

Intellectual Resonance

DCAC Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

Vol II
June 2014
ISSN: 2321-2594



Published and Printed by:

DELHI COLLEGE OF ARTS AND COMMERCE
(UNIVERSITY OF DELHI)

NETAJI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110023

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Printed at: Xpress Advertising, C-114, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi-28

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Editorial

It is my pleasure to present this issue of “Intellectual Resonance” to its subscribers. The main purpose of this Journal is to present the recent developments in our subjects and also, its applications in life, business and education.

Subscribers are requested to send their articles and topics that are of temporal and professional relevance.

Our mission is to bring this Journal to a height of significance. Your efforts are welcome.

Dr. Rajiv Chopra

OSD-Principal

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Does New Media Really Impact Children?

Professor Chandrabhanu Pattanayak

Abstract- *In an age of ever expanding media use by children, there is a growing concern among parents, academics and policy makers about what impact these technologies are having on our children and youth. In the recent past several organizations around the world have initiated studies to understand young children and their ownership and use of media. However there is hardly any such study undertaken in India. This paper will try to explore questions relating to media's impact on children and youth and try to put these questions in perspective. In the absence of much Indian data, it will draw from studies done outside of India and try to locate the questions in our context. It will also try to question the categories such as 'generation' being used as sociological categories and try to determine whether there is actually any reason to be worried. It will also explore the question of whether there is an uniform impact across societies and whether children are only passive consumers rather than active participants in the process.*

Keywords: Children, New Media, Technology, Digital Age.

Introduction

In a recent report from the Joan Ganz Cooney Center and Stanford University on media multitasking, Claudia Wallis concluded¹, “New technology sometimes brings change that is so swift and sweeping, that the implications are hard to grasp.” Such is certainly the case with the rapid expansion of media use by children and youth for ever-larger portions of their waking hours. Academics, policymakers, and practitioners show a keen interest in the digital age. And, of course, parents are scrambling to keep up with the preponderance of new gadgets that influences modern household arrangements and communication patterns.

This report takes a fresh look at data emerging from studies undertaken by Sesame Workshop, independent scholars, foundations, and market researchers on the media habits of young children, who are often overlooked in the public discourse that focuses on teens and tweens. It reviewed seven recent studies — several never before released — about young children and their ownership and use of media. By focusing on very young children and analyzing multiple studies over time, we were able to arrive at a new, balanced portrait of children's media habits. They also introduce portraits of children's digital media use from a smaller qualitative study

conducted by the Joan Ganz Cooney Center to add some tint and texture to the quantitative findings.

Not everything they have reported here is newsworthy. But taken in its entirety, the view is of a settled pattern: Even as technology evolves and young children increasingly turn to games and mobile media, they still love television best. Here is a snapshot of the findings of the study:

- Children have more access to all kinds of digital media, and are spending more time during the day with them than ever before.
- Television continues to exert a strong hold over young children, who spend more time with this medium than any other.
- Not all children have access to newer digital technologies, nor do all children use media in the same ways once they do own them. Family income continues to be a barrier to some children owning technology, even as the price of devices falls.
- Lower-income, Hispanic, and African American children consume far more media than their middle-class and white counterparts.

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- Children appear to shift their digital media habits around age 8, when they increasingly open their eyes to the wide world of media beyond television.
- Mobile media appears to be the next “it” technology, from handheld video games to portable music players to cell phones. Kids like to use their media on the go.

What seems to emerge from this and many other studies is that we are confronted with a generation which is so attuned to technology that all of us, parents teachers and society at large really do not know how to deal with the situation.

Young people are often called the digital generation – a generation defined by and through its experience of digital computer technology. This rhetoric can be found in popular commentary in fields as diverse as commerce, education, government and youth activism. Thus, the electronics company 'Panasonic' advertises its e-wear MP3 players as providing “digital music for a digital generation”; the US department of commerce speaks about “preparing the digital generation for the age of innovation”; the educationist Papert writes of the “digital generation gap” between parents and children and the journalist Lassica seeks to defend young people from what he sees as “Hollywood's war against the digital generation. Elsewhere we encounter “the Nintendo generation”, “the Playstation generation”, and the “net generation” as well as related constructions such as “cyberkids”, “bionic children” and even “cyborg babies”. Meanwhile in Japan, there has been considerable discussion about the “thumb generation” – young people who have apparently developed a new dexterity in their thumbs as a result of their constant use of gaming consoles and mobile phones. In other words, what we seem to be discussing as academics is that there is a generation, which has grown up with the computer and new media technologies that are somehow different simply because of it.

Closer home, there is an advertisement that is running on TV where a mobile internet company

is playing on the idea of this generation and is showing how a child is born and is immediately hooked on to the internet that it can look at the net and cut it's own umbilical chord. The mother and the doctors stand horrified as the child grows up in seconds and walks out of the birthing room swinging to music from a smart phone. I think, this is a horrifying ad and am surprised that no one objects to this at a time when people seem to be super sensitive to anything that hurts sensibilities. Is this because we have become so insensitive to media messages that we no longer even see the message? Or is it that we have, as a society, accepted the notion of a cyber-generation and believe that this is the future that awaits us?

Nevertheless, just as the debates on gender, the study of generational differences inevitably runs the risk of essentialising those differences. Which experiences, dispositions and characteristics do we take to be representative of a generation? Who are the spokespersons of that generation and how is this authority established? How do we actually identify the boundaries and even the shared consciousness of a generation?

These kinds of questions are often at the heart of academic controversies about the nature of social change. For example, there has been considerable debate within sociology between Ronald Inglehardt and others about the notion of a post-materialist generation². Essentially Inglehardt argues that there has been a generational shift from materialist to post-materialist values in the post war period; yet his analysis raises difficult theoretical and methodological questions about how we measure and identify values, and about the relationship between the values that people might proclaim or sign up to in a questionnaire and their actual behavior. Both within the academy and popular debate, therefore, the concept of generation is complex and contested, and how we define, characterize and study generation is highly problematic.

Social scientists have suggested that in recent decades, chronological has been decoupled from people's actual life situations and that the normative biography – or the steady progress of

the life course – has become decentred. Even so, children and young people are not passive victims of this process. They are actively involved in sustaining the distinctions and boundaries between the generations even as they may aspire to challenge them. In exploring the changing meanings of such age based, generational categories, therefore, we need to understand how they are actually used by young people as well as how they work to regulate and define the meanings of age differences. We need to recall that such categories are not merely discursive, imaginary fictions: They also have real material consequences.

A technologically determinist position would mean that there are many issues and phenomena that many of the technology augmenters are bound to ignore. They often neglect the fundamental continuities and interdependencies between new media and the old media such as TV. These continuities exist at the level of form and content, as well as in terms of economics. A historical view will show that old and new technologies very often come to co-exist and one is never replaced by the other. Particularly in the area of media, the advent of new technologies may often change the functions and uses of new technologies, but it almost never completely displaces them. This kind of reading would also tend to ignore what many theorists have called the banality of much new media use. It is in fact quite interesting to see several recent studies which have suggested that most children's everyday uses of the internet is characterized not by spectacular forms of innovation and creativity but by relatively mundane forms of information retrieval. In other words, what most children are doing on the internet is not a subject of great worry for the parents and elders as made out to be, but in fact much more simple and harmless activities such as visiting fan web sites, downloading music and movies, emailing or chatting with friends and shopping (or at least window shopping). Technology offers them different ways of communicating with each other pursuing specialist hobbies and interests as compared with offline methods, but the differences can easily be overstated. For today's child, the idea of “friend”, or “community” is

quite different from what they mean to us elders. For them friends are not people who you meet face-to-face on the streets or in school or the café but a much larger constituency who you communicate with without fear of reprimand. The geography of the child's mindscape has changed drastically and we have not seen or read that map.

While one sees the mundane side of the internet one cannot ignore the downside of internet – the undemocratic tendencies of many online communities, the limited nature of much of what is called digital learning and the grinding tedium of much technologically driven work. One of the most troubling issues here is the continuing digital divide – the gap between the technology rich and the technology poor, both within and between societies. Many theoreticians of technology believed and still believe that this is a temporary phenomenon, and that the technology poor will eventually catch up, although this is obviously to assume that the early adopters will stay where they are. That the flow of technology will come to a halt for a while which will allow the technology poor to catch up and then they can all merrily be on their way to salvation. It is also to assume that the market is a neutral mechanism that functions simply by giving individuals what they need. The possibility that technology maybe used to exploit young people economically or indeed that the market may not provide equally for all, does not enter the argument at all. From the Indian perspective, this argument is so complacent that these theoreticians do not even see that there is a view that children growing up without the access to such technology, for example, in many developing countries, are likely to be developmentally disadvantaged. This is more damaging than any other argument from my perspective. It is one thing to hold such views. One may dismiss them as borne out of a certain degree of ignorance. However to not possess the ability to or simply choose not to see this is just dangerous and arrogant.

The technologically empowered cyberkids of the popular imagination may indeed exist. But even if they do, they are in a minority, and they are

untypical of young people in general. One could even argue that, for most young people, technology is a relatively marginal concern. Very few are interested in technology in its own right, and most are simply concerned about what they can use it for. But like other forms of marketing rhetoric, the discourse of the digital generation is precisely an attempt to construct the object of which it purports to speak. It represents not a description of what children or young people are, but a set of imperatives about what they should be or what they need to become.

Consuming media, it seems, has far outstripped reading storybooks or playing dress-up as the average American child's favorite pastime. Overall, children between the ages of two and 18 spend an average of almost five-and-a-half hours a day at home watching television, playing video games, surfing the Web or using some other form of media, revealed a 1999 Kaiser Family Foundation report called "Kids & Media @ The New Millennium³. Often children multitask, engaging in more than one media-related activity at the same time. How does all this media use affect children's cognitive, emotional and social development? Researchers are only beginning to search for answers, now that society is taking the question seriously.

"For years, psychologists interested in answering that question had their funding proposals turned down at the National Science Foundation [NSF] and the National Institutes of Health," says Jeff McIntyre, senior legislative and federal affairs officer in APA's Public Policy Office. "Funders would say, 'We're not going to pay for someone to study kids' video games. That's silly.'" Thanks to pressure from APA and researchers themselves, such attitudes are now changing. The NSF recently gave a group of psychologists a \$2.45 million, five-year grant to study how interactive media affect children's learning. Other psychologists are tackling the question of how more traditional media such as television affect children. Although there are still many more questions than answers, one thing is becoming clearer as psychologists continue their research: No electronic medium's effects are all good or all bad; it's the content that makes all the difference.

Digital children

Among the research groups working to fill gaps in the knowledge base is the NSF-funded Children's Digital Media Center project. Based at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., the center also has locations at the University of Texas at Austin, the University of California, Los Angeles, and Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill. "We have a whole new media world,"⁴ says the project's principal investigator, Sandra L. Calvert, PhD, a Georgetown University psychology professor. "We're at the beginning stages of sorting out what its impact on children will be." Building on what is known about older media, the center's research focuses on two major questions: How does the interactivity that is a hallmark of the new technologies affect children's ability to learn? And how do the new technologies help children create their identities?

One of the projects at the Georgetown site features a multi-user domain called TVTOWN. Children participating in the project create "avatars," or alternative identities for themselves, and then use emotion and action menus to interact with other children online. The goal is to see how children build their identities and present themselves to each other.

Educational Television

When it comes to television, much of the research so far has focused on the negative impact it has on children's development. Brian L. Wilcox, PhD, chair of APA's Task Force on Advertising and Children and director of the Center on Children, Families and the Law at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, has summarized the literature about the effects that televised violence, sexuality and advertising have on children.

The news isn't good. Take violence, for example. While not unanimous, says Wilcox, the consensus is that exposure to violent content has generally negative effects on children's attitudes and behaviors. "Probably the clearest evidence we have that television influences children's thinking and behaviour is the fact that advertisers invest literally billions of dollars trying to influence the perceptions, choices and

behaviours of children through advertising," says Wilcox⁵. "We know very well that they wouldn't be investing the amount of money they do without clear evidence that those messages are influencing kids."⁶ Of course, television's effects can also be positive. Plenty of psychologists have been trying to harness television's power to help educate children. Much of the commonly accepted thought about television and children is wrong, says Anderson a famous psychologist. For example, there's no evidence for the popular assumption that television's rapid-fire editing style has shortened children's attention spans. Anderson also finds himself having to convince producers that they should focus less attention on how a show looks and more on making its content understandable. Now Anderson has an NSF grant to challenge another common idea--that having the television on in the background doesn't affect very young children. "Most exposure to television by infants and toddlers is actually exposure to programs being watched by someone else," says Anderson, noting that in many homes the television is on so much it becomes part of the home environment. "We don't know what that noise and potential distraction are doing to children."⁷

To find out, Anderson is putting children under 3-years old in a lab and watching how they play with toys and interact with their parents with and without a television on in the background. The results could form the basis of an educational campaign for parents. Anderson's own daughter has helped with his research. The fact that she watched a "Blue's Clues" pilot 17 times before losing interest prompted Anderson's research on the effect of repetition. His discovery that repetition reinforces learning resulted in Nickelodeon's strategy of repeating episodes on five consecutive days. However, Anderson says his research interest hasn't made his daughter a television addict. Now 10, Emma prefers to read.

Given this complex question of generational effect of technology, how do we read and or theorize this prospect? And it seems to me that what all adults seems to be obsessed with today is how social media is effecting our children and youth. We are even more concerned because we

do not seem to understand how this whole thing works. Let me try and attempt some tentative theorizing. This may allay some of our fears about social media and use and our children. In the earlier part of this paper, I have tried to point out various aspects of new media and how and where children and youth are interfacing with it. So what is the takeaway?. My attempt here is only a cursory and tentative and a great deal more research needs to be done to come up with a more comprehensive understanding. In order to understand the effects of media on children we must understand the nature of the media and how it functions in the society that we live in. Our specific context may finally determine the effect or at least the extent and nature of the effect and therefore this attempt.

I must point out here, that when I was trying to find studies done in India, I found very little to no research in this field. Some quantitative studies have been done but they are very tentative and very limited in scope. So, the lack of theorization and a lack of commonly agreed-upon first principles places social media studies in a unique relationship with public discourse, and how, unlike most other media studies, Social media studies does not have to "retrofit" critical paradigms developed in the past, and therefore should ideally be able to provide unprecedented insights into the complex interrelationships between textuality, subjectivity and technologies in contemporary cultures.

Given the proliferation of digital technologies it is first important for us to look at not only how digital technologies are changing us, our homes, work places, cafes, villages and towns, but also how we, our specific cultures, languages and our belief systems are changing these technologies. The physical and the digital world seem to be converging in a variety of ways. For example, today if one feels sick one begins to look for explanations of their symptoms on the internet before contacting a doctor; many people pay bills and their bus fare using their smartphones and libraries have begun to change from a physical one to a digital one. How does this interweaving of the physical and the digital effect the society that we live in? And how do we create different

structures to interact with these technologies? In other words, how do we build our towns, how are the roads and bridges built? How do we create different groups and feel a sense of belonging? Questions such as these are very important to ask if we are to understand the phenomenon of the social media and how it interacts with people and institutions and how it in turn determines the way we interact with it and with others around us.

One of the most important areas to be looked at is that the traditional sites of knowledge production have shifted. They have shifted from the physical spaces of the University, the school, the family to the digital realm of the internet and the social media. However, the digital spaces that are created as a result of this cater to the physical world of people and societies. Thus the space within which Media exists today is one of “hybrid practice and Representation”.

This is, in a way, a replication of the post-modern condition that was debated in the 90s. One of the most important characteristics of the post-modern condition is the proliferation of signs and their endless circulation, generated by the technological developments associated with the information explosion. These technologies have in turn created an ever-increasing surplus of texts, all of which demand our attention in varying degrees. The resulting array of competing signs shapes the very process of signification, a context in which messages must constantly be defined over and against rival forms of expression as different types of texts frame our allegedly common reality according to significantly different ideological agendas.

Both television and the social media are obviously central tropes in today's age of information. Many critics both past and present, the left and the right have argued that these technologies have responsible for the devaluation of meaning – the reduction of all meaningful activity to mere “non-sense” to a limitless tele-visual universe that has taken the place of the “real”. Such critics as Alan Bloom, and Jean Baudrillard have made claims about the destructive powers of the media and “mass-culture”⁸. The former has claimed that television

has brought about the ruin of true morality and learning. The latter has claimed that contemporary culture is a culture of endless simulations in which reality simply disappears. What, however is more interesting is that in Bloom's view, the culprit is not television alone but the more general democratization of culture, which threatens the elite values that once formed the basis of real learning and thus the acquisition of truth. But for Baudrillard, technology (especially television) is cause as well as symptom, allegedly constructing a seamless realm of simulations that hinder our acquisition of the *really real*. This I believe is what produces the endless repetition of the same question of whether the act committed was really real.

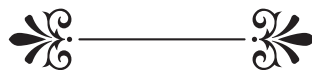
What then is happening is not that all these various technologies are producing the same response, but in fact because of the democratizing character of the technologies, they become absorbed into the category of the already familiar that produce an initial disorientation that quickly become manageable or *secondarized* through different strategies of absorption as they are worked over by popular texts and popular audiences. The medium may be the message, but twenty minutes into the future, the technological novelty is already in the process of being absorbed. This process of *secondarization* involves the manipulation of the array of texts operating within it – TV, Internet, Cinema, songs bestsellers and so forth – that demonstrate an increasingly sophisticated knowledge of the conditions of their production, circulation and their eventual reception⁹. This becomes more apparent when one sees how social media works, the site of production of information and the intimate knowledge of the process of circulation and reception. However, when this message crosses over to main stream television and other news media it becomes hybridized and re-represented in a different practice.

The all pervasiveness of different strategies of rearticulation and appropriation is one of the most widely discussed characteristics of the post-modern cultural production. Umberto Eco has argued that this kind of articulation is ironic in

nature and is the articulation of the “already said” which is the distinguishing feature of post-modern communication. In this often quoted example, Eco insists that he can no longer make innocent statements. A lover cannot tell his beloved, “*I love you madly*” because it would very probably produce only a laugh or in the day of social media be picked up and re-represented. But if he wants to make such a declaration of love, he could say, “*As Barbara Cartland would put it, I love you madly.*” The later indicates a mutual awareness of the “*already said*”. This is what accounts for the diversity of the possible strategies for re-articulation in which the past is not just accessed but hijacked given an entirely different cultural significance than the antecedent text had when it first appeared. What is interesting and as some might say, post-modern in the simultaneity of these competing forms of re-articulation – the “already said”¹⁰ is being constantly re-circulated, but from very different perspectives ranging from nostalgic reverence to vehement attack or a mixture of these strategies. Linda Hutcheon argues very convincingly that what distinguishes post-modern re-articulation of the past is their ambivalent relationship to the antecedent text, a recognition of the power of certain texts to capture the imagination, but at the same time a recognition of their ideological or stylistic limitations.¹¹

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Role of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in the Indian Economy

Dr. Garima Malik

Abstract- *The rise of India as a growing power not only in Asia but also at the global stage would require not only a macroeconomic uplift but also a thorough realization of innovation by the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). MSMEs contribute 45% in industrial output, 40% of exports, employing 60 million people and create 1.3 million jobs every year. Nationwide entrepreneurship development with appropriate scale, scope and innovation will make all the difference for Indian MSME segment considering the growing innovation in the competing countries including China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore etc. which are found high on Global Innovation index. MSMEs play a critical role in innovation, thanks to their nimbleness and their ability to experiment with new technologies on small scales. However, they often suffer from lack of funds, inability to take risks associated with technology developments and the difficulty of attracting skilled manpower. Accessing credit on easy terms has become difficult in the backdrop of current global financial crisis and the resultant liquidity constraints in the Indian financial sector, which has held back the growth of MSMEs and impeded overall growth and development. It has become difficult for lenders to be able to assess risk premiums properly, creating differences in the perceived versus real risk profiles of MSMEs. Government policies for MSMEs should therefore help them improve their technological capabilities by focusing on: providing access to risk capital, setting up of standards for the industry, improving industry/research institute/academia interaction, mostly in clusters, stimulating demand/providing scale through preferential treatment in government purchases.*

Keywords: Small Scale Industries, MSMED Act, Global Innovation Index, Industrial Clusters

“The poor cannot be helped by mass production but by production by the masses”

–Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Nation

Introduction

The ongoing program of economic reform is based upon the principles of liberalization, globalization, and privatization. Changes in the international economic scene, including the emergence of the World Trade Organization (WTO), have brought certain challenges and several new opportunities to the Small Scale Industries sector. The most important challenge is that of increasing competition, both globally and domestically.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) plays a critical role in Indian economy as reflected in their contribution to GDP (9%), manufacturing output (45%), exports (43%), fixed assets at Rs 689 billion & employment at

around 80 million. The scope and coverage of the MSME sector was broadened significantly under the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act (MSMED) Act, 2006, which recognized the concept of “enterprise” and to include both manufacturing and services sector, besides defining the medium enterprises under MSME sector. Thus the entire non-agricultural sector of economy was brought under the coverage of MSME sector subject to the revised criteria prescribed for defining Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises separately for manufacturing and services sectors.

MSME Sector consists of any enterprise, whether proprietorship, Hindu undivided family, association of persons, co-operative society,

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partnership or undertaking or any other legal entity engaged in production of goods pertaining to any industry specified in the first schedule of Industries Development and Regulation Act, 1951 & other enterprises engaged in production and rendering services, subject to limiting factor of investment in plant and machinery and equipment respectively as noted below:

Definition of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises in India:

Micro, small and medium enterprises as per MSMED Act, 2006 are defined based on their investment in plant and machinery (for manufacturing enterprise) and on equipment for enterprises providing services. The defined limit on investment for enterprises to be classified as micro, small and medium enterprises is as follows:

Classification	Manufacturing Enterprises*	Service Enterprises**
Micro	Rs. 2.5 million / Rs. 25 lakh	Rs. 1 million / Rs. 10 lakh
Small	Rs.50 million / Rs. 5 crore	Rs. 20 million / Rs 2 crore
Medium	Rs 100 million / Rs 10 crore	Rs. 50 million / Rs 5 crore

* Investment limit in Plant & Machinery ** Investment limit in equipment

The term "village industries" has been redefined in amended Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Act, 1956 as "any industry located in a rural area which produces any goods or renders any service with or without the use of power and in which the fixed capital investment per head of artisan or worker does not exceed Rs. 1 lakh (Rs. 1 lakh and fifty thousand in case of village industry located in a hilly area) or such other sum as maybe specified by the Central Government"¹.

MSME sector spans the entire non-agriculture segment of the Indian economy. Implementation of MSMED Act, 2006 brought different components of the economy hitherto classified under Small Scale Industries (SSIs), Small Scale Business Sector Enterprises (SSBSEs), Village & Cottage industries together and expanded the scope of MSME sector.

registered an impressive growth over the years; total number of units increased at an annual rate of 20.3% to 31.2 million during 2006–11. MSMEs contribute 45.0% to manufacturing output, 40.0% to exports and 8.0% to the country's GDP.

The Khadi & Village Industries (KVI) Sector not only serves the basic needs of processed goods of the vast rural sector of the country, but also provides sustainable employment to rural artisans. KVI today represent an exquisite, heritage product, which is 'ethnic' and has a strong clientele among the middle and upper sections of the society.

Output, Employment & Investment of MSME Sector

MSMEs account for more than 90.0% of total industrial units in India. The MSME sector has

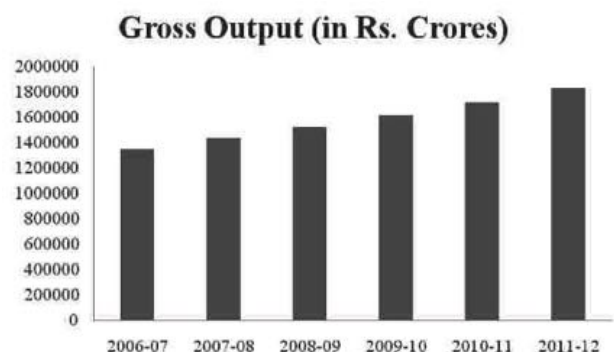


Figure 1 : Gross Output
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

Growth Rates in India

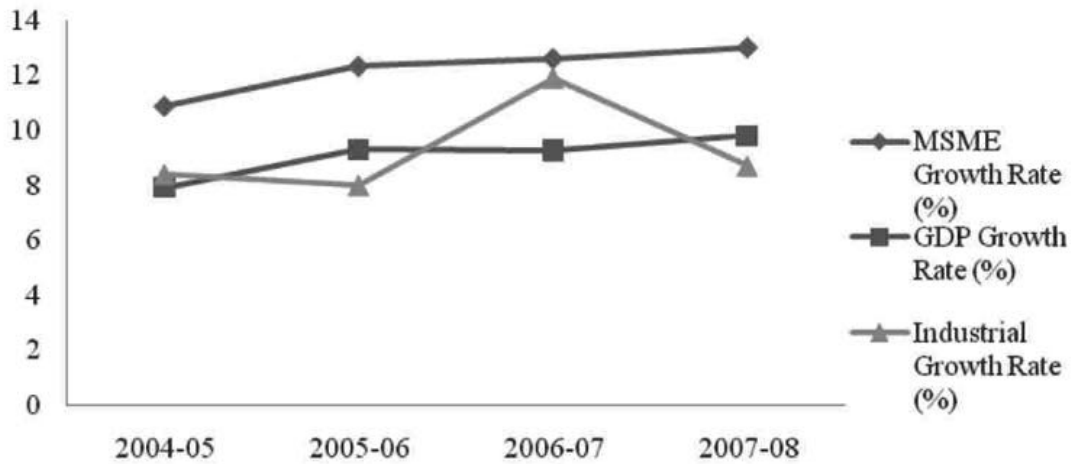


Figure 2 : GDP Growth Rate & MSME Sector Growth Rate compared with Industrial Growth Rate
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2011-12

The domestic MSME sector has outpaced industrial and GDP growth. MSME sector plays a key role in supporting employment and skill upgrading. The MSME sector is the second largest employment generator in India after agriculture. It generated employment for 73.2 million people in 2011-12 and is projected to increase. While MSMEs are a key source of employment for low-skilled and semi-skilled workers, the sector has been working hard towards upgrading the skill base and attracting more talent. In line with this, the government and various private players are heavily investing in training centres. MSMEs have been coordinating with private sector players in upgrading skills and delivering quality. Large industrial firms

(such as those in automotive sector) often tend to be the end-customer for MSMEs. To ensure product quality, these firms often coordinate with smaller suppliers to impart the requisite skills and ensure adherence to standardised processes. The government as well as NGOs have been actively involved in this endeavour. With improving skills, better coordination with bigger firms and greater technological access, MSMEs in India have moved into a league of their own. The sector currently produces more than 6,000 quality products, ranging from handloom saris, carpets and soaps to pickles and machine parts, for large industries targeting domestic and international markets².

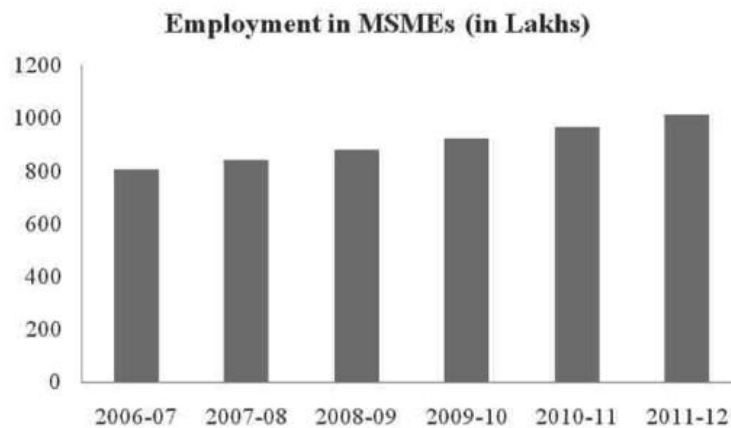


Figure 3 : Employment in MSMEs
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

The MSME sector in India is heterogeneous, dispersed and mostly unorganized. A key feature of MSMEs in India is that a majority of them are unregistered. Micro enterprises dominate the sector with a 94.9% share, followed by small

enterprises (4.9%) and medium enterprises (0.2%). Uttar Pradesh leads with the largest number of enterprises and highest employment followed by West Bengal.

States	Number of Enterprises (Lakhs)	Employment (Lakhs)
Uttar Pradesh	44.03	92.36
West Bengal	34.64	85.78
Tamil Nadu	33.13	80.98
Maharashtra	30.63	70.04
Andhra Pradesh	25.96	70.69
Kerala	22.13	49.62
Gujarat	21.78	47.73
Karnataka	20.19	46.72
Madhya Pradesh	19.33	33.66
Rajasthan	16.64	30.79
All India	361.76	805.24

Table 1 : State-wise distribution in MSME Sector
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

Given strong growth and rising potential, the MSME sector experienced a significant increase in investment flows.

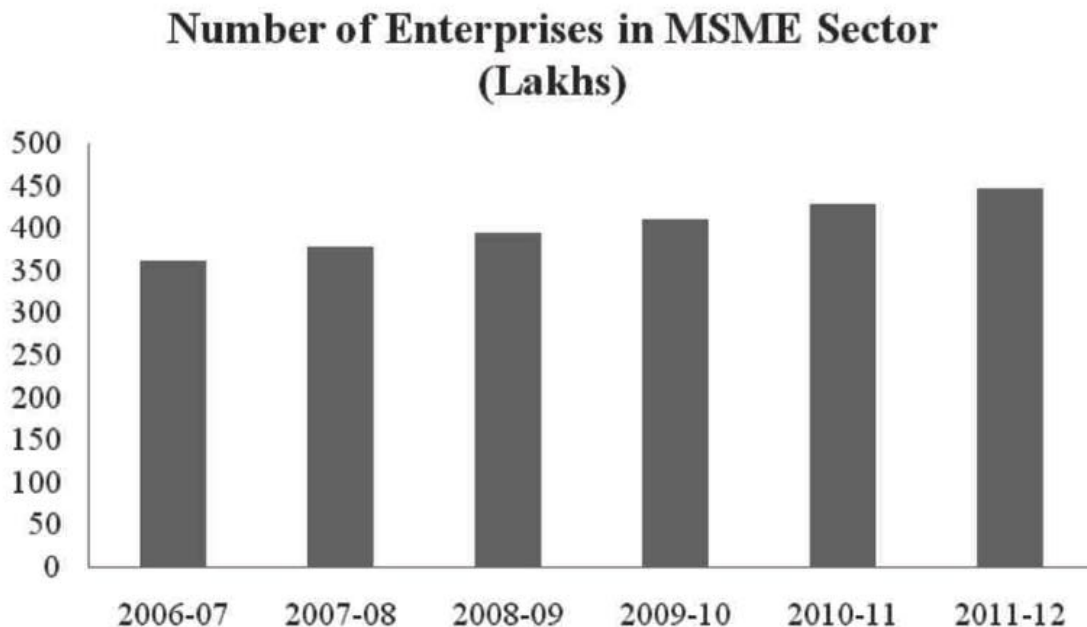


Figure 4 : Number of Enterprises in MSME Sector
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

Market Value of Fixed Assets (Rs. Crores)

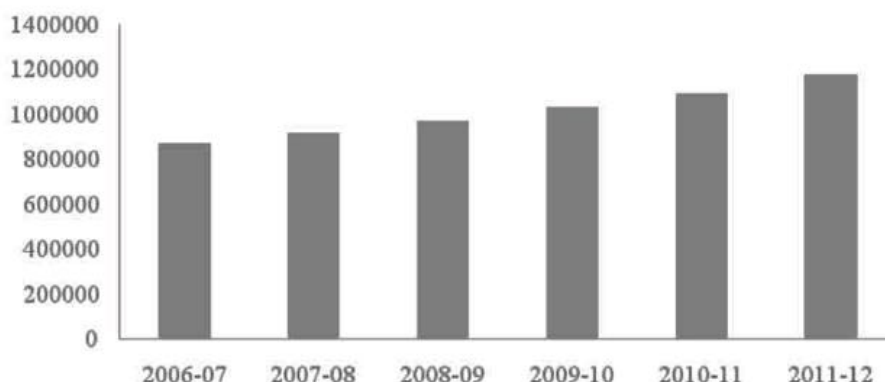


Figure 5 : Market Value of Fixed Assets
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

A major portion of investments has been directed towards technological developments, resulting in an improvement in volume and quality.

I. No.	Year	Total Working Enterprise (In Lakh)	Employment (In Lakh)	Market Value of Fixed Assets (In Crore)	Gross Output (In Crore)
1	2001-02	105.21	249.33	154349.00	282270.00
2	2002-03	109.49	260.21	162317.00	314850.00
3	2003-04	113.95	271.42	170219.00	364547.00
4	2004-05	118.59	282.57	178699.00	429796.00
5	2005-06	123.42	294.91	188113.00	497842.00
6	2006-07	361.76 ³	805.23	868543.79 ⁴	1351383.45
7	2007-08	377.37	842.23	917437.46	1435179.26
8	2008-09	393.70	881.14	971407.49	1524234.83
9	2009-10	410.82	922.19	1029331.46	1619355.53
10	2010-11	428.77	965.69	1094893.42	1721553.42
11	2011-12	447.73	1012.59	1176939.36	1834332.05

Table 2 : Performance of MSME Units, Employment, Investments and Gross Output
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

There are over 6000 products ranging from traditional to high-tech items, which are being manufactured by the MSME sector in addition to provide wide range of services⁵. The leading industries with their respective shares are as depicted below:



Figure 6 : Sector Shares in MSME Sector
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

Around 45.2% of MSME enterprises operate in rural regions and 31.79% of the enterprises in the MSME sector were engaged in manufacturing, whereas 68.21% were engaged in services.

Urban-Rural spread of MSMEs

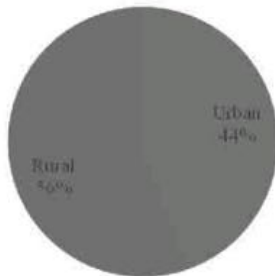


Figure 7 : Urban-Rural Spread of MSMEs
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

Activity-wise MSME

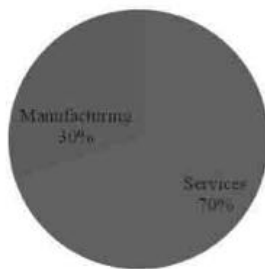


Figure 8 : Activity-wise MSMEs
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

MSME Sector & Industrial Clusters

The MSME landscape has matured over time and moved up the value chain. The MSME sector has evolved from the manufacturing of traditional products to much more hybrid products. Firms in the MSME sector that were earlier facing difficulties in achieving economies of scale, specialisation and innovation due to their small size are now increasingly benefiting from the advent of industrial clusters. Clusters and associated networks enable small firms to combine the advantages of running a small unit with the benefits of scale and specialisation provided by large units. Currently, there are more than 600 industrial SMEs clusters and over 7,000 artisan/micro enterprise clusters operating in India. The networking approach has helped

MSMEs to overcome barriers such as technological obsolescence, supply chain incompetence, global competition and investment shortages. Furthermore, to capitalise on the benefits from specific target customer base, clusters are classified as export-oriented and domestic. Tirupur textile and Vizag marine processing clusters focus mostly on exports while the requirements of large domestic firms are supplied by MSMEs in specialised domestic clusters such as Jamshedpur's engineering cluster and Pune's auto cluster.

The inter-firm linkages stimulated by these clusters and networks have aided MSMEs to move up the value chain and gain competitiveness. Firms within a specific cluster have been able to better utilise the available infrastructure by sharing the same transport mechanism. These clusters even helped the journey of rural artisans with innate skills to self-sufficiency by overcoming their funding and technology-based constraints. Many success stories showcasing the potential of MSMEs have been recorded in India. Many industrial zones across sectors adopted the participatory approach by coming together to reap the benefits of clustering. The textile industry, largely operated within industrial clusters, in India is home to more than 70 clusters, accounting for around 80% of the total country's production. There are several successful natural clusters across the country. Panipat is home to 75% of total blankets produced in the country, Tirupur contributes 80% to total cotton hosiery export and Agra exports shoes worth \$60 million annually. Similarly, Ludhiana has become the hub for production of woollen knitwear, sewing machines and bicycles and bicycle parts in India. The auto component industry at Gurgaon is an induced cluster. Setting up of Maruti Udyog Ltd's public sector car manufacturing unit laid the foundation for the cluster formation. Moreover, petrochemical-based cluster at Vadodara was driven by the establishment of Indian Petrochemical Industries Ltd. Additionally, majority of the gems and jewellery exports come from Surat (Gujarat) and Mumbai (Maharashtra). Chennai, Agra and Kolkata are hubs for leather and leather-based products⁶.

Policy Initiatives during Economic Reforms period

The MSME Development Act, 2006 came into effect on October 2, 2006. Subsequently both the Central and State Governments have taken effective steps towards implementation of the Act.

- ❖ With a view to build the capacity of the Indian micro, small and medium manufacturing enterprises for overcoming competition in the global markets and facing challenges being posed by multi-nationals in the domestic markets, the Ministry of MSME is implementing the National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme (NMCP). The objective of NMCP is to ensure healthy growth of the MSME Manufacturing Sector. The ten components of the Programme dealing with the firm level competitiveness are being implemented in the Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) mode.
- ❖ The objective of Rajiv Gandhi Udyami Mitra Yojana (RGUMY) is to provide support and assistance to the potential first generation entrepreneurs, who have already successfully completed Entrepreneurship Development Training Programme (EDP) in the establishment and management of the new enterprise, in dealing with various procedural and legal hurdles and completion of various formalities required for setting up and running of the enterprise. An 'Udyami Helpline' (a Call Centre for MSMEs) with a toll free number is functioning under the Scheme which provides information, support, guidance and assistance to first generation entrepreneurs as well as other existing entrepreneurs. The Udyami Helpline provides information about various promotional schemes of the Government, procedural formalities required for setting up

and running the enterprise and how to access credit from Banks etc.

- ❖ The Government of India has notified Public Procurement Policy for goods produced and services rendered by Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs) Order, 2012 which is applicable for Central Ministries/ Departments and PSUs for effective implementation. With effect from 2015, overall procurement goal of minimum 20% are to be made mandatory by every Central Ministry/Departments/PSU⁷.

Financing for MSME Sector

MSMEs funding gap needs to be bridged to capture sectors promising growth. Availability of funds at competitive rates is considered to be an important factor to fund long-term growth plans and short-term working capital needs of MSMEs. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)'s contribution to the sector so far has been remarkable. SIDBI, in collaboration with various major public and private sector banks in India, launched a dedicated rating agency called SME Rating Agency of India in 2005. The rating agency provides a third-party rating for the overall condition of a specific SME before granting loans. The need for such committed financing institutions is consistently being felt mainly due to the sector's increasing demand for credit. This offers immense scope for other private and public sector banks in India to formulate innovative financing models. Total advances from various public sector banks to micro and small sized firms have been growing at a fast pace; it expanded at 23.8 % to reach \$106.2 billion over 2000–11. As part of an RBI initiative, all banks were instructed to boost credit to micro and small units to 60% of total SME lending by 2013⁸.

<i>Name of the Products reserved for Exclusive Manufacture under MSME Act, 2008</i>
FOOD AND ALLIED INDUSTRIES
WOOD AND WOOD PRODUCTS
PAPER PRODUCTS
INJECTION MOULDING THERMO-PLASTIC PRODUCT
OTHER CHEMICALS AND CHEMICAL PRODUCTS
GLASS AND CERAMICS
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING EXCLUDING TRANSPORT EQUIPMENT



Figure 9 : Financing of MSMEs
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

Export Promotion of MSMEs

The MSME sector also plays an important role in India's exports. MSME exports have expanded at 19% during 2002–08. The MSME sector accounts for around 40% of total exports in India. With the opening up of foreign direct investment (FDI) in multi-brand retail, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have sought the government's help in setting up a branding and export marketing fund. The primary objective of such a fund would be to promote and create awareness of Indian SME labels in markets overseas and within India. The proposed fund could enable positioning of Indian MSME products and services and help create new market opportunities, as foreign retailers that invest in India are required to source at least 30% of their goods from Indian SMEs. The key strategy to enhance the exports of MSMEs is to improve the manufacturing ability, which in turn is expected to improve the competitiveness of their products, higher value addition, skill development and training, thrust on standardisation and quality, access to affordable credit, impetus to technology upgradation and innovation, support for marketing and brand-building and infrastructure development.

Adequate provision of pre- and post-shipment foreign currency credit to the MSME sector; a uniform credit rating format, tackling the problem of delayed payments by customers will go a long way to improve their liquidity problems and bring about an overall improvement in efficiency in the sector⁹.

Constraints facing MSME and Policy Implications

The inclusiveness of the MSME sector is highlighted by the fact that around 50% of MSMEs in India are owned by underprivileged groups. Due to its low capital structure, coupled with high labour absorbing power, the sector has played a noteworthy role in achieving rural industrialisation as well. The MSME sector remains a key driving force for India's complete transition from an agrarian economy to an industrialised one. MSMEs have been awarded a host of incentives by government and number of other organisations in the private and non-profit domain have also been aiding MSMEs to remain competitive in a more globalised economic order. This is set to continue in the coming decade as well, with MSMEs requiring access to credit, technological know-how and training centres for bridging the skill gap¹⁰.

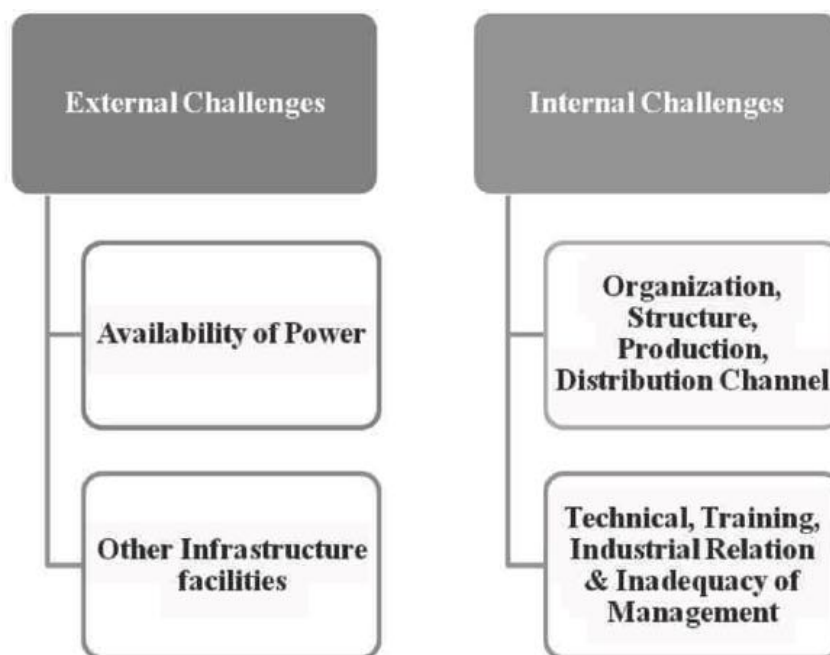


Figure 10 : Challenges facing MSMEs
Source: Annual Report of MSMEs 2012-13

The requirements of large domestic MSMEs play a critical role in innovation due to their ability to experiment with new technologies on small scales. However, they often suffer from lack of funds, inability to take risks associated with technology developments and the difficulty of attracting skilled manpower. Policy interventions for MSMEs must be tailored to their conditions. Government policies for MSMEs should therefore help them improve their technological capabilities by focusing on¹¹:

- i. Providing access to risk capital
- ii. Setting up of standards for the industry
- iii. Improving Industry/research institute/academia interaction, mostly in clusters
- iv. Stimulating demand/providing scale through preferential treatment in government purchases

Future Landscape for MSME Sector

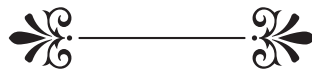
MSMEs are likely to experience a more conducive landscape with the government committed to provide momentum to the sector by including it as an integral part of industrial policy. MSMEs' contribution to the country's GDP is expected to increase to 22 % by 2020. The anticipated rise can be attributed to policymakers'

focus on boosting the country's manufacturing sector and promoting greater role of entrepreneurial activity across sectors. This could lead to a wide range of lucrative opportunities for domestic and international investors. An appropriate strategy in supporting MSMEs is important for financial institutions also. In recent times, while banks' dependence on large corporates and infrastructure funding resulted in a mismatch of funds, MSMEs have provided better opportunities for working capital and short-term loans.

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Corporate Social Responsibility: A Welcome Step in the Right Direction

Dr. Rajiv Chopra

Abstract: *CSR is a Welcome Step towards social upliftment in India. As I am going to discuss below about its mandate of Companies Act 2013 and opinions about its voluntary feature through views of many management experts and various activities of companies.*

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility

With the passage of Companies Act, 2013 the mandate for corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been formally introduced to the dashboard of the Boards of Indian companies. The industry has responded positively to the reform measure undertaken by the government with a wide interest across the public and private sector, Indian and multinational companies. I see as a welcome step in the right direction.

Corporate drives its strength from the society and is obliged to return the favour back to the society. Under the aegis of the new Companies Act, 2013, every company with a net worth of Rs 500 crore or more or a net profit of 5 crore or more or turnover of 1000 crore or more, must utilize 2 percent of its profit through a special team constituted for this purpose. This is an important step, as it tries to fix not only a financial responsibility of CSR on the companies, but also, the operational part. Earlier, companies used to be involved in tangential CSR activities, but, now they will have to get their hands dirty in it. They need to hit the ground, constitute a body, provide funds for running it and have to discuss the results in their Annual Report.

Many feel that an object like CSR should always be voluntary, and never made compulsory, as it may discourage various companies in doing so. Social responsibility should be taken as service and should never be something pushed upon. But, I feel that looking into a broader perspective, we need to develop a culture of CSR among the corporate sector first, and this goes in the right

direction. Various Indian companies have impeccable work done as part of CSR. Tata Group has built schools, colleges, hospitals, parks and other amenities for public.¹ HUL's Project Shakti was aimed at empowering the women in rural areas. Similarly, ITC has collaborated with other NGOs to provide and fund education for poor children. But, sadly, this is limited to a few Corporate Houses, and for many more, it is just a simple plain farce.

Corporate Social Responsibility was for long considered to be a philanthropy exercise by the companies, with no economic value attached to it. It is really painful to see that everything in this world is seen through the prism of economic profit. But, the notion of CSR has changed in last 5 years or so. With concepts of triple bottom line profits gaining in strength, companies look to expand their social foot print as well. Noted Strategic Professor at Harvard, Michael Porter, have advocated companies to take CSR as a brand building exercise that further contributes into value creation for the companies. Intelligently utilizing money in CSR activities on the projects of impact and value creation for the society can be used to enhance the brand image of the company, create effective business and channel partners. Just taking an example of Lifebuoy from HUL during Kumbh mela, HUL team collaborated with large free food messes operating at the Mela to raise awareness about the cleanliness. They got the text imprinted on Chappatis – Aapne Lifebuoy Se haath Dhoya Kya? This kind of advertisement was something,

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where companies own missions were bundled with social responsibility.

One of the key challenges will be required magnitude of impact creation. A non-professional and divided approach to CSR may result in making sub optimal gains and nothing concrete can come out of it. Another famous Strategic Management Professor, CK Prahalad, in his book, Fortunes at the Bottom of the Pyramid, have talked about as to how we need to innovate our business models. CSR needs not be an external arm, but instead should be implicit in the business model of the company. Companies along with NGOs, Civil Society and the government must come along to find out innovative ways to tackle to social problems of poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition.² Poor people constitute the biggest and fastest growing opportunity for the companies. We must stop treating them as liabilities, and instead treat them as our customers.

To make this provision a success, the firms need to bring a change in their intent. The companies should consider their impact on environment, must not push the limits for their own economic benefit. They should strive to reduce their carbon foot prints, take precautions not to pollute or damage the environment.

I personally feel that the companies should direct their CSR activities on a specific list of projects and are sustained for a long period time, enough to create an impact. It has been widely seen that companies are engaged in Child education in one year and move to environmental awareness in the next. This does not yield the desired result. Now, with proper CSR policy and dedicated team, I am sure that first, they should be able to list down the specific cause they intend to work for. The government can also look forward to utilize their expertise their respective field for various social assistance programmes as part of CSR. In this way, we will be able to get the best out of them. Funding of Mobile Ambulances, creating various e-governance portals, creation of other soft

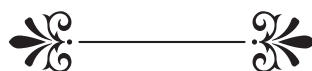
infrastructures and processes can be a more progressive step than those projects done in bits and pieces.

An ethical corporate governance structure of the companies forms the core of the CSR. A company which is ethical in its operation will be already taking care of their social responsibility. The daily dilemmas faced by them in various decision making and the choices they make needs to be based on clear strategy and high moral grounds. For companies it needs to be understood that they are deriving their strength from the society, as to they are integral part of this society.³ They cannot function in isolation with the society. Hence, it is their responsibility to behave and function like a responsible member of the society. A social commitment along with a sound business model will go a long way in building brand equity of the organization.

Time and again, it has been proven that the organizations who have imbibed the social values in the DNA of organization have stood the test of the time and will be the ones who will call the shots in the future too.⁴ It is this DNA which determines the success or failure of the organization. We must not see this as expenditure but rather as an investment. So I would like to conclude it by saying that it's really a welcome step towards social upliftment in india.

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South Asian Environmental Diplomacy: Species Conservation And Beyond

Dr. Atanu Mohapatra

Abstract- *The South Asia region has been facing multitude of environmental threats which are beyond control of any singular country. Most of the South Asian Countries are Party to various multilateral environmental declarations, agreements, treaties, conventions and frameworks. With its unique geographical features including trans-boundary river system, trans-boundary ecosystems with protected areas spreading over international border; are the South Asian Countries adopting or pursuing to environmental diplomacy to resolve their trans-boundary or regional or global environmental problems? Have international instruments transformed or facilitated or being catalyst for regional environmental agreements among South Asian Countries? This essay delves into species conservation efforts in South Asian region with a special critical look at recently concluded Memorandum of Understanding between India and Bangladesh. This paper also highlights potential of regional forum like SAARC to accelerate regional environmental diplomacy.*

Key Words: *Environmental diplomacy, endangered species conservation, climate change, South Asia.*

Introduction

Environmental diplomacy has its origin in biological conservation dates back to the Treaty Concerning the Regulation of Salmon Fishing in the Rhine River Basin among Germany, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Switzerland in 1886. However, during last fifty years, the emergence of 'environmental concerns' facilitated by great discoveries and voyages with substantiated by international science, the environmental diplomacy has been gaining momentum. The UN sponsored global environmental conferences have streamlined diplomacy on environment as one of the priority political agenda. Since UN Conference on Human Environment (UNCHE) and especially during Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the notion of environmental diplomacy added to the lexicon of foreign affairs of countries. Are the South Asian Countries adopting or pursuing environmental diplomacy to resolve their trans-boundary or regional or global environmental problems? Most of the South Asian Countries are Party to various multilateral environmental declarations, agreements, treaties, conventions and frameworks. Have these international instruments transformed or facilitated or being catalyst for regional or bilateral environmental

agreements among South Asian Countries?

