer, or likewise (S. Kumar et al., 2018). The importance of precisely identifying the kind of influencer who is compatible with a brand and business when a firm attempts to use influencer marketing as one of its promotional strategies is underscored by the fact that in today's world, there are several different types of influencers operating on a variety of social media platforms and posting a variety of various types of material on their accounts. Therefore, a firm that wants to use influencer marketing as a marketing technique should do extensive research on the various influencers, their brands, and social media accounts, and thoroughly process the data obtained before beginning to interact with anybody (Holmes et al., 2008).

An outline of a step-by-step social media approach for reaching out to bloggers. However, even though the four procedures were carried out in the instance of bloggers, they may also be used in the instance of other social media influencers in identifying individuals (Booth et al., (2011). Table 1 shows the four phases that must be completed:

TABLE 1. Four Phases of Social media approach

1	Determine your goals and strategy.
2	Investigate and evaluate
3	Participate in and connect with others
4	Prepare a report and revise it

Source: Author

By using these methods, an organisation may better discover influencers, and then pick an influencer who is the most appropriate for the brand and who is also acceptable in other aspects, according to the organisation.

Influencer Marketing has several Advantages

Influencer marketing is anticipated to grow to a \$5-10 billion sector within the next 5 years as even more companies embrace it to enhance their profitability. Considering its ease of use, many businesses are apprehensive to use influencer marketing (Tiautrakul et al. 2019). The excellent thing is that understanding how it operates & determining which influencer is best for your activities may radically transform and develop your company, making it a vital marketing tactic. Influencer marketing provides several benefits that might assist your company model in stabilising and growing.

A. It helps to establish power & trustworthiness

Influencers have developed close connections with their followers, earning their followers' trust and reputation. Users take their suggestions seriously. Consider the example of when a celebrity promotes a service or a product, which immediately generates trust for the brand that the celebrity is supporting. Social influencers have a certain amount of power over the products or services that they are endorsing or promoting (Singh, 2021).

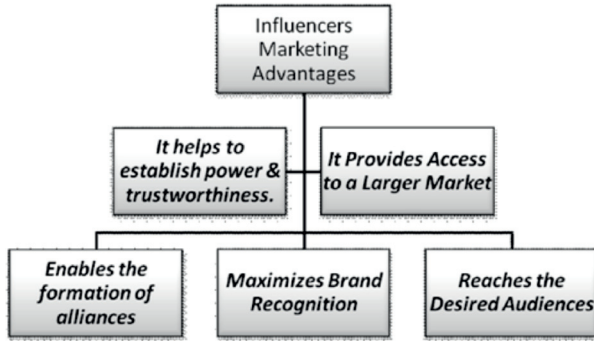


Figure 2. Advantages of Influencer Marketing

Source: Author.

B. It Provides Access to a Larger Market

By partnering with an influencer, you are not only addressing your target audience but also influencing them. You will also be able to establish a connection with a different part of the market. For example, teenagers and Generation Z customers are very valuable groups that may rapidly increase sales & earnings.

C. Enables the formation of alliances

Connecting with influencers is the beginning of a long-term relationship. By transforming yourself into an influencer, you would be able to expand your networks. Your collaboration with influencers will give great advantages to both of you.

D. Maximizes Brand Recognition

Improving brand awareness is among the immediate benefits of using influencer marketing. Your brand will become familiar to a platform target demographic, stories, and services. As a result, it is critical to provide informative information that boosts presence on social media (Cakmak, 2016).

E. Reaches the Desired Audiences

Influencers that are crucial to your brand have a social media following, which makes it easier for you to find them. As a result, when you employ an influencer, you will have an easier time reaching your

target audience. And no need to invest more money only to evaluate and identify your target market since the influencer has already had one (Ouvrein et al., 2021).

Influencer marketing has a number of significant Disadvantages

A. Mistakes in Influencer Marketing Can Be Expensive for Your Organization and Brands

Because influencer marketing is indeed a new approach, marketers are sure to make blunders. Because there is no manual for developing an effective influencer marketing plan, organizations must learn from their successes and failures. Among the most typical errors that influencers make that might harm a business are as follows:

- Failing to disclose that content is paid.
- Publishing material that does not connect with their intended demographic.
- Avoiding the FTC approval criteria, and
- Enabling to inflate followings & interactions.

B. Dealing with Bad Influencers Can Be More Harmful Than Beneficial

Finding the right influencers for a product's marketing takes a lot of time and effort. Your brand's image will suffer considerably unless you do not collaborate with the right influencers. Based on one survey, 61 percent of marketers find it difficult to locate the right influencers for their campaigns. It is difficult to tell whether an influencer has genuine followers. So, what could you do to stay away from it?

It encourages fourstarzz Media to avoid associating with the wrong influencers. This website includes a database of over 750K authentic influencers from which you may choose those who are a good match for your company. You can narrow down the influencers depending on region, speciality, reach, and other factors. You may also look for them using hashtags, usernames, and identities.

C. Extremely Dangerous Situation

As per a survey, approximately two-thirds of organisations want to increase their influencer marketing spending in 2019. However, the increased cost will not guarantee the desired results. If an influencer is unable to create appealing material, they may be unable to engage

with your target audience. In such cases, your time and money would be squandered.

D. Measuring Results Is Difficult

You invest a deal of time and resources to discover the ideal influencers and start a petition. Your work, However, if you are unable to analyse and evaluate the state of your advertising, it may be rendered ineffective. You must decide if an influencer can produce the desired results. If not, you must discontinue your collaboration with them. When it comes to influencer marketing, though, assessing outcomes may be difficult.

Influencer Marketing Content Platforms Are Classified into Many Categories

Once you have decided on whatever you want to express, the following step is figuring out how to convey it in the most effective way. Listed below are many examples of the most prevalent forms of influencer marketing models, organised by platform (Kapitan et.al, 2021).

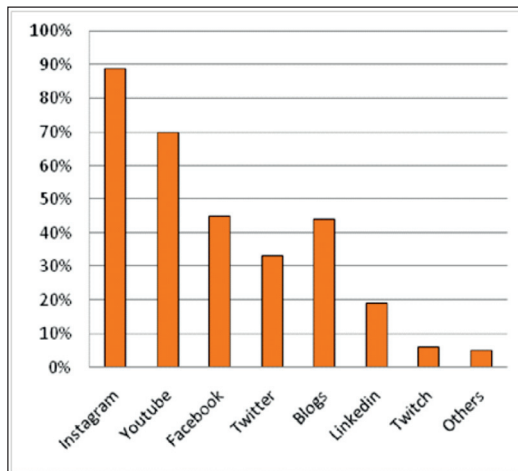


Figure 3: Content Distribution Platforms for Influencer Marketing

Source: Author

- Instagram: Instagram Post, Stories, Videos and IGTV are all available options.
- YouTube: (including YouTube Video and YouTube Live):

- Facebook: Facebook Post, Videos and Live are all examples of social media content.
- Blogs: Bloggers can post a blog post on WordPress.com.
- LinkedIn: LinkedIn Post and LinkedIn Video are some of the options.
- Twitch: Twitch Live streaming service

Influencer marketing platforms that are most often used (Influencer Marketing as a Modern Phenomenon in Reputation Management (2019).

Influencer marketing is enhanced by using Social Media Platforms:

However, although it is beneficial to be mindful of which social media platforms some organisations can use for influencer marketing efforts, your objectives will always change based on your marketing objectives.

When deciding which social media platforms to use for your marketing, it is critical to analyse all the parts of your advertisement and how they relate to a particular platform. Whenever it comes to influencer marketing, every platform has a distinct audience, a distinctive proportion of influencers, as well as its own set of key features (Kim et al., 2021) that makes it special.

Table 2: Information about Social Media Platforms in the Context of Influencers

Social Media Platform	Audience	Characteristics & Advantages
Instagram	Instagram features many young members and a significant number of Generation Z users.	Instagram posts are composed of photographs or videos that are accompanied by an explanatory description that appears in the newsfeed of followers (Aktan, 2018). Influencers may use posts and stories to place your products in a visually appealing manner, as well as to tell a narrative or give a coupon code in the caption of the post. Interacting images that portray a “specific moment” via a clip or a succession of photographs, Instagram Stories are becoming more popular. As opposed to Posts, Stories may also contain a link by using the “Swipe Up” function (Lee et al., 2020).

YouTube	YouTube is used by a diverse spectrum of individuals, mostly those between the ages of 18 and 34.	YouTube is known for its long-form video file, which allows influencers to share their thoughts on a funded engagement, explain how well a product performs, or effectively integrate a brand into their plot in order to increase acknowledgement. YouTube also allowed developers to include links in their explanation of the video, making it a useful platform for transformation marketing advertisements.
Facebook	With more than 2.4 billion members, Facebook has the greatest reach of any social media platform. Because of its large size of the audience, Facebook can reach virtually all age categories, while youthful viewers (including such Generation Z) are starting to migrate away from the site in favour of other social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, or Twitch.	The social media network Facebook is used by many significant influencers as a secondary platform instead of their main platform. Even so, it may be a beneficial medium for magnifying an influencer's marketing if done correctly. In comparison to conventional videos, Facebook Live videos are viewed three times longer (F. Hong et al., 2014) and they may be utilized by key influencers to contact their audience in a direct, unfiltered manner.
Blogs	A somewhat older population of 25-49 years has accessibility to blogs, which is the most common group.	Blogs offer more in-depth, dramatic, and lengthy storytelling than traditional media. When marketing items and administrations that need in-depth description (for instance, a lengthy evaluation of a high-ticket item such as a mattress), blogs are an excellent avenue to use. They may also be used to provide additional context regarding distinctive parts of your brand's goal. Creating successful sponsored blog articles may also result in a gradual increase in organic search traffic (Trammell et al., 2005).

Source: Author

Statistical Data for Influencer Marketing

The popularity of influencer marketing has only risen, which means that a great deal of study has been done, resulting in some fascinating figures. Let us look at some of the more eye-opening findings from these research projects presented below in table 3.

Table 3: Statistics related to “Influencer marketing”

1	70% of Teens Trust Influencers More than Traditional Celebrities	Although it is exceedingly tough for companies to achieve the same degree of trust as influencers do, with the help of influencer marketing, that trust might be passed on to the company. So even though 4 among 10 Younger followers believe their favourite influencer knows them better than their own friends. Influencer marketing has the additional benefit of allowing firms to avoid wasting money on self-promotion rather than rely on influencers to speak on their own and convey the message they want the audience to know and believe (Pittman et al., 2021).
2	Influencer marketing assists brands in acquiring more loyal consumers.	Building connections with influencers that relate to your business and developing initiatives that relate to an influencer’s followers’ beliefs have become much more crucial than ever before, especially in the digital age. Furthermore, 51 percent of marketers believe that influencer marketing can help them attract more profitable consumers.
3	Influencer marketing is expected to see a rise in spending by top brands.	Influencer marketing is becoming increasingly popular as even more companies and marketers understand the great outcomes it can create. Due to this effect, marketers are aiming to boost their expenditure in the next twelve months, with most choosing to work with micro-influencers. Approximately 71 percent of marketers intend to grow their expenditure in the next 12 months. The amount of money spent on advertising is rising, not just to help increase brand recognition, reach more customers, and promote brand support, but it is also quick to become a main platform, with many marketers adopting campaign KPIs to assess success (Coll, 2019).
4	By 2022, the influencer marketing sector is projected to generate \$13.8 billion in revenue.	During the last 2 years, the influencer marketing business has seen a tremendous increase in its growth. After just \$1.7 billion in 2016, the business is expected to rise to \$13.8 billion by 2022, as it experiences increased growth becoming a highly successful marketplace, according to the latest estimates. Given the increase in popularity, marketers will need to refine their influencer marketing strategies in terms of how programs are monitored, develop analytics to scalable programs, and consider how to handle partnerships among brands and influencers.
5	Print marketing has been overtaken by social media marketing.	This implies that companies are going through a period of transformation in terms of how they allocate their marketing dollars. Influencer marketing is replacing unproductive and costly ad buys, like as many more seen in magazines & newspapers, as the most effective marketing strategy. The return on the investment in social media marketing is currently outperforming that of any other conventional channel, by a significant margin.

<p>6</p>	<p>Instagram is now the most popular social media network in the world.</p>	<p>Among the most important social media platforms, Instagram is among the most popular, with around 2.5 billion monthly active users throughout the entire globe. The site is responsible for influencing 89 percent of all shopping choices. The company is being challenged by other social media platforms, but Instagram remains competitive, particularly given its control of WhatsApp and Facebook. As a result, it is critical to be engaged on Facebook and communicate with influencers in order to grow your Instagram following (Stuart, 2020).</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Customers have already been affected by social media or blogs when shopping in a shop, as per 60 percent of customers.</p>	<p>The concept of comparative purchasing is altered as a result of this. As per study, just 3% of customers would consider purchasing a product in-store if it was sold by celebrities, compared to 60% who would consider purchasing a product if it was marketed by an influencer. The fact that more than half of buyers examine blogs & social networking on their smartphones intention to buy highlights the necessity of conveniently available data and postings (on social networking sites & blogs) to expose a product’s image.</p>

Source: Author

Conclusion

In recent years, with the fast-increasing popularity of social media & word-of-mouth advertising, influencer marketing has grown increasingly popular among businesses. By thoroughly knowing exactly what influencer marketing is, how it functions, and the benefits it provides, it will give a full understanding of one of the most popular marketing tactics used today and in the foreseeable future. The companies may acquire new consumers, increase brand awareness, and increase conversions by partnering with influencers, who provide them with daily engaging material and a limitless amount of spreading potential from their followers. It is possible to take social media marketing efforts to a whole new level by identifying the relevant influencers and developing an effective influencer marketing strategy. This is especially true for start-ups that have been struggling to get traction. Understanding how soon influencer marketing may help to achieve the digital goals and then using that information to other efforts will result in greater results. The use of influencer marketing may generate more revenue than its expenses, so long as the companies recognize its value and engage with the appropriate influencers as part of a comprehensive digital marketing plan.

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THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN DIGITALIZING ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS

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Abstract

The challenges and opportunities presented by digital transformation in accounting were the primary focus of this research. The implementation of digital technology into the accounting process ought to result in accurate financial accounts. Before it can generate compliant financial reports, the system needs to be able to satisfy certain criteria. Information of a superior caliber might be obtained from external sources. Research data may be obtained from a variety of sources. The following are examples of secondary sources: books, journals, the Internet, newspapers, and reports. According to this research, digitization has altered the way accountants think and carry out their work. The majority of accountants are familiar with both the benefits and drawbacks of digitalization. Usability, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness are at the forefront of developers' minds while creating software for digital accounting. Certain research has suggested that a comparison of digital and manual accounting systems has been suggested as a possible solution. The effectiveness of accounting software and its widespread use are both contingent on the user's level of expertise. The collection of one-of-a-kind data is not only pricey but also time-consuming and requires a COVID-19. Understanding and utilization of accounting software were both improved as a result of the study. This study takes the viewpoint of accountants to investigate the positives and negatives associated with the use of digital technology in accounting. It demonstrates the limitations and viewpoints of accountants. The findings of this study suggest that accountants who make use of digital accounting software may have a better understanding of both theory and practice. More topics are required for more advanced study. The processes of accounting in the information age are identified in this paper.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Accountant, Manual Accounting, Book-keeping, Digitalization of Accounting.

