INTELLECTUAL RESONANCE

DCAC JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Double-blind Peer-reviewed/Refereed)

Dec 2023, Volume 6

DELHI COLLEGE OF ARTS & COMMERCE

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About *Intellectual Resonance*
DCAC Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

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peer-reviewed/refereed journal that provides Faculty and Research Scholars an academic space to submit their unpublished research papers, book reviews, and research essays for publication.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

About DCAC

Delhi College of Arts & Commerce is located in the quiet and peaceful enclave of Netaji Nagar in South Delhi. The College began its journey as a Liberal Arts & Commerce College in the year 1987. It is a co-educational constituent College of the University of Delhi. This College was a pioneer in offering an undergraduate course in Journalism Honours in the University of Delhi in the year 1989. At present, it offers Bachelor Honours courses in Journalism, English, Commerce, Political Science, History, Economics and B.A. (Prog.) and B.Com.

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Editorial

We are delighted to introduce volume 6 of *Intellectual Resonance*, an annual double-blind peer-reviewed/refereed research journal brought out by Delhi College of Arts & Commerce, University of Delhi. The journal seeks to promote multidisciplinarity in the domain of research and brings together papers exploring diverse areas of knowledge such as commerce, economics, liberal arts and mass communications. The papers published here have undergone a rigorous double-blind peer-review process. We are happy to note that a large number of papers were submitted to the journal and our diligent referees and editorial board members strove to ensure that this volume of the journal enriches and deepens our understanding of the society, economy and culture.

The present volume features fourteen papers, one research note and a book review. The three papers reflecting on literature and culture address questions relating to gender, domesticity and the literary portrayal of a marginalised community. The papers dealing with the economy, society and law throw light on aspects of a changing nation and its implications for the citizens. Several papers included in the current volume offer fresh perspectives on the functioning of financial institutions in a world getting rapidly transformed by digital technology. Issues of conflict and peace, and a changing world order have been explored by some contributors. Various sectors of the economy and industry have been examined from diverse perspectives using well-researched case studies. The inclusion of a research note and a book review add variety and value to the journal.

We sincerely hope that the papers included in *Intellectual Resonance* will gain the appreciation of students, teachers and researchers, and expand the frontiers of our knowledge of society, economy and the world of commerce.

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The Construction of Domestic Space in Nineteenth-century Britain: Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton*

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Abstract

Domestic space is an important sphere of intimate politics. Nineteenth-century Britain was marked by developments in a number of areas. While the Industrial Revolution became one of the most influential events to take place, the lack of women's rights made progress difficult. In a predominantly patriarchal society that lacked avenues for women's empowerment but was also on the way to opening up economic opportunities, such a disparity made its way into the literature of the time. Through an analysis of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814) and Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848) this paper attempts to engage with questions of domesticity, morality and the condition of the urban working classes. The paper also seeks to trace the influence of Hannah More (1745-1833) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) in women-centric literature of the time.

Keywords: nineteenth century, domesticity, working class, British literature

Nineteenth-century English literature reflects every aspect of contemporary society which incorporates the rise of the traders, colonial expeditions, the industrial revolution, condition of the working class, status of women in the domestic sphere and their subjugation by patriarchal society. By focusing on women's conditions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this paper throws light on the role of Hannah More (1745-1833) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) in women-centric literature followed by a critical evaluation of moral and domestic issues in the British countryside as depicted in *Mansfield Park* (1814) by Jane Austen, and the condition of urban

working classes within the framework of *Mary Barton* (1848) by Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865). This paper has also attempted to examine the Industrial Revolution and its effects on the domesticity of the working class.

In late eighteenth and nineteenth-century Britain, lack of any socio-political and economic rights led to dismal conditions for women. They were confined to domesticity and patriarchal society dictated that liberty was not necessary for women. In his treatise *Emile* (1762), Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) wrote that liberty should not be extended to women. The fifth chapter of this work describes the role of women in the domestic arena and also provides directions on how women should nourish their children and follow established patriarchal norms. Rousseau goes on to say that men should be the active partner while women should be feminine and passive.

Property is closely linked to domesticity. Since women did not have the right to own property, inheritance was transferred either to the male members of the family or closest male kin. The immediate consequence of objectifying women was reflected in the status of women who had no rights, as men were privileged enough to treat them in whatever manner they wanted. Women could not claim rights over their self-owned possessions as legally all domestic property belonged to the husband. Rebellious women were sent away to asylums and branded as "mad". An example of this is found in *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* (1798) by Mary Wollstonecraft in the context of Jemima and Maria. In *Elizabeth Gaskell: The Novel of Social Crisis*, Coral Lansbury (1975) writes: "[t]o be born a woman in the Victorian era was to enter a world of social and cultural deprivation unknown to a man. But to be born a woman and a Unitarian was to be released from much of the prejudice and oppression enjoined upon other women." (p. 134)

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, in *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (1987) write about the role of marriage in the family foundation. They discuss what was considered to be the man's duty and the woman's duty in matrimonial alliances - "On marriage men assumed economic and jural responsibility for their wives and the expected brood of children. With marriage,

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women assumed their full adult status. The process of courtship and marriage was a serious step for both men and women." (p. 322).

The prominent women thinkers – Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft – tried to break away from patriarchal shackles through their literary works like *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799) and *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). In her work *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Wollstonecraft demands socio-political and economic rights for women. Through her works, it is apparent that she is in favour of women's education along with training them in etiquette and manners. She argues that if women get a good education they can build strong nations. She also emphasizes the importance of the mother-child relationship and shares her views to mothers on how to treat their children. She is against prostitution and suggests that women should read books on conduct. Patsy Stoneman (2007) in her essay "Gaskell, Gender and Family" highlights the relevance of conduct books for women in 18th and 19th century Britain. She remarks:

> 'Conduct books' for women, recommending how they could best fulfil theirdomestic responsibilities, were common throughout the eighteenth century,consolidating an idea of the family as an essential unit of society with the wife asits moral centre. In the nineteenth century the number of books directed at women and their conduct in the home greatly increased, while their direction subtly changed. In addition to moral rectitude came social propriety, giving rise to superficial patterns of behaviour, particularly in the middle class, which assumed enormous importance as indicators of class status and social acceptability (p. 140)

Wollstonecraft's ideas are full of contradictions. She demands equal rights for women in social and political spheres, but while discussing the role of women in the domestic arena she emphasizes that a woman should nourish her children and fulfil other household duties. To some extent, her views echo Hannah More.

More's ideas about women are entirely expressed in the context of religion. She was an Evangelist and started Sunday school for poor children. She believes that women should perform their social duties and help orphans and poor people. She is also against prostitution and pre-marital relations. She says that women should fulfil their sexual desire within matrimonial boundaries. Her book, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799), focuses on women's morality

and adheres to patriarchal norms to a great extent. For instance, according to her, women should not talk much and silence is the vehicle of good conversation for women. More's ideas were indicative of the conservative nineteenth-century Victorian era– issues that reflect in More's views. Women revolting against oppressive norms gave shape to Wollstonecraft's ideas.

Jack Trotter (2010) in his essay "Liberty, Restraint, and Social Order in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*" remarks:

> Throughout the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century, it was generally taken for granted that Jane Austen's novels reflected the conservative values of the landed English gentry. But if she was recognized as a brilliant satirist of her own milieu, little attempt was made to place Austen within a broader historical and political context (p. 470).

In the early nineteenth century, all novels, especially those by Jane Austen (1775-1817), follow set social conventions. Austen has written only domestic novels like her contemporaries Hannah More, Elizabeth Inchbald, Charlotte Smith and Fanny Burney. On matrimony, she opines that marriage is the origin of fortune for women, and is therefore, necessary for happiness. In *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) she writes that a man cannot live single his whole life. The novel begins with the well-known opening line "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife" (p. 3). Mitchell Kalpakgian (2010) in her essay "The Economic, Social, Romantic, and Moral Aspects of Marriage in *Mansfield Park*" remarks:

> Like most of Jane Austen's novels, Mansfield Park concentrates on the universal theme of love, romance, and marriage and on the distinguishing qualities of marriages in rural eighteenth century society. In Austen's novels, marriage is not only a respectable, honorable institution of civilization but also a complex decision that encompasses both the wishes of families and the sensibilities of a person's mind, heart, and soul (p. 437).

Mansfield Park (1814) is different from her other novels in its depiction of the female protagonist's response to marriage. Fanny Price, the female protagonist of the novel, comes from a poor family while her aunt Mrs. Bertram is extremely rich. Mrs. Bertram brings Fanny to Mansfield Park from Portsmouth. Fanny's cousins treat her in a callous manner

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as she lacks in accomplishments as compared to her cousin sisters Julia and Maria. For Mrs. Bertram, she is like a servant who has come to assist her. The economic and social hierarchy between the family members is visible.

Trotter in his essay continues:

> Some feminists have argued that Austen must have read and approved of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), but it is more likely that her views on women and education owe something to Hannah More, a conservative reformer who wrote dozens of novels and tracts dealing with moral and political issues, especially those involving the education of women (p. 479).

In *Mansfield Park*, Julia and Maria have superficial education. They only like music, dance and other things that can entertain them. But Fanny's ideas are extremely contradictory to their idea of education. She has the potential for learning and thinking, her only 'shortcoming' is that she comes from a poorer class. She receives affection only from her cousin Edmund who respects her curiosity and intellect. Edmund aims to be a clergyman. Thus both Fanny and Edmund's views on education and virtue are very similar. He helps to raise her social position as well as intellectual capacity. On several occasions, Mrs. Norris, sister of Mrs. Bertram, tries to degrade Fanny by comparing her to her cousins, and each time Edmund protects her.

In the study of nineteenth-century English novels, it is observed that outsiders create problems in the domestic sphere. In *Mansfield Park* the siblings of Henry and Mary Crawford come to Mansfield Park and try to create chaos in the domestic life of Mrs. Bertram's family, aided by the insensibility of Mrs. Bertram's two daughters, both of whom give much indulgence to Henry and Mary Crawford. Henry plays with the emotions of both Maria and Julia, even though Maria is already engaged to Mr. Rushworth. Maria gives in to his charms and is often found in a compromising position by Fanny. Henry's sister Mary has designs on Mrs. Bertram's elder son Tom who is slated to inherit all the family property. Meanwhile, Henry expresses his feelings for Fanny before her. But Fanny is sensible and she waits for Edmund till the end.In this novel, it seems that a woman's future and her duties are interwoven with matrimony. Fanny is a little different since she does not rush into marriage and is not impatient enough to accept Henry's

proposal. She is different from Elizabeth Bennet of *Pride and Prejudice* and much closer to Jane Bennet. Elizabeth marries Mr. Darcy because of his high social status and immense wealth, but Fanny does not have any desire of marrying a wealthy man. Her fortune is deeply connected with intellectual endeavors rather than materialistic pleasures. In Fanny Price, the anti-Jacobin idea of Hanna More is visible. She loves Edmund wholeheartedly even though he has decided to spend his life away from extravagance, as a clergyman. In the character of Henry, we see that he performs good deeds for evil reasons – he helps Fanny's brother William get a promotion in the Navy but Henry's sole purpose in helping William is to achieve Fanny's love. Fanny disagrees with her uncle Sir Thomas Bertram and her aunt over the issue of her marriage with Henry. The Bertrams are dismayed by Fanny's rejection of Henry's proposal since it is an extremely advantageous match for a poor girl like her. Sir Thomas rebukes her for her 'ingratitude' and sends her back to her poor family so that she might realize how useful it is to have a rich husband. When she is thrown out of the Bertram family, Fanny uncomplainingly goes back to Portsmouth and in her parental house, she once again starts to live her old life. Only her younger sister Susan is close to her and Fanny tries to educate her like herself. But some upheavals in *Mansfield Park* give Fanny another opportunity to enter the domesticity of Mrs. Bertram's house. After her marriage, Maria goes to London with Mr. Rushworth and Julia also accompanies them. In the meantime, Mary Crawford comes to know about Tom's illness. His illness leaves no hope. Now Mary shifts her affections to Edmund and tries to gain his love, since, after Tom's death, Edmund would be the successor to the Bertram fortune. For Maria, love becomes a tool to climb up the social ladder and attain prosperity.

On comparing life of the countryside with towns, we realise that city life is more corrupt than the 19th century British countryside. In this novel, the city of London is depicted as being mercantile, with the rules of commerce governing human relationships. As per Victorian norms, there is no morality in the city. Eighteenth-century literature also brings out this idea and it is evident in Samuel Johnson's "London: A Poem, in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal" (1738) and William Blake's poem "London" (1794). *Mansfield Park* also provides an instance of this lack of Victorian morals in its depiction of the relationships of convenience between Maria and Henry, and between Julia and Yeats.

Like Lydia and George Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*, Maria elopes with Henry and Julia elopes with Yeats, and consequently, Mr. Rushworth breaks all matrimonial relations with Maria. The Bertrams does not allow Mary's entry into their house, although Julia and Yeats achieve reconciliation with the Bertram family. Simply put, in the plot of the story Maria, Henry, Julia and Yeats break the social and moral norms of nineteenth-century Britain. Eleanor Donlon (2010) writes:

> Like *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice, Mansfield* presents a young woman's fall from morality; unlike in the other two novels, the fallen woman of *Mansfield* is not to be pitied. She cannot be excused because of naïveté or unschooled principles. Hers is a wilful and deliberated defiance of all social and moral expectations. *Mansfield* unerringly displays the depth of Austen's wisdom, especially in her understanding of the spiritual, psychological, and cultural complexities of morality (p. 20).

But some contradiction is evident in the reaction to this breaking of social conventions. While Maria has been thrown out of her parental house and is disowned by the family, Julia and Yeats are brought back into the fold.

In this novel, we also see how people inculcated with superficial education look down upon and make fun of real educational values. For instance, in the theatrical play to be performed at Mansfield Park, everyone is ready to play their stage roles under the influence of Henry and Mary. Only Fanny Price and Edmund retain their senses and are against the staging of the play. They choose to maintain a distance from these shenanigans for which they are ridiculed by others. Mary Poovey (1984) in her book *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* writes:

> The rehearsals of this play at Mansfield liberate each character's repressed desires, preoccupations or anxieties, once indulged, will inevitably find an outlet, also point to the dangers this new ethic poses (p. 214).

In London, Mary is always making fun of Edmund's wish to be a clergyman. Finally, Edmund realises Mary's superficial superiority and finds that although her manners are fashionable, they hide a lack of principles. Now he emotionally turns to Fanny Price and establishes a committed relationship with her ending in matrimony.

A duality is present in the character of Fanny Price. Susan Gubar and Sandra Gilbert have tried to indicate in their book *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (1979) that every character of Jane Austen's novel is full of contradictions. Poovey argues that Jane Austen is no different from Mary Wollstonecraft. Poovey's argument is appropriate because Mary Wollstonecraft's ideology about the emancipation of women is also full of contradictory aspects like the characters of Jane Austen. While Fanny Price rejects a man like Henry Crawford who is economically powerful with a high social status, she prioritizes education over intellect, marries her cousin Edmund and follows patriarchal norms that allow for an incestuous relationship. With this decision, she rejects the conventional societal norm that argues against women placing value on education, and adheres to other conservative traditions of marrying within the family. In nineteenth century British society, to keep the property among relatives, it was a tradition to establish matrimonial ties between cousins. Through matrimonial alliances between cousins, outsiders were not allowed to become successors to the family name and property. The issue of incestuous relationships is found in other nineteenth-century novels too. For instance, Heathcliff Junior and Catherine Linton's relationship in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and Jane's cousin John proposing to her in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*.

Coming back to *Mansfield Park*, it is clear that Fanny Price emerges as the most superior in education. Apart from conventional education, she has imbibed her values through individual efforts and her upbringing. Socially, she is an enlightened being. Indirectly, she fights for her own desires and wishes against the dictates of society, and establishes what she wants in Mansfield Park. Nancy Armstrong (1987), in the introduction to *Desire and Domestic Fiction* states that:

> From the beginning, domestic fiction actively sought to disentangle the language of sexual relations from the language of politics and in so doing to introduce a new form of political power. This power emerged with the rise of the domestic women and established its hold over British culture through her dominance over all those objects and practices we associate with private life (p. 3).

Armstrong's statement is noteworthy because, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, women writers tried to portray women's struggle

to gain authority in the domestic sphere through their literary work. The Bronte sisters, George Eliot and Elizabeth Gaskell are prominent women authors who have discussed the same. All of them are different from Jane Austen whose novels have adhered to existing social norms. Only *Mansfield Park* is different from Austen's other novels to some extent, but other female authors go beyond *Mansfield Park*. In their novels, the female protagonist always struggles for her self-existence against patriarchal norms. For instance, in Gaskell's *Mary Barton* where she portrays the life of working-class women in Manchester and how women in the Victorian era were doubly oppressed because of their class and gender. This novel is entirely different from Austen's *Mansfield Park* where the author discusses domestic issues of the countryside. The protagonist of the novel *Mary Barton* is more active than Fanny Price since the former faces many upheavals in her life. The novel vividly describes dirty streets and houses of the working class. Jill L. Matus (2007) in the Introduction to *Cambridge Companion of Elizabeth Gaskell* writes:

> Gaskell was by no means the first woman novelist to concern herself with the plight of the poor. Industrial fiction by Charlotte Elizabeth Tonna, Frances Trollope, and Harriet Martineau had already established a genre of writing sympathetically about the social ills of industrialism. Gaskell entered this developing tradition primed by what she had witnessed in Manchester and by her own experience of suffering. While the preface makes only the briefest of allusions to those personal circumstances of grief which prompted her writing, it does go on to dwell on the question of sympathy (p. 30).

Mansfield Park has been narrated in the third person. On the other hand, Gaskell gives voice to Mary Barton throughout the novel. Initially, the title of the work was "John Barton", but she highlights the female character Mary with the final title named after the protagonist. Shirley Foster (2006) discusses the confession of the author:

> "John Barton" was the original name [of the work], as being the central figure to my mind . . . he was my "hero"; and it was a London thought coming from the publisher that it must be called *Mary* B. . . . Round the character of John Barton all the others formed themselves (p. 19).

Gaskell talks about the "sufferings and anxieties of the working class" as prime sources of her inspiration. It is believed that Gaskell has borrowed the plot of the novel from the real life of Thomas Ashton,

but according to Foster, Gaskell has denied such postulation. This novel is very close to Frederick Engel's treatise 'The Condition of the Working class in England' (1845) where he throws light upon the working class' conditions, again in the city of Manchester. In "Mary Barton and North and South" of *Cambridge Companion to Elizabeth Gaskell*, Jill L. Matus (2007) discusses how Mary Barton is the reflection of the nineteenth-century British working class:

> Elizabeth Gaskell's two ''Manchester'' novels have often been paired in critical discussion in order to compare their representation of industrial life and their purchase on the relations of workers and masters, labour and capital. The process of industrialization in Britain had precipitated rapid shifts of population into the cities to seek work in the factories. Crowding, lack of sanitation, and other ills of urban expansion gave rise to concerns about ''the condition of England,'' as Thomas Carlyle famously put it. Fluctuations in the economy had in the 1830s and 1840s resulted in poverty and starvation among the labouring classes, leading to protests and demands for reform on the part of workers and fears of social unrest or, worse, revolution on the part of the middle and upper classes (p. 27).

Before all this discussion, it is better to develop an understanding of the Industrial Revolution. Industrial Revolution stands for those big changes and inventions of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century which brought a revolution in the industrial setup of England. Nancy Henry (2007) in her essay "Elizabeth Gaskell and social transformation" remarks:

> The nineteenth-century social transformation known as ''industrialization'' raised questions about what constituted progress. Technology was improving; markets were opening; finance was becoming more sophisticated; many grew rich. Yet the working classes suffered, first through loss of jobs to machines and later through unregulated factory conditions and the fluctuations of trade (p. 156).

Industrial Revolution was not an event but a process. As the nineteenth century wore on, an ever increasing proportion of the population was harnessed to the new machinery while the realm of the factory was extended every year at the expense of domestic and out-of-door occupations. When animal or human labor is replaced by mechanical labour, it becomes an industrial revolution. The Industrial Revolution had far-reaching results. It affected the entire social setup, political ideas and economic structure of the human race as a whole.

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While studying the condition of the working class in England, Engels argues that the Industrial Revolution made workers worse off. He discusses the daily life of the factory hands, the horrible industrial accidents and pollution in the city. In his description, there is compassion for the working class and anger against the capitalists. He juxtaposes the squalid living conditions of the working poor and the luxury of the bourgeois manufacturers and also compares Manchester with other Victorian cities. He says that due to capitalism, workers begin to negotiate with employers about the price of labour. While it seems that a labor market would be good for both sides, the problem was that in the absence of labor laws and regulations there was always someone willing to work for less money. As a result, the price of labour dropped drastically. This cycle left the proletariat in a permanently impoverished situation. They had no means to earn more or to improve their conditions, upward mobility was not possible.

During a minute study of this treatise, one comes to know that the working class people did not have any job security and received very low wages. Engels compares the English workers with African slaves and says that these slaves were comparatively better off since they at least had the assurance that they would be clothed and fed at the end of the day. He says that the bourgeois probably did not realize the abysmal workers' conditions because of how the cities were segregated.

Engels writes that the capitalist society not only perpetuates poverty but also the conditions that go with it. He describes that alcohol, pre-marital sex, and adultery were rampant among the working class, and for this, they were belittled by the bourgeois. But Engels believes that the workers deserved whatever little pleasure they could attain. The capitalist system took away all the dignity and life out of the proletariat and then tried to take away even their escape.

Engels also discusses the Industrial Revolution's impact on family dynamics. He states that the new practice of women working, often while their husbands stayed at home, was diluting England's masculinity. Women and children were employed by factories and mills because of their small nimble hands which allowed them to work more efficiently with equipment like textile looms. In his words, the introduction of women into the workforce caused a transposition of the traditional patriarchal society. Here, it is important to mention Engels. The Industrial

Revolution did destroy the domesticity of the working class. The women of this class were working in factories and playing a prominent role in the domestic sphere. *Mary Barton* is a good example of this dual role played by working-class women. In the Introduction to the novel, Shirley Foster (2006) also indicates this:

> While she does not sentimentalize the factory workers (a particularly notorious example of this is the figure of Stephen Blackpool in Dickens's later industrial novel, *Hard Times* (1854)), she does not merely cast them as symbolic victims of oppression (p. xiii).

John Barton, the male protagonist of this novel, is an enlightened man who understands the condition of working-class people. His wife works with him in the textile mills. We also come across George Wilson and his wife, both working in the same place. After working hours, both women engage in domestic work. Armstrong (1987) says, "Mrs. Gaskell extended this code of values into the households of the laboring poor " (p. 87). Further, she gives examples from *Mary Barton* of the fact that a woman's devoted application of domestic economy might enhance the value of a man's meagre wages:

> In the corner between the window and the fireside was a cupboard, apparently full of plates and dishes, cups and saucers, and some more nondescript articles, for which one would have fancied their possessors could find no use – such as triangular pieces of glass to save carving knives and forks from dirtying tablecloths (p. 49).

John Barton realises the woman's double burden only after the death of his wife. He does not allow his daughter Mary Barton to work in the mill and tries to keep her engaged in the domestic arena. His actions prove that he finally realises a woman's value in the domestic sphere. John Barton is involved in the workers' Union and after losing his job, he does not want to depend on others. It is an irony that he spends a tragic life till the end of the novel. He kills Harry Carson by mistake and later on, dies in the arms of the mill owner. According to him, his sister-in-law Esther's bad conduct was the cause of his wife's death as after Esther's disappearance people asked the Barton family about her whereabouts. That kind of insinuation proved intolerable for John Barton's wife and she meets an untimely death.

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Young Mary had a troubled childhood – she had lost her mother, and belonged to the poorer classes. Circumstances compel her to think that the working class never gets to enjoy the pleasures of life. Mary's life would have been more complicated had she not made a good friend who helps her to learn about morality and good conduct. Two women, Alice Wilson and Margaret play a prominent role in improving young Mary Barton's life. Alice Wilson comes to take up domestic work in Manchester and from her Mary learns how to handle domestic issues. Mary's love life also sees some affairs. Two men come into her life, Jem Wilson and Harry Carson. Initially, she rejects Wilson's proposal and Carson seems very attractive to her. Needless to say, she tries to explore moving up from her class and condition, as well as fulfilment of emotional needs. In her infatuation she almost commits the same mistake as her aunt Esther does. But she realizes her follies and comes to recognise Harry Carson's true colours, and finally turns towards Jem Wilson to accomplish true love. Catherine Gallagher (1985) in *The Industrial Reformation of English Fiction* compares Mary and Esther with Sally Leadbitter and Harry Carson, saying, "Esther and young Mary hold the sentimental perspective; Sally Leadbitter and Harry Carson hold the complementary viewpoint of farce " (p. 68-69).

Mary faces many difficulties in her relationship with Jem Wilson. The situation becomes very painful for her when John Barton kills Harry and Jem is blamed for the murder. On the one hand, she has lost her father and on the other, her lover is in trouble. Mary plays an important role in freeing Jem from prison. This act proves that Mary Barton, a working-class woman is more active and stronger than the man. Armstrong indicates that working-class women were trying to compete with masculine authority and at some point were emerging as a force to reckon with.

When it comes to Esther, her sentimental thinking compels her to elope with her lover. It is only after being seduced does she realise that she is flowing in a stream of uncontrolled emotions. It is she who tries to restrain Mary when she is about to commit the same mistake of eloping. Esther first tries to inform John Barton but he does not give any attention to her. She then expresses her concern about Mary and says, "What shall I do? How can I keep her from being such a one as I am; such a wretched, loathsome creature! She was listening just as I listened, and loving just as I loved, and the end will be just

like my end. How shall I save her? She won't hearken to warning, or heed it more than I did" (p. 170). Later, when Mary is successful in rescuing Jem Wilson, both of them search for Esther and think of ways of redeeming her position in the society. Eleanour Bourg Donlon (2010) in the Introduction to *Mansfield Park: Ignatius Critical Editions* highlights the domestic issue by stating:

> It is clear that calling *Mansfield* a novel about ordination at the same time acknowledges that it is a novel of family and of the intricacies of a lived morality, delving into questions of the education and upbringing of children, of conservative values, of conflict between the family community of the landed gentry and the expectations of an urban social scene, of parental authority, of the propriety and place of romantic love, of the tension between propriety and sophistication, and of the dangers of undue familiarity outside the family circle... (p. 18-19).