Environmental Diplomacy

'Environmental diplomacy' or 'eco-diplomacy' has been a recent phenomenon in international relation. Despite its volume and momentum with growing number of specialised professional representatives of the governments to deal with, there is no commonly accepted definition in arena of international politics. Further, the study on environmental diplomacy in South Asia is very limited. While the region produced a masterpiece of 'complete diplomacy' as in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* in 4th Century, there is no coherent effort to develop 'environmental diplomacy' as a tool to address trans-boundary environmental challenges in India. More recently an attempt has been made to critically look at the MENs and capacity of South Asian countries for its implementations¹. Mitigation of environmental stresses in South Asia is possible only through ecological cooperation as building trust to resolve long-standing territorial disputes² and by entering into treaty³.

Eco-diplomacy is a new fields in international relations, in essence a kind of environmental stewardship that emphasises international cooperation and multilateral actions to address transnational environmental harm⁴.

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"Environmental diplomacy", as defined by UN Environment Program (UNEP), "as a combination of tools and approaches to help parties in dispute create opportunities for cooperation, confidence building and conflict transformation by addressing joint environmental and natural resource issues".⁵ The UNEP promotes shared natural resources or common environmental threats as a platform for dialogue, confidence-building and cooperation between countries.

The basic understanding of structure, process and outcome of environmental diplomacy has provided by Susskind who describes the actors, stages of negotiations and information exchanges⁶. While there has been a growing number agreements regarding conservation, protection, and management of species, it has been clubbed into four types of negotiations on biological conservation⁷. The first is the traditional form of conservation treaty negotiation, intended to provide participants with a fair share of a resource and to prevent overexploitation of a resource. The second type of negotiation involves conservation of a species or habitat that is not currently being exploited. A third type of negotiation concerns joint measures to contract a threat to a common stock other than by overexploitation, such as by pollution. A fourth type of negotiation aims at ensuring a sustainable yield and at regulating international trade in products obtained from a natural resource.

According to Cyrille de Klemm (1993), sectoral conservation treaties deal either with certain species or with certain types of natural habitat or protected area⁸. Although species and area-based measures may frequently be combined, such treaty may be either global or regional. Instrument dealing primarily with the protection of wild species fall into three broad groups as below:

(a) Species whose range is shared by several states: Where the range of a given species covers several neighbouring states, effective measures for its protection are usually dependent upon the conclusion of international agreements for the

taking of joint conservation of management measures to conserve stocks, control trade of preserve the natural habitat of the species in the region concerned.

(b) Migratory species: Migratory species are increasingly seen as an international resource, given that different states have jurisdiction at different points along their migration routes. However, the majority of international agreements are limited to the protecting of migratory birds, basically in Europe, North America as bilateral agreements. The convention on the conservation of Migratory species of Wild Animals adopted in 1979 in Bonn was an example of migratory species conservation.

(c) Treaties regulating the trade in wild species: The global Convention in International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed in Washington on 3 March 1973 and entered into force on 1 July 1975. In this global treaty trade in endangered species have been regulated. Most of the states are party to this treaty.

(d) Treaties regulating the exploitation of wild species: Certain species-based treaties may be classified as 'exploitation treaties' where their primary aim is the conservation not of biological diversity but of the basis for an economic activity. In order to prevent over-exploitation of the natural resource in question, it is necessary for joint regulatory measures to be adopted and implemented and to share the results of scientific research into the populations of management stocks. Major examples are International Whaling Commission (ICW) signed in 1946 and the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) signed in 1980.

However, Lyster Simon's typology of species conservation treaties falls into three categories⁹. In the first category, treaties designed to protect either a single species or group of species, examples are: agreements for polar bears, vicuna, and northern fine seal, and treaties for migratory species, whales, birds, Antarctic seals etc. With a few exceptions, these treaties concentrate on

restricting killing or trading of animals rather than dealing with other threats such as loss of habitat. In the second category, the regional treaties of habitat protection in America, Africa, Europe and Antarctica are included. Third category of treaties, open to almost any country wishing to join them i.e. CITES, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Ramsar Convention, etc. They cover wetlands, habitats of outstanding universal values, international trade in wildlife and migratory species.

Biodiversity Conservation in South Asia

South Asia region was formed due to geophysical violence in terms of plate movement. This land mass is covered and separated from rest part of the Asia by a long stretch of Hindukush-Himalayan mountain range in the Northern side. The other side of the Indian subcontinent is surrounded by Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean and Arab sea. This geophysical surrounding gives a unique though varied life support system. While the people of South Asia are organised within several political boundaries, however, the rivers, the mountains, and the ecosystems in general and species in particular are transboundary. The protected areas are transcending political boundary in this subcontinent. These unique features explain the diversity of species and ecosystems in Indian subcontinent.

The region comprises 22 percent of the world's population living on 3.5 percent of total land area but contain only 2 % of the world's forest area. The Hindukush- Himalayan mountain range is the host to the world's highest ecosystems. The range is home to over 25,000 major plant species, comprising 10 percent of the world's flora. Indian subcontinent has a unique feature of existing protected areas, which transcends political boundary. The Royal Manas National Park (NP) of Bhutan shares the border with Manas Tiger Reserve of India. Similarly Nepal's Royal Chitwan NP and Parsa Wildlife Reserve shares Valmiki Tiger Reserve of India. Also Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and Royal Bardia NP are situated adjacent to Dudwa Tiger Reserve of India and many more.

Other landscapes in the Himalayan region that

are potential spot/area for trans-boundary implications are: Palas-Kaghan-Machiara complex (Pakistan and India), Western Terai (India and Nepal), Kanchenjunga Complex (Nepal, India and China), Thrumshing La-Black Mountain- Jigme Dorji-Manas Complex (Bhutan and India), Divang Valley- Walong Complex (India and China). The Sunderbans, covering some 10, 00,000 hectare of land and water formed by sediments deposited by the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna, is transnational. Out of 14 percent of World's remaining mangrove forests, almost 60 percent of the Sunderbans is situated in Bangladesh while the remaining western portion lies within India¹⁰.

Besides protected areas, the major river systems both tributaries and distributaries dismantle the restricted border. Major rivers like the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra originate from southern slopes of highland Tibetan plateau and covers more than one country in their course. Distributions of species throughout South Asian countries are remarkable. Fauna like Asian Elephant are found in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka; greater One-horned rhinoceros in India, Nepal, Bhutan; Musk deer in India, Bhutan and Nepal; the Gangetic River Dolphin is found in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. Some migratory species like Olive Ridley Turtles are found in the coast of Sri Lanka, India and Bangladesh. Most species are trans-boundary in nature, migrates from one country to another, like rhinoceros migrates from India to Nepal. However, the protected areas that shares common borders often share common problems such as poaching and illegal trade in wildlife through the porous borders. The region is prone to natural disasters such as cyclones, floods and landslides.

Thus, cooperation among these countries of the region offers great potential for the preservation of biodiversity. Trans-boundary conservation can bring many benefits to species in particular or biodiversity in general. From a biological perspective, the joining of a protected area of one country with the protected area of another expands the size of the habitat in the same ecological zone. The larger the size of the

protected area, the greater the chance of preserving the ecosystem in its totality, and of providing adequate habitat for widely-ranging species. Another benefit from cooperation is that illegal activities such as poaching, unsustainable harvesting can be addressed. To control these activities requires common legal frame works and coordination in implementation. This though transgressing the sovereignty of natural resources, it calls for diplomacy, dialogue and cooperation. It also helps countries to meet their obligations under international agreements such as CITES, Ramsar Convention, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Unilateral Conservations

The earliest codified laws in India can be treated to the third century B.C. when king Ashoka made laws in the matter of preservation of wildlife and environment. In the First Major Rock Edict, Ashok decreed that no living thing was to be sacrificed for festival¹¹. The first codified law in India that heralded the era of laws for protection of wildlife was enacted by the British— was the Wild Birds Protection Act No. X of 1887. Post Independence, the Parliament passed the Indian Wild Life (Protection) Act (IWPA) in 1972. The IWPA was the first comprehensive act meant specifically for the protection of wild life. But unfortunately, even the 1972 Act under section 9, permitted hunting, though with a license, for the purpose of (a) special game, (b) big game, (c) small game, and (d) wild animal trapping¹². Under the circumstances poaching continued on a large scale, as the trade in trophies and animal articles was not completely restricted. In 1976 wildlife in India finally got its due place and recognition under the Constitution as Article 48A (w.e.f. 3.1.1977) in part IV that contains the Directive Principle of State Policy. Article 48 (A) reads: “The state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country”¹³.

Besides IWPA 1972 (and amended Acts), Customs Act 1962 also controls import and export of wild animals. Similarly, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan have their respective country laws and regulations to protect wildlife.

Regional Block SAARC and SACEP: Platforms for Environmental Diplomacy

With the development of international laws to conserve wildlife, South Asian countries have been incorporating measures in their national laws. It is the obligation of member countries to formulate policies accordingly. However, the unilateral laws have failed to protect the wildlife. To resolve the problems like poaching, illegal trade, migration of animals and loss of habitat, it is imperative to seek cooperation among countries.

The genesis of environmental diplomacy in South Asia can be traced to the formation of South Asia Co-operative Environment Program (SACEP) in early 1980s. Prior to forging a political regional block as South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the need for a sub regional group for resolving regional environmental problems emerged as SACEP. Established in 1982 in Colombo, this inter-governmental organization is to promote and support protection, management and enhancement of the environment in the region. It has provided technical support by encouraging cooperative methods to tackle trans-boundary environmental problems on sea, in land and on air. The South Asian Seas Program, South Asian Coral Reef Task Force and tackling trans-boundary air pollution are being few examples of regional efforts made by SACEP.

For forging a common stance among eight South Asian countries during World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002), SACEP took a part in preparing the South Asian regional position paper on sustainable development. In 2004, SACEP and SAARC signed a MoU on cooperation for the protection of environment of the region. During its 12th Meeting of the Governing Council in Colombo, 2010, the Environmental Ministers of member countries recognising the importance of biodiversity in South Asian economy development and ecosystem service in and around the region, pledged to accelerate the efforts to halt the biodiversity loss¹⁴. The highest body, i.e., Governing Council had also urged SACEP forge

greater links and interaction with SAARC and to signing the SAARC Convention on Co-operation on Environment.

After immediate establishment, SAARC had initiated a special regional study on 'causes and consequences of natural disasters and protection and preservation of environment' in 1987 which elaborated the problems and sought for a regional approach through mutually agreeable financial and institutional mechanisms¹⁵. The Fourth SAARC Summit in 1988 decided another study regional in scope on the 'Greenhouse Effect and its Impact on the Region' to provide a basis for an action plan for meaningful cooperation among Members¹⁶.

In early 1990s, the South Asian countries were grappled with information surge on environmental concerns around the world. The end of Cold War had opened the new chapter of diplomacy for protecting or forwarding national interest on the face of environmental degradation. As it was the beginning of environmental diplomacy in international arena, SAARC environmental ministers met first time just before the Rio Summit in 1992 for taking unanimous stand at Summit in Rio¹⁷. The hype and anxiety which brought by Rio Summit has not seen in SAARC unity during Post-Rio decade. Often discussion on trade and environment, sustainable development and major global environmental issues like climate change took place under SAARC Ministerial summits. The two regional technical studies had somehow pushed the governments to agree upon 1997 SAARC Environment Action Plan which identified key concerns and implementation plan approved at Male. Late 2000s have witnessed more concerted efforts in discussing environmental threats in SAARC especially on climate change. However, during almost two decades since Rio Summit, the Environment Ministers of SAARC have met eight times only. Since, SAARC has come a long way in prioritising environmental issues especially climate change.

There have been instances of growing common shared negotiating position of SAARC in MENS.

SAARC has adopted common positions at Conference of Parties (COP) to UNFCCC -COP 15 (2009) and COP 16 (2010) respectively. To convey the regional aspiration on climate change, SAARC has accredited as an observer with UNFCCC since 2010. The Dhaka Declaration and SAARC Action Plan on Climate Change (2009-2011) adopted in 2008 and Thimpu Statement on Climate Change adopted in 2010 have ushered a new phase in SAARC for cooperative effort on climate change¹⁸. The SAARC has huge potential to provide a common shared platform on environmental issues of 21st Century but yet to utilise its potential.

Global Tiger Forum and Global Tiger Initiative: Multilateral Species Conservation

The first meeting of tiger range states to set up the Global Tiger Forum (GTF) to address the declining tiger population was held in New Delhi in 1994. It was attended by 11 tiger range countries and a number of non-tiger range countries; inter-governmental organizations and national and international NGOs. As per 'Delhi Declaration on Tiger Conservation', GTF was established and MOEF of India was elected as the first chairperson¹⁹. The GTF is consisting of 7 tiger range countries as members and INGOs, other non range countries, specialised agencies and so on to protect as few as 3,200 tiger today²⁰.

With the help of UNEP and WWF-International, ministers from Tiger range states met in 1997 once again before commencement of General Assembly of the Forum. Subsequently, India held an informal meeting with Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and other representatives of the Tiger Range states at New Delhi during November 1995 to speed up the ratification of statutes of the GTF by the Tiger Range States²¹. In 2000, the first General Assembly meeting of GTF was held in Dhaka where 40 representative from five member countries – Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Vietnam and Bhutan and nine non-member tiger range countries – Nepal, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, North Korea, China, Russia and Thailand participated. Besides observes from different international NGOs, WWF etc. were present in the meeting. The

meeting was primarily expected to focus on the Royal Bengal Tiger found in the Sunderbans forests in Bangladesh and India. It was also expected that both countries would try to reach a consensus for cross boundary cooperation on conservation of tigers.

The Dhaka Declaration states that for the conservation and protection of tigers and its habitats should be formulated through inter-state protocols. This ten-point declaration is to protect the existing tigers in 14 counties and also its habitats include Sunderbans, Royal Chitwan NP, Valmik NP, Parsa NP, Bardia NP, Sohelwa NP, May-U range and Chin Hills and Royal Manas and Phipso protected areas. Besides, the Assembly reviewed issues like 'inclusion of new members into the forum', the status of tiger and its habitats', 'population and threats across the world', 'illegal poaching and trade in tiger bones and derivatives' etc. Besides, it also discussed strategies for trans-boundary cooperation, protocols and the terms of inter-state agreements to save the tigers.

On the bilateral front India disclosed that it was going to sign an agreement with Bangladesh shortly in conserving the tigers, at the inaugural ceremony of the Assembly meeting. India's representative, Babulal Marandi, the then Minister of Environment of Forest, stated it would be impossible to conserve tigers without appropriate enforcement measures along the international frontiers. However, Sunderban's tiger population had to wait eleven years for such cooperation between two adjacent neighbours. The progress in GTF has been very slow due to lack of resources. Established in 1994, the GTF's first assembly meeting was held after six years. The last General Assembly, which was fifth of GTF, met in Delhi in 2011. The membership is also another concern area. The Illegal market for Tiger and its derivatives are in China, Korea and South East Asia.

Meanwhile, in 2008, the World Bank, Global Environment Facility, Smithsonian Institution, Save the Tiger Fund, and International Tiger Coalition (representing more than 40 non-government organizations), established Global

Tiger Initiative (GTI) for working together toward a common agenda to save wild tigers from extinction. The GTI Secretariat, based at the World Bank in Washington, DC, assists the 13 tiger range countries to carry out their conservation strategies through planning, coordination, and continuous communication. This is more confusing at the outset of two parallel and more overlapping multilateral forum- GTI and GTF existing for one purpose to save tigers. The government's initiative multilateral forum as GTF is fading its rational against the financially backed leading by 13 tiger range countries GTI. The World Bank, as financial institution, being GTI's secretariat has pushed new model for tiger conservation till 2022.

India-Bangladesh Bilateral Relation on Tiger Conservation and Protecting Sunderban

Sunderban, habitat and the largest sanctuary for the Royal Bengal Tiger in the world, shares common boundary of India and Bangladesh. With shared concern for dwindling population of Tiger, both countries entered into agreement to ensure survival and conservation of the tiger in Sunderban in 2011²². The Protocol on Conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sunderban is one of the progressive initiatives taken by neighbouring countries to jointly address threats to Tigers. The Protocol provides for bilateral cooperation in undertaking scientific research, knowledge sharing and patrolling of the Sunderban waterways on their respective sides to prevent poaching or smuggling of derivatives from wildlife and bilateral initiatives to ensure survival and conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger in ecosystem of the Sunderban. The Protocol also provides for cooperation to promote understanding and knowledge of Royal Bengal Tigers, exchange of personnel for training and promotion of education.

Simultaneously, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between two countries to conserve and utilise Sunderban for development and poverty alleviation (MoEF: 2011). Both the countries are parties to the CBD and are contracting parties to the Ramsar Convention. The MOU seeks to facilitate

Table 1: Countries and Year of Entry to Conventions

MENs on Species	India	Bangladesh	Nepal	Bhutan	Sri Lanka	Pakistan	Maldives	Afghanistan
Ramsar (1971)	1982	1992	1988	2012	1990	1976	NA	NA
CITES(1973)	1976	1981	1975	2002	1979	1976	2012	1985
CMS1979	1983	2005	2008	2005	1990	1987	2010	2006
IWC (1946)	1981	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
CBD (1992)	1994	1994	1993	1995	1994	1994	1992	2002

cooperation in the areas of conservation of biodiversity, joint management of resources, livelihood generation for poverty alleviation and development, cataloguing of local flora and fauna and studying the impacts of climate change. A Working Group would be set up to implement the activities under MoU.

It is beyond obvious that the agreement was triggered by climate change discourse. As Sundarban can be termed as lungs of South Asia due to its vast forest cover, India suggested immediately after Copenhagen COP that both countries were joining hands to establish Indo-Bangladesh Sundarbans Eco-System Forum²³. The Forum would include civil society organisations and local communities of both the countries, plans to coordinate efforts in afforestation, management of mangroves and conservation of the tiger. However, the Joint Working Group on Conservation of Royal Bengal Tigers at the Sundarbans under the MoU has yet to be set up to explore the possibilities of cooperation²⁴.

Subsequently, moving forward with bilateral cooperation, India and Bangladesh have proposed a Joint Venture between NTPC (India) and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) to set up a 1320 megawatt (MW) thermal power plant in Bagerhat which is nine miles of the Sundarbans as agreed in 2012²⁵. This proposed project has attracted severe protest from environmental groups as it would affect the Sundarbans ecology²⁶. However, after a site visit by Indian delegation on April 2014, Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka said that coal-fired power plant will not be harmful to the Sundarbans as 'supercritical technology' will be

used in the plant²⁷. The Indian government expects that plant will come into operation by 2016-17. Do India and Bangladesh have trans-boundary environmental impact assessment policies to consider the impact of such projects? There are several bilateral projects funded by international financial institutions which neither consider trans-boundary impacts nor successful in implementation. The case of Lafarge Surma cement project funded by World Bank, ADB and IFC-private arm of World Bank which faced India's apex court intervention is a trans-boundary project between India and Bangladesh.

Conclusion

Conservation is not alien to the Indian subcontinent. From third century BC to mid-twentieth century, South Asia had been passed through more or less uniform legislation on conservation. With countries getting independence from foreign rule that uniformity eroded and permitted independent regulations to emerge. These unilateral efforts have been unsuccessful in addressing natural resource degradation. Major events both at regional and international level like liberation of Bangladesh, the Stockholm Conference and institutionalisation of CITES marked the beginning of conservation through diplomacy in South Asia. It was in 1987 that South Asian countries had started environmental diplomacy in the region under the aegis of SAARC. However, environmental diplomacy is in its embryonic stage.

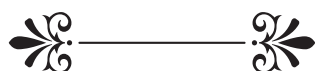
Until mid-2000s, the South Asian diplomacy had least touched upon environmental issues. However, the rapid economic growth on the face of severe environmental consequences has

opened the wide avenue for diplomacy. The regional cooperation on priority areas of environment needs to translate from talking points of workshops and conferences to actual implementations. International institutions like ICIMOD, WWF, IUCN and UNDP and financial institutions like World Bank and ADB have been creating a common ground in South Asia through various technical studies and projects. As a cultural unit with its value system and history and common approach to life, South Asia provides sufficient diplomatic space for negotiation and discussion on the issue of water, biodiversity, climate change that affects the human life. The species conservations which have seen a headway can have potential to amplify cooperation on shared water resources among South Asian countries. There is an urgent need of codifying the structure, process and outcome of environmental diplomacy in South Asia for further its utilisation by South Asian countries.

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Rural Wages and Salary Earnings in India: Analysis of the Recent Trends across Gender

Deepika Jajoria

Abstract- Last decade of economic reforms, the period of deceleration of employment in rural areas for males particularly for females, has witnessed a greater restructuring of employment pattern across various production sectors. There are evidences of further widening of the gap in levels of earning between males and females across various industries and occupations. The patterns of wages and salary earnings in different sectors reveal that the growth of women employment and earnings have not been simultaneous as no concordances were found between a positive but decelerated growth of rural employment and increments in real earnings of both males and females. This paper seeks to analyse the patterns of growth and levels of rural wages among males and females across broad industries and occupations in rural areas using individual level data from quinquennial rounds on employment and unemployment situation by NSSO.

Key Words: Rural wages, salary, gender.

Introduction

It is widely accepted by the research scholars that a number of factors determine the wage rates in rural India such as fluctuations in the labour market, seasonality of labour demand, levels of economic development, availability of labour and quality of labour in terms of levels of skills and education among labour. Quite at large, in a regional context, gender differences in wage rates are controlled by numerous considerations such as nature of work available (manual/ non-manual), relative dominance of males and females in the society, social acceptance of women, social structure, and demographic structure of the existing population. The basic objective of this paper is to examine the trends in real wages and to analyse disparity between earnings of males and females in rural India during last decade i.e. the later phase of economic reforms.

Views of social science researchers are diverse about widening of the gap in levels of earning between males and females in rural areas. The patterns of wages and salary earnings in different sectors reveal that the growth of women employment and earnings have not been simultaneous. The sectors of mass employment and higher employment growth have witnessed

the slowest growth in earnings, while the sectors of diffused employment and lower employment growth have witnessed high growth in earnings. This has led to the further widening of the existing income inequalities across sectors¹.

In the post-reform period, relaxed labour regulations with greater autonomy to the employer, preferred use of contractual, casual and piece rate workers has meant greater preference of women employees as they are easier to dismiss, obedient, willing to accept lower wages, less likely to expect promotion etc. are the factors which determine preference for women in the labour market as their expectations are lower and can be made to work longer hours².

In other view, adjustments in the household income is the main reason that has compelled women to take up petty jobs which render meagre wages and no social security (Ghosh 2009). However, this has induced feminisation of low productive activities where women are concentrated in the low paid and less remunerative activities associated with longer work hours (Ghosh, 2009). Further, a lot of studies indicate that the importance of females as agricultural workers has grown up, as more men

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move to non-farm job leading to an increased feminisation of agriculture³. In this situation, rural females are supposed to work as hired labourers since they are more likely to expect lower wages than their male counterpart.

Evidences from the available literature suggests that the males are better off compared to the females in terms of getting wage rates in both agricultural and non-agricultural sector⁴. Casualisation of rural employment in the non-farm sector, since 2004-05, was more rapid among rural females than among rural males with the total increment in casual employment being 16% and 8.7% respectively. Increased casualisation of the workforce has reduced the bargaining capacity of labour in the post-liberalisation era⁵. Virtually, there has been no improvements in the level of earnings for rural females. Wage differentials exist and have intensified in the post-reform period. Since a large share of women workers are engaged in agriculture particularly, as casual wage labour, the trend in growth rate of agricultural wages is an important indicator of women's wellbeing in rural areas⁶. Also, there are evidences that the growth of real earnings in the farm sector has been lower than in the non-farm sector.

This paper seeks to analyse the patterns of growth and levels of rural wages among males and females across broad industries and occupations in rural areas. Attempts has also been made to find concordances between change in wage rates and a simultaneous growth trends in rural employment in various sectors of production. To assess the gender dimensions of real earnings, two way analysis has been done. First, growth trends and gender inequalities measured in terms of differences in average nominal and real earnings of males and females in various manual and non-manual operations⁷; comparative analysis of compound annual growth of real earnings of males and females in those operation or tasks; and the gender disparity in real earnings in the same by applying *Sopher's Index of Disparity (modified)*; gender differences are then testified through *Independent Sample's t-Test* by comparing mean earnings of both males and

females in the same operations. Second, the same methodology has been applied to assess the trends of growth and inequalities among female workers of current casual and regular status across various production sectors. For this purpose, unit level data for three quinquennial rounds of NSSO on the situation of employment and unemployment were used (i.e. 1999-00, 2004-05 and 2009-10). Nominal earnings of rural males and females in all operations or tasks and production sectors have been adjusted with normal GDP figures first, and then exercised to estimate the real earnings considering the year of 1999-00 as base. Current daily status of the workers has been taken into consideration to analyse the wage and salary earnings.

Dimensions of Growth in Rural Employment by Sectors

Post-reform period has been characterised by agrarian distress which has resulted in significant deceleration in the employment generation potential of the farm sector thereby increasing the proportion of non-farm sector in total rural employment, particularly for females. Growth trends in employment (table 1) have been on account of sectors such as Construction, Education, Transport-Storage-Communication and Health & Social Work which are characterised by irregular employment and lower wages. Higher growth rate of employment for rural females in Electricity-Gas-Water supply sector is attributed to their little participation. Therefore, women are increasingly getting concentrated in the sectors where they tend to remain in lower job categories than men and are paid lower wages than men. Women are preferred in such jobs as they easily accept casual contracts, demand lower wages than men. On the other hand, employment growth remained positive but decelerated during 1999-00 to 2009-10 for rural males in both farm and non-farm sectors (table 1). Health & Social Work, Manufacturing, Electricity-Gas-Water Supply and Forestry, Logging & Fishing are the sectors in which it remained negative for rural males during 2004-05 to 2009-10.

Table 1 - Compound Annual Growth of Usual Status Workers by Broad Sectors in Rural India, 1999-00 to 2009-10

Usual Industry	Growth (%)			
	Rural Males		Rural Females	
	1999-00 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2009-10	1999-00 to 2004-05	2004-05 to 2009-10
Agriculture & Hunting	0.8	0.2	3.1	-4.3
Forestry, Logging & Fishing	4.7	-1.0	8.8	-21.7
Agriculture & Allied	0.8	0.2	3.1	-4.4
Mining & Quarrying	4.6	6.3	3.7	-5.7
Manufacturing	4.0	-1.1	5.6	-5.5
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	1.6	-1.5	9.4	21.5
Construction	11.3	12.0	10.5	24.5
Wholesale, Retail Trade; Repair	6.5	0.7	8.5	-1.3
Hostels and Restaurants	6.3	3.4	7.5	-2.4
Transport, Storage & Communication	6.1	3.1	25.0	2.0
Education	3.7	0.5	12.8	0.6
Health & Social Work	7.7	-6.2	9.9	1.9
Other Services	-0.2	1.5	-0.4	-1.1
Non-agriculture	5.6	3.5	6.3	0.7
All Sectors	2.3	1.3	3.6	-3.5

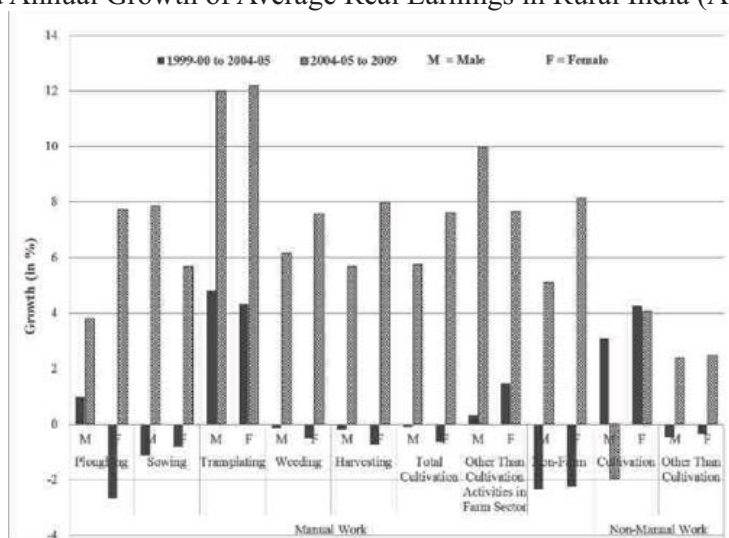
Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

Dimensions of Growth in Real Average Earnings

Last decade of economic liberalisation, the period of several key transformations in the rural employment generation schemes, has come up with oodles of up-and-downs in the real earnings

of rural male and female workers in different operation or broad occupations. Transplanting and other than cultivation activities in farm sector are the only manual tasks where both males and females could deter an uninterrupted increase in the real wages and earnings (table 2; figure 1).

Figure 1- Compound Annual Growth of Average Real Earnings in Rural India (At 1999-00 Factor Cost)



Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

Table 2- Average Real Earnings (in Rs.) across Gender in Rural India [At 1999-00 Factor Cost]					
Type of Operation		Gender	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10
Manual Work	Ploughing	Male	43.0	45.2	54.4
		Female	33.4	29.2	42.4
	Sowing	Male	40.0	37.9	55.2
		Female	29.0	27.8	36.7
	Transplanting	Male	39.7	50.3	88.6
		Female	29.6	36.5	65.0
	Weeding	Male	35.7	35.4	47.8
		Female	26.0	25.4	36.6
	Harvesting	Male	39.7	39.3	51.7
		Female	29.5	28.5	41.8
	Total Cultivation	Male	39.9	39.7	52.5
		Female	28.3	27.5	39.6
	Other Than Cultivation Activities in Farm Sector	Male	48.3	49.1	78.9
		Female	32.8	35.3	51.1
Non-Farm	Male	75.7	67.2	86.2	
	Female	42.1	37.6	55.6	
Non-Manual Work	Cultivation	Male	57.8	67.4	61.1
		Female	29.9	36.9	45.0
	Other Than Cultivation	Male	120.0	117.3	132.1
		Female	80.7	79.3	89.7

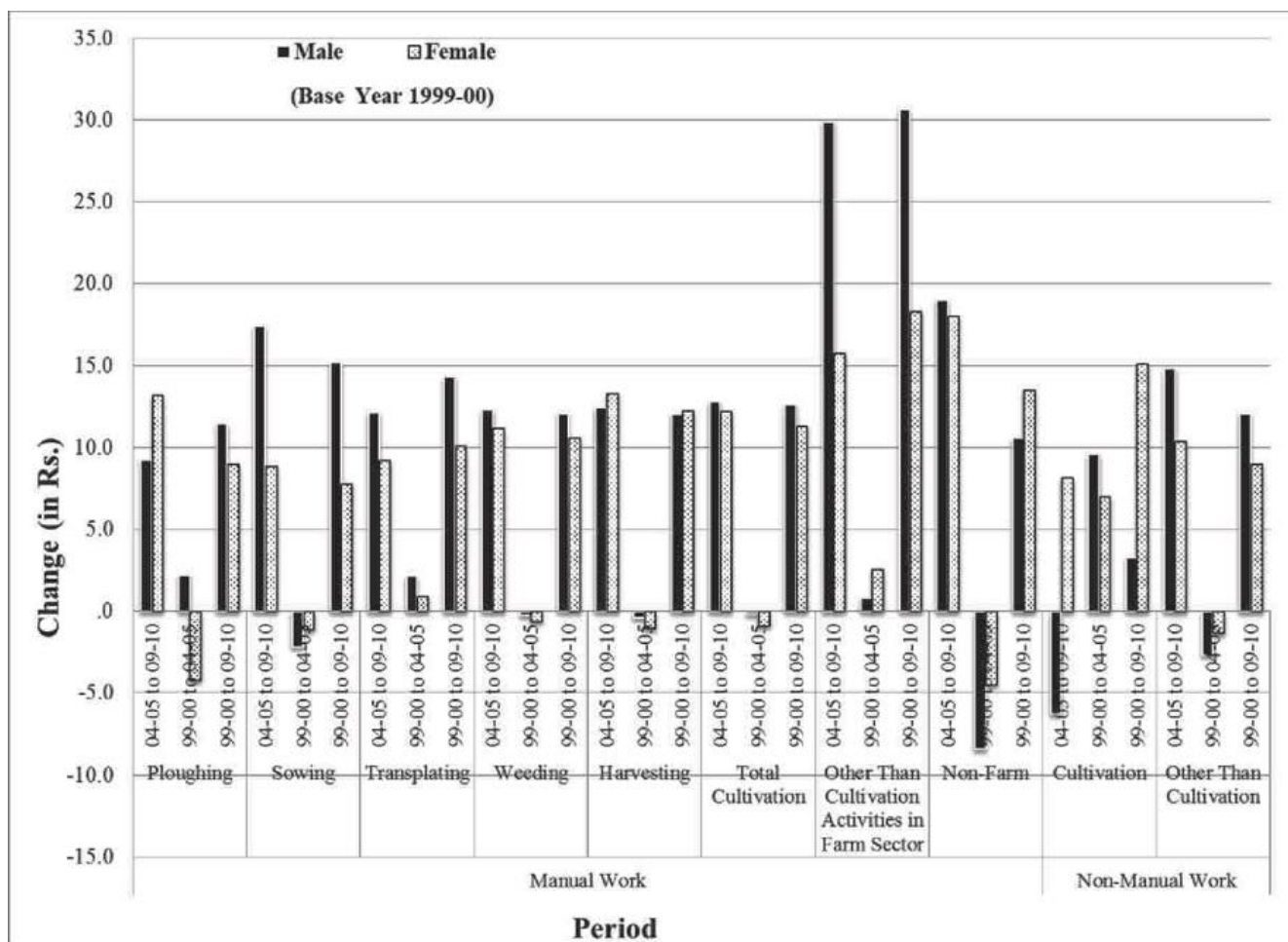
Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

** Compound Annual Growth Rate.*

Real wages for both males and females in the manual and non-manual operations once slumped in the period of 1999-00 to 2004-05 except in Transplanting, Other than Cultivation in farm sector (manual), non-manual Cultivation and in Ploughing for males, but again raised between 2004-05 to 2009-10. The period between 1999-00 to 2004-05 is characterised by an abrupt decline in real earnings followed by a retrieving level to some extent in the year of 2009-10. A

sudden fall of real wages of rural men and women seems to be an outcome of erratic monsoonal conditions followed by a substantial fall in Kharif production, when the second advance estimates of foodgrains production released by the Ministry of Agriculture placed the Kharif foodgrains production at 102.9 million tonnes, short of previous year's production by nearly 9 million tonnes.

Figure 2- Change in Average Real Earnings (in Rs. At 1999-00 Factor Cost) of Rural Workers in India, 1999-00 to 2009-10



Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

Remarkably, the period between years 2004-05 and 2009-10 records increment in the real earnings of both males and females in all rural operations except in the non-manual cultivation works for males. Figure 2 shows the extent of change in the real earnings of the rural workers across gender. It is notable that overall period between 1999-00 to 2009-10 has come up with an increase in the real wages for both males and females in both manual and non-manual tasks of cultivation and other than cultivation. Broadly, three observations could be demarcated- First, total monetary growth (in Rs.) and annual growth (in percentage) in real wages favours men in each

rural operation or task; second, rural labour markets offer more remunerative earnings in the non-manual type of jobs both in farm and non-farm sectors; and third, both men and women enjoy favourable incomes in non-farm and other than cultivation sectors irrespective of manual or non-manual tasks. Analysis from table 2 and figure 1 and 2 indicates that the real wages in rural India have been rising over time, however, the gender inequalities have not been slenderised and imbalances across males and females remain unchanged in all rural manual and non-manual operations.

Table 3– Sectoral Distribution and Compound Annual Growth of Average Real Earnings in Rural India (At Factor Cost 1999-00)

Current Daily Industry	Gender	Regular Salaried				Casual Labourers					
		1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	Growth 1999-00 to 2004-05 (in %)	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	Growth 1999-00 to 2004-05 (in %)		
					Growth 2004-05 to 2009-10 (in %)				Growth 2004-05 to 2009-10 (in %)		
Agriculture, Hunting	Male	35.2	54	58	8.9	1.4	25.8	40.2	53.8	9.3	6
	Female	27.8	44	38.1	9.6	-2.9	17.9	28	40.4	9.3	7.6
Forestry, Logging, Fishing	Male	84.7	105.9	136.6	4.6	5.2	36.2	77.7	79.2	16.5	0.4
	Female	59.5	73.2	540.8	4.2	49.2	26.3	35.5	36.1	6.2	0.3
Mining and Quarrying	Male	98.7	206.8	146.2	15.9	-6.7	37.5	57.8	83.1	9.1	7.5
	Female	41.2	61.4	157.7	8.3	20.8	24.8	38.7	54	9.3	6.9
Manufacturing	Male	59.2	98.1	100.1	10.6	0.4	35.4	54.6	71.3	9.1	5.5
	Female	24.4	34.1	47.3	6.9	6.7	22.4	31.8	47.4	7.3	8.3
Electricity-Gas-Water Supply	Male	115.9	202.8	241.8	11.8	3.6	35	70.5	78.5	15	2.2
	Female	73.8	211.6	251.5	23.5	3.5	70.3	20.5	48.6	-21.8	18.8
Construction	Male	81.7	88.3	137	1.6	9.2	37.9	59.1	74.8	9.3	4.8
	Female	57.2	73.5	98.1	5.1	5.9	25.2	41.8	55.4	10.7	5.8
Wholesale, Retail Trade; Repair	Male	38.2	60.3	74.8	9.6	4.4	32.7	49.2	69.6	8.5	7.2
	Female	35.4	46.3	43.4	5.5	-1.3	24.7	33.8	71.8	6.5	16.3
Hotel and Restaurant	Male	45	71.1	69.8	9.6	-0.4	44.6	57.2	72.4	5.1	4.8
	Female	35.3	34.9	30.4	-0.2	-2.8	21.2	40.3	65.8	13.7	10.3
Transport, Storage and Communication	Male	71.6	105.8	116.6	8.1	2	43.6	59.4	80.5	6.3	6.3
	Female	56.4	106.2	116.3	13.5	1.8	32.3	36.2	51	2.3	7.1
Computer and Related Services	Male	73.9	149.4	254.9	15.1	11.3	27.4	35.7	87.9	5.4	19.7
	Female	-	57.8	93.9	-	10.2	-	-	-	-	-
Education	Male	130.5	185.6	243.2	7.3	5.6	47.3	62.1	52.7	5.6	-3.3
	Female	93	96	129.5	0.6	6.2	14.9	42.7	45.1	23.5	1.1
Health and Social Work	Male	118.9	149	215.7	4.6	7.7	28.8	54	63.8	13.4	3.4
	Female	81	103.6	90	5.1	-2.8	17.9	43.3	35.4	19.4	-3.9
Other Services	Male	105.9	150.7	213.6	7.3	7.2	37.1	54.1	56.8	7.8	1
	Female	61.7	46.6	75.3	-5.4	10	20.9	34	44.3	10.3	5.5
Total	Male	86.8	119.2	150.7	6.5	4.8	29.4	46.5	62.1	9.6	6
	Female	63.7	68.9	93.6	1.6	6.3	18.6	29.2	43	9.5	8

Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

Broadly, growth in total wages was found higher from 2004-05 to 2009-10 as compared to that from 1999-00 to 2004-05; males were found in an advantageous position over females in both regular and casual type of employment. However, from 2004-05 to 2009-10 females have over-performed males in regular employment with a higher growth of real earnings as the later experienced a deceleration (table 3). In all periods, both males and females of casual and regular status experienced lowest returns in agriculture. Rural non-farm sector and its sub-sectors provide somewhat better income opportunities as compared to that of farm. Workers from regular status have always been in an advantageous position over the workers from that of casual status in all the sectors. Recently in 2009-10, females experienced negative growth of real earnings in agriculture, health and social work, hotel and restaurants and wholesale and retail trade (table 3). On the other side, real earnings raised at a higher rate in forestry, logging and fishing, mining and quarrying, computer and related services, other services, construction and manufacturing. Among males, it was negative in mining and quarrying and hotel and restaurants. While comparing two subsequent periods of economic growth between 1999-00 to 2004-05 and between 2004-05 to 2009-10, the overall growth of real income for female regular workers has been thwarted in the second period in agriculture, manufacturing, electricity-gas-water-supply, wholesale and retail trade, transport, storage and communication as compared to the first period.

In all sectors, workers from casual status have always been in a disadvantageous position compared to regular workers. Although all the sectors in all periods show a positive increase in the real income of both males and females except a negative growth in electricity, gas and water supply for females in the first period and education and health and social work respectively for males and females in the second period, yet there is a slackening of growth in the real income in the second period in almost all sectors. It was accelerated only in case of males in education and females in wholesale, retail trade and transport-storage-communication.

It is perceptible that the real wages for female casual workers are comparatively higher in the non-farm sector than in the farm sector. Wholesale, retail trade, hotel and restaurant, construction, mining and quarrying and transport-storage-communication are the sectors where females have relatively advantageous position over other remaining sectors.

While comparing the two periods viz. 1990-00 to 2004-05 and 2004-05 to 2009-10, the major sectors where employment growth has remained positive for rural males are Construction, Mining & Quarrying, Hotels and Restaurants, Transport-Storage-Communication and Other Services (table 1). However, except construction, there is a deceleration of employment growth in these sectors. Simultaneously, wages rates for regular male workers accelerated in this period. But, on the other hand, in Mining and Quarrying and Hotels and Restaurants it was even negative. Also, the growth of real wages for males also decelerated in case of casual employment in these sectors (table 3).

For rural females, at the same time, Electricity-Gas-Water Supply, Construction, Transport-Storage-Communication, Health & Social Work and Education are the major sectors where employment growth has remained positive but decelerated, except casual employment in Electricity-Gas-Water Supply where it accelerated (table 1). The notion that positive growth of employment in these particular sectors accompanies with an increment in the real earnings, does not really work. It works merely for regular employment in Construction and Education and casual employment in Transport-Storage-Communication. Besides, there is deceleration of wage rates in other sectors mentioned above, for both regular and casual employment. It was even negative for workers in the Health & Social Work (table 3).

Gender Differences and Disparity in Rural Earnings

Considering the year 1999-00 as base, real earnings of female workers have always being humbled in all periods. Indeed, the gap between earnings of males and females has widened in the

last decade in all rural operations. Although female earnings have been remunerative, the differences in incomes among both have not been bridged over the time. Significant differences between earnings of males and females were found in all the three periods.

Table 4- Gender Gap in Average Real Earnings in India (At 1999-00 Factor Cost)				
Type of Operation		Female Earnings as Percentage to Male[#]		
		1999-00	2004-05	2009-10
Manual	Ploughing	77.8**	64.7**	77.9**
	Sowing	72.4**	73.6**	66.4**
	Transplanting	74.4**	72.7**	73.3**
	Weeding	73.0**	71.7**	76.7**
	Harvesting	74.4**	72.5**	80.8**
	Total Cultivation	71.0**	69.1**	75.4**
	Other Than Cultivation Activities in Farm Sector	67.9**	71.9**	64.7**
	Non-Farm	55.7**	56.0**	64.5**
Non-Manual	Cultivation	51.8**	54.8*	73.7**
	Other Than Cultivation	67.3**	67.6**	67.9**

Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

*# Applying Independent Sample's t-test to the Un-weighted Sample Data, Positive values indicate a favourable condition for Male Workers. ** Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level.*

In terms of total difference, it is more wider in relatively remunerative tasks such as manual work in non-farm sector, manual work in other than cultivation in farm sector and non-manual work in other than cultivation. However, manual cultivation alone displays a comparatively modest but significant gender differences in all the periods; smallest extent of gap could be recorded in harvesting (table 4). In all periods, manual non-farm and non-manual cultivation experienced highest degree of gender disparity in favour of males.

Sectoral allocation of real wages for rural casual workers depicts some significant gender differences. Recently, in 2009-10, wholesale and retail trade was the only sector where females out-performed males. In all periods, Construction along with hotel and restaurant, education, other services and agriculture experienced a gradual augment in the income of female workers as a percentage to male. On the contrary, forestry, fishing and related services along with mining and quarrying, health and social work sector experienced a decline in the real income of females. Other sectors such as manufacturing, electricity-gas-water-supply and transport-storage-communication once showed a downfall in the real income of females in 2004-05 and then again increased in 2009-10. It explains the vulnerability for female workers in these sectors during 2004-05, a drought affected year (table 5).

Among regular workers, the real income for rural females is dwindling gradually in most of the sectors in 2009-10. Such sectors are agriculture, wholesale-retail trade, hotel and restaurant, transport-storage-communication, computer and related services, health and social work and electricity-gas-water-supply. On the contrary, real earnings of females as a percentage to males were once slumped during 2004-05 and again raised in 2009-10 in some sectors such as manufacturing, education, other services, mining and quarrying and forestry-logging-fishing. In forestry-logging-fishing, mining and quarrying and electricity-gas-water-supply, the females have a relative advantage over males.

At all India level, it can be posited that real income of rural females in both regular and casual category came down once in the year 2004-05. Also, the gender gap seems to be higher in regular category. Among regular

**Table 5- Gender Gap[#] in Average Real Earnings in Rural Areas across Sectors
(At 1999-00 Factor Cost)**

Current Daily Industry	Female Earnings as Percentage to Male					
	Regular Salaried			Casual Labourers		
	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10
Agriculture, Hunting	78.9**	81.5**	65.7**	69.4**	69.5**	75.0**
Forestry, Logging, Fishing	70.3	69.1*	395.9	72.7**	45.6*	45.5**
Mining & Quarrying	41.8**	29.7**	107.8	66.3**	66.9**	65.0**
Manufacturing	41.2**	34.7	47.2**	63.1**	58.2**	66.5**
Electricity-Gas-Water-Supply	63.7*	104.4	104	200.8*	29.1	61.9*
Construction	70.1	83.2**	71.6	66.4**	70.7**	74.1**
Wholesale, Retail Trade; Repair	92.8	76.8*	57.9**	75.5	68.7*	103.2
Hotel and Restaurant	78.4	49.1**	43.5	47.5	70.4	90.9
Transport-Storage-Communication	78.8	100.4**	99.8	74.0**	61.0**	63.4**
Computer & Related Services	-	38.7	36.8	-	-	-
Education	71.3**	51.8	53.3**	31.4**	68.8	85.7**
Health & Social Work	68.1**	69.6	41.7**	61.9	80.1	55.5
Other Services	58.3**	31.0**	35.2**	56.2**	62.8**	78.1**
Total	73.4**	57.8**	62.1**	63.2**	63.0**	69.2**

Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

Applying Independent Sample's t-Test to the Un-weighted Sample Data, Positive values indicate a favourable condition for Male Workers. ** Significant at 0.01 level, * Significant at 0.05 level.

workers, during 2009-10, it is widest in other services followed by computer and related services, health and social work, hotel and restaurant and manufacturing (less than 50 percent as a percentage of males). In Education, it is slightly more than 50 percent. Among casual workers in the same period, forestry and related services was the only sector which experienced less than 50 percent. Health and social work, electricity-gas-water-supply, transport-storage-communication, mining and quarrying and construction show 50 percent to 75 percent

followed by agriculture, other services, education, hotel and restaurants and wholesale and retail trade with more than 75 percent of the males.

Males enjoy advantageous and commanding position in rural labour market in terms of getting earnings in all rural operations; altogether biased against females (table 6). Disparity index reveals that level of gender disparity once increased during 1999-00 to 2004-05, decreased in 2009-10 at even the

level less than that of 1999-00 for some rural operations viz. manual work in weeding, harvesting and manual work in cultivation as a whole. Along with manual work in the non-farm sector, there is a high level of gender disparity in manual work in other than cultivation in farm sector, sowing, non-manual work in other than cultivation and non-manual work in cultivation.

Recent trend depicts that highest level of disparity ciphered in non-manual type of tasks in other than cultivation sector followed by manual tasks in other than cultivation in the farm sector and manual tasks in the non-farm sector. The two very important sectors in terms of providing employment for rural labour in the post-liberalised economy viz. manual non-farm and non-manual other than cultivation offer biased and unbalanced earnings to the rural females. However, manual cultivation has rendered fairly a low level of gender disparity.

Level of disparity has gradually increased since 1999-00 in transplanting. In ploughing, weeding, harvesting and cultivation as a whole the level of disparity once increased in 1999-00 and 2004-05 and then decreased in 2009-10. In sowing, manual work in other than cultivation in farm sector, non-manual work in other than cultivation, the level of disparity once decreased in 2004-05 and then increased in 2009-10. Although the level of disparity in manual non-farm and non-manual cultivation is higher as compared to other operations yet there is a continuous

decrease since 1999-00 (table 6).

Type of Operation		Value of Disparity Index*		
		1999-00	2004-05	2009-10
Manual	Ploughing	0.135	0.232	0.143
	Sowing	0.17	0.159	0.23
	Transplanting	0.155	0.169	0.175
	Weeding	0.162	0.17	0.146
	Harvesting	0.155	0.168	0.121
	Total Cultivation	0.179	0.192	0.159
	Other Than Cultivation Activities in Farm Sector	0.21	0.181	0.279
Non-Farm	0.358	0.339	0.294	
Non-Manual	Cultivation	0.364	0.351	0.18
	Other Than Cultivation	0.346	0.334	0.378

Data Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.

** Positive values of the index indicate an advantageous position for Males over Female.*

Gender disparity is higher among regular workers as compared to casual workers. Since 1999-00, the level of disparity has been swelling continuously among regular workers (table 7). On the contrary, it has decreased for casual workers in 2009-10. In case of regular employment, in 2009-10, primary sectors of production (farm and mining) indicate its lesser extent as compared to the other sectors such as highest in manufacturing followed by hotel and restaurant, construction, wholesale and retail trade and agriculture. Mining and quarrying sector has experienced a favourable condition for females in the same period. Along with transport-storage-communication and electricity-gas-water-supply sectors also come up with a decline.