Introduction

The transition to digital accounting involves the creation of data, as well as its presentation and transfer. In spite of widespread opinion, it is not a substitute for accountants or for practice. It is beneficial to accountants' overall productivity. The technology used in finance has progressed. It is possible that software that simplifies data collecting and processing will one day take the position of accountants. This has made it easier for proprietors of businesses and accountants to review the data and report on it. Businesses are better able to concentrate on important tasks and issues, like managing their finances, when there are fewer things to distract them. Journals, ledgers, and sometimes even additional records are not always necessary in contemporary accounting. An innovation in accounting methodology that bridges the gap between conventional and modern practices. The modern method of accounting is trustworthy. In recent years, digitization and upgrades have been major drivers of growth in the accounting software market. Change is inevitable in business, just as it is in life. A wide range of sectors are being disrupted by technology. For businesses that are looking to the future, consistent accounting involves more than just bookkeeping and payroll. Accountants now have more authority thanks to digitalization, automation, and analytics. Accountants have the ability to expose unethical business practices, poor audits, inappropriate use of public money, and questionable actions conducted by both businesses and governments. They have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of everyone involved, including the general public, clients, businesses, and the government. It gives an honest and unbiased picture of how a firm is doing financially.

Background of the Research

Before the widespread use of computers, the majority of businesses kept their books manually. Every banking transaction is required to be entered by hand into columnar sheets. There were several instances of manual computation. The practice of accounting has evolved in response to developments in technology and digitalization. Accounting used to be done manually, but now it's all done automatically thanks to software. The ability to focus on growing their businesses is facilitated by automation for business owners and accountants. In 2010, numerous top executives at major corporations said that accountants were obsolete. They are concerned that advances in technology, particularly digitization, may

eventually render the practice of accounting obsolete. Instead of trying to eliminate the COVID-19 outbreak, accountants and other professionals will need to find ways to adapt to it. The advent of digital technology has completely altered the playing fields. In order for businesses to remain competitive, they need to make use of the huge volumes of data at their disposal. The move into digital accounting will be seen as an opportunity by businesses that are prepared to implement the change. Because of COVID-19, millions of us have been forced to conduct our daily lives online, including participating in virtual meetings and maintaining online relationships with family and friends. In order to promote concord and reduce feelings of insecurity, local peace-builders make use of social media, statistics, and other technology. The majority of companies are transitioning to digital bookkeeping. Business and Peace is an example of a worldwide conversation that has been going on for a long time and a policy that addresses the digitalization of accounting because it gives timely financial reporting to stakeholders.

Literature Review

Literature Reviews illustrate what's been done and what needs to be done. Digitalization in accounting risks and opportunities were examined in order to prove this. The following are some notable studies:

According to the findings of Saed's (2020) investigation, the topic comprises two important facets: accounting maturity and digital transformation preparation. This will become possible as a result of the elimination of accounting work and errors. According to the findings of Parlak (2020), the accounting profession and its procedures have been impacted by digital technology. Because of this, memorization, classification, summarization, analysis, and interpretation of financial statements, as well as the design and maintenance of systems, are all impacted. In order to adjust to the change, experts in accounting need to employ the systems that are already incorporated into their software. Demiroz and Heupel (2017) discovered that organizations do not have adequate awareness of the benefits of digital transformation. Several of these institutions are still in the first phases of digitalization since they must first overcome internal obstacles. According to Thipwiwatpotjana (2021), the success of digital transformation is dependent on senior executives, a company plan, an organization culture, access to alternative resources, and assistance. Additionally, the success of digital transformation is dependent on senior executives. According to Nguyen

et al. (2021), the implementation of digitalization methods will make it possible for managers to find new consumers, increase product quality, and strengthen the organization's ability to compete. According to the findings of Phornlaphatrachakorn and NaKalasindhu (2021), digitalizing accounting has the potential to enhance accounting information and financial reporting, which ultimately boosts the effectiveness of strategic choices. His research, which will be published in 2020, will focus on the performance of accounting organizations and their digital transformation. This review will focus on both strategic and operational aspects.

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand and appreciate the significance of the concept of digitalizing accounting..
2. To investigate potential risks associated with the digitization of accounting.
3. In order to ascertain whether or if there is potential for the digitalization of accounting.
4. To provide insightful recommendations for next research endeavours

Research Methodology

The pros and cons of switching to digital accounting systems are outlined with the use of secondary data. For the purpose of this study, a variety of secondary sources, including but not limited to books and magazines, the internet, and newspapers such as periodicals and government publications were studied.

Concept of Digitalization of Accounting System

The digital transmission of financial data is made possible by the digitalization of accounting. Tax cuts were the desired end result. Integration of systems, reporting in real time, and digitization of records all work together to make data accessible. Accounting "information on demand" is provided through the use of mobile devices, applications, and social media. New breakthroughs in technology make it possible for financial experts to spend so much time providing advice and formulating strategies. Bookkeeping, productivity, and the accuracy of data are all improved as a result. The availability of data in a timely manner

appeals to customers, workers, and other stakeholders. According to the Enterprise Research Centre, the use of digital accounting software led to an 11.8 percent increase in employee sales over a period of three years (ERC). *“During COVID-19, seventy percent of small and medium-sized enterprises digitised their accounting”* according to information provided by the ERC. The time spent entering data is reduced when accounting is digitalized. When the system syncs, accounting software sorts transactions into categories and creates accounts for them. Digitalization of accounting facilitates data retrieval. The use of accounting software is not a substitute for the need for business owners to hire an accountant. Technology has brought about shifts in accounting practices. The functionality is improved with each new expansion. The practice of accounting has been completely transformed by technology. Accounting software that is converted to digital format protects financial data.

Threats for Digitalization of Accounting System

Rather than relying solely on the most up-to-date software, hardware, and organisational structures, businesses could consider digitalizing their accounting processes for a novel and original approach to completing an essential business activity. Before implementing digital accounting, businesses need to consider the reactions of their staff members as well as how the change would impact their costs, goals, and security.

1. It will be expensive to make the transition to digital accounting. An upgrade is necessary for every new version of the application.
2. Concerns are growing that the rise of computer technology will result in an increase in the rate of unemployment.
3. The advent of digital accounting needs new employees to go through training whenever the software is updated, which adds to the overall expenditures.
4. According to research conducted by SonicWall, the number of global ransomware attacks increased by 62 percent between 2019 and 2020. During the height of the outbreak, cybercriminals took advantage of the recent transition to digital working conditions, which had not been prepared.

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5. A lack of competence is a roadblock for the digital transformation activities of organisations. According to a survey conducted by CaseWare in 2020 among professionals working in finance and accounting, 62 percent of respondents stated that their industry was facing a significant skills gap, which is an increase from the 51 percent who said the same thing in 2016.
 6. There is a possibility that an error in the system will result in the completion of the task taking longer than expected.
 7. Digitalization of accounting delivers precise data, but it can't identify mistakes or fraud as it lacks judgement.
 8. It is possible for viruses and unauthorised users to access the application, which might result in the original documents being changed.
 9. Everyone who has a stake in the outcome of the digital transformation needs to get behind it for it to be successful. Therefore, leadership needs to come up with a strategy to circumvent resistance from employees.

Opportunities in Digitalization of Accounting System

There may be a reduced requirement for manual operations as a result of the digitization of accounting, which may assist speed up processes and produce financial status of your firm. It is possible that this may result in various chances for the efficient running of a firm:

1. The future of accountants is brighter if they keep up with the times. The accounting profession is undergoing a cultural transition, as evidenced by a skills gap between what accountants perform and what educational institutions teach. Non-automatable abilities are required for accountants to compete (and fend off the robots).
2. It helps to verify the financial health of a business at any time and from any location. Accessing information no longer necessitates being in the workplace or having a laptop on hand for professionals. It is possible for you and your staff to access cloud-based accounting software from anywhere.

3. Conventional accounting techniques are less prone to errors than computerised accounting. Your company's finances are better understood and tax returns are completed more accurately thanks to this software. Compared to the old-fashioned methods of accounting, it is more accurate and error-free.
4. Machines are far superior to humans in many areas, and even the best humans can't compete. Computers are better at recognising, recording, categorising, and summarising information, according to Richardson. When it comes to analysing and reporting on data, accountants are the best in the business. When accountants combine their traditional skills with cutting-edge technology, they are at their most powerful.
5. Additionally, it may help streamline business processes and meet tax and reporting needs. This, together with improved decision-making, helps to increase productivity and efficiency. Using a digital accounting system, many accounting tasks may be automated.
6. Tracking fraudulent company activities and transactions has become much simpler because of the widespread adoption of digital accounting systems. Changing from paper to electronic record keeping might result in time and money savings for accounting companies.
7. A person who specialises in finance may look at real-time data and make suggestions on how to make it better. It keeps info updated. It automates actions that are time-consuming yet vital while providing you with comprehensive access to the company's data.
8. The most effective strategy is to digitalize accounting processes since this facilitates the automation of payment requests and invoices.
9. Today's profession differs from the 1800s, and more changes are ahead. If accountants and universities can't keep up with change, the profession's future is at risk. Richardson says accounting educators control the profession's destiny. "Accountants must revamp the curriculum to produce analytics-minded graduates."

By teaching accounting students data analytics, they'll be able to help managers and stakeholders make informed decisions.

10. Because of this, companies have more time on their hands, which enables them to seek out new clients and ultimately increase their turnover.
11. It is possible to readily restore the data in the event that it is lost due to whatever occurrence since the data is saved in soft copies. This makes it feasible for the data to be easily recovered.
12. In the end, it will be a rewarding and exciting job. Improving your computer abilities is a piece of cake. It's just as crucial to learn digital skills while working as it is to learn them on the job. Digital skills courses and training are available at many colleges, and there are also free online courses on accounting, such as cloud computing, that are available.

Findings

The following is a rundown of the most significant findings from the study:

1. Within the years, the field of accounting will experience significant development. The maintenance of white water demands the flexibility of the business.
2. As a result of the digital revolution of accounting, it will become increasingly common for businesses to relocate their operations to countries with lower overall labour costs.
3. The rise of digital technology is expected to bring about significant shifts in accounting and auditing practices in the not-too-distant future. When machines take over labor-intensive activities, experts may shift their attention to providing customers with more value while simultaneously cutting both the time and money spent on their services.
4. It will be feasible to automate the processes involved in auditing, and improved technology that can detect risk and fraud will be readily available. In the not too distant future, auditors will be able to focus on output analysis rather than spending hours

obtaining data from financial accounts, which will allow them to save a significant amount of time.

5. In the not too distant future, auditors and accountants will be required to make use of cutting-edge analytics and automation technology in order to carry out analyses, produce reports, and offer the right outputs.
6. It's possible that accountants struggle with the volume of data. For accountants to make sound choices about a company's finances, they require access to relevant data. This work demands excellent communication skills, both vocal and written. Even though computers have taken over, information is still secured.
7. The automation of routine accounting operations enables accountants and auditors to concentrate on far more specialised tasks, which benefits both parties. Accounting tasks currently performed by humans, such as billing for in-house services and calculating travel expenditures, will someday be automated by computers.
8. A broad variety of financial data will be connected to one another through the use of advanced information systems in order to guarantee the confidentiality of the data.

Recommendation and Suggestions

This is done in order to assist accounting in attaining a higher level of accomplishment and company harmony than it does at the present time. The following are, in accordance with the findings of the study, the critical concepts for preserving business relevance:

1. Those who work in accounting need to familiarise themselves with the dizzying number of digital choices that customers have so that they may point them in the proper path and maintain their status as the industry's most trustworthy business consultants.
2. In order to properly carry out their responsibilities and conduct audits, accountants need to have a solid working understanding of contemporary accounting software, in addition to various accounting models and business models. It is imperative that auditors engage in ongoing training and strive for professional advancement in this field.

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3. As the state of technology continues to advance, it is imperative that accountants acquire the skills necessary to make optimal use of digital accounting systems.
 4. In order to advance, accounting firms need to evaluate each digital marketing strategy that they now provide to clients. This might be avoided by companies who are thoughtful and diligent.
 5. It is important for businesses to keep up with the latest relevant technological advancements and to incorporate new technologies.
 6. As their professions grow increasingly reliant on computers, they need to be more open-minded regarding emerging technology. In order to be a trusted business adviser, an accountant has to be able to communicate effectively with their customers and find ways to cut costs using technology.

Conclusion

The transfer of accounting data digitally increases financial reporting, as well as usability and the capacity to make strategic decisions. The quality of financial reporting has an impact on both the usefulness of accounting and strategic decision-making. Integrity of financial reporting and accessibility of financial reporting help in digitalizing accounting-strategic decision effectiveness linkages, which enhances workplace harmony. The advent of digitization presents accountants with opportunities rather than challenges. Bringing accounting into the digital age improves both its accuracy and its efficiency. Time is conserved thanks to the accountant. In addition to this, we place an emphasis on the training of accounting experts. Fear about digitization is widespread among accountants. The idea of digital accounting has to be developed. In next studies, the use of digital transformation as a neutral antecedent variable might potentially yield better levels of understanding. It may assist entrepreneurs manage resources and talents. For the sake of your company's expansion, make the switch from manual to digital accounting. The digital revolution in accounting encompasses more than just the automation of accounting jobs. The information obtained from accounting helps in making strategic decisions, improving performance, and reducing time-consuming operations. The advancement of technology has made this conceivable. The motto of the modern world is "change or perish," and if the accounting profession does not begin to accept change, it will cease to exist.

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PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS IN INDIA: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract

This study aims to gain insight on various issues related to the public sector banking industry in India. For this study, forty research papers and studies related to market structure, conduct and performance of public sector banks in India have been examined. These studies made important contributions to the comparative analysis of profitability of public sector banking industry with respect to private and foreign banks, but none of them provided a rigorous analysis of the impact of reforms on the profitability of public sector banking industry over time. Issues explored in these studies are related to interest and non-interest income, bank size, technology issues, and formation of non-performing assets. In many studies, DEA, stochastic frontier analysis, ratio, regression, graphs and charts, production function have been used. In very few studies, the S-C-P framework has been used

in the banking industry in India. Many of the studies have compared public sector banks with old private, new private and foreign banks. None of these studies have examined public sector banks at bank level. But now questions arise whether with the adaptation of liberal economic policies and market model, other objectives than profit are irrelevant. Secondly, given their own frame of reference, can they be dubbed as good or bad?

Keywords: Banks, Investment decisions, Market structure, Advertising, Investment.