To conclude, in *Mansfield Park* domestic issues of the countryside are based on morality, property and upliftment of social status. The woman's settlement on marriage is parallel to the man's advances in career. Bad elements are evident in the domesticity of the countryside, brought by Henry and Mary Crawford from the city of London. Critic Kalpakgian (2010) in her essay discusses how "the novel also portrays the flirtatious, philandering manoeuvres of Henry Crawford, who trivializes marriage, turning it into games of conquest" (p. 447). In the comparative analysis of the nineteenth-century countryside and city life in Britain, it is seen that in cities prostitution and other evils are damaging the domestic sphere. The Industrial Revolution also emerged as a damaging element that destroyed the domesticity of the working class. People working in industrial areas ended up suffering from many diseases. The death of John Barton's son in *Mary Barton* is an example of how children were dying due to the poor living conditions brought about by the Industrial Revolution. Lawrence Stone (1977) in *The Family, Sex and Marriage: England 1500-1800* discusses these evils of the Industrial Revolution. He writes:

> The family as it evolved in England during the Early Modern period was limited in its options by certain unyielding facts. The first was the very high level of mortality, particularly infant and child mortality, which affected all classes of society, although the poor suffered more than the rich. Until this mortality rate began to fall in the late eighteenth century, family limitation was a gamble with death, since at any moment all the

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children might be wiped out by an epidemic disease, leaving none to inherit the property and family name (p. 651).

After the death of John Barton's son, nobody remains in the Barton family to carry forward the family name. On the issue of morality and marriage it is comprehensible that in cities, men tried to objectify women and to some extent, women also went for extra-marital affairs. These incidents took place in the life of some Victorian literary figures too. Gertrude Himmelfarb in her book *Marriage and Morals among the Victorians* (1986) discusses the life of five couples – the Carlyles, the Ruskins, the Mills, the Dickens, George Eliot and George Henry Lewes. She says:

> These couples are notorious for the "irregularity" of their relationships. Two pairs (the Carlyles and the Ruskins) never consummated their marriage; one (Eliot and Lewes) lived together without benefit of marriage; another (the Mills) had a long-standing, intimate relationship while she was married to another man; and the fifth (the Dickens) separated when he fell in love with another woman (p. 5).

It is evident that some literary personages' lives were full of upheavals. The point being that city life in 19th century Britain was quite at odds with conventional norms of morality compared to country life, where morality was very important. But the condition of women was the same in different ways in both places. It is ironic that for more than half of the 19th century, Britain was ruled by Queen Victoria, and yet the Victorian era was a time of misery and patriarchal subjugation for women in both the countryside as well as in the cities of Britain.

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The Courtship Between the Lion and the Lamb: An Analysis of Rape Culture Romanticised in *The Twilight Saga*

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Abstract

The paper aims to study how rape and the stereotypical notions of gender get perpetuated in society as part of its popular literary discourses. It shines light on the ways in which selected fiction series glamorizes and sexualizes violence against women. Sexual violence is often ignored, excused, condoned, and even encouraged throughout the world. This paper analyzes the development of rape as a cultural phenomenon branching from deep-rooted sexism and misogyny that extends towards rape myths, locker-room talks, victim shaming etc. It gives special attention to treat rape as a social crime that breeds through psychologically, morally and ethically built cultural tools where violence against women is normalized. It tries to emphasize the importance of a gender sensitive approach in popular literary discourses. *The Twilight Saga*, initially released as a novel series, and later through movie adaptations with the same name, has a massive fan base especially amongst young-adult audiences. This investigation raises consciousness regarding the various problems of toxic masculinity, misogyny, consent, violence, trauma etc. portrayed in the series.

Keywords: gender, popular culture, rape culture, sexism, sexual violence, *The Twilight Saga*

Rape culture denotes a culture where rape and sexualised violence are normalised, and sometimes, condoned. In other words, it is "a set of values and beliefs that provide an environment conducive to rape" (Boswell and Spades,1996, p. 133). In a rape culture, factors like public attitudes, religious beliefs, shared values, and even the very unconscious of the society will be deeply rooted in phallocentric ideologies so much so that, a culture of rape can thrive there. It "includes jokes, TV, music, advertising, legal jargon, laws, words and imagery, that

make violence against women and sexual coercion seem so normal that people believe rape is inevitable" (FORCE: Upsetting Rape Culture, Glossary section). Since these factors mostly exist as cultural undertones, which make them difficult to decode, they are often ignored, excused, condoned, and even encouraged throughout the world. Considering the social existence of the crime, rape cannot be eradicated when it is approached as an individual crime. According to Susan Brownmiller, "The ideology of rape is fuelled by cultural values that are perpetuated at every level of our society, and nothing less than a frontal attack is needed to repel this cultural assault" (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 389). The existence of collective behaviours like spreading and believing rape myths, normalising stalking, glamourisation of locker room talks and bro codes, lack of basic awareness about consent, fewer concerns about individual space, propagating the idea of women as vulnerable and fragile, patriarchy existing within economic relations, religion, law, military and almost all social and state-sanctioned institutions, end up contributing to the culture of rape.

The reinforced subordination of women and other gender minorities in a rape culture sets gender-based sexual violence as their centre of action. It talks about power that is both material and psychological. The important factor is that the struggle between men of unequal power relations often takes up their manifestations on women's bodies to prove one's superiority over the other. The chaste female body symbolizes an object under possession, the loss of which hurts the pride and honour of men who 'own' it. Therefore, she bears the burden to submit to the law of men, deviation from which will raise a threat to her existence. The object is thus deprived of an agency, even to conceptualise the violence committed on her body and to understand her own victim position. This discursive enforcement socially and psychologically nullifies her capability further as an individual self and justifies the normalization of gender-based violence by projecting women as "naturally" prone to violation and therefore requiring the protection of men. Here, rape and sexual violence becomes a strategy for creating intelligible gender positions where women constitute the vulnerable other.

As discussed earlier, when violence against women gets integral to a culture, it becomes a culture of rape. Rapes are not just some occasional scandals of physical coercion, happening out of a momentary overflow of lust, or out of deviant sexual behaviour. They are rather a by-

product of nuanced sexism and rigid notions of gender integral to a culture. Sexism is a form of power manipulation that routinely regulates women's subordinate position through the pillars of paternalism, heterosexuality and gender differentiation (Fraser, 2015). In her work, "From "Ladies First" to "Asking for It": Benevolent Sexism in the Maintenance of Rape Culture" Courtney Fraser (2015) argues that

> …benevolent-sexist ideologies construct women as creatures devoid of agency, leading men to routinely presume women's consent to sexual activity whether or not such consent in fact exists…Gender norms, and the rigid binary division of gender, must be broken down if the rates at which rape is committed and acquitted are to decrease (p. 141).

Studies on literary works that perpetuate/reflect the culture of rape are an efficient tool to understand the deeper gone roots of normalization of violence against women. Dealing with popular media and the issue of rape, Dianne Herman (1989) elaborates on the idea that,

The imagery of sexual relations between males and females in books, songs, advertising and films is frequently that of a sado-masochistic relationship thinly veiled by a romantic facade. Thus, it is very difficult in our society to differentiate rape from "normal" heterosexual relations. Indeed, our culture can be characterized as a rape culture because the image of heterosexual intercourse is based on a rape model of sexuality (p. 21).

The Twilight Saga, considering its immense fanbase and the problematic portrayal of a romantic relationship it presents in front of its young adult audience, offers a scope of analysis on how sadomasochistic relationships get its "thin veil of romantic façade" within the arena of popular culture. The novel series by Stephenie Meyer has become a sensation and cult throughout the world despite the regressive anti-feminist attitudes it has, sugar-coated in the name of 'selfless love', that glamorizes and sexualises violence against women.

It is the story of Isabella Swan, a seventeen-year-old girl, who falls into a love triangle between a vampire Edward Cullen, the most desired bachelor of the town and Jacob, the head member of the werewolf community, who swore an oath to protect the town from attacks of bloodthirsty vampires. These two men represent power that is both masculine and supernatural whereas Bella represents human and fragile.

Throughout the series, she can be seen strangled between Edward and Jacob in their ego combat to establish authority over the female subject of their passion. These male characters also forms a dichotomy where Edward represents perfection; the white, straight cis man who is educated, immensely wealthy and well respected in society. He belongs to a heteronormative upper-class family, where the gender-based division of labour prevails and flourishes. On the other hand, Jacob is all that Bella is trying to overcome. He belongs to a broken, lower-middle-class family of a Native American community. Even though Bella identifies with Jacob, considering her familial and economic status, as a woman craving for social mobility where her gender limits her from achieving the same, she ultimately chooses Edward not only for material prosperity but also for the protection and fulfilment that she believes she requires. As De Beauvoir explains (2011),

> …the adolescent girl wishes at first to identify herself with males; when she gives that up, she then seeks to share in their masculinity by having one of them in love with her; it is not the individuality of this one or that one which attracts her; she is in love with man in general (pp. 774).

Since the story is presented to us in a first-person point of view, the narrator's thoughts justify Bella's actions claiming them as her conscious choices, thereby blocking the readers from thinking deep into the situation. However, the question of how limited her choices are and how they are discursively produced in the first place is never addressed by the author. Even when Bella asks her monstrous boyfriend to kiss/have sex with her, she is less concerned about the fact that Edward can end up killing her. It is her body image issues that are rather troubling her.

Bella marries Edward just after her 18th birthday; the minimum age required to get legally married. Following this, on their honeymoon on a private island, she constantly tries to seduce her husband and gets disappointed by the probability that she is not 'desirable' enough for him. She thinks of herself as not worthy because women are supposed to be desired by men. This exemplifies the narrowing down of female sexuality to a parameter according to what men want. The feeling of lack in Bella ignites a desperate craving to overcome it by merging with the absolute. Her love for Edward is this path from otherness to the individual. It becomes her central motivation, even though she knows the transformation will be physically painful and that she most probably will have to give up parts of her personality.

Even though there are genuine efforts from the author to portray Edward as a gentle and understanding partner, he often expresses his ability to coerce his power over Bella and his struggles to resist the urge. This scenario is problematic on so many levels. One, it indicates the idea that men are inherently capable of hurting women and they have to make immense effort to resist it. Thereby, naturalizing the power of one gender over the other. Secondly, Edward's 'cravings' for Bella complicate physical intimacy in romantic relationships. For example, Edward often compares Bella to his favourite food. More than a sexual connotation between two intimate partners, Edward's use of this analogy stands out more as an objectification to show how threatening her presence is to him that he has to struggle to control his 'cravings'. At some point, it evokes a sense of gaslighting and victim blaming where women are blamed for inciting violence committed against them just by existing. In another sexually intimate interaction between the two characters, Edward pushes himself back from Bella so forcefully that he will not go on to the extremes of killing his lover. Here, the narration establishes Edward's sexuality as a violent one and romanticises this as a repercussion of his mighty love.

Twilight more than often celebrates male aggression by inextricably merging it with the idea of love and protection. The main motivation for all the battles and conflicts in the novel was formed as part of protecting Bella or her daughter but never for other moral causes. In a conversation where Edward and Bella confront their love for each other, Edward says that "and so the lion fell in love with the lamb" (Meyer, 2017, p.296) comparing himself to the lion and Bella to a lamb. Just like in the poem of William Blake, the symbolism of the lion and the lamb forms a dichotomy where one represents the all-powerful, violent, and authoritarian and the other represents innocence, purity and powerlessness. This is reminiscent of the discursive reproduction of intelligible genders, disguised as an innocent remark as it is romanticized. For Courtney Fraser (2015),

The process of gender differentiation generates both "benevolent" and "hostile" effects: on the one hand, reverent attitudes toward women as pure and good, and on the other, the violence or abandonment that can occur when a woman abdicates her status as a "lady" by stepping outside the lines of proper deportment (p. 149).

The violations done to the normative "lady attributes" by another character Rosalie, a shallow, haughty woman who desired her fiancé only for his material wealth, somehow make her deserving of the rape that was committed on her while she went out alone at night. This strategy is double-edged. Firstly, it sets the idea that women are fragile and thus need the protection of men and secondly, it blames the same women on whose bodies the violence was committed. In the first part of the book series, "Twilight", Bella nearly gets raped by a group of men as she was walking alone along a street at night. Edward, using his supernatural abilities saves Bella from trouble and blames her for the 'reckless' action. Even the author, through the first-person narration, blames Bella for ignoring the codes of gender conduct. Such victim-blaming attitudes, readily available in real-life patriarchal social equations, burden the gendered other to always be cautious as if they are always at a point of threat. This uneasiness causes them to be restless in their own flesh and body, thus the compulsion to seek protection from the absolute, the men. This reveals how we as part of a culture of rape tactically displaces the responsibility of a crime from the culprits to the victim when it comes to gender-based violence.

By sexualizing violence and sexuality as violent, The Twilight Saga promotes the culture of rape even to a fetishist level. For example, Edward is never blamed for hurting Bella during the act of sex. His actions are rather justified as involuntary and inevitable. Stephenie Meyer also pays special attention to 'whitewash' the Cullens by describing them as vegetarians, as they choose to predate only over animals, establishing a superiority or purity on them over their other vampire companions. However, the Cullens coexist with the rest of their vampire community, tolerating them and making peace with them, just like men cooperate with rapist men. Mayer makes a deliberate effort in the novel series to 'angelize' Edward while celebrating his abstinence and portraying him as a predator of sexual offenders. Edward used to prey on rapists and sexual offenders for blood before he turned into a so-called vegetarian vampire. However, the important point to note here is that the now civilized, modest vampire, does not make any efforts to stop sexual harassment ever since his blood thirst is satisfied.

The novel begins with Bella moving to Forks, Washington, from her mother who is separated from her birth father Charlie. This separation from her compassionate mother and reuniting with Charlie whom she

barely knows places Bella in a position of anxiety, displacement and a quest for a place of her own. Charlie is a police officer, whose authority over Bella represents the authority of the state. Bella is more of a cook and a housekeeper in her father's house. Charlie, even being a police officer, keeps Bella under house arrest when she gets attacked, rather than legally reporting it. The failure of the system to find a proper solution for gender crimes without withholding the rights of the victim is further naturalized in the name of protection in this novel. Bella fears Charlie to object to her relationship with Edward because he is a potential predator. This is ironic because she denies questioning the consequences of that relationship on her own. Even though it can be justified as an individual choice, the feelings of a minor, towards a hundred- and fifty-year-old vampire cannot be understood as an informed choice, especially when the society she lives in systematically compels her to submit to the law of men.

Bella calls herself clumsy, thin and a 'trouble magnet' and thinks of herself as merely capable of owning her existence. She is constantly in search of somebody to belong to. Whenever Edward is absent from her life, she goes to Jacob to fill the void that Edward has left her with. Edward at times reminds Bella of how weak she is and always takes up the responsibility of 'protecting' her. There are many instances in the text where he uses his physical/supernatural abilities to save Bella from trouble. The irony here is that the very man who is concerned about her safety is the same man who ends up killing her. The situation is not any different with Jacob. Jacob has the potential to become a werewolf within the outrage of passion so he has to control it vehemently. Both Edward and Jacob want to save Bella from each other but both of them, in several instances, end up hurting her. According to Susan Griffin (2015), "In the system of chivalry, men protect women against men.... Indeed, chivalry is an age-old protection racket which depends for its existence on rape" (p. 11). By posing women as vulnerable to rape and other such violations, the society of men sweeps away her agency and invalidates it. It is a discursively produced historical violence against women. In this text, both Edward and Jacob are portrayed as rational beings as they are always in control of themselves whereas Bella is allowed to be emotional and reckless at times because she has the shielding of the men. The vicious tradition of patriarchy to establish men as saddled with the responsibilities of safeguarding women from assaults/injuries that men themself perpetrate and also with the pain

of prohibiting themselves from committing it takes up its manifestations throughout this novel. The power dynamics here are reminiscent of the Whiteman's burden to civilise his colonies.

Susan Brownmiller (1975) describes rape as something that has "played a critical function" in society since prehistoric times. For her, rape is a tool, "a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear" (p. 15). In the Twilight Saga also, the control over Bella's sexuality, sexual choices and the fear and insecurity evoked in her, put the protagonist entangled between the male forces acting around her. Many of the male characters in her proximity, including Edward's brother-in-law try to attack Bella, an attack that symbolises rape since the very process of a vampire preying on his victims can be read parallel to rape. James Twitcher's work (1980) "The Vampire Myth" explains that "as the vampire takes blood, he is also inseminating his victim with evil. Rape is played out through the gauze of fantasy" (p. 87). They do it violently, without consent, and also in a predatory manner. In the text, Bella is in a constant quest to escape from unwanted attacks by Edward's rival vampires so that her purity, honour and chastity can be maintained. This fear in her helps and justifies the men in action to retain their control and superior position over the inferior other.

Stalking is also a normalized practice in this novel. Edward persistently stalks Bella while she is asleep, inside the privacy of her own house. When Bella finds it out, she does not report it to the police or even share it with her father for she perceives it as Edward's way of expressing love. Bella is very much consumed with the idea of love so that, as Beauvoir (2011) says, from her early adolescence, she is

> …used to seeing him as a sovereign, with whom equality is not permitted…her dream of surpassing her being toward one of those superior beings, of becoming one, of fusing with the sovereign subject; there is no other way out for her than losing herself body and soul in the one designated to her as the absolute, as the essential" (p. 773).

Bella wishes to attain the status of a supernatural entity, a supreme being through Edward as she cannot do it on her own. She is neither an earning member of her family nor does she have a college degree. According to Courtney Fraser (2015), "women whose freedom is already imperilled by the condition of economic dependency, agency is further

stripped away as they tolerate marital abuse that they might otherwise feel empowered to reject" (p. 153). Bella's immediate pregnancy after the marriage with Edward later ties her to the sacrificing mother figure. She had to give up her life as a human to give birth to her vampire baby. Bella's rebirth as a vampire comes after the birth of her child, indicating her rebirth in life as a mother, thereby acquiring the sense of fulfilment through motherhood that she failed to gain earlier. In her work "Possession: Erotic Love in the Law of Rape", Ngaire Naffine (1994) details that in the Western philosophical tradition,

Man is the procreator, that sexual production-reproduction is preferable to his "activity" alone, to his "project" alone. Woman is nothing but the receptacle that passively receives his product, even if she has pleaded, facilitated, even demanded that it be placed within her. When a woman is swept off her feet, when she loses herself in love's swoon, she serves to reveal the potency and sexual autonomy of man. While she is eclipsed by his erotic power, he finds himself affirmed: as the one 'of fame,' of 'perpetual action,' the productive one. 'She is most immediately and dramatically a woman when she lies beneath a man, and her submission is the apex of his manhood (p. 7).

Therefore, women become a chattel, an object or a possession that can only be possessed by men. In the Twilight saga, the control over Bella's death and life after that are left with Edward while she just lies there motionless, symbolic of her stagnant agency. It is he who decides whether Bella should be left to die or continue to live by becoming a vampire.

In this Novel series, Stephenie Mayer never mentions an adult involved in a conversation with the teenagers regarding sex and consent. Charlie, Bella's father, is hesitant to talk to her openly about sexual matters. Before her marriage with Edward, Charlie wanted to know whether Bella was a virgin but didn't bother to educate her on matters like consent, safe sex, etc.

Education, both in school and of the general public, is perhaps the most direct route to changing public perceptions of gender stereotypes, sex, and rape…. in addition to expanding official school curricula, it is crucial that parents take an active role in helping their children learn about consent and communication. Even in interactions where

sex is not mentioned at all, children are absorbing information and lessons—about gender, communication, respect, boundaries, and self-assertion—that they will one day apply in the course of a sexual exchange (Fraser, 2015, p. 199).

Neither the school nor the parents provide the teenagers in this text with basic sex education. Rather, the sexual policing done on Bella's body, by both Edward and Charlie further complicates the situation. The woman trying to exercise her sexual freedom is always under surveillance by the men in her immediate surroundings in this series. The surveillance often goes to the extremes from damaging her truck to stalking Bella at times so that it will restrict her mobility.

 Female objectification has repeated occurrences throughout the Twilight Saga. Carles Cullen, the vampire father of Edward Cullen, looking for a beautiful bride for his son, turns Rosalie into a vampire just because he finds her pretty and fit to be Edward's wife. The imprinting mechanism that happens within the werewolf clan also objectifies women by portraying them as 'things that hold men" to earth. When Jacob forcefully kisses Bella in one instance, she tolerates it and later, the narration portrays Jacob as a sad victim of romantic rejection. Bella feels sorry for him because she could not reciprocate that "love". The trivialisation of some major violations of personal boundaries and consent, makes the plot line regressively complicated. According to Brownmiller (1975), rape (here, sexual violation) has further significance as conquering women acts as "the vehicle of his victorious conquest over her being, the ultimate test of his superior strength, the triumph of his manhood" (p. 225). Therefore, Bella becomes a mere tool for Jacob's attempt at ascension to superiority. The violent sexual acts of Edward, that leaves Bella in pain are also justified in the text as an extension of his power rather than a flaw or limitation. Portraying men's sexuality as violent and violence as sexy is another problematic aspect of the work.

Heteronormativity is a key aspect of a rape culture. It pushes other sexualities to the margins and therefore builds a society that is run by the law of cis men. There is no representation of queer identities in the Twilight universe. All couples existing in the novel are heterosexual, establishing the heteronormativity it represents. The traditions like weddings and high school proms along with familial institutions are all included in this book in a way that they stay within the bounds of

normative gender relations. While Courtney Fraser (2015) argues that "dominant norms can be (should be) challenged by advancing subversive uses of those norms, there is a way out from under the prescriptive gender stereotypes that help perpetuate rape culture: as a society, we must make room for more alternative renditions of gender" (p. 190). Also, the emphasis on the extremely pale white skin of the vampires that shines like diamonds under sunlight as a point of attractiveness binds the narration to undertones of racism. There are no black/brown vampires in the text. The animal-like descriptions given to the werewolf clan who are already marginalized for their ethnicity as an indigenous Quileute tribe, are also questionable. Even within the werewolf clan, there is only one she-wolf.

The compilation of Essays by Emilie Buchwald, Pamela R. Fletcher, and Martha Roth (1995) titled "Transforming a Rape Culture", describes rape culture as

> A complex set of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. In a rape culture, women perceive a continuum of threatened violence that ranges from sexual remarks to sexual touching to rape itself. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm (p. 11).

The recreation of the concept of man as saviours of women who gives them the gift of protection through forcing obedience is one of the key aspects of a rape culture. It propagates men's sexuality as naturally violent while simultaneously encouraging the notion that women enjoy being violently dominated by men. This dichotomy envisages specific social roles for each gender that ultimately traps women in the protection racket. This particular paper analysed how the selected text has been contributing to the normalisation of sexism and rape culture to an alarming level. In the Twilight saga, the components of a culture of rape are deeply intertwined with its narration, symbolism, plot and even through the very construction of a romantic hero who is a monstrous predator. The culturally imposed division of sexes is maintained throughout this work of fiction so that it makes the social responsibility and gender sensitivity of the author questionable. To conclude, it can be stated that cultural sexism, which is "the conscious form of female degradation designed to boost the male ego by offering 'proof' of his native superiority (and of female inferiority) everywhere he looks"

(Brownmiller, 1975, p. 389) is not only present but also romanticized in this text.

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Challenges for the Implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 in Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The paper examines the challenges for implementing the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, (PWDVA) 2005 in Arunachal Pradesh, India. This specific Act is completely victim-oriented and provides instant relief from all kinds of abuse within domestic setting. It guarantees to safeguard an aggrieved person whether wife or female-live-in partner from abuse by husband, male-live-in partner, or any biological relatives. The Act has been established considering international commitments and human rights enshrined in the Articles of the Indian Constitution. This Act is a civil law, whose advantage is that it complements existing criminal laws. The objective of this Act is to provide immediate support to women exposed to domestic violence and to empower them. There are provisions of various rights and assistance under the Act. The present study will analyse some of these, such as assistance of protection officers, residence relief, and monetary relief. Nonetheless, there is an assumption regarding the existence of a gap between implementation of the Act and its practice in the state. Hence, the study attempts to examine secondary data to find out challenges for the implementation of PWDVA, 2005 in the state.

Keywords: domestic violence, protection of women, PWDVA-2005, Arunachal Pradesh

Introduction

There are 25 major tribes and more than 100 sub-tribes with distinct historical backgrounds and cultural practices residing in Arunachal Pradesh. Despite the fact that women are an integral part in all communities in the state, dominance of patriarchal value system is prominent. Adding to that many women have also perceived these values and norms of patriarchy conceivably through socialization process and other means. In order to empower women, gender equality in all spheres need to be exercised in the existing society. Women empowerment, a socio-political reform which is gaining a momentum in the 21st century, get hindered by the approach of patriarchy. Moreover, it encourages to continuing the practice of domestic violence against women. The National Family Health Survey- V, (2019-2021) shows in the percentage that the ever-married women between age group 18-49 years who have experienced domestic violence is 24.8% in the state. Adding to that, ever-married women who have exposed to physical abuse during any pregnancy is 3.0%. Survey also reported that young women between the age group 18-29 years who have experienced sexual abuse is 0.7%. Note that when we convert this percentage into numbers, it is massive. To eliminate domestic violence the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 was established, (henceforth, PWDVA-2005). It has been more than a decade since the Act came into force in India on October 26, 2006. This particular Act provides protection from domestic violence, encompassing physical, psychological, sexual, verbal, emotional and economic abuse. It also provides protection to women from harassment, threats, and humiliation. This Act, therefore, is very broad and inclusive. The Act is a direct response to international agreements and human rights given in articles 14,15,19 and 21 of the Indian Constitution, reflecting India's commitment in fulfilling the responsibility of eliminating domestic violence. Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1999 and United Nations (UN) confirmed that domestic violence is a global issue. Therefore, discussion on domestic violence against women is a necessity.