Table 7- Gender Disparity in Average Real Earnings across Sectors in Rural India (At 1999-00 Factor Cost)

Sectors	Value of Disparity Index*					
	Regular Salaried			Casual Labourers		
	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10
Agriculture, Hunting	0.11	0.10	0.20	0.16	0.17	0.14
Forestry, Logging, Fishing	0.17	0.19	-1.49	0.15	0.37	0.38
Mining and Quarrying	0.43	0.66	-0.04	0.19	0.19	0.21
Manufacturing	0.41	0.51	0.37	0.21	0.25	0.20
Electricity-Gas-Water-Supply	0.23	-0.03	-0.03	-0.33	0.58	0.23
Construction	0.17	0.09	0.18	0.19	0.16	0.15
Wholesale, Retail Trade, Repair	0.03	0.13	0.26	0.13	0.17	-0.02
Hotel and Restaurants	0.11	0.34	0.39	0.34	0.17	0.05
Transport-Storage-Communication	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.23	0.22
Computer and Related Services	-	0.49	0.60	-	-	-
Education	0.18	0.37	0.39	0.53	0.18	0.07
Health and Social Work	0.20	0.20	0.50	0.22	0.10	0.28
Other Services	0.27	0.60	0.59	0.26	0.22	0.12
Total	0.15	0.28	0.26	0.21	0.21	0.17
<i>Source: Unit level data from Various Quinquennial Rounds by NSSO.</i>						
<i>* Positive values of the index indicate an advantageous position for Males over Female.</i>						

Among casual workers, the level of gender disparity seems to be higher in forestry and related services followed by health and social work, electricity-gas-water-supply, transport-storage-communication, mining and quarrying and manufacturing in 2009-10. Lowest level of disparity was observed in wholesale and retail trade followed by hotel and restaurants, education, other services and agriculture sector. Moreover, wholesale and retail trade offers relatively higher income for females than males in the same year (table 7). In forestry-logging-fishing, mining and quarrying and transport-storage-communication sectors, there is a continuous increase in gender disparity in the casual employment since 1999-00. At the same time, construction, hotel and restaurant, education and other services show a continuous decline in it. Also, the rural sector as a whole, manufacturing, electricity-gas-water-supply and

wholesale and retail trade were showing an increase in the disparity level in 2004-05 and decrease recently. Here, it would be worth noting that the drought prone year of 2004-05 was unfavourable and vulnerable for rural workers, particularly for females.

Concluding Remarks

Trends in earnings for males and females across various operations suggests that- (1) there is a significant difference in their earnings in favour of males. Levels of disparity is discernible in the non-manual types of work rather than in manual, (2) the levels of gender disparity were found relatively higher among workers engaged in the non-manual work other than cultivation followed by those in the manual non-farm sector, other than cultivation in farm sector and sowing, (3) Non-manual rural operations offer more remunerative income for both males and females

rather than in manual types of work, (4) Recently, most emerging rural occupations (manual non-farm and non-manual works) in terms of providing better remunerative employment opportunities indicate a higher but gradually declining level of gender disparity.

Gender disparity is higher among regular workers as compared to casual. Since 1999-00, the level of disparity has been widening continuously among regular and casual workers. However, from 2004-05 to 2009-10 it has remained significantly low among casual workers, even as compared the same between 1999-00 and 2004-05. Sectoral distribution of real income suggests that- (1) in rural casual and regular employment, gender disparity exists conspicuously in favour of males, (2) the level of gender disparity was found relatively higher among regular workers as compared to casual workers, (3) Among casual workers, relatively higher level of gender disparity was found in forestry-logging-fishing followed by health and social work, electricity-gas-water-supply, transport-storage-communication, mining and quarrying and manufacturing; among regular workers, it was relatively higher in computer and related services followed by other services, health and social work, education, hotel and restaurants and manufacturing, and (4) rural workers have more remunerative earnings in regular employment. From 1999-00 to 2004-05, decline and stagnancy in real wages of regular workers and casual labourers respectively seem to be an outcome of monsoon failure. In case of casual workers, there is a deceleration of agricultural income for male and female in the period from 2004-05 to 2009-10 in comparison to the previous period i.e. from 1999-00 to 2004-05. Recently, wholesale and retail trade, construction, education and hotel and restaurants sectors have been emerging as propitious and more remunerative options for female workers in general and for female casual workers in particular.

No concordances were found between a positive growth of employment and increments in real earnings of both males and females in some particular production sectors. The belief that

positive growth of employment in some particular sectors is an outcome of increase in real earning, does not really work. Rather, it seems to be driven by the type demand which is available in the labour market. Moreover, lower levels of the wage rates in all types of work (manual/ non-manual/ regular/ casual) across all sectors of production strengthens the argument that females are more likely willing to accept lower wages.

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As per NSSO's Definition, *“A job essentially involving physical labour was considered*

manual work. However, jobs essentially involving physical labour but also requiring a certain level of general, professional, scientific or technical education were not termed as 'manual work'. On the other hand, jobs not involving much of physical labour and at the same time not requiring much educational (general, scientific, technical or otherwise) background were treated as 'manual work'. Thus, engineers, doctors, dentists, midwives, etc., were not considered manual workers even though their jobs involved some amount of physical labour. But, peons, chowkidars, watchman, etc. were considered manual workers even though their work might not involve much physical labour. A few examples of manual workers are cooks, waiters, building caretakers, sweepers, cleaners and related workers, launderers, dry cleaners and pressers, hair dressers, barbers, beauticians, watchmen, gate keepers, agricultural labourers, plantation labourers and related workers”.



Media Concentrations and Pluralism - An Analysis

Dr. Prashant Kumar

Abstract-It is generally argued that high media concentrations (implying that the supply of media is dominated by a few firms in the industry) have an adverse impact on pluralism i.e. there is a negative correlation between extent of market domination and the levels of media pluralism. However, the relationship between concentrations of media ownership and pluralism is not as simple as this. It is quite possible that large organizations may be better placed than small ones to innovate in products and to add to the range of media output. Hence, concentrated media ownership could actually be conducive to pluralism. This paper examines the issues relating to media concentrations and pluralism.

Keywords: Media Concentration, Pluralism

In a general sense pluralism implies diversity in media, that is, the existence of diverse and numerous independent voices, presence of political opinions of differing hues and representation of the different cultures of the nation in the media. The Committee of Experts on Media Concentrations and Pluralism set up by the Council of Europe defines pluralism as follows:

*“media pluralism should be understood as diversity of media supply, reflected, for example, in the existence of a plurality of independent and autonomous media and a diversity of media contents available to the public”.*¹

What this definition implies is that it is not so much about diversity in what is consumed by the public but diversity in what is offered to the public by the media firms. The definition of pluralism has two connotations - diversity of ownership and diversity of media content. Another way of looking at pluralism is in terms of 'external' and 'internal' pluralism. The former is said to be present when there is diversity of ownership whereas the latter exists when there is diversity in the output/content offered.

At a broad level the idea of pluralism comprises of two aspects – political pluralism and cultural pluralism. Political pluralism requires the presence of differing political views and opinions, which is essential for a healthy

democracy and the absence of which could pose a threat to democracy. Cultural pluralism emphasizes the need for expression, in the media, of a variety of cultures thus reflecting the diversity within society. This is important as its absence poses a threat to social cohesion.

Media concentration implies that the supply of media is dominated by a few firms in the industry. High concentrations of media ownership is considered undesirable as it could lead to one sided over representation of certain political views and values and /or certain forms of cultural output (those favoured by the dominant media owners because of commercial considerations or ideological grounds) at the expense of others. However, it is not easy in practice to isolate the role of media ownership patterns in determining the extent of diverse media output that is made available to the public.

Concentrations of media ownership can occur in different ways – 'monomedia' concentration (horizontal expansion), cross-media concentration (vertical or diagonal integration or both).

Horizontal merger occurs when two firms that are at the same stage in the supply chain or who are engaged in the same activity combine forces. For example one television company acquires/merges with another television company. Horizontal expansion is a common

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strategy in sectors. It enables firms to expand their market share and achieve better and more efficient utilization of resources and exploit economies of scale. Vertical growth involves expanding either forward into downstream/succeeding stages or backward into upstream/preceding stages in the supply chain². Vertically integrated media firms could well be engaged in activities stretching from creation of media content/op (upstream stage) to distribution or retail (downstream stage) of that op. Vertical expansion generally results in reduced transaction costs for the enlarged firm. Another significant benefit of vertical integration is that it gives firms some control over their operating environment and it can help them to avoid losing market access in important upstream or downstream stages. An example of vertical expansion would be a film production company acquires or merges with a film distribution company or vice-versa. Diagonal expansion implies that firms diversify into new business areas, for example, a merger between a television company and a telecommunications operator. This could lead to or generate efficiency gains³ as both types of services -audiovisual and telephony - are distributed jointly across the same communications infrastructure. Radio companies may diversify into magazine publishing or newspaper publishers may expand diagonally into television broadcasting. A host of possibilities exist for diagonal expansion across media and related industries. An important benefit of this strategy is that it helps to spread risk as the activities are now spread across different business areas. Further, due to expansion significant economies of scale and scope become available to the firm thus lowering production costs.

Logically it could be inferred that there is a negative correlation between extent of market domination (media concentration) and the level of media pluralism. Higher levels of media concentration imply less number of independent suppliers and consequently smaller range of output in any given market. A higher level of market domination means fewer competing suppliers and the latter implies less pluralism. However, the relationship between

concentrations of media ownership and pluralism is not as simple as this. Since the concept of pluralism includes both diversity of content and diversity of ownership, it is quite possible that large organizations may be better placed than small ones to engage in product innovation and to add to the diversity of media output. Hence, concentrated media ownership could actually be conducive to pluralism. High level of market domination implies fewer competing suppliers and fewer competing suppliers imply a more cost efficient utilization of resources. The latter implies greater availability of resources for innovation which in turn would result in an increased range of output and hence greater pluralism. However, any specific market (as defined by product and location) can support only a certain level of supply. Thus, in smaller markets the relationship bet concentration and pluralism becomes complicated by the economic question – what level and composition of diversity is affordable. In short, the relationship between pluralism and media concentrations is complex, and both may be affected by a no. of factors.

Size and wealth of market is an important factor affecting the level of diversity of content. In a free market economy, the amount of resources available to the media will essentially be limited primarily by the size and wealth of that economy, and the tendency on the part of the public to spend on or consume media. Expenditure on media products thru direct payments will be constrained by the aggregate levels of consumer expenditure (which in turn is a function of the wealth of the economy). The extent of earnings through advertising is also closely related to levels of consumer expenditure and economic wealth in a given market. Even in instances where the state intervenes to support an artificially high level of indigenous media provision, the level of such support too will be determined by the overall wealth of the economy, and of the competing claims for public expenditure.

It is, therefore, evident that the relationship bet the size and wealth of the market of an economy and the level of resources that could be allocated in supplying its media has unambiguous

implications for pluralism. As many media output possess characteristics of 'public good', that is the product is not generally used up or destroyed in the act of its consumption, and the same unit can be offered to larger and larger audiences at an insignificantly low or zero marginal cost. Since it is the production of the first unit of media output that involves most of the costs incurred⁴, a greater the diversity in the composition of output would entail the employment of greater amount resources. Pluralism thus depends on the extent of resources available to support the origination and distribution of many different variety of media output. It is, therefore, contended that large and wealthy markets, which can afford greater resources for the provision of media, are likely to have a greater diversity of op than smaller markets. In general, the smaller level of resources available for media provision in small markets makes them prone to concentration of ownership. This though does not to mean that large markets necessarily avoid the problem of potentially undesirable concentrations of media ownership. However, as far as pluralism is concerned, it is not so much about the absolute size of media firms (in terms of turnover or profits) that is a relevant consideration but the extent to which they dominate the market in which they operate. Large firms are likely to (take a large market share) more easily in small than in large markets.

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available for media provision in small markets makes them prone to concentration of ownership. This though does not to mean that large markets necessarily avoid the problem of potentially undesirable concentrations of media ownership. However, as far as pluralism is concerned, it is not so much about the absolute size of media firms (in terms of turnover or profits) that is a relevant consideration but the extent to which they dominate the market in which they operate. Large firms are likely to (take a large market share) more easily in small than in large markets.

While wealthier markets are better placed to supply a more diversified output, the relationship between market wealth and pluralism is not so straight forward. An important intervening variable is the composition and structure of media supply. This is about the number of independent competing suppliers present in the market. Within the constraints imposed by the aggregate size and wealth of the market the existence of certain industrial structure would result in a more optimal use of resources available for media provision as compared to other structures. Hence, it is likely that a monopolistic industrial structure cloud provide greater diversity of media content/output, since economies of scale and scope are available to large media firms, than would be economically feasible in a more fragmented and competitive industry structure. On the other hand, a monopolistic industry structure could result in a threat to pluralism as greater media power becomes concentrated in the hands of fewer suppliers.

Diversity of Suppliers or the number of separate independent suppliers in a market is another important determinant of media pluralism. As market concentrations rise as a result of monomedia or cross-media expansion, or vertical integration there is greater possibility of increasingly dwindling numbers of independent organizations involved in supplying media. The more powerful individual suppliers become, the greater the potential threat to pluralism.

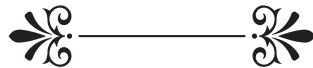
Here, it could be argued that regulations have been in place to create a measure of separation of

ownership from editorial control and that it may not be necessarily true that higher concentrations of ownership would lead to lesser content diversity. There has been much analysis and debate on this aspect and opinions are divided. The manner and extent to which ownership of a media organization could influence the content of its products is therefore not clear. However, whatever the regulatory measures in place, the scope for owners of media firms to assert an indirect influence over the content and the message intended to be conveyed through their products, seem to be so comprehensive as to defy any absolute guarantees of separation. An owner's influence may manifest itself in various ways - in the choice of key personnel, in strategic decisions about which resources to reduce or invest more in and in arrangements for sourcing or distributing content. Since it is not easy to monitor the intentions of media owners, or to completely regulate their conduct in editorial matters, the most effective and practical way towards effectively ensuring a healthy diversity of opinions and voices in the media is to preclude media power from being monopolized and one way to achieve this is by making sure the presence of a large number of autonomous and

independent suppliers of media.

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New Media and its impact on Political Communication

***Deepti Ganapathy**

**** Dr. Sapna M S**

Abstract- Indian politicians have taken to New Media, particularly Twitter, and see it as a powerful tool to listen to their voters and keep them engaged. But they are well aware of the limitations of the reach and political impact of the medium. Though the penetration of this medium is just above 9 percent in India, New Media is here to stay and change the dynamics of political discourse. With General Elections due in 2014, most of the major political parties have started investing considerably on their New Media campaigning tools. This paradigm shift has worked wonders in the communication aspect especially to reach out to the younger voting population of India which consists of more than half the population. The use of New Media was rampant in the many State Assembly Elections held recently. This paper will draw inferences about the New Media awareness levels among voters in four cities-Bangalore, Mysore, Pune and Mumbai. The survey will shed light on the online experiences of voters, the ability of this medium to initiate political dialogue and its relevance in our democracy. The paper will explore the possible arrival of New Media as a powerful campaigning tool.

Key Words: New Media, Political Communication, Campaigning tools, Social engagement

Introduction

The trend in political campaigning in India is the use of both traditional and New Media to reach out to the 1.2 billion voters. Political parties use these forms of communication to communicate, engage and enthuse young voters and continue to do so.

The use of media such as newspapers, radio, television and now internet, is creating and defining new ways for political parties to mobilise support, mould public opinion and encourage public participation, compelling voters to step out of their homes and come to the polling booths to exercise their franchise.

Social media in particular has redefined the communication strategy for political parties. It has garnered public activism in the form of online petitions, created discussion forums online, helped voters and political parties to share pictures, articles and videos and prompted citizens to get involved in the democratic

process.

Communicating through New Media may be considered elitist, in a country like India, where a mere 9 percent of the population logs in every day. However, this evolving campaigning tool is soon spreading to the grassroots too, with the government setting up broadband connections in all the village panchayats in India.

New Media has a multi-pronged usage for political parties. As seen in the recent Delhi Assembly Polls, the Aam Aadmi Party took to this medium not only to effectively communicate its party's ideologies, but also to raise funds and make the fund collection drive transparent and budgeted.

The US Presidential elections not only showed the world the effectiveness of New Media and the role it played in the victory of Obama, it has also helped to understand the dissemination of political news. Though the future of New Media

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in the process of political discourse is not clear, it certainly cannot be overlooked at the moment. It is a platform to harness and leverage to the maximum extent¹.

Political communication using New Media in India

New Media encompasses the internet and all the social networking sites such as blogs, You Tube, Facebook and Twitter.

A recent newspaper report noted that BJP's prime ministerial candidate for 2014 general elections Narendra Modi has edged out India's cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar to become the most talked about person on Facebook in India. Facebook had 82 million MAUs (monthly active users) in India for the quarter ending June 30, 2013².

In the recent past, the popularity of the political personalities in India is being judged by their followers on Facebook. There have even been allegations of creating fake identities to take on the rivals. A recent sting operation by Cobrapost showed how for the right price, the online reputation of a politician or political organization could be made or marred³. If politicians felt slighted by an Election Commission decision to bring social media campaigns under a code of conduct, they had a reason⁴. But with the Cobrapost expose, the Election Commission now stands vindicated.

Ability to influence

A study by Burson-Marsteller illustrates how Twitter and social media in general have become part and parcel of any integrated government communications. It however has found that Barack Obama may have over 33 million followers on Twitter but he is not the most influential world leader on Twitter. Instead, this distinction belongs to Pope Francis, who tweets from the account @pontifex. Despite having just seven million followers, tweets made @pontifex are retweeted over 11,000 times on average. In comparison, tweets made from @barackobama account are retweeted 2,309 times on average⁵.

The study, based on an analysis of 505 government accounts in 153 countries in early July, found that more than three quarters (77.7%) of world leaders have a Twitter account that they use to reach out to people. Of these, 68% leaders have made mutual connection with their peers, either by following them or by conversing them, on Twitter.

Most of these Twitter accounts are handled by official staff that manages the affairs for these world leaders. These leaders rarely make personal tweets or connect with their followers in any meaningful way.

The twitter account of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh follows the same pattern. "The Twitter account run by the office of the Indian Prime Minister is quite active with an average of almost 5 tweets a day ... (but) it is clear that the main purpose of the account is to disseminate information. Engagement on the account is extremely limited. Only 1% of his tweets are replies and 5% retweets," notes the report.

In fact, the study found that the leaders who are more influential in the real world tend to follow fewer accounts on Twitter and refrain from replying to their followers. For example, "almost a third (148) of all world leaders and governments are following Barack Obama (but) he only mutually follows two other world leaders-Norway's Jens Stoltenberg and Russia's Dmitry Medvedev".

Purpose of the Study

The recent technological advances in mobile technology and India's growing clout as one of the top five countries which is socially engaged online, makes social media a phenomenon which is still largely untapped. It is perceived to be an important part of the elections in India, which is the world's largest democracy. Thus, analysing its role and the difference that it will make in the elections needs to be ascertained.

This study is purely primary and exploratory in nature. The purpose is to understand the significance of New Media in political campaigning and the awareness of the electorate

about this rapidly evolving medium.

Objectives of the Study

- * To study the awareness levels of voters about political campaigning using New Media
- * To study what attracts them to political discussions in the online forum
- * To study their participation levels in the New Media platform
- * To study the preference of voters with regard to personalities and networking sites

Methodology

This study uses both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Data was collected first hand from 75 respondents in four cities-Bangalore, Mysore, Pune and Mumbai. A structured questionnaire (consisting of close-ended and open-ended questions) was administered to the respondents and personal interviews were conducted to draw conclusions.

Majority of the respondents (70 percent) were in the age group 21-40yrs. 65 percent of them belong to the student category (21-24yrs), while the rest of the respondents (15 percent) were working professionals(30-40yrs). 20 percent of them were from business and other categories.

A simple percentage analysis was carried out to draw inferences, since this is a very primary exploratory study. Hence results are indicative. It has to be supplemented by extensive exploratory and descriptive study on various aspects.

Data Processing and Analysis

The following tables indicate the profile of the respondents who participated in this study:

Respondents	
Maharashtra (Mumbai/Pune)	37
Karnataka (Bangalore/Mysore)	38
Total	75

Age	% of total
21-30	65%
31-40	27%
>40	8%

Education	% of Total
Under Grad	5%
Post Grad	60%
MBA	24%
PHD	8%
CA	3%

Income	% of Total
Unemployed/Students	46%
0-5L	16%
5-10L	16%
10-20L	16%
>20L	5%

Sex	% of Total
Male	54%
Female	46%

Awareness levels

The respondents have been selected from some of the most prominent metropolitan cities in south and western India. Hence, the participants were educated, IT-savvy and aware of political developments, though not all of them were interested in political systems and how they communicate. However, majority of them seemed to be aware of the definition of New Media and its usage in political campaigning, which is a fairly recent development in the Indian context.

Are you aware of political campaigning via New Media?	Yes	86%
	No	14%

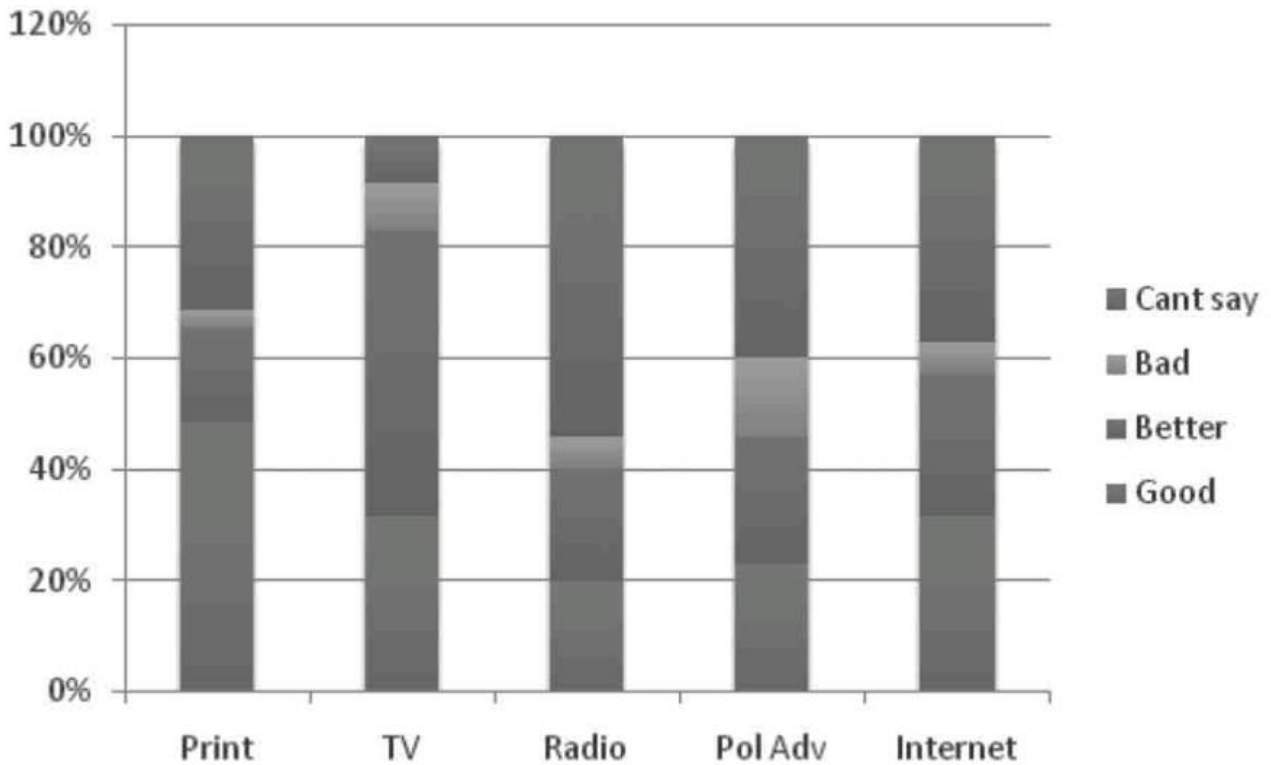
Influence

When it came to assessing the influence that New Media has on a voter, the respondents were fairly non-committal. They selected the 20-50 % range of influence level that was given and remained neutral. In a country like India, where more than half the population still live in villages, public speeches and door-to-door campaigning remain the two most preferred options for campaigning. But by 2040, there will be a shift in demographics and more than 60 percent of the population will be living in cities. This rapid urbanisation will lead to political parties opting for platforms like the media to campaign and reach out to their electorate.

What is the percentage of influence that New Media has on the voter?	10-20%	22%
	20-50%	36%
	50-70%	31%
	Above 70%	11%

The following graph indicates the respondents rating of influence of different media:-

- * Television has been rated as the most influential media in being able to communicate political campaigns as it has a wider reach and impact
- * Newspapers came second in their influence factor
- * Internet, which encompasses New Media (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, You Tube) came a close third, showing that it is gaining prominence as an influential medium in a short span of time



Participation

A unique attribute of New Media in political campaigning is that it has been able to initiate dialogue and pave the way for meaningful interaction between stakeholders concerned-voters, administrators and leaders.

Today, the common man is able to directly reach out to a minister or bureaucrat, if he has a public profile on a social networking site. Hence, the respondents when asked if their participation on political debates in this forum mattered, were divided in their response (50%).

Do you think your participation in the New Media political debates matter?	Yes	50%
	No	50%

Do you think your opinion on the New Media platforms is paving way for more dialogue?	Yes	53%
	No	47%

Do the political personalities revert to your Tweets/Comments?	Yes	22%
	No	78%

Does a positive response create renewed interest in you to follow or like that political party/personality?	Yes	58%
	No	42%

Preference

When it came to preferences for selecting a New Media channel of their liking, many felt that it

was easier to 'like' a post of Facebook. With regard to preferences of candidates and display of content, the personality of a politician mattered most.

Majority of the respondents (78%) felt that New Media as a campaigning tool is a phenomenon that will have far reaching implications in the elections and political system of India.

What is the frequent activity given below that you endorse the most:	Tweeting	9%
	Posting pictures on Twitter/Facebook	29%
	Liking a Post	40%
	Sharing pictures, videos, posts on your profile page	8%
	Creating/Joining groups with similar political ideology	14%

What attracts you to a political page of a politician of your choice	Personality	36%
	Content	25%
	Design and Display	3%
	Frequency of updation	11%
	Interesting interaction/Dialogues	25%

Do you think campaigning through the New Media in India is a phenomenon that is here to stay?	Yes	78%
	No	22%

Summary of the findings

- 86% of the respondents are aware of the political campaigning in New Media
- 60% of them own atleast 2 accounts in social media such as Facebook and Twitter, followed by 25% of them who blog.
- Respondents felt that political speeches and rallies (53%), Door to door campaign (22%),

advertising through various media (18%) are still the best ways for election campaigning.

- Respondents (14%) like creating groups with similar ideology, followed by (40%) liking a post, (29%) of them like sharing pictures, videos, posts, (9%) of them like to tweet and start a debate or form opinion and 8% of them like to upload a news item related to the party.
- Almost all the respondents were aware of political campaigning in media.
- 85% of the respondents felt that media can play a deciding factor in influencing the voters during elections, while 15% say they don't agree
- 60% of the respondents endorse this method of campaigning and 40% of them feel it as an additional medium used by political parties

Conclusion

Political communication in the social media has been successful in bridging the gap between political parties and young voters. It has generated interest and activism among the youth, who earlier thought of politics in negative shades of muscle power, corruption and not fit for the common man. As seen in the recent record turnout in Delhi Assembly Elections, it has influenced voters to come out and vote. By engaging voters in the online forum, this medium has created wider scope for a participative approach to democracy. It has eliminated the gap between politicians and the common man.

Suggestions

What could make this the medium more effective for shaping public opinion and conveying the political ideology?

- **Regular updates**

Frequency of updates is crucial for any campaign to sustain on the New Media platform.

A minimum of 4 tweets in a week and 1 update on Facebook is a must

- **Healthy interaction and avoid personal vendetta**

The communication on this forum should go beyond personal grudges and the blame-game of politics. Politicians should avoid bragging about their achievements and maintain a balance between disseminating information about their work and getting their electorate to pitch in with ideas and useful dialogue

- **Accountable and genuine, with a purpose to reach out to the common man**

Since the idea is to communicate and reach out to the common man, the content should be genuine and the responses should be meaningful. The common man should be able to make the politicians accountable for what they write on these social media sites.

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New Media Tools and Modern ingredients Influence Production of Culture

Dr. Dharmesh Pushpa Dhawankar

***Abstract-** The paper is an explorative attempt to verify whether the new media tools are trying to be in the hyper reality domain. There are many instances of these tools influence the process of sub culture. Further the paper verifies the function of design in the age of image prompted culture. Culture being a dynamic entity, how these media products are shaping the real with image in new media is to be assessed. The research paper envisages justifying the efficacy of sound as a tool to communicate the real and the consequence of the required. Thus the paper focuses the compliment part the new media tools wish to foray into the functional realism without the help of present 'concrete' culture of media productions.*

Key Words: New Media, culture.

Introduction

New media tools are fast intruding into the various forms of cultural attributes. Creative music, sound design and image production in the context of culture as defined by how its participants socialize in late capitalist culture using commodities is evident. Through the stylization of image, music and sound effects, advertisers communicate an abstract concept of a brand, and instantiate the brand through an audience member's heightened experience of the brand via the ad. Facilitated by socialized and mediated frameworks for brand communications, branding is an embodied practice that relies on the audience member's participation with the brand through her/his real experience with an (audiovisual) advertisement. The effect of making the abstract brand tangible relies on successfully executing advertising objectives to create "impact" through stylized and often hyper real representations of reality¹. At the same time, audience members' encounters with ads and branding practices represent bona fide experiences for them within capitalist cultural practices, and audience members take part in these practices as part of social participation and general making sense of their everyday lives. In late-capitalist consumer culture, the idea of the "consumer" operates within the luminal space of constructions of hyper-reality and the self. Through advertising, corporate interests mediate how people relate to

and through commodities as consumers. Through ads, producers communicate an idea of a brand, that is, the collection and stylistic design of specific visual and sonic symbols, and the associated ideas, values or emotions that project an identity or persona about a company and its products or services. In attempts to increase the efficacy of their ads, ad producers fashion image, music and sound design specifically in ways they believe will generate "impact," that is, a physical, physiological or emotional response to audiovisual stimuli that are infused with symbolic meanings and values². In their attempts to create effective ads, ad producers circumscribe identities of people based on demographics, behaviour metrics, or a host of other measures intended to define what the industry calls "target audiences." With the belief that target audience members share wants, needs and values, ad producers build constellations of audiovisual signifiers that they believe will resonate with target audience members. These signifiers borrow from cultural narratives and myths to tell stories about brands and products, and communicate how people lived experiences might be transformed through consumption practices³.

With meticulous formulation of image, music and sound design, ad producers create a "hyper reality," that is exaggerated, heightened or stylized representation of reality. Through these

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Carefully produced audio and visual artefacts, ad producers recirculate cultural narratives they believe communicate meaning and ideas of value, and make those abstract beliefs tangible through the audience member's sensorial experiences⁴. With hyper reality grounded in an audience members' body and emotions, ad producers believe they can shape and direct audience members' ideas about their personal identities, and that of others and social groups. Additionally, ad image, music and sound design contribute to the naturalization of the ways people can socialize around branded identities and interconnect through commodities. Sometimes oversimplified through the media and scholarship, the relationships between cultural producer and audience member are complex and mutually informative in the process of creating and circulating cultural discourse. As a practice taken for granted by many of us in the early twenty-first century, brand messaging through mass media establishes a power relation between corporate interest and audience member. Because many corporations have access to talent, capital, and distribution resources generally unavailable to the lay person, corporations maintain a kind of power in late capitalist discourse unavailable to many audience members.

The systemized and institutionalized dissemination of brand messages through media channels maintains this power relation in the circulation of cultural discourse. At the same time, as the work of scholars like Michel de Certeau and Janice Radway exemplifies, audience members can and do appropriate ad messages in the process of managing and making sense of their everyday lives. Concurrently, ad creative's themselves operating as both producer and consumer as they contribute to ad content⁵. By looking at the complex interconnections, roles and relationships that make up the creative practice of ad coding and decoding, I take into consideration the agency as well as the limitations of ad producers and audience members alike. The folklore, stories and myths disseminated through ads (and other media) show us heroes, entertain us with fables, and advise us on moral conduct. Throughout these

pages I examine processes of constructing those stories through image, music and sound, and consider ways we all incorporate those stories in the expressions of daily life. Knowledge is constructed within late-capitalism, which is marked by globalized economic systems, and blurred delineations between institutions like government, corporate interests and culture. As a reaction against a modernist sense of isolation and anxieties, postmodern thought breaks down the idea of the self into constituent parts. With influences ranging from the ruminations of Sigmund Freud, artistic contributions from the likes of Rene Magritte, Samuel Beckett and Albert Camus, ideas of the self became decentered, rife with complexity and contradiction. The fragmented self can be dissociated from its grounding, parsed out, and interchanged as people find solace from modernist isolation and express themselves in daily life⁶. In this new order, everyday experiences can become commodified. Separated from a historical base, representations of reality are aestheticized, heightened and made more engaging than life experiences themselves. This surprises many because of its speed and depth of persistence.

Age of Image and design prompted Culture

Definitely, with the flexibility and choice it has become pretty easy to permeate into the functional arena. It was argued for the musicologist that they should give themselves the space to explore musical aesthetics and criticism. This should necessary involve methodological emphasis on ethnography to explore the materials and processes of cultural production through ads; and an interdisciplinary, tripartite concentration on image, music and sound design as equal and interrelated implements in the production of cultural discourse in audiovisual media. The realm of music studies has exploded, and the range of acceptable topics and methods grown exponentially⁷. Even with the expansion of popular music studies, however, it seems that sonic influences from advertising, perhaps the most ubiquitous source of music today, remains understudied as an aesthetic influence, conveyor of meaning, and shaper of values. Tyler's

archival research lends a historical frame of reference to ways that music has been used to communicate ideas of identity, and invite potential patrons to identify with a particular retail establishment through music. Timothy Taylor's multi-faceted oeuvre includes the study of genre categories and the communication of identity, meaning and values. In the process, he acknowledges ad producers' political, bureaucratic and ideological constraints in communicating a meaningful and readable sales message within an ad's strict time constraints. For Cook, music in ads can offer "a *potential* for the construction or negotiation of meaning in specific contexts...music is never 'alone.'" As an audience member "reads" ads, Cook might argue, her understanding of emotion, meaning or value through music is always based on a lifetime of emotional and sensory experiences that frame one's reception.

In the new order, in which the self is dissociated from its historical grounding, culture and everyday life experiences can become commodities in and of themselves. Through branding and advertising, culture and life experiences become separated from the individual subject, aesthetically stylized, repackaged, and then projected back to audiences. With these new turns Jameson observes "a new depthlessness, which finds its prolongation...in a whole new culture of the image or the simulacrum..."⁸ In other words, in late capitalist thought, knowledge constructs and stories that help people make sense of their society are no longer grounded in society and its history. With the new global order, marked by the enmeshment of corporations, government and culture, cultural narratives can be created without grounding in lived experience. One way these stories circulate is through advertising. Ad image, music and sound design function as signifiers that direct audience members' attention toward something signified, an idea based presumably on their own experiences of reality. The dissociation of signifier and historically-grounded signified results in the possibility of constructing of stories without historical grounding. Signifiers' images, sounds are free floating, and can be employed with brands in

countless ways, depending on the message the producer desires to communicate. In a culture of images divorced from their referents, according to Jameson, "the producers of culture have nowhere to turn but the past: the imitation of dead styles...the past as 'referent' finds itself gradually bracketed, and then effaced altogether, leaving us with nothing but texts."

As invitations to participate in the brand, ads can shape how people self-identify⁹. John Fiske argues that, in a society in which resources and social power are distributed unequally, parties with economic resources and social transmission networks like the advertising industry also have the power to shape social discourse, and audiences participate in meaning-making as they read media texts (Fiske 1987). With every ad, the advertiser calls upon its audience members to agree to certain prescribed identities; Louis Althusser refers to this process as "interpellation". The process of defining target audiences are efforts toward interpellation: marketers reconstitute audience members' responses to branded products into a generalized subject position or identity. The process involves interactions between the industry as addresser and its audience as addressee. By responding to an advertisement, the perceiver assumes the ad's definition of the perceiver's identity. As Fiske observes, "in responding to the call, in recognizing that it is *us* being spoken to, we implicitly accept the discourse's definition of 'us,' or, to put it another way, we adopt the subject position proposed for us by the discourse" (Fiske 1987, emphasis in original). Subjectivity, then, is shaped by our interactions with numerous social agents like ads. Consequently, interpellation obscures the numerous, complicated, sometimes contradictory subject positions we actually hold. Despite the range of real experience, institutions with social agency, like the ad industry, impress specific definitions upon these identities depending on particular character traits they believe might resonate with audiences and encourage them to purchase a product. Through the process, social discourse also inscribes ideas about members of society that are taken for granted as self-evident or so-called "common sense" (Fiske 1987). This process repeats

everyday as we watch films, read magazines and, indeed, view television commercials. This study continuously negotiates ideas of the cultural producer as consumer, and of the consumer whether “producer” or “audience member” as participant in the production of culture. No linear logic will lend insight into the social practices of what I call here “production” and “consumption” of media, of commodities, of culture itself.

Can 'the real' transport Image in New Media?

Now, this is a technical flux accompanied with social ordeal. More severely mediated representations of reality present a unique world based on idealized constructions of the real. Advertisers rely on recycling these fantasy constructions to advance the idea that their products can fulfil people's needs, wishes and desires. Even as ad producers represent “real products,” they seem to play with ideas of reality and what I call The Real, specifically, various image, sonic, identity or narrative constructions¹⁰. Audience members are able to read The Real in film, television and other media owing to their prior media-habituated experiences with those kinds of impressions or stories. Constructions of The Real make possible communication about products, brands, identity stereotypes and fantastical worlds of perfect wish fulfilment because of themes and representations that already circulate widely throughout the media. Representations of reality in advertising (as in films and other media) often don't need to convey actual authenticity; rather, those depictions merely have to be read as Authentic according to culturally circulating knowledge of The Real. The production of this quasi reality-based context for brand presentation is negotiated creatively, politically and bureaucratically among producers¹¹. While examining the encoding and decoding of The Real, I follow Michel Chion (among other scholars) in arguing the importance of approaching film and other audiovisual media as image-sound complexes that simulate reality coded by technological, social and historical constructs. Rather than relegating sound as subordinate to image or isolating aural from visual and justifying that they ought to be studied apart from another Chion argues that “films,

television and other audiovisual media...place their spectators their audio-spectators in a specific perceptual mode of perception, which...I shall call *audio-vision*.” He argues further that sonic verisimilitude depends upon “codes established by cinema itself, by television, and narrative-representational arts in general, rather than to our hypothetical lived experience. Several film scholars articulate that our embodied interactions with these media are common or even expected. Richard Dyer suggests that all film constitutes a “cinema of sensation,” and that cinema can fulfill desires shared among audience members for an “underlying pattern of feeling, to do with freedom of movement, confidence in the body, engagement with the material world...to which all humans need access”. Dyer suggests that our sensorial experiences with audiovisual media like film may fulfil our desires for experiences we may never have in reality, and that those experiences are encoded by the social categories to which we've been habituated. The process of constructing The Real also speaks to ways that ideas of identity are naturalized in their associations with brands and products. As this study will show, the marketing campaign for the sandwich is actually what defines audience identity for the product.

Through the specific ways these ad producers emphasize the meatiness of the sandwich, and carefully design sets, lighting and shots that they believe will attract men, the ad producers engender the product themselves. While some strategists may use market research to define target audience, it seems that its authority and prevalence in informing ad image and sound is something of a myth. Verisimilitude is critical when portraying The Real. As Dyer argues, idealized representations of products and scenarios must point to the real world—if the Real world of the advertisement breaks social codes that define “real-ness” in audiovisual media, the ad will be dismissed by audience members, and the brand's reputation may be tarnished. Finally, Dwayne's comments reveal beliefs in a kind of visual logic that maintains cultural primacy. Declaring that “they want to see what they're getting' for their money,” the vendor

discounts the multifarious ways people are moved by, stimulated by, and drawn toward audiovisual media, commodities and brands. Identity construction and personal expression within cultural constructs re-circulated and reinforced within an intricate eco-politico-cultural system. Thus, commodified and abstracted, the idea of the “consumer” is positioned between constructions of The Real and people's everyday lives. This can be generated through the prism of local culture.

What is the Efficacy of Sound to communicate fact and consequence?

No wonder, sound has reached a different level with reference to its representations using new media as a promoter. With regard for film sound, Michel Chion observes that the “film spectator recognizes sounds to be truthful, effective and fitting not so much if they reproduce what would be heard in the same situation in reality, but if they render (convey, express) the feelings associated with the situation.” In audiovisual advertising, sound design is critical not only narrating the ad story or message, but doing so in a way that represents some idea of reality, and moves the audience member emotionally, sensorially, or even sensually. Sound design in particular heightens sonic reality for the sake of what the industry calls “impact,” that is, an audience member's physical, physiological or emotional response to audiovisual stimuli infused with meanings and values¹². A reference to the audience member's embodied response to an ad, “impact” is critical in the instantiation of a brand, a process some marketers call a “brand experience.” As producers attempt to create impactful experiences through the ad, their sound designs communicate meanings and values associated with the otherwise abstract brand that are thought to resonate with target audience members. Producers' beliefs about target audience members' listening practices influence their creative work. In other words, ad producers' build sound based on their beliefs for which their listeners are, the values they hold, and how they listen to ads. As has been shown with music, advertising sound design can circulate discourses of authenticity and identity, and contributes to the reification and commodification of experience,

particularly as a reflection of post-production studio conventions that involve processing sound with effects like reverberation.

Several music scholars recognize the studio as a site for replicating constructions of identity and value through sound. Harris Berger and Cornelia Fales demonstrate that timbral processing in heavy metal music defines the “heaviness” of the music; distorted guitar in particular communicates ideas of power and strength for some metal heads. Thomas Porcello recognizes how studio microphone placement and processing techniques deliver an “Austin sound” in country music, which connects the sound not just to place, but also to constructions of space, notions of sincerity and ideas of local identity. Louise Meintjes observes that, for producers in a South African studio, the selection of music technologies (including miking techniques and acoustic or electronic instrument selections) differentiates sounds as “traditional” or “black stuff” compared to sounds coming from “overseas.” As these scholars show, the studio functions as a site for negotiating values and identities while materializing these sonically. Unlike music, however, the social role of sound design—that is, sound effects like footsteps, wind, room tone, bleeps, bleeps and blips that represent narrative actions or events within an ad—is often overlooked. Research shows, sound design serves several functions in the ad and the marketing strategy supporting the ad. Sound design represents verisimilitude in the ad often while heightening the audience member's experience of that reality which has been called here a construction of The Real, that is, a stylized representation of reality that has no grounding in reality). Sound design prioritizes events within the narrative and directs the audience member's attention to those events based on the strategic goals supporting the ad. At the same time, sound design can lend expressiveness or life-presence to the audiovisual experience and, by extension, the brand. Moreover, successfully crafted sound helps ensure the ad's impact and the instantiation of the brand through the audience member's emotional and embodied response¹³.

Sound provides a conduit into audience

members' own historical and cultural experience, linking previous sonic experiences with ad sonic experiences, and facilitating relationship-building between the audience member and brand. Commercially-available sound effects libraries provide a context within which much sound design is created¹⁴. Sometimes providing the source material for the design, sometimes compelling the designer to fashion new sounds, stock sound effects often serve as ballast against which the designer expresses his own creativity. All audio representation is contingent on the expectations built socially, historically and technologically for how things ostensibly should sound in new media representations. As Rick Altman points out, in all audiovisual media *“there is no such thing as direct representation of the real; there is only representation of representation.”* Though this may seem like a simple or even naïve remark, I see its significance in considering sound representation as socially-, culturally and historically-constituted, and the ways sound is crafted to produce the effect of The Real¹⁵. As Jonathan Sterne elaborates, our understanding of sound is grounded in the contexts of ever-emerging technologies, ideological paradigms, and concomitant listening practices. At the turn of the twenty-first century, I argue, ad sound design is understood within a historical framework of sound in various media, including film, that construct Real representations of reality, and situate the individual as “consumer,” a position between The Real and the everyday experience of the self.¹⁶ Thus the proximity and the technicality of the representative attribute may not generate the feel required to express the real.

Conclusion/Discussion

Culture by and large is a way of life and it is so dynamic in its practising forms. Demonstrating cultural prowess and values through musical Knowledge are closely related to the value of representing uniqueness and originality. In the process, some discussants represent themselves as on the cutting edge of cultural knowledge, bearing enviable expertise in music recognition and hipness that may contribute to displays of a kind of competency and cultural power. They reveal values about the kinds of sounds to which

they think so-called mainstream audiences may or may not respond sounds that may have been minimized by producers to make the track more appealing to a broader audience. Likely that consequence is intentional while the music establishes an editing-friendly pace and makes many listeners want to move their bodies, the music can appeal particularly to music collectors with digital collection skills and resources. In the age of peer-to-peer file sharing sites like Napster, Limewire and Kazaa, and with establishment of iTunes as a distribution hub, people find ways of expanding their musical interests and collections. Recognizing and collecting this music, audience members flaunt their musical and cultural knowledge by what music they might recognize as fresh, hip, or outside the traditional music industry, and by their knowledge of artists and music outside the industry mainstream. Interestingly, none of the thousands of blogs available discuss sound design or its effects. Considering the technical and cultural savvy bloggers and posters demonstrate through their online discourse, their lack of awareness, lack of interest, or uncritical acceptance of sound design is striking.

One could argue that this speaks to the subtleties of an effective sound design. Research shows, sound design is extremely important to ad producers, who spend countless hours perfecting sound design, especially in revisions when early designs don't work according to a client's standards. Analyses of these ads may suggest that each of us is simultaneously isolated and connected through a world of social discourse. That discourse borrows from, contributes to, and shapes cultural knowledge through audience members' embodied responses, emotional movement, or perhaps intuitions or “gut feelings” based on hyper reality disseminated in the new media. As discussed here, we saw the kinds of cultural practices described throughout “Reality by Design” functioning as people endeavor to shape opinions, influence behaviors, and build economic or political power locally and globally. The processes of mediatization have been employed for political and ideological ends throughout the twentieth century, and will be further forward. Musicologists, germanists,

ethicists and a myriad of other scholars have shed blood, sweat and tears in debating the “truth” of Wagner's intents, the “accuracy” for whether and how Wagner's music represents anti-Semitic inclinations. Indexing musical elements as representative of anti-Semitism (in this case) isn't the key to understanding the issues at hand. Rather, I'm interested in recognizing the alternate fixity and fluidity of musical sounds (and other sounds), and comprehending how a culture reads media image, music and sound in terms of other circulating cultural messages—this is central to understanding the production of culture throughout the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, and untangling the conveyance of meanings for political or ideological ends.

Though sound design is often overlooked as a carrier for meaning, it similarly parlays ideas of social behaviours and values. In advertising, sound design can be an effective tool in inviting the audience member to embody ideas of the brand through impact. Undeniably, our experiences within capitalist culture influence our perceptions of who we are, how we self-express, and how we satisfy our life needs and lifestyle preferences. Within this complex politico-cultural system of practices, audiovisual productions mediate meaning on a visceral level for audiences as media producers contribute to audience members' world view. All of this brings me to ruminate on constructions of power within increasingly globalized politico-economic cultural practices. One reason some musicologists twisted themselves in knots to debate Wagner's anti-Semitism has to do with the construction of musicology and the discipline's traditional investment in the powerful symbolization behind a canon of creative geniuses. Despite our deepest moral standards and beliefs of human commitment to truth, the stories we tell ourselves through image, music and sound can be more powerful than truth, which is often mired within the milieu of public secrets. This has given the whole debate a new twist for new explorative research in this aspect.

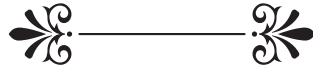
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Islamic Accounting – A Different Aspect of Accounting

Om dutt and Akshay Mishra

***Abstract-** Islamic finance and banking growth rapidly during the last twenty years in Muslim countries and around the world. Along the growth, Islamic accounting is also rising to fulfill the needs of Islamic community. The rising to the needs for Islamic accounting is mostly because there are aspects of conventional accounting that do not accord with Islamic principles. This article is a conceptual study mainly used related literatures of available accounting written in traditional and Islamic perspective. It will provide us an introduction to Islamic Accounting and its contrast to Traditional Accounting. This article also identifies the basic features and objectives of Islamic Accounting, justifies the need for the development of a separate accounting system for the Islamic Organizations, and analyzes the traditional concepts of accounting in the Islamic point of view. The proposition of the article is that the role of accounting and accountants would be more accurate, effective, complete and fair if any firms and organizations apply Islamic accounting practices*

Key Words: Islamic Accounting, banking growth

Introduction

Islamic accounting practice engages with the Islamic financial institutions such as Islamic banks, takaful, ar-rahn and zakat institutions. Obviously, it is essential to the running of these institutions. Ather and Ullah defined Islamic Accounting as the branch of accounting which sets its goals and performs all of its activities to achieve those goals ethically and objectively within the limits and boundary of Islamic Shariah. It provides appropriate information to stakeholders of an entity. On the other hand, the development of Islamic banking and finance now embraced even by ardent capitalist institutions such as Citibank, HSBC and ANZ banks may interest accountants to the possibility of new opportunities for the profession (especially in the wake of layoffs and downsizing by the big four firms). Perhaps, the Enron affair has rekindled an interest in having a more honest profession who truly care about the public interest in addition to their pockets. Whatever the interest or curiosity, we hope accountants will find this series of articles interesting, informative, and profitable and yes we hope it may even lead to a bit of soul searching. In this paper, we try to explain what is Islamic accounting (although it will not be the final definition) together with a discussion of the main differences between Islamic and conventional accounting, provide some justifications for the addition of the world

'Islamic' to the word accounting, make a prima facie case for Islamic accounting and finally make the important distinction between accounting for Islamic banks and Islamic accounting, which is presently thought of by many people as synonymous.