JEL Keywords: G21, G11, L10, M37, E22

1. Introduction

In the development of every field of a study, a stage is reached when it becomes indispensable to take stock of the whole work done in the past. A critical review of literature needs to precede the research work. This helps to focus on the areas which did not receive adequate attention. The literature review must be arranged in terms of a theoretical framework used in the study so that the link between the theoretical framework used in the study and the review of literature becomes clear enough. This leads us to classify the extant literature in the banking industry in three categories relating to structure, conduct and performance because in the present study the Structure-Conduct-Performance paradigm has been used as a theoretical framework. Moreover, there is a large and growing volume of literature of varying quality in the field of Indian banking industry. Therefore, a brief review of this literature and committee recommendations on the banking sector has been made.

The research questions for this article are as follows:

1. How has liberalization affected the public sector banking industry in India?
2. Are there strategic groups within public sector banks in India?
3. How has the entry of private sector banks led to changes in the public sector banking industry?
4. What have been the changes in the market structure of public sector banks in India?
5. Which conduct variables can better measure the behavior of public sector banks?
6. How have market structure and conduct affected performance of public sector banks in India?

The literature review helps to focus on the areas which are not explored enough. The literature review has been arranged in terms of a theoretical framework that will be used in the proposed study so that the link between the theoretical framework used in the study and the review of literature becomes clear enough. This leads us to classify the literature review in the banking industry, in categories relating to structure, conduct and performance. Keeping these research questions in view, the theme of this paper is to lay out the literature that explores the public sector banking industry in detail. For this paper, we have explored forty research papers.

A brief introduction and research questions of this chapter (Section 1.1) is followed by the theoretical framework in section 1.2. Section 1.3 provides the literature review on the structure, conduct and performance of PSBs. Section 1.4 summarizes the research gap and conclusion of this paper is highlighted in section 1.5.

2. Theoretical Framework

Within the broader industrial organisation approach, there are three strands that are used to establish characteristics of an industry. The S-C-P framework (figure 1.) which is the most appropriate to study the banking industry has been used to study the nature of the banking market in terms of market structure, conduct and performance.

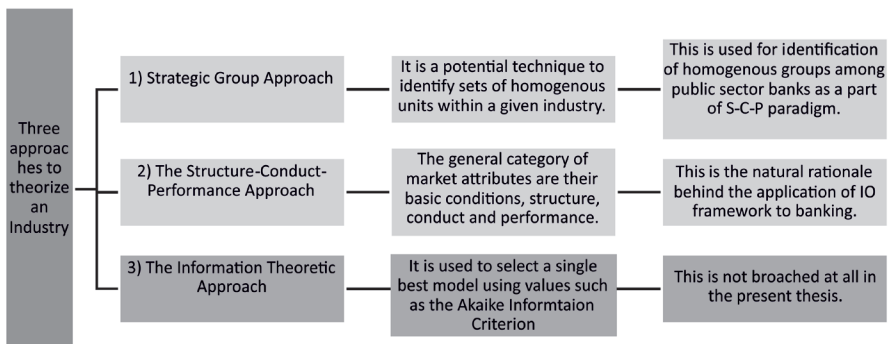


Figure 1: S-C-P Framework

Source: Authors' own compilation

The S-C-P paradigm assumes that there are certain attributes which are given and are referred to as basic conditions. Furthermore, there is a chain of causation that logically determines all the other attributes in a sequence as follows: In the chain, basic conditions are the primary determinants of the market or industry structure. In the next step, the structure of the industry influences the conduct or behavior of the participants in the industry. Conduct, in turn, influences performance finally. The schema of traditional S-C-P paradigm was like the flowchart below (figure 2):



Figure 2: Flowchart of S-C-P paradigm

Source: Authors’ own compilation

3. Literature review

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
A. Literature Review on Structure						
1	(Murthy & Deb, 2014) “Measurement and Determinants of Competition in Private Banking Industry in India during 1992-2002”	To analyse the limitations of concentration as a measure of competition.	1992-2002	Concentration and competition	Three-equation simultaneous equation model is used in the research through Tobit technique.	A fall in concentration ratio is equated with a rise in competition. An analysis of concentration ratio needs to be supplemented by an analysis of changes in the identities of leading firms.
2	(Bajaj, 2008) “Indian Public Sector Banking Industry: 1992-2006- An Impact of Reforms”	The focus was mainly on the impact of deregulation on public sector banks in India.	1992-2006	Assets, deposit, and advances	SCP framework	Share of public sector banks was slowly decreasing over the time because of the entry of new private banks and foreign banks.
3	(Gupta, 2013) “A comparative study of public and private banking industry in India”	It assesses the impact of banking reforms and competition in public and private sectors.	1996-2010	Net profit, operating efficiency, and absolute spread.	Use of Panel data research methodology involving 27 public sector banks and 19 private sector banks over fifteen years.	Competition has emerged in the form of new banks vs. incumbents rather than in the form of public vs. private banks. Operating efficiency and better conduct in terms of asset management, technology, advertisement, and absolute spread are the keys to performance.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
4	(Amel & Rhoades, 1988) "Strategic groups in Banking"	This paper tested the strategic groups hypothesis using cluster analysis.	1978, 1981, and 1984	U.S. Treasury securities; state and local government securities; real estate loans; construction loans; farm loans; residential loans; multifamily nonfarm loans; commercial and industrial (C & I) loans; and loans to individuals	The paper uses Analytical approach and non-hierarchical clustering algorithm.	The results indicate that approximately six strategic groups exist in banking and are stable over time. Implications of the results are (1) intra industry profit differences may be due to strategic groups rather than efficiency differences, (2) markets may generally be defined too broadly, (3) investigations for collusion need to focus on homogeneous groups in an industry rather than the whole industry, and (4) there is no simple strategy choice for banks between retail and wholesale banking.
5	(Hannan, 1991) "Bank commercial loan markets and the role of market structure: Evidence from surveys of commercial lending"	To estimate the relationship between market structure and various aspects of bank conduct and performance as implied by the structure-conduct-performance (S-C-P) paradigm and thereby assess the most commonly tested relationships in this large literature.	1984-1986	Market concentration, maturity of the loan, size of loan, total assets, market population, business failure rate, and average hourly earnings of nonsupervisory manufacturing employees in the market.	Secondary data has been used by the researcher. For evaluating data, coefficient and regression is used.	Greater price rigidity in concentrated markets is offered as a possible reason for the observed differences in the relationship between loan rates and market structure over time.
6	(Heggstad & Rhoades, 1976) "An Analysis of changes in Bank Market Structure"	It tests the market structure-stability relationship in commercial banking.	1966 and 1972	Controllable variables are bank mergers, bank holding company acquisitions, branching, and holding company laws while non-controllable variables are initial market structure, market growth, and size of banks.	Analysis based on 228 markets and over 2,000 firms was conducted to determine whether elements of market structure have a systematic influence on stability.	The greater the level of concentration in a market, the greater is the stability of firms. Thus, the results are generally consistent with expectations.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
B. Literature review on Conduct						
7	(Arasu, Sridevi, Nageswari, & Ramya, 2019) "A Study on Analysis of Non-Performing Assets and its Impact on Profitability"	It investigates the impact of the level of Non-Performing Assets of private and public sector banks on profitability.	2014-2018	Profitability and Non-performing assets	The secondary data is collected for NPAs of 10 banks. The study has used mean, standard deviation, Pearson cross-correlation, and linear regression model.	The trend of Gross & Net NPA and profitability of both public and private sector banks are found significant.
8	(Nuner & Devika, 2019) "A Study on comparative Analysis of Non-Performing Assets in Selected Private Sector Banks in India"	It tries to study the trend of Gross NPA and Net NPA of Axis Bank, Federal Bank, IndusInd Bank only.	2014-2018	GNPA (Gross Non-performing Assets), and NNPA (Net Non-performing Assets)	The paper has used ratio analysis, trend analysis analysing data and Pearson correlation coefficient tool.	On concluding three private sector banks for the comparative is based on the sales report and their market values in the banking sectors.
9	(Kambar, 2019) "A study on the consolidation and merger of public sector banks in India: Issues and challenges"	It attempts to understand mergers and consolidation.	2016-2017	Deposits, Gross Advances, Gross NPAs, and Net Profits/Loss	The study has used secondary data based on descriptive analysis methods.	A steady rise in the NPA's of banks affects not only the banking sector but the country's economy. creating a bad bank remains a politically volatile idea and is difficult to implement.
10	(Kapadia & Madhav, 2019) "NPAs in Indian Scheduled Commercial Banks: Origination and Impact on Economy"	To investigate the trend in NPAs.	2006-2017	GNPA (Gross Non-performing Assets), and NNPA (Net Non-performing Assets)	The study is descriptive in nature.	The prudential norms laid down by the RBI must equip the banking system to reduce if not completely to keep away from the problem of NPAs.
11	(Kumari, Singh, & Sharma, 2017) "Impact of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) on Financial Performance of Indian Banking Sector"	It examines the relationship between NPAs and financial performance (ROA) of selected public and private sector banks.	2013-2017	Return on assets, Gross Non-performing Assets, Net Non-performing Assets, and Age	It is an empirical study regression model.	The study found a significant and positive impact of GNPA and NNPA on financial performance (ROA) of public sector banks.
12	(Raj, Jain, Bansal, & Verma, 2018) "Non-Performing Assets: A Comparative Study of SBI & ICICI Bank from 2014-2017"	To study whether there exists any linear relationship between Net profit and Net NPA in case of both the banks.	2014-2017	NPAs (Non-performing Assets), and Net Profit	The data is collected using secondary data analysis and the techniques used involve correlation analysis using SPSS.	On comparing the two banks based on the effect on its profitability, SBI has higher NPAs as compared to ICICI bank because of its public nature.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
13	(Rayudu & Rajesh, 2018) "A Study on Non-Performing Assets in Selected Public and Private Sector Banks in India"	To study the status of Non-Performing Assets in selected public and Private sector banks.	2015-2017	NPAs (Non-performing Assets)	This study used techniques of mean, standard deviation, and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA).	The government, Reserve Bank of India and management of banks should make more reforms in the financial sector especially in banking to control and avoid the bad loans and advances.
14	(Mishra & Pawaskar, 2017) "A Study of Non-Performing Assets and its Impact on Banking Sector"	The present study tries to understand the NPAs sector wise and the recovery through various channels.	2011-2016	NPAs (Non-performing Assets)	Financial Ratios	The conclusion of the study is that the Bank needs to have a better credit appraisal system so as to prevent NPAs from occurring.
15	(Alagarsamy, 2017) "Performance of non-performing assets (NPA) in state bank of India"	It analyses the performance of NPA in state banks of India.	2012-2017	GNPA (Gross Non-performing Assets)	Trend Analysis	The researcher concluded that the government and bankers have to make a serious effort to decrease the NPA otherwise it thoroughly damages the bank profit of the banker and also is not good for the developing countries.
16	(Mittal & Suneja, 2017) "The problem of Rising Non-performing Assets in Banking Sector in India: Comparative analysis of public and private sector banks"	It analyses the impact of NPAs on banks' performance and the reasons for mounting NPAs in banks in India.	2005-2016	GNPA (Gross Non-performing Assets), and NNPA (Net Non-performing Assets)	It is an analytical and descriptive study that analyses data using bar graphs and figures.	The government is taking many steps to reduce the problem of NPAs, but banks should also have to be more proactive to adopt a structured NPAs policy to prevent the non-performing assets and should follow stringent measures for its recovery.
17	(Bag & Islam, 2017) "Non-performing assets a biggest challenge in banking sector- a comparative study between India and Bangladesh banking sector"	To understand the concept of non performing assets of Indian Bank as well as Bangladesh Bank.	2011-2016	ROE, ROA, and NPA (Non-performing Asset)	The regression analysis has been performed to estimate the effect of NPAs on the profitability of banks in India.	The Conclusion of study is that the growth of NPAs in Indian public sector banks as well as Bangladesh State owned banks are dramatically upward rising while private sector banks in both the countries are more conscious about the NPAs as well as total advances.
18	(Laveena & Guleria, 2016) "A Study of Non-Performing Assets of Public Sector Banks in India"	This study tries to compare performance of public sector banks with private sector banks in India.	2011-2015	Net profit and ROA (Return on Asset)	This paper has computed NNPA to know the risk level of banks.	The NPA level of the banking system is still at a high level compared to the international standards.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
19	(Singh, 2016) "A Study of Non-Performing Assets of Commercial Banks and it's recovery in India"	It studies the status of Non-Performing Assets of Indian Scheduled Commercial Banks in India.	2000-2014	GNPA (Gross Non-performing Assets) and NNPA (Net Non-performing Assets)	The paper has used charts and graphs to represent data.	The conclusion of the study shows that the extent of NPA is comparatively very high in public sector banks as compared to the foreign banks.
20	(Durafe & Singh, 2016) "Cyclical Behavior of Public and Private Sector Banks: A Comparative Study of Non-performing Assets"	To study the cyclical behavior of public sector bank groups and private sector bank groups in India with a focus on non-performing assets.	1999-2013	NPA (Non-performing Asset), credit inclination, Loan maturity, unsecured lending, cost condition, GDP, and Inflation adjusted GDP deflator.	The study has used secondary data and the methods of Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis for the analysis of data.	The findings indicate that when GDP increases, NPA decreases and when GDP decreases NPAs increase.
21	(Garg, 2016) "A study on management of non-performing assets in Context of Indian banking system"	To study the preventive mechanism for NPA and Compromise settlement scheme.	2010-2015	NPA (Non-performing Asset), profitability, liquidity, and credit loss.	The research has used a combined approach that involves both the features of analytical and descriptive research designs.	The conclusion of the study based on the problem of NPA has arisen due to the basic objective behind lending of public sector banks that is social welfare.
22	(Shiralashetti & Poojari, 2016) "Non-Performing Assets: A Case Study of Syndicate Bank"	To analyse the gross, net NPA, and sector wise NPA.	2011-2015	Net profit and Gross NPA	The data has been analysed by using percentage, t-test, regression and one way ANOVA.	Banks must take more care in avoiding any account becoming NPA by taking proper preventive measures in an efficient manner.
23	(Bandyopadhyay, 2016) "An Analysis of the Non-Performing Assets of some selected public sector banks in India."	To examine the overall trends of NPAs and to explore the dynamicity of NPA as the variable under study over time in selected PSBs.	1996-2012	NPA (Non-performing Asset) and strategic banking variables.	The study has used an empirical approach for analysing the movement of NPA and its impact on PSBs based on Secondary data.	The study has clearly demonstrated that NPA in PSBs are on the rise for the last three years and is expected to rise still further in next three years.
24	(Rao & Patel, 2015) "A study on non-performing assets management with reference to public sector banks, private sector banks and foreign banks in India"	To analyse and interpret various NPA related ratios for aggregates of Public Sector, Private Sector and Foreign Banks in India.	2009-2013	NPA (Non-performing Asset) and GNPA (Gross Non-performing Asset),	The paper has used Descriptive research design that includes tools like ratio analysis, application of least square method, and use of SPSS. The paper has used secondary data for analysis of NPA.	The conclusion of the study in case of ANOVA test is found, Ratio of Gross NPA to Gross Advances for Public sector, Private Sector and Foreign Banks does not have significant difference from 2009 to 2013, and it does not reject our null hypothesis.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
25	(Joseph & Prakash, 2014) "A Study on Analysing the Trend of NPA Level in Private Sector Banks and Public Sector Banks"	To identify the trend in NPA level.	2008-2013	NPA (Non-performing Asset), Standard advances, Sub-standard advances, and doubtful advances	Ratios	The conclusion of the study is that compared to private sector banks, public sector banks are more in the NPA level.
26	(Ibrahim & Thangavelu, 2014) "A Study on the Composition of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of Scheduled Commercial Banks in India"	To review the trend of Gross NPAs of public, private, and foreign banks of Scheduled Commercial Banks in India.	2007-2012	NPA (Non-performing Asset) and loss assets	The paper has collected secondary data for analysis and used regression analysis for finding conclusions.	The conclusion of the study is that the RBI and the Government of India have taken innumerable steps to reduce the volume of NPAs of the Scheduled Commercial Banks.
27	(Das & Dutta, 2014) "A Study on NPA of Public Sector Banks in India"	The objective of the study is to find out whether there is any difference in the NPA occurrence between the various banks during the period of the study.	2008-2013	Net non-performing assets	For the purpose of this study, secondary data has been used and the researcher has used analysis of variance (ANOVA) one way.	The study finds out that there is no significant difference between the means of NPA of the banks at five percent level of significance.
28	Siraj K.K.(2014) "A Study on Non-Performing Assets Of Public Sector Banks In India With Special Reference To State Bank Of Travancore"	To analyse the trend of the NPA in Public Sector Banks in India vis-à-vis State Bank of Travancore.	2001-2012	Variables used are total advances, capital, reserve and surplus, deposits, advances-sector wise, investments, total assets, Interest expended, operating expenses, provision and contingencies, total expenses, and profit or loss.	The study is both a descriptive and analytical study. It has used both primary and secondary data. The statistical tools used include averages, ratio, Exponential Growth Rate, Correlation-Regression, ANOVA, F-test, t-test, Sobel test, Welch statistics.	Significant differences are observed between SBI and SB of Travancore.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
C. Literature review on Performance						
29	(Sarkar & Sarkar, 1998) "Does Ownership Always Matter? -Evidence from the Indian Banking Industry"	To investigate the effect of ownership by examining public and private sector banks.	1994-95	Explained variables includes ROA (Net profit/assets), OPR (Operating profit/assets), NIM (Net interest margin/assets), OCR (Operating cost/assets), and SER (Staff expense/asset) while explanatory variables are assets, investment in Govt securities/assets, Noninterest income/assets, rural branches/urban branches, and priority sector advances/assets.	Mean and standard Deviation	It is found privatization is likely to be an effective policy for improving the performance of ailing public-sector enterprises in emerging economies like India.
30	(Armijo & Jha, 1997) "Centre-State relations in India and Brazil: Privatisation of Electricity and Banking"	This paper examined the political factors involved in privatisation of the banking and electricity sectors of two nations: India and Brazil.	The period of study relates to the early 1990s	Center-state relations and the gradual process of national economic liberalization	It is a descriptive paper and uses secondary data.	They arrived at the conclusion that the leftist ideology and beliefs of particular politicians may be a factor in shaping politicians' attitudes toward privatization, but it is unlikely to be the most crucial one.
31	(Mohan, Privatisation: Theory and Evidence, 2001) "Privatisation: Theory and Evidence"	It attempts with the help of survey theoretical and empirical work on privatization to induce a measure of caution in statements about the likely efficacy of privatization.	1961-1990	Sales assets, and number of employees	The paper has used four performance measures that include return on assets, return on sales, net income, and return on equity.	The paper concludes that privatisation is seen to work best when allied with competition or deregulation.
32	(Subramanian, 2014) "Financial Performance Analysis - A Case Study"	It makes an attempt to evaluate the financial performance of private sector banks in India and rank them based on each variable	2003-2006	Business per employee, return on assets, profit per employee, capital adequacy, credit deposit ratio, operating profit and percentage of net non-performing asset to net advance	Regression	The paper concludes that the Indian banking system has undergone a drastic change since liberalization. The new generation private sector banks have best used the technology; utilize the manpower in an effective manner