Objective

To investigate the challenges for implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 in Arunachal Pradesh.

Method

To find out challenges for implementing the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 different secondary data sources were analysed. Thus, Reports from National Crime Records Bureau, National Family Health Survey-5, United Nations India, Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women were examined. Furthermore, other available studies and researches were also investigated.

Challenges for the implementation of PWDVA-2005 in Arunachal Pradesh: An Observation

Based on the observation made by the researcher following considerable challenges have been found. They are-

1. Many women, especially in rural areas of the state, are not aware of their legal rights and provisions of the PWDVA-2005.

2. Due to fear of judgement, general outlook and mindset of society about women, it can be assumed that there might be numbers of underreported domestic violence cases in the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

3. Although there is monetary relief for aggrieved person mentioned in the Act under section 20, economic and financial dependency on men is acute in Arunachal Pradesh.

4. The PWDVA-2005 stated that disposal of cases should be within 60 days. Unfortunately, the majority of cases takes more than 6 months to 2 years according to the studies. Hence, longer duration of trials weakens the will power and spirit of women who fight for their existence and survival.

5. The PWDVA-2005 enshrined the importance of Protection Officer (PO) who are the point of contact. The function and responsibility of the Protection Officer (PO) plays a pivotal role in bringing justice of aggrieved person or any other witness of the domestic violence. Sadly, there is an insufficient number of protection officers or service providers in the state. Hence, Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women (APSCW) has recommended for the appointment of more POs from law graduate in the state.

6. There is paucity of services and infrastructures which deals with domestic violence against women in the state. According to the annual report 2022 published by Arunachal Pradesh State Commission for Women (APSCW) there are only 5 women police stations. So, the issue regarding implementation of the Act is critical in the state.

7. Although the Act guarantee that aggrieved person or the victim can reside in the same house as the perpetrator of domestic violence, but there is no provision for the police protection during her stay at place. Thus, the residential protection under PWDV-2005 is not so practical.

8. There is no provision for monitoring and evaluation of the Act. Hence, it is right to say that there exists lack of coordination between the state and the centre in bringing smooth functioning of the PWDVA-2005. Hence, annual report maintenance by the state and submission to the centre is imperative.

9. The researcher has observed ambiguity in actual practice of PWDVA-2005 in the state because there is almost or no records of case registered under this Act. The recent data of 2021 published by National Crime Reports Bureau (NCRB) also shows that only 1 case has been registered under this Act in Arunachal Pradesh. Whereas, 112 cases have been registered under IPC 498(A) which also deals with domestic violence against married women.

10. According to the observation, it is also worthy to say that there exists lack of funds which hinders the process of effective implementation of the Act. The APSCW has also recommended the state to take this issue seriously while formulating the plan for state budget because various provisions under the Act cannot be fulfilled with limited amount.

A debate on how men occupy both public and private spheres in comparison to women

Choudhury and Kumar (2021) revealed that in the context of North-East Indian society, women enjoy less freedom than men. Women hold less money but more work and responsibilities within the domestic

setting as well as in the society. The findings also revealed that in the decision-making process, it is usually end up as a joint decision where the decision is primarily made by male members in the household. the study also found that in comparison to the male counterparts, often women's needs are ignored and considered to be a secondary matter or otherwise overlapped with the family's overall needs. Furthermore, women's participation in the politics has been neglected and denied. This poor representation of women in the democratic bodies tells that the fact about exclusion of women in political decision-making. Hence, Women Studies should be given more importance specifically in a country like India. Women Studies enables us to understand the equality and imbalance in the social system (Pande, 2018). Women empowerment will not be achieved if women's economic opportunities are hampered by social, cultural, and religious barrier. Hence, eradication of feminized poverty, women education and elimination of domestic violence against women should be geared up effectively (Sumathi, 2018). The relationship between economic development and gender relation has always been very multidimensional and complex in Arunachal Pradesh. Some women have better status then men but still there exists certain disparities in various dimensions. Moreover, due to gender stereotype, patriarchal norms, and unable to percolate economic development programmes and schemes implemented by Government at the grass root level, the economy is lacking behind and women tends depend upon their respective husbands. The key interventions to empower women and girls in Arunachal Pradesh includes promoting rights of descent ownership, and inheritance, promotion of awareness of gender education and gender education, use of technology in women training programmes, and implementation of laws related to freedom, protection and rights of women (Mandal, 2016; Bage, 2019; Lendo & Nayak, 2021). The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, (2001) is to be implemented more forcefully to achieve gender equality on every walk of life (Bala, 2013).

Discussion

Ample researches made on the PWDVA, 2005 also corroborates the present paper (Ghosh & Choudhuri, 2011; Dutt, 2018; Goel & Shambu, 2019; Das & Lakshmana, 2020). Studies revealed that there is no proper system set up in various states to monitor and assess its implementation in India. Besides, most states have not recruited independent Protection Officers (POs) rather given additional charge to the existing government

officials. Reviews on this Act also disclosed that allocation of budget for the effective implementation of the Act is very limited in states. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD), Government of India, set no benchmark regarding allocation of funds for the various provisions under the Act. Hence, it is the responsibility of each state governments to reform the issue of funds. National Commission for Women (NCW) reviews on the PWDVA, 2005 in five regional consultations also found that there exist region-specific or state-specific issues. Hence, the law needs an urgent comprehensive change in order to meet the requirements of states and make it more inclusive in its execution.

Conclusion

The results of the paper clearly envisage and reflects the fact that women are more susceptible to domestic violence. Regardless of geographical location, educational status, social status and age of women, the practice of domestic violence is prevalent. Therefore, awareness regarding PWDVA, 2005 and specific rights of women including other criminal laws should be geared through various programmes and conferences. Gender equality cannot be achieved by adopting certain policies, committees, commissions, and acts alone. Women empowerment should be kept in the centre while planning for desired social transformation and advancement. In addition, change of attitude towards women should be acquired by the people to make the society safe and sound.

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Women Entrepreneurs of India: A Case Study of Maheshwari Gramodyog's Owner–Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract

This case study is a part of a three-part case study done for a larger research. It examines a woman entrepreneur's path within the framework of international trade. It explores the difficulties and possibilities faced by women entrepreneurs in India and looks at the current legal and legislative frameworks via a case-study analysis. The study identifies important gaps in gender-disaggregated statistics, loan availability, and gender-specific trade legislation requirements. The report emphasizes the necessity of gender mainstreaming and offers suggestions for empowering women entrepreneurs, promoting inclusion, and bridging gender gap in global commerce.

Keywords: women entrepreneurs, empowerment, gender disaggregated data, economic development, inclusivity, gender-specific provisions, gender-neutral laws

I. Introduction

The empowerment of women entrepreneurs in the realm of international trade is a critical aspect of economic development and gender equality. This research paper investigates the experiences of a successful woman entrepreneur while shedding light on the broader challenges and opportunities faced by women in this field. It also examines the existing legal frameworks and suggests policy interventions for a more inclusive and equitable international trade landscape. The case study presents the life and entrepreneurial journey of a woman from East Delhi who overcame significant odds to establish a successful business in the spice industry. Her story serves as a lens through which to analyze the socio-cultural and economic challenges and opportunities faced by women

entrepreneurs in India. It highlights issues such as lack of access to credit, gender biases, and safety concerns.

II. Research Methodology

Research Objective
The primary objective of this research was to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in India, focusing on a case study of a successful owner of a masala company. The research aimed to provide insights into the socio-cultural, economic, and legal factors that impact women entrepreneurs in the context of international trade.

Research Design
This study will employ a qualitative research approach, specifically a case study design. Qualitative research is appropriate as it allows for an in-depth exploration of the experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by the female entrepreneur.

Data Collection
Data was collected through in-depth interviews with the female entrepreneur who owns a masala company. The interviews were conducted using an interview schedule with open-ended questions. Additionally, the researcher gathered supplementary data from relevant documents and records related to the business.

Sampling
The researcher has used purposive sampling to select the key respondent for the case study. Given her extensive experience in the masala industry and her success as an entrepreneur, she is a representative case for this study. This case study is one part of a three-part research. The first part was an analysis of data collected from various government institutions. The research was published, and the findings suggested that gender-segregated data is not available to the government of India.

Data Analysis
The collected data was to be analyzed through thematic analysis. The researcher transcribed the interviews, coded the data, and identified

key themes related to the challenges and opportunities faced by the entrepreneur. The analysis categorized themes into social, cultural, and economic challenges and opportunities, as well as individual traits that contribute to success.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent, ensuring her privacy and confidentiality. The researcher maintained objectivity and avoided bias in data collection and analysis. Any sensitive information disclosed by the respondent was handled with care.

Timeline and Resources

The research timeline spanned approximately six months. The primary resources were access to the respondent for interviews, research materials (interview schedule, documents), and access to relevant literature and legal documents.

Expected Outcomes

The research was expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs in India, with a focus on the masala industry. The study also will contribute to the literature on gender disparities in entrepreneurship and provide insights for policymakers and organizations aiming to support women entrepreneurs.

Significance of the Research

This research is significant as it sheds light on the experiences of a successful woman entrepreneur in a male-dominated industry and highlights the socio-cultural, economic, and legal factors that affect women's participation in international trade. The findings can inform policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

Case Study

The researcher scheduled her first meeting with the respondent in March 2019 and conducted interviews using an interview schedule tool with

open-ended questions. She also recorded a series of interviews with the same respondent.

1. The respondent Mrs Maheshwari lives in East Delhi. She was married in 1984 and is over 60 years of age.

2. She comes from a lower-middle-class family in Hapur and lives with her father, mother, six sisters, and one brother. Her father did not have a stable income but she somehow struggled to finish her graduation.

3. After marriage in 1984 she came to Delhi and stayed in Delhi ever since with her husband and two children.

4. She was never in any full-time employment. She took training in Khadi for masala and papad making in the year 2003 when her husband met with an accident and became bedridden.

5. She had no choice but to do something for her family with a husband and her two young children who were born in 1985 and 1990 respectively.

6. Her children are both well settled and her son and daughter-in-law are living in the UK as engineers and her daughter is settled in Ahmedabad as an entrepreneur in exports herself.

7. Maheshwari started in the year 2003 after the respondent thought of setting up a masala unit after training from Khadi Gram Udyog. Khadi Gram Udyog is called Khadi and Village Industries Commission now and its head office is located in Mumbai.

8. The respondent underwent the training under a subsidy scheme of the commission for which she had enrolled herself in the same year that is 2003. To set up a masala unit she had nothing but a gold chain which she sold and got money for the raw material.

9. The respondent told the researcher that this was a big decision of her life and during those days there were no special schemes for entrepreneurs to avail loans and credit.

10. She mortgaged the family flat at Patparganj took a loan of rupees 6 lacs and proceeded with setting up a unit in Samaspur Village in East Delhi.

11. Control over family property was never an issue for her but she regrets that she had to mortgage her house. However, she also mentions that she owns three properties in Delhi and one in NCR today. She bought these properties herself but one in the name of her son and one in the name of daughter.

12. She is planning to shift her residence to Greater Noida.

13. Maheshwari Gram Udyog started with 5 to 10 products initially and now sells about 150 products all over Delhi and NCR in 35 outlets of MORE, Nafed, Sanchta, Air Force Canteens, and Khadi outlets including outlets in CP.

14. They had a tie-up with Big Bazaar but it did not work well for them.

15. The turnover of 2018-19 is estimated to be One Crore INR which is a jump of 20 percent over the previous financial year. The respondent was quite confident of it when she said this.

16. As regarding expansion plans, the respondent said that she is talking to outlets in Punjab who had approached her herself, and in Allahabad, Kanpur, and Lucknow.

17. She sees that there will be logistical problems as these outlets wanted to use smaller vehicles for transport but the respondent insisted on bigger trucks to deliver the products as she feared that the products would be damaged due to space issues in the smaller vehicles.

18. The outlets have yet not come back with their revised proposal. So outside Delhi, Maheshwari Masalas are available only in outlets in Punjab. She also mentioned that it was not so easy to expand due to manpower issues as she feels that hired persons cannot do justice to the control and management of the business as she would do.

19. Her husband who is older than her in age and who had met with an accident in 2003 sits in the factory these days as she is taking care of the marketing of the product and continuously meets people. Her children live out of Delhi and she mostly depends on labour for running her factory.

20. She mentioned that to meet people she uses public transport to save travel costs.

21. The respondent said she had a lot of family support and according to her otherwise she would not have been able to go for exhibitions in far-off places like Chandigarh for which she had to stay away from home and family for long periods, sometimes as long as one to two months.

22. With staying out of the house till late at night to oversee the sales in the showrooms like Khadi in CP, she said that women are very unsafe even in central areas like Connaught Place where a couple of times men misbehaved with her by asking if she would accompany her for shopping etc.

23. One senior manager in the same trade called her to the office in the evening when everyone left and she could sense something wrong and she immediately had to rush home. The next day onwards that person made some comments about how he waited for her but she did not come despite him asking her to come to his office.

24. The Respondent was of about 45 years of age then. She mentioned some more incidents when she felt unsafe and this is possibly the reason that she felt that being a woman was a drawback in being an entrepreneur. She also mentioned rampant corruption and how those responsible for payments for her goods always asked for bribes to the tune of ten percent of her cheque amount.

25. Sometimes she gave in and sometimes she fought. And when she fought, she faced harassment. During those years she was so scared of the people that she also fell prey to a newspaper advertisement which was a fraud and duped her of Rs. 15000.

26. She attributes her wisdom to all that she learned by getting cheated in the beginning years of her entrepreneurship.

27. For start Maheshwari Gram Udyog applied for a loan at the Bank of Baroda in 2003 under the KVIC subsidy scheme. She was told that she would not get any loan and that unless she had collateral, she could not approach the bank for a loan.

28. She showed her flat in which she resided at IP Extension as collateral and a loan of 6 lacs and 25 thousand was disbursed, and this too not until she had met the General Manager of the Bank. She is paying her installments for this. The house is still in the bank's name.

29. Regarding the unit where her products are produced, she said that she rented it for 6500 in the year 2003. Today she pays a rent of 28000 for the same area. She has 8 full-time women workers and three boys. She has about 7 to 8 temporary workers at any given point of time of which more are women.

30. MGUL makes about 150 products today. Despite financial problems like cash flow issues, the unit is doing well. The products are registered and licensed as per the food safety standards of India and the respondent said that she knows the procedures about these.

31. When the researcher asked the respondent about her expansion plans again, she mentioned that she is already 60 plus in age and would be difficult due to this though she was in perfect health, she had her apprehensions, including the fact that her kids are not going to continue with her work as they are in different professions.

32. The second reason she gave was for exports she was fluent in foreign languages and has only workable English. Her main mode of communication is Hindi and therefore she feels that it might be difficult for her to carry on in the field of exports. She however was not averse to the idea of expanding to International Markets and knows reasonably well of the quality of the products required for exports.

33. Regarding online business she tried selling her products on Amazon once but due to logistical issues like packaging single product for every single order, she did not go ahead with it as it required a lot of logistical infrastructure and of course money.

34. She therefore confined her products of offline outlets only. Financial constraints were also mentioned by the respondent for exports to other countries.

35. She said that though she knows that now loans and schemes are available for exporters, she also thinks that what is on paper turns different for people who are vulnerable like women when it is implemented.

36. She says out of ten thousand applications about ten are selected and out of these ten, people who are known to bank managers or to anyone inside the system are about fifty percent. So, the loan disbursal rate is 10/10000.

37. Digitisation had improved things but only at the middlemen level. Once processing is to be done, the officers responsible make it difficult for the common man.

38. Regarding the drawbacks and benefits of technology, she said technology has only helped her and she never saw it as a drawback. She said that her product Bhuna Dalia is the first to show when one Google roasts Dalia and therefore it helps in marketing her products and the visibility of her products.

39. Regarding the government schemes, the respondent said that the PM EGP scheme is a wonderful scheme. But as mentioned before, the beneficiaries do not benefit due to lack of education, and lack of awareness generation.

40. She suggested that to improve the situation schools should have entrepreneurship skill training, and make people aware of these schemes from the school level.

41. Regarding patenting she said she had never thought of patenting her products. When the researcher explained to her the benefits

of patenting, she said that she might think about it as she was not very aware of it.

42. The respondent also did not know anything about Special Economic Zones and the benefits she would have as an entrepreneur to run a unit from an SEZ. She however mentioned that she is happy with her current unit as she finds it difficult to even move to another State due to the logistical challenges.

43. Her proximity to wholesale markets for procurement makes it convenient for her to continue operating from XYZ Village in East Delhi.

44. However, she thinks that if there is access to transportation and the government provides better infrastructure in the SEZs she is not averse to the idea that a new entrepreneur could start a unit in SEZ, or someone who already has a unit could move there.

45. She is contented with the current factory in a Village in Delhi (East) and would at least for the time being not move from there.

46. The respondent is expecting to see Maheshwari Gram Udyog give more returns in the future as people have preferred her product to other popular brands on the shelves.

47. They are launching some new products soon.

Analysis of the Case Study

After coding the case study transcript, finding key indicators, and symbolizing them through a word or group of words, the researcher put them under different heads namely, social, cultural, and economic challenges and opportunities. Individual traits of the entrepreneur were also coded and put under push and pull factors for the personality requirements of an entrepreneur.

After putting all the codes in tabular form, the researcher gave the tables to three respondents from different fields including banking, research, and entrepreneurship, and received replies in the form of

handwritten marks assigned to the indicators. This was done to rank the indicators from the perspective of each challenge and opportunity faced by the woman to find the challenges and opportunities that would make a successful or unsuccessful entrepreneur.

The mean of rankings was taken to impute a number to each indicator. The tables are as under:

Social Challenges and Opportunities

Table 1

Challenges	Rank
Never stepped out before	2
I felt overwhelmed by the sudden turn of events	4
Safety	5
Corruption	3
Age is seen as barrier	1

Table 2

Opportunities	Rank
Was in Delhi	2
Had a degree	5
Had access to institutions	1
Access to police machinery	10
Access to a good transportation network	8
Communication and Telephone services	6
Internet access	9
Customer base strong	4
Access to raw material	3
Access to labour	6
A good circle of contacts and peers	7

Cumulation of Table 1 and Table 2

Table 3

Social Challenges and Opportunities	Rank
Never stepped out before	-2
Felt overwhelmed by the sudden turn of events	-4
Safety	-5
Corruption	-3
Age is seen as a barrier	-1
Was in Delhi	2
Had a degree	5
Had access to institutions	1
Access to police machinery	10
Access to a good transportation network	8
Communication and Telephone services	6
Internet access	9
Customer base strong	4
Access to raw material	3
Access to labour	6
A good circle of contacts and peers	7

Cultural Challenges and Opportunities

Table 4

Challenges	Rank
Role changed to Bread Earner all of a sudden	5
Had to part with Streedhan	6
City bound mostly	4
Caregiver function entrusted to her	1
Faced sexual harassment	2
Corruption	3

Table 5

Opportunities	Rank
A close knit family set up	1
Extended family support	2

Cumulation of Table 4 and Table 5 gives the following figure
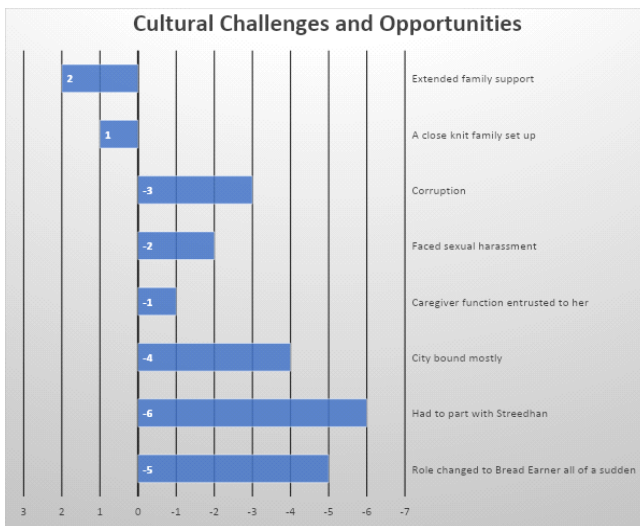
Economic Challenges and Opportunities

Table 6

Challenges	Rank
Middle Class	8
Increase in competition	4
Credit crisis	1
Cash flow problem	2
Labour Issues	3
Lack of Managerial Personnel	5
Lack of Entrepreneurship Training	6
Lack of Management Skills	7

Table 7

Opportunities	Rank
Property Owner	1
Days of NEP	6
Good Customer Base	7
Globalisation	5
Awareness due to Communication	4
Bank Loan Availed	2
Subsidy from Khadi	8
City Unit	3

Cumulative of Table 6 and Table 7

Table 8

Challenges and Opportunities	Rank
Middle Class	-1
Increase in competition	-4
Credit crisis	-5
Cash flow problem	-6
Labour Issues	-7
Lack of Managerial Personnel	-8
Lack of Entrepreneurship Training	-2
Lack of Management Skills	-3
Property Owner	1
Days of NEP	6
Good Customer Base	7
Globalisation	5
Awareness due to Communication	4
Bank Loan Availed	2
Subsidy from Khadi	8
City Unit	3
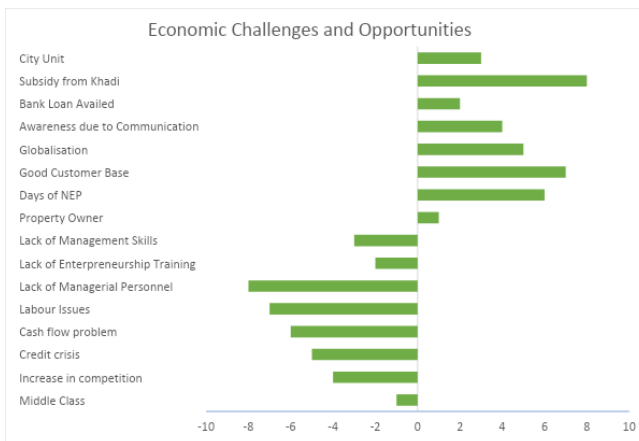
Analysis of Individual Traits

Table 9

Push Factors	Ranking
Emotionally Controlled	4
Knew crisis management	1
Enterprising	2
Learnt about schemes	3
Risk taker	5
Aware of the challenges and believes in finding solutions	8
Handled and confronted bad men	6
Frugal in spending	7
Investment oriented	9
Educated	10

Table 10

Pull Factors	Ranking
Lacks Managerial Aptitude	2
Lacks Delegation	1
Does not want to expand her Business	5
Seeks Family Permission	3
Contented with income	4
Thinks of age as a barrier	6
Started late and old now	7

Cumulative of Table 9 and 10

Table 11

Push and Pull Factors	Ranking
Emotionally Controlled	4
Knew crisis management	1
Enterprising	2
Learnt about schemes	3
Risk taker	5
Aware of the challenges and believes in finding solutions	8
Handled and confronted bad men	6
Frugal in spending	7
Investment oriented	9
Educated	10
Lacks Managerial Aptitude	-6
Lacks Delegation	-7
Does not want to expand her Business	-4
Seeks Family Permission	-5
Contented with income	-2
Thinks of age as a barrier	-3
Started late and old now	-1

Push and Pull Factors of Individual Traits
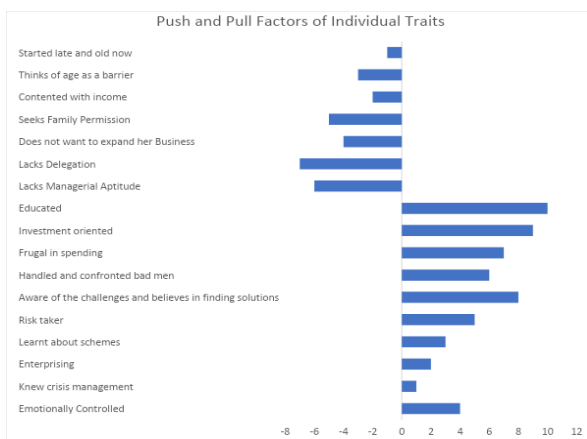
Discussion

The case study of the woman entrepreneur of Maheshwari Gram Udyog reveals a complex tapestry of challenges and opportunities that women entrepreneurs face in India's international trade landscape. Her entrepreneurial journey underscores the resilience and resourcefulness required to navigate a male-dominated business world. The most significant challenge highlighted in this case study is the difficulty women entrepreneurs face in accessing credit. Despite the respondent's determination, she encountered resistance from financial institutions when seeking a loan. This difficulty in securing financial support can be attributed to various factors, including traditional gender biases, collateral requirements, and a lack of awareness among women about available financial schemes. Addressing this challenge is crucial for enabling more women to embark on entrepreneurial journeys. In India, several laws and initiatives have been introduced to promote women's access to credit, such as the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and the Stand-Up India scheme. These initiatives aim to provide financial support, collateral-free loans, and assistance to women-owned businesses. However, there is still much work to be done in raising awareness about these opportunities and ensuring their effective implementation.

The safety of women entrepreneurs is another pressing issue illuminated by this case study. The respondent shared her experiences of feeling unsafe, especially when working late hours or traveling to unfamiliar areas. These safety concerns can deter women from fully participating in the business world, particularly in sectors where they may be more vulnerable. Indian laws, such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013, provide a framework for addressing such issues. However, there is a need for more comprehensive safety measures and awareness campaigns to create a secure environment for women entrepreneurs.

Gender biases and corruption emerged as significant challenges in the case study. The respondent faced gender-based discrimination in her interactions with male colleagues and officials. Additionally, she encountered corruption when dealing with payments for her goods. India has enacted various laws to address corruption, such as the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988. However, tackling deeply ingrained biases and corrupt practices requires continuous efforts in raising awareness, enforcing existing laws, and promoting ethical conduct in business transactions.

The respondent's journey underscores the importance of education and awareness in empowering women entrepreneurs. She managed to overcome challenges partly because of her education and access to information about entrepreneurship opportunities. To empower more women, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, it is essential to introduce entrepreneurship skill training and financial literacy programs from the school level. Initiatives like these can equip women with the knowledge and confidence needed to pursue entrepreneurial ventures.