Meaning of Islamic Accounting

Islamic accounting can be defined as the “accounting process” which provides appropriate information (not necessarily limited to financial data) to stakeholders of an entity which will enable them to ensure that the entity is continuously operating within the bounds of the Islamic Shari'ah and delivering on its socioeconomic objectives. Islamic accounting is also a tool, which enables Muslims to evaluate their own accountabilities to God (in respect of inter-human/environmental transactions).

The meaning of Islamic accounting would be clearer if we compare this with the definition of “conventional” accounting. (Conventional) accounting as we know it is defined to be the identification, recording, classification, interpreting and communication economic events to permit users to make informed decisions¹. From this, it can be seen that both Islamic and conventional accounting is in the business of providing information. The

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differences lie in the following:

- The objectives of providing the information
- What type of information is identified, and how is it measured and valued, recorded and communicated, and
- To whom is it communicated (the users)

While conventional accounting aims to permit informed decisions whose ultimate purpose is to efficiently allocate scarce resources available to their most efficient (and profitable) uses by providing information efficiency in the market². Apparently this is achieved by the user making the appropriate, buy, sell or hold decisions on their investments. Islamic Accounting, on the other hand, hopes to enable users to ensure that Islamic organisations (whether business, government or NFP) abide by the principles of the Shari'ah or Islamic Law in its dealings and enables the assessment of whether the objectives of the organisation are being met. At the very basic level, it can be said that Islamic organisations (whether business or otherwise) differ from their conventional counterparts by having to adhere to certain Shari'ah principles and rules and also try to achieve certain socio-economic objectives encouraged by Islam.

Following from the above, the type of information which Islamic accounting identifies, measures is different. Conventional accounting concentrates on identifying economic events and transactions, while Islamic accounting must identify socio-economic and religious events and transactions. A few of us, older ones, might still remember when we did our first accounting or book-keeping courses, we had to do final accounts (i.e. balance sheet and trading, profit and loss account. However, Americanization of the curriculum has popularised the term financial statements. Hence, the concentration of accounting has moved from stewards manorial accounts to accounting for money (accentuated by the monetary measurement concept).

This is not to say that Islamic accounting is not concerned with money (especially when accounting for businesses). On the contrary due to prohibition of interest-based income or

expense, profit determination is more important in Islamic accounting than conventional accounting. However, Islamic accounting must be holistic in its reporting Hence, both financial and non-financial measures regarding the economic, social, environmental and religious events and transactions are measured and reported.

Conventional accounting mainly uses historic cost (or lower) to measure and values assets and liabilities. The profession is well aware of the limitations of the stable unit of measure assumption of the monetary unit and to its credit has tried in the past in its inflation accounting initiatives. However, despite recommendation from its own research efforts (True blood committee?), the idea of using current values was given up due to its complexity and presumed lack of objectivity. From an Islamic point of view, at least for the purpose of computation of Zakat, current valuation is obligatory³ prompting calls for a current value Balance Sheet.

A further difference is, Islamic accounting may require a different statement altogether to deemphasize the focus on profits by the income statement provided by conventional accounting.⁴ Baydoun and Willet (2000) have suggested a Value Added Statement to replace the Income Statement in Islamic Corporate Reports. They argue that this shows and encourages a cooperative environment in business as opposed to a destructive competitive environment.

The third category of differences is in the users of the information. Although the profession has recognised various stakeholders as users of accounting information⁵, the users which it focuses on are shareholders and creditors (i.e. Financiers – those who provide the funds). This is obvious from the fact the FASB's SFAC 1 dismisses a whole range of stakeholders by the term “and others”. From recent developments in finance and financial markets, accounting seems to be serving an elite group of financiers – market players and banks and other financial institutions. It has been accused of helping a group of rich people get richer⁶- a grave charge since the profession always justifies its monopoly on audit

services by virtue of the public interest.

Islamic accounting serves the whole gamut of stakeholders recognised by the corporate report, not that each group can serve its own interest best, but society as a whole can make corporations accountable for their actions and ensure they comply with Shari'ah principles and do not harm others while making money ethically and achieve an equitable allocation and distribution of wealth among members of society especially the stakeholders of the concerned corporation.

Religion and accounting- an explosive mix?

Now we come to the question, is it wise to add the adjective “Islamic” to accounting? Why not accounting for Islamic organisations or accounting from the Islamic perspective? The worry is that the addition of any religious adjective may compromise the objectivity of the discipline as religion is mostly seen as an unchanging dogma and code not subject to pragmatic or logical considerations.

We will take this matter in two stages:

- a) Is conventional accounting value free and objective as it portrayed to be or is there a hidden adjective attached to it?
- b) The problem of epistemology- the nature and sources of knowledge

What are the implicit assumptions behind the theory and practice of conventional accounting, in other words – what is the worldview behind conventional accounting? Some years back, European and communist states adopted a different system of accounting. In a centrally planned or a socialist state, there is a lack of profit motive or not too much of it. Hence, the conventional accounting i.e. Profit and loss account, balance sheet did not make much sense in that economic system. This is why the accounting profession never developed in the communist countries. It is only after liberalisation i.e. conversion to capitalism that these states are trying to catch up with the West. A little more reflection and we come to the

conclusion that the conventional accounting system in which we were educated and work in is in fact *Capitalist* Accounting. The adjective 'capitalist' is not used before the word accounting, because it would not then appear neutral as capitalism is a philosophy and many ways a religion. Its sacred symbols of private property, the *hudud* (literal meaning the definitive borders) of the market and its God-wealth for the creation of which, business and finance exists. Capitalism is not only the economic system which allows choices and opportunities but a philosophy and religion which forsakes equity for efficiency and the wants of a few for the needs of the many. It can be said to be the dominant 'religion' of the world (both in Muslim and Non-Muslim countries).

Hence, to call a spade, a spade, accounting should be renamed capitalist accounting, economics as capitalist economics and so forth. Hence, faculty of economics in our universities should be renamed faculty of capitalist economics. However, we do not because it is not necessary, it is assumed and implicit. Due to the non-explicitness of this assumption, we sometime forget that accounting is not objective, neutral and value-free as it is portrayed to be.

Secondly, we discuss the problem of epistemology- the nature and sources of knowledge. Ever since the so-called 'enlightenment', science has gained the upper hand and has replaced religion as the authority in defining what is knowledge. Modern research emphasises positivism i.e. what is. Knowledge is only what is perceptible through our senses through observation and experiment or what appears logical to our mind. Revelation is not considered a source of knowledge as religious truths cannot be verified by our senses. Accounting is considered a science (many US and UK universities use MS or MSc not MA for post graduate accounting programmes) and such mixing religion with accounting may be considered unprofessional.

However, as Chapra⁷ argues science and religion deals with different levels of reality. While sciences deal with the physical universe

perceptible by the senses, religion deals with a higher level of reality which is transcendental and beyond the sense of perception. The sources of scientific knowledge are reason and its method observation and experiment. It describes and analyse 'what is' and tries to predict what will happen in the future (e.g. Forecast earnings from models). When dealing with the physical universe, it is exact in its description and analysis and more accurate in its predictive power (e.g. in Physics or Chemistry). However, when it deals with human beings who do not behave in a consistent manner, unlike the revolution of the planets above, its analysis is less precise and its predictions less accurate. The recent move by the SC on insisting on 10% accuracy on profit forecasts reports by accountants has given a headache for accountants as forecasting is not an accurate science as it deals with behaviour of human beings in the marketplace.

Unlike science, religion depends on Revelation as well as reason for its knowledge. Its objective is to help transform the human condition from 'what is' (e.g. Enron, WorldCom) to what should be (perhaps, Johnson & Johnson under Burke). It should bring about individual and social change to conform to its worldview and values and institutions that it provides.

The ultimate objective of both science and religion is to bring about the well-being of human beings. One addresses the physical and material while the other addresses the social, mental, emotional and the spiritual. Chapra (2000) further argues that if both of these are important, then both science and religion can better serve mankind by greater cooperation and coordination between them. Religion can help science by reminding it of its ultimate objectives and limitations, to use the power and mastery over the universe for well-being rather than destruction. Science can help religion by helping it realise 'what ought to be' by providing a better description of 'what is', facilitating prediction and providing better technology for a more efficient use of all available resources.

It can thus be seen that rather than becoming an explosive mix, the mixing of science and religion

can be fruitful and in fact serve to stabilise society from the instability of a world dominated either by science or religion alone.

A Prima-facie case for Islamic Accounting

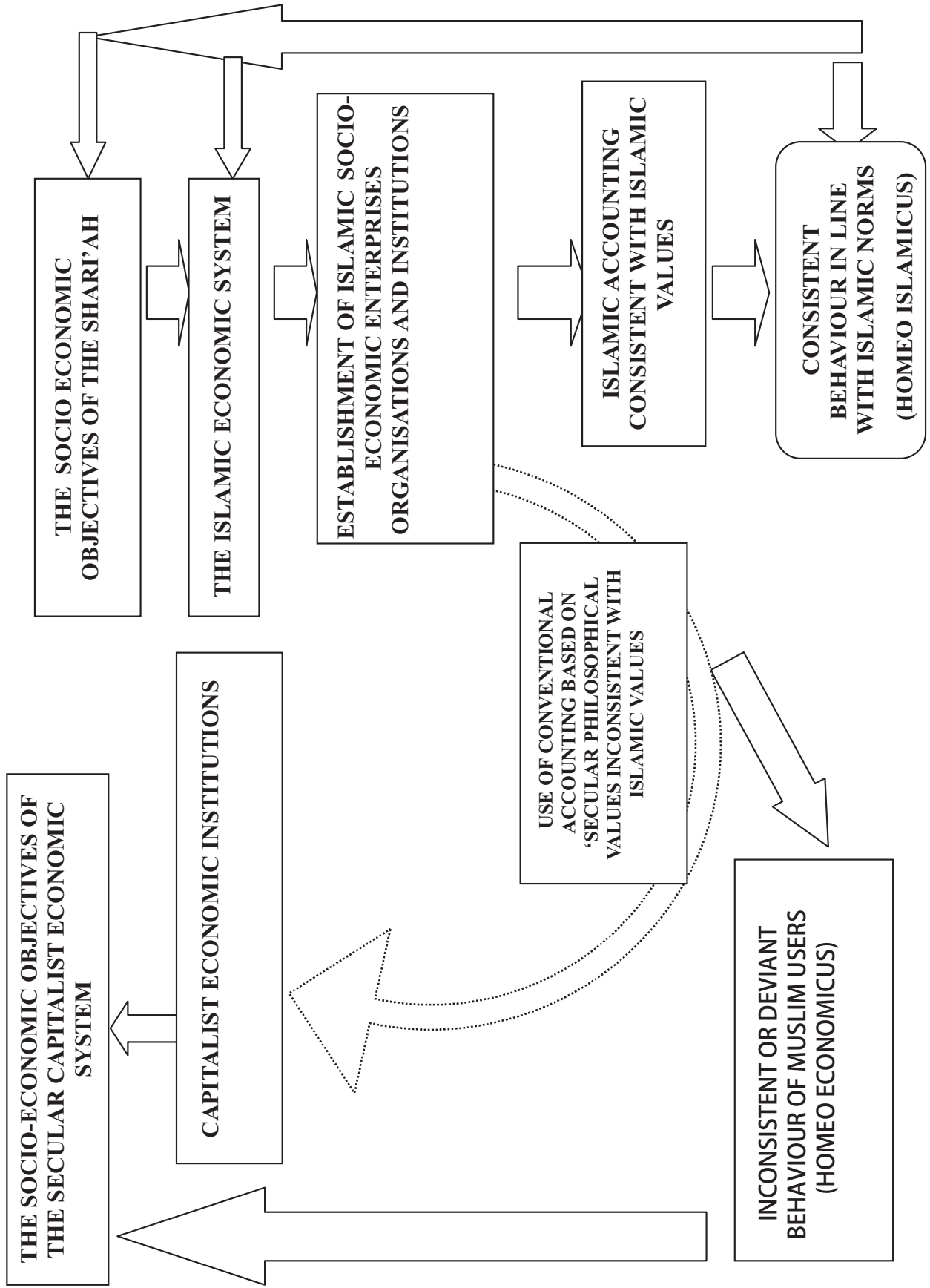
Accounting is a tool to achieve certain objectives. In order to be useful, it must be relevant to its purpose. The purpose of accounting has been extended by the American Accounting Association in 1975 (presumably concerned to promote the public interest responsibility of the profession) which defined the purpose of accounting "to permit informed decisions which will enable scarce resources to be allocated efficiently thereby achieving social welfare". Hence, like it or not, the accounting profession is entrusted with the responsibility of helping to achieve social welfare by providing its services.

It is common sense, that one must use the right tool for the right job. If one were to use a sledgehammer to crack a nut, we would get paste instead of nuts! Hence, Islamic accounting may be more appropriate to achieve the socio-economic and religions objectives of Islamic institutions and Muslim users. The diagram below⁸ shows the situation of match and mismatch.

Briefly, Islamic institutions such as Islamic banks, Tabung Haji etc. are established to meet the socio-economic objectives of the Shariah (Islamic Law) through the implementation of an Islamic economic system. Hence, these institutions should logically use Islamic accounting, especially for monitoring these institutions to achieve their objectives which are different from capitalist institutions. However, if conventional accounting which developed to meet the needs of a capitalist economy is used instead in these institutions, a mismatch is likely. This will lead to the institutions not meeting the Shari'ate socio-economic objectives and even worse may turn these Islamic institutions into capitalist institutions by providing materialist profit-focused information instead of the holistic information provided by Islamic accounting.

It can thus be seen that it is not at all unscientific

FIGURE 1: RESULT OF INCONGRUENCY BETWEEN ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND ACCOUNTING SYSTEM(SOURCE; SHAHUL, 2001)



or objectionable, to use Islamic accounting and would in fact be more logical to use it as it would result in an ethical based accounting system which measures not only profits but social, environmental and religious performance.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that accounting for Islamic banks and financial institutions is not Islamic Accounting but only a subset of it. Although the efforts of AAOFI must be appreciated for developing standards for Islamic Banks, the methodology and hence the outcome is questionable. This is discussed elsewhere⁹. Islamic accounting is not the just technicalities of accounting for Islamic financial instruments employed by Islamic banks but much more requiring whole new areas of performance measurement including the social, environmental, economic and the Shariate. We will explore the reasons why conventional accounting is unsuitable for Islamic institutions as well as more details of what is the content of Islamic articles in later articles.

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Awareness of Indian Consumer on Corporate Social Responsibility

Mrs. Rina Gupta

Abstract- India is one of the fastest growing lucrative consumer markets, churning out demands for even luxury items. The consumers are literate and aware in many aspects as they are exposed excessively via the social media to the universal pressing issues like environment, education, human rights and gaps in wealth possession. In many market segments there is an overwhelming consumer curiosity, concern and desire for knowledge of the social responsibility exhibited by the companies, be it manufacturing units or the retail organizations from where they are buying the products for their consumption. They are bound to have a positive image and trust only those brands and companies who show more concern for the society. All this, has changed dramatically the purchasing behavior and standard of living of the consumers. The aim of this study is to scrutinize what the consumer expects out of the corporate and how it influences their purchasing decisions, their awareness of Corporate Social Responsibility and reaction to it. Also the consumer wants to know what Business houses and Corporate are doing for the welfare of the society as the Indian consumers have high values imbibed in them through culture.

Key Words: Awareness, purchasing decisions, consumers, CSR, Business

Introduction

With the global economic integration, India has opened its doors far and wide to the International trade. Since then, both business and consumerism have changed dramatically. The consumer market in India is huge and rising. It is increasing faster than most of the other emerging markets; in fact it is the second fastest growing major consumer market of the world. Businesses can capture this market only by understanding it. Most notably in this market, due to the economic liberalization and social freedom, there is a rapid rise in a new generation of consumers referred to as “Gen I”, where “I” stands for India, Independence and Individuality¹.

Also the strong economy, rising household income, socioeconomic conditions and demographic environment has led to an expansion in overall spending of the consumer across the country by almost 3.6 times – from \$991 Billion in 2010 to anticipated \$3.6 trillion in 2020 - 14% annual growth rate, which is higher than anticipated 5.5% annual growth rate globally and 9% average annual growth rate expected out of the emerging nations². This

growth highlights a nation having aspirations and repressed demand.

All this has created demand for not only the necessity products but also the discretionary items and at the same time it has also brought forth, particularly in some of the market segments the overwhelming consumer curiosity, concern and desire for knowledge of the social responsibility exhibited by the companies be it manufacturing units or the retail organizations from where they are buying the products for their consumption. With the social and media exposure to the universal pressing issues like environment, education, human rights and gaps in wealth possession, consumers are poised to have a positive image and trust only those brands and companies who show more concern for the society.

Thus, this paper aims to study the today's most sought after buzz word “Corporate Social Responsibility” and its awareness in the minds of the Indian consumers.

Corporate Social Responsibility or CSR as it is

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called is not new to India. In fact it has been here since ancient ages, but in the form of philanthropy and never deliberated. Even before the British rule, the rich traders erected places for worship and provided food during famines. Behind this societal donation, were the motivating factors of religion, culture, and family ideals. Therefore hardly any reported documents are available in this context. Nonetheless, the summary on of this activity evidently showed the nationalized temperament, whether it was in the form of bequeathing institutions, or participating in the Indian struggle for freedom, or deep-rooted in the philosophy of social trusteeship.

Review of Literature

As Freeman³ puts in, the responsibility which the company bears for its actions and creates a constructive force for all its stakeholders, consumers, society, environment and employees is in fact the corporate social responsibility.

CSR is mostly defined in context of a corporate structure which may follow an unconscious or a legally bounded activity, or maybe even a ritual that a company should comply with. It has been always brought to the forefront in the policy of the organization so that it is identified as a responsible business from the point of view of the investors, whether local or international, the main purpose therein is to maximize profits.

Another group of definition of CSR as defined by Kotler⁴ is the concept of societal marketing in which the company does business in such a way that it improves both society and customer's welfare.

In order to understand the impact which CSR makes on the minds of the consumers, Webster⁵ states that only a “socially conscious consumer takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption or who attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change”. The statement above makes it clearer that a consumer who is socially responsible will focus on the nature of the products whilst making purchases and using them with a desire to reduce or eliminate any sort of harmful effects so that there is long term

benefit to the society.

It is seen that as the people in the society prosper and become more conscious and aware consumers, they tend to be more receptive towards the behavior of the corporations which acts as a stimulus in their buying behavior⁶

In a survey conducted, Mohr⁷ scrutinized the influence of CSR awareness on the consumer's approach and buying decisions and to what extent the attitude of the businesses towards CSR would impact the consumer's decision. The authors attempted to find out what composition of the consumer segment is affected by CSR and concluded that there is definitely a substantial linkage between CSR and consumer decisions.

Some researchers⁸ studied the service industry and concluded that as the employees of the service industry and the customers work in collaboration to create the desired product and since they both have direct contact with each other, there is a very strong positive binding force in between the two and they are more concerned of each other's welfare.

The trust in the product brand resulting out of the consumer's awareness of the corporations' policy on CSR has also been seen as the most important factor to affect their purchasing decisions. Consumer trust has been defined in different forms. A study on the trust⁹ indicates it as a resultant of perception, evaluation and predictions made by the consumers while considering the distinctiveness, the intentions and assured outcome of the corporations. On the other hand, Swain & Chumpitaz¹⁰ stated three perspectives of trust, which includes capability of fulfilling and satisfying the customer (perceived credibility), capability of maintaining promises honestly (perceived integrity) and capability of prioritizing consumer interests (perceived benevolence).

There are several basis of consumer's trust on the corporations. According to McAllister¹¹, the extent of confidence displayed in the long-term trust developed in between the consumer and

business on the basis of an emotive factor and concern shown by the business is known as Affect-Based Trust.

Sometimes due to the outlook of business towards consumers and society, there is a tendency of the consumer to trust businesses known as the Disposition-based trust, even when there is an uncertainty in their intentions¹². Consumers also base their trust on the business by analyzing the facts, past experience and their track records. This is called as Cognition –based trust. Cognitive trust relies on attitudes and behavior of the business (McAllister, 1995).

An Echo-Global CSR study conducted by Cone Communications' Research & Insights¹³ in various countries, show that the consumers in India, Brazil and China have an optimistic impression, entrust and are faithful to those companies that employ CSR practices in their business dealings. According to the study, the consumers of these countries have specified that they would get involved with corporate efforts, right from educating themselves on corporate behavior to volunteering.

1. 88% of Indian, 86% of Chinese and 79% of Brazilian Consumers bought a product with a social/environmental benefit. The global average indicates 67%.
2. 56% of Indian, 52% of Brazilian and 43% of Chinese consumers researched on a company's business practices or if they are supporting any sort of social and environmental issues. The global average states 34%.
3. 69% of Chinese, 67% of Indian and 65% of Brazilian consumers donated. The global average is 60%.
4. 48% of Indian, 46% of Brazilian and 45% of Chinese consumers volunteered, the global average being 37%.

The study (Echo-Global CSR, 2013) also states that the consumers in Brazil, China and India insist on social responsibility. They are using social media and personal networks to voice their

thoughts on CSR not only amongst themselves but also directly to companies. Globally almost 62% of the global consumers use social media to connect with companies over social and environmental topics but it is more popular in high mobile-savvy countries.

1. 77% of Indian, 75% of Chinese, 64% of Brazilian and 50% global average consumers told their friends or family members about the efforts which a company has taken with respect to CSR.
2. 90% of Chinese, 89% of Indian, 85% of Brazilian and 62% global average consumers use social media to engage with companies around CSR efforts.
3. 84% of Chinese, 69% of Brazilian, 65% of Indian and 55% of global average consumers boycotted a company's products/services upon learning that it has behaved irresponsibly.
4. 49% of Chinese, 35% of Indian, 35% of Brazilian and 26% global average consumers shared negative information about companies CSR practices via social media.

The study further warns the companies that if they did not become sincere with their CSR activities, this attitude of the consumer might be a cause of trouble to them as the consumers no longer shy from revealing the negative behaviour and information to their friends and families to the extent that they influence the boycotting of the goods. This means that if the consumers can become the brand advocates, they can also be strong antagonists.

Objective of The Study

Consumer is not only the king of the market but also an aware member of the society. He wants to know what Business houses and Corporate are doing for the welfare of the society. Corporate Social Responsibility is the burning topic of the day so much so that the Indian government has also amended the CSR clause 135 of the

Companies Act, 2013 (Handbook on Corporate Social Responsibility in India, 2013). So in order to scrutinize the consumer's expectations and purchasing decisions, their awareness of Corporate Social Responsibility and reaction to it is a very important feature.

Research Methodology

Scope of The Study

The primary data collected for the study was restricted to the sampling unit which is the consumers of Delhi and NCR.

Research Design

Descriptive type of research is undertaken for the study as it states the condition of the consumer as it exists in the market currently. Scientific technique is followed in the course of the study of the research problem. The main aim was to be familiar with the environment, describe the accessible data and gain insight into it.

Sampling Size

The sampling size was selected in such a way that it could while stating facts would adequately represent the entire population. The total population surveyed was 200 consumers of Delhi and NCR.

Sampling Design

To collect the primary data from the survey of the consumers, Convenient Sampling technique was used on the respondents.

Data Collection

In this research study, a structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. The secondary data was collected through certain web portals.

Statistical Techniques

Some of the statistical techniques used as per the necessity of the study are as follows:

T- Match Paired Test

$$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{s} \sqrt{n}, \text{ where } \bar{d} = \frac{\sum d}{n} = \text{mean of the differences}$$

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2 + n(\bar{d}^2)}{n-1}}, \text{ where } s = \text{standard deviation of the differences}$$

Weighted Average Method

$$\text{Weighted Average} = \frac{A_1W_1 + A_2W_2 + \dots + A_nW_n}{W_1+W_2+ \dots +W_n}$$

where 'A' represents variable values and W represents the weights attached to variable values

Scaling Techniques

Five point scale used varying from 1 to 5, which assigns from disagree to agree in the ascending order.

Ranking Method

In this method the respondents were asked to rank all their answers.

Limitations of The Study

1. The research for the study is based on the datas collected from sample areas of Delhi and NCR only and there may be a variation in the results in other places of the country.
2. There may be biased opinions of the respondents during the survey while collecting the primary data through the well structured questionnaire, how so ever carefully the field investigation had been done.
3. The sample size was limited to 200 consumers as the main objective of the study was to understand the consumer's awareness on CSR.
4. The respondents for the survey were selected from the city only.

The Analysis And Interpretation of Data Demographic Profile of The Consumers

Classification of respondents	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	18 to 30 years	43	21.50%
	31 to 40 years	54	27%
	41 to 50 years	36	18%
	51 to 60 years	67	33.50%
	Total	200	100%
Education Background	Below Tenth	22	11%
	Tenth	88	44%
	Graduates	50	25%
	Post Graduates	40	20%
	Total	200	100%
Profession	Entrepreneur	32	16%
	Farming	26	13%
	Student	65	32.50%
	Service	27	13.50%
	Housewife	38	19%
	Others	12	6%
Total	200	100%	
Earnings per annum	Below Rs. 50,000	13	6.50%
	Rs. 50,000 – Rs. 1,50,000	43	21.50%
	Rs. 1,50,000 – Rs.2,50,000	116	58%
	Rs. 2,50,000 – Rs. 5,00,000	15	7.50%
	Above 5,00,000	13	6.50%
Total	200	100%	

Testing of Hypothesis

Assuming that H₀ is the hypothesis, which indicates that there is no significant difference between the awareness and expectations of the consumers concerning societal responsibility of the corporate.

The tabulation done below indicates the ranking methods and scaling techniques is given by the respondents of the survey:

No. Of cases	Awareness	Expectations	(A-E) = d	d ²
1	3.04	3.2	-0.16	0.0256
2	3.19	3.4	-0.21	0.0441
3	3.01	3.1	-0.09	0.0081
4	2.78	3.65	-0.87	0.7569
5	2.69	3.72	-1.03	1.0609
6	2.54	4.11	-1.57	2.4336
7	2.67	4.23	-1.56	2.8900
8	2.85	3.98	-1.13	1.2769
9	2.87	4.1	-1.23	1.5129
10	2.65	4.2	-1.55	2.4025
			$\sum d = -9.4$	$\sum d^2 = 12.4115$

H0 hypothesis was tested by using T-match paired test, using the formula

$$t = \frac{\bar{d}}{s} \sqrt{\frac{n}{s}}$$

where $\bar{d} = \frac{\sum d}{n}$ = mean of the differences

$$\bar{d} = \frac{\sum d}{n} = \frac{9.4}{10} = 0.94$$

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2 + n(\bar{d}^2)}{n-1}}$$

where s = standard deviation of the differences

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{12.4115 - 10(0.94^2)}{10-1}}$$

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{12.4115 - 8.836}{9}}$$

$$s = \sqrt{0.3972777} = 0.6303$$

$$\text{Now, } t = \frac{0.94\sqrt{10}}{0.6303} = \frac{0.94 \times 3.16}{0.6303} = 4.71$$

$$V = n-1 = 10-1 = 9$$

$$V = 9, t_{1.05} = 4.82$$

The value of t which is calculated is more than that of the table. Therefore the hypothesis H0 is rejected, which shows that with regards to CSR, there is a distinct differentiation between the awareness and expectations of consumers.

Variance Between The Awareness And Expectations of Consumers With Respect To The Corporate Social Responsibility

Sr No.	Mindset of the consumers	Corporates with CSR	Weighted average	Variance Between awareness and expectations
1.	Awareness	During production, Corporates have considered consumers'	3.04	0.16
	Expectations	During production, Corporates shall consider consumers' preference	3.2	
2.	Awareness	Corporates have developed products as per the consumers' economic	3.19	0.21
	Expectations	Corporates shall develop products as per the consumers' economic	3.4	
3	Awareness	Corporates provides prompt after sales and other services to the	3.01	0.09
	Expectations	Corporates would provide prompt after sales and other services to the consumers	3.1	
4	Awareness	Corporates maintain delivery of the products and services with the right price	2.78	0.87
	Expectations	Corporates will maintain delivery of the products and services with the right price.	3.65	
5	Awareness	Corporates ensure smooth flow of products and services at the right	2.69	1.03
	Expectations	Corporates will ensure smooth flow of products and services at the right time.	3.72	
6	Awareness	Corporates guarantees timely commitment to the consumers.	2.54	1.57
	Expectations	Corporates will guarantee timely commitment to the consumers.	4.11	
7	Awareness	Corporates always resolve consumers' problem with genuine	2.67	1.56
	Expectations	Corporates will resolve consumers' problem with genuine interest .	4.23	
8	Awareness	Corporates release only those testimonials and advertisements which are factual and non-discriminatory.	2.85	1.13
	Expectations	Corporates will release only those testimonials and advertisements which are factuals and non-discriminatory.	3.98	
9	Awareness	Corporates do not indulge in any sort of deceitful and immoral trade practices	2.87	1.23
	Expectations	Corporates will not indulge in any sort of deceitful and immoral	4.1	
10	Awareness	Corporates delve in proper and smooth distribution of the products and services so that the consumers are confident of their purchases	2.65	1.55
	Expectations	Corporates will always delve in proper and smooth distribution of the products and services so that the consumers are confident of their purchases	4.2	

Conclusion

This study concludes that Consumers being the imperative constituents of the market, want to know what businesses are doing for their and society's welfare. They are discontented with the approach of the Corporates towards CSR. The expectations of the Consumers are higher than their awareness which creates variance between the two. Though as shown by the study, this can increase the disappointment and dissatisfaction among the Consumers, as is already happening in many countries these days.

So Business should genuinely focus and formulate their practices majorly on ethics and social responsibility. As the consumer is more literate and aware with high expectations from the businesses, it might endanger the free-market economy by creating a proletarian upheaval in the society.

Proposition

1. The companies should promote their products through ethical advertisements, untrue statements and unfair practices only loosen the confidence of the consumer in the company.
2. Consumer satisfaction, being the prime motto of the businesses, ulterior motive of the business should be to provide products at the right time with right price and right quantity.
3. In order to increase the consumer's level of trust in the businesses, they should ensure smooth functioning of the product supply chain / distribution chain, proper dealing with customer complaints, providing prompt services,

To sustain the positive image of the business in the minds of the consumer, the business should not indulge in unfair and immoral practices, which only creates chaos in the market, thus affecting the sales of the company, ending up in the closure of the company

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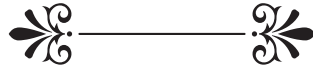
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Media Pluralism: A Study of Select Regional News Channels

Mahvish Rahman

Abstract- There are over 300 channels in India, out of which around 77 are news channels. The private electronic media, particularly the television news media, which is a creature of the 1990s, is still evolving and maturing. Of late, the private news broadcasters, either under an umbrella network or as a single-unit, are turning towards niche audience and therefore, a mushrooming of regional news channels. Owing to the plethora of news channels, it is expected that diverse viewpoints be represented but studies have also shown that since the private news broadcasters are owned by big corporate houses, these channels are actually creating a 'façade of media plurality'. The access to independent and pluralistic media and the representation of the full spectrum of views, interests and concerns prevalent in the society are the prerequisites of a successful democracy. This study will map content of two regional news channels and explore if plurality is actually practiced or the dominant viewpoints telecast.

Key Words: Media Pluralism, Indian media, regional news channels.

Introduction

Asia has witnessed a profound transformation of its media landscape since the mid-1980s when deregulation of state television monopolies resulted in a dramatic growth in commercial television outlets. Cable and satellite television have since proliferated at a phenomenal rate providing Asians with a wide range of television channels.¹

In any given week in India, there could be about 500 million people watching television. This big sea of consumers is still expanding. The private electronic media, particularly the television news media, which is a creature of the 1990s, is still evolving and maturing. There are over 300 channels in India, out of which around 77 are news channels². Of late, the private news broadcasters, either under an umbrella network or as a single-unit, are turning towards niche audience and therefore, a mushrooming of regional news channels. Owing to the plethora of news channels, it is expected that diverse viewpoints be represented but studies have also shown that since the private news broadcasters are owned by big corporate houses, these channels are actually creating a 'façade of media plurality'³.

This paper will study if plurality is actually practiced or is media concentrated in the hands of a few. For a democracy to function efficiently, it is imperative that it has a dynamic and diverse media sector, both in terms of ownership and in content. The access to independent and pluralistic media and the representation of the full spectrum of views, interests and concerns prevalent in the society are the prerequisites of a successful democracy.

Objectives

This study will look at the pluralistic character of the news broadcast by two regional channels in the state of Uttar Pradesh, India and whether it is helping in the widening of media diversity. It will map the content of an Urdu News Channel, Aalami Sahara and a Hindi News Channel, GNN News. This paper intends to:

- Examine the extent to which diversity is practiced;
- Explore political pluralism by mapping the castes and gender of actors in the news channels;
- Analyse geographical pluralism by studying the origin news themes across the news channels;
- Study the styles of reporting news and

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events;

- Evaluate the ad sources and product categories of the news channels.

India's Television History

India's television history can be divided into three broad phases⁴. The first phase, from 1960 until the 1980s, saw the employment of television as a socio-economic educational project for villagers in India and later as a state propaganda tool for nation-building. In the second phase, through the 1980s, the state retained control of the airwaves but allowed commercial engagement with the private sector, legitimizing entertainment as a viable ambition of television content. In the third era, post liberalization, the state ceded control of the medium, which was in the hands of the private sector saw an astonishing growth that has shown no signs of abating. In such a scenario, it becomes imperative to understand whether Indian news media, with a mushrooming of news channels, is pluralistic in nature and diverse in character.

Media Pluralism

Curran and Gurevitch⁵ provide a useful definition of the pluralist point of view regarding media:

“The pluralists see society as a complex of competing groups and interests, none of them predominant all the time. Media organizations are seen as bounded organizational systems, enjoying an important degree of autonomy from the state, political parties and institutionalized pressure groups. Control of the media is said to be in the hands of an autonomous managerial élite who allow a considerable degree of flexibility to media professionals.”

Media Pluralism therefore highlights³:

- pluralist view that the media are independent;
- the independence of media from the government, pressure groups and big conglomerations;
- the relative independence of journalists in writing their articles;
- media freedom by reducing media ownership concentration, and by supporting more and diverse media voices;
- editorial independence in the mass media by

supporting the efforts of journalists and media professionals to work freely and to resist all forms of internal and external pressure that undermine the quality and ethical standing of media

- public engagement with media and policymakers in order to develop a more balanced, accessible and democratic media system;
- a comprehensive strategy for diversity to help media meet the challenge of improving levels of diversity, both in content and within media institutions, and among broadcasters;
- awareness of minority concerns and cultural identity among media professionals, and to promote dialogue between media and representatives of different communities.

Using the term media pluralism can be a useful way of acknowledging that there are different types of media diversity. Media pluralism can include both internal features of the market, such as the level of diversity in available content, and external features, such as the concentration of ownership. Pluralism is also a useful term to highlight geographical diversity, and the different challenges that face various markets. For example, a rural community with access to only one local newspaper may appear to have a limited range of voices. However, that community will also have access news and information sources via other platforms, such as online, radio or TV.

Methodology

This study will explore diversity in terms of content and access to different points of views. Uttar Pradesh has been chosen as the area of study as it has a huge population which consumes news voraciously in the Urdu-Hindi language. Its importance also stems from the fact that it is geographically closer to the capital of the country, Delhi and therefore is active in the larger political sphere. It has a diverse population too in terms of caste, ethnicity and religion.

'Aalami Sahara', a 24x7 Urdu News Channel and GNN News, a 24x7 Hindi News Channel have been undertaken for the study. 'Aalami Sahara' has been chosen as it is the first privately owned

national Urdu news channel. 'GNN News' as it is one of the leading news channels of core Hindi-speaking belts of the country with a focus on rural development.

Prime time news bulletins (30 minutes each) broadcast during week days on the said channels were recorded for three weeks and the recorded news was mapped under different parameters.

On the basis of these parameters, news for a period of 15 days was mapped and analyzed.

S. No.	Channel Name	Time Line	Time Slot	Frequency
1.	Aalami Sahara	27 th - 31 st August, 2012	09:00-	5 times/week
		3 rd - 7 th September, 2012	09:30pm	
		10 th -14 th September, 2012		
2.	GNN News	27 th - 31 st August, 2012	08:00-	5 times/week
		3 rd - 7 th September, 2012	08:30	
		10 th -14 th September, 2012	pm	

This study will examine the different points of views based on the following parameters:

- 1) **News Themes:** Political, Social, Business & Finance, Entertainment, Sports, Miscellaneous.
- 2) **News Sub-Themes:**
 - (a) **Political: Functioning of Political Party,** Funtioning of the Organ of States, Protest & Demonstration , Conflict/Terror/War, Corruption/Scam.
 - (b) **Social:** Cultural/Religious, Crime/Social Conflict, Welfare/Health/Education/Sanitation etc, Environment/Natural Disaster
 - (c) **Business & Finance:** Functioning of Government/Regulation/Debates, Corporate & Financial Markets
 - (d) **Entertainment:** Bollywood, Non-Bollywood
 - (e) **Sports:** Cricket, Non-Cricket
 - (f) **Miscellaneous**
- 3) **Geographical origin of News:** Central U.P., Eastern U.P., Western U.P., Other States, National and International.
- 4) **Voices of people:** Ruling party, Opposition, Government Officials, Experts, Identity Groups, Activist groups and Vox Populi.
- 5) **Caste of Voices:** Brahmin, Kshatriyas,

Vaishyas, Ashrafs, OBCs, SC/STs.

- 6) **Religion of Voices:** Majority, Minority: Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, Jain, Others.
- 7) **Story treatment:** Reporter from location/PTC, Reporter over Phone, Panel, Studio Interview/Location Interview, Anchor over Pictures (Including Agency), Anchor reads (without pictures), Others.
- 8) **Advertisements:** (a) Public, Private (b) Product Catogories of advertisement: Business & Finance, Food & Beverages, Consumer Durables, FMCG, Non-Financial Services, Others.

Brief Background of the Channels

Aalami Sahara

Sahara News Network launched its Urdu news channel 'Aalami Sahara'- a 24x7 News Channel on 27th December 2010. It is India's first privately owned National Urdu news channel. It is a free to air channel that broadcasts news across 54 countries.⁷

The company is a part of business conglomerate 'Sahara India' owned by Subrata Roy, which publishes an Urdu daily 'Roznama Rashtriya Sahara', a weekly-magazine 'Aalami Sahara' and a monthly- tabloid 'Bazm-e-sahara'. Sahara News Network runs the national Hindi news channel, Samay, along with 36 city-specific regional news channels under the brand name, Sahara Samay.

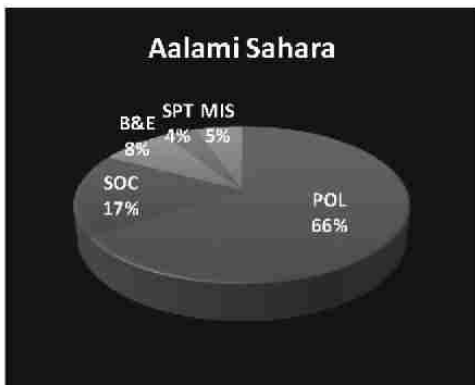
GNN News

GNN News is a 24x7 Hindi news channel catering essentially to the core Hindi speaking belts of India- Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi and NCR and Western Uttar Pradesh. It was launched on 20th June, 2011 with an aim to make it a one-stop shop for fiction and non-fiction entertainment. It aimed to provide information related to agricultural developments, climate, science and technology and folk entertainment (focus on rural audience).⁸

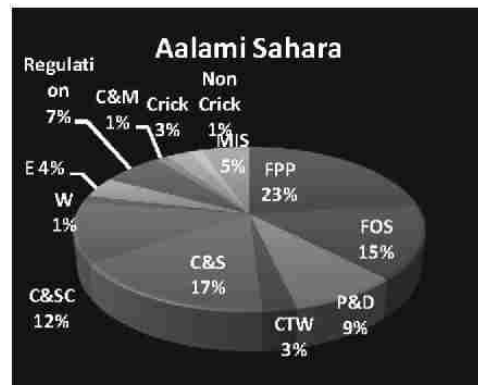
GNN News is owned by GN Group (Chairman Mr. S. S. Randhawa) which is a multi-disciplinary and multi-faceted corporate group having diversified bearings in different fields.

Findings from the Variables/Themes Aalami Sahara

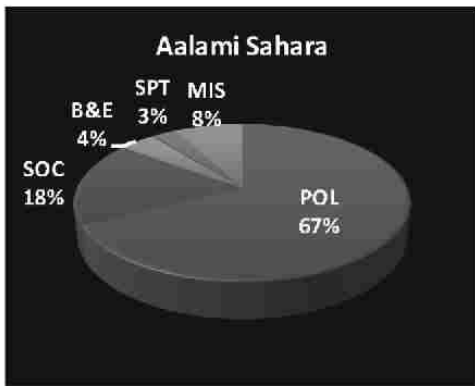
Proportion of News Themes in Headlines



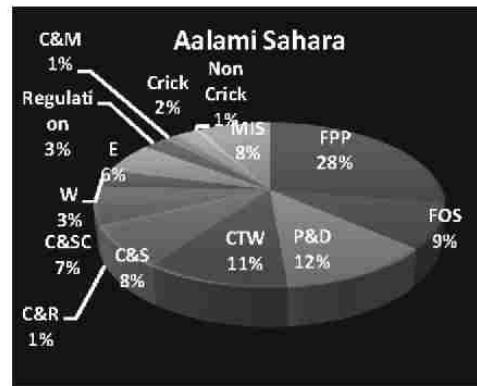
Proportion of News Sub-themes in Headlines



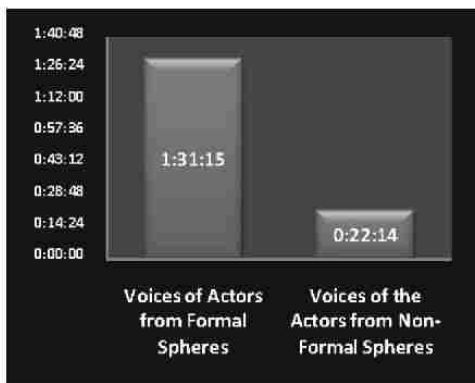
Proportion of News Stories under Various News Themes



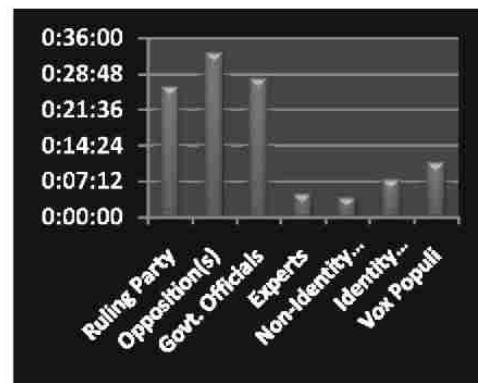
Proportion of News Stories of Various Subthemes in Entire Bulletin



Profile of Time Given to Voices

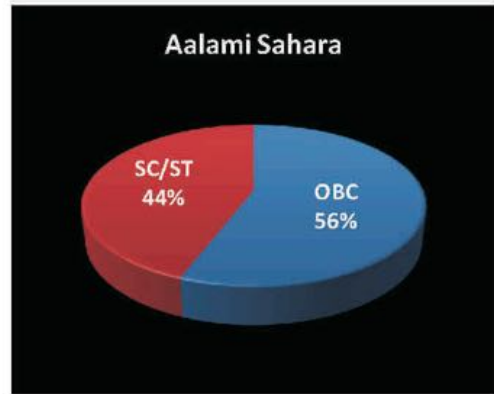
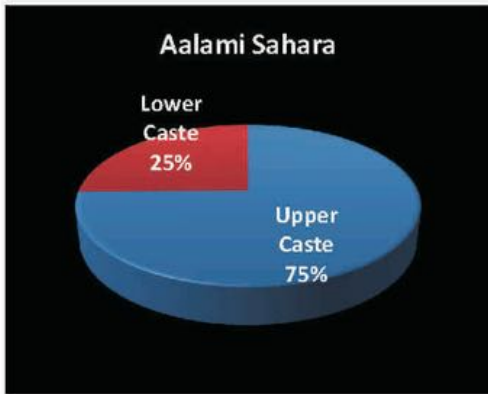


Profile of Time Given to Sub-themes of Voices

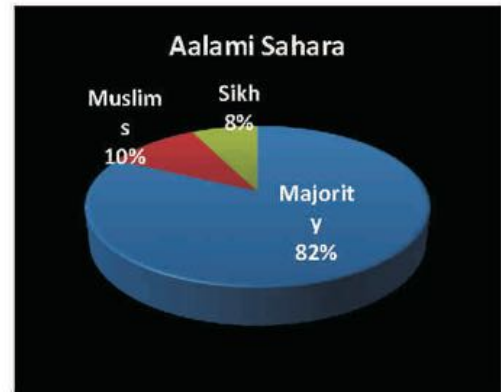
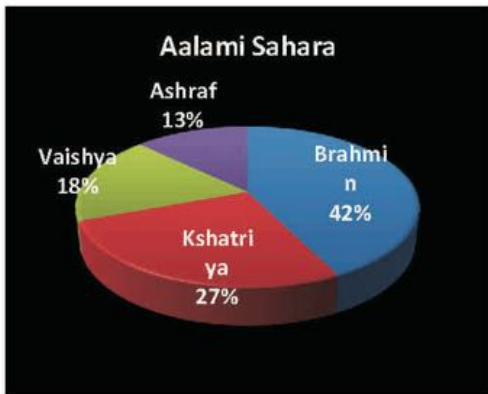


Proportion of Actors among Castes

Proportion of Actors among Lower Caste

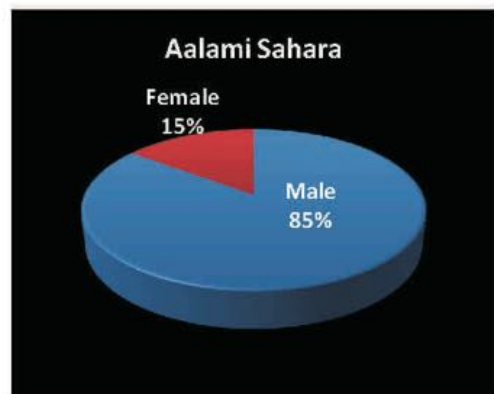
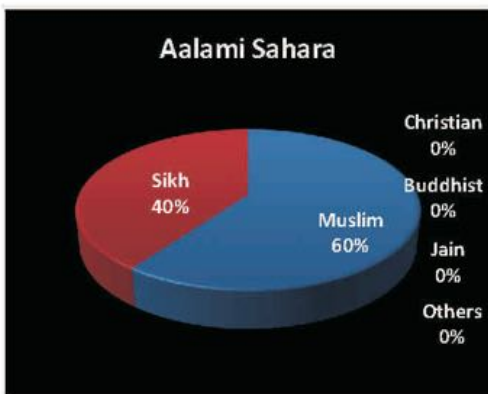


*Proportion of Actors among Upper Caste
Proportion of Class of Actors in News Stories*

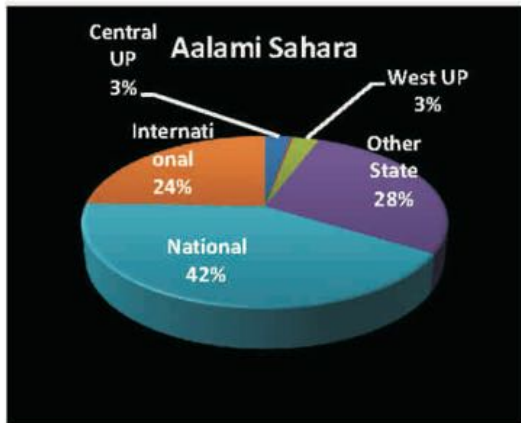


Proportion of Minorities

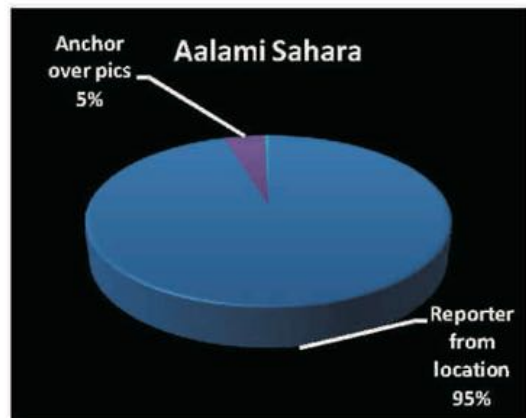
Proportion of Gender of Actors



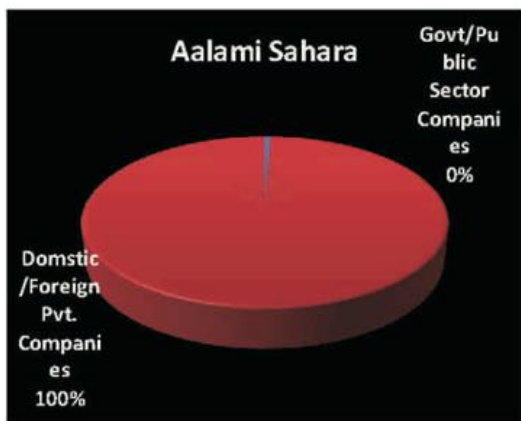
Proportion of Origin of News in News Stories



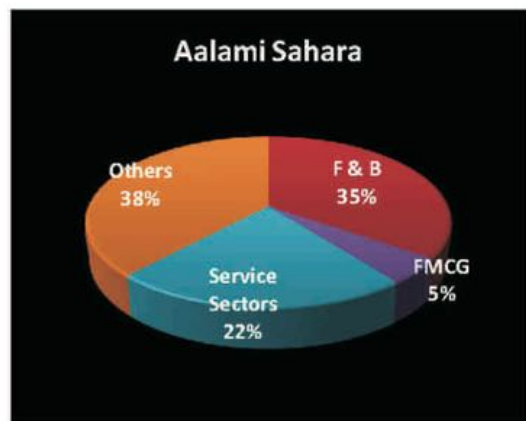
Story Treatment



Advertisement Source



Product Category



Observations

In U.P., 'Aalami Sahara' gives the biggest pie to 'Political News' in headlines implying that the channel is not diverse in terms of the news themes covered in headlines. In news sub-themes of headlines also, the channel gives the maximum pie to 'Functioning of Political Parties' among 'Political News'.