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
33	(Prasad & Ghosh, 2005) "Competition in Indian Banking"	This paper evaluated the validity of the claim that competition in the Indian banking sector has increased since the inception of the financial sector reforms in 1992.	1996-2004	Number of banks, Total assets, total deposits, and total credits	The research paper has used the PANZAR-ROSE test for assessing competition in banking.	The empirical evidence reveals that the Indian banking system operates under competitive conditions and earns revenues as if under monopolistic competition.
34	(Murthy & Deb, 2008) "Operationalizing and Measuring Competition: Determinants of Competition in Private Banking Industry in India"	This paper provides a theoretical framework of competition that can be applied to banking also. Discussing the evolution of competition, the study proves how ordinary Structure Conduct and Performance Approach (S-C-P paradigm) is unsuitable in judging market dynamics.	1995-2002	It provides a methodology to arrive at a market form in banking industry through an analysis of all the aspects of basic conditions, structure, conduct and performance	Correlation coefficient, chi square test, and simultaneous equation.	This paper argues that sustained growth and dynamics of industry is not price led. Growth arises out of changing basic conditions and dynamics arises out of sharing the new market created by basic conditions
35	(Tabi & Joseph, 2006) "Profitability Performance in the Banking Industry of CFA Countries: _ The Case of Commercial Banks in Cameroon"	This study tested empirically the Structure - Performance (S- P) hypothesis within the context of the Cameroonian Commercial banking system.	1987-1999	Independent variable includes Index of market concentration, Management of bank's capital, Bank's loan portfolio, Total advances to total deposit, Bank size, Expense control, and period of study while dependent variables include ROA, ROC, and ROE	Three accounting measures of bank's performance were utilised: return on capital (ROC), return on assets (ROA) and return on equity (ROE).	The results indicate that the market concentration power is of paramount importance in the determination of bank profitability the positive effects of bank's size, time and savings deposits to total deposit ratio and the 1994 CFA devaluation cannot be emphasized

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
36	(Neuberger, 1998) "Direct Banking - A Demand Pull and Technology Push Innovation"	His paper reviews the literature by focusing on the links between theoretical and empirical research.	1994-1995	Market share is the independent variable while price data as dependent variable	The paper has used SCP (Structure-conduct-performance) Paradigm for conducting theoretical and empirical research.	The results are to alternative assumptions about the type of competition or structural variables affected by deregulations and technological progress. He concludes, more research needs to be done which differentiates between different product and geographic markets and accounts for banking size, portfolio structure and regulatory settings.
37	(Srinivas & Kumar, 2010) "Is Structure-Conduct-Performance a case of structure-performance? Structural Equation Modelling of Indian industries"	This paper conceptualised a theoretical model Based on Bain's work for the Structure-Conduct-Performance (S-C-P) paradigm.	1991-2005	Structure variable is HHI and entry barrier; conduct variables are advertisement as proportion of sales, research and development Expenditure, debt-equity ratio, and distribution expenditure; and performance variable include profit after tax	The paper has collected data for 124 industries and the technique of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).	The results indicate that direct and total effects of industry structure on firms' profitability are positive and significant while the indirect effects are insignificant. It is observed that in the presence of entry barriers, industry concentration has no significant effect on firms' profitability.
38	(Mohan, 2005) "Bank Consolidation Issues and Evidence"	It states that India's public sector banks lack a compelling rationale for consolidation.	1996-2004	Assets, deposits, profits, non-interest income, and operating costs	The study is a descriptive study and has used secondary data.	The performance of PSBs, measured by the appreciation in stock values, has also been very impressive. Also, greater size is the key to further performance improvement.

S. No.	Name of the Author & Title of the study	Objective of the study	Time Period of the study	Variables of the Study	Data & Methodology	Main Findings
39	(Kaur & Kaur, 2010) "Impact of Mergers on the Cost Efficiency of Indian Commercial Banks"	It examined the cost efficiency of Indian commercial banks	1990-2008	Input variables are labor, loanable funds, and physical capital while the output variables are non-interest income, net-interest income, and advances	The paper has analysed the cost efficiency of Indian commercial banks by using a non-parametric Data Envelopment Analysis Technique.	This study suggests that over the entire study period average cost efficiency of public sector banks was found to be 73.4 and for private sector banks is 76.3 percent. The findings of this paper suggest that to some extent the merger programme has been successful in the Indian banking sector.
40	(Gupta & Murthy, 2012) "Demise of Development Financial Institutions in India: A Critical Appraisal"	It evaluated the views in favor and in against demise of DFIs in India and concluded that commercial banks are not in a position to fill the gap of long-term financing being taken care of DFIs earlier.	1999-2005	NPA, Profit after tax, Margin, and Capital adequacy ratio	The research paper is a descriptive study and has used secondary data from the bank's annual reports, journals, RBI website.	It has been concluded that Development finance institutions were capable of bearing the risk of undertaking huge projects.

4. Research Gap

These studies made important contributions to the comparative analysis of profitability of public sector banking industry with respect to private and foreign banks, but none of them provided a rigorous analysis of the impact of reforms on the profitability of public sector banking industry over time. Issues explored in these studies are related to interest and non-interest income, bank size, technology issues, and formation of non-performing assets. At times, public sector banks have faced criticism that they are inefficient, uncompetitive, and a burden on exchequer. Many of the studies have compared public sector banks with old private, new private and foreign banks. But now questions arise whether with the adaptation of liberal economic policies and market model, other objectives than profit are irrelevant. Secondly, given their own frame of reference, can they be dubbed as good or bad? These issues are to be taken in the present study to have a deep insight into the functioning of public sector banks and to examine whether there are homogeneous groups among public sector banks.

5. Conclusion

From the discussion of literature on structure, conduct and performance, it broadly follows that the PSBs are facing stiff competition after the

entry of new private and foreign banks. Their share in the market is decreasing slowly and the share of private and foreign banks is increasing. The existing literature looks at concentration ratio in terms of asset, deposit and advances. Market structure needs to be analyzed by taking more variables like deposits plus advances to show barriers to entry, absolute advertisement expenditure as a proxy of selling cost, other income to show product differentiation, and concentration ratio which tells about the nature of the market. There is a strong need to check the presence of strategic groups amongst public sector banks in India because very often it is said that there are no strategic groups. Moreover, the State Bank of India (SBI) is the undisputed leader in the market, but we need to examine whether competitive rivalry has impacted SBI adversely. Also, we must investigate if there is presence of oligopolistic behavior in the market. In case of conduct it can be said that reforms have been successful in affecting change in the conduct of the banks. But banks still need to focus on various conduct variables to compete efficiently. The other conduct variables related to staff, operational expenditure, advertisement expenditure, other fixed assets, non-interest income, term loans to total advances, investment in G-sec etc. need to be examined in case of the public sector banking industry. There are some more general impressions about the public sector banking industry; they don't compete with new private banks which entered the Indian banking industry due to the historic accident which led to implementation of Narasimham Committee report I and II. Very often it is said that these banks are homogeneous in character and that is why they do not compete amongst each other. The extant literature shows that performance and productivity of the public sector banking industry has improved but banks level data needs to be analysed to have in-depth results to see how competitive forces are being unleashed in the industry. Moreover, one needs to check the impact of new policies and variables on profitability of the public sector banking industry because their profitability and efficiency is questioned at times.

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EXPLICATING THE NEXUS BETWEEN TERRORISM AND NARCO-TERRORISM IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA: A CASE OF INDIA AND MYANMAR

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Abstract

South East Asia's importance for India lies in its geo-strategic location which forces India to expand its strategic relations with these countries. For India's interest, it becomes a key player because of its two major worries viz. China's expanding influence over South East Asia and beyond and the threat of a growing belt of drug trafficking and its sponsoring of military activities and cross-border terrorism. The threat of instability caused by these twin forces-drug trafficking and cross-border terrorism, has impeded the growth of democratic institutions and civil society in the region that has larger implications for a democratic country like India with regard to its larger foreign policy. Furthermore, the clandestine activities and business of drug and opium trade in the South East Asia particularly Myanmar and Thailand have opened the doors of new possibilities for the militant groups. In fact, India's potential to neutralize security threats in this region defines its regional security calculus. Militant groups in the region of both South Asia and South-East Asia get financial and physical support from drug business. Needless to say that India and South East Asian countries face common threats of terrorism, extremism and separatism, drug trafficking and trafficking in general. The commonality of interest provides greater opportunity to cooperate more closely in addressing the regional security issues of narco-terrorism and terrorism as the increasing violence and instability in Myanmar are likely to have serious security implications for the region whose possible solutions can be drawn through organizations like BIMSTEC. Hence, this paper underlines the prime importance of a collective approach with regard to security issues as well as in countering transnational crimes for both India and Myanmar in particular and the South East Asian region in general.

Keywords: Transnational Crime, Terrorism, Narco-Terrorism and BIMSTEC.

Introduction

With the passage of time, the concept of security has shifted from traditional to non-traditional and trans-national security threats with widespread effect on the nation-states. The traditional concept of security arguably gives too much emphasis on military power, hence, it has had a narrowed use in recent times. On the other hand, the non-traditional security threats are defined in a much broader sense covering different areas like religious radicalism, drugs and human trafficking, illegal migration, environmental degradation, climate change, arms race, etc. (Singh K.N. 2013). Non-traditional security issues can be defined as non-military threats that threaten either the unity (political and social integrity) of a nation–state or the health of its inhabitants. They, thus, create insecurity not only for a sovereign state but also for the society as a whole. The problem of non-traditional security threats are not limited to any particular country or region, but has spill-over effect into an ever-widening geographical area with increasing consequences for world security as a whole. It is possible due to the global web created by modern communication, transportation and information technologies, and they all involve transnational and non-state actors (Mathew and Shambaugh 1998). In today’s borderless world, it becomes easy to reach each and every corner of the world. Transnational crimes cover offences committed in more than one state. It also takes place in one state but is planned or controlled in another.

Among these non-traditional and transnational security threats, terrorism and the trade in illicit drugs, arguably, carries the largest societal, political, and economic consequences for the whole world. It threatens the fabric of societies through addiction, crime, and disease. It exacerbates corruption in the already weak states, impairing their economic and political functioning. Moreover, through its linkages to insurgency and terrorism, the drug trade is an increasing threat to regional and international security.

Conceptualizing Terrorism

There is no universal definition of terrorism. Defining terrorism is a complex task due to its nature. The fact is that there are different types of terrorist groups pursuing a variety of goals and using different methods. In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly’s resolution 49/60, stated that terrorism includes “criminal acts intended to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or

particular persons for political purposes” and that such acts “are in any circumstances unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other nature that may be invoked to justify them (UNHC for Human Rights).” In 2004, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1566 defined terrorist attacks as ‘criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism’ (UNSC Resolution 1566: 2004). It is commonly understood as the acts of violence and terror that target the common people in the pursuit of their political or ideological aims. To fulfil their target, they recruit volatile young people, train them clandestinely, and provide them weapons illegally.