The case study also highlights the role of technology in marketing and visibility. The respondent's success in leveraging technology to promote her products and gain visibility on digital platforms is commendable. Encouraging more women entrepreneurs to embrace technology and providing them with the necessary training and resources is vital in today's digital age.

Findings

Management Training-The respondent could have done better and got into exports if conditions were provided by the government to enhance her business acumen and risk taking abilities by insuring the risks. She required management training.

Safety- Safety of the women in new towns may keep them away from new opportunities, though this has to be tested.

Potential- She had the potential to export her products but the capacity had to be built by joint efforts of the government and the institutional machinery.

Limitations

When the respondent was interviewed and told this story about herself and her business, she was very comfortable speaking to a stranger and did not hesitate to explain her journey. But, the social desirability of answers was to be tested to be ruled out here as she knew that her interview was being used for research. She had consented to come on camera and knew that the interview was recorded. The set therefore was a formal set and the chances of being embellished with decorative words could not be ruled out.

To corroborate the answers, therefore, the respondent was interviewed again on the phone and she was consistent in her statements. Even on the day when the respondent showed her factory to the researcher, she reiterated the challenges and therefore as far as the objectivity with which the questions like challenges related to credit and corruption were answered, it is to be mentioned that she seems to have given unbiased and real answers.

However, on a couple of occasions, the respondent was inconsistent or unclear. For example, she tried to avoid the questions relating to why despite owning three properties in Delhi, she was paying the loan installments against the house where she lives. But largely the answers about business, credit, and the policies of the government, the role of the village commission, the officers and corruption, and the challenges faced on a day-to-day basis were consistent.

Conclusion

The case study serves as an example of the tenacity and tenacity of female company owners who, despite having to overcome many challenges, can start and grow their companies. The respondent's path from having few resources to having a prosperous firm is proof of the fortitude and tenacity of female entrepreneurs. According to the report, women entrepreneurs face several difficulties, such as difficulty obtaining loans, safety worries, and gender prejudices. Significant obstacles include corruption and a lack of gender-sensitive trade laws. The study also reveals opportunities that women entrepreneurs can tap into, such as having a strong customer base, access to raw materials and labour, and the ability to leverage technology for marketing and visibility. To unlock the full potential of women entrepreneurs in international trade, there is a clear need for government support. This includes providing access to credit and financial resources, imparting entrepreneurial skills and management training, and ensuring the safety and security of women entrepreneurs in their business endeavours.

Gender mainstreaming should be a top priority, both in policies and programs. Initiatives aimed at promoting women's participation in international trade should be developed, and gender-disaggregated data should be collected to better understand and address the specific needs and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs.

Suggestions

Financial institutions should develop specific loan products and schemes tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs. Collateral requirements should be flexible, and efforts should be made to ensure that women have equal access to credit. Government agencies and organizations should offer entrepreneurship training programs to equip women with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in business. These programs should focus on areas such as business management, marketing, and financial literacy.

Enhancing the safety and security of women entrepreneurs is crucial. This includes measures to protect them from harassment and ensuring a safe working environment. Government and industry bodies should work together to create safe spaces for women in the business world. Policymakers should review and amend trade legislation to include gender-specific provisions that address the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs. This could involve measures to promote gender equality in trade policies and practices.

Government agencies should conduct awareness campaigns to inform women about available schemes, subsidies, and support mechanisms for entrepreneurs. This should start at the school level to instill entrepreneurial skills from an early age. Encourage women entrepreneurs to embrace technology for marketing, e-commerce, and improving business processes. Provide training and resources to help them leverage digital tools effectively. Support women entrepreneurs in exploring international markets by simplifying export procedures, offering incentives, and providing information on foreign trade opportunities and regulations.

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The use of Literary Devices in Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja*

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Abstract

The classic Odia novel *Paraja* is concerned with the representation of the Paraja tribe inhabiting the hinterlands of Odisha. The word 'Paraja' originates from the term 'Praja' which means the 'subjects of a country'. The novel is not just a sociological document; its philosophical aspects acquire great significance and deserve academic scrutiny. Written in 1945, *Paraja*'s sociological concerns still remain contemporary. In the words of the translator who rendered it in English, the social is lifted to the level of the metaphysical in the hands of Gopinath Mohanty who is the author of this novel. *Paraja* might be labelled as an ethnographic document, but the novelist does not compromise on its literary aspects. The language, according to the translator, is colloquial at one point and lyrical, at the next; it becomes forthright at one moment and effervescent, at the next. Therefore, it becomes difficult to distinguish the borderline between prose and poetry in the novel. While the prose narrates the tragic tale of a tribal family, the lyrical style alleviates the serious mood of the novel. In the process, the narrator makes profuse use of symbols and images in the depiction of the social and cultural modes of the Paraja tribe. He mentions that words are inadequate symbols to express an experience. Considering the limitation of words, he finds images and symbols useful to convey human experiences and emotions in a much intense way.

Keywords: symbol, image, poetic style, literary device, narrative technique

Paraja is not just a fictional work but an authentic record of the hopes and sentiments, dreams and desires, pleasures and miseries of a tribe which really exists. The author Gopinath Mohanty, an eminent Sahitya Akademi Award Winner literary intellectual of Odisha, has left an extraordinary indelible imprint in the global fictional scenario with his huge and outstanding collection of fictional as well as non-

fictional outputs. Most of his writings are in Odia but the more notable ones have been translated into English to cover a vast range of audiences. *Paraja* is one such masterpiece that creates the contours of the fanciful world of the Paraja inhabited village, Sarsupadar with different shades, colours and dimensions using a language that is rich and lyrical. The landscape is imaginary but the tribe really exists in the backwoods of some districts in Odisha. Their main locations are Koraput, Pottangi, Semiliguda, Lamatpur, Laxmipur, Jeypore and Dashmantpur. Their mother tongue is Parji which is a part of the Dravidian language family.

As an administrative officer, the novelist was privileged to come in close proximity with the untouched tribal heartlands of the state. *Paraja* and a number of his other fictions that deal with the same tribal concept emerge out of his direct communication, first-hand experiences and the substantial knowledge of the tribal ethos. The novel bears the stamp of a magnificent onlooker who has studied the challenging circumstances, living conditions, cultural nitty-gritty of the Paraja tribe and has presented them with an exotic flavour and an antique appearance. The polychromatic sketches of fascinating scenery, graphic details of rugged mountains, dense forests and dirty villages, glimpses of superstitions and folklores, celebrations of festivities and seasonal merrymaking, tribal dialects and lyrical modes of communication, music and mass dances hold a special space in the novel that gives the picture of an ancient and enchanting cosmos. Sulochana Das (2015) has made an elaborate study of these aspects of the novel in her book *Odia Upanyasa re Adibasi Jibanacharja* [The Depiction of Tribal Lifestyle in Odia Novels]. She has compared the portrayal of tribal way of living presented in *Paraja* with those depicted in some other texts and has identified similarities in the cultures of different ethnic communities.

Sitakant Mahapatra (1992) in his critical text *Reaching the Other Shore: The World of Gopinath Mohanty's Fiction,* has expressed that ethnographic details are an integral part of the 'epic design' of *Paraja*. However, *Paraja* cannot be confined to the identity of a mere documentation of ethnographic diversities or a synthesis of some ornamental, figurative notions. It narrates the sad tale of the protagonist Sukru Jani and his whole family who have to undergo a torrent of miseries due to the inhuman Shylock, Ram Bisoi. He is a typical money-lender wearing gold pendants and thick bangles that mock the dark lives of his bonded labourers. He is not concerned with anything else

other than exploiting people, hoarding wealth and other all other assets. The powerful government officers are his partners in crime. All the resourceful non-tribal people are on one side and the striving tribal people are on the other side. The people are too submissive to resist and they have to pour their blood, sweat and tears in the service of the lender. They treat the forest guard as a god and call him 'great lord' (Das, 1987). "He could easily be recognised as one from the civilized world, because in these hills where people went about half-naked, he was dressed in shirt and shorts". His clothes signify his status as a civilized man. There is a contrast between the civilized forest guard and the half-naked Paraja. The guard is smart whereas the Paraja people are naïve and "their heads were like stones" that cannot articulate the reason behind their harassment (pp. 33, 42). Their prostrated position in front of the superior class signifies their servitude (Hall, 1997). In his insightful essay "Bikalpa Adhunikata: Sarala Mahabharata ra Ekalabya Upakhyan (Janapada o Jungle Madhyare Sangharsha ra Chitra: Ekalabya Upakhyan ru Paraja Parjyanta)", Gaganendra Nath Dash has made an acute observation on this aspect, the conflict between forest dwellers and city people. In this unusual but convincing analysis, Dash (2022) has shown how since the early days of Odia literature, from Sarala Das's fifteenth-century rendering of the *Mahabharata* to Gopinath Mohanty's mid-twentieth century novel of epic proportions about the Paraja tribe, the marginalization, exploitation and displacement of the tribal population have served as tropes in Odia texts.

There is a sharp distinction between the status of the affluent usurper Ram Bisoi and his troupe and the hollow existence of the impecunious tribal (Das, 1987). The bullock-carts, horses, cattle, warehouses overflowing with crops, grain-bags etc. symbolize wealth and power. On the other hand, the ancestral land of the protagonist stands for the glory and heritage of the previous generations. It also signifies a sense of belongingness and attachment. The old, miserable handcuffed protagonist is struggling to safeguard this ancestral land and is chasing his dream of uniting his family. Sitakant Mahapatra (1992) has rightly stated that the novel has drawn the attention of readers by portraying the social problems and the role of fate in human life in a language that is essentially *figurative* by nature (p. 4). Similarly, Mayadhar Mansinha (1962), the well-known Odia poet and writer of *History of*

Oriya Literature, finds Gopinath Mohanty's language to be vital, evocative and metaphorical.

In the portrayal of the Paraja village, the novelist has not depicted a typical, idyllic rural area. He has given a realistic picture of a tribal village with all its imperfections. It does not create any nostalgia to visualise the lush countryside. The trashes and the stinking odour are ticked as the special features of this village:

> The ground was littered with leaves, rolled into cups for drinking. Every home had in front of it a pile of mango kernels, thrown after the fruit had been eaten. Turmeric paste, which had been rubbed off human bodies, lay everywhere. Mandia found the piled-up rubbish and the stale odours in the wind deeply comforting; these were the sights and smells of home. (Das, 1987, pp. 167-168)

The novelist has not tried to cover up the filth spotted in the tribal society but he has tried to capture the attention of the readers to the diseases caused by the unhygienic living conditions. The imagery of 'odour' and 'litter' has been profusely used throughout the novel. The huts of the tribesmen have been demonstrated to be 'littered with dirt and rubbish' (p. 121). These images are constructed to be compared with the 'fragrance of money' and grandeur at the money-lender's empire (p. 119). And "in the darkness of the dingy shelter", the people are devastated both by the natural and man-made catastrophes (p. 37). The gloomy sights which predominate the novel make it very clear that darkness is part of the tribal community. The images of darkness give the impression of a world inhabited by a pitiable people under the subjugation of the powerful. It also confirms the existence of another world that is lighted and brightened by power and diplomacy. The collocation of the odour of rubbish in the huts of the Parajas and the smell of opulence in the lender's house affirms the disparity of two worlds completely different from each other: one is full of splendour and the other is utterly miserable (p.120).

The anthropomorphic metaphors in *Paraja* are prominent traits of the narration. Some inanimate objects have assumed human aspects to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the novel. The tired huts and bald thatches give the impression of an impoverished world. Even the inanimate objects are equally helpless as the living beings. The natural objects have been personified and animalized: 'Ferns grew as tall as a

full-grown man, waving their fronds like an elephant's trunks' (p. 161). Destiny has been personified as the main villain in the life of the people which controls their goals and aspirations. (Das, 1987).

The narrator has used the natural phenomena as symbols in different contexts. Critics justify it by citing the deep-rooted connection between tribal people and nature (Maharana, 1993). The star, the sun, the moon, the sky and clouds have been used as symbols to convey the happiness as well as predicaments of the characters. For instance, the 'sun looked more dead than alive' and the moon is getting pale. They have been used to communicate a gloomy setting (Das, 1987, pp. 157, 260). 'Darkness lay heavy and frozen under the big trees. Presently a bright star rose in a corner of the sky. It was the planet Venus, come out in the dark with a torch, to look for a tiny, lost soul' (p.157). The novel abounds with the images of several other natural objects to convey human emotions: 'Valleys, mountains and sky were buried beneath the sooty darkness and the air was heavy with feeling of desolation' (p. 261). These symbols indicate dejection and a sense of loss: 'When the clouds rumbled in the sky, lost memories returned and gnawed at the heart' (p. 226).

Some recurring symbols such as 'darkness, 'black', 'night', 'drab' etc. have been used more than one hundred and seventy times in the narration of the source text to imply both the inner as well as the outer darkness. These are potential symbols that signify the absence of light or happiness in the life of Paraja people: 'His hut was dark inside him lay a dark sorrow; but the night bore no resemblance to him. He was like a black cloud intruding into the moonlight' (p. 369). The word 'night' has been employed more than a hundred times and another closely connected word 'evening' has been put to use more than seventy-five times in the narration. The all-pervasive caliginous set-up is a pertinent layout of the novel. The protagonist's 'pitch dark' hut is a mute spectator of the afflictions which he has to go through. At the end, Sukru Jani and his sons find the 'darkness before sunrise' as a convenient time to negotiate with the lender as the darkness will save them from the possible embarrassment but they end up taking the life of the antagonist (p. 371).

One can identify a variety of images which stand for death and decay in the novel. These symbols also imply the passage of time and its

fleeting nature. They allude to the fragility of human life and the inevitability of death. The narrator's philosophical views on the realities of human existence which are related especially to the life of the protagonist are thus reflected: 'Wild spear-grass had sprouted on the land, grown up, withered and died; the leafless stumps of wild weeds stood in the fields; measuring the passage of hours and days with their shifting shadows … The birds would fly away and the surviving crickets would set up a funeral chant to mourn their dead' (p. 214).

The novelist has made use of a great number of visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory and olfactory images in the description of the food habits, living styles, celebrations and cultural practices and also in the depiction natural objects: 'The whole house stank of musty grain bags, manure and sweat from the Sahukar's cattle and sevants" (p. 199). There are long descriptions which evoke a medley of different sense imageries: "Wild pigeons cooed softly in the groves and green pigeons perched in the jhodi trees, breakfasting on the berries" (p. 178).

A key feature of the narrative devices is the usage of animal, bird and reptile metaphors to signify the tribal affinity with beasts. The Paraja man roars like an animal; rouses to fury like an animal and can melt in the darkness like a 'fox' (Das, 1987, pp. 29, 31). There is a close association between the Paraja people and the animals when it comes to their movements: Jili sways like a 'serpent' and lies like a 'dead snake'; She and Bili flit from one tree to another like a pair of cranes (Das, 1987, pp. 203, 156).

In *Paraja,* the novelist has attempted to highlight the several facets of poverty prevalent in the Paraja society. The 'empty cooking pots', 'tattered clothes', 'patches on clothes', 'cheap aluminium utensils' behind the bamboo curtains give the picture of an impoverished society (pp. 207-208). The bonded labourers in the novel seem to be in a more miserable state than the other characters, as they are deprived of proper food, shelters and clothes to protect their life from the dire predicaments. The outside darkness that is 'dense' and 'close' is nothing compared to the inner darkness that is intensified due to the innumerable times of twists, turns and torments in their life (p. 229). Their huts are like a 'cattle-shed' with the rotten grass thatch inhabited by snakes, scorpions and white ants. In short, it is a horrible place for human existence. They are divested of strength and voice to stand against odds. None

of them dares to raise a single word of protest against the oppression caused by the voracious wealth-hoarder but soliloquize in the 'darkness' of their 'little cells' (p. 37). The frequent use of the term 'dark' in *Paraja,* symbolises the wretchedness and dejection in the life of those people (p. 368). There is a melancholic atmosphere wherein "everything was passing away in the same unchanging rhythm, endlessly, into the same oblivion…" (p. 296). The novelist has selected vocabulary, diction and imageries not only to convey his genuine concern for the tribe but has also made use of the de-familiarization effect to sensitize the readers to the lives of poverty-stricken people. Though he has tried to make the readers aware of the innumerable challenges faced by Paraja people, he has been careful not to portray indigence as their only identity or their way of life.

'Powdered mango', 'tamarind seed', 'roots', 'leaves', broth cooked with the 'larvae of wild wasps' are described to be constituents of the Paraja culinary system and the novel also figuratively comments how the flesh of the Kondh is 'toothsome' due to their intake of the flesh of monkeys (pp. 200, 273). The Parajas have been shown as snake-eaters in the novel. *Adibhumi,* a novel by the renowned Odia novelist Pratibha Ray, depicts a similar identity of the Bonda tribe regarding their culinary habits (Roy, 2015). Eating habits are often associated with status, civilization and the advancement of a class. In *Paraja,* the novelist has highlighted the abject poverty and other problems faced by the Paraja people with empathy but he has also blamed their luck, backwardness, isolation for the same using several images which signify the conditions of the people (p. 37). The depiction of hills and forests situated in the 'unmapped corner' of the world suggests a primordial way of life of the natives who are 'luckless' or in a way destined to survive under harsh circumstances. Their existence in the unknown corner of the world is a clear indication of their non-availability on the social scene. The symbol 'map' plays a significant role when it comes to the representation of the identity of a culture. Pioneering anthropologist Henrietta Lidchi has discussed it in her seminal essay "The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures". She has pointed out how the description of the location of a culture significantly defines the representation of its identity. She explains how the exhibition of an ethnic culture through maps is basically the projection of a different world wherin the unfamiliar might be made comprehensible (Lidchi 1997). The whole of Lidchi's interpretation of Western ways of

representation of indigenous cultures may not be applicable here but the geographical arena which the novelist creates in *Paraja* gives the impression of an unknown world whose identity has to be searched for. The natives as the novel portrays survive in scarcity and are destined to suffer. But the novelist has not highlighted only those aspects but has made use of visual imageries to draw attention towards the hierarchal boundaries that are shared between the dominant and the indigenous. The depiction of traditional and customary practices also go side by side with the story of Sukru Jani's fight against the belligerent world. Life is celebrated through the tune of the musical instrument 'dungu dunga' and the rhythm of folk dances, through the hardships of relationships and marriages, through the unique practices of festivals and rituals. The songs and poems go hand in hand with the prosaic expression just the way the tribal women dance keeping in pace with the men of the tribe. The symbols, images and rhythm found in the songs and incantations ease out the seriousness of the prosaic expressions. But sometimes rhythm and resonance in prose are achieved through images, diction, metaphors, symbols and other figures of speech. The English translation features the best of the Odia original when it comes to the use of different images but the subtleties of parallelism and contrasts are more prominent in the source text:

> Kuhudi chirichiri doora Kondha gaanra
> Jodi boienfire gotae puruna kondha ragini
> Duietara, Khudi upare Khali godia godi (Mohanty, 2014, p. 427).

In Bikram K. Das's translation the line reads thus:

> Through the mist came the sound of two
> Kondh flutes played together, the notes
> Chase each other through the mist … (Das, 1987, p. 359)

As described in the passage, the notes of the flutes played by the Kondh chase each other. This tune gives the impression of melodious poesy; it communicates something intense through poetic devices. The fine nuances of the original text cannot be captured through translation. But, in spite of the limits of translation, the translator has attempted to keep the essence of the source text in the best possible ways.

Another illustration may clarify the point better: Eka funkake sabu udigala, chutia mushara sabu dhana daulata gala. (Mohanty, 2014, p. 25)

This sentence has been rendered in English thus: "In the same way, a single puff of wind can destroy what has taken a field mouse a lifetime to amass" (Das, 1987, p. 37).

The condition of man has been compared with that of a field mouse. The endeavor of the mouse can go in vain by a mere single blow of wind just the way a human being can lose everything due to a cruel twist of fate. In his critique *Kathashilpi Gopinath Mohantynka Kalajayi Kruti Paraja* [*Paraja*: The Timeless Creation of Gopinath Mohanty]*,* Surendra Maharana (1993) has observed how the novelist has skilfully employed the devices of comparison and poetic notes throughout the narrative.

The novelist's knowledge regarding the Paraja culture is unquestionably vast as his reconstruction of tribal lexicon, folktales and songs testify to this very fact. His experiences with the tribal folks have helped him represent a tribe which cherishes its existence amidst forests and hills of Odisha. One of the unique features of the novel is the balance between the Odia vocabulary and the tribal lexicon. One doesn't overshadow the other. Though the images and symbols are found in Odia, the tribal words have kept their identity intact and both languages don't clash with each other. The tribal characters are interacting with each other in their native language but when it comes to delivering long speeches, they are speaking in Odia. The writer has maintained coherence in juxtaposing both languages and also in switching between them depending upon the situation. In *Things Fall Apart,* Chinua Achebe has not translated the native words into English but has used them as they are to capture the essence of Igbo language as a result of which these words have maintain their originality. Similarly, the tribal idiom in *Paraja* has not lost its identity and there is an integration of Paraja vocabulary to the narrative. The cultural revitalization through language has been achieved by both the novelists. However, Ravi Shankar Mishra has identified a sense of uneasiness on the part of Mohanty in writing the native dialects in Odia script. Mishra has reflected on the linguistic aspect of the novel in his critical text *Tika O Tippani* [Notes and Observations] and has described how the stark contrast between the

'alarabalara' (incoherent) talk of the tribal characters and the razor-sharp statements of the moneylender signifies the supremacy of one group and the marginality of the other (Mishra, 2005, p. 24).

Many symbols, metaphors and other expressions of the source text are not found in the English translation. For example, the source text mentions the names of some historical places and rulers to indicate whether Paraja people are affected by monarchy: Parajas do not care who the 'Muslim Aurangzeb' or 'Maratha Shivaji' were and they are not bothered to know who 'Siraj ud-Daula' or 'Warren Hastings' were (Mohanty, 2014). These names are symbols of power and interestingly they do not find a place in the translated version of the text. It simply narrates that Paraja people do not comprehend anything beyond their farm lands and are indifferent to the rise and fall of kings. (Das, 1987). Similarly, there are other expressions which have been manipulated in the translated text. In the Odia text, the novelist has addressed the people as beasts of the jungle which symbolize aggression, fierceness, savagery etc. (Mohanty, 2014). But there is no direct association of tribal people with animals in the translated version. The translator has mentioned them but in a subdued and refined manner (Das, 1987). The metaphorical association of Paraja people with animals to highlight their wild aspects is more conspicuous in the original text.

The novelist has adopted a lyrical style to narrate the story of the Paraja tribe in general and the plight of the protagonist Sukru Jani in particular. The poetic devices are thus part and parcel of the novel to depict both the pathos and symphony of human existence. According to the translator, "flowers bloom only to droop dreams; huts crumble and dreams are swept away like cobwebs, but all this does not invalidate the act of blossoming. Huts have to be built and dreams must be dreamt … Life goes on" (Das, 1987, p. vii). The translator has tried to maintain the flavor of the original work but he has admitted the limitation of translation and has mentioned that "no translation can hope to capture the varied riches of Gopinath Mohanty's Odia prose" (p. viii). The accurate and appropriate use of lyrical devices by the novelist has not only enriched the novel but has also helped him portray the world of the Paraja tribe in a realistic manner.

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Conflict and Peace: Media Reportage of the Sri Lankan Crisis in 2022

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Abstract

The article looks into the part played by civil society forums in restoring peace in Sri Lanka following the nation-wide political and economic crisis that overtook the island nation in 2022. It analyzes civil-society discourses on the Lankan crisis that appeared in Press editorials and the advocacy communication of NGOs articulated in the social media. The Press provides a platform for civil discourse, to debate and articulate on current affairs and generate public opinion to guide the decisions of ruling governments. This paper examines the editorials that appeared in leading Indian and international newspapers as well as narratives of non-government organizations (NGOs) to analyze the communication discourses on the political crisis that had engulfed Sri Lanka. The findings show that journalistic coverage along with citizen-mobilization initiatives can work towards resolving disputes and restoring peace in strife-ridden conditions. Peace-oriented journalism and humanitarian efforts by civil-society groups like NGOs can play a vital role in resolving conflict and working towards restoration of peace.

Keywords: peace building, peace-oriented journalism, civil society, public sphere, mobilization

Introduction

Sri Lanka faced a massive economic and political crisis in 2022 with excessive fuel, electricity and food shortages and the economy defaulting on international loans. The crisis in Sri Lanka was attributed to myriad factors, that include myopic and reckless borrowings to finance infrastructure projects in Colombo, unanticipated Easter bombings in the country in 2019 and the Covid pandemic, all of which contributed

to high inflation, shortages and the collapse of the economy. This was attributed to the misdoings of Sri Lanka's elected president, Gotabaya Rajapaksa who imposed a state of emergency in the island nation. This resulted in public unrest as the Gotabaya government failed to allay public distrust with prolonged power outages, queues and shortages of essential commodities. Tens of thousands of people took to the streets in Colombo, demanding ouster of the Rajapaksa government which was successfully achieved in July 2022. The hundred-day peaceful public protest has been hailed by the global media and captured aptly in the headline as 'Supreme power of the people' (https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/7/18/supreme-power-of-people-sri-lanka-marks-100-days-of-protests), upon whom the Sri Lankan authorities' had resorted to violent crackdowns. The present article has examined the media discourse on the Sri Lankan crisis during the political turmoil in the island nation.