In the news stories dealt with in the bulletin, it again reflects that the channel is inclined towards 'Political News'. In the news sub-themes, we find that it deals with 'Functioning of Political Parties', 'Conflict', 'Crime', 'Corruption' and so on.

By giving a huge proportion to 'Voices of Actors

from Formal Sphere' than to 'Voices of Actors from Non-Formal Sphere', 'Aalami Sahara' reflects that it is not diverse in terms of voices and it depends upon the powerful and high-ranked officials for statements and opinion formation. However, among the 'Formal' sphere voices, it gives almost an equal chance for the actors to express themselves, indicating that it is not pro any side and gives an almost equal weight age to all viewpoints. It telecasts more voices of 'Vox-Populi' from 'Non-Formal' Sphere.

The caste representation is also not diverse in this channel as the 'Upper Caste' gets three times more representation than the 'Lower Caste'. Even among the upper castes, there is hierarchy as the 'Brahmins' who are at the top in the caste ladder

are represented the most than the 'Kshatriyas' and 'Vaishyas'. Among the class of actors, majority gets a much higher representation than minorities like Muslims and Sikh.

Among the Minorities, Muslims get the maximum representation followed by Sikhs and it is the same faces among them who figure time and again. Male voices are heard far more than Female voice. Only when there are issues directly related to women do we find a female voice. Thus, 'Aalami Sahara' does not represent gender proportionally.

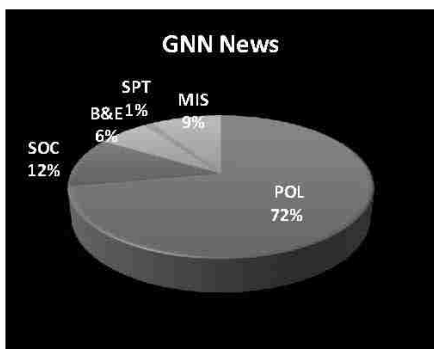
'Aalami Sahara' being a national news channel, telecasts mostly 'National' news. However, news of 'International' origin is adequately represented. News from 'Other States' gets covered but it is again mostly from north Indian

states.

The style of news gathering is mostly 'Reporter from Location' implying that the channel has reporters to cover most of their stories. Other modes of news gathering like, 'Reporter over Phone', 'Panel/Studio Interview/Location Interview', 'Anchor reads (without pictures)' and so on are not used.

All the advertisements on 'Aalami Sahara' are from 'Domestic/Foreign Companies' and no 'Government/Public Sector' advertisements are seen. Amongst the products advertised, the biggest share is to 'Others which is Self-promotion/Other Channel Programs' followed by 'Service Sector' while 'Business & Finance' and 'Consumer Durables' do not get any share.

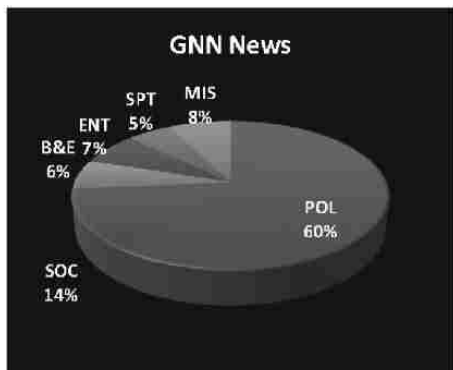
Proportion of News Themes in Headlines



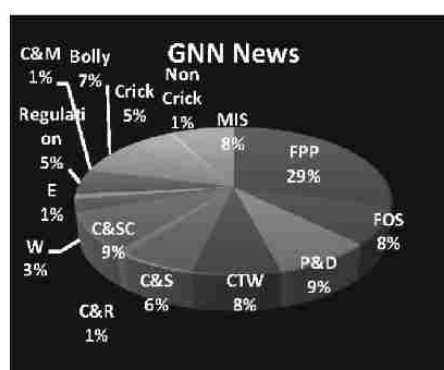
Proportion of News Sub-themes in Headlines



Proportion of News Stories under Various News Themes

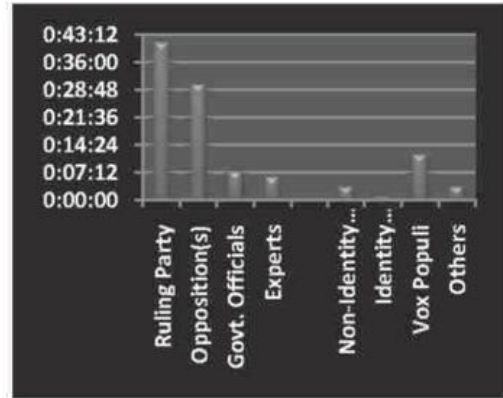
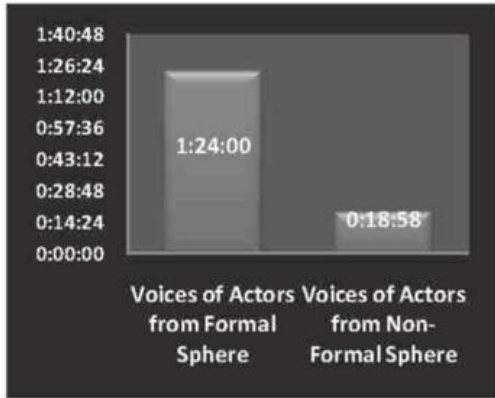


Proportion of News Stories of Entire Bulletin



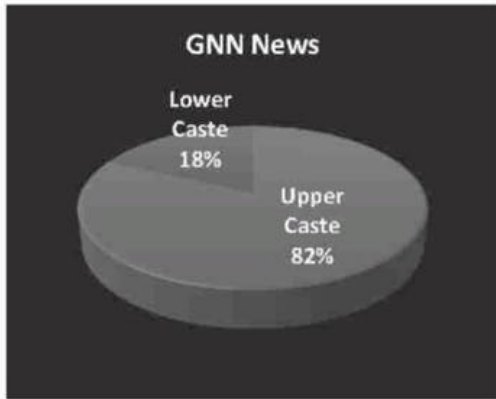
Profile of Time Given to Voices

Profile of Time Given to Sub-themes of Voices



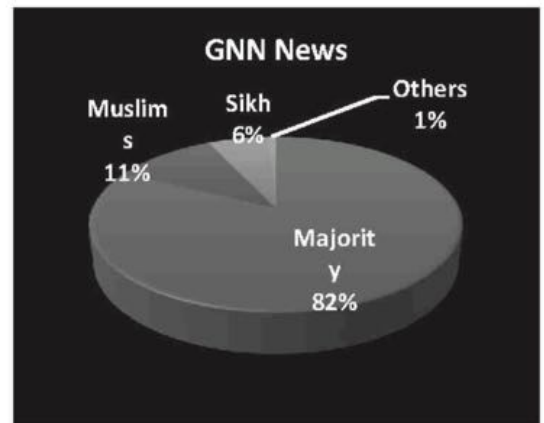
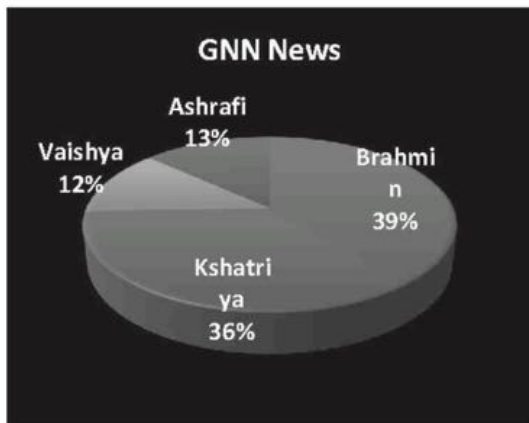
Proportion of Actors among Castes

Proportion of Actors among Lower Castes

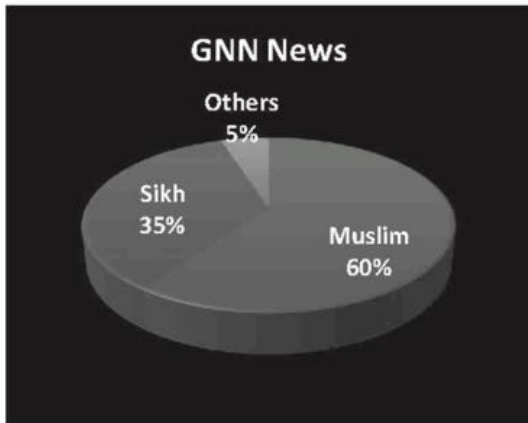


Proportion of Actors among Upper Caste

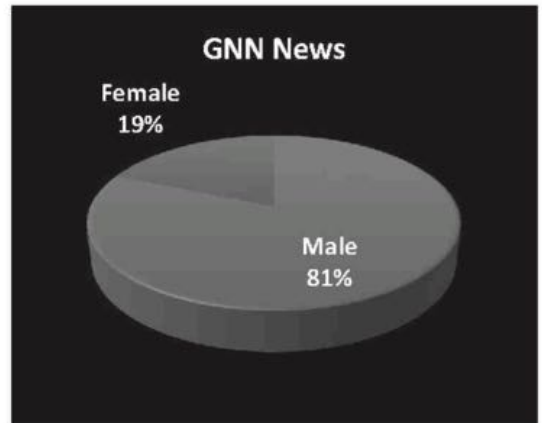
Proportion of Class of Actors in News Stories



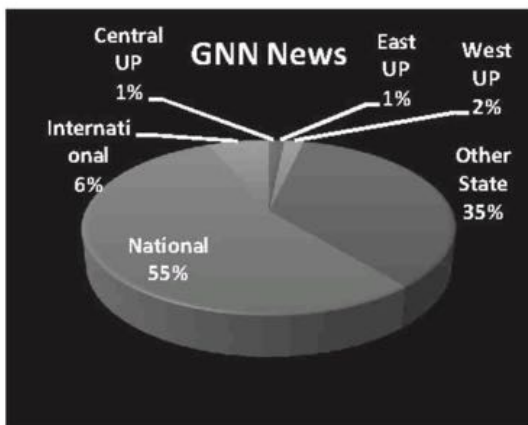
Proportion of Minorities



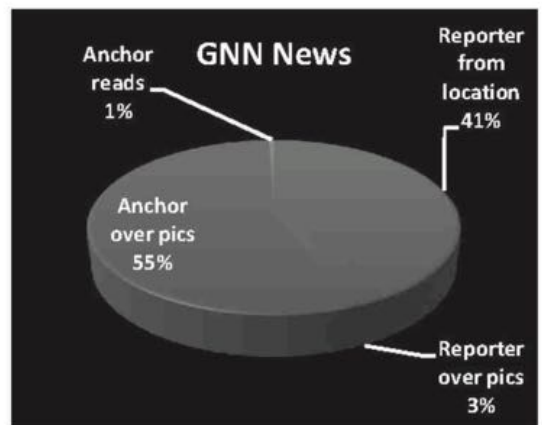
Proportion of Genders of Actors



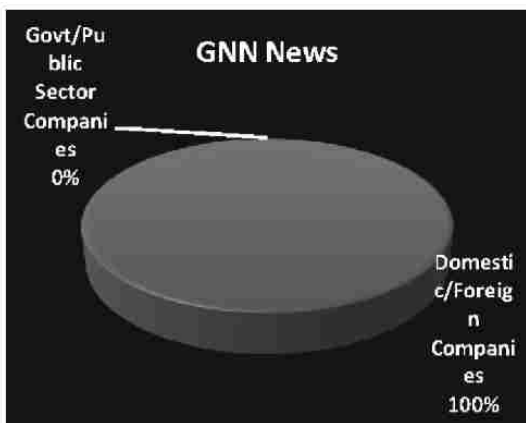
Proportion of Origin of News in News Stories



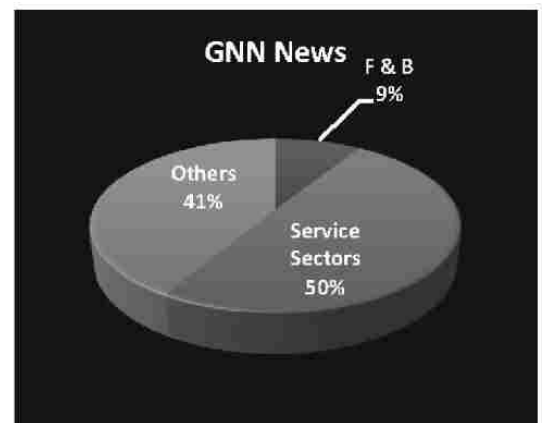
Story Treatment



Advertisement Source



Product Category



Observations

In the state of U.P., 'GNN News' is biased towards 'Political' news in headlines. It's very little share is given to other news themes like 'Social, 'Business and Economics' and 'Sports'.

In news sub-themes in headlines too, the channel gives the maximum share to the 'Functioning of the political parties'.

Even in the entire bulletin, the channel is not diverse in terms of the news themes dealt with as it still is inclined towards political news. 'Sports News' is telecast more in the bulletin implying that the channel assumes that the Hindi-speaking public would be interested to know about the sports world. An important change which figures here is that 'Entertainment News', which was absent in the headlines figures at the end of each bulletin and it deals with news related to Bollywood.

'GNN News' is also biased towards actors of 'Formal' Sphere, that is politicians and officials and it seems to give very little space to the voice of the powerless. Even among the powerful, it is largely pro-establishment. Bollywood directors and actors are given space to be heard. The channel tries to incorporate voices of the common people but it is very less, thus the ideal of diversity is not fulfilled.

'GNN News' is highly biased towards the actors of Upper Caste as it gets a much higher representation. Among the Lower Castes, OBCs are represented much more than SC/STs.

Amongst the minorities, Muslims get represented most followed by Sikhs by the same actors who figure again and again and take decisions on the behalf of the entire community.

Among the genders, males get a much higher representation than females. Some voices of female Bollywood stars are heard. Voices of common women are rarely heard. Thus 'GNN News' is not diverse in the representation of gender.

Among the 'Geographical origins of news', 'GNN

News' has mostly 'National' news and news from 'Other States'. There is a lack of news from 'Central U.P.' and 'Eastern U.P.' because the channel concentrates on 'Western U.P.' still the news from there is very less. Also, the news from U.P. is more about crime and accidents than about politics.

A major chunk of news treatment is 'Anchor over pics' indicating the reliance of the channel on pictures available from news agencies to make news and telecast it. 'Reporter from Location' is used for news related to politics and Bollywood

The advertisement sources in 'GNN News' are all of GNN and no ads from Government/PSU can be seen. 'Others' which is Self-promotion/other channel programs also occupies a big pie. 'FMCG', 'Business & Finance' and 'Consumer Durables' do not get any share.

Inferences

- Both 'Aalami Sahara' and 'GNN News' give the highest pie to 'Political News' in Headlines. This clearly states the bias which is present among channels of both the languages towards political news. Therefore, we can deduce that Indian news media is inclined towards political news and equates politics with news. It also co-relates to U. P. being a politically active state (due to its proximity to Delhi) and therefore, it reflects on the kind of news shown on the channels.
- Both the channels give a little share in headlines to news in 'Social,' 'Business and Economics', and 'Sports.' This also reflects that the Indian news media does not consider it worthwhile incorporating these themes for Prime-time news. 'GNN News' which covers 'Entertainment' in its bulletins does not show it in its headlines. This means that the Hindi-speaking population of U.P. would like to get some entertainment news but it is not preferred in the headlines while it is completely absent in the Urdu channel 'Aalami Sahara'.
- Among news sub-themes in headlines, both the channels give a greater share to

'Functioning of Political Parties'. It means that the news channels deem it important to let people know of the activities of different political parties of the state. After that news again from the political theme, that is, 'Functions of organs of the state' and 'Corruption' are covered reflecting that people would be more interested in news related to dramatic things like crime, conflict and corruption.

- In tandem with the headlines, among the News Stories, both the channels give the greatest share to 'Political News'. This again reinforces the proposition that people in U.P. are much more interested to know about news stories related to Political News. The difference is in the share given to 'Social News'. 'Aalami Sahara' deals with it in its bulletins to an acceptable length. However, 'GNN News' which was launched with the motto of delivering news related to social development does not deal with 'Social News' in its bulletin to a great extent. It gives an equivalent share to 'Entertainment News': 'Cricket' and 'Bollywood' to a greater extent, befitting its objective of being a one-stop shop of fiction and non-fiction entertainment.
- Among the news sub-themes in bulletin, 'Environment' and 'Health' get a bigger pie in 'Aalami Sahara'. It reflects that 'Aalami Sahara' gives a more diverse viewpoint in terms of news as it also gives news related to such social issues. On the other hand, 'GNN News', which neither mentions any of its stakeholders on the website nor has issued any annual reports, seems to have been launched by the GNN Group for the purpose of diversifying one's interest in the media field rather than act as a watchdog. Although at the time of its launch, it claimed that it would cater to agricultural developments, climate, science and technology and folk entertainment (focus on rural audience), there was no news related to these aspects.
- 'Protests and Demonstration' gets a bigger pie in 'Aalamai Sahara' owing to its share of

'International' protests (because of the American film 'Innocence of Muslims'). It brings out an interesting relationship between the watchers of 'Aalami Sahara' and International news as there seems to be an unspoken interest of the Urdu-speaking population of U.P. towards issues related to Islam and to American news in particular.

- Both the channels give greater proportion of time to 'Voices from Formal Sphere' meaning there is not much space for the common public to make its voice heard. It is the politicians and people in power who are heard for a long time again and again. 'GNN News' gives a high share to actors from 'Ruling Party' and 'Government Officials' are not largely heard. It hints that GNN is pro-establishment and other voices from formal sphere are not catered to. 'Aalami Sahara' gives slightly higher share to 'Opposition' as compared to 'Ruling Party' and this could mean that it tries to give a fair representation. In the 'Non-Formal Sphere', 'Vox-Populi' is heard the most in both the channels indicating that there is some air time for the common public to express its viewpoints.
- Among the castes, both the channels give much higher representation to voices from 'Upper Caste' as compared to 'Lower Caste'. Among the Voices of 'Lower Caste', OBCs get more representation as compared to SC/ST. This clearly reflects the bias prevalent in the Indian news media supporting the caste system. Lower Castes are still struggling to make their voices heard and among the lower castes, SC/STs are not heard adequately. Among the upper castes, equal representation to voices from 'Brahmin' in both 'Aalami Sahara' and 'GNN News'. Kshatriyas and Vaishyas voices are heard lesser as compared to Brahmins and this again is in sync with the hierarchy of the Indian caste system. The Upper Caste Muslims 'Ashraf' are given a low representation in both the channels. This reiterates a prominent notion of the Indian media system that it is dominated by Upper caste Hindus and low-caste or minority

voices are less heard.

- Vaishyas' and 'SC/STs' are represented more in 'Aalami Sahara' than in 'GNN News'. It reflects that between the two, 'Aalami Sahara' tries to give more representation to marginalized voices and tries to cater to diverse viewpoints in its news-making business.
- Both the channels represent the classes, minorities and genders almost similarly. Actors from majority are heard the most in both the channels. Among the minorities, Muslims and Sikhs are heard while there is absolutely no representation from other minority communities like Christians, Buddhists, Jains and so on. This clearly shows how mainstream media sidelines other voices of the country. Women are represented by a very low proportion in both the channels. This reinforces the proposition that Indian news media is dominated by Hindu males. Rarely do we find a minority voice, especially of a woman heard. Thus, we find that there is no political pluralism in these channels.
- National' News gets maximum visibility in both the channels however the share of national news in 'GNN News' is much more. News from other states gets more represented in 'GNN News'. 'Aalami Sahara' gives a big share to 'International' news, owing to the worldwide protests against the American film 'Innocence of Muslims' by the Muslim world. News from U. P. gets marginal visibility in both the channels. The study finds that most of the news is related to politics and therefore from the capital of the country, Delhi. That is why, the variable 'Other States' which includes Delhi, has a big count in both the channels. Also, 'National' news is also generally about Judiciary and Legislative bodies which are mostly situated in Delhi, therefore the news boils down to the maximum from Delhi. Although the channels cater to U.P. which is a big Hindi, Urdu-speaking belt, there is not much news from this state. Other states of the country, mostly North India, figure only in terms of mishap or protests. Thus we find that there is not much geographical pluralism in the channels. News is mostly from Delhi and North India and other parts of the country are rarely mentioned.
- Aalami Sahara' employs 'Reporters from location' for all their news coverage. It means that it has the resources to deploy reporters at specific locations and just does not churn out news as given by news agencies. 'GNN News' uses 'Reporter from location' but 'Anchor over pics' is used more. This clearly indicates that it takes a short cut by using this news treatment. It reflects that the channel invests less in news gathering and tries to make do with the news coming from agencies. Panel/Studio Interviews are never used by either of the channels. This means that the channels do not invest in calling experts and doing an analysis of issues. They are only concerned with churning 'breaking news' one after another and not having experts discussing news stories and helping the public form opinions.
- Both the channels have advertisements only by Domestic/Foreign Companies, no Govt/PSU Ads. It means that they do not get any advertisements from the government sector. It also shows that the channels have enough private advertisers or enough revenue to keep them running without any Government advertisements.
- GNN News' has a huge share of advertisements in the 'Service Sector' as it issues a lot of in-house manufactured Public Service Messages. This reflects that GNN intends to create a farce of being a channel related to development and issues by showing advertisements of service sector instead of catering to 'news' related to social issues. Self-Promotion too comprises a big share in both the channels. Due to the lack of advertisements from the government sector, both the channels indulge in self-promotion in the available air-time.

Conclusion

By analyzing the data from both the channels we see that news is actually not that diverse in U.P. Political news occupies the biggest share in the bulletins and within it, upper caste males get the biggest share. Of the two channels 'Aalami Sahara' tries a notch higher to be diverse by incorporating voices from Vaishyas/Kshatriyas but fails to cater to voices of minorities and women. Thus, irrespective of the language, be it Urdu or Hindi, news does not come across as being diverse and actually there is a 'façade of media plurality' (Thussu, 2005). Media pluralism does not exist in U. P. as it seems that the channels are controlled by few men in power. Both are privately owned channels and also do not have any Government funded advertisements. The channels do not fairly reflect the voices of society in its ethnic, linguistic, religious, political, geographical and social diversity and did not make an effort to reach out to under-represented groups of people.

In order to be more pluralistic, these channels should try and incorporate more voices and cater to news from all aspects of the society. Media diversity supports, promotes, deepens, consolidates and strengthens democracy, nation building, social cohesion and good governance. Especially for the poor and marginalized, media freedom should be understood to include their participation not merely as consumers, but also as producers of news and analysis. There can be no real media freedom if commercial imperatives start to impact directly on the content on a day-to-day basis. It is because of an acknowledgement of the importance of diverse and pluralistic media for the sustainability of democracy. Diversity of views and opinions promoting different perspectives enriches citizens to participate in a people driven democratic process. It is therefore in the interest of states to support media diversity and pluralism.

Notes and References

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French Retrospect of Miraculous Power and Absurd Believes of Fakir, Jogis, Mullas and Sanyasis

Sakul Kundra

Abstract- The French travelers' and adventurers' records in northern India during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gave different facets of a section of society which are sometime considered as pious while at other times as hypocrites. These include fakirs, jogis, mullas, boiraguy and sanyasis etc. This article tries to discuss their narratives which highlight about their attaining miraculous powers; absurd and disgusting practices; activities of penances and asking alms. Many untranslated and translated French records have been examined to highlight activities pertaining to their ambiguous activities. The rationalist minded Occidental travelers raised question about their theories, believes, activities and behaviours. These scientific mind voyagers blamed them for propagating the irrational and superstitious custom among the Indians. The objective of this article is to narrative the French travelers' observations about these sections of the society during the period of their voyage.

Key Words: Superstitious customs, penances, Fakirs, sanyasis, absurd and disgusting practices, European beggars and alms

Most of the French travelers and adventurers in northern India during the of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had a rational approach, criticized the superstitious and miraculous powers of the fakirs, jogis, mullas, sanyasis and other hypocrites. The article purports to discuss the narratives of these voyagers about the miraculous powers and absurd believes attached to the most ambiguous sections of society who believed to claim the religious sanctity from God. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, occidental voyagers traveled to orient world, who gave a copious account of these men and their implications in the society. Among these accounts the French prospective from original sources is still lacking, so this article uses the first hand (translated and un-translated) sources to comprehensively comprehend their perceptions about these men and their identities. Although some historian have worked on the theme of these people such as Vijay Pinch's *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires* and David Gordon White's *Sinister Yogis* etc. but they all have been missing the French prospective of these men. So this article highlights these person's descriptions through the French eyes.

European travel gave narratives that yogis (semi) nude appearance with ashes on their bodies and matter hair; their practice of carrying and blowing horns; their iron implements and weapons and their proclivity for begging alms, other European accounts refer to yogi practices or lifestyles that differentiate them from other types of renounces and to that of Brahmins¹. Law de Lauriston [French adventurer] said that the temporal advantages which come to the Brahmins from their spiritual authority and the impossibility to set the admitted in their tribe and probably led to the rise of an extraordinary quantity of *faquirs* who by their penitence and austerity attracted the same veneration which a Brahman acquired by his birth². Jean-Baptiste Tavernier [French traveler] gave a description of the fakirs as being nefarious and lazy and make a show of devotion when they do not find means of livelihood. These monks were approximately 1,200,000 in number in India but they were looked with disdain by the Indians. These monks performed many penitence and led an austere life. They spend rest of their life sometimes in an awkward position, for example raising the hands towards the sky, taking food

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with others help and making long pilgrimages. They are naked, bare foot with heavy chains and many remain upright for several days while repressing their breath. Some travelers does not mention the stoppage of breath in the underground crypt while other does not believe in the state of suspended animation termed as Samadhi. This kind of lifestyle was quite unusual for French voyagers who condemn such of absurd activities and made estimate about their number in India.

Tavernier said these idolaters have no unity among themselves as superstition introduces a strange diversity of opinion and customs that they never agree with each other. An idolater will not eat bread nor drink water in a house belonging to any different caste other than those who are noble and more exalted than his own. They can all eat and drink in the house of the Brahmans, which are opened to all³. These men supported the caste distinctions which itself seemed to be bizarre to Occident travelers who do not have this kind of disparity in Europe.

Francois Bernier [1658-68] mentions that India had 'endless variety of fakirs, *dervishes*, and holy men or Gentile hypocrites, who had their different groups which were governed by superior who was given the vows of chastity, poverty and submission⁴. Their followers paid huge respect to their teachers and were believed to have extraordinary sanctity. Travelers show a kind of hierarchy which was being prevalent among these fakirs, this disparity was quite hazy in the eyes of French as they suppose these men living an austere life, in which they follow the caste distinctions and hierarchy.

Tavernier also criticized the Musalman beggars of the East Indies which he believed to be around 80,000 in India. He said 'they are all vagabonds and idlers, who blind the eyes of the people by a false zeal, and lead them to believe that all that falls from their own mouth is oracular⁵. Further he said that some of Musalman [Muslim] fakirs were almost naked like the idolaters Fakirs, as they did not have any regular dwellings and abandon themselves to all kinds of impurity without any shame. They believed to have the

privilege to do all kinds of evils without sin. This French traveler associated fakir's origin with the Ravana whom the Rama despoiled of his kingdom. Thus gave a strange connection that 'on that account he felt so much remorse that he resolved to wander like a vagabond throughout the world, poor and bereft of all property, and completely nude....For being revered as saints, they had abundant opportunities of doing whatever evil they wishes⁶. These fakirs moved in groups who had a chief or superior. These fakir revered a tree at Surat, and believed that 'in its truck, which his hollow, a monster is represented like the head of a deformed women which is said to be the representation of the first women, whom they call Mananiva⁷.

Different kind of penances and the physical conditions of *Jauguis*⁸ were highlighted by varied French travelers. Tavernier and Bernier state that they 'were nearly naked with black skin, long hair, spindle arms, long twisted nails and found in unusual posture⁹ performing different penances. French travelers dislike such conditions of jogis as they believe in cleanness and sanitation. Bernier said

I was for a long time disgusted with a celebrated Fakir, named Sarmet, who paraded the streets of Delhi as naked when he came into the world. He despised equally the promises and the threats of Aureng-zebe, [Aurangzeb] and underwent at length the punishment of decapitation from his obstinate refusal to put on wearing apparel.... Sometimes I have only seen brutality & ignorance in them, who appeared to me to be more like trees that occasionally bestirred themselves from one place to another than creatures with reason; or, I have regarded them as people intoxicated by their Religion¹⁰.

Bernier wrote that these 'naked fakirs undertake long pilgrimages laden with heavy iron chain, without eating and drinking stood upside down for seven to eight days without sitting or lying down and without any other support than might

be afforded by leaning forward against a cord for a few hours in the night; their legs in the meantime were swollen to the size of their thighs¹¹. He was impressed by these severe penances and felt that they were destitute of piety. He called them as egregious fools, or having some sinister views which were hidden from the world. He witnessed the irrational sanctity attached to these men, as 'females would often bring them alms with much devotion, doubtless believing that they were holy personages, more chaste and discreet men¹².

Bernier was amazed by the superstitious beliefs of the Indian and compared these Fakir's with the French hermits who lived a secluded life in a remote garden without ever visiting a town. Bernier was told by a *Jogi* that their 'souls are often rapt in an ecstasy of several hours duration; that their external lose their functions;...they were blessed with a sight of god...they experience transports of holy joy, and a contempt of temporal concerns which defy every power of description¹³. This French traveller condemned vaunted ecstasies of *Jauguis* and mention that 'it is possible that the imagination, distempered by continued fasts and uninterrupted solitude may be brought into these illusions or that the rapturous dreams of the Fakirs may resemble the natural ecstasies¹⁴. He quoted another incident of superstitions attached to one aged hermit who resided in one of the mountains of Kashmir where it was believed that 'he wrought miracles, caused strange thunders and raised storms of wind, hail, snow and rain¹⁵. Bernier criticized the prevalence of such irrational and magical powers of religious hermits among the Indians. Finally, this French traveller called these sects are of *Jauguis* and *soufys*¹⁶ who are mystics who believed in concealing their ideas among themselves. Jean Mocquet also mentions about the penitence of the Gentil *jauguis* of the Goa region who did extraordinary abstinences.

Tavernier's also corroborated Bernier's view by describing a kind of fakirs who wear wearied clothes. They have a chief or a superior. He wore different colour clothes and drag a heavy iron chain attached to one of his legs. When he prays

with a loud voice and makes great noise with this chain, and he attracts the veneration of the people¹⁸. His disciples proclaim throughout the country, the great virtues of their master and the favours he receives from God, who reveals to him the most important secrets and confers upon him the power to aid afflicted persons with good advice. The people give him great credence, regard him as a holy man, approach him with great devotion, remove the shoes of their feet and prostrates before the Fakir and kiss his feet. 'He boasts of possessing a prophetic spirit, especially for indicating to women who are sterile the way in which they may obtain children and how to constrain anyone they wish to manifest love for them¹⁹. Tavernier further said 'There are Fakirs who have more than 200 disciples, whom they assemble by the sound of the drum and a horn similar to the horns of our huntsmen. When marching, the disciples carry their standard, lances, and other arms, which they stick in the ground near their master when he halts to rest anywhere²⁰.

Joseph Tieffenthaler also describes the superstitions attached to the Gorakhnath, is believed to be the founder of *Joguis*. Gorakhnath was famous for the austerity of his life. He further said that 'it was claimed that...Gorakhnath was buried alive, which made enough confirm to the use of the *Saniasses*'. Then he described the tomb of kabir in Awadh, the famous weaver, the founder of the new sect called *karbirpanthi*: he lived during the time of Sikender Lodi, king of Delhi in the year 1500. Tieffenthaler said that under this dome lies the body of Kabir, and on the right of this dome is a tomb of his son²².

Tavernier tells in great details about the band of seventy Fakirs or Dervishes whom he saw after leaving the Mughal court. He not just described their clothes and customs but also the arms they possessed. He said, 'they were all well armed, the majority with bows and arrows, some with muskets, and the remainder with shot pikes and a kind of weapon which we have not got in Europe. It is a sharp iron, made like the border of a plate which has no centre, and they pass eight or ten over the head, carrying them on the neck like a ruff. They withdraw these circles as they require

to use them, and when they throw them with force at a man, as we make a plate to fly, they almost cut him in two. Each of them had also a sort of hunting horn, which he sounds, and makes a great noise with when he arrives anywhere. During the same evening, after they had supped, the Governor of the town came to pay his respects to these principal Dervishes'. The chief of these Dervishes gave orders to the others and were respected by not just the common men but also by the Governor of the town who gives them food as charity while others collected alms from the villages²³. Tavernier also described oppression of governors forced peasantry to move towards military service, where he said

You may see in India whole provinces like deserts, from which the peasants have fled on account of the oppression of the Governors. Under cover of the fact that they [Governors] are themselves Muhammadans, they persecute these poor idolaters to the utmost, and if any of the latter become Muhammadans it is in order not to work any more; they become soldiers or Fakirs, who are people who make profession of having renounced the world, and live upon alms; but in reality they are all great rascals²⁴.

Chevalier noticed some gentil fakirs [Hindu Fakirs] when he was travelling from Dhaka to the border of Assam. He said that these Fakirs live in a community like monks and they obeyed the superiors. These fakirs were the incharge of temple of Durga²⁵. This temple was highly revered in the country and attracted many pilgrims. He said 'the fakirs ensure that it continues and even that its reputation increases by all sorts of impostures²⁶. These fakirs collect copious donations from the people.

Jean de Thevenot also mentions the audacity of the faquirs to demand some money even from a banian, 'it happened many times that a Banian will give a Faquir a considerable sums of money, because he has the boldness to place himself near his shop, and to protest that he will kill himself if he be not supplied with what he demands the Banian promises fair, and brings it him; but

because the fantastical Faquir understands that several have contributed to that Charity, he openly refuses it, and goes about to execute what he had threaten, if the Banian also did not furnish him the money demanded, and the Banian knowing that some faquirs have been so desperate as to kill themselves upon these occasion²⁷. Thevenot further described that

[These Faquirs] cannot be better compared to Gypsies, for their way of Living is like theirs; and I believe their Profession has the same Original, which is Libertinism. They are many times to be seen in Troops at Halabas, where they assemble for Celebrating of some Feasts to perform certain Ceremonies. Some of them as do no hurt, and show signs of Piety, are extremely honored by the Gentiles; and the Rich think they draw down blessings upon themselves, when they assist those whom they call Penitents. Their penance consists in forbearing to eat for many days, to keep constantly standing upon a Stone for several weeks, or several months; to hold their Arms a cross behind their head, as long as they live, or to bury themselves in Pits for a certain space of time. But if some of these Faquirs be good Men, there are also very Rogues among them; and the Mogul princes are not troubled, when such of them as commit violences are killed. One may meet with some of them in the Countrey stark naked with Colours and Trumpets, who ask Charity with Bow and Arrow in hand; and when they are the strongest, they leave it not to the discretion of Travelers to give or refuse. These wretches have no consideration even for those that feed them; I have seen some of them in the Caravans, who made it their whole business to play tricks, and to molest Travelers, though they had all their subsistence from them. Not long since I was in a Caravane, where some of these Faquirs were, who took a fancy to suffer no body to sleep: All night long they did nothing but Sing and Preach; and instead of banging them soundly to make them

hold their peace the Company prayed them civilly, but they took it ill; so they doubled their Cries and Singing, and they who could not Sing, laugh'd and made a mock of the rest of the Caravane. These Faquirs were sent by their Superiours, into I know not what Countrey full of Banians, to demand of them Two thousand Roupies, with a certain quantity of Rice and Mans [maunds] of Butter; and they had orders not to return without fulfilling their Commission. This is their way all over the Indies, where by their Mummeries, they have accustomed the Gentiles to give them what they demand, without daring to refuse²⁸.

Later in his travelogue, this French traveller said there were some good faquirs who were honoured, who assembled for celebration of some feasts and performed certain ceremonies. He said that 'such of them as do not hurt, and show signs of piety are extremely honoured by the Gentils and the rich think they draw down blessings upon themselves, when they assist those whom they call penitents. Their penance consists in forbearing to eat for many days, to keep constantly standing upon a stone for several weeks, or several months, to hold their arms a cross behind their head, as long as they live, or to bury themselves in pits for a certain space of time²⁹. Besides the good faquirs there were some rogues who 'stark naked with colours and trumpets, who ask charity with bow and arrow in hand and when they are the strongest, they leave it not to the discretion of travelers to give or refuse. These wretches have no consideration even for those that feed them. I have seen some of them in the *Caravane*, who made it their whole business to play tricks and to molest travelers, though they had all their subsistence from them. Not long since I was in a *Caravane* these faquirs were, who took a fancy to suffer no body to sleep, all night long they did nothing but sing and preach; and instead of banging them soundly to make them hold their peace the Company prayed them civilly, but they took it ill, so that they doubled their cries and singing and they who could not sing, laughed and make a mock of the rest of the *Caravane*³⁰. There are many Faquirs

among the Mahometans, as well as amongst the idolaters, who are also vagabonds and worse than them and commonly both of them are treated alike.

Absurdities And Disgusting Practices

The absurd and disgusting practices of the Fakirs and other similar groups were severally criticized by the French travelers and adventurers. These voyagers sometimes compared them with European thieves, beggars and frauds. They believed that 'the monks whom they call Fakirs or the poor, are dedicated to the divine service, they live only on charity and wear patch up clothes of old rags which they collect in the streets to scorn the world and to press to the feet; they carry large beads chain in the neck and a fan in the hand, their hair served them as turban and never make them cut; they often wash them and lubricate them of oil without combing them, they go from city to city to wait the time of the pilgrimages of the large Pagodas, or the sacred washing, where they are at the feast day to receive the charity of people of good³¹. Lauriston explains that the poverty of the people is not general. He certifies that he saw the good kingdoms of Europe had more poverty than in India. He admits that there were more beggars in Europe as the extraordinary quantity of fakirs who demand for alms in India³².

Various superstitious beliefs or ceremonies were witnessed in the marriages by Chevalier in relation to hermit fakirs. He told that in all weddings the bride has to go to fakir to perform this ceremony. He says 'he (fakir) wears a golden amulet on his genitals that contains some figures or relics of the god which these credulous people honour. The fakir, when celebrating a wedding, has the right to spend the first night with the bride³³. The husband and the family find themselves highly honoured with his ceremony. Sometimes some people give some money to fakir to enjoy this honour, which was considered to be the blessing for their family and the newly wedded couple. Boullaye le Gouz noticed the corrupt practices of these Fakirs. He observed that these faquirs sit shamelessly near the house of Hindus, without being invited. They search for the moment when the husband left the house and they enter it to corrupt the woman of the house³⁴.

Francois Xavier Wendel, a French missionary, also criticized these faquirs and compared them with the European thieves. He said that 'ruined functionaries of India becomes faquirs sometimes on a pretext of awaiting for nothing more than a divine life, retired and removed from all troubles. He compares them with the race of privileged thieves in Europe who established their success on the ruins of the others, declared bankruptcy at an opportune moment to enjoy unmolested the fortune acquired through their devious and deceitful ways....(Later he said that) people of India are foolish enough to respect these rogues who, having assumed a place somewhat removed at the corner of the main route soon have their devotees to promulgate their holiness and celebrate miracles³⁵.Some travelers also noticed that these fakirs were also used as spies as they reap the best intelligence for the prince that had employed them.

Lauriston explained the deceiving practices of these Fakirs in order to gain commercial profits. He observed that the 'Gentil faquirs, or religious beggars of all Asia, are the only allowed to make trade of impure gold. There were given the priority in this trade, because being regarded as saints, they pass all the customs without being examined. Moreover, they go in troops, sometimes of two or three thousands, one cannot insult them. They carry this gold to Surat, Golconda, Patna, Bengal, and all the seaports. They change it against pearls, diamonds and other precious stones which they carry in Tibet, where they very sell them costly to the inhabitants³⁶. These Fakirs used their identity for their personal benefits.

Anquetil Duperron gave references of the fakirs whom he saw during the course of his voyage in India. He describes some fakirs who were covered with dust, ash and dung of cow and who were almost nude. He said 'knowing him European, he was attached to my aggregation in the hope that I cure him of certain evils produced by his incontinence'. Then he goes on to describe the beauty of one of the fakir women who pleased him so much that he forgot the black complexion of the woman³⁸.

The activities of plundering of the armies of the fakirs of Jagannath were mentioned by Duperron. He described their ugly appearances and these fakirs went to make pilgrimage to Jagannath from all the parts of Asia³⁹. After adoration in the temple these fakirs choose a chief to whom they give salute, an elephant and a camels, etc. after that the pilgrims who have weapons form an army divided in different groups which maintain discipline in plundering the surrounding cities and burning villages. Sometimes the rajas of the place were obliged to repurchase some plundering⁴⁰. Duperron met approximately six thousand army of the fakirs. He was stopped by the vanguard of 400 men whose formation, arms and alertness were defined by this adventurer.

Mullas

The class of fakirs of the East Indies who was born of poor parents. They wish 'to know the law thoroughly, in order to become *Mullas* or doctors, take up their abode in mosques, where they live on charity and bestowed upon them. Fakirs of this class marry wives and some of them through piety and their great desire to imitate Muhammad, take three or four of them, believing that they render to God signal service, by becoming fathers of many children who will follow the law of their Prophet⁴¹. Their mystical theories were criticized by the French voyagers who disdain their outlook and superstitious practices.

Wendel severally criticized the nature of the faquirs, 'he was astonished to observe which point the stupidity and obtuseness of the Moors has reached concerning these faquirs and would be saints of Mohammedan law. One sees in all parts of Hindustan dargahs or mausoleums, commemorating them, which are more or less famous and still frequented by the gentils, who were drawn to them perhaps by the masses or the Moor supremacy, being themselves very inclined to accept and believe all manner of superstitions which they are accustomed to assimilate since childhood. There are in this country such Moorish sanctuaries where it is widely known that those buried there and whose name they bear, regarded as veritable saints, were but the most

abominable blackguards conceivable.... They are, in the opinion of believers, great men near to the throne of Muhammad in the seventh heaven, capable of fulfilling the vows of their devotees with every prosperity. The *mullas*, found in throngs at these places of Mohammedan superstition, initially supported by some relative of the purported saint there interred so as to laud his deeds, then by public alms or pensions of the king, are cunning enough to demonstrate to the most exalted degree the power of their *walis* or favourites of God, which since they are being fed thereby, they are most interested to assert⁴². In most of the places of Hindustan, Wendel said one would see some slaves or *chela*, or relative of the deceased afterwards consider them as his jagir or place and source from where to secure the means of living in idleness at the expense of credulity of others.

Wendel goes on to say the Indians believed that the faquirs have the privilege to say and do anything. The insolence of the faquirs is tolerated with utmost patience. He said 'they are viewed as Shimeis who perhaps by quirk of imagination have the right to curse the innocent Davids. As inversely, their benediction, or *dua*, is held to result without fail in good fortune by way of the credit which they are reputed to have with the sovereign bestower of all good, and there are some who brazenly demand charity and themselves clout those from whom they have demanded it⁴³. He further said the Moorish faquirs did not lead a life of austerity and consume opium which dulcifies and put them in a state as if beyond the thoughts. Suraj Mal, Jat Raja said amusingly that there was no better way to live than after the fashion of the Moors. They attain to riches virtuously or wickedly, make themselves forthwith amirs, after having dispensed with their fortunes, they becomes faquirs. Finally after their death, there is always someone who erects for them a tomb, and they were considered as blessed and saintly⁴⁴.

Modave mentions the faquirs and mollahs were present outside most of the tombs in Hindustan⁴⁵. He mentions that Mughal emperors was surrounded by fakirs and mollahs. He listened to them in an air of meditation and submissiveness

which appeared quite astonishing. He goes on to say that 'these mollahs jumped, danced, whirled on their feet, the arms in the air with an extraordinary speed and made hundred other extravagances which hardly appeared only worthy of the respect with which the emperor attended this strange spectacle. Sometimes these mollahs approached the emperor stretch out their arms ahead, the tight fist one against the other. Padcha gets up, applied his hands on the fists of mollahs and then passed its sanctified hands by this contact on his face and his beard with a serious which gave me large urge to laugh⁴⁶.

Sanyasis

The most respected were the Hindu monks called *Sannyasis* who devoted themselves entirely to their divinities and make lived in poverty, chastity and sobriety. They wandered all sides in naked form, their heads were bald, did not have anything, held nothing, living only on alms and eating only to survive. Their life was simple and austere.

Comte de Modave, French adventurer, described about the Sanyasis or penitents in India as 'they are divided into sects or communities which have some principles of control and interests very opposite to the others, agreeing only in one point which is to draw from the people in force of grimaces and importunities the broadest subsistence and most convenient that they can get. A small number of these penitents form a class the contemplative that one can compare to our hermits. Those remain alone, building a small hut under some large tree at the door of the cities or on main route and they never lose sight of the fact the place of their retirement. Others live in community in the pagodas having some particular and superiors rules. Others finally run the country or alone, or two to two, or in large troop. In the countries where they are in great number, they are rented for the war and one forms bodies of troops of them, it is what one names Goussins⁴⁷. Modave further said their general profession was that of beggar and pilgrim. These faquirs were spread all over India and had a large number. This adventurer said that 'they are spread all over, to be dressed in hundred different ways and some even entirely naked. (They have a)

detail history of these beggars. Tavernier claims that there is at least eleven hundred and thousand scattered on the surface of Hindustan. I do not know if his calculation is quite exact. However, I would not want much to dispute him, because it is sure that the cities, the large villages and the main routes are filled of these vagrants. They push their races at unbelievable distances⁴⁸.

Later Modave described about *sanyasi* who were from the caste of the Brahmans and who were dedicated to rigorous observance precepts of the religion. He said 'these people here devote entirely towards construction and public education. They live a very austere and mortified life and their manners reflect a kind of meditation and modesty. They are subjected to very rigorous things... These penitent, priests or doctors, called themselves as *samnyasi*⁴⁹. Although there number was not much in India but they were respected among all. They were considered to be true oracles of the Hindus. Modave asked several questions to one *sanyasi* who replied him with accuracy. They were looked as reformed Brahmans by the Hindus.

There was another type of fakirs seen by Chevalier known as *boiraguy*⁵⁰. They were allowed to do business in the kingdom of Assam without paying any tax⁵¹. Tieffenthaler mentions of another place in Allahabad region named *Tschetercot*, famous for the superstitions of Hindus. He said 'where they flow from all Hindustan: because they make in the idea that RAM, that they take for a God and that they revered as such, returned from the town of *Adjudea*, with his wife Sita, and remained there with her. One sees a quantity of pagodas there where they give a worship to two statues of stone, the one of RAM, the other of Lakshman. At these Pagodes are presided by *Beragiens*, who carries out a life of hermit, though several are married⁵². Overall most of these groups of fakirs were condemned by the French voyagers, as their superstitious practices were considered irrational in comparison to European's rational approach. Sometimes the voyagers compare these faquirs with the European beggars who were condemned by Occident.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion help to comprehensively understand the ambiguousness attached to these varied sections of the society. These men had religious affiliations which formulate their identity and further help them to gain popularity among the common masses, esp. among the women. Their penances helped them to gain acceptability and a sense of posing miraculous extraordinary powers; this further helped them to gain reverence and honor. French voyagers severely criticized these barbaric men as they were amused with their practices, probably because of the scientific and rational background which do not permit to believe in any kind of irrational, absurd and bizarre practices.

Notes and References

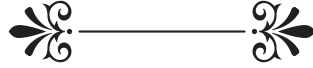
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4. Francois Bernier, *Travels*, p. 316.
5. Tavernier, *Travels in India* , Vol.2, Book III, p. 139.
6. Ibid., Vol.2, Book III, p. 153.
7. Ibid., Vol.2, Book III, p. 155.
8. *Jogi*, a corruption of *yoga*, union or junction. Applied to those followers of the yoga doctrine who are supposed to go about preaching the duty and necessity of religious retirement and meditation. (Bernier, *Travels*, ft. 2, p. 316)
9. Bernier, *Travels*, p. 317.
10. Ibid., pp. 317-318
11. Ibid., pp. 317-318.
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13. Ibid., p. 319. These Fakirs believed according to Bernier, "that they exercise painful austerities in the confident hope that they will be Rajas in their renascent state; or if they do not become Rajas, that they shall be placed in a condition of life capable of more exquisite enjoyment than is experienced by those sovereign princes." (Ibid., pp. 319-320).
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18. Tavernier, *Travels in India*, Vol.2, Book III, p. 140.
19. Ibid., Vol.2, Book III, p. 140.
20. Ibid., Vol.2, Book III, p. 140.
21. Tieffenthaler, *La géographie de l'Indoustan*, p. 258.
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24. Tavernier, Vol. I, pp. 391-392.
25. Chevalier, *The Adventures of the Jean-Baptiste Chevalier in Eastern India*, p. 120.
26. Ibid., p. 120.
27. Thevenot, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 93.
28. Thevenot, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 93.
29. Ibid., p. 93.
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31. Boullaye le Gouz, *Les Voyages et Observations du Sieur de la Boullaye le Gouz*, p. 154.
32. Lauriston, *Mémoire sur quelques affaires de l'Empire Mogol (1756-1761)*, p. 29.
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44. Ibid., p. 112.
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46. Ibid., p. 256.
47. Ibid., p. 256.
48. Ibid., p. 377.
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50. Vairagin, an ascetic and usually vaishnavite

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Benazir's Refracted Images

Tanvi Sharma

Abstract- This paper investigates the complexities posed by the genre of life writing and the ramifications it has on formulation of history through a detailed analysis of Benazir Bhutto's autobiography, *The Daughter of the East*. The book has been publicised as a "historical document of uncommon passion and courage" and is a first person narrative of Pakistan's first woman Prime Minister. The personal and the political are intertwined in such a manner in the book that there is a constant blurring between the subjective individual memory and the collective history that an entire nation shares in. The following study attempts to delineate the narrative strategies used by the author to bring about the same. It further discusses the role that market plays in shaping of the genre of autobiography.