Defining Narco-Terrorism

The term ‘narco-terrorism’ was first coined by President Belaunde Terry of Peru in 1983 to describe a violent collusion of cocaine traffickers and the Maoist group Shining Path to commit joint attacks destabilizing his government forces (Booty, H. 2012). In common language, it means an act or threat of violence by groups involved in the production, transport or sale of illegal drugs, with the aim of destabilizing the governmental ability to suppress these activities. Narco-terrorism is a combination of two terms viz., ‘narco’ and ‘terrorism’, where ‘narcotic’ means illegal drugs business or ‘terrorism’, i.e., where drug mafias become politically active or political actors begin to fund their way through the control of drugs. Drug trade involves several elements viz. Cocaine, Heroin, Marijuana (Ganja), Methamphetamine, Methylene-Dioxy – Methamphetamine, Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (UNODC: 2018).

Some of the simplest definitions on narco-terrorism are necessary to mention here for better understanding. Boyce (1987) defines narco-terrorism as ‘the involvement of terrorist organizations and insurgent groups in the trafficking of narcotics’. D. J. Davids (2002) defines narco-terrorism by taking the two terms i.e narco and terrorism together, ‘On the one hand terrorism that aims to protect and support the activities of illegal drug traffickers; and on the other, terrorism

by organizations that use the financial profits of narco-trafficking to support their political, religious or other goals'. The simplest and widest definition of narco-terrorism is given by the Oxford dictionary (1999), 'Terrorism associated with the trade in illicit drugs'.

Nexus between Terrorism and Narco-Terrorism

There is a strong and inalienable connection between terrorism and narco-terrorism. The term narco-terrorism is a combination of two phenomena viz. narcotics trafficking and terrorism. However, the relationship between drug traffickers and terrorists is one of mutual benefit. The relationship between organized crime and terrorism, the nexus most commonly applies to the straightforward use of crime by terrorist groups as a source of funding (Singh K.N. 2013). The formation of alliances between criminal and terrorist organizations is a common tactic (ibid). Drug traffickers benefit from the terrorists' military skills, weapons supply, and access to clandestine organizations. Terrorists gain a source of revenue and expertise in illicit transfer and laundering of proceeds from illicit transactions. Both groups bring corrupt officials whose services provide mutual benefits, such as greater access to fraudulent documents, including passports and customs papers (Beers, R. 2002).

Terrorist groups and drug trafficking organizations increasingly rely on what is known as cell structures to accomplish their respective goals. However, there may certainly be a strong central leadership but day-to-day operations are basically carried out by members of compartmentalized cells (Beers, R. 2002). This structure enhances security by providing a degree of separation between the leadership and the rank-and-file. They use informal transfer systems such as "hawala," and also rely on bulk cash smuggling, multiple accounts, and front organizations to launder money (ibid). Both groups make use of fraud documents, including passports and other identification and documents to smuggle goods and weapons. They both fully exploit their networks to conduct business. In addition, they use multiple cell phones and are careful about what they say on the phone to increase communications security (Beers, R. 2002).

The Case of India and Myanmar

Needless to say, both terrorism and drug trafficking are mainly responsible

for bringing instability and uncertainty in South East Asia. As an immediate neighbour of South East Asia, India has been suffering from these twin evils. India is the connecting bridge between South Asia and South-East Asia. India's relation with South East Asia lies on two important factors. Firstly, India's strategic location which is the main and only transit route for South Asia to reach South East Asia or vice versa. Secondly, from a security perspective, India is sandwiched in between the Golden Triangle (area where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar meet) and Golden Crescent (areas covering Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan). India becomes a transit hub for transnational activities particularly for drug trafficking (Das, Pushpita: 2012).

Myanmar, which shares a border with India, is rich in natural and mineral resources. This sometimes affects the country negatively. As per the UNODC, World Drug Report, 20005, Myanmar is the second largest producer of illicit opium after Afghanistan. The Shan State, the Kokang, Wa, and Mong-La regions are the major areas of opium cultivation. From there, opium is transported to neighbouring countries, particularly China and India. Another major concern in Myanmar is the production of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS), primarily of methamphetamine. Though Myanmar has a limited chemical industry and does not domestically produce the precursor chemicals required for the production of ATS, it depends on China and India for chemicals. Drug trafficking gives ample opportunities to other related crimes such as money laundering and corruption, human trafficking both internal and external are major concerns for Myanmar (UNODC: 2005). The ongoing political, ethnic and economic instability in Myanmar further aggravates the volatile situation.

In fact, in the case of South-East Asia, the main source of funding for militant and insurgent groups comes from 'illicit money'. That is, it becomes a safe haven for insurgent groups who completely depend on drug business for their survival. Money coming from drug trafficking is used by such groups. Thus it is necessary to break the nexus.

It needs to be underlined that in recent years it is the ethnic minorities in Myanmar who have become the easy victims of the menace drug trafficking, which in turn provides fertile ground for them in militant activities, for example, the Qaida branches in the islands surrounding Myanmar have allegedly been training the Rohingyas to resort into

“Jihad”. Apparently, the Quida terrorist groups of Myanmar publicly called for the support of the Rohingyas Muslims from jihadists based in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and the Philippines (South East Asia: 2017). Needless to say, the Ethnic Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar are easy victims of trafficking of all kinds. Added to this, they are also rendered stateless now as the Myanmar government is not granting them citizenship status. This helplessness has made it easy for the militant groups’ active in different parts of the world to enlist the hapless Rohingya Muslims into narco-terrorist activities. To put it in other words, through these helpless migrants, the traffickers have been smuggling drugs to neighbouring countries illegally. In most of the cases, the migrants take the help of the smugglers, while in others, the smugglers recruit the migrants. Due to difficult paperwork, they largely depend on smugglers, who engage them in drug trafficking.

The nexus between terrorism and narco-terrorism is mainly responsible for instability in Myanmar and its neighbouring countries. India and Myanmar are victims of both terrorism and narco-terrorism. India is a habitual consumer of opium and other varieties of drugs like bhang, marijuana/ganja and hashish. India gets it from Myanmar which is the main supplier of drugs to India due to its geographical proximity. Political instability and lawlessness in Myanmar also aggravate the situation by giving ample scope to traffickers and criminals. The growing demand for drugs among the young local population in the Northeastern states of India (Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland), political instability and insecurity created by insurgencies in the border areas of the region of South and South-East Asia as well as poorly guarded border provided a fertile environment for traffickers to smuggle heroin and other drug substances into India through the India-Myanmar border. From the North-Eastern part of India, drugs have been supplied to the other parts of India particularly Bihar, Bombay and Delhi. The Shan state of Myanmar is the largest producer of illegal drugs and from there it enters into the North-Eastern state of India. Opium produced along the Indo-Myanmar border especially in Manipur and Mizoram is reportedly transported to Myanmar for the manufacture of heroin (Das, Pushpita: 2012). In addition, drugs are being trafficked from Myanmar into Tibet via India and Thailand, and from there into other provinces. The greater availability of cheap and high-purity heroin, along with limited access to drug treatment, combined with ineffective

counternarcotics policies, have resulted in greater rates of addiction along with other public health problems (ibid).

Drug trafficking facilitates other organized criminal activities such as human trafficking, sex trafficking, and weapon running, all of which use the same networks and routes to smuggle people, arms and contraband. Precursor chemicals such as ephedrine, pseudoephedrine and acetic anhydride from India are trafficked into Myanmar to cater to the demands of numerous mobile laboratories manufacturing heroin and amphetamine type stimulants (ATS). Seizures of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine indicate an increasing trend of trafficking of these chemicals from India to Myanmar. The most important route is the one which starts from Mandalay, continues to Monya and Kalewa and then bifurcates to enter India at two points. The first moves northwards, enters Moreh in Manipur through Tamu and travels thence to Imphal and Kohima via National Highway-39. The second branch moves southwards and enters Champai in Mizoram through Rihkhwadar (ibid).

However, drug trafficking in the region was slow during the initial phase of COVID-19 due to the restriction of movement of people. However, the traffickers quickly changed their style of distribution. They adopted contactless methods like online delivery and service. In fact, they took advantage of the COVID-19 crisis where millions lost their jobs and income. As a result of which, particularly, young and children became addicted to phones and became victims of this online drug business (UNODC: 2021).

Role of BIMSTEC

These non-traditional security threats can be better addressed through different international and inter-regional organizations. Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is one such inter-regional organization which has been playing a crucial role, which cannot be ignored. BIMSTEC is a unique regional organization which basically connects South Asia with South East Asia. It also brings SAARC and ASEAN nations under one platform. The BIMSTEC was established in 1997 with the purpose of peaceful and progressive development in the region of both South Asia and South-East Asia. It consists of five South Asian countries viz. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, with two South East Asian countries of Myanmar and Thailand (BIMSTEC: Online

Access). Both Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) as one of the priority sectors of BIMSTEC was added in the Eighth BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on 18-19 December 2005. The Joint Working Group on CTTC is the major sector of BIMSTEC which addresses the problems of terrorism and transnational crimes. There are six sub-groups which work on specific aspects of CTTC cooperation (Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime: Online Access).

- 1) Sub-Group on Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemicals.
- 2) Sub-Group on Intelligence Sharing.
- 3) Sub-Group on Legal and Law Enforcement Issues.
- 4) Sub-Group on Anti- Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism.
- 5) Sub-Group on Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration.
- 6) Sub-Group on the Cooperation on Countering Radicalization and Terrorism.

Many productive summits have been conducted through BIMSTEC to address the problem of terrorism and drug trafficking since its formation. In the Kathmandu declaration held 30-31 August 2018, member countries strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations wherever and by whomsoever committed that there can be no justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism. The summit also addressed that the fight against terrorism should target not only terrorists, terror organizations and networks but also identifies and hold accountable States and non-State entities that encourage, finance terrorism, provide sanctuaries to terrorists and terror groups and falsely extol their virtues (Fourth BIMSTEC Summit: 2018). The BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking was come into force on 16 March 2021 (Ministry of External Affairs, 2021).

The 9th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (JWG-CTTC) was hosted by Bhutan virtually on 25th November 2021 due to COVID. The meeting focussed on the emerging traditional and non-traditional security threats within

the BIMSTEC region. In this meeting, India played a prominent role by highlighting the threats emanating from cross-border terrorism from terrorist groups such as LeT, JeM, HM etc. and transnational organized crime such as drug trafficking, illegal weapons smuggling etc. (ibid). The meeting made valuable suggestions and recommendations on wide ranging issues to enhance collective cooperation and collaboration in countering terrorism and transnational crimes in the region.

Despite the effort to address the above issues, BIMSTEC needs to work and improve its strategies more religiously. There are certain grey areas where BIMSTEC has failed to address. The first and foremost is that the member countries need to take the organization seriously. Because the BIMSTEC summit has taken place only five times since its birth in 1997 the first held in Bangkok 2004, the second and third summits were held in New Delhi in 2008 and Nay Pyi Taw in 2014. The fourth was held in 2018 in Kathmandu. The last one was held in Sri Lanka in March of 2022 (BIMSTEC: 2022). It has failed to address the problems of Rohingya Muslims of Myanmar. This problem has created a chaotic condition not only in Myanmar, but also in both South and South East Asia. The constant conflict among the member countries does not augur well for tackling the menaces of drug trafficking and terrorism.

Conclusion

The problem of transnational crime, particularly narco-terrorism in Southeast Asia is severe. India has been directly affected due to its geographical proximity. Illegal migration, specifically Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar to Bangladesh and India, refugee issues, porous border, mistreatment and mismanagement by state authorities provides fuel to the conflict. It is beyond the control of an individual country to take any action. Hence, active cooperation and collective efforts are required to address it. It can be said in this context that a coordination of anti-drug and anti-terror policy can be used, and is necessary, to effectively deal with both threats. There is a triangular relationship here among drug production, drug trafficking and terrorism. Therefore, to reduce the militant activities, the government needs to check the drug trafficking, and again to tackle the drug trafficking, there is a need to destroy the drug production particularly cultivation of poppy and production of opium itself which is the root of the whole problem. Thus both drug traffickers and militants should be treated as criminals.

The governments of both India and Myanmar should adopt an inclusive approach. State, non-state actors, civil society, local leaders or representatives, international and regional organizations need to work together in order to get rid of the menace. International cooperation is also required in the countries of origin, transit and destination of drug trade. Awareness should be created among the local people about the hazardous effects of drug uses and its nexus with terrorism.

Thus, the root cause of drug trafficking and sustenance of terrorism in Myanmar is drug cultivation. Therefore, what is necessary is the destruction of the poppy crop to prevent the Cocaine or heroin from entering into the market. Nevertheless, while destroying the crop, it should always be kept in mind about the alternative livelihood of the farmers who are dependent on drug cultivation. It also needs to study the extent to which the illicit economy provides employment for the local population. Without taking care of the whole scenario, any kind of harsh steps would backfire or may have dangerous consequences. It simply means that more and more people may join in insurgent activities. Lastly, in order to tackle the twin evils of terrorism and narco-terrorism, we need to innovate and adopt new strategies. International cooperation is urgently required. The border areas which provide fertile ground for such illegal and criminal activities need to be guarded seriously. Here the international and national government should take the help of local people who are well aware of the whole situation.

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POETIC DECONSTRUCTIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT: WOMEN VOICES FROM SRI LANKA

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Abstract

In this article I begin by addressing stereotypes associated with the bodies of women in traditional south Asian societies. My focus is Sri Lanka and chronologically the civil war therein. While traditional societies such as the Sri Lankan have deified the reproductive body of the woman, extolling it in religion and celebrating its sensuousness in poetry, these strictures changed drastically with the formation of the Illavar – the women’s brigade of the LTTE. The need of the hour was to enlist women fighters for the cause of the imaginary homeland of Tamil Eelam. This move had to be successful not just through the arduous physical training undertaken by young women training to be cadres but sociologically there had to be acceptable for women forfeiting their roles as sacrificing wives and mothers. This societal acceptance is accomplished through discourse as facilitated by the LTTE wherein reverence otherwise bestowed on women in their self-sacrificial role is transferred to function duty as suicide bombers for the cause of the motherland in the offing thereby the violence of the act is extolled as the ultimate sacrifice of martyrdom performed for the greater communal good. I compare this with the act of poetry-writing by women showing this an exercise of female autonomy and resistance.

Keywords: Woman, Resistance, Body, LTTE, Poetry, Martyrdom.