Literature Review

In consonance with the theme of this article which pertains to media reportage on the Lankan crisis, it becomes pertinent to discuss the concept of the public sphere. The media provides the platform to debate and articulate on current affairs and build public opinion. This makes the media a key agent of the public sphere, which is a non-intimidating arena that garners views from all sides to influence public opinion. Jurgen Habermas (1962) has described the public sphere as a notional space that enables discussions among citizens. In this digital era, the role of social media provides ample spaces for civil society groups to present varied points of view. The mass media help to channelize communication, contribute to confidence building, education, correcting misconceptions, consensus building and finding solutions to conflicts. Lasswell (1948) explains that the functions of media pertain to (1) observing the environment and reporting about it; (2) Analysing and interpreting and providing editorial opinions on various issues; and (3) disseminating various aspects of diverse cultures. Other functions of the media suggested by Mass Communication theorists pertain to that of entertainment and mobilization, the latter being that of garnering public support for humanitarian objectives. The Social Responsibility Theory, one of the normative theories of the media emphasizes that the Press ought to fulfil the informational, social and moral needs of society and should set the agenda for the society's good. This entails that journalists should adhere to the principle of objectivity and to

serve the society better they should be guided by professionalism and regulatory codes. The Press has a major role to play in liberal democratic societies. According to Ram (2011), Newspapers more than any other media have over the years performed invaluable democratic functions which he lists as: 'the credible-informational, the critical-adversarial, investigative, educational, and agenda-building' (p.13). Ram describes these as positive contributions of the media.

Kenneth Newton (1999) explains the 'mobilization' theory arguing that a combination of rising access to ever larger amounts of political information from the mass media and other information sources have helped to mobilize citizens, both cognitively and behaviourally. Research studies point to a slow but steady increase in political interest, discussion and ideological sophistication among the citizens in the United States, Britain, France and Germany over the past few decades. Newton (*ibid*) has noted that one of the significant aspects of contemporary politics is the rising level of cognitive mobilization which is associated with greater levels of political participation, political discussion, more political information, increased political awareness and more refined ideological skills among the public. Uslaner (2003) points out that among the media, the credibility of newspapers continues to be the highest and leads to greater civic involvement, attributable to the long-standing history of newspapers and the credibility of the printed word.

Peace building

Peace building has been defined in several ways. Kilmurray (2006) refers to peace building as:

> The opening of opportunities and spaces which support all members of society to (i) discuss and address the causes of conflict (ii) contribute to influence and benefit from social, political, economic and cultural life (iii) develop a sense of self-worth and common belonging based on shared values of justice, equity and interdependence and (iv) develop a positive and creative respect for diversity through mutual trust, tolerance and acceptance. (p.3)

Moshe (2001) notes that peace building should aim towards creation of autonomous and interdependent groups that work for justice and equality of all citizens through active civil society participation and community building. Moshe (*ibid*) has stressed upon humanity and universal well-being to build peace.

Peace-oriented journalism emanating from the media can contribute to peace building efforts. Civil society groups like NGOs also have a vital role in peace building efforts by liaising and networking to provide more options, to forge agreements and to have more strength for working towards reconciliation efforts (Abozaglo, 2009).

Research Methodology

The present article has examined the journalistic discourse on the Sri Lankan crisis as well as the advocacy communication that emanated from leading NGOs to restore peace in Sri Lanka. For this purpose, two leading newspapers from Sri Lanka, three from India and two international newspapers were analysed during the time period of June 2022-July 2022 – the peak period of the public protests. The methodological framework consisted of editorial analysis of prominent newspapers from Sri Lanka (*The Island and Daily FT*) to study the local news angle in the island nation. The *Indian Express*, *The Hindu* and *The Telegraph* were selected from India, since strategically India is a close neighbour of Sri Lanka with a large Tamil diasporic population located in the island. Editorials in *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* were also examined to study the reactions of the foreign Press on the Lankan imbroglio.

Analysis of newspaper editorials on the Sri Lankan crisis

The media has in recent decades played a crucial role in negotiating peace during conflict entanglements both within states and between countries. Professional journalists by presenting accurate, impartial and objective reports aid in peace building efforts. Howard (2004) notes that responsible journalism is one that constantly seeks solutions to problems. While reporting conflict, the journalist is expected to present all sides to an issue. While examining disputes between conflicting groupings, journalists need to examine and write about various possibilities for compromise, withdrawal or transcendence. Editorials analysed in this study have been selected from local newspapers in Sri Lanka, leading Indian newspapers as well as global newspapers to provide a diversity of reportage.

Editorials on the Lankan crisis were by and large in the nature of problem-solution editorials which have presented the Lankan crisis in terms of factual evidence of the ground realities from the protest sites.

Excerpts from the *Indian Express* and *Telegraph* newspapers have emphasized upon and lauded the peaceful protests by citizens, as cited herewith:

Civilians, who have been admirably peaceful in their protests, turned against the ruling party politicians and…………. hardened their demand that Gotabaya quit office.*'*

https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/editorials/colombo-storm-7910434/

'After months of largely peaceful agitation, thousands of Sri Lankan protesters demanding the resignation of the president, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and his government broke through barricades and braved tear gas shells to enter the presidential mansion over the weekend.*'*

https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/people-power-editorial-on-sri-lankas-worst-crisis/cid/1874262

Newspaper editorials like the *Indian Express* editorial offered solutions to the Lankan crisis recommending that India should continue to play the role of a sensitive neighbour of the island nation.

'India has played the role of a sensitive and helpful neighbour without weighing in on the political crisis. It should continue to do so, since New Delhi's commitment is, as it has repeatedly stated, to the people of Sri Lanka and not to any political dispensation or family.' (Indian Express, ibid)

The *Indian Express* further advocated the importance of governmental stability in the island nation.

New Delhi has been helping Colombo with money for food and fuel, but the world must step in quickly and for that it is important that there is a government.

https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/editorials/sri-lanka-crisis-protests-8021108/

Editorials on the Lankan crisis also adopted an emotional tone to highlight the sufferings of the citizens of Sri Lanka. *The Telegraph* mentions

how people were being put to enormous economic hardships, being unable to buy even the basic necessities. The *New York Times* headline captured the plight of the citizens stating:

'There's Nothing': Scarcity Deepens Desperation in Sri Lanka

'The island nation was once an economic hope, with a growing middle class. Now many people are living on the edge, unable to buy even the basics.'

https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/world/asia/sri-lanka-crisis-gotabaya-rajapaksa.html

The *Daily Mirror* also highlighted the people's plight and suffering imposed by the erstwhile Gotabaya regime. *'The current protests are a result of people's rage prompted by their suffering due to economic hardships'*, noted the Daily Mirror.

https://www.dailymirror.lk/print/opinion/Tackle-the-root-causes-for-the-dissent/172-236647

The Hindu wrote:

'As irate protesters gathered near the house of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in a desperate bid to highlight their suffering, the worsening economic crisis in Sri Lanka has possibly reached its crescendo. The Rajapaksas, who have dominated the political and electoral scene, face an unprecedented decline in their popularity, as the people struggle for want of adequate money, fuel and food.'

https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/sri-lankas-rage-the-hindu-editorial-on-the-island-nations-economic-woes/article65281828.ece

The Island called the attack on the protest site "dastardly" and said it "must be condemned unreservedly".

https://island.lk/violence-begets-violence/

Daily FT which is Sri Lanka's first and only national daily business paper, noted:

"Sri Lanka is Asia's oldest continuous democracy, and despite its chaotic nature is well-capable of handling its political crises through peaceful, democratic means through institutions such as parliament without any assistance from the military

https://www.ft.lk/ft_view__editorial/Military-tread-cautiously/58-734594

The Sri Lankan newspapers opined that the crisis and violence the country was being subjected to was due to the fault of the government in power, which refused to address the people's legitimate concerns. The newspapers pointed out that those in power misused law enforcement agencies to defend the powerful instead of the ordinary citizens, which is a fact in several developing nations of the world.

If democracy is about people's power, the island nation is today not just a cautionary tale: it is also a beacon of hope

https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/people-power-editorial-on-sri-lankas-worst-crisis/cid/1874262

Commenting on the economic and political upheaval in the island nation, The *Washington Post* commented:

"Now, the world is looking at Sri Lanka as a cautionary tale. Kristalina Georgieva, the managing director of the IMF at the G-20 summit this month issued a dire forecast. "Countries with high debt levels and limited policy space will face additional strains. Look no further than Sri Lanka as a warning sign," she said. Sri Lanka, once considered a success story with high levels of education and standard of living, could now be the first among a litany of developing countries that will face political instability."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/07/23/sri-lanka-economic-political-crisis/

Analysis of the role played by NGOs in peace efforts

Peace-oriented journalism explores peace ideas wherever they emanate from. The role played by NGOs in Sri Lanka to diffuse the economic and political crisis reflect civil society's role in peace restoration efforts. Ross Howard (2004) has noted that internationally there is a growing

recognition about the role the media can play in ending conflicts and engendering peace.

The Centre for Policy Alternatives, a leading NGO in the island nation advocated policy alternatives of non-violent conflict resolution and democratic governance to facilitate post-war recovery in Sri Lanka. CPA and other Civil Society organizations issued several public statements commenting on the Gottabaya regime's use of brutal force to quell peaceful protestors by reminding the leaders of the rights guaranteed in their constitution. These civil society groups orchestrated that protesting is a democratic right. 'In this regard, civil society and citizens have taken a stand on the need to uphold constitutional democracy because we are now confronted by an unprecedented political and economic crisis in Sri Lanka. By peacefully protesting, we hope to protect our democratic rights and our democracy'(https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-esources/news/interviews/5756-sri-lanka-by-peacefully-protesting-we-hope-to-protect-our-democracy).

Several leading NGOs and civil society groups signed a memorandum condemning the Sri Lankan authorities for the violent crackdown and increasing reprisals against peaceful protesters in Sri Lanka. These included NGOs working in the area of human rights, racism, and peace initiatives, whose members signed a petition with endorsements and suggestions to restore peace in the island nation. The petition urged the Lankan authorities to end their reprisals against dissent in the interest of human rights and the rights of the public for peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. (https://www.omct.org/en/resources/statements/sri-lanka-end-government-crackdown-on-peaceful-protesters).

Among the other recommendations were the call for an independent, prompt and fair inquiry into the crackdown on citizens on 22 July, including allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, with the support of international observers. They emphasized upon the need to bring justice for the common citizens. To this end, their advocacy communication included the demand for revocation of Emergency Regulations to prevent misuse of powers by enforcement officials and prevent abuses of human rights of the people. They appealed for the right of peoples' participation in peaceful protests and release of those booked under charges of 'unlawful assembly'. They demanded the armed forces in the country to be restrained from using military equipment

for policing public assemblies of peaceful protestors. This was further reiterated by appealing to the Lankan authorities to ensure that they take actions only in line with globally recognized standards of fair trial. The civil rights groups also took up the cause of journalists so that there were no impediments like lack of access to protest sites or arrests while the latter were on their line of duty. This included requests to state officials to not obstruct the members of the media from monitoring and reporting and not to use unlawful force against them. The petition asked for putting a stop to labelling peaceful protestors as criminals or terrorists. The petitioners requested protection of the physical safety of anyone taken into custody by the security forces, and guarantee the respect of their rights to liberty and security, a fair trial and to remove travel bans and all other conditions imposed on peaceful protesters.

Discussion

The narratives from editorials and NGO advocacy communication were analysed to study the efforts taken by civil society groups to restore peace and reconciliation in the conflict-ridden island nation. The editorial discourse on the Sri Lankan crisis reflected compassion towards the economic hardships faced by the common people of Sri Lanka by rulers belonging to the Gotabaya regime. The editorial discourse was rational with leading newspapers listing out the problems brought on the economy of Sri Lanka that led to the crisis. Editorials advocated solutions of restoration of peace through formation of an interim government and strengthening of democratic institutions in the country. Conflict analysis enables journalists to understand and report about how diplomats and negotiators work towards peace reconciliation efforts. By getting news from diverse sources, journalists ensure that the public are far more well-informed. The non-defamatory reportage shows that journalists did not give false information about people. Editorials on the Lankan crisis did not ruin or defame individuals while pointing out the follies of the erstwhile Gottabaya regime. Conflict-sensitive reporting could be seen in the editorial discourse which did not speak from the perspective of elites, but reflected the perspectives of the ordinary citizens. The reportage took cognizance of the interests of all stakeholders to advocate the restoration of peace and reconciliation in the strife-torn nation.

Citizen engagement is an important component of participatory governance, and it enables joint decision-making between government and civil society. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has emphasized upon the significance of peace-building as the tool to address the causes and issues of conflict by giving support to social and cultural institutions engaged in this noble endeavour. Their activities should ensure inclusion of the marginalized groups within the mainstream so that effective communication can be generated to resolve issues of conflict.

Conclusion

Journalistic discourses enable media persons to discharge their social responsibilities by providing the forum for debate and dialogue. Through fair and balanced reportage, peace-oriented journalism enables people to develop critical awareness and an understanding of causes, contexts and possible solutions to situations of conflict. Galtung (1996) distinguished between war journalism and peace journalism by stating that the former focuses on the one who advances, surrenders and keeps an account of material damage and lives lost. War journalism, notes Galtung (*ibid*) is fuelled by propaganda and manipulation, which further polarizes people and exacerbates conflict by advocating more violence or hatred to avenge. On the contrary, peace journalism explores the causes of conflict, provides a voice to the voiceless, empathy and understanding. It focuses on human suffering by presenting a truthful account of the hardships faced by people. From the discourses in editorials and NGO advocacy on the Sri Lanka crisis, one can discern an adherence to peace-oriented journalism to restore normalcy in the strife-ridden island nation. The civil society appeals were for peace initiatives and reconciliation through non-violent creative methods like peaceful assemblies of citizens. This is in consonance with the standpoint of Bell (1998) on peace-oriented journalism that plays a socially responsible role in taking up the right causes of justice for victims against oppressors. The efforts of NGOs in signing and submitting petitions to the authorities indicates actions focused on human rights keeping with tenets of international humanitarian law standards. The petitions signed by NGOs indicated their support for civil resistance initiatives and peace mobilisation in the island nation.

Recommendations

This article has focussed on newspaper editorials on the political and economic crisis that engulfed Sri Lanka in 2022. Newspaper editorials reflect informed public opinion with their credibility as a mass media on a firm footing in comparison with the other media. The pen is mightier than the sword and the stamp of credibility of the printed word has given newspapers far more respectability and public faith in contemporary times where there is a preponderance of fake news. Further research can be conducted to study television coverage of the Lankan crisis in 2022 to analyse the impact of visuals, video footage and news debates on the crisis. This would also help to analyse whether the nature of television journalism was oriented towards peace-building initiatives to restore normalcy during the period of unrest in Sri Lanka.

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Establishment of Soviet Power in Central Asia

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Abstract

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was indeed a multinational state, with a vast and diverse territory inherited from the Tsarist conquests that took place from the early 16th century to the first quarter of the 20th. The Russian empire's final territorial acquisition was the region known as Turkestan, which is now called Central Asia. Significant changes occurred with the Tsarist Imperial Decree of June 25, 1916, and the Bolshevik Revolution of November 7, 1917. The Bolshevik Revolution marked the beginning of transformative processes that further altered Central Asia. Following the revolution, civil war erupted across the young Soviet states. Muslim guerrillas, referred to as "Basmachis" by the Soviets, fought against the Bolsheviks during the 1920s. However, by the early 1930s, the Soviet forces had largely crushed the armed opposition. As Bolshevik power consolidated in Central Asia, certain administrative changes were implemented. The former Tsarist Governorate-Generals of Turkestan and the Steppe Region were transformed into the Turkestan and Kirghiz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs) in 1918 and 1920, respectively. Additionally, the vassal khanates of Bukhara and Khiva became People's Republics in 1920, appearing to be independent but ultimately under Soviet control. Overall, the history of Central Asia within the context of the USSR reflects a complex interplay of conquests, revolutions, civil wars, and administrative changes that shaped the region's political landscape during the early 20th century.

Keywords: Turkestan, Basmachis, steppe region, Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics (ASSRs), Khanates

Introduction

The final outsiders to arrive on the Central Asian scene were the Russians. However, when Russian expansion into the Balkans was halted by their defeat in the Crimean War in the 1850s, they turned their attention southwards towards Turkestan [1]. Russia encountered relatively little resistance and rapidly conquered major cities in the region: Chimkent in 1855, Tashkent in 1865, Bukhara (under Russian protection) in 1868, Khiva (also under Russian protection) in 1873, Kokand in 1875, and Mary in 1884 (Vaidyanath 1967). The Russian administration sought to maximize the interests of the Russian autocracy while also filling the vacuum left by the suppression of the former khanates.

The Turkistan National Liberation Movement was a response to the Bolsheviks' attempt to reconquer Turkistan. It can also be seen as the culmination of Russia's long history of intrusion into Central Asia, known as the "Eastern Question" and the "Great Game in Asia," as famously described by Kipling (Kaushik 1976). The provisional government that replaced the Tsar adopted an uncertain attitude towards the national-colonial question. While initially promising recognition of the right to self-determination for all people, the provisional government's indifferent approach to the national problem disillusioned various nationalities in the region.

In 1917, the Council of People's Commissars, after the Bolshevik Revolution, made promises of equality and sovereignty for the nations of Russia and the right to self-determination, including the right to form independent states. Muslim Communists such as Tatar Mir Said Sultan Galiev and Uzbek Faizullah Khojaev took these promises seriously and sought to bring about changes driven by communist ideals, pan-Islamism, and pan-Turkism (Vaidyanath 1967). However, the 1924 delimitation of republican boundaries in Central Asia served as a major barrier to nationalist aspirations. As Stalin gained power, Muslim Communists were purged, accused of being "nationalist bourgeois," and liquidated in the Great Purge of the 1930s, effectively bringing Central Asia under the political control of the Soviet Union.

Theoretical Understanding

Geopolitics is the study of international relations from a geographical perspective. In other words, it is also defined as the practice of states

competing for dominance and control of the territory. Central Asia, due to its geopolitical importance, has always attracted the attention of major schools of geopolitical thought, especially 'the school of political landscape' (English school) and the school of geopolitical organism' (German school). This region has also been the core of Russia's and the former Soviet Union's geopolitical imagination. Since the emergence of independent Central Asian Republics (CARs), a struggle has erupted to control space in this region for hydrocarbon resources and various other reasons.

The Central Asian region was a zone of the triangular contest between Britain, Russia, and China during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which has been romanticized as the 'Great Game' (Warikoo 1989). During the Soviet period, the entire region was closed to external powers. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the strategic importance of Central Asia became distinct. Today, Central Asia is vital to international security by virtue of its geographic position, and those with access to it will play a critical role on the global stage. Due to the geographical proximity of Turkey, Iran, China, Russia, and India to the Central Asian region, these countries are going to play an important role in the geopolitics of this region. China and the USA have a global interest in terms of energy needs and are trying to get a strategic foothold worldwide. So, they want to increase their influence in the geo-strategic and geo-economically important Central Asian region.

The paradigm shifts designated in the international sphere after 1991 have considerably altered the geopolitics of the whole world, forgetting away the existing systems that had been built up after the World Wars. The unexpected appearance of the new Central Asian countries reminds us that no great power has collapsed in the 20th century without their successor states undergoing civil wars or regional conflicts, which made the circumstances more complicated. The Soviet Union's breakup has altered the Central Asian position accidentally by setting a new geopolitical calculation for them. Half of the countries in Central Asia sit on the vast resources of oil and gas, and the same numbers of countries are at the higher end of controlling the water resources. Apart from that, the new Central Asian countries are yet to keep aloof from instability, both internally and externally. The struggle of external powers for actual space and interests has made the condition of Central Asia vulnerable.

However, the five Central Asian countries have adopted different paths because of their location, size, and natural resources, thereby focusing on security (domestic and international) and policy issues that were not there before independence. With the combination of the above three features, Central Asia appeared mainly in the geopolitical imagination of Mackinder, Haushofer, and Spy man. Mackinder had given importance to the geostrategic position of the Central Asian region in his "heartland theory" (Megoran and Sharapova 2005). Later, it influenced the European powers as a mechanism for their policies (particularly for the British to maintain their foreign policy to secure their colonies).

The Central Asian region is an area of interest for Russia to retain its external influence in view of the prospect of military threats to its southern border. For many years, the exit points of Central Asia were under Moscow directly. At present, the mounting geopolitical equation and the resources needed to provide the five Central Asian countries with an orientation away from their Russian connections Apart from that, the arrangement of geographic proximity, economic opportunity, ethnic and cultural ties, and religion deliberately push them in every direction, not only based on historical preferences but also on national interests. The tilt of Russia towards Central Asia persists greatly in the supply of resources and raw materials because of the joint routes. Hence, the disengagement of Central Asia with Russia is hardly desirable from an economic point of view. Even today, many Russians are unable to accept a shift in the status of the newly independent states. They continue to see the former Soviet southern border as Russia's outer frontier.

The founding of the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic
The creation of national republics for the peoples of Central Asia was difficult, as they were divided between three state units, viz., Turkestan, Khiva, and Bukhara. It was anti-colonial, anti-feudal, and anti-capitalist in character. The strong desire of the people was to get rid of the burden of Tsarist colonialism and native exploiters. The establishment of Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics was thus the first step towards the founding of national states by the peoples of Central Asia.

In an extremely complicated and intense class struggle, the Third Territorial Congress of the Soviet Union of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies met in Tashkent on November 15, 1917, and continued its session until November 22, 1917 (Olcott 1981). The central point of contention during the congress was the issue of power in the territory of Turkestan, leading to debates between the Mensheviks, the Right Socialist Revolutionaries, and the Bolsheviks. Simultaneously, the so-called Congress of Muslims, which consisted entirely of bourgeois nationalists and reactionary clergymen, also convened in Tashkent. During the proceedings, on November 17, the Congress of Muslims rejected the idea of transferring all power to the Soviet Union and instead proposed the formation of a regional governing body composed of bourgeoisie representatives, both local and Russian.

This was conveyed to the Third Regional Congress of Soviets by Sher Ali Lapin, a leader of the *Ulema,* who addressed the Congress on the organization of power. After a long debate lasting several days, the Third Congress of Soviets rejected the proposal of the Menshevik and Right SR groups to share power with the bourgeoisie and bourgeois nationalists. It adopted a declaration at the instance of the Bolsheviks and "maximalists," proclaiming the victory of Soviet power in Turkestan and recognizing the existing central power and its forms of organization. It categorically rejected the idea of sharing power with "Muslims" as well as the compromising Russian groups that defended the Provisional Government and took a stand against the Revolution. The Third Regional of Soviets voted for the establishment of an 18-member Council of People's Commissars, including three representatives of Muslim workers. The Fourth Territorial Congress of Soviets supported this proposal at the instance of the Bolsheviks. The *Nakaz* (instruction) adopted by the Third Regional Congress of no doubt whatever as to the complete absence of antipathy towards Muslims. The Declaration did contain several drafting mistakes. The bourgeois nationalists came out openly against Soviet power towards the close of November 1917. The firm refusal of the Third Congress to surrender power to them led to the convening of the so-called Regional Muslim Congress in Kokand on November 27, 1917. It was attended by about 200 delegates, the vast majority of whom came from Fergana (150 delegates). Syr-Darya provided 22 Samarkand 23, Transcaspia 1, and Bukhara 4 delegates only. It consisted of representatives of such political parties as *Shuro-i-Islamia* and *Alash Orda* (Kaushik 1976).

The Congress actively discussed the suggestion for the entry of Turkestan into a "South-Eastern Union" headed by the counter-revolutionary leader Dutov. The so-called autonomous government of Kokand was at first headed by a Kazakh-Pan-Turkish Mohammed Jan Tanishbay-uli, who was soon replaced by another Kazakh Shuro-i-Islamist, Mustafa Chokayev (Olcott 1981). The post of Defense Minister in the Kokand government was occupied by a white-guard Russian general. The Kokand autonomists maintained close relations with Dutov, the British Consul-General in Kashgar, and Menshevik-SR organizations. The slogan of autonomy was only a cover for their counter-revolutionary aims. The Kokand autonomy movement was not a national movement of Central Asian Muslims against Russians. Diverse shades of opinion existed among the bourgeois nationalists of Central Asia. First, there were the pan-Islamists who proclaimed that all Muslims in Russia were a single nation and that they should act unitedly. The pan-Turkists, ignoring national differences among the Muslims in Russia, sought to create by artificial means a Turkic nation composed of Tatars, Azerbaijanians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turkmens, and Kirgizs. The bourgeois nationalists knew that the idea of nationalization of land and national territorial autonomy, as advocated by the Bolsheviks, was becoming increasingly popular among the Muslim working masses. So they also hastened to proclaim their loyalty to them.

In September 1917, during the Second Extraordinary Regional Muslim Congress, a proposal was put forth for an autonomous Turkestan Republic with a bicameral Parliament. The upper house, known as the Senate of the Clergy, was intended to ensure that all laws framed by the Parliament adhered to the Sheriat (Sharia law).

The question of autonomy resurfaced at the Fourth Regional Congress of Soviets held in Tashkent from January 19 to 26, 1918. A Bolshevik leader named Tobolin, who has been accused of opposing Turkestan's right to autonomy, addressed this issue in his speech at the Congress. Tobolin expressed the view that while autonomy was a legitimate aspiration, immediate implementation was not feasible due to the threat posed by the counter-revolution and the ongoing conditions of war in the country. The Bolshevik group presented a resolution before the Fourth Congress, which was approved by a significant majority, stating that the matter of autonomy was closely connected with the broader

national question arising from the Russian Revolution. They argued that it should be approached solely from a revolutionary standpoint.

The Kokand autonomists launched a military attack on the city organ of Soviet power on the night of January 30–31, 1918, by laying siege to the fort of Kokand. This compelled the Soviet government to take strong military measures against them. After the defeat of the White Cossacks near Samarkand, the Red Guards from Fergana and Andijan also moved towards Kokand. In their ranks, there were many natives. Military action began on February 19 and continued up to February 22, 1918, when the Kokand Autonomists were crushed. After the dissolution of the Kokand government, the Bourgeois nationalists began to organize the Basmachi [2] (brigand) bands in the Fergana valley. In April 1918, the Fifth Regional Congress of the Soviet Union of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and Muslim Dekhans Deputies of Turkestan was convened (Paksoy 1991). As the majority of the deputies of the Fifth Congress were from the native population, speeches were translated into the Uzbek language. The Sixth Regional Congress of the Soviet Socialist Republic was held in October 1918. The first constitution of the Turkestan ASSR, which the Sixth Regional Congress of Soviets adopted in October 1918, had the full concurrence of the Center. In fact, this constitution, as well as the one later adopted by the Ninth Regional Congress of Soviets of Turkestan in September 1920, The Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic began to draw the local people into the work of government from its very inception. Village Soviets and People's Courts Composed of representatives of local nationalities fully familiar with the native languages, customs, and traditions, they were set up almost everywhere in the period 1918–1924. Local people's representatives now constitute the majority in the administrative bodies.