Key Words: Benazir Bhutto, Refracted Images

"I have always believed in the importance of historic record"¹ states Benazir Bhutto, Islam's first elected woman Prime Minister. However, the autobiographical form chosen by her is neither the finest source of history, nor a neutral one. Autobiography has socio-political functions that far exceed historiography. It is a "polygenre"² that proceeds from cultural locations and "histories that are influenced by past and present colonialisms."³

Like all life writing, *Daughter of the East* is "informed by an 'initiative' that affects the author's entire process of composition, telling her what to write and when to edit."⁴ Through her narrative Benazir tries to construct an identity for herself and her nation while stressing the interdependence of the two. In this process she is not seen through a plain mirror. The images constructed in the process are distorted, as though refracted.

Hailing from a country steeped in illiteracy, Benazir's choice of writing in English clearly identifies the kind of audience she has in mind. She sprinkles the text with suitable comparisons and allusions for just such an audience. Her counterpart in this exercise is Kathleen Kennedy, while Samiya, Amina, and Yasmin are her own Charlie's Angels. Calling herself 'the daughter of the east', she proceeds to present before her western audience, *her* version of what the 'east' encompasses. Throughout the text she works

with binaries like modern/ traditional, liberal/ conservative and religious/fundamentalist to carve out an amicable version of true 'east' which differs from the distorted version promulgated by the few bad elements in the society.

"In the case of autobiography, how the author acts upon the narrative often overshadows how he acts in it."⁵ Benazir performs a double role as the storyteller who simultaneously participates in her own story as a protagonist. These two personas "share the same name, but not the same time and space."⁶ She is able to manipulate her own reactions, "exaggerate intentionality in treating past successes, rationalize failures, and particularly...find a unity and pattern in the disorder of past political strife."⁷ Her naive reactions to her father's questions on political issues, in spite of his careful grooming seem to serve as an example. Also, her claims about her perspicacity as regards Zia sound unconvincing as they do not fit in with the picture of innocence that she generally projects considering that the far more astute Zulfikar himself had been deceived by Zia. Her "melodramatic understanding of politics wherein Pakistan's recent history is presented as a morality play with the altruistic Zulfikar Ali Bhutto thwarted by a vile cabal of evil doers"⁸ cannot be accepted without qualms. She would like her readers to believe that her imagination was still overshadowed by the children's stories and

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Bhutto legends narrated by her father.

Her representation of Zulfikar has messianic overtones, replete with suffering and martyrdom. In her memoir, he becomes a larger than life phenomenon. True to the Muslim belief, the animals at 70 Clifton try to deflect the danger yet danger to him is so great that it kills not one, but three, of the pets. His indestructibility is highlighted as even in death "his face was the face of a pearl. He looked the way he had at sixteen."⁹ She describes the unfathomable awe and respect with which the general population of Pakistan regard him. Shahnawaz receives similar treatment by the author. His identification with the father is legitimised by Zulfikar himself when he states "Shah reminds me of myself when I was young."¹⁰ Zulfikar and Shahnawaz are the martyrs and in her autobiography, Benazir is regarded by them as a 'precious jewel' and 'closest sister.'

Her autobiography is interspersed with first person narratives of witnesses, prisoners and a wide range of PPP supporters who compliment her version of 'history.' In an effort to create a meta-narrative, the personal narrative of Benazir is transformed into the public narrative of Pakistan. "I didn't choose this life, this life chose me. Born in Pakistan, my life mirrors its turbulence, its tragedies and its triumphs"¹¹ she states. All sentiments contrary to her evaluations are regarded as 'rumours.' As a member of the ruling elite of the nation, she extols herself as the representative of the political will of the nation state.

In contrast to the west, where the demand came from within, the idea of democracy is a borrowed one for the east. Democracy was the demand not of the entire body politic but of few individuals. For the larger public only their leaders mattered. Though all participated in the struggle for independence, few actually led. Even though eastern nations adopted the paraphernalia of a democratic state, the approach of both the rulers and the subjects remained feudalistic.

Resultantly the new born nations depended on important families (with longer histories than

that of the nation) for brokering democracy. Benazir implicates this idea in her multiple references to Sindh and the Bhutto estate. The incident with the pilot at Rawalpindi airport who offers her food though putting himself in danger is a telling example- "I can still see the concern on his kind face, the tears that spilled out of his eyes. "I'm a Sindhi," he said. That was all. That was enough."¹² Feudalism here serves to fuel nationalistic sentiments. Her self-fashioning as the 'daughter' of the east becomes truly significant in this context. The naming of Bilawal, her son, further emphasizes this idea as it is replete with resonances and allusions to the history of Sindh, and to the members of its most important family. It is "a derivative of the name Bil Awal, which means "one without equal." In Sindh there is a saint by the name of Makhdoom Bilawal who fought against oppression in his time...The name also echoed my own name, which means "without comparison." So here was a name that touched the mother, the father, and the culture and history of the land" states Benazir.

The PPP is known for the family that it is associated with rather than specific political ideals. The party gains an identity through the family and the family is inextricable from the party. This is apparent when Zulfikar is imprisoned Nusrat tells him "If we leave, there will be no one to lead the party, the party you built."¹³ Benazir echoes these sentiments by adding "I could never go."¹⁴

Her closeness to her father is highlighted as she miraculously awakens at the time of his killing, feeling her father's noose around her own neck. Identification in these terms sets the stage for her own will which treats the party as a family heirloom and bequeaths it to her husband and son.

She exploits the discourse of democracy to the fullest to legitimise her leadership as the only progressive leadership for her country. Notably, it is the west that gives her the "first taste in democracy."¹⁵ The 'Larkana Bhutto' and 'Radcliffe Bhutto' distinguished by Ian Buruma¹⁶ therefore prove to be two sides of the same coin.

If it were not for her feudal background Benazir could have hardly afforded Radcliffe schooling. If she were not the daughter of a successful Larkana politician who groomed her for a career in politics and wrote letters requesting authorities at Radcliffe to encourage his daughter to study Comparative Politics, she would hardly have developed the insight and shrewdness required to survive in the political climate of Pakistan. Rafiq Zakaria in his book *The Trial of Benazir Bhutto* calls Benazir a “study in contradictions.”¹⁷ These contradictions are consciously cultivated and carefully preserved by her. She fits perfectly into the mould of a third world democratic leader as the feudal aspect is made to compliment the progressive.

“I am a woman proud of my cultural heritage.....I am the symbol of what so called 'jihadists', Taliban and al Qaeda most fear. I am a female politician leader fighting to bring modernity, communication, education, and technology to Pakistan”¹⁸ states the preface. These lines summarise the 'self' that Benazir strives to construct through this autobiography. There is a conscious effort to frame herself as a dissenting voice and to pitch her autobiography as literature of challenge.

As the heir of her father's political party, Benazir was at the mercy of alliances brokered before her time. The incompleteness of the state inherited by her is highlighted by her incapacity in getting rid of the eighth amendment or the *Hudood* ordinances.

Conflicting personal and political motives inform her dealings with the military. In her narrative, Zia is consciously and painfully separated from the army at large. However, taking over of Premiership and subsequent tussle for power dissolves this neat distinction.

Under the PPP, Pakistan may be seen as having made “transition from authoritarianism to procedural democracy, but as lacking any of the characteristics of a consolidated democracy.”¹⁹ Benazir too fails to make a strong bid for the latter. She manages only an “electocratic rule - a hybrid mix of electoral forms and authoritarianism”²⁰ in which Army exerted veto

on government in matters such as Afghanistan, defence expenditure and foreign policies.

“The intentional and, even more insidious, the unconscious element of personal interest”²¹ operates in this political memoir with regard to Benazir's relation with the West. At times she calls on the West for intervention, at other times she insists on keeping them away. The internal politics of Pakistan seem to be forever brokered by the West.

The narrative structure of life writing joins text and author by “simplifying time sequences, compressing some years and expanding others.”²² Benazir's detailed description of her time in jail is an example of the same. Omissions also figure when expedient. Nusrat's Alzheimer's is emphasised but her political differences and subsequent removal from PPP chairmanship are omitted. Murtuza's murder is also presented in equivocal terms. In this respect Benazir is no different from her adversaries who refuse to regard political opposition as legitimate.²³

Benazir highlights her gender, to pitch even higher, the image of a struggler and survivor that she wants to impart. Her preface foregrounds this as it deals with the gender specific narrative of child bearing into which her political duties keep intruding. She successfully combats with stereotypes which handicap women operating in the public sphere. At the end, she emerges as the exceptional head of government in recorded history to actually give birth while in office. She further mentions her husband's victimisation and asks “would a wife ever be imprisoned for eight years without evidence or conviction, held hostage to her husband's political career?”²⁴ Perhaps one would not consider this question to be as rhetorical as she believes after reading about her own years of exile and imprisonment on account of her father's political affiliations.

In her portrayal of her mother, sister and herself exceptionality becomes definitional. They are the 'first' Bhutto women who formulate liberal identities within the framework of 'true' Islam. While her mother is truly modernised and drives a car in the 50s, Sanam becomes the first Bhutto

woman to choose her own husband and Benazir becomes the first to give up the burqa. While she makes these claims she forgets that Begum Nusrat hardly followed the Burqa dictum and her marriage to Zulfikar was a love marriage. Her remarks about the Burqa neatly coincide with the accepted western notions regarding the garment.

Additionally, in her attempt to solidify her father's image as a modern liberated Pakistani leader, she attributes the decision of giving up the burqa to him, forgetting that Nusrat needs to seek permission from Zulfikar regarding this, as well as regarding the question of marrying within the family. This only serves to emphasise the patriarchal structure within her family. It coincides with her political discourse, which harps on democracy yet fails to translate into practice.

Though she dislikes Burqa, the sanctity the Zenana is repeatedly evoked by her as she reprimands Zia's regime and indicts his officers. Upon Zia's crackdown on the family, both her mother and father emphasise at different points in the narrative that 'especially' the boys should be safeguarded. It is a threat to their life that the father panics about where as Benazir is praised for staying on. Her gender here becomes an enabling factor. She is able to stay back in the country and garner sympathy and support of the people by virtue of being a woman. Years later Zia would confess that his worst mistake was to let Benazir live, to which a confident and composed Benazir would reply in the affirmative.

In her political discourse women's rights and family care become the crowning goals and achievements of her father's and her governments, while Zia's regime is censured for orchestrating backlash in this sector.

For her, an important marker of the 'east' palatable to the west seems to be its religiosity. She advocates that Islam is being misused by few fundamentalists to suppress the majority. However, 'true' Islam as elucidated by her is a tolerant religion. Being the daughter of the east she adheres to her religion. She is cultured but not backward, spiritual but not superstitious. She

performs her prayers and rituals in her prison cell which give her moral strength. She also helps the spirit of Ayaz Samoo by performing riots for him.

“However cunning, the memoirist is almost invariably self-betrayed into the hands of the later historian. Hence the proverb: "the book is the man.”²⁵ Benazir also falls into this trap. “At times, whole newspaper columns will run blank, the journalists' method of letting the reading public know that news worthy of being printed has been removed by the censors” she observes. Though she wails about Zia's clamping down of the press, she does not mention the cartoons in the newspapers that did not miss opportunities to satirise the political games she herself was involved in.

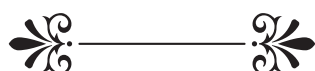
Shahid Mehmood confesses “Bhutto provided a rich vein of drawing material for a cartoonist like myself. With such a steady stream of political incongruities she became one of the few people I could draw from memory – Gucci glasses, Hermes scarf and all....Abro's brooding illustrations for *Newsline* vividly critiqued Bhutto's government for not guaranteeing women the most basic of rights in rural Pakistan. The fact that Abro hailed from Sindh, Bhutto's provincial and constituent stronghold, emphasized the Prime Minister's unpopularity at the time.”²⁶ It is precisely these political cartoons that serve to combat Benazir's refracted images by offering an alternative narrative, a different history.

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Men And Masculinities In *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album* & *Something To Tell You*

Samana Madhuri

Abstract- *The appearance of Kureishi's gay, South Asian businessman Omar in My Beautiful Laundrette (1986) caused much hype in the British media because of the presence of characters like Omar Ali. The portrayal of Omar's sexuality (i.e., as a homosexual) was out rightly rejected by many South Asians. The portrayal of a gay, South Asian entrepreneur is one of many controversial iden titles that Kureishi has portrayed in his works. Ruvani Ranasinha in "Introduction: Situating Hanif Kureishi" sees the character of Omar as the beginning of Kureishi's "exploration of the question of race through sexuality and constructions of masculinity." (Ranasinha 19) In his later novels like The Buddha of Suburbia (1990), The Black Album (1995) and Something to tell You (2008) Kureishi engages further with the "question of race" and deals with the changing character of masculinity vis a vis their ethnicity in the post-colonial era. My paper would theorize and map the gradual transformations in the production and circulation of masculinities in the last century by referring to the fiction written by Hanif Kureishi. The central idea of "transforming masculinities" is addressed in Kureishi's works by sketching the differences in the masculinities portrayed by the first generation immigrant and the second generation immigrant. There will also be an attempt to contrast the hegemonic masculinity of the first generation immigrant with the fluid and dialogic masculinities of the second generation immigrant. While dissecting the presentations of masculinities in Kureishi's work, masculinity would be looked at as a "cultural space" as something that defines the characteristic traits of men or simply as "what men do" as well as a "masculinity" as 'situational accomplishment' and as a "performative act" as suggested by Morgan, Kirsten and Butler theorized respectively.*

Key Words: Hanif Kureishi, Masculinities, New British Asian Subjectivity.

Hanif Kureishi in his writings has always tried to address diverse subjectivities by crafting as well as bringing together myriad characters of different social and economic backgrounds. Kureishi has in fact carved a niche for himself in the literary world by etching some of the most remarkable South Asian characters in his works like: the metropolitan picaro Karim of *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Shahid the reluctant fundamentalist of *The Black Album* or the South Asian gay entrepreneur Omar of *My Beautiful Laundrette* whose appearance had sparked many controversies in the British media about Kureishi's unconventional portrayal of the South Asian community. Kureishi has not only reasserted the anxiety and angst of the second generation immigrant characters in his works but he has also introduced his readers to the world that exists in the peripheries of British Society like that of the homeless people, immigrants, gays, blacks, drug addicts etc. The familiar faces

of South Asians appear in a new light in the Kureishian narrative as the writer continuously imagines and reconstitutes various elements in positioning of the South Asian "subject"¹ vis a vis the dominant discourses of sex, race and class in British multiculturalism. It is in this process of reconstitution that Kureishi etches new black/brown subjectivities that were earlier absent rarely acknowledged in the British media. Very often his characters open up to the readers through the typical Kureishian narrative wherein the character is in the process of discovering and defining himself. Kureishi's literary career flowered at a time when Britain was on the lookout for "cultural translators" in its heterogeneous population. Kureishi became a familiar name after his association with Channel Four (Channel 4 was created by the British media in the 1980's with the intent of promoting the voices of minorities in the British population). Critics have at times pointed out that Kureishi's

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writings are a typical example of literature in a world where there is a continuous attempt to bridge this gap between 'self' and 'other', with the help different official policies like multiculturalism², concepts like convivial culture, cosmopolitanism, secular humanism etc. The appearance of Kureishi's gay, South Asian businessman Omar in *My Beautiful Laundrette* Kureishi was accused of tampering with the image of South Asians in the media by portraying characters of South Asian origin in an entirely different and new light. The portrayal of Omar's sexuality (i.e., as a homosexual) was out rightly rejected by many South Asians. Criticisms were hurled at Kureishi for representing South Asian characters in a negative light (characters like Salim in the narrative are greedy and unscrupulous). Commenting on this aspect of Kureishian narrative Ruvani Ranasinha in "The Politics of Representation: Political commitment and Ironic Distance" points out, "Kureishi appears to have accurately anticipated the hostility he would face with *Laundrette*...Kureishi justifiably refuses to take on the role of representing 'the Asian community'³. His portrayal of a gay, South Asian entrepreneur is one of many controversial identities that Kureishi has portrayed in his works. Ruvani Ranasinha in "Introduction: Situating Hanif Kureishi" sees the character of Omar as the beginning of Kureishi's "exploration of the question of race through sexuality and constructions of masculinity."⁴ In his later novels like *The Buddha of Suburbia*, *The Black Album* and *Something to tell You* Kureishi engages further with the "question of race" and deals with the changing character of masculinity vis a vis their ethnicity in the changing social context. This paper will focus on Kureishi's constructions of South Asian masculinities in his novels. There will also be an attempt to contrast the hegemonic masculinity of the first generation immigrant with the fluid and dialogic masculinities of the second generation immigrant.

Before moving into a detailed analysis of Kureishi's representation of different masculinities in the key texts it is necessary to understand the term "masculinities". This particular term has been the topic of many

debates and discussion in academia. John Beynon in "What is Masculinity?"⁵ explains the term "masculinities" along with a brief overview about how this term became a part of contemporary culture and theoretical postulations. Beynon explains that, "Masculinity is always interpolated by cultural, historical and geographical location" and in the last century movements like feminism and gay movement have been instrumental in interpreting masculinity as well as sexuality in a new light. Masculinity is interpreted in this context as "cultural" phenomenon as opposed to "maleness" which is biological. Masculinity therefore, can only be interpreted by taking factors like "class, subculture, age and ethnicity" etc. Beynon and other critics on "masculinities" have always emphasized the plurality that exists within the discourses of masculinities that are loosely homogenized under the categories of race, sex, class etc. Beynon, therefore points out that

...any easy generalizations like 'working class', 'middle class', 'gay' or 'black' masculinities are greatly misleading because within each of these broad categories there is considerable variation in both experience and presentation...men globally have never shared the conception of masculinity...it is interpreted, enacted and experienced in culturally specific ways⁶

Beynon's theoretical postulations can be interpreted in a better fashion by taking Morgan's explanations of masculinity into account. Morgan defines masculinity as a "cultural space" as something that defines the characteristic traits of men or simply as "what men do". This definition is further elaborated by theorists like Kirsten and Butler who have described "masculinity" as 'situational accomplishment' and as a "performative act"⁷ respectively. But it is only with the help of the body as well as its relationship with the world around forms one's identity.

Beynon argues that this new way of looking at "masculinity" as a "cultural" phenomenon is the

result of a series of changes in economy, technology, politics and the socioscope in the twentieth century. The Suffragette movement⁸ had influenced the lives of many women in countries like United Kingdom, Ireland, USA, Australia, and New Zealand. The years of Suffragette movement were temporally parallel to the years that had already brought a considerable change in the living conditions of people living in various developing countries after the world wars. The Great Depression era when millions of men were unemployed was catalytic in changing the ideal image of the man as the “breadwinner” or the provider of his family needs. The emergence of technology in the post depression era further worsened the situation for men. The closing of many heavy industries like shipping, mining etc further reduced the requirement for men in the industrial section. The changing scenario not only led to the new situation where men were under privileged but also the women were catapulted to a scenario where they could find employment with ease in the automobile industry. This transformation situated men in a completely new matrix of both consumption as well as production.

Benyon points out the major reasons by which this new trend of consumption soon became a question of lifestyle. Celebrity culture, the growing popularity of “image industry” and its successive growth as well as the increase in goods of luxury like cars were some of the many characteristic traits of consumer culture. Critics like Benyon have often pointed out that consumerism promoted a culture wherein desires become more important than needs. This culture points out Benyon has also led “masculinities” to a juncture where “masculinities” can also be commodified according to ones resources.

Nick Bentley in Contemporary British Fiction talks about Haroon's performance as The Buddha. Bentley points out

Karim's father, Haroon, is the suburban Buddha alluded to in the title and shows an ability to exploit cultural stereotypes to his own advantage. He takes on the image of the exotic mystic to get money out of the gullible, suburban, white middle class, and is,

therefore, aware of the way in which cultural identities can be used to turn the exploitation back on the colonial centre. His position as a 'lapsed Muslim masquerading as a Buddhist', whilst at the same time continuing his day job as a suited civil servant, shows this fluidity of cultural identity and how it can be used for personal gain.⁹

Haroon in the course of the novel is described by Kureishi as someone who is impeccable in his manners. He adds “Like many Indians... (he) was small, but... was also elegant and handsome, with delicate hands and manners, beside him many Englishmen would look like clumsy giraffes. He was broad and strong too: when young had been a boxer and fanatical chest expander.”¹⁰ Haroon is an employee of the British Government. He works as a Civil Service clerk and also acts as the mystic spiritual guru of the East on Eva's request. Haroon is actually an imposter posing as the guru. Haroon explores his connection with the East to its fullest. He not only becomes a small local star in himself who is mainly driven the exotic element of eastern spirituality but also manages to win Eva as his girlfriend.

Kureishi's characters like Omar, the rich gay entrepreneur of My Beautiful Laundrette, Karim, the ambitious bisexual actor of The Buddha of Suburbia and Mushtaq/John Cage, the talented gay singer, songwriter and musician; draw their identities from their difference (their choice of sexuality) with others (both with the characters in his text as well as with the characters of his plays or screenplays). Kureishi situates homosexuality as well as bisexuality in the post modern context. If we try and look at how homosexuality is interpreted in the present context, it can be defined in its relationship with the discourses of heteronormative sexualities. Manalansan points out that

- Homosexual relations have been able to escape the structure of the dominant heterosexual kinship system.
- Exclusive homosexuality, now possible for both partners, has become alternative path to conventional family forms.
- Same-sex bonds have developed new forms

without being structured around particular age or gender categories.

- People have come to discover each other and form large-scale social networks not only because of existing social relationships but also because of their homosexual interests.
- Homosexuality has come to be a social formation unto itself, characterized by self-awareness and group identity.¹¹

Therefore, the non-heteronormative sexuality of Kureishian protagonists is located through their “perverse” subject position- i.e., of being a part of “queer South Asian diasporic subjectivity”¹² and their non-belonging to the “heterosexual diasporic subjectivity”. As Iris Marion Young points out, I quote “Any move to define an identity, a closed totality, always depends on excluding some elements, separating the pure from the impure.”¹³

The sexuality of characters like Omar and Mushtaq can be accommodated in the construction of 'the new man' by refuting their Muslim identity but it is the bisexuality of characters like Karim that poses a bigger threat to the world (Western) that defines itself on the basis of difference. Eve Sedgwick in *Epistemology of the closet* points out that

*Current struggles over the “authenticity” of bisexuality illustrate the effect: if the world is divided into “same” and “different”, “homo” and “hetro”, then bisexuality is something which cannot exist, and individuals claiming a bisexual identity are confused or are in a state of transition.*¹⁴

Perhaps, it is Karim's sexuality that challenges his feelings of belonging to one place or the other. In a world etched on differences Karim finds it difficult to understand the basic facets of his identity, namely ethnicity and sexuality. Karim wants to construct his identity in opposition to the 'other' and this is his biggest limitation because he is both British and Asian as well as both a heterosexual and a homosexual. Karim is from the suburbs but he is also a Londoner. All these characteristic traits of Karim which makes him

the inhabitant of oppositional worlds challenges him into different situations where he belongs as well as not unlike his father who is straight and has the memories of the world that he once belonged. Kureishi very skillfully captures the dilemma of Karim from the opening lines of *The Buddha of Suburbia* “I am an Englishman born and bred, almost”¹⁵ till the end of the novel. The heterogeneity of Karim's character indicates how identity “should not be equated with labels for fixed or national groups, or indeed with labels of any kind. They are about 'choosing' and 'using' as well as 'being'”.¹⁶

In *The Buddha of Suburbia* Haroon's contempt for homosexuality manifests itself when he witnesses Karim and Charlie making love in the course of his spiritual sessions in Eva's house. Haroon exclaims

*I saw you, Karim. My God, you're a bloody pure shitter! A bum banger! My own son-how did it transpire?... I'll send you to a fucking doctor to have your balls examined!*¹⁷

Haroon is clearly troubled by Karim's act but both of them refrain from talking about this episode. Haroon's immediate reaction of contempt against same sex relationships is manifested clearly in the narrative when he sees Karim with Charlie together. Like most South Asian Muslim fathers of Kureishian narrative, for Haroon it is doubly impossible to accept Karim's sexuality both as a man as well as a Muslim. It is only when Karim starts seeing Eleanor that he muses

*Dad had already heard that I set my sights on Eleanor. This was relief to my father, I knew, who was terrified that I might turn out to be gay and he could never bring himself to mention the matter. In his Muslim mind it was bad enough being a woman; being a man and denying your male sex was perverse and self-destructive, as well as everything else.*¹⁸

Judith Butler in her work on sexuality and gender points out how the differences created by sex and

gender are instrumental in constructing 'heterosexuality' as the rule or the normal choice whereas other sexualities are condemned for being unnatural. Therefore this normative discourse of heterosexuality reasserts its fundamental postulations by recreating the circumstances that favour it through constant proliferation into new generations and by propagating its validity to them. This leads to the formation of 'subjects' who follow heterosexuality and the 'other' or the 'non-subject'. Kureishi's narrative gives a platform to these 'non-subjects' and their modes of resistance against the dominant culture.

This outright condemnation of homosexuality also resurfaces in Kureishi's latter novel *The Black Album*. Riaz, the Muslim student leader, and Hat criticize homosexuality in Shahid's presence:

*Hat had stated that homosexuals should be beheaded, though first they should be offered the option of marriage. Riaz had become interested and said that God would burn homosexuals forever in hell, scorching their flesh in a furnace before replacing their skin as new, and repeating this throughout eternity*¹⁹.

In *The Black Album* Kureishi does not etch any gay or bisexual character but the narrative is always accompanied by the image of the bisexual, pop star Prince who is described by Deedee as, "...half black and half white, half man half woman, half size, feminine but macho too"²⁰ Kureishi had named his second novel after Prince's *The Black Album*.

In *The Black Album*, for Shahid, like Omar and Karim, religion does not hold redemption but it rather poses a threat to them in performing their identities. Riaz on the other hand is an embodiment of agonistic masculinity.²¹ Riaz like Shahid transgresses the codes of masculinity by refusing the law and order of normal existence whereas Shahid who is in love with his teacher Deedee does not denounce his life of sexual adventure, drugs and music for leading the life of a chaste Muslim with his friends.

Shahid in the course of the narrative recounts how his father and his brother Chili bullied Shahid by calling him effeminate. Shahid recalls how his father got infuriated when he came to know that the former was reading poetry to his girlfriend on a date. I quote

*'Did you touch her?' Papa stabbed at his own wheezing chest.
'Or further down', he continued, slapping his legs, as thin as medieval Christ's. Chili was smirking in the doorway.
'No'.
'What have you been doing?'
'Reading poetry.'
'Speak up, you bloody eunuch fool!'
'Reading Keats and Shelly to her.'
'To the girl?'
'Did she laugh at you?'
'I don't think so.'
Of course she did!*²²

Shahid's character is completely in contrast with his father's who flew RAF bombers from East Anglia and was also awarded with an MBE and with his brother Chili, for whom both money and girls came easily in the 1980's. Shahid in order to understand himself leaves his house for college in London after his father's death. Shahid refuses to be a part of the patriarchal set up that had considered him effeminate. If Shahid's brother and father are from the old masculine era then Shahid is brought up in the culture of the new masculine wherein men have to play multiple roles like father, brother, lover, partner, worker etc. *The Black Album* concludes with Shahid breaking all ties with his friends. Shahid and Deedee are together and they choose to sever all ties with the world outside. The self confessed 'racist' Shahid who is often haunted by "killing nigger fantasies" in end takes the route of hedonism with Deedee. Shahid's performance of his masculinity in the end is completely opposed to how Shahid introduces himself to Riaz and the audience in the beginning of *The Black Album*. Both Riaz and Shahid can only be defined by their position of opposition against the dominant discourses. Their masculinities have to be in the process of continuous friction with the discourses woven around them (like religion or law

respectively).

In *Something to Tell You*, Kureishi's latest novel, the writer has made an attempt to address homosexuality by creating characters like Mushtaq/John Cage. Mushtaq or John Cage's image is contrasted with his father right from the start. Jamila's and Mushtaq's father was a very powerful man. He owned a factory in London but due to workers strike and other problems his business is almost destroyed. As a child Mushtaq loved reading *Young Americans*, loved *Rolling Stones* and watching T.V. Jamal describes young Mushtaq as “girlish” (81) as he is unaware of “football”. The incest committed by Ajita's father re-asserts his hegemonic masculinity as opposed to Mushtaq's choice of sexuality after his father's death. Mushtaq even confesses to Jamal that “If he were alive today he would disapprove of everything about me. I have to be glad he's dead—which is difficult”²³. Unlike Jamal (a south Asian Muslim, without a father figure), Mushtaq's homosexuality displaces him from his original place of belonging. Mushtaq's real identity is always camouflaged under the alias of John Cage, a very well known face in the popular culture circle. Mushtaq himself confesses how his colour and his upbringing were always instrumental in concealing his real identity as a South Asian.

In “Exploring notions of masculinity and fatherhood: When gay sons 'come out' to heterosexual fathers” Tracey Skelton and Gill Valentine point out how “homophobia as part of masculinity and part of fatherhood provides an important context for the father—son relations” (Hoven et al 192) and how their set of familial relations, “acting at individual, social and cultural levels, in which masculinities are at play and potentially in great tension with each other”. The politics that govern this familial relationship are “alliance, dominance and subordination” as Young points out in his critique of hegemonic masculinities. The homosexual masculinities of the sons can be repressed by their fathers. Tracey Skelton and Gill Valentine point out

men have been, and continue to be, exposed to, and interact with, hegemonic

*masculinity but through a discovery of their homosexual sexual identities they have transformed the way in which they engage with such a hegemony. The men are both marginalized from, and subordinated by, the dominant masculinity. Nevertheless some of them resist the negative practices and reject the 'patriarchal dividend' because they constitute a masculinity which contradicts the heterosexual masculine hegemony.*²⁵

Kureishi's characters underplay their Muslim identity as it is unable to accommodate one of the defining markers of one's identity, i.e., sexuality. Since, one can either be a Muslim or a homosexual. Kureishi's protagonists in the process of re-defining themselves turn towards an identity which is more secular i.e., their being British and situate themselves in opposition to the dominant discourses by locating themselves in the margins or in the popular culture scene their search for identity.

These new ways of asserting one's subjectivity separates the first generation immigrant character of Kureishian narrative from the second generation South Asian immigrant. Kureishi in his novels has always tried to address the marginal sexual identities of his characters. There had also been many attempts by the author to address this issue from the perspective of both the first generation and second generation characters. Kureishi's texts deal with these marginal sexualities and their respective conflicts with their families as well as with the society around them. Almost all of Kureishi's South Asian second generation characters are born into a middle class, immigrant, Muslim families. It is this Muslim identity that refuses to accommodate any kind of sexual diversions in the formation of the characters identity. Both Islamic masculinities as well as the 'social construction of masculinity in Western culture' (Stephen et al 61) have rejected femininity and homosexuality as threats to traditional notions of masculinity. Asifa Siraj in her essay “On being homosexual and Muslim: conflicts and challenges”²⁶ writes about the responses of various interviewees (most of them who were

Muslim, male and were either straight or gay) and how being gay and Muslim at the same time might evoke some fundamental problems. She re-iterates what Ellison has pointed out in this context: 'many gay men and lesbians repudiate organised religion or at least maintain a healthy distance in order to survive in a hostile context'²⁷. Asifa Siraj points out that in some cases the Muslim and the homosexual identity could be integrated on the grounds that homosexuality in most cases was a natural condition to some people and therefore "God given" but this connection could not be forged for all respondents.

Kureishi weaves in the narrative of changing identities in his novels and since most of his protagonists are men the changing essence the question of "what is it to be a man"/masculinities reemerges within new contexts and situations in his texts. In *Gabriel's Gift* Gabriel's father, Rex Bunch is a typical example of the new boy/man who does not want to take any responsibilities. In fact Rex is the complete opposite of the masculinities demonstrated in the working class where men grow up with the presupposition that if they want to play the role of a good husband then they should always be in a position to provide for their family. It is only when Christine throws him out of her house that he starts earning for a living. Rex is the example of the 'new man' who has not taken up the role of the "breadwinner" of his family.

In an attempt to move away from the writings typically associated with diasporic writers Kureishi plays with the idea of a dystopic reality where in bodies could be purchased, worn and discarded by human beings. In his novella *The Body*, Kureishi's body is the site of performance for different activities. Gender, colour, occupation etc set assorted roles for this body to be a part of social action. The 'mind' and 'matter' debate that had been the central debate of western philosophy is addressed by Kureishi. For, the postmodern writer Kureishi, the bridge between mentality and materiality is not 'imagination' but a technologically sound future that would enable new advancements. Kureishi decodes the possibility of a world where mind is specific and

bodies are readily available to everyone, a completely contrasting position to the functioning of the present world where the mind is free-flowing and the body is governed by constant sameness. Kureishi structures his protagonist's debacle and dilemma in such a way that the reader gets to explore various facets and functions of a normal, human body. Adam's act of exchanging body results in new permutations and combinations. Being in a new/different body for the first time explores the possibilities of youth and beauty. As Mark, he enters his own house and talks to his wife. He works in a Centre for women in Greece as an "Oddjob". His relationship with Patricia, Alicia or his new present is at constant friction with his past because he is being chased by Matte's men (Matte wants Adam's new body for his ailing brother). Adam becomes a subject who cannot be self-regulated anymore by the social order because of his multiple identities: Adam/Adam in Mark's body.

The Body, of Kureishi transports us to a situation where the body becomes 'cultural plastic'. The author takes us to a point in history where even the body is commodified as a garment that can be worn, used and in the end sold to get a better one when it is old from wear and tear. The body in Kureishi's story breaks the dichotomies of gender and race that are the crucial elements in positing the 'self'. This small piece of sci-fiction takes us to a futuristic plane where

*The body is no longer simply a dysfunctional object requiring medical intervention, but a commodity...which can be continuously upgraded and modified in accordance with new interests and greater resources.*²⁸

The body in Kureishi is thereby reduced to a 'pastiche'- a blank parody in Jamesonian terminology²⁹. Adam's new body does not have any memories just like the replicants in Ridley Scott's *The Blade Runner* (1982).

The extreme dystopic possibilities of our highly technologised culture are presented by Kureishi in his novella. The crisis faced by individual even

in the highest state of technological accomplishment and the other side of cosmetic surgery, sex change operations etc is the main subject of Kureishi's enquiry. Kureishi's first work of science fiction can be read as his attempt to move away from the "differential history" of mankind. Homi Bhabha explains this concept further in his essay "Race', Time and the Revision of Modernity"³⁰ where he discusses the "differential and relational nature of postcolonial identity"³¹ and the subversive nature of postcolonial politics. For Bhabha modernity is still an incomplete project undertaken by the West and it is only under the banner of postmodernism that it has made a new attempt in demystifying the non-West. He elaborates on his ideas by referring to Fanon's "phenomenological performance of what it means to be not only a nigger but a member of the marginalized, the displaced, the diasporic... whose very presence is both 'overlooked'- in the double sense of social surveillance and physical disavowal. And at the same time...made stereotypical and symptomatic"³². Kureishi in *The Body*, manipulates the reader into believing a future wherein the discourses woven around human body can be done away with. There is an attempt made by the author to forgo the oppositions created by modernity which denies the black man the ontological understanding of his identity since their identity has to be read with relation to "the white world". Kureishi like Fanon "...uses the fact of blackness, of belatedness, to destroy the binary structure of power and identity...Fanon writes from the temporal cesura, the time-lag of cultural difference, in a space between the symbolization of the social and the 'sign' of its representation of subjects and agencies".³³ Kureishi unlike Fanon refers to the future where the world has moved beyond the discourses perpetuated by modernity. The body does not hold the key to ones identity in Kureishi's future.

Kureishi in his novel *Gabriel's Gift* as well as in *The Body* do not have any South Asian characters. The identity of the characters in both the works of fiction is challenged by typical traits of postmodernism like schizophrenia and pastiche. Adam's sense of personal identity falls

in crisis when he meets Mark's friends from New York accidentally on the road. He does not know how handle the situation. Adam has hired Mark's body only for six months, to live, feel and enjoy the life that he has missed because of aging. The old Adam inside the body of Mark remains the person. Similarly Gabriel continuously communicates and seeks advice from his dead brother Archie. Both of these characters demonstrate symptoms of schizophrenia. Jameson describes schizophrenia as

the breakdown of relationships between signifiers...The schizophrenic, however, is not only "no one" in the sense of having personal identity; he or she does nothing...The schizophrenic is thus given over to an undifferentiated vision of the world in present...the temporal continuities break down, the experience of the present becomes powerfully, overwhelmingly vivid and "material": the world comes before the schizophrenic with heightened intensity, bearing a mysterious oppressive change of affect, glowing with hallucinatory energy".³⁴

This intensity can be traced back to Adam's primary reactions on his entering a new body. Adam describes his sensory perception post-operation, he muses in an amazed state of mind, "For the first time in years, my body felt sensual and full of intense yearning: I was inhabited by a warm, inner fire, which nonetheless reached out to others".

The painting by Lester Jones in *Gabriel's Gift* and the body of Adam in *The Body* both have a consumption value and to possess either of them one needs capital or one can exchange capital for the possession of either of the two. Like the painting, the body also has a resale/exchange value and there are bidders like Matte who can go to any extent in order to possess it.

Lester Jones's gift to Gabriel, a drawing that is autographed by Lester points is circulated in copies by the innocent Gabriel. The circulation of drawing not only points out how the drawing or the work of art is drained of its significance but also at the rapid circulation of copies in the post-

modern era. Gabriel's act of copying, circulating and later reaping the benefits from is a reference to the fast pace of production in the mechanical era where consumption holds the key for fulfillment of all desires.

Kureishi weaves in the narrative of changing identities in his novels and since most of his protagonists are men the changing essence the question of “what is it to be a man”/masculinities reemerges within new contexts and situations in his texts. Gabriel's father, Rex Bunch is a typical example of the new boy/man who does not want to take any responsibilities. In fact Rex is the complete opposite of the masculinities demonstrated in the working class where men grow up with the presupposition that if they want to play the role of a good husband then they should always be in a position to provide for their family. It is only when Christine throws him out of her house that he starts earning for a living. Rex is the example of the 'new man' who has not taken up the role of the “breadwinner” of his family. Kureishi's representation of the South Asian families as well as that of the dominant/white culture and relationships is much more nuanced and critical than any of his contemporaries as his writings deal with the fine intertwining of the question of race, class and culture in our fragmented present.

Notes and References

1. In any discourse the “subject” is the most crucial constituent in defining one's identity, for the 'self' is constructed when the 'subject' itself becomes a function of power. It entails that the 'subject' is 'subject' only when it has proved its supremacy against the 'object'; which in turn means that one's subjectivity can only exist in its relationship with the 'other'. The relation between the 'self' and the 'other' or in other words the orientation of subjectivity in relation to the 'other' is known as identity. In the maze of ever evolving “identity” the notion of “difference” acts as an essential ingredient in determining one's position vis-a- vis the 'other/Other'.
2. Multiculturalism has been adopted by different countries and promoted by each state with individual way of defining it like British multiculturalism, Australian mosaic culture and the American melting pot.
3. Kureishi, Hanif. (1990) , London: Faber and Faber,pp.49.
4. Ibid. pp.19.
5. Beynon, John. (2002) *Masculinities and Culture*, Buckingham: Open University Press, pp.1-25.
6. Ibid.pp. 3.
7. Butler, Judith. (1999) *Gender Trouble: Feminism & The Subversion of Identity*, New York & London: Routledge Publishers. 1999.
8. This movement started in the 1860's but it was popularized and well know from 1098 to 1928.
9. Bentley, Nick. (2008) *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, pp. 165.
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16. Hussain, Asifa and William Miller, eds.(2006) *Multicultural Nationalism: Islamaphobia, Anglophobia, and Devolution*, University of Glasgow & New

York: Oxford University Press.

17. Kureishi, Hanif. (1990), *Opit.*, pp. 18.
18. *Ibid*, pp.174.
19. Kureishi, Hanif. (1995) *The Black Album*, London: Faber and Faber, pp.119.
20. *Ibid*, pp-25.
21. The masculinity of the terrorist is often interpreted as the case of transgressive masculinity. The cult of violence among men (let it be the suicide bombers or the *Jihadis*) are seen as figures who transgress the normal law and order and therefore their masculinity cannot be interpreted as that of a normal citizen. The masculinity of the terrorist, therefore can only exist outside the ideology of state and its rules and regulations.
22. Kureishi, Hanif. (1995), *opcit.*, 52.
23. Kureishi, Hanif. (2008) *Something to Tell You*, London: Faber and Faber. pp-192.
24. Hoven, Bettina van and Horschelmann. (2005). *Critical Geographies: Spaces of Masculinities*, USA & Canada: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. pp.192
25. *Ibid*. pp.193.
26. Ouzgane, Lahoucine, ed. *Islamic Masculinities*. London: Zed Books Ltd, pp. 202-216
27. *Ibid*. pp. 208.
28. Finkelstein, Joanne.(1991) *The Fashioned Self*, Polity: Cambridge, pp.64.
29. Jameson, Fredrick, (1996) "Postmodernism and Consumer society" in *John Belton ed. Movies and Mass Culture*, Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, New Jersey, pp-188-189.
30. Gilbert, Bart Moore, and Gareth Stanton, Willy Maley, eds. (1997) *Postcolonial Criticism*, London & New York: Longman, pp. 167-214.
31. *Ibid*, pp.166-214.
32. *Ibid*, pp.167.
33. *Ibid*, pp. 168-169.
34. Jameson, Fredrick, *Ibid*. pg-195-196.



Canadian Indigenous Writings and Tomson Highway: A New Form of Resistance

Dr. Santosh Bharti

Abstract: From 1960's, indigenous activism was felt at all levels by Canadian society for the recognition of indigenous distinct rights as a means to define indigenous identity. One such movement was indigenous literary writings which started in 1960's to document the processes of colonization and narrate the stories of marginalization, dispossession, displacement, pain and hurt experienced by indigenous peoples. Written from indigenous point of view, it also provides an insight into indigenous values, traditions, concerns and needs. For example, *Tomson Highway*, the subject of this study, chronicles the damages done to indigenous peoples with the establishment of residential schools in Canada. Hence, the present study seeks to examine, first- indigenous literature as a new form of resistance and second- *Tomson Highway's* contributions whose works have become a vital part of Canadian literary canon in the recent years.

Keywords- Resistance, Identity

Introduction

For many decades, White-European's rules and regulations led to colonization of indigenous peoples in Canada. It was also believed that, in nineteenth century, through various assimilationist policies, indigenous race would either disappear, die out, or become assimilated meaning that they would give up their traditional mode of lifestyle and live and act like white Europeans. However, instead of disappearing or assimilating, these indigenous peoples survived and from 1970's indigenous protest movements picked up pace and agility attempting to 'construct' an identity for themselves. One such protest movement was indigenous literary writings in Canada which emerged out of experience of colonization and emphasized their differences from their nation-states. Such writing back was an attempt to tell the history from indigenous point of view means telling their histories which involved recovering their own stories of the past and asserting their epistemological foundations as well as documenting processes of colonization from the perspectives of those who experienced it.

Through their writings, indigenous writers, "represent richly diverse tribal backgrounds and experiences. This diversity is manifested in many ways, through the multitude of cultures, languages, histories, land bases, treaties, governments, populations and other facets of tribal life". Thus, these indigenous writers "work

to recover land, language, knowledge, sovereignty, voice and indeed, entire peoples and nations¹. Commenting on contemporary indigenous writers, Louise Erdrich notes that, "in the light of enormous loss, they [indigenous writers] must tell the stories of contemporary survivors while protecting and celebrating the cores of culture left in the wake of catastrophe"².

This urge of writing back and telling the story from indigenous point of view which led to rise of Canadian indigenous literature has its origin in the oral tradition in the form of storytelling which includes myths, legends, folklore, traditional stories etc, transmitted from generation to generation verbally. These oral traditions which are didactic in nature, helped to communicate indigenous histories, beliefs, religious and cultural practices.

No doubt, residential schools had an adverse impact on indigenous peoples and their cultures, it is primarily because of English language taught at these residential schools, gave an opportunity to indigenous peoples to write in English and there are many indigenous peoples who support residential school have stated that it gave the indigenous "a better chance of integrating into mainstream society" which "they could not get from their own people in the traditional villages"³. Interestingly, *Tomson Highway*, the indigenous writer, the subject of this work, seems supportive of residential school education. In an

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interview [quoting his exact words], he stated, “residential schools experiences were fantastic. So much that, is reported about residential school....is screwed. It is not quite right. They don't have the whole picture. Lot of us have positive experiences in residential school. People heard about and discuss about me being gay is because of the fact that I had horrible tragic life....when the matter of the fact is that I have a life when most of street people in this country [Canada] can only dream about. I have a spectacular life”⁴. Thus, a residential school survivor himself, Tomson Highway, a person of Cree identity, turned out to be a famous pianist, dramatist, novelist and theatre artist. Like him, many other indigenous children who attended residential school, grew up to become teachers, novelists, musicians, politicians and lawyers. It is also because of residential school education that these first generation indigenous peoples make use of English to express the traumatized state of indigenous life, found in Canada today.

History

Desirous of being heard, indigenous peoples of Canada started writing from the middle of the 19th century. Ojibway writer George Copway⁵ was the first Canadian First Nation writer to publish a book in English in 1847 with his autobiography, *The Life, History and Travels of Kah-ge-gah-bowh*. After its success, it was reprinted six times and republished in London in 1850 under the title, *Recollections of a Fresh life*. Copway also wrote the first volume of indigenous history titled *The Traditional History and Characteristics Sketches of the Ojibwa Nation*. Similarly, Pauline Johnson, an indigenous woman wrote *The White Wampum* in 1895 which was acclaimed⁶. These 19th century writers, “attest[ed] to the innate rationality, intelligence and humanity of Native peoples”⁷.

After six decades, indigenous writers reappeared on the Canadian literary scene. Before 1960's indigenous literary writings were sparse. The politics of 1960's and 1970's, leading to the publication of *White Paper* in 1969 by the Trudeau government, led to the growth of indigenous literature in Canada. This literature

came to be known as 'protest' literature and included Howard Adams' *The Prison of Grass: Canada from the Native point of view* (1975), Harold Cardinal's *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians* (1977), autobiography of Maria Campbell, *Half-Breed* (1973) and Duke Redbird's *We are Métis*⁸ (Heiss 2003). “The beginning of Aboriginal writings in the 1960 was dominated by political concerns, most importantly by the struggle for Aboriginal rights and the attempt to reclaim an Aboriginal identity”⁹. It aimed at conveying a political message rather than contributing to the literary subtlety. They were confrontational in nature which led to an outburst in creative writing and gained momentum through the “emergence of a new generation of college and university trained Aboriginal authors and the sudden interest of the publishing industry in Aboriginal writing”. As a result 1970's saw the publication of a wide range of literary forms such as traditional and personal narratives, autobiographies, poetry, drama, children's literature and prose fiction. Among the earliest publications are of George Clutesi's works *Sons of Raven*, *Son of Deer* (1967) and *Potlatch* (1969). These works have traditional narratives and tales which continued over the following decades¹⁰. All these works and publications through the tradition of oral storytelling in written form, aimed to preserve the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples in Canada. As a protest literature, indigenous authors and writers had polemical style, and were referred to as “Indian lament” as they deplored the consequences of colonial oppression on indigenous cultures and identities, and “voice the pain over loss and the outrage at the injustices and racism experienced at the hands of the dominant society”¹¹. Further, being political in nature, these works emphasized the need for federal government to recognize, acknowledge and redress the legacies of past injustices done on indigenous peoples¹².

Thus, Indigenous literature meant “Native people telling their own stories, in their own ways, unfettered by criteria from another time and space”. It reveals “the depth and status of the culture, expresses Native wisdom and points of

view familiar to other Natives, reveals the beauty of the Native world, beauty rarely recognized by non-Native writers. Native literature records oral narratives, values, beliefs, traditions, humour, and figure of speech. It emphasizes communal living and portrays a mingling and sharing...For Native readers, the literature is a source of strength and personal development”¹³.

In their process of rebuilding their crumbling edifices in more ways than one, indigenous literature in Canada has become relatively young and new. This has resulted in indigenous writers voicing and putting on record their quest for self-determination, representation and identity which has been called “postcolonial writings” by Ashcroft, Tiffin and Griffith in their influential work *Empire Writes Back*. They argue: “What each of these literatures has in common beyond their special and distinctive regional characteristics is that they emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power, and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the empire centre. It is this which makes them distinctively post colonial” (Ashcroft et al. 2003).

Therefore, indigenous writings are considered postcolonial with their “cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to present day”¹⁴. Here, “the *post* rather articulates a desire, a utopia, a work-in-progress, the struggle for a truly postcolonial, de-colonized world”¹⁵.

Indigenous writings were also recognized because of indigenous and Metis publishing houses such as Theytus Book, Pemmican Publications Inc., Kegeonce Press, Gabriel Dumont Institute Press. Canadian Publishers like Fifth House, Talonbooks, University of Manitoba Press, and University of British Columbia Press were also actively promoting such publication. International publishing houses such as Oxford University Press have also shown interest in publishing Native North American writings¹⁶.

Indigenous Theatre

One of the most important developments in indigenous literature is the emergence of indigenous drama in Canada. It was with the popularity of Tomson Highway works *The Rez Sisters* (1988) that indigenous theatre gained prominence. The play was certainly not the first by a Canadian indigenous playwright but it is arguably the best which won Dora Mavor Moore Award¹⁷ for the best new play of 1988. It was also a runner-up for the Floyd S. Chalmers Award¹⁸ and was short-listed for the Governor General's Award in drama¹⁹. Highway followed the *The Rez Sisters* with *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing* in 1989.

Tomson Highway's contribution to theatre is immense. In true sense he has given voice to indigenous peoples of Canada through his insightful plays. His “ambition in life is to make “the rez”[reserves] cool, to show and celebrate what funky folk Canada's Indian people really are”²⁰. He was born on 6 December 1951, in a tent, on the Brocket Reserve in northern Manitoba. He is the eleventh of twelve children, born to legendary caribou hunter and world championship dogsled racer, Joe Highway and mother Pelagie Highway. At the age of six, he was sent to a Roman Catholic boarding school at the Guy Hill Indian Residential School in The Pas, Manitoba. He was at the boarding school until age 15 where he learned to play piano. Later, he was sent to Churchill High school in Winnipeg. After high school, Tomson Highway, went to University of Manitoba to study music (piano) for two years. He also went to London to study music from University of Western Ontario from where he graduated with a Bachelor of Music Honors in May 1975. He also did Bachelor of Arts in English from the same University²¹. After his return to Canada, he worked with James Reaney, one of Canada's famous playwrights. For the next few years, he engaged himself in connecting himself to indigenous peoples at an indigenous cultural centre and worked with indigenous organizations. This gave him an opportunity to familiarize himself with indigenous lives on reserves. This formed the basis of his plays. He wrote his first play *The Rez*

Sisters in 1988 which established his reputation on Canadian indigenous theatre circuit²².