Theorisations of the civil war in Sri Lanka often classify it as either LTTE (Lankan Tigers of Tamil Eelam) terrorism or an ethnic conflict. Disparately discreet as these understandings do appear, and this is mainly on account of media coverage of the war carried out under GoSL censorship; analysis shows them as interrelated and as misnomers for a war that blighted thousands. To read this neo-colonial war purely

from a right-wing perspective of warring ethnicities means ignoring the pitfalls of majoritarian governance or for that matter the inter-racial cohabitation and *bonhomie* as had existed on the island of Ceylon prior to independence; while to simplistically slot non-state violence as terrorism amounts to a failure of perception regarding the naturalisation of colonial structural violence within the post-colony. While colonial discourses of civilising the heathen or dark regions of the earth's surface served to obfuscate their deployment of violence (physical and psychic) as an essential mode of governance in the colony, it also naturalised the very idea of violence as an essential part of governance. This extended to patriarchal ideas of the exercise of violence as a chastening and corrective force by a benevolent authority. Added to this is the explaining away of violence on the bodies of women through religious texts that deem it righteous and legitimate. This article is concerned with women's voices regarding the turn their lives have taken with the all-pervasive presence of conflict on their homestead. How do they deal with the violence? Do they embrace it, do they reject it or do they resist it? How then is resistance articulated when performing violence on the other is deemed as noble and honourable? My contention is that resistance in this scenario is embodied in the speech-acts of women which are indictments of patriarchal administrative and social structures and are now manifest as violent and unrelenting conflict.

Following self-rule in Sri Lanka as in the subcontinent at large, assertions of national identity began with prescriptive dress codes. The ideological weightage of this sartorial fashioning being the construction of an exclusive and ideal Sinhala-Buddhist womanhood wherein ideas of modesty, purity, chastity and respectability were paramount. Women from the Burgher, Tamil and any other community residing on the island were marked by their absence of these very qualities. As Malati de Alwis shows in her essay "Sexuality in the Field of Vision: The Discursive Clothing of the Sigiriya Frescoes", the nudity of the Sigiriya frescoes caused immense discomfiture amidst this new breed of nationalists.¹ The fact that women from the Burgher and Tamil communities, for instance, had been among the foremost doctors and educators on the island did nothing to alter the racial profiling at work.² What was being silenced or erased at this historical juncture was the enabling coexistence and cross-cultural symbiosis as had existed on the island and the empowerment that the conviviality and cosmopolitanism thus generated had created in Ceylonese society. In the quest for an

exclusive national (majoritarian) identity hybridity came to be decried as contamination. Theorising the political and economic foundations of this phenomenon across a wider sociological spectrum, Yuval-Davis in *Gender and Nation* shows how “purity” plays out in the lives of women as and when ethnic collectives embark upon setting-up exclusive boundaries marking off their ethnic selves from the other:

The central importance of women’s reproductive roles in ethnic and national discourses becomes apparent when one considers that, given the central role the myth (or reality) of ‘common origins’ plays in the construction of most national and ethnic collectivities, one usually joins the collective by being born into it. (Davis 1997, 27)

Expanding on the theme, Amrita Chhachhi, in *Forced Identities: The State, Communalism Fundamentalism and Women in India*, points out how modes of behaviour, dress codes and discourses of chastity and modesty among other traditions are deemed ethnically/culturally appropriate, creating the boundaries needed to exercise control over the female reproductive body in the interests of the collective and define “our” women as opposed to “their” women (Chhachhi, 1991, pp. 144, 175) thus in Sri Lanka the Kandyan style of sari became the national mode of dress and was hardly accepted as such by the Tamil or Burgher communities.

However, with the onset of the civil war, gender demarcations on the island, particularly regarding labour and space underwent a rapid redefinition, particularly on the Jaffna peninsula. To begin with, the stereotype of the heroic male warrior versus women as victims and more often as “silent” sufferers of the war was being rapidly replaced with women-headed households and more radically with women soldiers who were now needed to be enlisted as cadres for guerrilla outfits on the peninsula and had to be combat hardy. This subversion of gender roles was rendered acceptable as it was being performed in the interests of Tamil Eelam - the nation in the making. Eelam too had to be represented by its women and in this case, the representations ranged from images of women as traditional sari-clad, thali and kumkum sporting images of feminine auspiciousness to a radically different idea of womanhood - the new, combat-hardy, militant women-fighters trained to perform deadly acts of suicide bombing as had been carried out by Illavar - the women’s brigade of the LTTE. However, as Sitralega Maunagur points out, these differing representations were viscerally

connected through the age-old notion of self-sacrificial womanhood. She has drawn attention to traditionally idealised notions of Tamil womanhood and the desexualised body by drawing from an anthology of Tamil heroic poetry from the 1st century A.D. entitled *Puranaanuru* wherein are elaborated on the qualities that women, particularly mothers, must cultivate. Modesty and chastity have pride of place here. As Maunaguru points out, the LTTE literally created as iconic and exemplary the image of the dutiful woman, first as a mother and then as a dutiful warrior for the motherland, (even if in the making). Women were required to actively and dutifully offer their bodies for the service for both causes. (Maunaguru 1995, p. 158, 175).³ To show the continuation of this strain of exemplary womanhood, a more recent example could be drawn from the World Tamil Movement conference held in Toronto in 2001, wherein the Tamil poet R. Cheran explicates the valorised position of women in Tamil culture thus:

Mere words or poetry fall short of remotely expressing the place of women in Tamil culture. Women are regarded with the utmost respect and reverence, as they are the keepers of wisdom, the connection to the divine and the teachers of life.⁴ (2001, p. 21)

While the poet Cheran may sincerely believe that he is according honour to womankind by his words, they are in effect a reiteration of patriarchal discourses attributed to the female body as has also been deployed by Sinhala nationalist discourse wherein also women (although exclusively of Sinhala-Buddhist origins) are repositories of spirituality and culture. As for the Sri Lankan Tamil community, these notions held sway despite witnessing the lived experience of women on the Jaffna peninsula wherein when they were not enlisted as soldiers, or suicide bombers they functioned as breadwinners for their families needing to protect their offspring from forced inscription into the “baby-brigade” of the LTTE.⁵

With militarisation becoming the order of the day on the Jaffna peninsula, women’s lives acquired a new and violent normal particularly since every male of Tamil ethnicity was targeted by the authorities as a terrorist and by the guerrilla outfits operating on the peninsula as a potential soldier. This led to widespread “disappearances”, as sons and husbands never returned home after the ubiquitous “questioning” by state authorities or were recruited by the LTTE. In this scenario,

women-centric protest movements such as the “Mother’s Front” took centre stage on the peninsula.⁶ While to protest in times such as these is in itself an act of bravery, we must also bear in mind that traditionally in south Asian societies, the body of the grieving mother, particularly for a warrior son, commands a space of formidable respect. This undoubtedly enabled mothers who were staging protests against the state machinery at a time when extreme forms of terror had paralysed civil society networks on the island. So now, a discourse decried by feminists as patriarchal and stereotypical was being effectively deployed by mothers grieving the violence of the times. The mothers were speaking out not only against the state, as is commonly believed, but also the war machinery of the LTTE and against the violence that had become such a normative part of their lives. With the moral weight of motherhood behind them, the Front attracted tremendous mass support. As a performative speech act, the movement subverted the traditional injunctions of isolation imposed on women during mourning and by bringing the body of the grieving mother out into the public realm not only did they perform grief but more so staged resistance to violence. By doing this, the movement redefined the practice of motherhood, making it more of an active, public experience, whereby mothers assuaged their grief instead of keeping it in the realm of the private (Schriver 1989, pp.185, 209). The means of protest used by the members of the Front to express their grief and demand redress were customary cultural practices such as, heaping of curses, invoking of superstitions and folk-rituals of black magic, fasts undertaken at the temple of Kaliaamma seeking divine vengeance as justice for their murdered kin. The movement was attacked by the state for encouraging stereotypes of irrationality, gullibility and superstition associated with women and for hysteria - often blamed on their bodily cycle and finally, they were accused of politicising grief by making it such a public affair.⁷ As a spokesperson for the state, the Defence Minister for the UNP, Ranjan Wijeratne, chastised the protesting mothers for: “having failed their duty by their children and the nation” (De Mel 2001, p.244) thus once again resorting to age-old patriarchal injunctions to keep the woman’s voice and her body within the private space of the homestead. Gauging the tremendous political currency of the movement, the UNP government in the South formed its own Mother’s Front, in opposition to what they termed was the SLFP’s Mother’s Front of the North. This propagandist politicisation and bifurcation led to the eventual dissolution of the movement in the South while in the North, the movement ultimately

dissipated under LTTE pressure. Pointing to the social effectiveness of the “Mother’s Front”, Niloufer De Mel points out that the movement created the much-needed empathetic space wherein women, often the silent sufferers of conflict and the silenced bearers of its brutalising effects could reach out to one another, swap stories and expect to be understood and supported in a humane manner. The members of the Front, as Mel points out, were: “as much in dialogue with each other as they were with the nation” (De Mel 2001, p.247; De Alwis, 1999).

As speech acts of resistance, the Protest poetry written by women protesting the war interrogates the patriarchy that bolsters this violence. These poetic enunciations radically broke class barriers along with ethnic barricades. The common thread binding women together at this time was the oppression they faced on account of violence, as has been stated by the editors of the Trilingual Anthology, a collection of poetry by women from different strata, ethnicities and walks of life:

As women who write in different languages, belong to different ethnic groups, religious communities, regions and cultures, we are divided. Yet, we share the experiences of oppression that are rooted in the patriarchal norms that rigidly control and constrain our lives. It is this same-ness and this difference that make our coming together all the more complex, and rich.

(Sanmarga 2002,n.p)

‘A Mother’s Lament’ penned by Sanmarga, (the pseudonym used by Sarvamangalam Kailasapathy) is part of the above-quoted anthology compiled by the Women & MediaCollective. The speaker’s words bear witness to the psychic disempowerment engendered by war, apart from its material losses.

A Mother’s Lament
 You lie on the road dust
 Your body soaked in blood
 I bend down to see your face
 Yes son it is you
 “Why do you cry mother?”
 The gathered crowd inquires
 “Do you know the boy”
 Threatens the man with the gun
 “No I don’t.” I shake my head
 Denying you my first born

In Kurukshetra, when Karna falls Kunti runs and takes him in her arms
 And cries "Oh my son"
 I am a sinner to be born now for I cannot even claim you as my son

If only I had some strength
 I will take you in the night
 And cremate you in Chemmani
 This hand which fed you rice
 Two nights ago, would have courageously
 Done this duty as well

You went away for six months
 Unable to bear the oppression of Ravana
 Why did you return my son?

If I claimed you as my son,
 They will come home and take away
 your brothers and set fire to my hut
 will load my cow on their lorry
 and drive away to Palaly

who is there to question them?
 I am just a poor woman

 My grief will one day destroy those
 Who have been so cruel.
 While those who advocate a separate state
 On platforms endlessly
 Are guests in neighbouring country safe and secure,
 You who gave your life for the country
 Are dead on the road-side

My heart breaks to leave you
 On the road-side
 I am a sinner who cannot even claim
 my son as my own. (Women in Wartime 2002, p. 24, 26).⁸

My analysis of Sanmarga's text shows the violence of authoritarianism whereby patriarchy is not simplistically located in binaries of men versus women. As the text shows, it is economic marginalisation and not ethnicity that is accountable for the speaker's anguish. She cannot

bury or even publicly claim the lifeless and mutilated body of her son for now the carcass is intended to serve as a spectacle deterring future offenders to the cause. Her predicament is two-fold, for while on the one hand, it shows her vulnerability and helplessness in the face of power structures, particularly the violence with which they control lives, on the other, it is her need to articulate the injustice of the act, the authoritarianism that has spurred it and as a mother to vent her grief and call out to the ones responsible that rises as an anti-war, anti-violence cry. In this, her subject position as a mother has proven to be the most enabling. Her words draw attention to her economic situation rather than her ethnicity and with this, she touches on the silenced dynamic of this (or for that matter most) conflict. As a speaker, Sanmarga attributes her helplessness to being “just a poor woman” and her duress is not on account of being a Tamil in a Tamil-dominated area but the self-alienation and psychic violence she experiences as a mother for having to undergo the unnatural act of denying the lifeless body of her child. Again, it is as a mother that she also needs to protect her other children from the war machinery. Her predicament, as she pronounces it, accrues on account of her economic powerlessness and ethnic identity appears immaterial throughout this speech-act.

Moreover, it is “the man with the gun”, that the mother perceives as threatening - whether he be of the Sinhalese armed forces or the Tamil-Tigers. Neither does she clarify for the readers whether her son’s death was ‘punishment’ as meted out to those deemed deserters/traitors by the LTTE as per their ideas of justice or was it a staged terrorist encounter by the armed forces acting under the aegis of the Prevention of Terrorist Activities leeway?⁹ While neither case justifies this spectacle of cold-blooded murder in broad daylight in the marketplace and intended to spread paranoia, the ambiguity regarding is an enabling speech act as it creates the scenario of the theatre of war which had become a living reality for Sri Lankans such as herself. Adding to this, her lament that her son had “returned” to the peninsula raises the question of forced recruitment by the Tigers?¹⁰ His murder then shows the shrinking space for non-violence and for individualistic choices when the violence of war is the order of the day. Furthermore, is the mother’s reference to “Ravana”, the mythical demon-king of the epic Ramayana, a reference to the head of the Tigers – Vellupillai Prabhakaran or the President of the elected Democratic Party, or to both – for as perpetrators of violence should not both be indicted? The power of the text as articulated by

the lamenting and desexualised body of the mother lies in its exposure of patriarchy.