Founding of Soviet Republics in Khiva and Bukhara

The victory of the October Revolution in Russia and Turkestan had great significance for the further development of the revolutionary struggle of the masses against the rulers of Khiva and Bhukhara. These feudal principalities were no longer semi-colonies, and the people could now rest assured of the full sympathy and support of the new regime in the task of liberation from the despotic rule of the Khan and Emir. In 1918, Junaid Khan, a Turkmen feudal chieftain, assumed dictatorial powers in Khiva. In close touch with the British in Iran and in alliance

with the counter-revolutionary Admiral Kolchak, Junaid Khan repeatedly attacked the Turkestan ASSR on the basis of the treaty concluded with the RSFSR on April 9, 1919 (Olcott 1981). The Khivan reactionaries were also in constant contact with the underground anti-Soviet Turkestan Military Organization founded in Tashkent with the active help of the American Consul-General Tredwell, French agent Castagne, and British Col. Bailey. While Junaid Khan was thus conspiring against Soviet power, the *dehkans*' revolutionary movement continued to grow in Khiva. The Communist Party of Khiva, which was established in September 1918, began to organize the revolutionary movement. Under their guidance and in alliance with the Left Young Khivans, armed uprisings occurred at several places in the Khanate. The revolution in Khiva was victorious on February 2, 1920, resulting in the overthrow of the regime of Said Abdullah Khan, a puppet in the hands of Junaid Khan. The First All-Khwarezm Kurultai of the People's Representatives, which met on April 30, 1920, proclaimed the establishment of the Khwarezm Soviet People's Republic. The First *Kurultai* adopted a constitution of the Republic, which transferred all power in the center as well as in local places to the Soviets of working people (Muminov 2022).

The revolution in Khiva had distinct characteristics. The industrial proletariat in Khiva was relatively small, and the majority of the population were dekhans (peasants). Therefore, the initial stage of the revolution was a popular democratic one rather than socialist in nature. It led to the establishment of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working masses, with the aim of paving the way for a transition to the socialist stage, which was to be accomplished through the soviets (workers' councils).

Similarly, Bukhara, like Khiva, was governed by feudal despotism and enjoyed the protection of Tsarist Russia. It served as the second-largest source of cotton for Russia, with Ferghana being the first. During the First Russian Revolution, a significant bourgeois nationalist movement known as Jadidism emerged. However, the Jadidists primarily focused on cultural and educational endeavors. It was only after the February Revolution that they began to demand moderate political reforms rather than advocating for a full-scale revolution.

From the beginning, the Emir took a hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union. He ordered mobilization of the army three times between November 1917 and March 1918 and maintained contacts with Dutov, leader of the Orenburg Cossacks, and also with the Kokand Autonomists. He was also in communication with General Malleson, commander of the British troops in Iran. At the beginning of 1918, the Emir mobilized an army of 30,000 along the railway line, posing a great threat to Soviet power in Turkestan. On February 28, 1918, Kolesov proceeded to Bukhara with a force of 500–600 Red Guards (Roudik 2007). He demanded recognition of Soviet power in Russian settlements in Bukahara and democratization of administration by the induction of representatives of the young Bukharans. When the Emir turned down his demands, Kolesov launched his military action on March 2, 1918. The Emir declared a 'holy' war against Kolesov, who had to retreat towards Samarkand. Kolesov was saved from annihilation by timely reinforcements from Turkestan. On March 25, the Emir was forced to sign an agreement in Kizil-Tape undertaking to revoke the mobilization of troops and expel all the counter-revolutionaries from his territory, and he received a Soviet commissar in Bukhara. The first attempt to overthrow the Emir's rule thus ended in failure. The masses did not side with the young Bukharans. The Emir moved still closer to the British imperialists in spite of the Kizil-Tape Agreement. In April–May 1918, several hundred camels loaded with British arms reached Bukhara through Afghanistan. In October 1919, Col. Bailey reached Bukhara from Tashkent and began to hatch a plan of action against Soviet Turkestan. The Turkestan Commission in Tashkent sent two missions to the Emir in January and March 1920, headed by Frunze, who tried to impress, but these efforts to bring the Emir to a sensible path of good- neighborly relations failed. The Emir mobilized 50,000 troops in August 1920 and gave a call for *jehad,* or the "holy" war against the Bolsheviks. Under the impact of the October revolution, a revolutionary movement was rapidly growing in Bukahra, in which the communist party of Bukhara, founded in September 1918, was taking a leading role. The Fourth Congress of the Party, held in Chardjui between August 6 and 19, 1920, decided to launch an armed revolutionary action to overthrow the Emir's regime. The revolution was launched by the communist party of Bukhara on August 28, 1920, by seizing Chardjui. After heavy fighting in Bukhara, the citadel of despotism fell on September 6, 1920. On October 5, 1920, the First Kurultai met

in Bukahara and proclaimed the establishment of the Bukharan people's Soviet republics (Khalid 2010).

Transition to Socialist Republics

The revolutions in Khiva and Bukahara were accomplished by the non-proletarian and peasant masses, and due to a number of objective and subjective factors, they could not immediately develop into socialist revolutions. The task of socialist transformation in Bukahara and Khiva was really a very complicated one, and there were many difficulties in the way. The bulk of the population was poor, illiterate, and fanatically attached to religion. The few primitive industries that were there had stopped functioning. Cities in these republics were the main centers of handicrafts, with trade capital dominating. State trading and state industrial undertakings came into existence as a result of the nationalization of privately owned enterprises and other property owned by the Tsarist government. In Bukhara, there were some 32 industrial undertakings, of which 25 were cotton-cleaning plants. Khiva had 31 industrial undertakings, of which five belonged to foreign capitalists. They formed the nucleus of a future socialist industry. Following the merger of the Party of Young Bukharans and Young Khivans with the Communist Party, the ranks of the latter greatly swelled. At the Fourth Conference of the Central Committee of the RC(B) with the responsible workers in national republics, Stalin pointed out that not a single *dekhan* was included in the Council of *Nazirs* of the BPSR, and all higher posts there were filled by exploiting elements of society (Paksoy 1991).

In late 1922, significant political and social changes took place in the lives of the Bukharan People's Soviet Republic (BPSR) and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic (KPSR), which facilitated their transition towards becoming socialist republics. By the end of 1922, the main Basmachi group, led by Enver Pasha, had been defeated, resulting in the waning of the Basmachi movement in Bukhara. Concurrently, Basmachi bands under Junaid Khan and other Turkmen tribal leaders were also eliminated (Holdsworth 1952). This marked the decline of armed resistance in the region.

After 1923, a period of peaceful reconstruction began in both republics. Bukhara experienced a notable increase in the total sown area, which had reached pre-war levels by 1924. The government took proactive measures to develop cattle breeding, with a particular focus on the

breeding of Karakul sheep. To support this initiative, special cooperative societies were established to facilitate the purchase of Karakul sheep, and a substantial sum of two million gold roubles was allocated for this purpose.

These efforts toward peaceful reconstruction and agricultural development contributed to the stabilization and progress of the Bukharan People's Soviet Republic and the Khorezm People's Soviet Republic during the post-revolutionary period.

National-State Delimitation of 1924

In 1924, national Soviet Socialist Republics were formed as a result of the national-state delimitation of the Turkestan ASSR and the Bukhara and Khwarezm SSR. Two of them—the Uzbek SSR and the Turkmen SSR—were formed as Union Republics within the USSR. The Tajik came into existence as an autonomous Soviet socialist republic within the Uzbek SSR; the Kazak areas of Central Asia became united in what was then called the Kirgiz autonomous socialist republic within the RSFSR; Karakalpakia entered the Kirgiz ASSR as an autonomous oblast; and the Kirgiz formed an autonomous socialist republic within the RSFSR under the name of Kara-Kirgiz ASSR. These Soviet Socialistic Republics and autonomous oblasts united the principal people of Central Asia into their national state forms for the first time in history (Kaushik, 1976). The determination of national frontiers was not an easy task. The Territorial Commission had to undertake expeditions to study the national composition of a number of disputed areas and ascertain the wishes of the people concerned. In the determination of the territory and frontiers of the Soviet national republics and autonomous oblasts, the national factor was no doubt most important. In organizing national states, special consideration was given to territories where national groups lived in a compact mass. But besides the national factor, such factors as the mode of life and economic integrity of the territory organized into national republics or autonomous oblasts were also taken into consideration. Thus, the ethnic map of Central Asia was more justly drawn after the national delimitation in 1924. The removal of old anomalies created better conditions for the ultimate solution to the national question in Central Asia. The national-state delimitation created the basis for the speedy removal of economic and cultural backwardness. By eliminating the grounds for national antagonism, it enabled the

people of Central Asia to be drawn into the historic task of building socialism.

The Soviet Nationality Policy

The basic purpose of Soviet nationalists was to secure its territorial integrity and stability by overturning various nationalist movements, especially separatist movements (Döm, 2017). All Soviet leaders tried to keep all the nations under the Soviet Union together while putting forward many different policies regarding nationalism. The Soviet nationality policy is unique in the sense that it is not only aimed at the establishment of formal equality between the erstwhile oppressed and oppressing nations but also at the elimination of factual inequality between them. The Tenth Congress of the Party (1921) set before itself the task of liquidating the inequality between the various nations.

In the post-delimitation phase after 1924 (Rahimov and Urazaeva 2005), the focus shifted to the task of levelling up the big gap in the economic and cultural development of Central Asia and the central parts of Russia. Democratic state political measures, through their great help in making the national question considerably less acute, cannot by themselves solve it completely. For an ultimate solution, radical changes in the socio-economic structure are needed. Historical experience has shown that the role of state-political institutions is conditioned by many factors. Under the condition of monopoly capitalism, even such democratic institutions as federation, national autonomy, and referendum have been adapted to the socially nefarious aim of perpetrating national oppression and exploitation.

Socialist Industrialisation

The industrialization of Central Asia began with the successful implementation of the First Five-Year Plan (Knickerbocker, 1931). During this process, technical equipment was introduced to agriculture, and numerous experienced political functionaries and specialists from Russia were sent to Central Asia to support the development. The achievements of the Second Five-Year Plan in the republics of Central Asia were really remarkable. The second plan gave great attention to the development of heavy industries. The power and cotton production in the Uzbek SSR rose immensely. Socialist industrialization helped to bridge to a large extent the big gap in the level of development of the

central region of Russia and Central Asia and thus made an important contribution to the final solution of the national question.

Monoculture

The keynote of Soviet nationalities policy and development strategy was a high degree of integration of their economic, political, and cultural aspects, where monoculture was the nodal point, which implies a mass collectivization campaign was encouraged in agriculture.

During the Soviet era, compulsory education for children was introduced, along with the establishment of a modern public health system. The regime also focused on comprehensive scientific and technological development, promoted the arts, fostered the creation of a national intelligentsia, worked towards the emancipation of women, and aimed to build a new life rich in spiritual content. Moreover, it was the Soviet regime that revitalized many great monuments to Central Asia's ancient culture and literature, providing them with a new lease of life. Top of Form

During the Soviet era, the epic tales of Central Asia, such as the Manas [3] of Kyrgyzstan, were documented in writing and published. The poetry of Central Asian classics, folk tales, and songs were also published in their original languages in significant quantities and translated into the languages of several other Soviet republics. Thanks to the efforts of the Soviet government, the rich cultural heritage of Central Asia has now found its rightful place in the treasure house of human civilization.

Conclusion

It has been evident that the establishment of Soviet power in Central Asia during the 20th century was one of the episodes of the Civil War period that has been largely overlooked by Western scholars. This episode involved the Basmachi, or Freemen's Movement. The opposition that the Bolsheviks faced in Turkestan was arguably the most pervasive challenge to Soviet rule. A widespread armed conflict between Red forces and the Basmachi persisted for six years and enjoyed support from virtually all sectors of Turkestani society. Unable to overcome the Basmachi solely through conventional military methods, the Soviet authorities were compelled to adapt their previously implemented

economic and social policies to establish a stable political order in the region.

Endnotes

[1] The Russian conquest of the region of Central Asia known as Turkestan. The territories, comprising parts of present-day Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan,.

[2] "Basmachi" is derived from Baskinji, simply meaning attacker, and was initially applied to a group of brigands. During the tsarist period, these brigands existed when Turkistan independence was lost and tsarist occupation began in Turkmenistan, Crimea, and Bashkurdistan.

[3] The "Epic of Manas" is an epic poem in verse, said to be over a thousand years old, about a tribal leader named Manas and his adventures in Central Asia. Sometimes called the "Iliad of the Steppes," the story has been passed down orally over the generations by "Manas-tellers" and was not written down until the 1920s.

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Industrial Ownership and Contractualisation in India's Organised Manufacturing Sector

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Abstract

Contractualisation in the organised manufacturing sector is the most critical phenomenon in India's labour market in the post-economic reforms era. Even as it grew fast in the post-reforms period, its genesis lies in the political economic contours of industrial policies since Independence. It is deeply integrated with size and ownership factors that define the industrial structure. While the policy shift of the early 1990s stimulated India's economic growth and replaced regular jobs of organised manufacturing sector by contract labour, size distribution of firms and structure of industrial sector have remained static by and large. The policies of economic reforms have consolidated the existing ownership pattern and enlarged the share of large capital-intensive firms in total firms. This paper attempts to show that concentration of private ownership and large firms in the industrial sector underlie faster contractualisation after the economic reforms.

Keywords: contractualisation, industrial structure, ownership, economic reforms, manufacturing

1. Introduction

While the policy shift of the early 1990s stimulated India's economic growth, regular jobs in the organised manufacturing sector were replaced by contract labour fast. The ASI data shows a drastic rise in the proportion of large firms in the industrial structure across select states over 1999-00/2018-19. As these firms have grown capital intensive, the production process has undermined regular employment. Contract labour has increased rapidly in these firms as the large firms tend to push contractualisation of jobs (Singh, 2022). The ownership pattern of

industries has a direct bearing on the size of firms. There are many other factors that cause contractualisation of manufacturing jobs.

The declining labour content in global manufacturing production, low growth of value added in labour intensive industries, low industrial productivity, and import competition are some of the prominent hurdles that withhold growth of regular jobs. The hasty policy interventions[1] in recent times, have disrupted harmonious functioning of the economy and has destroyed millions of small and micro industries. This, in turn, has adversely impacted the labour market. Although some researchers and intellectuals justify these policy interventions, the hardships of informal workers have exposed their claims.

In the current scenario, expansion of the formal sector is most essential for growth of regular jobs in the manufacturing sector. Reflecting upon the political choices that Indian policy makers made, industrial structure throws certain hard facts which have not received the due attention. Among them, the questions of industrial ownership and transition in firm size distribution are quite prominent. We argue that, among many factors, industrial structure and skewed distribution of ownership firms have also contributed to contractualisation of manufacturing sector jobs.

In this paper, we intend to examine contractualisation in the organised manufacturing sector from the perspective of the political economy of industrial development. The following sections discuss the phenomenon of contractualisation and its various dimensions, the industrial structure and pattern of ownership of firms, the political economy of industrial development and the way forward.

2. Research Methodology and Data

We have framed two regression models for five different points of time (1999-00, 2004- 05, 2009-10, 2013-14, and 2018-19). The choice of these points of time was guided by the pattern of employment growth in the manufacturing sector. The OLS regression equation was framed to examine causality behind contractualisation by controlling for size and ownership of firms. The OLS has been used to see how firms adjusted labour demand in response to policy changes of the early 1990s raising import competition.

Regression Equation

$$CONRACT_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PROFITi + \beta_2 LACOST_i + \beta_3 FINCAP_i + \beta_4 INVEST_i + \beta_5 IMPCOM_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1}$$

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

where, CONRACT_i (contractualisation in i^{th} firm), PROFIT_i (profit share of ith firm), LACOST_i (wage gap in i^{th} firm), FINCAP_i (interest cost of ith firm), INVEST_i (physical capital used in i^{th} firm), IMPCOM_i (imported inputs used in i^{th} firm).

The Ramsey RESET[2]and Linktest[3] were carried out to check for model specification and to rule out errors of omitted variables from the model. There was no multicollinearity as the value of VIF[4].In order to deal with it, heteroskedasticity-robust estimation was done

We have used the ASI data and raw data of ASI for twenty years (1998-99 to 2018- 19). It was arranged in a usable format for processing with STATA, statistical software, for each year. Many variables were constructed to carry out the analysis. To examine industrial structure, we have used the Economic Census data of the 6th round. In addition, we have used world development indicators data published by the World Bank.
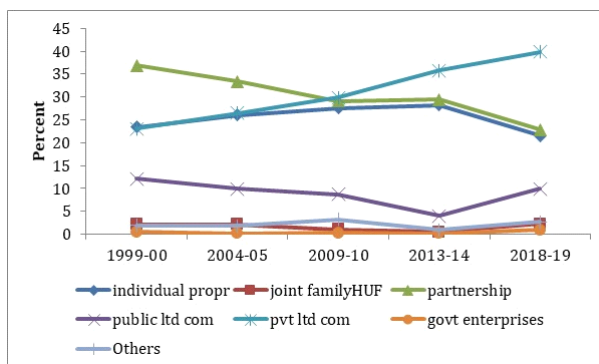
Figure 1: Distribution of firms by type of organisation, 1999-2019

Source: Author's estimates based on ASI data

3. Industrial Structure and Ownership Pattern

India's industrial structure and ownership pattern show a kind of elitism or hierarchy very much like social structure. The share of large firms has increased in the post reforms period. The share of private proprietorship is largest in terms of ownership as revealed by table (1).Similarly, figure (2) reveals that social groups of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes have very low share in ownership of establishments. The policies of economic reforms haven't shown any thrust to correct this. In the phase-I (1947-1985) India followed the path of planned economic development and laid out a robust foundation of modern industrial development.

The hard lessons that were learnt from the colonisation era made planners opt for a closed economy model[5]. There was some policy focus on public health and education as well. However, there was not a long-term policy on human resources integrated with industrial development. In other words; process of economic development was carried through modern industrialisation as followed in the Western Europe. It was fuelled by heavy physical capital and it was not labour absorbing. Therefore, even as industrial development and economic growth materialised, the core socio-economic challenges continued to become fierce. The economic policies in this phase were on physical investment for industrialisation without much consideration for human resource development for the industries largely.
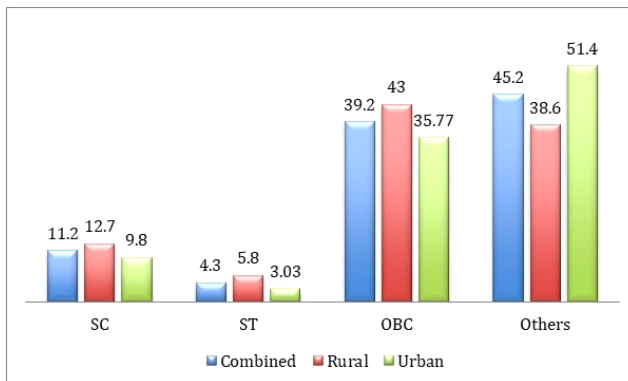
Figure 2: Ownership of Non-Agricultural Proprietary Establishments by Social Group

Source: 6th Economic Census, 2013-14

In the second phase-II (1985-2014), India's policy intervention tilted towards the market economy given fiscal constraints (Joshi et al., 1996). There were policy signals for relaxing the control system and opening the economy for private players. The public sector undertakings were privatised under the haze of global propaganda against government regulations and control (Harvey, 2016). The onset of new economic policy in India further deflected the policy attention from human development and human capital formation.

Table 1: Non-agricultural establishments by type of ownership and type of establishments

	Rural		Urban		Combined	
	With at least I worker	**Total**	**With at least I worker**	**Total**	**With at least I worker**	**Total**
Government/PSU	1573220	1573220	483281	483281	2056501	2056501
	25.79	*6.93*	*5.29*	*2.13*	*13.5*	*4.53*
Private:						
i) Propriety	3526527	19000169	7609557	20436846	11136084	39437015
	57.8	*83.66*	*83.36*	*90.22*	*73.12*	*86.94*
ii) Partnership	73550	130286	209625	282537	283175	412823
	1.21	*0.57*	*2.3*	*1.25*	*1.86*	*0.91*
iii) Company	53159	65326	113877	123068	167036	188394
	0.87	*0.29*	*1.25*	*0.54*	*1.1*	*0.42*
iv) Self Help Group	29951	176594	17967	53291	47918	229885
	0.49	*0.78*	*0.2*	*0.24*	*0.31*	*0.51*
v) Cooperative	49968	60812	31890	37556	81858	98368
	0.82	*0.27*	*0.35*	*0.17*	*0.54*	*0.22*
vi) Non-Profit Institution	334652	713169	170948	286051	505600	999220
	5.49	*3.14*	*1.87*	*1.26*	*3.32*	*2.2*
vii) Others	459833	990969	491059	950611	950892	1941580
	7.54	*4.36*	*5.38*	*4.2*	*6.24*	*4.28*
Total	6100860	22710545	9128204	22653241	15229064	45363786
	100	*100*	*100*	*100*	*100*	*100*

Note: Bold italic figure denotes percentage figures.
Source: 6th Economic Census, 2013-14.

While all developed countries and the East Asian countries developed their human resources, Indian state easily escaped this responsibility due to caste-class bias of India's political economy (Thorat and Newman, 2007).Despite the catchy slogan of structural reforms as the economic reforms were labelled, structure of political economy remained sacrosanct. The deeper questions of economy such as unemployment, inequality, and inclusion of all people through policy interventions were not touched. The economic reforms facilitated merely transfer of ownership of industrial capital from the government to the private sector only.

The third phase (after 2014) is characterised by autocratic policy interventions[6] to decimate government ownership of all undertakings, economic infrastructure, and disrupt all democratic processes of human development. The agitation by the farmers and labour class highlights grave fault lines of class struggle that have resulted from the agrarian policies[7]. Apart from this, there are many other policy interventions that have not only smashed the steady economic growth before the COVID outbreak, but also added to the social unrest and caste class divisions in the society.

As discussed in section (4), casualisation and contractualisation of jobs in India's manufacturing sector has been policy induced. The product reservation policy for small scale industries[8], with all fine intentions of policy makers, constrained firm size, productive efficiency, and expansion of the organised manufacturing sector (See subsection. These loopholes of industrial policies glowed brightly as soon as economic reforms were introduced in the early 1990s.

The size of the organised manufacturing sector must be increased through policy interventions. Figure (1) reveals that the share of private limited firms has grown consistently in the post economic reforms period. The recent policy initiatives of the government[9] may be good steps in this direction. However, they look inadequate as compared with countries of the East Asian region where the pattern of industrialisation and demographic transition were going together with the level of economic development. This calls for putting up pre-conditions[10] for such development. In order to do that expansion of the formal manufacturing sector, the policy makers need to foster entrepreneurs from the base of the pyramid of Indian social order. We argue that such a policy move will correct the imbalance of political economy of industrial development and will ensure social inclusion in the economy.

4. Industrial Performance: Issues and challenges

India too adopted a planned development model although there was a vacuum on national policy for the manufacturing sector until 2011.The National manufacturing policy,2011 was framed to address all such worries of the manufacturing sector. However, this was too late and short-lived. Opening the economy to foreign players before putting up such a policy in place was itself proof that policy makers were not prepared for external market competition. It is quite pertinent that social reforms[11] must be initiated before any kinds of economic reforms. Thus, India's manufacturing sector is way behind the world's manufacturing in respect of technology, production scale, and export share in global exports.

Consequently, contribution of India's organised manufacturing sector to the Lewisian type of transformation India has been lower in cross-country perspective. However, the unorganised sector has shown some signs of such a transformation since 2005.This is the reason for the withdrawal of 63 million[12] labour from the agriculture sector to non-farm sector. The declining job quality in the manufacturing sector mirrors this structural failure. In other words, it means that the fundamental strength of the economy is still not up to the mark. This is reflected in low technical efficiency of the manufacturing sector.

The industrial development strayed away from inclusive growth as policies could not frame a holistic policy framework for industrial development in terms of India's political economy demands. Since independence, India's industrial development has been governed by policies of import substitution, reservation for small scale industries, and control system[13]. There was a sheer shortage of vision for addressing issues of economic inequality and deprivation of social groups from ownership of industrial firms.

4.1. Industrial development since independence

India's industrialisation was laid out through the provisions of the Industrial Policy Resolution, 1956 which had the mandate to enhance economic growth and accomplish the objectives of the society with least regional imbalance. As the capital base was very narrow after independence, the state took all responsibility and ownership of industrial development. Most of the industries were owned by the government-central and state governments. The industries were divided into three

categories in terms of their ownership: central government owned, state government owned, and privately owned. The priority was given to the states having a low industrial base.

As industrial development expanded, there was a growing concentration of private industries in a few houses as industrial licensing enabled them to own a disproportionate share of industries. Taking cognizance of the same, Monopolies Inquiry Commission, 1964 and Industrial Licensing Policy Inquiry Committee of 1967 recommended to restrict the entry of private industries into core and heavy investment sectors only. Later, the monopolies and restrictive trade policies (MRTP)Act, 1969 was enacted to dispel the industrial concentration in a few hands only. The new industrial licensing policy, 1970 created four sectors of industries: Core, Heavy, Middle, and De-licensed sectors. In addition, the large business houses and foreign companies were entrusted with core, heavy investment, and exports industries only.