Like *The Rez Sisters*, *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*, was also received well by the audiences and it became the “first play in the history of Canadian theatre ever to receive a full production and extended run at Toronto's legendary Royal Alexandra Theatre in 1991”. It also won Dora Mavor Moore and Floyd S. Chalmers Awards. After this, Highway's plays are being studied at Universities and produced in theatres. Later he wrote many plays like *The Sage, the Dancer, and the Fool*, *Aria*, *The incredible adventures of Mary Jane Mosquito*, *New Song*, *New Dance*, *The Trickster Tale*, *Rose*, *Annie and the Old one*, *A Rediculous Spectacle in one act* and many more. His tragic-comic allegory *Ernestine Shuswap Gets her Trout*, had its world premiere at the Western Theatre in Kamloops in British Columbia. Tomson Highway was also artistic director of Native Earth Performing Arts, Toronto, from 1986-1992. Native Earth Performing Arts is Canada's most celebrated and accomplished indigenous theatre. In 1998, Highway published his first novel *Kiss of the Fur Queen* which was again nominated for several awards and introduced him to the larger audience. Along with all these, he has also published three children books namely *Caribou Song* (2001), *Dragon Fly Kites* (2002) and *Fox on the Ice* (2003)²³.

Thus, Tomson Highway is Canada's celebrated and important figure. His success is attributed to his “skilful fusion of Native mythology and Western (or mainstream) dramatic structures”. His works serve two purposes: First, “they are intended to raise the consciousness of Native peoples to their own forgotten culture, primarily through the figure of the Ojibway/Cree trickster Nanabush/Weesageechak”. Second, it serves to “educate non-Native audiences about the reality—both the pains and the pleasures—of reservation life, employing classical allusions and dramatic frameworks reminiscent of Shakespearean comedy that would be familiar to a sophisticated Native and non-Native audience”²⁴.

Qwo-Li Driskill explains Highway's plays thus: “If Colonization is a kinesthetic wounding, then decolonization is a kinesthetic healing. We carry the wounds of the past in our bodies, and it is through our bodies that we find ways to mend them and continue our lifeways. We must heal historical trauma in order to help our nations and homelands. It is in our bodies—and as bodies—that we tell our stories and understand what it means to be Native people enacting decolonization and continuance”²⁵. Thus, indigenous theatre is a logical extension of the storytelling technique and means to can carry their oral traditions and imagine new stories for a decolonized future²⁶. It is a form of knowing through actions. Diana Taylor posits, “we learn and transmit knowledge through embodied action, through cultural agency, and by making choices. Performance...functions as an episteme, a way of knowing, not simply an object of analysis”²⁷.

As has been mentioned earlier, it was not until 1970's that indigenous drama was given recognition in Canada. The indigenous had no tradition of written drama. The first in Canada can perhaps be traced back to Charles Mair's *Tecumseh* in 1880. Ever since there have been no developments in indigenous drama until 1970's. This period saw the flowering of many indigenous plays such as Nora Benedict's one act play, *The Dress* (1970), Duke Redbird's *Wasawkachak* (1974), George Kenny's *October Stranger* (1977), Minnie Aodla Freeman's *Survival in the South* (1980), Assiniboine-Dakota Playwright William S. Yellow Robe's *The Independence of Eddie Rose* (1986). This also led to the formation of numerous indigenous performing groups in the 1980's for example Native Earth Performing Arts in Toronto, Spirit Song in Vancouver and De-Jeh-Mu-Jig Theatre on Manitoulin Island and many more²⁸.

Along with Highway, there are other indigenous playwrights who are equally well acclaimed. According to Agnes Grant, “although Tomson Highway (Cree) is likely the most well known Canadian Aboriginal playwright today, there are many others. Drew Hayden Taylor (Ojibway), Margo Kane (Saulteaux, Cree, Blackfoot and

French), Monique Mojica (Metis) and Daniel David Moses (Ojibway) have all made outstanding contributions to the field of drama". Further, he writes that, "works of authors like Jordan Wheeler, Maria Campbell and Thomas King have been adapted for film and television and many vibrant theatre companies are exploring both creative drama and social issues using different venues"²⁹. It is interesting to note that each playwright is unique, but there are many similarities among them. It is set apart from mainstream Canadian experiences in drama. The characters are indigenous with their own distinctive experiences. Therefore, there are issues of race, class, colonialism, discrimination, oppression, loss of culture and redefinition of culture that are repeatedly brought out in the plays. The only differences are how these stories evolve or are conveyed in spite of these common themes. Human feelings of humour, pathos, rage, and grief are present in the dramas, but love, joy, optimism, pride, ritual and celebration are also found. "This," the playwrights say, "is what it is to be an Aboriginal person in Canada"³⁰.

Today, indigenous drama is growing in Canada and their plays are, "inspired by contemporary social problems facing native Canadians: alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, wife battering, family violence, the racism of the justice system, loneliness, rejection, youth awareness, as well as modern-day environmental issues. The politics of the streets, of the sub-culture, is a recurring theme"³¹. Penny Petrone, further explains that, the reason for the earlier neglect of indigenous literature is due to White-European imperialism, their antipathy attitude towards indigenous oral traditions and finally purist attitude of White-European literary critics towards indigenous literature which were thought to be invaluable³². Adding to it, Agnes Grant states that, "much of this Aboriginal artistry was either ignored as colonizers attempted to portray the inhabitant of this as ignorant savages, or it was suppressed by missionaries and eventually forbidden by laws. It is only in recent times that Canadians generally have become aware of the rich heritage that once existed. Contemporary Aboriginal artists are picking up the strands of this rich heritage, often producing materials which interpret the ancient

beliefs and values, albeit in a foreign language and through foreign art forms". According to Tomson Highway, "Aboriginal artists have not only a unique role, but an obligation to reconstruct this suppressed heritage"³³.

Now, indigenous literature is being acclaimed both at national and international arenas. "Canada's Native writers are creating a body of new writing that has an amazing versatility, vitality, and commitment. They are questioning why they should be expected to conform to the constraints of Eurocentric critical theories; they are using the language of 'the enemy' to break from a colonized past, bending and stretching mainstream rules of genre, reinventing new ones, and redefining traditional notions of orality and literacy to enrich and extend Canada's literature"³⁴.

A major contribution by Tomson Highway to the indigenous theatre in Canada is the establishment of a 'Committee to Re-Establish the Trickster' in Toronto along with Daniel David Moses and Lenore Keeshig-Tobias in 1987. The reason for establishing such a Committee according to Margery Fee, "was to get attention for their work and that of other indigenous artists". Through the traditional figure, "Trickster" borrowed from indigenous mythology, indigenous writers are combating stereotypes which often freeze indigenous culture in a traditional past³⁵.

Through the trickster figure, indigenous artists have infused humor in their works as a means to deal with their [indigenous] sufferings and pain. Drama is considered a better genre for "the portrayal of Aboriginal mythology than any other genre....Native people cannot be portrayed accurately without humour and laughter. Native humour is hearty and spontaneous and is often directed at misfortune turned into a joke. It is often used to deal with the pain that inevitably accompanies poverty and marginalization"³⁶ (Grant 1995). Here, Tomson Highway's works can be taken as prime example. Therefore, it can be said that "Canada's native writers have come out with their literary output that show extreme vitality and commitment. They do not want their writing to be evaluated on Eurocentric critical

models. These writers have enriched the body of Canadian literature by delving deep into their rich culture and tradition and thereby contributed new perspectives and insights into Canadian literature”³⁷.

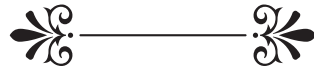
In conclusion, it can be said that indigenous literary writings in Canada especially the works of Tomson Highway, have marked a turning point in the history of Canadian theatre and established him as one of the foremost contemporary playwrights in Canada. His autobiographical novel *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, introduced him to an even larger Canadian audience.

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Bhramyomaan Theatre of Assam: A study of its origin and place within the Popular

Violina Borah

Abstract: This paper discusses the inception, history and working of the Mobile Theatre of Assam, known as *Bhramyomaan Mancha* is the most popular form of entertainment available to the people of both rural and urban sector. The performance happens in makeshift stages and tents which the theatre groups carry with them wherever they have to go and perform. The engagement with the word 'mobile' is being focused in the paper. The word 'mobile' carries a feeling/sense of popularity with it. It reminds us of the mysterious and fascinating group of Gypsies, Operas, Jatra companies of Bengal, Tamasha-wallas of Maharashtra, Circus, etc- these popular forms tour from rural to the fringes of urban cape. The Mobile Theatre of Assam is also not an exception to this genre of mobile entertainment. In 2012 this popular theatre form had completed fifty years till its birth. The paper will offer a glimpse of how and why this particular form of theatre is so popular drawing in different performance theories. The focus is also on the influence of new media, emerging technologies, the merging of Assamese film industry with the mobile theatre, the changes of the themes of the plays performed with time, the growing hierarchy within the performers and the positive and negative effects of the same. The paper will discuss media, advertisement and the advent of cinema culture which has changed the face of mobile theatre.

Keywords- Mobile theater, Assamese film industry, Bhramyomaan & Popular

The advent of the season of many festivals, autumn, brings eventful yet joyous days for the people of Assam. Along with preparing to welcome the goddess Durga, people look forward to another source of immense entertainment that begins during the same period and that is Bhramyomaan Theatre or mobile theatre. On one side there are beautifully crafted puja mandapas while on the other there are plain looking huge canvas tents and wooden stages of different mobile theatre groups. Though both the events are not comparable on any scale but the passion the people of Assam possess for these two occasions is astounding. Not a large number of people outside Assam have had many opportunities to experience this 'carnival on wheel' which keeps Assam dazed for more than six months. Though it is very popular within Assam, not much exposure out of Assam has been encountered by these theatre groups. In 1977-78 once Nataraj Theatre travelled to perform in Bihar, Nepal and North Bengal. Though people warmly welcomed and enjoyed the performances but due to lack of publicity and adequate financial planning they suffered loss.

After that they preferred not to step out of their indigenous secured space. However, due to its popularity mobile theatre again stepped out of the state boundary when National School of Drama had taken a case study of Assamese Mobile Theatre and called the Kohinoor Theatre group to perform in New Delhi, at Indira Gandhi National Cultural Association in April 2010 for three days.

This indigenous popular theatre form of Assam is known as *Bhramyomaan Theatre*. The word *Bhramyomaan* means a thing which can move, rove, travel or simply 'mobile'. The use of an equivalent Assamese word for English word 'theatre' is not introduced so far. It is not very common and appropriate, but the word '*Natyamancha*', (stage) is sometimes used instead of theatre. For the people of Assam theatre means only the 'Mobile theatre'. 'I am going to the theatre' does not mean someone is going to watch a film in a theatre or a movie hall rather it implies a performance by certain mobile theatre groups probably not very far from their house. Mobile theatre consists of a group of performers who pack everything needed to put up

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a show loaded in trucks, travel from one place to another reaching every nook and corner of Assam. They carry the props, stage, other equipments, generators, music system, tents along wherever they travel. The theatre groups construct their makeshift tent on an open field with seat capacity approximately for 2000 audiences.

The history of mobile theatre of Assam can be traced back to 1860s. When '*Bor Asom*', i.e. undivided Northeast India was brought under British rule in 1826 through the treaty of Yandabo, a group of literate people from Kolkata were brought to Assam for clerical jobs. These people as recreational activity used to do plays in their language using makeshift stages and it followed by the visit of different Bengali Jatra groups. Because of keen interest of the local people in these plays they were able to get a large cultural base for performances. The first travelling theatre group in Assam was formed by Tithiram Bayan at Barpeta in 1860. He was patronised by Govinda Ram Choudhury and he toured all over Assam with this troupe. As Bengali was the medium of studies then, Bayan also learned Bengali and the first play they had staged was written and performed in the Bengali language (*Bangla*). The plays included *Durjyodhaner Urubhanga (Bangla)*, *Rama Vanabaas*, and *Radhikar Maanbhanjan*. Tithiram Bayan can be called the founder of the first professional theatre group of Assam and he is the pioneer of the present day mobile theatre. This troupe performed for many years and it is not sure when the transition from the Bengali to Assamese plays occurred. Inspired by his astonishing groundbreaking into a form not much explored there came many followers in different parts of Assam who founded their own theatre groups. *Sanatan Sangeet Samaj* by Ambikagiri Raichoudhury, *Shankardev Arun Natya Samiti* by Arun Baishya, and Bhogram Kakoti's *Bhaluki Jatradal* are a few significant ones. Most of these troupes performed their plays in *Bangla*.

The first mobile theatre in Assamese language was started by *Natyacharya* Brajanath Sharma in 1921. The first group he started in Barpeta was *Shila Kalika Opera Party*. After three years this

group concluded their performance and he started another troupe named '*Dakshin Ganak Gari Opera Party*'. These theatre groups brought a cultural revolution against the *Bangla* theatre groups. *Assam Kohinoor Opera Party* was formed in 1930 and the revolt continued. Tithiram Bayan was the inspiration for Brajanath Sharma to start *Kohinoor Opera*. This theatrical movement started in Brahmaputra Valley which attracted people with their astonishing performances. A revolutionary transformation happened with the introduction of Co-acting in 1933. The dominance of male actors/acting was altered by Brajanath Sharma with the help of another famous actor Phani Sharma who is known as '*Natasurya*' which means the Sun of Drama. These two brought female actors to the stage.

This opera also travelled and entertained people of Assam for a few decades but the modern day mobile theatre was given a new identity by Achyut Lahkar. He is called the father of professional modernised mobile theatre of Assam. He was born in 1931 and went to Kolkata in 1949 for higher studies. He was inspired by his friend Bijoy Kanongo and started a magazine called *Dwipawali* in Kolkata and was its editor but had to go back to Assam and this magazine had to discontinue due to financial problems. He had seen *Jatra* performances in West Bengal and questioned himself about the absence of a large scale theatre production which could be the source of income through performance along with entertainment. He was interested in plays and music from his childhood as his father owned a costume and musical instrument shop. His brother Sada Lahkar was groomed by the local cultural pioneers to be an actor. Inspired by his mentors Sada Lahkar founded *Nataraj Opera* in 1959 and started staging plays in his house. Achyut Lahkar was determined to do something grand in this field which could contribute to the culture and socio-economic purposes of Assam. Hence with his younger brother Sada Lahkar without any capital to start with, he founded *Nataraj Theatre* on October 2, 1963. Achyut Lahkar puts his views about the transmogrification of *Nataraj Opera* to *Nataraj Theatre*,

Due to various reasons I reached the conclusion that 'Jatras' are actually 'mobile'. Their presence is indispensable in the weddings and other village feasts. I used to go and watch plays when I was in Calcutta and in Assam whenever time permits. After watching plays at Bhaskar Stage in Guwahati and Baan Stage in Tezpur I thought theatre is far more refined compared to opera. Girls act in theatres. One thought kept occurring in my mind can we not make theatres mobile like the Jatras and Operas? In Assam at that time theatre had not started like in Calcutta and Bombay. I wanted to open a theatre group of that sort and give it a mobile form.... To start a theatre was not an impulsive decision. When I saw in Sada's Opera without even the use of electricity and microphones audiences crowd to see the performances, so I wanted to use technology and amaze the viewers. Sitting in front of the stage when I switched on the colourful lights on stage audience were spellbound. Mobile theatre can be said was born with solely commercial purpose.'"¹

This theatre was different from those of Tithiram Bayan and Brajanath Sharma. Bayan used the plain ground as a performance arena and the other arrangements were minimal too. The props and stages differed because of the use of sound, technology and advance lighting. Through the semblance of these techniques with performance Achyut Lahkar had something newfangled and vibrant to offer to the audience which could stir their imagination. For forty long years, *Nataraj Theatre* travelled throughout Assam, entertaining rural as well as urban space. In the process it has enriched the cultural heritage of Assam with a unique dramatic tradition that ensures a strong foundation for the Mobile Theatre in the national cultural scenario. Right from the start Achyut Lahkar had deep and clear convictions regarding socio-economic issues, political ideas and culture.

He says, the audience go to watch a play to different corners of the country but bhramyomaan goes to the audience to show the play. Keeping in mind this

difference bhramyomaan theatre started."²

Since the birth of this modernised mobile theatre it has completed fifty years and more than 150 theatre groups have come to existence till date. Since its inception, the ingenuity of the mobile theatre lay in its stagecraft. *Nataraj Cine Theatre* was the first to introduce the 'trolley stage', a development that enabled theatre groups to quickly change the backdrop of the main stage with the help of the trolleys. But the biggest and perhaps the most significant development came in the year 1968 when *Mancharupa Theatre* changed the very face of Mobile Theatre with the use of 'double stage'. The most prominent advantage of double stage was that a performance could be continued without any pause or ruptures. For instance, the props and other things would be taken care of by the crew in one stage for the next scene in advance while the play would go on in the next one. This mode of presentation would keep the audience intact and occupied. In the last forty years over two thousand plays have been staged by Mobile Theatre groups. When *Lady Diana* was staged by *Abahan Theatre* it depicted the changing face of this form by using an internationally sensational topic for a play.

The Mobile Theatre groups are interestingly categorized informally as A, B and C groups on the basis of prominence, infrastructure and sustenance. Usually an A group theatre takes sixty thousand rupees from the committee which invites the group for every first show. At a time when the Assamese film industry is struggling for its survival, most of the top film stars are moving to this form. The popular Assamese film star Jatin Bora is said to have bagged an annual contract of forty lakh rupees from *Kohinoor Theatre*. His signing amount in the films was about one lakh rupees.

The sheer logistics involved in feeding and housing people, transporting them and the heavy equipment as well as large tents and stage props, from one destination to another every third day is truly overwhelming. Everyone, from the stars right down to the helpers in a commune, eats the same food and travels in the same bus. The social

hierarchies are very rare in this cultural form. Everyone performs and sustains the true performer's spirit. My personal interaction with the Kohinoor Theatre artists, from the people who work in kitchen, light and sound crew, to the performers on stage; from the producer to back-stage everyone in unison told me that they are like a family. It doesn't matter if they are paid late despite moving continuously for more than seven months. This mobility helps them to build up a family away from their own families. As if it's a performance within a performance. Perhaps this is the secret behind the stupendous success of this form.

Mobile theatre is different from the traditional theatres which are located in the cities and performed in a closed place like auditoriums and other stages with limited capacity. These theatres can bag audience from a particular class of people. It is different in the case of mobile theatres because they start from a small town and move towards the innermost villages of Assam. A village does not have innumerable population which the 2000 seat capacity makeshift tent cannot hold. Ratan Lahkar, the founder and owner of *Kohinoor Theatre* which is considered to be the most successful theatre group of Assam said in an interview with *The Times of India* (May 5, 2010, page no 22) that,

Mobile theatre is successful because we stage plays in villages.³

The plays that are staged by the theatre groups vary from English classics, Shakespeare's plays, and issues like terrorism, popular contemporary novels and adaptations of Hollywood and Bollywood movies. Plays based on *Othello*, *Cleopatra*, *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Hamlet*, *Taliban* etc are remarkable and are remembered by audience every now and then. People must have been disappointed watching the remake of *Sholay* by Ram Gopal Verma but the adaptation of the same film in a play was a huge success.

Adaptation of ever-new themes and an eye to changing interests have ensured that the mobile theatre genre does not lose its appeal to the young

audience either. With the Assamese film industry in a deep slumber, the plays have also provided the artists another platform to showcase their talent. The glamour quotient in these plays is ensured as Assamese film stars take up lead roles. It thus vindicates the significant place the mobile theatres hold in the media and entertainment industry in the state. Earlier actors were introduced by the mobile theatres and after being famous they could bag roles in the Assamese film industry. Nowadays exactly the opposite is happening. Movie halls are closing down and in the last decade no significant films have released. Barasha Rani Bishaya, an actor says that,

*Cinema halls have shut down but we cannot watch theatres shutting down too because we want to live. We want to act and show our talent. This is the only option we have for survival and we don't want this to close down.*⁴

Looking at one's favourite actor acting on screen is very different from seeing him/her performing a few feet away. Even when the film industry was doing better than of its current state, the stage of mobile theatre attracted various talented actors, directors and writers of the state which had been a reason of its consistent popularity. Actors like Biju Phukan, Suren Mahanta, Bidya Rao, Runu Devi and well known literary figures like Sahitya Akademi winner Dr Bhabendra Nath Saikia, Mahendra Barthakur and Arun Sharma have been involved with mobile theatres.

It was different in the times when there was no electricity, not any other mode of entertainment and mobile theatre was the only large scale entertainment people could afford to enjoy. Time has changed and so has the sources of entertainment. Even if there is no electricity people use chargeable batteries to watch television. Despite various other sources of available entertainments the popularity of mobile theatres has not gone down a bit; in fact it is rising day by day. The journey of mobile theatres is continuing unperturbed and Ratan Lahkar claims because mobile theatre adapts to changes, there is less chance of the popularity being compromised.

The adaptation to the changing times range from using new technologies to the utilization of media. Bringing a dinosaur alive on stage, rowing a boat through both the stages, showing a sinking Titanic, making an anaconda crawl, riding a horse across the stage, setting fire on the stage and showing the twin towers crashing down has been taken care by the new technologies along with the expert performance of the actors. In the films these things are possible because it is done using very high technologies, with many takes, retakes and lot of editing before presenting it to the audience. The same things that happen on screen can be seen on stage which keeps the audience in awe and the huge popularity of these plays like Titanic and Jurassic Park were staged more times than the scheduled plan at places due to public demand. The use of technology and creating ambience according to the scene, for example showing a river, the impression of a storm and using advanced lighting to represent various situations are changing the face of the magnificent stage of mobile theatre.

These technologies have not overshadowed the performances of the actors. A play on the life of Assamese cultural icon *Kalaguru* Bishnuprasad Rabha is equally appreciated so as the portrayal of the fear and insecurity of emigrants in a play staged about the life of Bangladeshi refugees. Another significant play staged by Kohinoor Theatre called "*Abuj dora achin koina*" (i.e. Innocent groom unknown Bride) have shown six feet tall Jatin Borah, the most famous Assamese actor as a dwarf. Wearing custom made heavy costume and performing on stage as a dwarf is definitely a huge challenge for an actor. There is another play which has shown the character of a girl in double role. Making both appear many times on stage at the same time was so acutely performed that people hardly could make out which one is the actual actor. Dr Laksminandan Borah showed concern about the future of mobile theatre in Assam if they do not change the theme of their plays because the unavoidable expansion of electronic based technologies have become an integral part of mobile theatre. He praises this theatre form for making the necessary changes and still continuing to be popular among the audience. He also says that mobile theatre is

popular because audience relate themselves on the stages with the play. It also helps bringing mass awareness among people. He gives example of the play *Daainir Prem* (Witch's Love) which was able to spread awareness about AIDS in a large scale and the state policies could not even do 10% of what the play did.⁵

It can be seen that along with procuring the themes and techniques from the films, mobile theatre is also applying song sequences which can be identified only with films. Earlier the play used to start with a short dance drama with a social awareness theme. Nowadays that part is mostly skipped and there are songs in between the acts of the plays which sometimes do not seem necessary. The way we sometimes criticise films for the unnecessary inclusion of these songs, the same condition applies to the mobile theatre also. It can be looked at in other ways as well. As the film industry is decaying in Assam the choreographers and singers are also losing their field of performance. Inclusion of song and dance has given them an opportunity to be a part of the popular. Nowadays songs are especially being written for specific performances and DVDs are taken out even before the performance happens. There are facebook pages of particular theatre groups who flaunt which big star they have bagged this year, videos of the songs and the already decided schedule for performance of the whole year. They also have websites with the same information. Of course publicity is a necessary part of being popular. Somehow the only poster that contained the faces of all the performers, names of the plays, playwrights, dates, timings and place with two big words on one corner of the poster saying "*Ahibo Dhorise*" which means it is coming, with the name of the theatre group was more appealing than the posters of theatres that look like film posters nowadays. The posters nowadays start with showcasing which film star they are able to rope in for the season which is followed by cut outs of the same film starts and individual posters for each performance of each day. Publicity and advertisement have been able to expose the grandeur of these performances but the suspense of waiting for these theatres to come to a place and perform is somehow lost in all the pomp and

show.

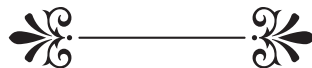
*Nationally and internationally famed actor Adil Hussain sadly remarked that the mobile theatres have killed the soul of performance. Achyut Lahkar does not agree with Hussain and says it is his personal opinion. According to him an enclosed space does not let the art evolve. It is every artist's duty to create a new form of art as searching the essence of an art form within another will be a mistake. Mobile theatres are different and continue to be.*⁶

It seems that the Assamese film industry after its downfall has merged with the mobile theatre and it in various ways has proved beneficial both for the actors and the theatre producers. Adding glamour and making it more alluring to the audience by positioning famous film actors have certainly enhanced its popularity but in a way has closed a door of opportunity for other aspiring actors who are not from a cinema background. The government has turned its eyes towards the mobile theatre groups and been trying to impose the laws that are to be applied in films, for example moral policing and censorship. I would like to conclude my paper with a concern that the

film industry in this state may never revive and despite being popular the mobile theatre may become more cinematic and lose its original charm.

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Politics of Secularism ; the Case of Congress and BJP : How To Resolve It¹

Tamanna Khosla

Abstract-India is officially a secular country and there are no special provisions favouring specific religions in its constitution and in its laws. Secularism in India means equal treatment of all religions by the state. Unlike the Western concept of secularism which envisions a separation of religion and state, the concept of secularism in India envisions acceptance of religious laws as binding on the state.

Both the Indian National Congress party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have been accused of exploiting the people by indulging in vote bank politics. The article looks at how to resolve it. Congress needs to avoid minority pandering politics as much it is on BJP's divisive communal strategies. Critics point out that both of them are basically are two sides of the same coin- they both engage in vote bank politics, rather than fighting on substantive election platforms. Secularism is an operative public value as enshrined in the constitution. Scholars like Bhikhu Parekh argue that the operative public values as enshrined in the constitution should provide the basis for what is acceptable in a society.

Key Words: Secularism, Congress, BJP, Operative public value, constitution

India needs an inclusive "national secularism" agenda Both parties, the congress and BJP need to realize this. India is officially a secular country and there are no special provisions favouring specific religions in its constitution and in its laws. The government is separated, for the most part, from organised religion. Secularism basically is the principle of separation of government institutions, and the persons mandated to represent the State, from religious institutions and religious dignitaries. The separation of church and state is the distance in the relationship between organized religion and the nation state. Although the concept of separation has been adopted in a number of countries, there are varying degrees of separation depending on the applicable legal structures and prevalent views toward the proper role of religion in society.

India is officially a secular country and there are no special provisions favouring specific religions in its constitution and in its laws. Secularism in India means equal treatment of all religions by the state. Unlike the Western concept of secularism which envisions a separation of religion and state, the concept of secularism in India envisions acceptance of religious laws as binding on the state. Thus even though there are no special religion which state favors, the state is in the public sphere relevant. The people of India

have freedom of religion, and the state treats all individuals as equal citizens regardless of their religion. In matters of law in modern India, however, the applicable code of law is unequal, and India's personal laws - on matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, alimony - varies with an individual's religion. Muslim Indians have Sharia-based Muslim Personal Law, while Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and other non-Muslim Indians live under common law. The attempt to respect unequal, religious law has created a number of issues in India such as acceptability of child marriage, polygamy, unequal inheritance rights, extra-judicial unilateral divorce rights favorable to some males, and conflicting interpretations of religious books.

Secularism as practiced in India, with its marked differences with Western practice of secularism, is a controversial topic in India. A well-known accusation made against a number of politicians, however, is that they play vote bank politics, meaning give political support to issues for the sole purpose of gaining the votes of members of a particular community, including religious communities.

Congress: Secularism As Appeasement

Both the Indian National Congress party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have been accused of exploiting the people by indulging in vote bank

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politics. The Shah Bano case, a divorce lawsuit, generated much controversy when the Congress was accused of appeasing the Muslim orthodoxy by bringing in a parliamentary amendment to negate the Supreme Court's decision. After the Babri masjid issue both the parties have been accused of indulging in vote bank politics. Further 2002 Gujarat violence, there were allegations of political parties indulging in vote bank politics. Salman Rushdie's Satanic verses was banned in India under the pressure from some orthodox Muslims. Taslima Nasreen further was not granted visa as Congress responded to its Muslim vote bank.

Neither the Congress nor the BJP can claim to be truly secular, one in which the BJP is a proponent of a form of cultural nationalism that is bound to impose a tyranny of the majority while the Congress is the defender of all things secular and liberal. This is a false dichotomy, as the Congress version of secularism too is flawed and it too is often found wanting when it comes to the defence of liberal values. But the Congress record too does not bear close examination. It has a long and murky history of playing politics with religion. After all, the Khalistan movement was Indira Gandhi's very own Frankenstein's monster, created by her decision to play off Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale against the Akali Dal. And the anti-Sikh riots in Delhi following Indira Gandhi's assassination will forever remain a blot on their secular credentials. Likewise, Rajiv Gandhi displayed his own willingness to use religion for politics with the Shah Bano case.

It's true that horrific incidents of communal violence such as the 1984 anti-Sikh riots did take place under a Congress regime. However, unlike the 2002 anti-Muslim riots in BJP-ruled Gujarat, the Congress did apologise for failing to prevent the atrocities committed on the Sikh community. But no such apology has been forthcoming from the BJP on Gujarat. In terms of electoral politics, the Congress has regularly fielded Muslims and other minority candidates, something that the saffron party can't claim. The very fact that the Congress is accused of minority appeasement means it cannot be equated with the BJP's Hindu fundamentalist ideology. Meanwhile, guided by

Nehruvian principles, the Congress has by and large adhered to the Indian version of inclusive secularism, cultivating minority communities as potential vote banks.

BJP's Version Of Secularism: As Practising Divisiveness

The latter continues to espouse Hindutva as its guiding philosophy. The RSS and the larger Sangh Parivar continue to serve as the BJP's ideological mentors, propagating the ideas of 'Akhand Bharat' and 'Ram Rajya'. Meanwhile, sections of the BJP still see the construction of a Ram mandir in Ayodhya as a project of national importance. The Congress, in contrast, cannot be faulted for promoting such exclusivist agendas. In the BJP's case, the assessment is not far off the mark. The Gujarat riots, the demolition of the Babri masjid, persistent attacks on Christians in Orissa are blemishes on its record that cannot be overlooked.

BJP needs to learn that in the coming general election, it needs to project itself as a secular party capable of taking not just the majority but also the minority together. As we are progressing as a world power, BJP needs to take care not just of the majority religious community but also minority together.

Congress needs to practice what it writes in its manifestos regarding the minorities, though one may say that it has a better record in representing minorities than the BJP. Congress need not appease Muslim for electoral purpose. The BJP needs to include more minorities in its party set up. Both the parties need to avoid playing communal politics. As India is moving towards globalization, both the parties need to realize that they cannot avoid taking majority and minority community together in a multicultural and democratic set up. The BJP needs to stop playing divisive politics and truly play like a party needs to be in a democratic and multicultural country like India.

Lessons For Both: Avoid The Practice Of Pandering Cultural Communities, Be It Minority Or Majority

Congress needs to avoid minority pandering

politics as much it is on BJP's divisive communal strategies. Critics point out that both of them are basically are two sides of the same coin- they both engage in vote bank politics, rather than fighting on substantive election platforms.

So that leaves us saddled with the communal parties of India. Coalitions seems to be the Indian way of providing checks and balances in a political climate devoid of any vision for social and economic progress. However, that cannot really be a long term solution to the problem. We do need substantive political platforms and not just ones based on communal lines. For example, we need political parties debating the best way of achieving socio-economic justice for all(Affirmative action) or ways to improve the laggard and in some cases nonexistent public education system or whether the current public distribution system is the best way to ensure food security, or how do we ensure equal access to credit or to consistent electric supply or just simply to effective governance. These are the problems that are plaguing the Indian economy and society and holding the progress back or keeping it in the hands of few.

Indians need to realize from both liberals and Marxists that there is a need for religion not to have a say in public sphere. India needs to take a cue from Norway which has severed the connection between Norway and the Church of Norway, making Norway a secular state. Religion causes much harm to minorities within minorities , women and children.

Operative Public Values As Enshrined In The Constitution: The Solution To Pseudo Secularism

Secularism is an operative public value as enshrined in the constitution. Scholars like Bhikhu Parekh argue that the operative public values as enshrined in the constitution should provide the basis for what is acceptable in a society. Now while the Indian constitution protects right to religion and culture, it equally in directive principle of state policy defends a uniform civil code. Bhargava in his article on secularism defends public character of religions in india.² But the fact is that this argument does

not realize that religion does much harm to women, minorities within minorities and liberal voices. Thus according to okin might not be in the best interest of girls and women of those religions, even if it benefits the men. Thus to okin those who make argument of rights of groups must take special care to look at inequalities within those groups. In law for example, feminists more frequently take on religion. According to some of the legal feminists, "religion perpetuates and reinforces women's subordination and religious freedom impedes reform"³. "Religion contributes to women's subordinate status, not only within religious communities hierarchies, but also in broader culture"⁴. "Religion encourages women to live with the status quo rather than destabilizing it by insisting on equality."⁵ Indeed the secular feminist tends to view religion itself as irredeemably patriarchal, and powerful ally of women's oppression throughout the ages. "Secular feminist is not unhappy to muzzle it and does not see it as doing a whole lot of good in anyone's life".⁶

"Many secular feminists are Marxists; and following Marx they are bound to take a negative view of religion and are unlikely even to give the free exercise of religion a high degree of respect."⁷

Here I would also like to point some Muslim feminists who proclaim the need for separation of religion and state. Moghadam somewhat answers this when she discusses her personal reasoning for secular feminism⁸. Her assertion is that as long a feminist movements are "focused on theological rather than socioeconomic and political questions, and so long as their point of reference is the Qur'an rather than universal standards, their impact will be limited at best."⁹ According to her , unlike the American feminists, "Islamic feminists are seeking revolutionary change to political and social institutions by questioning the exclusive right of clerics to interpret the Islamic texts and on Islamic jurisprudence."¹⁰ She even points out that it is particularly Islam which puts in danger feminist movements because it d Haideh Mohissi

as a Marxist feminist, is open about her dim view of religion, specially as a driving force for meaningful social change”¹¹. As far as Islamic in Islamic feminism is concerned Mohissi view is that “Not only is a religion based in gender hierarchies incompatible with “gender equity and . . . women's rights”¹², but it has no liberatory potential either”¹³. Hameed Shahidian is critical of attempts by Arab scholars such as Fatima Mernissi and Aziza Al-Hibri, and the Pakistan-born Rifat Hassan, attempts at reinterpretation of Islamic texts. According to him these attempts are futile given the strength of conservative, orthodox, traditional, and fundamentalist interpretations, laws, and institutions. He is especially critical of a growing trend in Middle East Women's Studies wherein authors justify Muslim women's veiling¹⁴, domesticity, moral behavior, and adherence to Islamic precepts as signs of individual choice and identity¹⁵. Thus as Nadje Al Ali in her work points out that “all women interviewed were united in their opposition to the establishment of an Islamic state, the implementation of the Shariah, the existing personal status law and an imposed dress code that is compulsory veiling. They also shared a sense that religion should not be conflated with politics”¹⁶. The majority of the activists concurred with the view that “the personal status law is a source of inequality and discrimination”¹⁷. “For many activists the aim to change the laws regulating marriage, divorce and child custody is the only aspect of their conceived goals that touches on women's private lives.”¹⁸”

Thus I disagree with Bhargava that religion is central to Indian Secularism¹⁹. This is because the debate between existence of religious personal laws in the public sphere and uniform civil code exists from the time of constituent assembly. KM Munshi argued that if personal laws of inheritance, succession etc were considered a part of religion, then equality to women which has been guaranteed in the fundamental rights could never be given. Mr Masani, Hansa Mehta and Amrit Kaur too expressed complete dissatisfaction with inclusion of UCC in DPSP. According to them one of the factors that kept India back from advancing to nationhood has

been existence of personal laws based on religion which keeps the nation divided into watertight compartments in many aspects of life. Nehru insisted in deference to the Sikhs and Muslims that the framing of a UCC be a goal set out in directive principle the implementation of whose provision was neither mandatory nor justifiable. The nationalist Muslims opposed even this. Nonetheless Article 44 of Directive Principle became a part of the constitution. The state thus shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a UCC throughout the territory of India. In contemporary India the compulsory civil code model has been suggested by several women groups in India who have been advocating for a common gender just code differentiating themselves, however clearly from the rightist agenda for a uniform civil code. Women groups like Saheli and Peoples union for democratic rights argue that plurality of laws work against the interest of women. And so the need would be for a compulsory civil code which would override personal laws. However cultural and other aspects of personal laws which do not offend against the provision of equality of constitution can be retained. Such a code can be brought into effect through separate acts of legislation, issue by issue, not necessarily in one sweep/go. This entire exercise is to be carried out in the context of understanding that the right of minorities to live in safety and dignity must be ensured by the state.

Further the special marriage act is the constitution's answer to hardships caused by the presence of separate personal law. This is infact the exit option which is provided by the Indian constitution itself.

The enactment of SMA 1954 had been one of the significant moves in post independent India not only to secularize but also to bring some kind of uniformity in family laws. “This act had been described as first step towards the attainment of the objective of UCC contemplated in article 44 of the constitution”²⁰. “The act provided for a civil marriage of two Indians, without the necessity of renouncing their respective religion.”²¹”

Further several feminist groups have advocated for the need of reverse optionality. Personal laws depend on the accident of birth and do not give the dissenting individual to

opt out. The concrete aspects of the present proposal are three central planks to contribute to democratize space of individuals-

- 1) Development and implementation of certain comprehensive packages regarding rights of women to marriage, adoption, property against domestic violence, to work, equal remuneration etc²².
- 2) These laws would be the birthright of every citizen and also apply to all naturalized citizens.
- 3) All citizens would have the right to opt for the personal laws of their community at any point of their lives. This option would be revocable at any time including the time of dispute. In case of difference in the options between the parties to a dispute, the secular law would prevail.

The right to choose provides for the democratic space. In order to attract women to choose the personal laws, the communities would have to take gender considerations into account whilst framing/ interpreting personal laws. This will trigger of the process of change within the communities to keep persons within the bounds of religious communities. This would also help stemming the rise in fundamentalisation and can be seen as a way out of the present impasse. This proposal is not opposed or in violation of minority rights.

Also, many Muslim groups such as Muslims for Secular democracy believe that all existing personal laws, applicable to people of different religious communities, discriminate against women and therefore urgently need change. In case of Muslims, the theological defense of triple talaq (instant divorce) and polygamy are unacceptable to the group. It is also a fact that in many Muslim countries family laws have been revised in respect of minimum age of marriage, polygamy, divorce, maintenance. For example, in most Muslim majority countries, including

those that claim to be run on Islamic principles, instant divorce is prohibited. Similarly, polygamy is either prohibited or is permissible under specific circumstances and only after permission has been obtained from the courts and the existing wife. Thus, there can be no 'Islamic' justification for these practices to be permitted in India: they must be prohibited. (Our objection is not to the concept of talaq divorce, per se, but to the practice among some Muslim sects in India of instant divorce

- According to these scholars it is simply not true that what goes in the name of 'Muslim Personal Law' in India are God-given laws that are immutable and all Muslims are obliged to follow them:
- In India itself, the Muslim Personal Law does not apply in Jammu and Kashmir (the only Muslim majority state in the country) or in Goa.
- As elaborated above, many Muslim countries have prohibited the practice of instant talaq, and polygamy is either totally prohibited or permitted only under special circumstances.
- Millions of Muslims living in secular societies throughout the world enter into marital relations according to the laws of the country they live in. Yet, they don't cease to be Muslims

Further Secularism denotes the insistence on a clear separation between religion and politics, between matters of faith and affairs of the state; by secularism is meant clear rejection of the idea of a theocratic state in the modern world. They have raised voice against conservative and regressive clergy within the Muslim community and other religious communities. According to these activists the board since its inception has remained mute witness to injustices against women.

Thus according to this approach reform within any personal law and gender justice would require state initiative. According to Javed Anand any kind of reform would require urgently state or judicial intervention. State intervention has been visible through various progressive

judgements delivered by High Court and Supreme Court of India. Internal reform according to him did not seem to be a very plausible option. Muslim women and the whole community cannot wait endlessly to bring about changes within their personal laws. Unlike the Christian community which brought about reform as a result of internal consensus brought about within the community, the same is not visible in near future within the Muslim community and hence the need for state intervention²³. According to Mr. Anand, reverse optionality proposed by several women groups also seemed to be not a very promising proposal. This is because the proposal would have to go through a ratification process by legislature at state and national level. Most probably it would require a majority of 2/3 rd in both the houses. And the proposal is unlikely to gain the majority required in the legislatures at national and state level²⁴.

Given the fact that internal reform and reverse optionality Therefore according to him activism on the part of all community members would be the answer to status quoist and regressive position of AIMPLB. Liberal Muslim activism as well as state intervention would be able to bring about changes within Muslim Personal Law²⁵.

Further many scholars within the Muslim community have insisted on the need for a common civil code for all citizens of the country. However it is to point out here that their conception of a common civil code is very different from the rightist notion of a UCC. Foremost among these have been scholars like Tahir Mahmood according to whom a common family code need not be an adaptation of the Hindu system, as some assume when passionately pleading for the adoption of a uniform law by the Indian Muslims but a synthesis of good in our diverse personal laws, an eclectic, not exotic, product, a picking and choosing from many systems so as to suit our ethos and to express the genius of our culture and at the same time be in accordance with the spirit of the times²⁶. A common civil code according to Mahmood would be entirely different from Hindu personal law and will be partly based on

the cream extracted from all systems of personal law prevailing in the country. It is wrong that Islamic conception will have no place in it. According to him contractual concept of marriage, its solemnization without ceremonies, facility of its dissolution in special circumstances, and women's property rights-all of which will be incorporated in the common civil code-are the ideals for which Islamic jurisprudence stands²⁷. According to M C Chagla expressed the desire that religion based personal laws had no place in a secular society like India and all personal laws of India including Islamic law should as early as possible be replaced by a secular and common law²⁸. Similarly Hamid Dalwai demanded an immediate implementation of the directive of article 44²⁹. The great Indian scholar of Islamic law Asaf A A Fyzee And Badruddin Tyabji had no objection in accepting a secular and common civil code applicable to all Indians. However all of them have been conscious of tremendous difficulties to be faced in the enactment and enforcement of such a code. They would therefore like enforcement of a UCC to be postponed for a fairly long period during which Muslims should be trained to accept change in traditional family law. Mr Anand and Muslim for Secular Democracy support any endeavor by the State to bring about a uniform civil code. Endeavor, in our view, can only mean encouragement of nationwide discussion and deliberation on the issue based on tentative draft(s) that could give citizens some idea of what a uniform civil code is going to look like³⁰.

India thus as seen in constituent assembly debates or debates between communities upholds a genuine secularism and not one which divides communities. The Indian constitution defends both the right of the individual and right of the communities to their culture. There is a need to balance the interplay between individual rights and cultural rights. Secular countries in the west while defending the right of the minorities, lay emphasis on defending the individual rights. India too needs to realize that while right of communities should be granted to religious minorities but it not be on the behest of individual rights. a secularism which takes care of individual rights would be the answer to pseudo secularism

as practiced by both the national parties.

Religion thus unlike bhargava needs to be intrinsically anti religious, with religion being given space in private aspect of individuals and communities as most of the discourse of liberals and Marxist would point out..If India needs to give equal rights to each of its citizens, both the major parties need to practice this. It might be difficult for both BJP and Congress but the fact is that our constitution lays the ground for a secularism which respects both majority and minorities.For example political theorist Ayelet Shachar pointsout that neither the state nor the community needs to be given full authority. For example property rights, adoption etc need to be taken care by the state and marriage etc by the community. But the fact is to defend individual rights state can interfere in matters of the community.

Thus the need is for india in order to solve the problems of a secular but multicultural state ,the need for deliberative democracy to evolve.Parties like BJP and Congress , and intellectuals to deliberate upon the role of religion in state and communities.They need to pick strands from different theoretical perspective and debate thereupon. Anne Phillips says "The need is for us to consider equitable treatment of minority and majority culture alongside other considerations of equity,that is between men and women."³¹" She cautions "against elevating cultural membership to status of primary good as it potentially trumps all other considerations"³². Thus the respect for other cultures is always premised on first respecting the individual citizen - which is not abstract but a gendered, differentiated citizenship within which multiple differences and diverse perspective of previously excluded other might be recognized, affirmed and represented.

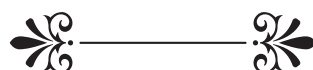
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1. This article is a view of a political researcher on secularism in india. It is not meant to be malicious against any political party.
2. Rajeev Bhargava, "Reimagining Secularism, Respect, Domination and

Principled Distance", Economic and Political Weekly, December 14,2013.

3. See Martha Nussbaum Women and Human Development'; Also see Mary Becker, 'The Politics of Women's Wrongs and the Bill of Rights : A Bicentennial Perspective', The University of Chicago Law review 59 1992, 453-517.
4. Martha Nussbaum ,'Women and Human Development' p 141
5. ibid
6. ibid
7. ibid
8. I am mentioning here along with liberal feminist some of the Islamic feminist because they too share similar concerns of individual rights , human rights and secularism with there liberal counter parts.
9. Valntine Moghadam,, 'Islamic Feminism and Its Discontents: Toward a Resolution of the Debate'. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, 27 (4), 1141-1165.at 1159.
10. ibid
11. Haideh Moghissi, Feminism and Islamic Fundamentalism: the Limits of Postmodern Analysis, London, Zed Books,1999, p 146
12. ibid
13. ibid pp 40-42; She criticizes postmodernists on several grounds. They ignore "the role of Islamic legal institutions and practices in maintaining ...the ...patriarchal order which circumscribes women's lives in Muslim societies;" they paint "an enviably rosy picture of women's lives in Islamic societies" that does not correspond to reality; "in the name of validating women's 'self-perceptions' and 'hearing women's own voices,' only the voices of particular groups of women are heard ...[and] broadcast as the

- unanimous expression of women in Islamic societies”; and, most importantly, they have abandoned “these secular democratic vision of feminism, sacrificing its hard-won achievements at the feet of an 'Islamic' vision of change” by attempting “to reshape and soften their ideas to fit the ideals of an elusive 'Muslim feminism’” instead of “exposing its limits.
14. Egyptian feminist openly wrote against the practice of female circumcision. Finally Egypt has banned the practice of circumcision.
 15. See: Hameed Shahidian, 'The Iranian Left and 'The Woman Question in the Revolution of 1978-79.' International Journal of Middle East Studies, vol. 26: 223-247, 1994; Also see Hameed Shahidian, 'Feminism in Iran: In Search of What?', Zanan, no. 40: 32-38, 1998
 16. See Nadjé Al Ali, *Secularism, Gender and the State in The Middle East The Egyptian Women's Movement*, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2000. pp154-155.
 17. Ibid ; In Egypt this also holds true for the debate around the Nationality or Citizenship Law, which is likewise considered to be discriminatory and therefore widely rejected in its current form. The law does not grant Egyptian women married to their children, while Egyptian men are granted this right. This is seen as the ultimate example of the confining of women to second class citizenship and like the personal status law, many activists argue, the nationality law is unconstitutional and in conflict with Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)
 18. *ibid.*
 19. Bhargava, *ar.cit*, p 79.
 20. Flavia Agnes ,p 98
 21. *ibid.*
 22. Amrita Chacchi, ' Civil Codes and Personal Laws: Reversing the Option Working Group on Women's Rights' ,pp20-24., *Women Against Fundamentalism* ,<http://waf.gn.apc.org/>.
 23. Interview with Mr. Javed Anand of Muslim for Secular Democracy in a telephonic interview taken by me on 18th June 2007.
 24. Mr Javed Anand , telephonic interview, 18 June 2007
 25. On being asked about four new board formation, Mr. Anand replied the more they splinter, much better it would be for Muslim community. I also conclude that in turn it would add to democratization process within the Muslim community.
 26. Tahir Mahmood,(ed) *Islamic law in Modern India*,New Delhi, 1972.p.1
 27. Tahir Mahmood , 'Progressive Codification of Muslim Personal Law', in Tahir Mahmood(ed)) *Islamic law in Modern India*,New Delhi, 1972.p.96.
 28. M.C. Chagla , 'Plea for a Uniform Civil Code', *Weekly Round Table*, 25 March, 1968. p.7.
 29. Hamid Dalwai, *Vide*, letter in the *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, 1 November, 1970.
 30. Pointed out by Mr. Javed Anand during a telephonic interview.
 31. Anne Phillips , 'Why Worry About Multiculturalism', *Dissent*, 1997, pp57-63 at 63
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Homohop: A Study of Sexuality and Music

Ved Prakash

Abstract—The genre of African-American Hip Hop has been captivated with so called 'normative masculine behaviour' to such an extent that it was not shocking to cognise the disappearance of Hip Hop which is sung and performed by rappers with "non-normative gender-sexual orientations." It was believed that one had to be a "macho" with innumerable girls around him to be a "successful male" rapper so that there won't be any apprehension concerning the 'hetero-normative' sexual predilection of the rapper as many rap artists believe that one with alternative sexual orientation cannot be acknowledged in the Hip Hop industry because this genre of music doesn't belong to 'emasculate' men. For instance, Snoop Dogg, a well known rapper remarked in *The Guardian* that "I don't know if 'gays' will ever be accepted because rap is so masculine." Hip Hop's golden era during 1980s began with gangsta rappers such as Ice T from New Jersey and N.W.A (Niggaz Wit Attitudes) from Compton, California. These groups represent an aggressive form of rap through their songs which would be full of physical and visual violence perhaps that is the reason most of the rappers portray an essentially hyper masculine picture of themselves. Even though Rap started in late 1960s in Bronx in America, interestingly till 1990s there was not any iconic rapper who could represent the LGBT community in America. This paper will focus on the etymology of Queer Hip Hop in America and argue how this has become a significant sub-genre of 'mainstream' hip hop. This paper will also look at the songs and lyrics of selected male and female LGBT rappers such as Tori Fixx, Tim'm West, Azealia Banks and Frank Ocean to analyse if there is a distinction with regard to how they address the issues of identity and queer issues? This paper will also attempt to discover why Homohop is resented and how 'hetero-mainstream' rappers respond to this art? Queer Hip Hop is not just a form of art rather it has become a site of struggle and revolution and this revolution needs to be studied, understood and performed.