Adding to the subversion of the normative order wherein she must disavow her son's body, now an abandoned carcass lying in the dust by the roadside is the belief that a son will further a mother's sense of agency, particularly within traditional and conservative communities.^{11;12} Nationalist ideologies too glorify women's bodies as producers of sons who would be future soldiers and protectors of the motherland. Jyotsana Agnihotri Gupta in *New Freedoms, New Dependencies* states:

The internalisation of this so-called ideal that nationalism put up for women simply reinforced the traditional notion that the fruition of women's lives lay in producing heroic sons. The nationalist ideology, therefore, simply appropriated this orthodox bind on women's lives by glorifying it. (Gupta 1996, p. 60)

Sanmarga's speech-act, however, is a rare enunciation for poetic texts written in Sri Lanka around this time usually extolling nationalist sentiment whereby veneration for the body of the mother in the household is extended to the nation as motherland, and protecting the motherland, even at the cost of one's life, is equated with the service rendered by a dutiful son towards his mother. This is usually the case with families of personnel from the armed forces as this poem entitled *To My Son on the Battlefield*, written by the mother of a soldier stationed on the front shows:

To my Son on the Battlefield
 When her son Dutugemunu went to battle
 The venerable queen did not shed tears
 I cannot do likewise my son
 For warm tears are cascading down my face
 Even if you die in the battlefield, beloved son
 Lay not your rifle upon the earth, hand it over to another
 This is the way I know you are my eldest son for sure
 Tomorrow I'll send my heroic younger son to battle (De Alwis 1998, p. 262)

One can make a strong argument that the above verse extols war to the extent that the mother even seems to propagate its continuation by vowing to send her "younger son to battle". The legend of King

Dutugemunu, the founder of the Sinhala race and his mother Vihara Maha Devi as recounted in *The Mahavamasa* has been foundational for this post-independence phase of militant Sinhala nationalism. The circulation of this myth of the young king's desire to wage war against the Tamils worked towards legitimising the idea of Ceylon as Sinhala-Buddhist land. Gananath Obeyesekere in his study entitled *Dutthagamini and the Buddhist Conscience: Religious and Political Conflict in South Asia* presents his version of this dialogue between the queen and her son, the young Dutugemnu:

The queen came and caressing Gamini spoke thus: why dost thou not lie easily upon thy bed with limbs stretched out my son? The son replies "over there beyond the Gange (the river Mahaveli) are the Damilas (Tamils), here on this side is the Gotha (ocean), how can I lie with outstretched limbs? (Obeyesekera 1993, p. 92)

The propagation of this myth by Sinhala nationalism is especially evident in the speech-acts by wives and mothers of the armed forces personnel as the cited text shows. While she expresses her distraught state of mind over the possible death that could await her son, at no point does she question the legitimacy of the battle as the Sanmarga mother had done or imply that it is a waste of human life. Her speech-act shows her internalisation of the myth of the courageous mother as exemplified by the legendary queen-mother Vihara Maha Devi and so the glory earned by her son-as-soldier overrides the grief of his possible death. Women/mothers with sentiments such as this were the need of the hour for both, the Sinhala and Tamil nationalisms and they provide ample illustration of the discourse at work. As war machinery the body politic needs at this time is just the reproductive capacities of women but for them to extol the right sentiments. It is these "Moral Mothers" and their "Stalwart Sons", as indicated by the title of Malati's essay who show the effects of coercion through discourse and its poetic representation.¹³ Noting the cultural import of images such as: "'warm tears' and the dispatching of another son to take the place of the first", Malati de Alwis notes how these images became familiar tropes during the armed conflict and even found their way into popular forms of public discourse such as: "war songs, political speeches and statements to the press by bereaved parents ..." (De Alwis, p.262). She adds:

The nation-state, i.e., the motherland conceptualises the citizen subject through a particular configuration of 'motherhood': nurturing and caring for her citizens in exchange for a similar reciprocity. In times of crisis such as war or an uprising such symbiotic relationships are especially highlighted: the heroism required of her male citizens foregrounded against the sacrifices of her female citizens. In addition, the female citizen is often perceived to embody the Motherland (they are both nurturant yet vulnerable); her rape or capture symbolizes the very desecration of the community/nation/land.

(De Alwis 1998, p. 254)

According to this equation, while the male body as protector, is duty-bound to defend the motherland; the woman-as-mother must order her sons to battle and not mourn their death/martyrdom if such be the case. This deification of motherhood at the national level however, much like the mother goddesses of the Indian pantheon did little to alter the lives of real women as the text by Sanmarga shows. Moreover, since this so-called power was exercised within the confines of and in the service of a nationalism which very clearly is patriarchal it didn't do much to improve the gender equilibrium either within society as a whole, or individual households. It was only in the absence of the male head, which is not an uncommon occurrence for a conflict zone that women were in-charge of their household economies. In most cases, this ascendancy in the power hierarchy was not a matter of choice but an enforced reality.

This trope of valorised motherhood is predominant in discourse propagated by Tamil-Tigers as well and actually shows the cultural similarities between the two warring ethnicities despite their avowal of difference. The only difference is that with the Tigers women needed to serve as armed combatants and suicide bombers as well. Explaining the popular acceptance of this new phenomenon whereby the death of a loved one, on the battlefield is equated or elevated to the gifting of one's life for the motherland, Cheran, in his book entitled *The Sixth Genre: Memory, History and the Tamil Diaspora* links it to an ancient Tamil practice called *Maanam* and explains it thus:

Another concept that receives wider articulation in the Dravidian-Chola-Tiger discourse is the concept of Maanam. The concept of Maanam, coupled with pride and valour constitutes a self-image of Tamils as proud and valiant people who would not tolerate any infringement of their honour and who would, if need be, redeem it by courting death. In the current dominant Tamil nationalist discourse, the Tigers are treated not only as a symbol of pride and honour but as the warriors, who reclaimed these qualities for the Tamil “race”. It is not surprising then, that the motto of the Muzhakkum is pulikalum innaa illaiyel elikathaana thinnam thamilarai (if it were not for the Tigers the rats would have devoured the Tamils). (p. 21)

Clearly, when communities take to arms, discourse must comply. Discursive construction is thus geared towards the deification of the sacrifice of self and body in the service of the nation/community. This sentiment rendered acceptable the idea of the armed virgin and legitimised, as far as Tamil society was concerned, the formation of the Women’s Wing of the LTTE - the Illavar - which translates as “birds of freedom”. This title appears ironic in view of the fact that while the women’s cadre endured training in armed combat similar to that undertaken by men, it was the women who were entrusted with suicide missions which they carried out successfully. Also, while in the subcontinent images of the Goddesses Durga and Kali in their avatars as fierce warriors, riding lions, wielding weapons and vanquishing demons are iconic; “real” women in combatant roles, as the Illavar typifies, are far from being commonplace occurrence.¹⁴ So while the patriarchal discursivity of this new role cannot be denied, on no count does it render women into passive agents of patriarchy.

The following poem *She, the Woman of Tamililam*, issued by the cultural unit of the Tigers has been attributed to Captain Vanati, martyred at age twenty-seven in the battle of Elephant Pass on 11/07/91. While it shows what it meant for women on the peninsula to don battle fatigues, it was also intended to serve the cause of female enlistment.¹⁵ The women cadres of Illavar, as the poem illustrates, were held up as models to be emulated by all Tamil women;

She, the Woman of Tamililam

Her forehead shall be adorned not with kumkum but with red blood
 All that is seen in her eyes is not the sweetness of youth (but) the tombs
 of the dead

Her lips shall utter not useless sentences but firm declarations of those
 Who have fallen down
 On her neck will lay no tali, but a Cyanide capsule!
 She has embraced not men but weapons!
 Her legs are going and searching,
 Not for searching a relationship with relatives
 But looking towards the liberation of
 the soil of Tamililam

Her gun will fire shots
 No failure will cause the enemy to fall
 It will break the fetters of Tamiilam!!
 Then from our people's lips a national anthem will tone up!!

(De Mel 2001, p.207)

On the surface of it the above text reads like and is a repudiation of feminine stereotypes of respectable domesticity as deemed ideal for women during the course of their natural lives. In the above text, the familial love and nurture of the homestead is supplanted by violence and the possibility of death which in this instance is the nobler – martyrdom for “then from our people’s lips a national anthem will tone up” (ibid). While sacrifice finds no literal mention in the sentiments of honour and warrior-glory being extolled in the above quoted text but is the vital thread connecting the old and new roles for women. What is being repudiated in the process is what earlier was extolled as the softness of the female body and temperament, the tenderness of female hearts, the nurturing body of the mother and so forth. This new avatar of femininity also demanded a new dress code. Cadres of the women’s brigade dressed, at all times, in belted trousers, loose shirts, rifle holsters and a gun slung over the shoulder. This was a complete change from the earlier strictures put in place by the LTTE demanding Tamil women in Jaffna wear the sari and not ride bicycles (De Mel, 2001).

The lines attributed to the martyred Captain Vanati moreover were issued by the cultural unit of the Tigers thereby rendering authorship into a collective expression rather than an individual and subjective one. Captain Vanathi’s delineation of the woman fighter is intended to accommodate the widest possible denominator of LTTE female cadre,

martyred or otherwise. Their bodies, as the propensity of women chosen to perform the act of suicide-bombing shows, were as much property of the LTTE as the body of the reproductive woman is for her husband/community/nation.¹⁶ Feminists such as Francine D'Amico have raised this question as the article entitled *Feminist Perspectives on Woman Warriors* shows:

. . . . the woman warrior image subjects women to greater manipulation by those controlling military institutions, thus allowing women to be militarized but not empowered. . . . women's militarization provides no substantive 'feminization' of the military as a social institution. Military institutions and their needs (not women's needs) determine women's role in the armed forces. Women's military participation reinforces rather than undermines the gender structures of the military and the broader society.

(D'Amico, p.120)

Women as LTTE fighters then was not much of a repudiation of ossified gender norms. Since this role too, implied a storming of the male bastion even if it appeared glamorous on the surface, it was still couched in entrenched notions of sacrificial womanhood and loyal womanhood which were effectively deployed by the LTTE to replenish the ranks of fast-depleting male cadre. What the women of the Illavar did blow asunder were notions of tenderness and physical vulnerability essentially associated with the 'weaker' sex. Patriarchy however relies on deeper roots and through discourse, as this article has shown, entrenches itself in psychic spaces. In the final instance then, if patriarchy is to be summed up as control of women and their bodies, this authority was not relinquished by the male command of the LTTE. The soldiers whether man or woman, whether Sinhala or Tamil needed to be equally saturated in the colours of nationalism, the abstractions of which readily lend themselves for much heroic poetry, beginning with the Queen Vihara Maha Devi onwards. In this scenario, true resistance is demonstrated by Sanmarga as the mother who speaks in a voice of her own and in a voice that does not take recourse to nationalist sentiments but draws on the peculiarities of her position of having to live on the Jaffna peninsula and being caught in a violent cross-fire, not of her choosing or making.

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Endnotes

1. Malati De Alwis and Kumari Jayawardene, 1996.
2. See Neloufer de Mel 2001,57;102; Neluka Silva 2004,97; 137.
3. In this regard, the murder/death of Ranjini Thirangama, a lecturer at Jaffna University and a strident voice speaking out against state and LTTE oppression, is a case in point.
4. Cheran, R, 2001, p. 21.
5. The location of the conference is significant in this regard as it explains the need of the speaker to highlight aspects of Tamil womanhood to a western audience.
6. The initiative of the Mother’s Front was begun by the poet and activist Richard de Zoyza’s mother following his disappearance. Protesting mothers on the Jaffna peninsula demanded to know the whereabouts of their children, taken into police custody for questions and having disappeared ever since.
7. Raka Ray in her study on women-centric protest movements has shown how these often take shape from local problems and are thus heavily influenced by local cultures and traditions. The ‘Mother’s Front’ in Sri Lanka was similar in this aspect being born out of a crisis of state. Moreover, when R. Premadasa met his end at the hands of a suicide bomber, the perception that folk-justice had taken recourse was a strongly prevalent sentiment. (Ray 1999; De Mel 2001)
8. Sanmarga’s poems first began to appear in a magazine called ‘Sollatha Seithigal’ around 1986. The war in Jaffna between the separatists and the GoSL had rapidly escalated during this time. Her poetry articulates a sharp socio-political criticism.
9. A ‘deserter’ refers to a soldier absconding from duty. However, the situation then calls for the military procedure of a court-martial, wherein the soldier will be tried under the military court and law.
10. The LTTE had a reputation for torture and cruelty in order to extract fear and therefore obedience from the cadres and civilian population. Refer to Narain Swamy for details.

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11. The deified status of Queen Vihara Mahadevi, in Sinhala folklore, accrues from her position as king Duttugemunu's mother.
 12. This is particularly the case with labour intensive, agriculture economies of Asia and Africa. Refer to Jyotsana Agnihotri Gupta elaborates in *New Freedoms, New Dependencies*.
 13. The title is also an ironic reference to the line-of-argument resorted to by the state whereby the members of the Mother's Front were upbraided by the state-representatives as "bad mother's" who had failed in their duty towards their family and towards the state and brought up children who were wayward and criminal.
 14. For more information on the women's wing of the LTTE, refer to Adele Balasingham's *Women Fighters of Tamil Eelam*
 15. The First Battle of Elephant Pass (1991): in this epic battle the LTTE cadre engaged with the Sri Lankan armed forces for control of the military base of Elephant Pass – a narrow strait of land connecting Wannu with the rest of the peninsula.
 16. For more on the female cadres of the LTTE, see Balasingham, 1993.

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RESEARCH ESSAY

SEX WORK, SEX WORKERS AND INTERSECTIONALITIES

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The discussion about sex work in the Indian Public Sphere often dwindles between an abolitionist and an anti-abolitionist perspective. The debates are fraught between articulations like “sex work is work like any other work” or positions such as that of Madhu Kishwar, who states that “no self-respecting society should legalise the dehumanisation of women who are forced into flesh trade through force, abduction and violence”. What is interesting to note here is what are the connotations attached to the phrase ‘self-respecting society’. The phrase and the position of the likes of Madhu Kishwar is laden with moralistic value judgements, one that devalues the labour entailed in sex-work, one that views sex and sexual as something strictly to be within the bonds of conjugality. Further, in the anti-abolitionist camp, there are differing viewpoints: one that vouches for decriminalisation and other that pushes for legalisation. While, the former implies that all existing legislation be abolished because the law itself operates with a certain moralistic viewpoint, the former implies a call for regulation that seeks to protect the sex-workers. The term ‘protection’ also carries with itself certain connotations, that of the paternalistic state and other institutions that seek to control by care. Feminists have been conscious and cautious about this, and perhaps this is the reason why the decriminalisation faction holds their position. What this layout of the various debates around sex-work points towards is that, at the core of the arguments each faction strives for the well-being of sex-workers, but still there are differences. The question that then arises is that are all sex workers the same? Can sex-workers and sex-work be thought through from the

perspective of intersectionality? I would argue that to think of sex-work and sex-workers as an analytical and political category, it is crucial to situate them within the framework of intersectionality and engage with the differences arising out owing to the class, caste, gender, racial and other identity markers. As Prabha Kotiswaran (2001, 2008) has also pointed out, sex-work does not exist as a unified category, there are different sex-work practices and regulations on each practice and the different types of sex-workers have varied meanings.

When sex-work is analysed from a labour perspective, the debate proceeds from the point of transcending the victim/agent dichotomy. It then becomes possible to analyse the diverse sex-work practices with the distinct stakeholders involved. The concept of labour positions sex work within a broader category of intimate and gendered labour. But it is equally crucial to remember that sex work is also a unique site of labour involving distinct forms of violence and agency. The economic sphere of work is more than often socio-culturally constructed. The notion of work is rather the conglomeration of the economic ideas (labour, exchange and value) and the sociocultural parameters (caste, religion and gender). Such construction is dependent both on the economic return of a work as well as the social perception related to the work which is to say that there is a relation between the work, its perception and the person who performs it. This paper situates sex-work within the perspective that it is a form of labour like other forms of informal labour. More so, I would situate sex-work in the category of marginal informal labour. Sex workers face gender oppression, sexual violence, discrimination and exploitation in their job. It is informal labour because women in sex work often move in and out of sex work into other informal occupations. This highlights that sex work operates as one form of work within varied and often precarious, labour network.