The thrust of India's policies over 1949-1990 was on five broad issues: raising industrial productivity and level of production, promoting small scale industries in order to realise structural transformation, regional balance in industrial development, discouraging formation of monopolies of large industries, and check on foreign investment in order to protect indigenous industries. However, the stylized pattern of structural transformation did not take place in India

In the subsequent period, the government of India has announced industrial policy statements and industrial policy measures only[14]. Industrial policy statement,1973 promoted small and medium entrepreneurs over the large houses and foreign companies for capacity formation to produce mass consumption goods. Industrial Policy Statement, 1977 facilitated industrial decentralisation by promoting small scale, tiny and cottage industries in order to enhance backward and forward linkages in industrial and agricultural sectors. It also expanded the ambit of industrial reservation for the small scale sector. The Industrial Policy Statement, 1980 emphasised competition in the domestic market, technological innovations and industrial modernisation. Moreover, managerial efficiency of public sector undertakings (PSUs) was developed by improving operations, finance, marketing and information systems.

India's industrialisation has undergone two major turning points so far. The closed economy model of import-substituting industrialisation and heavy industrialisation was adopted for boosting the capital goods sector during the period (1950-80) and subjected to import controls as well as industrial licensing. Later on, industrial space for private sector[15] in industrialisation was increased during the 1980s in the stewardship of the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi. The economic reforms introduced stabilisation and structural reforms[16]. Ahluwalia (2018) argues that these reforms were the outcome of deliberate planning of the government rather than any kind of imposition from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Although researchers including Amirapu and Subramanian (2015) term it premature deindustrialisation[17] in India, we do not agree with their viewpoint. Generally, deindustrialisation[18] sets in an economy only after the share of its manufacturing sector to GDP has reached to 30 percent. Contrasting this, in India's case, the manufacturing sector has remained stagnant since the early 1980s. The industrial share in total employment has started declining after touching the 25 percent mark as GDP per capita crossed a particular level ($1500) which is way below compared to the East Asian countries level. Even then, it cannot be outrightly termed so because the potential of the industrial sector has remained unrealised due to many factors on both demand and supply sides.

The demand side factors have constrained growth of India's industrial sector. The lack of policy focus on production of consumer non-durable goods, adoption product reservation policy for small scale industries, and multiple labour laws for the organised manufacturing strangulated industrial sector. There was no incentive left for increasing the scale of production and hence size of industries remained small. Industrial policy interventions caused irreparable distortions in growth and expansion of the industrial sector, compressed economic growth, and suppressed aggregate demand in the economy.

All this resulted in low economic growth and dwarfed the middle class. At present, about 350 million people constitute India's middle class which increased by fifty times during the period (1950-2018) and the maximum growth has taken place after the economic reforms (Singh, 2019). So, we may say that state-led capitalism and bureaucratic hurdles constrained the size and scale of industrial production and

expansion of the organised manufacturing sector. The legacy of bureaucratic disruptions to industrial development has not died down even after three decades (1990-2019) of the economic reforms.

The policy failures of the pre-reform era have not been corrected as the orientation and thrust of policies have not created much dynamism in industrial development. The focus of economic reforms has concentrated largely on economic growth through tariff reduction, industrial deregulation, privatisation etc. The factors of utmost importance relate to enhancing total factor productivity growth in the industrial sector, tapping the potential of demographic dividend, and promoting share of marginalised social groups in industrial ownership. We argue that designing a holistic industrial policy will repair all these dimensions of industrialisation.

4.2. Political economy of Industrialisation

An industrial policy is subject to the political choices and institutional framework to implement them. That is why, even though the industrial policy was a great success in South Korea and Hong Kong, it failed miserably in countries of the African continent in the 1960s (Haggard, 1990). In the early stages of development, it promotes resource-based manufacturing, diversified industrialisation at later stages, and high-technology industries at the advanced stage of development. In India, however, this kind of transition in policy focus was not followed although there were four industrial policy/statements resolutions[19] adopted during the period 1948-1990. This resulted in stagnation of the manufacturing sector for many decades now.

The industrial policy framework attempted to address issues such as enhancing industrial growth by developing import substituting industries, discouraging concentration of privatisation, and reducing regional disparities. There was emphasis on developing heavy industries as well as small cottage industries[20]. To streamline balanced regional growth of industries, the government had set up the District Industries Centres (DICs) which were set up throughout the country to facilitate small entrepreneurs in villages in terms of raw material, bank credit, machinery, and marketing of their produce.

The industrial policies promoted over-concentration of small firms thanks to the policy of industrial reservation for small firms. While the policy

was framed to protect and promote small entrepreneurs, it could not target the political economy or ownership structure of industries. For instance, there was little support or encouragement to potential entrepreneurs from the marginalised section of India's social pyramid. Figure (2) reveals that there is a huge disparity in ownership of establishments. The policies were not desperate to break the dominance of business houses belonging to the social elites. There was no affirmative action policy on raising entrepreneurs from these communities. That is why, achieving the policy goal of economic inclusion has seemed quite formidable in this globalised era given the huge size of informality.

Contrarily, countries of East Asia and the Pacific region steered their industrial development in conformity with the level of development and comparative advantages. Initially, labour intensive industries were developed which required low-skilled labour. The industrial policies that were adopted were flexible, and carried features of entrepreneurial maturity, skill-sets, competitiveness, and scale of production. They had promoted partnerships between the public sector and private sector. And also there were collaborations between industries and academic and research institutions. So, industrial policy played a key role in steering industrial development in all developed and developing countries.

The synergy between physical, economic, and human resources was not created unlike the countries of East Asia. The factors of demographic transition were not given much importance in industrial policy design. The policy focus on entrepreneurship development among marginalised sections is a very recent feature of policy intervention in the country. That is how the industrial sector suffered from supply and demand side hurdles. The political economy ignored the larger participation of social groups in ownership of industries. The Industrial Policy Statement,1991 has not changed much in this respect.

The objective of this industrial policy statement was to enhance and sustain productivity growth, generate industrial employment and utilise the potential of huge human resources to build up international competitiveness so that India becomes a strong player in the world economy. It also emphasised bringing backward areas of the country in the mainstream of industrial development by creating a mix of incentives, institutions and infrastructural investments. If such policy thrust was for economic choices, it is fine.

But why were political choices confined to a narrow canvas of industrial policy? Why was there no passionate attempt to expand the ownership structure of enterprises in terms of social groups? Why do marginalised and backward communities still own the Own Account Enterprises (OWEs) only? Why were industrial policies ignored creating skilled manpower for modern industries? Why was there no policy thrust on delegating responsibilities to all large business houses for development of human resources? We argue that these issues have not been addressed even after the policy shift of the early 1990s.

5. Size and Ownership of firms and contractualisation in organised manufacturing

The policy paradigm of the early 1990s has increased the proportion of large firms across states. The growing size of firms has a positive impact on total factor productivity though it tends to promote contractual jobs. As mentioned earlier, the trends have shown that the phenomenon of contractualisation in India had set in from 1997-98 onwards. However, the performance of the organised manufacturing sector in terms of industrial productivity and employment growth has not improved much.
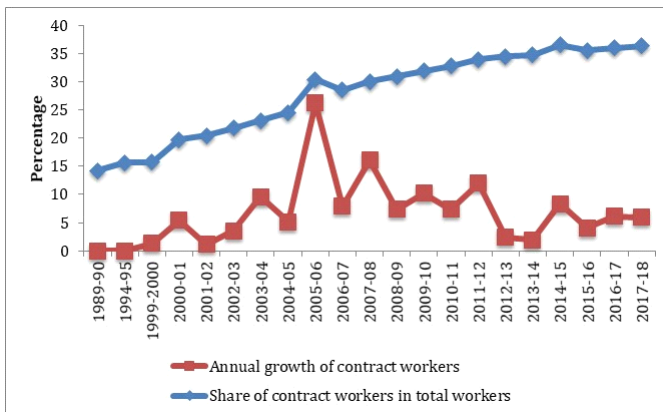
Figure 3: Contract workers in the formal manufacturing sector, 1999-2018

Contractualisation has got entrenched in India's manufacturing sector (Figure3). In fact, informality of jobs has become a global phenomenon with the surge of the market economy. Informality grew even faster with India's transition to the market economy in the early 1990s[21]. While it boosted economic growth relative to the pre-reform period

(1950-90), the formal manufacturing sector could not absorb the growing labour force due to the small formal manufacturing sector. The economic reforms of the early 1990s contributed to economic growth thanks to lifting various industrial and trade restrictions. However, there are contrasting claims regarding the impact of reforms on productivity growth.

The growing extent of contractualisation[22], has its root in poor performance of the manufacturing sector. It is also a reflection of factors like rigid labour laws, small size of the organised sector and policy of product reservation since that led to duality[23]of the manufacturing sector and thus constraining growth of regular employment.

Table 2a: Empirical results for contractualisation in wholly private sector

CONTRACT	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
IMPCOM	0.0439***	-298.1***	-3.26e-08***	-215.0***	0.0804***
	-0.01	-50.51	0.00	-50.18	-0.0112
FINCAP	0.0186*	-0.00321***	0.00545***	-0.00392*	-0.0111
	-0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.00629
PROFIT	-0.0000839***	0.000242**	0.00000124*	0.000342***	3.65E-05
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.000245
LACOST	0.00000864***	0.808***	-0.000131***	-0.00984***	0.317***
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.00525
INVEST	-538.9***	-70.79***	0.000689*	0.00000455***	-978.4***
	-159.90	-17.44	0.00	0.00	-232.6
_cons	0.149***	0.211***	0.00276***	1.008***	0.373***
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.00354
N	4542.00	15785.00	20398.00	1577.00	17160
R2	0.75	0.74	0.21	0.20	0.179

Source: Author's estimates based on ASI data

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

The growing proportion of casual and contractual jobs poses a policy challenge to enhance productivity growth and achieve inclusive growth[24] which entails a massive employment growth in the organised manufacturing sector. However, the fact remains that the contribution of the manufacturing sector to output and total employment has remained

very little despite three decades (1991-2019) of reforms policies. In the cross-country perspective also, performance of India's manufacturing sector is way below the rest of the countries. Whatever employment growth that has happened in the manufacturing sector is mostly related to the unorganised manufacturing sector over this three decade period (1991-2021). These jobs have largely been informal.

All informal workers are a vulnerable segment of the workforce as they are not covered under the Labour Laws. There was a marginal decline in informal employment in the year 2017-18 mainly to coverage of contractual jobs and fixed-term employment under the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC). However, this trend got reversed again as the proportion of informal workers rose to roughly 95 percent as per PLFS 2019-20 data.

Table 2b: Regression results of contractualisation for large firms

CONTRACT	1999-00	2004-05	2009-10	2013-14	2018-19
IMPCOM	0.0415***	-393.0***	-8.70e-09***	-278.9***	0.0824***
	-0.0121	-57.82	-7.11E-10	-55.61	-0.00806
FINCAP	-0.0000254	-0.00279*	0.00150***	-0.00475*	0.00259
	-0.00358	-0.00122	-0.0003	-0.00215	-0.0164
PROFIT	-0.0000859***	0.000297*	-0.000000520*	0.000474***	0.000345
	-0.00000225	-0.000118	-0.000000257	-0.000109	-0.000279
LACOST	0.00000836***	0.793***	-0.0000557***	-0.00609***	0.536***
	-7.59E-08	-0.0045	-0.00000518	-0.000539	-0.0354
INVEST	0.0000227***	-382.1***	0.000140**	0.0000879***	-0.00271***
	-0.00000378	-61.33	-0.0000544	-0.0000446	-0.0000446
_cons	0.174***	0.236***	0.00176***	1.003***	0.327***
	-0.00423	-0.00284	-0.0000226	-0.000659	-0.0069
N	77	12071	17283	1292	31792
R2	0.901	0.653	0.01	0.266	0.271

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

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

Contractualisation across firms was pulled up by factors like rising import penetration, profit share, labour cost of regular workers, and declining cost of finance capital. However, the impact of wage gap on

contractualisation was highest as the value of R^2 increased fast as we included wage gap in the regression.

As regards impact of ownership firm on contractualisation, we find that all explanatory variables were statistically significant for firms in wholly private sector. In other words, factors such labour cost, profit share, cost of finance capital, and investment climate all mattered. However, for contractualisation across states, we find that factors like investment climate, profit share, and labour cost were crucial for determining quality of employment in the manufacturing industry.

In the case of large firms, contractualisation was driven by factors like import competition, wage gap, and investment climate. As large firms employed 300 and more employees and capital labour ratio was high. The share of such firms in total firms in the organised sector is below 12 percent. With reduction in tariff walls, the pressure of import competition forced them to introduce more physical capital and hire contract workers to meet competition.

6. The way forward

Contractualisation in India's manufacturing sector underlines the severity of unemployment challenge that the economy faces though it is not a phenomenon of post-reform period only. While it was steady and got built up over decades in the pre-reform period (1950- 1990), it intensified after implementation of the New Economic Policy of 1991 mainly from 1999-00 onwards. Though it occurred in industry groups of all types and sizes, it was particularly high in capital and technology intensive industries, large industries, and in major industrial states.

All of this together reflected some kind of structural shift in India's labour market in line with labour informalisation worldwide. Growing contractualisation amid declining labour cost and low incidence of strikes in the industrial sector is an antithesis of arguments holding labour market rigidity responsible for stagnation of the manufacturing sector.

The organised manufacturing sector holds the key to realise labour absorbing structural transformation and address unemployment challenges that India faces. Economic theories underscore that manufacturing growth is essential for enhancing employment growth. However, even if contract

workers enable cost competitiveness of the sector. Contractualisation will hamper productivity growth and economic growth in the long run. In this respect, India's manufacturing sector is already way behind the industrialised and newly industrialised countries. The developed countries, the front-runners of the global production system, have already progressed towards the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

In this research, we have confined our focus to the organised manufacturing sector during 1990-91/2019-20.We attempted to examine the impact of policy changes of the early 1990s on employment quality from the perspective of industrial structure and ownership of firms. We found that factors like ownership and size of firms have been quite instrumental in pushing for contractualisation in the manufacturing sector. The way forward for a strong and diversified organised manufacturing sector is that policy frameworks promote small firms in industrial structure and share of marginalised social groups must be enhanced in the ownership pattern of firms.

Endnotes

1. Demonetisation and sudden introduction of goods and services tax

2. Regression specification error test (RESET) which is used to detect misspecification of functional form of a regression model

3. For empirical analysis, this test is used to rule out misspecification of explanatory variables.

4. It shows that how much coefficients of estimated variables are inflated vis-a-vis predicted variables, was very low (Wooldridge, 2015)

5. The economy was heavily controlled and regulated through licensing system and the public sector owned and operated most of the undertakings

6. With the winding up of the planning commission of India, policy measures such as demonetisation, privatisation of Indian railways, highways, airports, public sector banks, and uncalibrated introduction of the goods and services tax. The improper imposition of lock-down has halted all economic development

7. The contentious three farm bills that were passed in the parliament in the middle of year 2020 for corporatisation of India's agriculture

8. The manufacturing of more than 800 products were reserved for small scale industries under the Indus tries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 and successive industrial resolutions.

9. The introduction of Goods and Services Tax(GST) and policies of Digital India have led to some amount of formalisation in industrial sector (Economic Survey,2017-18)

10. The pre-conditions essentially mean that productive capacity of an economy must increase to benefit from the network of global production system

11. Ensuring social democracy, human dignity, and respect of labour is essential for non-antagonism in distribution of economic resources. This requires that caste hierarchy is dismantled to correct the political economy of production relations.

12. About 37 million labour during 2004-05 and 26 million during 2011-12/ 2017-18 withdrew from agriculture.

13. The industrial licensing system that existed before the economic reforms in early 1990s

14. Industrial policy statement,1973, 1977, 1991; Industrial policy measures, 1980s.

15. Industrial licensing for 30 industries removed, the MRTP limit increased, liberalisation of capital goods imports, widening of OGL window for capital goods and intermediaries, establishment of the Securities and Exchange Board of India

16. The industrial licensing removed for all industries barring 18 industries, abolished the MRTP Act, reducing industrial reservation of the public sector from 17 to 8 industries.

17. The premature deindustrialization takes place at a very low level of per capita GDP where the share of the manufacturing sector in total GDP and employment is low.

18. It refers to a stage of economic development in an economy where share of the manufacturing sector to GDP and employment declines after successful Lewisian structural transformation has happened

19. Industrial Policy Resolution,1956; Industrial Policy Statement,1973; Industrial Policy Statement,1977; Industrial Policy Statement, 1980

20. To this end, industrial policy, 1948 had thrust upon cottage and small industries. The Khadi and Village Industries Commission(KVIC) was set up in 1955.The Industrial policy, 1956 prioritise heavy industries

21. It is reflected by the new economic policy (NEP) or economic reforms that comprised mainly removal of industrial licensing all industries barring 18 industries, abolishing the MRTP Act, reducing industrial reservation of the public sector from 17 to 8 industries, and substantial reductions in tariff rates etc.

22. The share of contract workers rose from 32 percent to 60.4 percent over period 1999-2000/2011-12 in the organised manufacturing

23. The existence of unorganised segment along with organised manufacturing sector

24. As defined in the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12), inclusive growth will occur if surplus labour from the agriculture sector can be shifted to the organised or unorganised manufacturing sector in gainful employment.

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Development of Biofuels for the Indian Transport Sector: A Precursor to the Global Biofuel Alliance Launched During the G20 New Delhi Summit

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Abstract

The Indian government (GoI) during the G20 New Delhi Summit launched the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA). The stated aim of this global alliance is to mainstream the utilisation of biofuels as alternatives to petroleum products for the global transport sector demand for final energy. To put the announcement of the GBA in a proper perspective, it is imperative to contextualise the GoI's initiatives from time-to-time to develop biofuels as alternative transport fuels. This study provides a comprehensive coverage of the various interventions in India by the central and state governments over the last two decades. Finally, it concludes that the recent achievements in biofuel development in the Indian context have resulted from concerted efforts for nearly two decades and represents a classic case of adopting the public policy stance of learning by doing.

Keywords: Global Biofuel Alliance, biodiesel, bioethanol, renewable energy, transport, India

1. Introduction

Biofuels in general refer to liquid or gaseous fuels derived from biomass. Among the bio-liquids, bioethanol and biodiesel are produced from various alternative edible or non-edible oilseeds and other biotic sources like sugar cane or cellulosic component of biomass. The Indian government (GoI), during the G20 presidency, launched the Global Biofuel Alliance. The stated aim of the alliance is to mainstream the utilisation of biofuels as alternatives to the petroleum products such

as petrol and high speed diesel. It also aims to encourage "technology advancements, intensifying utilization of sustainable biofuels, shaping robust standard setting and certification through the participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders". In order to put the announcement of the GBA in a proper perspective, it is imperative to reflect on various initiatives of the GoI from time to time to develop biofuels as alternative transport fuels. In this context, this study provides a comprehensive coverage of the various interventions on behalf of the central and state governments over the last two decades.

It is noteworthy here that the road transport remains the dominant mode of transport compared to other modes such as railways, water and air transport and therefore accounts for the highest share in the total final energy consumed in the transport sector worldwide. Moreover, it is the petroleum products such as motor gasoline and high speed diesel (HSD) that remain the principal source of final energy for the world's road transport. The transition from the conventional to alternative fuels in the world's road transport requires – a) increasing the availability of alternative fuels, b) modifications in the present-day dominant spark-ignition and compression-ignition based vehicle technologies and c) the research and development of renewable alternatives and the compatible new vehicle technologies.

Road transport vehicles essentially use Internal Combustion (IC) engines such as spark-ignition (SI) engines and compression-ignition (CI) engines. Broadly speaking, these internal combustion engines drive the vehicle by first converting the chemical energy contained in the fuel into thermal energy and then utilising this thermal energy to perform mechanical work, which ultimately produces kinetic energy. However, these SI and CI engines differ significantly in how fuel combustion takes place initially. In SI engines, fuel is mixed with air before combustion takes place and the spark (i.e. high energy electrical discharge) finally initiates the combustion process. In CI engines, the air gets compressed during the compression stroke, and the fuel is injected into the cylinder. The fuel auto ignites as it gets mixed with the compressed air at a high temperature in the cylinder. Since the method of initiation and combustion in the case of SI and CI engines is different, the nature of fuels compatible for these vehicles technologies also differs in terms of their properties (Naber and Johnson, 2014).

Motor gasoline is used exclusively in SI engine-based vehicles. A wide range of alternative liquid/gaseous fuels are compatible with SI engines – liquid fuels include alcohols such as methanol, ethanol and butanol and gaseous fuels such as natural gas, biogas and hydrogen. Among the several properties, a fuel's octane rating is one of the important criteria for selecting fuel for these engines. The higher the fuel's octane rating, the greater its resistance to the pre-ignition (knock). Diesel, on the hand, is most commonly used in CI engines as it has higher cetane numbers which indicates the propensity of a fuel for auto-ignition. The alternative fuels for CI engines are liquid fuels such as biodiesel, Fischer-Tropsch (FT) diesel and Di-methyl ether (DME) and gaseous fuels such as compressed natural gas and hydrogen (Naber and Johnson, 2014).

An important attribute of biofuels – biodiesel and bioethanol is that since these can be processed to have suitable physical and chemical properties, they are suitable as blends in high speed diesel (HSD) and motor gasoline (MG) respectively with appropriate modifications in the internal combustion engines or as the principal fuel in flex-fuel vehicles. Research and development (R&D) efforts to encourage the production and use of biofuels in the transport sector have received global attention, especially in countries that import oil. The major driving force behind the acceptance of biofuels as an alternative transport fuel in such economies across the world has been that the feedstock can be produced domestically, thus reducing the dependence on imported crude oil and has the potential of increasing the resilience of the process of economic growth to oil shocks. Biotic resource use further assumes significance given their carbon neutrality as the carbon cycle of the earth's ecosystem recycles carbon dioxide back into the plant body, provided the biomass stock is maintained. One expects that such a development of biofuels would thus contribute to controlling global warming and abatement of climate change while supporting the economic development process. Besides economic considerations and environmental benefits, the value chain of organizing the production of biofuels promises social benefits in terms of developing an agro-based energy industry, thus creating employment opportunities and bringing rural development. Moreover, the oil marketing companies carrying out downstream operations in the oil industry find it easy to integrate these biofuels into their existing petroleum products supply chain across the country.

2. Indian Biofuels Initiatives: An Overview

In the backdrop of the growing global importance of biofuels as a renewable source of final energy in the transport sector and the potential benefits of promoting an agro-based energy industry for developing economies, the Indian government has encouraged biofuels domestically as part of its energy policy agenda since the early 2000s.

2.1 Committee for Development of Biofuels in India

On 18th July, 2002, the government constituted the 'Committee on Development of Biofuels' under Dr. D. N. Tewari as its chairman. Its report is called 'Report of the Committee on Development of Biofuels', finalised in April 2003. The committee recommended that in the case of bioethanol production, molasses - the by-product of manufacturing sugar from cane juice should serve as feedstock. The committee envisaged that 7 per cent bioethanol blending could be achieved and recommended scaling up to 10 per cent bioethanol blend in the fuel mix for the 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007).

To increase the availability of domestically produced bioethanol, the committee also recommended producing ethanol directly from sugar cane juice, especially in the case of states where sugar cane production exceeds what is required to meet the demand for sugar. Given the skewed sugar mills capacity concentrated in the areas with acreage under sugar cane cultivation, the committee recommended that the feedstock for bioethanol production i.e. molasses, be allowed to move freely across states to meet the mandatory bioethanol blending targets. The committee also recommended the provision of incentives for encouraging investment in new distilleries and for the modernization of the existing sugar mills by integrating distilleries with them, permitting flexibility in the choice of feedstock i.e. molasses- or cane juice-based bioethanol given the prevailing market conditions (GOI, 2003).

So far as biodiesel is concerned, the committee proposed to set up a "National Mission on Biodiesel" to achieve a target of 20 per cent biodiesel blending in the high speed diesel by 2011-2012. The committee also suggested that the implementation of this mission be carried out in two phases:

Phase-I: The 1st Phase under this mission should be known as the 'Demonstration Phase' and should cover 5 years starting from 2003.

The committee believed that the government must be active during this phase so that biodiesel production becomes economically viable with all its essential forward and backward linkages. In this backdrop, the committee laid down the following four objectives for this phase:

(i)   'To lay down the foundation of a fast-growing and self-sustaining people and enterprise-driven biodiesel production program in the country'.

(ii) 'To produce enough feedstock for biodiesel production'.

(iii) 'To test, develop and demonstrate the viability of programme constituting components, and their cost-benefit including their forward and backward linkages'.

(iv) "To inform and educate the potential partici-pants of the programme".

With the aim of realising the above objectives, the committee suggested setting up 6 Micro-missions covering the various aspects of the different stages involved in biodiesel production. The aim of the first three among the proposed six micro-missions, namely "Micro-mission on Plantation on Forests Lands", "Micro-mission on Plantation on Non-forest Lands" and "Micro-mission on Plantation on other lands" was to encourage the plantation of shrub or tree-borne non-edible oilseeds such as jatropha/Pongamia pinnata across the country. The committee further recommended a separate nodal agency - Ministry of Environment & Forests, National Oilseeds and Vegetable Oil Development Board (NOVOD) and Ministry of Rural Development for the effective and smooth implementation of the three micro-missions respectively. The committee proposed a target of planting jatropha curcas on 4 lakh hectares comprising forest and non-forest land across the eight Indian states (namely Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh). In this context, the committee recommended that the under-stocked forest land area of about 2 lakh hectares in the size of 50,000 to 60,000 hectares be under jatropha cover in each state (namely, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and Tripura). The Joint Forest Management Committees in these states should manage these plantations. The remaining 2 lakh hectares (comprising of non-forest land in the 50,000 to 60,000 hectares

range) should be from states such as Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh (GOI, 2003).

The focus of the other three micro-missions, namely "Micro-mission on Procurement of Seed and Oil Extraction", "Micro-mission on Trans-esterification" and "Micro-mission on Research and Development" was to encourage participation in the activities such as procurement of jatropha oilseeds and extraction of raw oil, its processing for manufacturing biodiesel and the R&D efforts for improving oilseeds yield and recovery of biodiesel etc. The committee recommended Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) and the State Agricultural Universities, along with the public- and privately-funded research institutions, as the agencies for governing the implementation of these three micro-missions respectively.