Keywords : African-American music, Queer hiphop, Sexuality.

Music cannot be looked at in isolation as it has always been an integral component of a society. Music is just not about the sound, beats or lyrics but in fact it delineates the culture and subsistence of a society. One can essentially contest that music works as a mirror of a culture. If one scrutinizes the whole contextual setting of music within the historical and socio-political context of African-Americans then it would not be an exaggeration in claiming the fact that music for them has been much more than just music. Music rendered a sense of space, tolerance and credence for African-Americans in a world where the colour black was never considered beautiful in comparison to white. Music has served as an apparatus of both resistance and power to blacks.

S. H. Fernando Jr. in his preface to *The New Beats: Exploring the music, culture, and attitudes of hip-hop* substantiates that music portrays an innermost picture of a culture and it is true about

all cultures of the world. Fernando Jr. writes: "Some people consider music as purely entertainment, when, in fact, it is one of the most intimate reflections of a culture. Like other modes of artistic expression, music also offers a direct insight into the soul...¹ "

Hip Hop has become a global phenomenon in the present scenario. In its voyage from being an art of a minority faction to an art of the mass, Hip Hop has evolved in the troubled terrain of politics, culture and race. Hip Hop is a youth movement which evolved in the Bronx, New York. It is claimed that the term Hip Hop became renowned after the release of Sugar Hill Gang's 'Rapper's Delight' in 1979. When 'Rapper's Delight' got released it gave a newfangled recognition to the phenomenon of Hip Hop. People started accepting Hip Hop both overtly and covertly. However, there are Hip Hop critics who gestate that Rap which is a foremost constituent of Hip Hop has led to a cultural

revolution but this revolution represents culture in a very negative way. On the contrary, for many Hip Hop artists like Run D.M.C, Public Enemy, N.W.A etc. rap has become a site of voicing the marginalised and unheard voice which doesn't get attention.

Even though Hip Hop began in 1960s in America, It wasn't perceived as a legitimate form of music for a long time as Hip Hop was associated with marginalised black people who were in search of their identity. Bronx, the place Hip Hop originated from was always considered a place of uneducated and unruly blacks by the mainstream America. A lot of people would avoid going to Bronx. Moreover, there was a popular assumption that the art of rap is only violent, misogynist and sexist as most of the black youths tend to indulge in gang violence and many other grievous crimes in ghettos at an early age and perhaps this is the reason when Hip Hop emerged out of the not so developed and respectable streets of America many were apprehensive regarding the nature of Hip Hop. Some considered it to be an art of low stature which should not be allowed any space to exist or flourish as it might influence the landscape of music in a negative way. Here I would like to make a clarification regarding Hip Hop being violent. There are songs by Snoop Dog, Lil Wayne, Jay Z and Ice T which fall within the framework of misogyny but at the same times there are songs like '*Fight the Power*' by Public Enemy and '*Ghetto Music*' by KRS-One which highlight the ghetto reality and black struggle.

However, after the years of repression and exploitation of the black body by the Whites, African Americans had a desire to construct a dignified identity for them. Post The Civil Rights Movement, African American youths got various forms to express their 'self' in order to establish their 'identity' and music became one such form which facilitated blacks in performing their individuality and formulating their language. Music functioned as a solitary source of strength and power for blacks at a time when not only black voice but black psyche too was suppressed but more than strength and power music furnished a cognisance of collectiveness and

integrity within blacks. It connected the veins of African-Americans regardless of their class, colour, religion and social prominence. But unfortunately sexuality became a primary site of difference when it came to Hip Hop music. One had to be a hard core masculine heterosexual to be a rapper as Hip Hop was not meant for musicians or artists who were feminine or non-hetero normative. If one looks at the journey of Hip Hop then one would realise that from Gangsta Rap to Contemporary Rap, Hip Hop has always been very masculine. What is the reason that sexuality has always been given so much of importance in our society? And why sexuality becomes central to someone's existence?

Michel Foucault² in *The History of Sexuality* argues the fact that the whole institution of sexuality has been enormously rigid as the discourse of sexuality is confined within the structural boundaries of marriage. In most of the societies the foundation of marriage is based on the hetero-normative pattern of social behaviour. Foucault coins the term 'repressive hypothesis' which denotes that after the rise of the bourgeoisie, sex became a private and political affair. Foucault suggests that according to 'repressive hypothesis' power is exercised to repress any form of free discussion on sex. The point which needs to be noticed here is that Hip Hop too is political and it is a form of music which has always been attentive and conscious about its hyper masculine image which was crafted very carefully over the period of time by the so called 'masculine' rappers. Hip Hop too repressed and avoided any free discussion on Queer Hip Hop. The genre of Hip Hop has been frightened to death by gay hip hop and artists. Power is exercised by hetero rappers to repress songs and artists who share an affiliation with homo hip hop or LGBT Hip Hop perhaps this is the reason that the gangsta rapper The Game claims in one of his interviews that there are many closet rappers in the hip hop industry in America but they are afraid to come out as Hip Hop is like a performance which supposedly can only be performed by "macho rappers". Furthermore, there is this fear that if anyone finds out regarding a rapper being non-hetero normative then Hip Hop Community might

refuse to acknowledge the presence of that particular rapper.

LGBT Hip Hop emerged in 1990s as an underground movement primarily in California. LGBT Hip Hop is also known by names such as Homo Hop or Queer Hip Hop. Tim'm West of Deep Dickollective, a Queer Hip Hop group from California, coined the term 'Homohop'. He argues that the term was invented to promote LGBT artists and a different form of music. Soon Queer Hip Hop became a sub-genre of mainstream Hip Hop. Queer Hip Hop had the same beats and musical instruments which any Hip Hop group would use but the only point of divergence was that Homohop placed the question of 'marginalised and suppressed identity' of LGBT groups at the very centre of the production of this sub-genre. LGBT Hip Hop became a site of mobilising queer artists. From 2001 to 2007 The Peace OUT World Homo Hop Festival, an annual event of Hip Hop music and culture by LGBT people strengthened the Homohop Movement. Subsequently, a new wave of LGBT Hip Hop artist emerged in 2012 when Azealia Amanda Banks, a rapper from Harlem and Frank Ocean from New Orleans revealed their sexual orientation which further inspired the LGBT people to be proud of their existence and sexual preference. Moreover, the release of the LGBT pro-songs by mainstream "heterosexual" artists such as Murs and Macklemore & Ryan Lewis empowered and revolutionised Homohop movement.

This paper will focus on the etymology of Queer Hip Hop in America and see if Queer Hip Hop is any different in comparison to 'mainstream' Hip Hop. This paper will also look at 'sexuality' and queer issues through the songs and lyrics of LGBT rappers such as Tori Fixx and Tim'm West. This paper will also attempt to discover why Homohop is resented and how 'hetero-mainstream' rappers respond to this art? Queer Hip Hop is not just a form of art rather it has become a site of struggle and revolution and this revolution needs to be studied, understood and performed.

First to understand why Hip Hop is so

ridiculously obsessed with everything which is "manly" goes back to 1960s-70s when more or less everybody in the Bronx belonged to gangs. There were more youths in gangs than out of gangs. Every street belonged to some squad or the other. There were gangs such as the Black Spades, the War Pigs, Bronx Aliens and so on. Many youths would join gangs because it would give them a sense of power and recognition. Gangs and Hip Hop share a very close association with each other. Many of these gangs would carve out a space for themselves through live performances in ghettos. The sound of gigantic boom boxes would help in spreading the substance of dominion and power across streets. Schoolly D, Boogie Down Productions, N.W.A and Ice T are considered to be the groundbreaker of Gangsta rap which glorified masculinity. African-American writer, bell hooks has a huge problem with black men performing their masculinity while singling, walking or even talking. This execution of manhood never stops.

bell hooks in her book *The Will to Change: Men Masculinity and Love* explores the milieu of masculinity and according to her it is not the blunder of men to be obsessed with manhood but rather it is patriarchy which conditions them since their childhood that violence and anger are the signs which make someone a man. bell hooks writes:

There is only one emotion that patriarchy values when expressed by men; that emotion is anger. Real men get mad. And their mad-ness, No matter how violent or violating, is deemed natural- a positive expression of patriarchal masculinity.³

I would like to state that black male body has always been stereotyped since the time of slave trade. For instance, during 19th century the blackface minstrel shows represented a negative image of blacks by portraying them ignorant, naive, violent, and irresponsible and so on. Most of the rappers today do not realise that they are further stereotyping their bodies through violent and misogynist songs which represent an

extremely masculine image of themselves. Byron Hurt made a documentary in 2006 called “Hip Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes” which initiated a whole new discussion in the hip hop world about manhood and sexism. This documentary highlights how most of the rappers stay in a box in which one has to be strong, tough, affluent and dominating else there is always a fear of being called soft, weak, chump or a faggot and nobody wants to be addressed by any of these terms. The documentary features interviews about masculinity with rappers such as Fat Joe, Chuck D, along with hip hop mogul Russell Simmons and others. One rapper in the documentary confessed: “before hip hop (black) man was seen as docile but when hip hop came around it brought masculinity back into the game and some of it is a bit misguided.” Byron Hurt highlights that most of the rappers have two sides to their self. First, what they essentially are and second, how they want them to be seen or projected as. When it comes to act masculine many rappers get trapped in the predicament of being and becoming.

Snoop Dogg, a well known rapper remarked in *The Guardian* that “I don't know if 'gays' will ever be accepted because rap is so masculine⁴.” Even though Rap started in late 1960s in America, interestingly till 1990s there was not any iconic rapper who could represent the LGBT community in America. Tupac Shakur, a well known rapper who was shot in 1996 in a gang violence, treated the LGBT community in a very degradable manner through his songs. The lyrics of his song “All Out” clearly gives a glimpse about how people with alternative sexual orientation were perceived by gangsta rappers. Tupac in this song says-

we goin all out
 We goin all out
 We goin all out, watch ya motherfuckin
 mouth niggaz
 That's right fuck these fag niggaz
 Do it do it do it.⁵

Eminem too has been accused of homophobia by Gay Lesbian Association Against Defamation (GLAAD) for his 2000 album *The Marshall*

Mathers LP. In this album the lyrics of most of his songs are soaked with violence and full of damaging and condescending comments about many groups and social factions including lesbians and gays. The song “*Marshall Mathers*” represents a boisterous imagery. The song goes like-

*I'm anti-Backstreet and Ricky Martin
 With instincts to kill N'Sync, don't get me
 started
 These fuckin brats can't sing and Britney's
 garbage
 What's this bitch retarded?...
 New Kids on the block sucked a lot of dick
 Boy/girl groups make me sick
 And I can't wait till I catch all you faggot in
 public.
 Think I was put here to annoy the world
 Plus I was put here to put fear in faggots
 who spray Faygo root beer
 And call themselves clowns cause they look
 queer
 Faggot2dope and silent gay
 Claimin Detroit, when you all live twenty
 miles away
 And I don't wrestle and I will knock you
 fucking faggots⁶*

The song goes on and on stating queer as repulsive. I believe somewhere production houses who produce the videos are also to be blamed as they play a very conscious role with regard to what should be consumed by the youth or people at large. These selective bodies control the product and they make sure that mass media must notice the product. Weitzer and Kubrinin in their essay

“Misogyny in Rap Music: A Content Analysis of Prevalence and Meanings” argue that
Rap artists are also influenced by pressures from elites in the music industry. To maximize sales, record industry moguls encourage provocative, edgy lyrics. Producers not only encourage artists to become “hardcore” but also reject or marginalize artists who go against the grain. As a result of such practices, a

*directly proportional relationship has developed between rap music's explicitness and the sale of its records. In response to corporate pressure, many rappers abandon political and social message and focus instead on material wealth and sexual exploits.*⁷

Moreover, some rappers believe that Hip Hop should be identified as one universal genre. Multiple categories such as; Gangsta Hip Hop, Conscious Hip Hop or Queer Hip Hop more than helping Hip Hop is actually harming it. The moment one mentions 'Queer hip hop' the entire perspective changes. In this case scenario music gets defined not by the artist but by his or her sexual orientation by virtue of it pertaining to the category of gay Hip Hop. There are still several rappers who are afraid that the moment they will reveal their sexuality it might sabotage their music and their existence consciously or unconsciously.

For instance, one of the legends of hip hop Mister Cee was arrested in 2011 for receiving oral sex in his car from a man. After this incident the entire media in America started talking about his sexuality. Whether is he a gay or not? He was asked continuously about his sexual orientation. Mr. Cee gave multiple explanations by stating he is straight. I wonder the circumstances if he had confessed that he was gay then how would the media, rap lovers and Cee's fans have reacted? Would people have started hating and disliking his music just because he was not a hyper masculine Hip Hop artist? Well these are the questions which are looking for an answer but answers are not easy to find.

However when Frank Ocean came out of the closet in 2012 a lot had changed. People had become much more tolerant towards rappers with alternative sexual orientations. The New York Times writes that

When Frank Ocean a rising star in the R&B world, announced that his first true love had been a man, he seemed to be taking a giant risk with his career...No

*other mainstream R&B artists have acknowledged having homosexual relationships. For decades even the rumour of homosexuality had ruined artists in hip hop circle.*⁸

Mark Anthony Neal, a professor of African-American studies at the Duke University opines that things were different ten or fifteen years ago. At that time Frank Ocean could never have come out. Now, many big names from the hip hop industry such as Jay Z, Mr. Simmons, the founder and former owner of the Def Jam Label and Joie Manda, the president of Island Def Jam are supporting Frank Ocean. Joie Manda said that Mr. Ocean broke down an old wall that should never have been built.

On the other hand, Deep Dickollective, a black Queer Hip Hop group from California was making pro- LGBT songs. This group was formed in early 2000 by Tim'm T West, Juba Kalamka and Phillip Goff. These three came together and started jamming on Stanford campus and soon they came up with 20 songs and 13 out of these became a part of their debut recording named 'BourgieBohoPostPomoAfroHomo'. The track "Straight Trippin" by Deep Dickollective (D/DC) completely disregards any idea which might suggest that gay rappers lack necessary skills to be in the hip hop world.

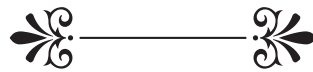
Furthermore, Tori Fixx is one of the first openly gay Hip Hop artists. In the mid 90s Tori Fixx dj-ed for various parties and gatherings and soon he became a part of many illustrious LGBT groups. In 2005 he appeared in a documentary titled 'Pic Up the Mic'⁹. This documentary primarily highlights the issues of LGBT in Hip Hop. Later on Tori also became a part of the "Homo Revolution Tour" in 2007. His album 'Code Red' talks about the "LGBT issues" and 'hot boys'. This album was perceived well and through World Wide Web a lot more people were talking about it. Another thing which has been a sheer blessing for young LGBT artists is that through technology and internet it has become easier to reach out a wider audience without shelling out a lot.

Finally I would like to say that there are so many aspects to Gay hip hop and it is not possible to cover them all in one paper. Nonetheless, as far as the current scenario is concerned, more and more people are accepting queer hip hop and this genre is getting stronger. Finally I would like to conclude the paper with the lyrics of a song 'Same love' by Macklemore and Ryan Lewis.

*“When I was in 3rd grade
I thought that I was gay
Cause I could draw...
And I kept my room straight...
Call each other faggots
Behind the keys of a message board
A word rooted in hate
Yet our genre still ignores it...
No law's gonna change us
We have to change us
Whatever god you believe in
We all come from the same one
Strip away the fear, underneath, it's all
the same love
About time that we raised up.”¹⁰”*

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Shelters In Ancient Literatures And Modern Urban Housing

Dr Reena Kumari

***Abstract-**Providing housing to all is a major challenge for the policy makers in modern India. A big chunk of the population does not have good housing. This is not only the case that applies to rural India but also the urban centres and metropolis. Poor income and nearly 32 percent of the people living below the poverty line it appears to be a daunting task for the policy makers indeed. The mushrooming of slums in the urban centres due to migration of population from the rural India speaks of the magnitude of the problem. Low cost housing to all seems to be a distant dream. This paper documents and provides insight into how housing was developed and cities were built in India in the past. Most of the cities were developed along the river and the housing had definite impacts of climatic conditions across the regions. Further, cities happened to be the hub of the settlements and trade and there happened to be a graded hierarchy between villages, towns and royal cities. The paper is content analysis, entirely based on the published literature.*

Keywords: Shelters, Ancient Literature, Urban Housing

The history of shelter is very old and it probably coincides with the evolution of the modern human. The earliest human had diversified his activities with increasing brain size, and therefore, felt the requirement for shelter to live. One of the earliest humans who developed the ability to live was the Homo habilis and he existed roughly 1.7 million years ago. This early man is considered the direct ancestor of modern humans. The larger brain size enabled him to use stone tools for hunting, cutting plants and slicing scavenged meat. After this type, evolved the Homo erectus man. This was an erect man and lived between 1.7 to 1 million years ago. During this stage he made the technological advancement from crude stone tools to hand axes. He began to roam more extensively, engaged in collective hunting and learned how to use fire. Probably from here he migrated out of Africa and started peopling the Earth. The Homo erectus made most of the sounds we do with the larynx because in collective hunting use of sound was probably most needed for cooperation. Between 1 million to 2 lakh years ago, the Homo erectus evolved into Homo sapiens and then came the Neanderthal man roughly 1 lakh years ago. He was a skilled tool maker and crafty hunter.

The Neanderthal man was the first to build

shelters out of tree branches and dwelled in caves. He lived in the prehistoric age called the Palaeolithic. The Palaeolithic man lead a savage life, using stone weapons for hunting. There was no family life and people lived in caves like the one at Sanghao (north-west Pakistan), or in Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh) and wandered in jungles. They also lived in rock shelters, which have been frequently discovered in Bhimbetka, in Madhya Pradesh, and in other parts of India. In the earliest stage, food was obtained by hunting animals and gathering edible plants and tubers. Settlements tended to be close to scrub jungles and watering places, for e.g., at Hungsi. A few rock paintings at Bhimbetka, discovered alongside other later paintings, are thought to be of this period and reflect a connection between success in hunting and fertility. People of the earth entered a new stage of culture when, instead of depending entirely on the resources of nature for survival, they started producing their own food by cultivating cereals like barley, wheat and rice and started domesticating some species of animals. The beginning of domestication is quite significant in the sense that men did it both for supplies of milk and meat as well as for harnessing labour for various purposes. Domestication of plants and animals led to the emergence of village communities based on sedentary life, the beginning of agriculture

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technology and greater control over nature by exploitation of natural resources. The transition from hunting to food gathering to food production also meant manipulating nature. Through human intervention, some plants were made to grow intensively, while others were excluded. Now people were bound to stay at a particular place and wait for the plan to grow to reap the harvest. This probably led humans to live in shelters.

Shelter, other than caves, thus began to be made in the agriculturally fertile area, normally bereft of rocky mountains. This period is known in history as the Neolithic age characterised by pit-dwellings with well-made floors smeared with red-ochre as well as dwellings in the open. Excavations at Chirand, Chechar, Senuwar and Taradib, etc. throw significant light on the life pattern of the Neolithic people of this region. At Senuwar in Rohtas District, Neolithic farmers cultivated rice, barley, field pea, lentil and some millet. The Neolithic levels at Chirand in Saran District situated on the left bank of the Ganges revealed the structural remains of mud floors.

Harappan Housing

One of the earliest evidences of housing in a planned way is of the Harappan civilization, also well known as the Indus valley civilisation. It is from this time that we start distinguishing between a village and a town as this civilization is distinguished by its system of town planning. But the proportion of people living in towns was very less. At present it is said that almost seventy five percent of the Indian population lives in rural area and this figure was eighty five percent just after independence. On this basis we may presume that the proportion of people living in villages was much more than this and the average man in ancient India was a countryman. Six Harappan sites which may be regarded as cities are Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Chanhudaro, Lothal, Kalibangan and Banawali. Of these, Harappa and Mohenjodaro are the most important from the point of view of town planning. The general layout of these two cities seems to have been similar. Each city had its own citadel or acropolis to the west, fortified by crenelated walls. At

Harappa, the citadel was roughly a parallelogram, 460 yards in length from north to south and 215 yards from east to west. It was 45–50 feet high. At both the places, the citadel was based on a mound. The citadel was possibly occupied by members of the ruling class. Below the citadel in each city lay a lower town containing brick houses which were inhabited by common people. The remarkable thing about the arrangement of the houses is that they followed the grid system. This is true of almost all Indus settlements regardless of size. The towns, in each case, were at least a square mile in area. The main streets, some as much as 30 feet wide, were laid out on a grid plan. They were quite straight and intersected each other at right angles, thus, dividing the city in large rectangular blocks. This rectangular town planning was a unique feature of the two cities and was not known in Mesopotamia or Egypt.

In neither of the great cities has any stone building been found. Standardised burnt brick of good quality was the usual building material for houses. The average size of brick used for houses was 7 x 15 x 30 cm. but for the construction of fortification walls the size of the brick was of, bigger size viz. 10x20 x40 cm. Both sizes of bricks have identical proportions, 1:2:4, that the width is double the thickness and the length four times the thickness. The doors, windows were made of wood and mates. The floors of houses were generally hard-packed earth that was often plastered. Bathing areas and drains were made with baked bricks or stone. Some rooms were paved with bricks or fired terracotta cakes. Doorways and windows rarely opened out into the main street, but faced side lanes. Only in Lothal, doors and windows opened in the main street. The view into the house was blocked by a wall or a room around the front door. This was done to keep private the activities in the central courtyard from the view of passerby. Many houses were at least two storied and some scholars think that some of the houses may have been three storied. Hearths were commonly found in the rooms and almost every house had a bathroom, and in some cases there is an evidence of bathrooms on the first floor. The doors

were made with wooden frames and a brick socket set in the threshold served as door pivot. Adjacent houses were separated by a narrow space of "no man's land". Almost all big houses had a well within their courtyard. Deep grooves on the bricks at the top edge of the well show that ropes were used to draw the water up, probably with leather or wooden buckets.

The houses of varying sizes, often of two or more stories, consisted of rooms constructed round a rectangular courtyard. Average size of the ground floor of a house was 30 square feet. These were often based on much the same plan. The parallel rows of two-room cottages unearthed at Mohenjodaro and Harappa were perhaps used by the poorer sections of society and anticipated the „coolie“ lines of modern Indian towns. From this, may be inferred, class differences in Harappan society.

The drainage system of Mohenjodaro was very impressive. In almost all cities, every big or small house had its own courtyard and bathroom. In Kalibangan, many houses had their own wells. Water flowed from the house to the streets, where there were drains. Sometimes, these drains were covered with bricks and sometimes with stone slabs. The street drains were equipped with manholes. The remains of drains have also been found at Banwali. The drainage system of Harappa is almost unique which indicates that the Harappans paid a great deal of attention to health and cleanliness.

One of the largest buildings discovered so far and the most important public place at Mohenjodaro is the Great Bath, comprising a tank which is made of beautiful brick. It measures 11.88x7.1 m. and is 2.43 m. deep. At the north and south ends of the Great Bath, brick steps led to the bottom of the tank, which could be emptied by a drain. It is suggested that the Great Bath was meant for some elaborate ritual of vital importance for the people.

To the west of the Great Bath, there is a large granary, originally 150 feet long and 75 feet wide. This was divided into storage blocks of 50 × 20 feet each. It was used for storing corn. In the

citadel at Harappa, we find as many as six granaries, each measuring 15.23 m. × 6.09 m. In an age when money was not in use, granaries must have reflected the solvency of the administrative organisation. Chanhudaro is another important city which is about 130 km. south of Mohenjodaro in Sindh. It does not have a citadel like the other two cities, but there is evidence of the use of drains and baked brick houses. Kalibangan is in the district of Ganganagar in Rajasthan. It has a citadel and a lower town. Brick platforms have been found at several places. Lothal is at the head of the Gulf of Cambay in Gujarat. Excavations have revealed a great artificial platform with streets and houses of regular plan. In addition to the urban settlement, a brick dockyard connected with the Gulf of Cambay by channel has also been discovered here. Sutkangendor consisted of a formidable citadel and a lower fortified settlement. It was a coastal city and people traded with Babylonia from here. Other Harappan coastal towns include Sotka Koh, Surkotada and Balakot.

Vedic Housing

Historians believe that with the decline of the great Harappan civilization the city culture also underwent decline and there were no towns in existence for centuries. The Aryans living in the age of the Vedas were leading more of a semi nomadic lifestyle with mixed pastoral and agricultural economy, in which cattle-rearing played an important role. Cattle formed their most-valued possessions and chief form of their wealth. Though cattle-breeding seems to have been the chief occupation of early Aryans, they also practised agriculture.

The extent of the geographical knowledge of the Aryans at the time of the Rigveda can be ascertained by reference in the hymns to various rivers. From this it would appear that the early Aryans lived in the geographical area covered by eastern Afghanistan, Punjab and fringes of Western U.P. In the text, the western tributaries of the Indus, the Gomati (modern Gomal), the Krumu (modern Kurram), and the Kubha (modern Kabul) are mentioned. The Suvastu (Swat) is the most important river mentioned to

the north of Kabul. But the main focus of the Rigvedic culture seems to have been the Punjab and Delhi region. Here, the most frequently mentioned rivers are the Sindhu, the Saraswati, now lost in the Rajasthan sands, the area probably represented now by the Ghagghar river, and the five streams which collectively gave their name to the Punjab. These five rivers are Shutudri (Sutluj), Vipas (Beas), Parushni (Ravi), Asikni (Chenab) and Vitasta (Jhelum). The Sindhu, identical with the Indus, is the river par excellence of the Aryans and it is repeatedly mentioned. The geographical knowledge of the early Aryans did not extend beyond the Yamuna, which is thrice mentioned in the Rigveda. Ganga is mentioned only once in a late hymn. Thus, the focus of the Aryan culture during Rigvedic times was between the region of Yamuna and Sutluj and along the upper course of the river Saraswati. The Later Vedic Literatures show that the Aryans, during the later Vedic period pressed further eastwards and expanded from Punjab over the whole of Western U.P., covered by the Ganga-Yamuna drab. They set up kingdoms in Kosala, to the east of the Doab and in Kasi the region of Varanasi. Towards the end of the later Vedic period, around 600 B.C., the Vedic people spread from the doab further east to Kosala in eastern U.P. and Videha in Northern Bihar. By the time Gautama Buddha a number of reference to towns such as Kaushambi, Champa, Rajgriha, Sravasti, Kasi appear. Throughout these regions the Aryans lived in thatched roof houses.

Basing his work on India's long tradition of ritual literature a French scholar, Louis Renou (1896-1966), published his article on "La Maison Vedique" in 1939. Louis Renou has tried to visualize the kind of houses that existed during vedic period on the basis of descriptions given in the Vedic texts. Renou tries to understand the practical aspects of houses in the Vedic period in the texts on ritual like Grihasutras which has passing reference to the rites that accompany house construction. From these he learns about materials - bamboo, thatch, straw mats, rope and their binding together. He then links up the description given in a further set of texts that deal with the staging of sacrifice and ritual

(Shrautasutras), where sheds and huts used in ritual performance are described. In the Shrautasutras it is also mentioned that the site of the house should be of such a nature as to allow water flowing from all directions toward the center to form an ambulatory path pradakshina around the bedroom and the water should drain without noise toward the east.

Renou also tries to analyse few mantras to see if there is some trace of the house and its organization. He is able to find out technical terms that have been used as metaphors in one passage of a funerary hymn. In the mantra it is prayed that the earth allows a thousand pillars to be raised in the cavity where the dead repose, so that her weight will not crush those who take refuge in her breast.

Louis Renou on the basis of Vedic literatures explains that the kitchen used to be a place where the water drains i.e., on the east side of the house, north of the bedroom. The general siting of the house is to be chosen such that the draining of water should be the same everywhere and no side should be lower or higher than any other. He also mentions that the construction of the house itself begins first by digging a certain number of holes. These post-holes are to have a depth equal to the distance from the ankle to knee so that the water drains well from here. Grihasutra also instructs that the pillar to the south side of the door be first erected, then that to the north. These posts that support the door on the north and south and their post-holes are referred dvar or main entrance to the house. It is also mentioned that the door can be to the east, north, or south, meaning thereby that a door to the west is not recommended. In the foundation posts, bamboo sleepers are laid so as to connect posts to one another and to help support the roof. Grihasutra also recommends that the rooms should be arranged in the spaces between the beams. The roofing system consists of nine roofs. The central roof, which rests on the central post, is secured first and then the two side roofs to the east and west. Then comes the turn of the three units to the south, and finally three to the north. The edges of the roofs to the north are inserted under those at the center so that the front

edges of the southern roofs would be slightly above the others. Thus according to the Vedic texts, the walls are woven mats and stones or bricks were not used as opposed to the earlier Harappan civilization houses.

Housing During The Mauryan Period

Later descriptions in the historical literatures from the Post Vedic period we get reference to houses constructed on both sides of the broad roads and were made with bricks. The larger houses used to have central courtyards. The Arthashastra of Kautilya recommends for the construction of planned city. According to A.L.Basham, it advises for a „square gridiron plan? divided into wards or sectors by six main roads – three north to south roads and three east to west roads. The main temple is to be located in the centre. Different category of people have been recommended to be located in separate sectors. The houses of the richer section of society were bigger in size than that of the poor people. Kautilya also recommends that fort should be surrounded by a high wall followed by deep gorge. Such conception of Kautilya is evident in Pataliputra (in modern Patna) which was the capital of the Mauryan dynasty. Strabo, a Greek traveler, has given similar description of the city of Pataliputra in his account.

The archeological evidence suggest that in the pre - Mauryan Period, Indian architects worked in wood but during the Mauryan period they started experimenting with rock-cut architecture. At present we are not in a position to say definitely whether this change in medium was caused by the Indian architects and sculptures independently or under the influence of the Greek and other counterparts who by this time had become adapted to at that medium. The evidences available to us, however, seems to favour the second alternative. The remains of the palace at Pataliputra (modern Patna) which were discovered first in 1914 -15 and then again in 1951 are very fragmentary. But they definitely indicate the presence of a large pillared hall as a part of a large building complexes. The floor and the roof of the hall were made of timber. The round and tapering pillared halls were made of

chunar sandstone. The pillers halls were arranged in parallel rows, 15 feet apart dividing the hall measuring 140 X 120 feet. The similarities between this palace at Pataliputra and the Achemenian palaces at Persia are too close. However, the rise of timber for the construction of floor and roof was totally indigenous tradition. Both Magasthenes and Fa Hsien have praised the beauty of this palace. In fact, from this period onwards we start getting evidence of pillared halls. The Mauryan period also witnessed the growth of rock cut caves for living. The earliest specimens of the rock cut architecture of the Mauryan period are the three caves found at Barabar hills, cut out of hard granite. These are (1) Rarna Choupara (2) Sudama and (3) Visvajhopri. The most important from architectural point of view is Sudama. It has several Chambers. The outer chamber is rectangular with a vaulted roof while the inner chambers are circular with a hemispherical domed roof. The caves in Nagarjuna hills were carved out on the same pattern. The best among these is the Gopika cave. All these caves are worked by the typical Mauryan architectural characteristics of a bright polish shining from their roof as well as walls.

Stupa construction in hemispherical shape also began under the Mauryas. Of the stupas, the Sanchi stupa and the Bharhut stupa are most important. Both were made of bricks. The proper height of the Sanchi Stupa would have been 77 1/2 feet and the diameter at the base of the dome is 110 feet. The Bharhut stupa was nearly 68 feet in diameter. Both the stupas have a hemispherical dome placed on a low circular wall which is further crowned by a parasol. The structures are surrounded by a passage of circumambulation fenced off by a railing wall.

In the villages and towns, homes were mostly one room huts made of wood or bamboo, with thatched roofs. Even the palaces were made of wood. Larger homes had several rooms and balconies. Streets between the homes were narrow and twisted. Stalls for selling things were located on both sides of the street. People mostly walked where they wanted to go inside their

village. The village normally consisted of a group of houses, made of brick and mud with thatched roof, and were quite close to each other. The adjacent house structures were deliberately done so for safety. Each group of house was surrounded by some kind of hedge as a protective barrier against enemies and wild beasts.

Housing During The Gupta Period

We start getting reference to three storey houses in bigger towns with tiled roofs in the Post-Mauryan period. Such houses became common from the Gupta period onwards. The housing style in villages remained the same, but a number of towns emerged with features such as brick structures, drainage system, roads and sometimes they were surrounded by brick and mud walls as well.

The construction of free standing temples (as opposed to cave-excavated chaityas and viharas) in architecture are regarded as the artistic breakthrough of the Gupta age. Numerous stupas were built during this period and the famous ones include the stupa at Mirpurkhas in Sindh, Dhamekh stupa at Sarnath and two stupas at Rajgir. The stupa at Sarnath consists of a circular stone drum with cylindrical mass of brickwork above it. It rises to a height of 128 feet and has four niches at the four cardinal points for the images of Buddha.

The rock-cut architecture of this period is represented by the chaitya hall (the shrine) and the vihara (the monastery). They are mostly found at Ajanta, Ellora and Bagh. The chaitya is marked by an imposing, colossal image of Buddha seated between two standing attendants while the vihara has rows of cells surrounding a central court. The caves of this period belong to Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. The hills of Udaygiri, near Bhilsa (Bhopal) contain nine cave-shrines, which are partly rock-cut and partly stone-built. There are two inscriptions that belong to the reign of Chandra Gupta II. Cave No. 1 is also known as the „false cave?, and in it a natural ledge of the rock is converted into a primitive shrine with an additional pillared structural portico projecting from the front. The

other caves, indicating a gradual improvement in design, consist of a plain and rectangular sanctum cell, dug out of the rock and are preceded by a shallow structural portico with pillars in front. They have richly carved doorways of the typical Gupta style. The rock-cut and structural styles have been combined. Cave No. IX, locally known as the Amrita cave, is the largest, 22 feet by 19 feet 4 inches, i.e., nearly twice the size of other caves. Due to this huge size, there are four massive pillars in the interior, which have been naturally hewn, in the center of the hall and serve as additional supports for the mass of rock that forms the roof.

Among the caves of the Gupta period, the best belong to Ajanta, notably vihara cave No. XVI and XVII and chaitya cave No. XIX. Provided with a large number of pillars, their beauty is as remarkable as their variety, and no two pillars are alike. In spite of this, there is pleasing harmony in design and form. The walls of the caves were covered with painted scenes from the life and times of the Buddha (some of them are still there). Another group of rock-cut monasteries and chaitya halls are those of Ellora.

Dressed stone along with brick as a constructional element was probably used for the first time by the Gupta architects and in this respect the Gupta age can be regarded as the beginning of a new epoch in housing construction. This also gave rise to brick laid roofs supported by wooden slabs.

Towns and cities in the ancient period developed as per the economic and social needs of the regions and, as a result, socio-economic disparity between rural and urban areas was not discernible in the ancient culture. Also, there was not much variance in rites, rituals, culture, etc. in urban areas from those in rural areas, and the urban areas were just a little refined and sophisticated versions of those already prevailing in a particular region.

Modern Urban Housing

Modern urban vocabulary such as slum was not at all heard or witnessed in ancient literature. B.D.Chattopadhyaya in fact says that the dichotomy between rural and urban terminology, was not definitely visible. He says literature gives two initial impressions about the city. As an apex centre, it is not at a distance from other settlements; in other words, the essence of the city is in its centrality in the togetherness of settlements. Second there is a graded hierarchy, between villages, towns and royal city and not simply a sharp distinction between the village and the city¹.

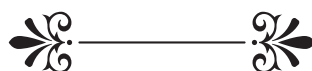
After independence, Government of India has adopted a number of policies and programs to solve ever-escalating housing problem of the country. The ultimate outcome of these policies has been quite dismal as is evident from the continuing worsening of housing situation especially for the poor and mushrooming of *jhuggis* or slums in urban areas. Percentage of urban population living in slums had increased from 17 per cent in 1981 to 27.8 per cent in 2001². According to the 2001 Census, population living in slums was as high as 61 million³. Similarly, the percentage of households having no exclusive room increased from 0.04 in 1991 to 2.3 per cent in 2001. Thousands of families in the city have been residing in the slums without basic amenities such as safe drinking water, power connection and other facilities, and neither do they have any pacca houses.

The evidences of shelter and its organization could be taken as useful tip to construct houses in both urban and rural areas even today. We may give consideration to the humbler dwellings of the poorer folks in the villages and in towns or the still humbler shelters for economically weaker sections of society as per the prevailing climatic conditions in a particular region. The system of counting roofs or roof lines described in the Shrautasutras could still be used for the modern days buildings. Cities could also be developed in line with suggestions given in Kautilya Arthashastra. The emergence of cities near the source of water could also be taken as a guide to

understand the sustainability of a city for longer period of time. Ancient literatures give us a good idea of coexistence of poor and rich people dwellings.

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Poverty, Food Security And The Post-2015 Development Goals

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***Abstract**-Poverty and food security are complex food security issues, not only linked to health but also to sustainable economic development, environment, trade and gender equality. Access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food is essential to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. The persistence of extreme poverty and hunger is related to the subjugation, marginalization and disempowerment of women. Women suffer from hunger and poverty to a great degree and in greater numbers than men. The emerging debate about food security revolves around some arguments like problem of distribution, food availability, food access, food use, food inflation, market liberalization, global trade versus food sovereignty. Despite producing more food than is consumed, the women with their children are finding it increasingly difficult to access nutritious and healthy food at affordable prices. In the developing countries of Global South, women are the primary producers of food and conservers of environment. Yet they are the ones extremely poor and chronically undernourished. With the deadline for the Millennium Development Goal-1 on the horizon and with impact of the global economic and financial crisis, the progress on many fronts still far from satisfactory. The recently enacted National Food Security Act 2013 by India is a step in this direction. Thus, the vision for the post-2015 development agenda should be changing the existing centralized global approach towards a more decentralized global framework based on gender inclusive food security system, sustainable economic development and climate-smart food system.*

Keywords: Poverty, Feminization of agriculture, Food security, Sustainable food security, Sustainable development

The ultimate aim of development is to ensure human well-being through sustained improvement in the quality of life of people, particularly the poor, excluded, vulnerable and deprived sections. Poverty has traditionally been defined as lack of access to material resources and understood in absolute and relative terms. Poverty is a complex problem having multiple dimensions. In '*Development as Freedom*', Amartya Sen defines poverty as the deprivation of basic capabilities that provide a person with the freedom to choose the life he or she has reason to value. These capabilities include good health, education, social networks, command over economic resources, and influence on decision-making that affects one's life. **Extreme poverty, absolute poverty, or abject poverty** is stated as "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services"¹ [UN declaration at World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995]. The World Bank defined the new international

poverty line as \$1.25 a day for 2005² (equivalent to \$1.00 a day in 1996 US prices). Therefore, fighting poverty and hunger remains at the core of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the post-2015 development agenda.

Poverty and food security are interrelated and multidimensional in nature. Poverty leads to food insecurity by limiting their access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. Poverty also threatens all the dimension of food security like availability of food, accessibility of food, affordability of food, appropriate use of food, stability and sovereignty of food. Food insecurity causes poverty, hunger, undernutrition, vulnerability, livelihood insecurity and low quality of life, but is at the same time also a result of these conditions. In 2013, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated that 842 million people are undernourished (12% of the global population)³.

Undernutrition denotes a deprivation or lack of freedom to lead a minimally healthy life. Adequate nutrition attainment is an essential

element of human well-being. However, women's nutrition assumes additional importance for the family welfare, human well-being and sustainable development of society. The manifestation of women's malnutrition for human development are multiple and cumulative. For instance, maternal malnutrition tends to increase the risk of maternal mortality. Also, child malnutrition in terms of stunted growth or underweight, infant mortality and rising incidence of chronic diseases, etc. are related to maternal malnutrition. Due to nutritional deprivation women never reach their full growth potential and suffer anaemia. Women from the disadvantaged social groups suffer the hardest in terms of food insecurity. The women in vulnerable groups includes the scheduled castes and tribes, backward class, religious minorities, disabled, aged, single women and divorced, deserted, separated, female-headed households, migrant workers, women in disturbed areas, trafficked women, women in prison, transgender communities, among others.

Engendering Food Security System

Gender equality is an essential condition for sustainable development and social empowerment. Studies have found that gender equality is the single most important determinant of food security.

With increasing population pressure on land, the land holdings have become small and fragmented. This has led to migration of male members into other sectors, leaving the family farms to be tended largely by women and children⁴. Over 70 percent of India's population currently derives their livelihood from land resources, which includes 84 percent of the economically-active women⁵.

Persistent gender inequalities constrain women's potential for contributing more effectively to agriculture, rural and community development, food and nutrition security, which together undermine the achievement of food security in the long run. On the one hand, agriculture is in crisis and on the other, we are witnessing 'feminization of agriculture' due to the out-migration of male workers to non-agriculture,

while women have remained very substantially in agriculture. The resulting feminization has implications for food security and rural livelihoods.

The persistence of extreme poverty and hunger is related to the subjugation, marginalization and disempowerment of women. Women suffer from hunger and poverty to a great degree and in greater numbers than men. At the same time, it is expected that it is primary responsibility of women to end hunger through vaccination of new born, providing nutritious and healthy food to children, education and family income. Women play an active role in creating the environment of food security such as the food "producers"; "gatekeepers" who dedicate their own time, income and decision-making to maintain food and nutritional security of their households and communities; and "managers" of the stability of food supplies in times of economic hardship. Women also play an important role in food production, processing, distribution, marketing, food preparation, providing childcare within the family and more likely to be spent their income on food and their children's needs. They often work as unpaid family workers, are involved in subsistence farming and represent about 43% of the agricultural labor force in developing countries⁶ (FAO). Despite their dominance of the women in India still face disparity, disadvantage and discrimination in terms of : ownership of, access to and control of livelihood assets like land; shrinking farm size, limited rights to inheritance and that too frequently violated; gender wage gap; credit from formal institutionalised agencies; availability of seeds; approachable market; extension services and technologies; less education and low skills; overwork and invisibility of work; powerlessness; bargaining power in cooperatives; forceful acquisition of land and displacement; majority are small, subsistence farmers and agricultural labourers; intense competition from larger farm operations; work of the female agricultural labourer is limited to less skilled jobs, such as sowing, transplanting, weeding and harvesting, that often fit well within the framework of domestic life and child-rearing. The traditional social norms and

values require women to consume last and least throughout their lives, even when pregnant and lactating. Malnourished women give birth to malnourished children, thereby perpetuating the cycle. Women's employment in family farms is rarely recognized as economically productive. Any income earned from this work is generally controlled by the men. Women are invariably paid lower wages, despite the fact that they work harder and for longer hours than do men⁷.

Women's rights to inheritance are limited and frequently violated. They seldom enjoy property ownership rights directly in their names. Access to land and property is a major source of income and long-term economic security. Critical resources such as land or common village land (shamlat) are also unevenly distributed by gender. Even with land in their names, they may not have actual decision making power⁸.

Despite feminization of agriculture, even today, women's work is not fully realized. Due to gender relations, their mobility is restricted, they are burdened by domestic responsibilities and engaged, generally, in those non-cultivation processes which are near their households.

The lack of women empowerment often results in negative externalities such as lower educational attainment for their children (particularly girl child) and poor familial health (i.e. adverse Sex ratio, high IMR, MMR, malnutrition level, low hygiene and immunization).

With increasing disproportionate percentages of women among the world's poor, there is feminisation of poverty. The burden of poverty is borne by women (UNIFEM). It includes the poverty of choices and opportunities, such as the ability to lead a long, healthy, and creative life, and enjoy basic rights like equality, freedom, respect, and dignity. Even whatever they can afford is of poor quality. They do not get a balanced diet, nutrition or medicare facilities. Due to insufficient income, the lone or single mothers are usually at the highest risk for extreme poverty. This, in turn, lowers their children's possibilities for nourishment and good education. A large number of poor women work

migrants migrate from the poverty-stricken areas of Odisha, Jharkhand etc. to other economically advanced areas where they are forced to work in poor conditions and at low grade jobs and subject to bonded slavery, clinical tests or even end in forced prostitution.

Women lack power to decide what to eat, when to eat, how much to eat, what quantity and quality of nutritious food to eat, lack of availability of food in the market, lack of ability to buy needed food and the capability to absorb and utilise the food in her body. Thus, food and non-food factors like drinking water, health care and environmental hygiene are involved.

Despite producing more food than is consumed, the women with their children are finding it increasingly difficult to access nutritious and healthy food at affordable prices. In the developing countries of Global South, women are the primary producers of food and conservers of environment. Yet they are the ones extremely poor and chronically undernourished.

The **human cost of the "liberalization"** has been very high in terms of **farm suicides** in India. Due to fault policies pursued by the state a very high portion of rural households got into the **debt cycle**, resulting in a very high number of farm suicides. The policies encouraging farmers to **switch from traditional food crops to cash crops**, has resulted in an extraordinary increase in farm input costs, while the price of the cash crops being determined by market. The increasing influence of market led to shrinking role of the welfare state.

The capitalist framework of neo-liberalism is viewed as an extension of the neoliberal policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank as developmentally favourable to poor and developing countries including India. However, in the long run it is predicted that the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) will not bring gains to the agricultural sector of India. The Multinational Corporations (MNCs) will benefit at the expense of the small Indian agricultural labourers and farmers, majority of which are women. Forceful land acquisition, displacement

and unfair competition may threaten women's and their families' livelihoods and create problems of food security and deepen gender inequality. As foreign investors begin to acquire power over agricultural or natural resources in India, women engaged in subsistence farming will be at risk of losing the basic resources such as water, seeds, traditional ways of farming which is nature-friendly and her decision-making abilities will be further threatened. In the wake of Capitalist mode of production manifested in the form of Green Revolution, it is clear that the widespread usage of chemical pesticides and herbicides is creating a public health problem, which has disproportionately impacted women, e.g. high cancer rates in the Malwa belt of Punjab.

State Initiatives

The concern for food and nutrition security is enshrined in the Directive Principles of the Constitution which establishes India as a Welfare state. The issue of food security includes whole gamut of integrated interplay of macro policy, agricultural and food policy, right to education, access to health, sanitation and potable drinking water, income and employment security, and social security mechanism. The government interventions through food-based programmes include the Public Distribution System (PDS), the Targeted PDS (1997), the Integrated Child Development Scheme (mid-1970s), the Mid-day Meal Scheme, Food-for-Work (FFW), the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (2000), the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (*MGNREGA*) etc. The recently enacted National Food Security Act, 2013 aims to provide subsidized food grains to ensure food security to about two-third of the population. Beneficiaries are to be able to purchase 5 kilograms per eligible person per month of cereals at the following prices: rice at at ₹3 per kg, wheat at ₹2 per kg and coarse grains (millet) at ₹1 per kg. Pregnant women, lactating mothers, and certain categories of children are eligible for daily free meals. The eldest woman in the household, 18 years or above, is the head of the household for the issuance of the ration card⁹. The Act is no doubt a bold initiative to provide gender-inclusive food security, but how long this new comprehensive legislation will itself be sustainable to tackle the

issue of sustainable food security system is still yet to be seen.

With the deadline for the Millennium Development Goal-1 on the horizon and with impact of the global economic and financial crisis, the progress of India on many fronts still far from satisfactory. India constitutes one-third poor of world; 42 per cent of children are underweight; 58 per cent of children are stunted by the age of 24 months¹⁰; ranked 63rd in 2013 Global Hunger Index¹¹; ranked 132 in the Gender Inequality Index 2013 which is second highest in the South Asia region after Afghanistan; *ranked 101 among 136 countries in the Global Gender Gap Report 2013*; and at 136 among 186 countries in Human Development Index (HDI) 2013¹².

What Should Be The Post-2015 Mdns Agenda ?

- Food security is a complex sustainable development issue, linked to health through malnutrition, but also to sustainable economic development, environment, and trade.
- There should be sustainable agricultural development for sustainable food security. Sustainable food security means sufficient food for everyone at present alongwith the ability to provide enough food in future as well. In the long-run sustainable food security is very important.
- Balancing human and environmental needs is essential for food security and sustainability. The pattern of resource use should aim to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations.
- Sustainable land management is also necessary for sustainable food security. Rain water harvesting, sprinkle irrigation to reduce excessive irrigation water, change in cropping pattern (i.e. produce food crops which requires less water), using same water for many purposes, water recharge,

controlling water pollution etc. are related with the food security.

- Removing the obstacles women encounter in accessing land rights.
- Climate change could potentially interrupt progress toward a world without hunger, the need is develop a 'climate-smart agriculture and food system' which includes: sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes (food security); adapting and building resilience to climate change (adaptation); reducing and/or removing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation), where possible.
- A transformation of traditional gender roles to complement gender equality strategies and food security strategies. The urgent need is to recognize of the constraints women face, the adoption of measures that help relieve women of their burdens, and the redistribution of gender roles in the discharging of family responsibilities. Recognition of and compensation for women's often invisible, under-valued and unpaid contributions to the care economy, and their role in maintaining the agricultural workforce. The active engagement of women at all levels of decision making is absolutely necessary to attain food and nutritional security.
- Develop the gender-inclusive food security strategies to improve women's access to childcare, farmer support mechanisms, credit, market, agricultural and extension services. Here the focus should be on small and marginal women farmers and agricultural labourers.
- Without women, there cannot be sustainable food security. So the rural women should be empowered to end poverty and food insecurity.
- Shift from the centralised towards the decentralised interventions by the actors

involved in the development debate. Rather than blindly following the development paradigm of Think globally, Act locally, we should also adopt the paradigm of Think locally, Act globally by taking into account the local realities, needs and priorities of the poorest and most-deprived communities.

- Thus, the vision for the post-2015 development agenda should be changing the existing centralized global approach towards a more decentralized glocal framework based on gender inclusive food security system, sustainable economic development and climate-smart food system. The post-2015 goals should be action-oriented, concise, easy to communicate, aspirational, and based on inclusive and sustainable governance approach.

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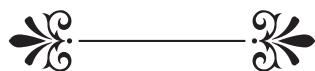
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