The case of conflation of caste and sex-work gets complicated owing to the notions of sexuality attached to the lower-caste women by the Brahmanical Patriarchal structures. The sexuality of lower caste women is constructed as transgressive and promiscuous, one that is always available. As pointed out by Meena Gopal, feminists were confronted by this dilemma in the wake of the ban on dance bars in Maharashtra. While a section of savarna feminists from autonomous women collectives opposed the ban from the labour perspective, and because it deprived women the right to livelihood, another section of Dalit-Bahujan feminists

argued that a lot of the women were part of caste communities where dance was a form of caste practice, and that under the argument of right to livelihood savarna feminists are reinforcing the existence caste-based occupations and stigmas attached to them (Gopal, 2012). When this debate of ban on dance bars is extrapolated into other forms of sexual labour (like Devadasi), a similar set of dilemmas emerge. The practice of Devadasi, where young girls from lower-caste would be dedicated to the temple deity was a caste-segregated profession. The young girls termed as Devadasi meaning the god's servant, would go on to become common prostitutes for the upper-caste men. There have been times when Dalit feminists of Maharashtra vehemently condemned the Devadasi tradition that pushed their ancestors into subjugation, at other times women from the Devadasi communities of Western India have become collectivised as sex workers to battle against police atrocities. The marginalities of caste then open questions about the way forward for feminist politics within the domain of sex-work.

For Transgender women, the path to enter sex-work opens owing to the discrimination they face because of their gender and sexual identity. Most of the transwomen are forced to migrate to unfamiliar places at a very young age due to the abuse faced at their parental homes. They enter sex-work when they are unable to sustain themselves economically in any other labour sector due to gender discrimination. In the process of finding a community for themselves, many trans women find solace in the *Hijra* community, which is linked to cultural and religious dimensions. These earnings are mostly spent in sustaining the chosen family for themselves, gender-affirming surgeries and bribing the police officers. Violence inflicted by police officials is also a common feature of sex work among transgender women.

In this regard, a study by the Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties, Karnataka, concluded that the police's attitude seems to be that since they are engaging in sex-work they are not entitled to any rights of sexual citizenship (PUCL-K, 2003). In addition to the stigma associated with sex work, transgender women face additional violence as they are perceived to be a threat to the gendered social order. Their visibility itself becomes the reason for provocation of anger, rage, and violence from the police and among the general public. Although, people engaged in sex-work largely are at a higher risk of contracting HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections, transgender persons involved in sex-

work are statistically amongst the population group most affected by HIV. Their HIV vulnerability is linked to physical and sexual violence is associated with inconsistent condom use, and increased HIV/sexually transmitted infection (STI) vulnerability among sex workers (Ganju, 2017).

The State, while working through legalities, institutions, and state personnel, hold immense power in constructing and deconstructing the other. The legal binaries of legality versus illegality determine the normal versus the other. The transgenders are deprived of equal participation in social and cultural life, shunned by family and society, and have restricted access to education. They have less access to health services and public spaces as well. They exercise limited civil, political, and economic rights, their life, citizenship, and identity transits between legality and illegality of civil and criminal law (Skylab, 2019). What this does is that it makes them more marginal, in the already existing marginality. This abandonment by the State renders a category of people vulnerable to forms of abuse and violence. The cases of murders of trans women, who engage in sex-work like that of Sweet Maria, go unnoticed and un-investigated because the system considers them to be second-class citizens. These women are more than often murdered out of blatant transphobia, just because of rage caused due to disclosure of their identity. One such case was that of Pravallika in Hyderabad. The man, named Venkat had murdered several transwomen including Pravallika out of the hatred and disgust he had for the community.

The case of Living Smile Vidya, a Dalit trans woman becomes crucial to look at in this regard, as she points out the exclusions and discriminations faced by her owing to her caste and gender identity. In an interview, when asked to compare caste discrimination and transgender discrimination, she points out how transgenders who are working class have no dignity of labour as they have to either beg or resort to sex work. She points out the occupational fixity in both the forms of discrimination due to which “manual scavenging becomes an occupation enforced on Dalits through the exclusion of access to other jobs; in a similar way begging and sex work are forced occupations for transgenders through exclusion from other jobs” (Living, 2013). What Living Smile Vidya has to say about identities and intersectionality also points towards a strategy, a vision for transversal politics where people occupying different identities broaden their viewpoint and stand

in solidarity and unity against various oppressive factors. Particularly, in the domain of sex work, one needs to see it as work, as a form of labour. Although, it is oppressive owing to the violence and stigma that the society holds but so is existence in the form of any marginalised identity. The problem then is not in the identity or the work itself, but the stigmatic notions around it.

Through this discussion on various forms of sex-work and related professions (like bar dancers, devadasi and the workers occupying different identity positions of caste and gender) who are part of this labour network, I have tried to highlight the varied issues that the sex-workers face. In doing so, my attempt has been to point out how an intersectional approach is useful to examine the category of sex-worker as it brings to light the various issues that workers might face owing to their gender, caste, class position in the society. Sex work and Sex workers cannot be conflated into one category, and there is need for more intersectional analysis to highlight the specific issues that sex-workers face. Caste and gender in intersection with sex-work opens various questions and problems, related to visibility, increased vulnerability, and caste-based occupation. As pointed out earlier there are controversies within the Dalit-Bahujan feminists too regarding their position on sex-work and related professions. I think these contests can be points of deliberation for the future of politics of sex-work.

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BOOK REVIEW

MCKENZIE, WARK. 2021. PHILOSOPHY FOR SPIDERS: ON THE LOW THEORY OF KATHY ACKER. DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS, Pp. 216

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Some of the popular images of Kathy Acker in the vignettes of public memory are from her days when she used to don a buzz cut hairstyle, a black leather jacket, a denim skirt, and laced stockings, and was often found mounted on a motorcycle. Kathy Acker, an American writer, and playwright, passed away in late 1997. Acker's works occupy a canonical position in American literature yet are disappointingly designated to the narrow and niche space of what is largely understood as the 'counterculture'. Various scholars have dressed her up in their own imaginings to further multiple discourses on gender, queerness, avant-garde art, punk, and capitalism and have variously reinterpreted her.

Although Acker is a queer icon, her gender identity has always been a matter of obscurity. McKenzie Wark in the book, *Philosophy for Spiders: On Low Theory of Kathy Acker* sees her as a trans individual which is also one of the assumptions about her gender identity. Such positions are not new, but Wark stages her take here by combating the common assumption of Acker's identity as a default cis individual. From a vantage point, this may seem like the crux of the book, but Wark goes on recounting and discussing her interaction and companionship with Acker and drives home the point that the book is neither a biography nor an evaluation of her writings. It is in fact a furthering

and a remembrance of what is lost and maybe forgotten about Kathy Acker, thus introducing the reader to a side hardly visible before.

Biographies tend to imitate human memory. We reimagine and redesign a person in our mind with the help of pre-existing memories and images, and so does the biography. The measure of the dead usually has been for what they have left behind, and most of the retellings impose a sense of ownership over the dead. Wark provides an interesting take on the conventional understanding of biography through this book and claims that this form of literary work is like a conversation about a person by another person to another person (reader) which renders it into an exercise in fiction. She adds that these forms of communication are only a part of image-making and through various stories of subjectivity and opinions of objectivity, one only creates a subject consumed by others as an object. Often in a biography, controversies, gossip, debates, and the public image of a person determine the way one is offered a peek into a person's life but only to be articulated in the manner of another writer. Here, Wark concentratedly withdraws from such a practice. She does not write for people to be initiated into the life and works of Kathy Acker but in fact to problematize all the ways Acker has been imagined and understood so far. It becomes clear in about the first fifty pages of the introductory chapter that Wark has not embarked on writing a biography in a traditional sense. Throughout her life, Acker despised academic circles and the space of philosophical writings, which have been mostly saturated with men. The male sphere of philosophy has been largely preoccupied with metaphysical questions about life. These writings have come to hold a position of 'high' philosophy in the canon. Thus, Wark proclaims her own book as low theory and titles it so, in contrast to the philosophical work produced by men.

Wark presents the book in accordance with her perception of Acker's spirit. She asserts and makes sure that Kathy Acker is not reduced to a categorical individual but is presented in her multiplicity. The first chapter details Wark's relationship with Acker in the first few years of their meeting. It includes stories of their sexual escapade and the struggles of their queer existence in a heteronormative world. At this point, Wark proceeds to write a low philosophy concerning people like them in society. It is interesting to note that the first chapter in the

second section of the book is numbered zero. This section is the part of theorizing their philosophy, which reiterates this style by titling a chapter as Null Philosophy. This play on language and structure resembles the core of the book and the struggle both Kathy and McKenzie have felt about writing. For them, language becomes a limiting tool, something that has been created by men and handed down to them only to reduce their identity. Wark provides a semblance of understanding it through gender as for Acker and Wark language is gender. Wark suggests that gender should be imagined as a transitive verb that exists in the language of behaviors. Besides the structure, the writing of the book shares a striking resemblance with the living philosophy of Kathy Acker. The book confounds the reader as it reads like a combined voice of both Acker and Wark, but Wark interestingly uses her (Acker's) words in coherence of her own and makes her appear no less than a co-author of the book.

Acker was exhausted by the literary industry and the oppression of copyright laws that forbid a text to be imitated and therefore stalls its circulation. Acker writes text that breaches these copyright laws. This resembles the culture of creating remixes in the music industry, which has had a tradition of sampling musical pieces to create another track. Acker does the same in literary terms by titling her novels like *Great Expectations* and *Don Quixote*. Her remixes are a reappropriation of classics as she takes them away from the hands of men and bourgeois cliques and gives them to a rebellious transgressive public. Wark performs ethnomethodology from references to Kathy's writings and interviews to carve a complete philosophy that issues from her life. The text is laden with quotations, and throughout the text Wark includes notes, writings, and public speeches of Kathy Acker. Wark creates a web of Acker's words in the book and is able to catch multiple ideas and theories that further form a melange of her ideas on varied topics like punkism, post-capitalism, sexual emancipation, and gender revolution.

The book is a simple read devoid of cliched philosophical ramblings. It shows its readers the zest of Kathy's spirit – a kleptoparasite that envisages a body of work through stealing, borrowing, or imitating. In the second section of the book, Wark derives a philosophical piece which is largely derived from her novels, essays, and interviews and her own companionship with Acker. Acker comes alive in the book

only to be reminded in the academic language of in-text citations that it is a quote from the distant past. It would be appropriate to call this book a remix of Acker's work (which most of her own books were). It presents revolution as an endnote on patriarchy and adds yet another footnote to the understanding of sexuality. It is a debate on structural systems which shall provide insights into everyday philosophy that claims to answer the truth about life but often complicates it.

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BOOK REVIEW

RANGANATHAN MURLI. (TRANS.). 2022. THE FIRST WORLD WAR ADVENTURES OF NARIMAN KARKARIA: A MEMOIR. HARPER COLLINS, Pp. 230

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The First World War Adventures of Nariman Karkaria is a firecracker of a memoir. On its centenary, this fascinating book (originally titled *Rangbhumi par Rakhad*, 1922) has been translated from Gujarati into English by the keenly perceptive Murali Ranganathan, an independent scholar and researcher. It proves to be a gift to the historian and the academic alike because it is a Parsi man's rare first-hand account of travel, adventure, and soldiering on three fronts during the First World War.

Nariman Karkaria, a restless Parsi youth from Gujarat, whimsically decides to visit China at the age of sixteen and embarks on this incredible journey with barely fifty rupees in his pocket. After returning to India two years later, he revisits Peking (now Beijing) in 1914 from where he travels to London via Siberia, Russia, Finland, Sweden, and Norway. But this is just the beginning of his adventures. In London, he manages to enlist in the British Army as a private soldier in the 24th Middlesex Regiment. As a result, fate catapults him to three fronts in the battlefield – the Battle of the Somme on the Western Front, the Battle of Jerusalem on the Middle Eastern Front, and the Balkan Front – which he not only survives but also records on his return to India in May 1920. From 1920 to 1921, he chronicles his mind-boggling exotic experiences through serialised columns in a Gujarati newspaper which later become the source material for *Rangbhumi par Rakhad* (1922).

This conversational and episodic text is a kaleidoscope of contrasting images. It thrills and terrifies at the same time. If, at one moment, the buoyant and inviting narrative voice takes the readers on a guide-bookish tour through the streets and alleyways of China, in another moment, the reader suddenly finds herself in the riveting Battle of the Somme. This account along with “The Killing Fields of France” is the first description of a full-fledged battle scene in the memoir and it is quite a sensory experience: it is pervaded by the booming sounds of cannon, of soldiers dodging enemy shells, the digging of the trenches, the foul smell of gas which could only be filtered by stifling gas masks, and the sights of either corpses used for cover or soldiers grappling with their mortal combatants in addition to the acute shortage of food, water and medical aid. The entire memoir is interspersed with alternating scenes of war and tourism. The section devoted to the Middle Eastern Front elucidates grit and determination in the face of fierce enemy attacks and the spread of malarial fever. The chapters titled “Desert Battles” and “The Conquest of Jerusalem” provide sneak previews into defence tactics and martial gumption. The portion on the Balkan Front is a cursory account of Karkaria’s services under the 31st Casualty Clearing Station (CCS) which enabled him to tend to wounded soldiers without the license to practise medicine.

Certain sections of this book also prove to be quite informative for the layman. The chapter titled “I Become a Tommy” expounds on military hierarchisation and military routine and discipline. On the lighter side, for those who are inclined to recreation, the touristy narrator recounts his humorous experiences in foreign locations and provides the reader with information on budgeted travel-worthy places. His tips include the most affordable stays in expensive cities like London and the true art of drinking Turkish coffee. Moments like these in the text make it more relatable today despite the fact that it was written a century earlier. The breezy and chatty manner of the narrator adds to the appeal of this remarkable part travelogue, part war memoir.

This book is full of potential full-blown stories because instead of containing detailed description of his experiences, Karkaria provides multiple hastily written snippets of his sojourns across the three fronts. Even the translator, Murali Ranganathan, in his introduction has commented on the complete erasure of “individual personalities” as “a disconcerting aspect of the memoir” (p. xxi). Speed, usually a

beneficial factor in times of war, proves not to be such a useful quality when it comes to writing. It seems as if the narrator is in a haste to say everything at once. Not once does he stop to contemplate or philosophise except on a rare occasion when he visits the sombre tomb of Christ in Jerusalem. This is the only occasion in his long list of expeditions which leaves a lingering sense of profound sorrow in him. Karkaria's temperament on most occasions is otherwise rather detached, touristy, and observational. The following lines from the chapter titled "Constantinople" sum up his trajectory: "The strange customs of strange countries are bound to trip up the traveller, but one has to take it in one's stride" (p. 212). It is precisely his speed, tenacity and emotional distance from his surroundings which enable him to survive the Great War and simultaneously enjoy his rather topsy-turvy peregrinations.

In conclusion, one can't help but wonder whether this rare and rather captivating account of an Indian soldier who fought on the side of the British Army during the First World War will ever be adapted for cinema. Karkaria's story deserves to reach audiences far and wide. After all, it is a veritable account of a man who nurtured a contagious zest for life and who lived a colourful life.

Reviewer Bionote: *Enami Chopra is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English at Delhi College of Arts and Commerce, University of Delhi, and Research Scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She recently submitted her PhD thesis in which she studies the novels of E. M. Forster and examines a gradual shift in his authorial vision as he advances into his novelistic career. Her areas of interest include British Modernism and Indian Aesthetics.*

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