Phase-II: During the 2nd phase of the mission, the committee envisaged that feedstock plantation and biodiesel production would become 'self-sustaining' and the government would be a facilitator instead of being a 'prime mover' as suggested under the proposed 1st phase of the mission. The committee proposed to launch the 2nd phase from the year 2007. The committee further sets a target of introducing 5 per cent blending of biodiesel in the high speed diesel consumed in the transport sector for the year 2005 and envisaged that the total quantity of biodiesel required for achieving 20 per cent would be available domestically by 2011-12 (GOI, 2003).

2.2 Measures prior to the announcement of the National Policy on Biofuels
Despite the committee's forward-looking recommendations confirming the prospects of biofuels – bioethanol and biodiesel for India, the biofuels sector development was marked by uncertainty, particularly for want of a national policy laying down the guidelines governing this sector and the objectives and targets of biofuels production and use are concerned. The committee's final report, placed before the Prime Minister's Office for approval in July, 2003, remained a 'draft report' for over five years, elevating the uncertainty regarding the prospects of biofuels in India before it was finally approved in September 2008 (Altenburg et al., 2009).

It must be noted here that the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (hereafter MoPNG), through a notification on 1st January 2004 published in "The Gazette of India" dated 9th January 2004, permitted the sale of motor gasoline blended with only 5 per cent bioethanol in the 14 districts of Andhra Pradesh (namely Chittoor, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantapur, Nellore, Nalgonda, Mahaboobnagar, Hyderabad, Adilabad, Nizamabad, Warangal, Karimnagar, Ranga Reddy and Medak), along with Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory (UT) – Pondicherry. Bioethanol-blended motor gasoline was to be introduced in these two states and the UT in January 2004. However, the MoPNG, in its notification dated 30th January 2004 published in The Gazette of India on 27th February 2004, put on hold the sale of blended petrol in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry and even its spread was limited to 12 of the 14 districts of Andhra Pradesh as notified earlier (i.e. excluding Chittoor and Nellore). Subsequently, in the case of Tamil Nadu, the MoPNG did allow the sale of blended petrol, but it was limited only to the nine districts of the state (namely Coimbatore, Dundigul, Erode, Nilgiri, Tirunelveli, Ramnathpuram, Virudhunagar, Tuticorin and Kanyakumari). Further, the MoPNG permitted approximately three months i.e. from 14th April 2004 to 14th July 2004, for the successful implementation of the sale of 5 per cent ethanol-blended petrol in these selected districts.

On 27th October 2004, the ambit of the ethanol blending programme got extended by the MoPNG from the few selected districts of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to other Indian states and UTs (namely, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal and the three Union Territories i.e. Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar and Chandigarh). The blended motor gasoline was to be sold subject to the conditions that (i) its price is comparable to the potential alternative uses and (ii) its price remains comparable to the import parity price for the location. Finally, it took another two years for the MoPNG to make the ethanol blending program national coverage. On 20th September 2006, the MoPNG directed the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to market 5 per cent ethanol-blended petrol across the 20 states (i.e. excluding Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura) and 4 UTs (i.e. excluding Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep) from 1st November 2006.

To introduce 5 per cent biodiesel blending from 2005 in the county as recommended by the Committee on Development of Biofuels, the MoPNG announced its 'Biodiesel Purchase Policy' on 9th October 2005. As per the announced policy, the MoPNG initially fixed the price of biodiesel at Rs 25 per litre for six months, taking effect on 1st January 2006. Based on the consultations with the OMCs such as Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), the MoPNG identified 20 purchase centres across the 12 Indian states belonging to either of these three public OMCs where biodiesel manufacturers could sell their final product i.e. biodiesel for blending purposes (GOI, 2005).

According to the MoPNG, the biodiesel manufacturers in these states were required to register themselves with the designated purchase centres of the OMCs. It was mandatory that the manufacturer's plant capacity, its credibility and quality of biodiesel be certified before they could sell biodiesel to any of the designated centres. The MoPNG also directed that the biodiesel purchase price should be uniform at all biodiesel purchase centres (including any taxes, duties and transportation cost involved). However, the responsibility of testing the biodiesel brought to these centres was entrusted with the OMCs which were to make the necessary arrangements and bear the cost of the testing as well. Once fixed by OMCs, the uniform price of biodiesel would remain effective for six months, after which it was to be reviewed given the market conditions. The MoPNG also appointed the Petroleum Policy and Analysis Cell (PPAC) to monitor the OMCs' implementation of the Biodiesel Purchase Policy (GOI, 2005).

2.2.1 State-level Initiatives for Biofuels

Since agriculture is a 'State' subject in India, states such as Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand undertook several policy initiatives to encourage energy plantations for biodiesel production. In Andhra Pradesh, the government has been promoting the plantation of Pongamia pinnata since 2006. The Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development implemented the program, while the Rain Shadows Areas Development Department was responsible for policy formulation. The plantations are encouraged in the forest land managed by the Joint Forest Management Committees and since November 2006, the small and marginal farmers with agricultural landholdings of less than 5 acres have been allowed to participate in

the programme. The government provides subsidised seedlings and also reduced the value-added tax on biodiesel to 4 per cent (Altenburg et al., 2009; Raju et al., 2012).

In Chhattisgarh, the state government established the Chhattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) in 2005 under the aegis of Chhattisgarh Renewable Energy Development Authority (CREDA). The biodiesel programme in the state encourages jatropha plantations on all types of land, such as forest land, revenue and common land, and private agricultural land holdings. The state government provided 500 seedlings free of cost; farmers must pay a subsidised rate of Rs 1 per seedling for the additional purchases. The state government encouraged private enterprises to set up biodiesel manufacturing units through subsidies and tax exemptions. In addition, the state government had plans to use the Straight Vegetable Oil (SVO) extracted from jatropha oilseeds to electrify as many as 500 villages unconnected to the grid. The CREDA took this initiative, which used the funding available under the Village Energy Security Programme of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. The CREDA developed plans to set up an SVO extraction unit for a group of five to six villages to supply the oil to the generators installed in each village for producing power (Altenburg et al., 2009).

On 9th March 2009, the Karnataka government announced its 'State Biofuel Policy' and besides jatropha, it also emphasised tree-borne oilseeds such as Pongamia, Neem, Simarouba and Mahua for biodiesel production. The biofuel policy encouraged plantations on dry and marginal land and wastelands across the state. In this regard, the State Revenue and the Forest Department were to identify the wasteland under the government or private ownership suitable for energy plantations. The collection of seeds is to be carried out by the 'self-help women's groups and local user groups' and private entrepreneurs will be encouraged to set up biodiesel-producing units in the state. The state government also established a Karnataka State Biofuel Development Board (KSBDB) under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of the state for the implementation of the biofuel policy. The State Task Force on Biofuel, established on 12th October 2009, was to perform an advisory role for the state government and the KSBDB (GoK, 2009; Raju et al., 2012).

In 2004, the Tamil Nadu government launched its biodiesel programme
under which it decided to finance nurseries for raising and distributing
about 30 million jatropha seedlings to farmers and panchayats free of
cost. The state government developed an input-based monitoring
mechanism that could ensure the distribution of seedlings, but the actual
plantations of these seedlings could not be ensured owing to a lack of
monitoring. Moreover, on account of the low survival rate of jatropha
seedlings and the requirement of intensive use of agricultural inputs
such as manure, fertilisers and water for irrigation, thus involving higher
expenses in the maintenance of jatropha seedlings farmers began to
give up jatropha plantation. Finally, the state government discontinued
the practice of distributing subsidised jatropha seedlings by the year
2006. However, the newly elected state government in the year 2006
reintroduced the biodiesel programme under which instead of supplying
jatropha seedlings for free of cost, it decided to offer a subsidy of Rs
1.5 per seedling to all the nurseries managed by self-help groups (SHG),
non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Tamil Nadu Agricultural
University (TNAU). It is found that farmers depending on their size
of agricultural land holdings had a different incentive for undertaking
jatropha plantation. Small and marginal farmers carried out boundary
plantations (or plantations on fences or hedges) as an additional source
of income, whereas rich farmers with large landholdings opted for
block plantations. The absentee landlords were willing to undertake
jatropha plantations on their land to avail themselves of the benefit
from tax rebates only. Further, the state government to encourage the
uptake of jatropha seedlings and extraction of straight vegetable oil
(SVO) exempted jatropha oilseeds from any purchase tax and no value-
added tax was levied on SVO (Altenburg et al., 2009).

In 2004, the Uttarakhand biodiesel programme was mainly driven by
creating employment opportunities and rehabilitating the degraded forest
land as the state experienced high unemployment rates and thus out-
migration of people in the search for livelihoods. The state planned to
carry out jatropha plantations on approximately 2 lakh hectares of
forest land until 2012. The state government also established the
Uttarakhand Biodiesel Board (UBB) which oversees the state's biodiesel
programme and provides necessary training while monitoring the jatropha
plantation activities. Besides utilising the funds from the National Oilseeds
and Vegetable Oil Development (NOVOD) Board and the Department
of Land Resources under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development

and various central government-sponsored schemes (such as Swaran Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and the Village Energy Security Programme, the UBB also receives financial assistance from the state along with the private biodiesel manufacturers for fulfilling its responsibilities (Altenburg et al., 2009).

In 2007, the Odisha government formulated the policy guidelines for 'Raising Energy Plantations and Biodiesel Production' covering ten years. The Science and Technology Department of the Odisha government estimated the total biodiesel production potential in the state at 14,000 kilo litres (KL) per annum. The biodiesel programme had plans to cover 30 per cent of the state's total wasteland for jatropha plantations (RCDC, 2011). The main objectives of the biodiesel policy of the state are as follows:

  (i) "To put barren, uncultivated and fallow land of the state into effective use through raising energy plantations".

 (ii) "To enable the poor and disadvantaged people of the society to take up cultivation of oilseed bearing trees".

(iii) "To enable interested and eligible entrepreneurs to set up biodiesel production plants".

 (iv) "To provide suitable market linkage to biodiesel producers to sell their product and endeavour for a minimum support price".

  (v) "To set up the quality control facilities to guide entrepreneurs to produce biodiesel conforming to the standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards".

Orissa Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) became the nodal agency for the biodiesel programme. The Orissa Forest Development Corporation (OFDC) was responsible for encouraging the cultivation of tree-borne oilseeds for biodiesel production in the state. The Orissa University of Agricultural Technology (OUAT) and Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) were to provide technological and scientific inputs for successfully implementing biodiesel production activities in the state. The Odisha government has also constituted a monitoring committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for the appraisal of biodiesel-related activities as per the

policy guidelines and for providing the necessary information to the
state government every quarter (RCDC, 2011).

2.3 National Policy on Biofuels, 2009

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) announced the
National Policy on Biofuels in December 2009, after the Cabinet
Committee approved it on 23rd July, 2009. This reaffirms the commitment
of the Indian government towards developing biofuels, putting at rest
the uncertainties around this emerging sector. This policy attempts "to
facilitate and bring about optimal development and utilisation of
indigenous biomass feedstocks for producing biofuels" (GOI, 2009).
The policy announcement and its provisions would play a crucial role
in addressing the concerns of the different stakeholders, which is essential
for their participation and attracting the required flow of investment
for the various stages involved in the biofuel value chain.

The MNRE in its resolution vide dated 7th May, 2010 published in the
Gazette of India dated 16th August, 2011 and its office memorandum
vide dated 7th May, 2010 set up a National Biofuel Coordination
Committee (NBCC) under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Prime
Minister with the purpose of providing "overall coordination, effective
end-to-end implementation and monitoring of biofuel programmes" in
the country. It also sets up a Biofuel Steering Committee (BSC) under
the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary "to provide effective guidance
and to oversee implementation of the policy on a regular and continuing
basis".

The Indian biofuel policy has set the target of achieving 20 per cent
blending of biofuels, both for bioethanol and biodiesel for 2017. In
the case of biodiesel, the proposed target is "recommendatory" in nature,
whereas since October 2008, the intermediate target of 10 per cent
bioethanol blending remains mandatory. It is important to note here
that the biofuel policy focuses on using indigenous non-food biomass
sources as feedstocks for producing biofuels. It thus forbids any import
of free fatty acid (FFA) oils for biodiesel production in the country
and even the import of biofuels – bioethanol and biodiesel are subject
to the approval of the "National Biofuel Coordination Committee
(NBCC)" and that too for meeting the required blending targets only.
The imported biofuels are also subject to duties and taxes, so they
don't compete with domestically produced biofuels. Further, the export

of such fuels is allowed only after the domestic blending requirements has been met and the approval of the NBCC is also mandatory in such cases (GOI, 2009).

India is a world's leading producer of sugar cane and sugar cane cultivation is being practiced by Indian farmers across several states. Consequently, India has a large industrial base of sugar mills that manufacture sugar from cane juice. Molasses is the by-product of sugar from cane juice and serves as an intermediate input for distilleries producing potable alcohol and hydrous ethanol for industrial use in the chemical industry, pharmaceuticals, etc. The biofuel policy encourages molasses as feedstock for bioethanol production and to further augment the domestic availability of bioethanol for blending purposes, has allowed its production directly from the cane juice subject to the condition that "it does not in any way create supply constraints in production of sugar or availability of ethanol for industrial use".

Unlike sugar cane, the plantation of shrub and tree-borne non-edible oilseeds are not currently practiced by the Indian farmers. Though several edible oilseeds such as groundnut, nigerseed, rapeseed and mustard, safflower, sesamum, soybean and sunflower are being produced by Indian farmers, but the Indian government can't afford to divert these for biodiesel production since their domestic demand exceeds their domestic production making India a net importer of edible oil. The Indian biofuel policy promotes using non-edible shrub/tree-borne oilseeds cultivated in the "government/ community wasteland, degraded or fallow land in forest and non-forest areas" for biodiesel production.

One of the fundamental challenges in ensuring domestic production and availability of biodiesel for blending purpose is establishing the biodiesel value chain in the states with the potential availability of wastelands for such energy plantations. The national biofuel policy aims to address the problem of the availability of feedstocks by announcing minimum support prices (MSP) for such non-edible oilseeds, with the provision that they will be revised periodically to ensure fair returns to farmers. Since the energy plantations and the harvest of oilseeds is expected to be labour intensive in nature, the biofuel policy extends the coverage of the "National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)" to include such activities. Further, the government plans to encourage private participation in oil extraction and biodiesel

processing units which can procure the oilseeds produced in the surrounding areas. The government also plans to promote the Gram/ Intermediate Panchayats to set up oil extraction units, which can then sell the raw extracted oil or Straight Vegetable Oil (SVO) to the nearby biodiesel processing units (GOI, 2009).

To provide financial support to the stakeholders across the different stages of biofuel value chain, the government plans to declare the biodiesel sector "as a priority sector for the purpose of lending by financial institutions and banks". The energy plantations by farmers will be supported by the "National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)" and institutions such as "Indian Renewable Energy Development Authority (IREDA)", "Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)", other financing agencies and commercial banks will also be encouraged to extend funding to this sector. It is noteworthy here that excluding energy plantations, the government also plans to approve foreign equity to the extent of 100 per cent through an automatic approval route to attract foreign capital in the biofuel-related technologies and projects, subject to the condition that the total quantity of biofuels produced is meant for the domestic market only. The domestic biodiesel production is not subject to any excise duty and the government has allowed a concessional excise duty of 16 per cent for bioethanol. There are plans to provide custom and excise duty concessions "on plant and machinery for biofuel production, including for engines that are run on biofuels for transport, stationary and other applications, if these are not manufactured indigenously" (GOI, 2009).

To encourage investment in suitable biofuel production units across the country, the government will announce the "Minimum Purchase Price (MPP)" for both – bioethanol and biodiesel. The Biofuel Steering Committee (BSC) has been assigned the responsibility of setting MPP for these fuels, which will be announced after they have been duly approved by the NBCC. The MPP for biodiesel is to be calculated after considering various stages of biodiesel value chain i.e. from oilseeds production till the marketing stage and relative to the prevailing high diesel price in retail. For bioethanol, the MPP is to be determined considering the cost of production and imported price of bioethanol. The OMCs have been assigned the responsibility of storage, distribution and marketing of biofuels with the provision that if the petroleum

products (i.e. petrol and high speed diesel) price fall below the MPP fixed for bioethanol and biodiesel respectively, the government would duly compensate them for the difference (GOI, 2009).

2.4 National Policy on Biofuels, 2018 and 2022

On 4th June 2018, the GoI replaced the "National Policy on Biofuels, 2009" with a new policy referred to as National Policy on Biofuels 2018. As per this policy, despite the mere 2.0 per cent blending of bioethanol and even less than 0.1 per cent of biodiesel blending being achieved till date, the GoI proposed an "indicative target" of achieving 20 per cent bioethanol blending and 5 percent biodiesel blending by the year 2030 (GOI, 2018). Besides the blending targets, the GoI also "established guaranteed pricing, long-term ethanol contracts, technical standards and codes and financial support for building new facilities and upgrading existing ones" (IEA, 2023). One of key initiatives of the National Biofuels Policy 2018 further amended on 18th May 2022 has been to even "advance the bioethanol blending target of 20 per cent in petrol forward by 5 years from the initial timeline of 2030".

3. Concluding Remarks

Against the above backdrop, it must be noted that the recent achievements in biofuel development in the Indian context have resulted from concerted efforts for close to two decades. It's a classic case of adopting a public policy stance of learning by doing, wherein an instrumental role is of the "coordinated policies, high political support" along with the potential availability of feedstocks to make it a reality.

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Navigating Turnover Tides: A Decade-long Meta-analysis of the Impact of Authentic Leadership on Employee Turnover Intentions (2011-2021)

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Abstract

In the dynamic landscape of organizational behaviour and management, understanding leadership styles' impact on employee outcomes is crucial. This research delves into the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention through a comprehensive meta-analysis spanning a decade (2011-2021). The study, guided by PRISMA guidelines, amalgamates findings from 14 primary studies, revealing a nuanced and robust correlation. The negative overall correlation of -0.30 underscores Authentic Leadership's protective influence against Turnover Intention. Reporting bias analysis, heterogeneity measures, and practical implications for organizations enhance the credibility of the findings. As organizations strive for talent retention, cultivating Authentic Leadership emerges as a strategic imperative.

Keywords: authentic leadership, turnover intention, meta-analysis

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of organizational behaviour and management, the exploration of leadership styles and their impact on employee outcomes has become imperative. One such leadership approach that has gained substantial attention is "Authentic Leadership." Rooted in the principles of transparency, self-awareness, and ethical decision-making, authentic leadership is postulated to foster positive employee attitudes and behaviours.

A critical aspect of organizational effectiveness lies in understanding and mitigating turnover intentions among employees. Turnover intention, often considered a precursor to actual turnover, carries significant ramifications for organizational stability, productivity, and the overall work environment. Consequently, there is a growing interest in scrutinizing the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention.

The proposed research endeavours to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by conducting a meta-analysis, synthesizing findings from a decade-long span, ranging from 2011 to 2021. The chosen timeframe allows us to capture a comprehensive understanding of the evolving dynamics between authentic leadership and turnover intention, considering potential shifts in organizational cultures, leadership practices, and external influences over the years.

1.1 Rationale for the Meta-Analysis:

 1.1.1 **Cumulative Insight**: Meta-analysis offers a systematic and comprehensive approach to amalgamate findings from individual studies, providing a more nuanced understanding by synthesizing a diverse range of research outcomes.

 1.1.2 **Temporal Analysis**: Examining the relationship over an extended period facilitates the identification of trends, variations, and potential modifications in the authentic leadership-turnover intention dynamics, offering insights into the adaptability and sustainability of this leadership style.

 1.1.3 **Holistic Perspective**: By incorporating studies from various industries, geographical locations, and organizational contexts, the meta-analysis aims to provide a holistic perspective on how

authentic leadership functions as a mitigating or exacerbating factor in turnover intention across diverse settings.

1.1.4 Practical Implications: The outcomes of this research hold practical implications for organizational leaders, human resource practitioners, and scholars, offering evidence-based insights that can inform leadership development programs and retention strategies.

As we delve into the meta-analysis, it is anticipated that the synthesis of research findings will not only deepen our understanding of the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention, see figure 1, but will also contribute valuable knowledge for fostering organizational cultures that support employee well-being and organizational sustainability.

Figure 1: Relationship Between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention

2. Literature Review

2.1 Methodological Approach: PRISMA Flow Diagram for Meta-Analysis - The methodological rigor of a meta-analysis is foundational to its reliability and validity. Adhering to established guidelines, this study employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework. As depicted in Figure 2, the PRISMA flow diagram illustrates the systematic process undertaken to identify, screen, and select primary studies for inclusion in our meta-analysis.

PRISMA Flow Diagram for Meta-Analysis between AL and TI

Identification

Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention primary studies identified from Mendeley, Scopus, and Google Scholar (k=70)

Removing duplicate records (k = 04)

Screening

Records screened (k = 66)

Records excluded (not full-text articles/theses) (k =32)

Primary studies evaluated for suitability (k = 34)

Primary studies were excluded because they did not meet the specified inclusion criteria (k=20)

Included

Primary studies that met the criteria were included in the quantitative synthesis (meta-analysis) (k = 14)

Figure 2 - PRISMA flow diagram for Meta-analysis

Note: k = Number of Studies

2.2   Identification of Primary Studies: Our comprehensive search strategy, spanning the years 2011 to 2021, led to the identification of a total of 70 primary studies exploring the intricate relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention. These studies were sourced from reputable academic databases, scholarly journals, and relevant publications in the field of organizational behaviour.

2.3   Screening and Inclusion Criteria: The initial screening process involved a meticulous examination of titles and abstracts, eliminating studies that did not align with the focus of our research. Subsequently, the full texts of the remaining studies

were rigorously scrutinized against predetermined inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria were designed to ensure the relevance, quality, and consistency of the studies included in our meta-analysis. Studies that met the following criteria were considered for inclusion: (i) Directly addressed the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention. (ii) Published between the years 2011 and 2021. (iii) Employed robust research methodologies and statistical analyses. (iv) Available in English language.

2.4 **Qualification for Analysis**: After stringent screening and application of inclusion criteria, a refined set of 14 primary studies emerged as eligible for the meta-analysis. These studies, carefully selected for their methodological soundness and thematic relevance, form the bedrock of our investigation into the nuanced dynamics between authentic leadership and turnover intention during the specified time frame.

In the subsequent sections of this literature review, we delve into the key findings and synthesized outcomes derived from the meta-analysis of these 14 primary studies as shown the Table 1. Through this meticulous process, we aim to offer a consolidated understanding of the authentic leadership-turnover intention relationship, acknowledging both the common trends and potential variations across diverse organizational contexts.

3. **Meta-Analysis Methodology**: Application of a Random Effects Model- We conducted a meta-analysis on 14 primary studies investigating the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention from 2011 to 2021. Following PRISMA guidelines, the Random Effects Model was chosen due to expected heterogeneity. The model accounts for both within-study variance and between-study variability, acknowledging potential differences in effect sizes. The Random Effects Model provided a conservative overall effect size, considering both within-study and between-study variances. We applied Meta-Essential Tool – Workbook 5 developed by Suurmond et al. (2017).

Table 1 – Primary Studies Included in Present Study

PV	OV		Name of the Studies	Participants in the Study	Country	Published	n	r	Scale Used for PV	α of PV	Scale Used for OV	α of OV
AL	TI	1)	Alkadash, (2020)	Employees	Palestine	Yes	235	0.41	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.82	Cammann et al., (1979)	0.77
AL	TI	2)	Kalay et al., (2018)	Employees	Israel	Yes	512	-0.37	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.87	James et al., (1985)	0.88
AL	TI	3)	Aziz & Latif, (2018)	Nurses	Pakistan	Yes	432	-0.27	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.88	Kelloway, Gottlieb & Barham, (1999)	0.85
AL	TI	4)	Smith et al., (2018)	Nurses	Canada	No	478	-0.25	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.96	Kelloway et al., (1999)	0.81
AL	TI	5)	Fallatah, Laschinger & Read, (2017)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	998	-0.23	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.93	Kelloway et al., (1999)	0.87
AL	TI	6)	Oh & Oh, (2017)	Employees	South Korea	Yes	375	-0.32	Neider & Schriesheim, (2011)	0.80	Kim, (2013)	0.89
AL	TI	7)	Sharon et al., (2017)	Employee	South Africa	Yes	204	-0.34	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.89	Sheldon et al., (1983)	0.90
AL	TI	8)	Olaniyan & Hystad, (2016)	Employees	Norway	Yes	402	-0.27	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.95	Nielsen et al., (2013)	0.74
AL	TI	9)	Kiersch & Byrne, (2015)	Employees	USA	Yes	187	-0.56	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.96	Gaty, (1998)	0.92
AL	TI	10)	Kiersch & Byrne, (2015)	Employees	USA	Yes	37	-0.51	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.96	Gaty, (1998)	0.92
AL	TI	11)	Garazi et al., (2015)	Students	Spain	Yes	623	-0.29	Walumbwa et al., (2008)	0.90	Meyer et al., (1993)	0.83
AL	TI	12)	Laschinger & Fida, (2014)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	342	-0.29	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.88	Konovsky & Cropanzano, (1991)	0.86
AL	TI	13)	Laschinger & Fida, (2014)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	205	-0.22	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.88	Konovsky & Cropanzano, (1991)	0.89
AL	TI	14)	Spence et al., (2012)	Nurses	Canada	Yes	242	-0.30	Avolio et al., (2007)	0.95	Kelloway et al., (1999)	0.87

Note. For all the published studies, the *Predictor Variable* is *Authentic Leadership* and the *Outcome Variable* is *Turnover Intention*; n = Total Sample Size; r = Correlation; á = value of Cronbach's alpha.

4. Results

4.1 Galbraith Plot Analysis: To ensure the robustness of our meta-analysis outcomes, a Galbraith Plot, as illustrated in Figure 3, was employed to identify potential outliers among the 14 primary studies. The Galbraith Plot visually represents the standardized effect sizes against their standard errors, aiding in the identification of studies that may exert disproportionate influence on the overall meta-analysis results. This methodological step is crucial for maintaining the reliability and validity of the synthesized outcomes.
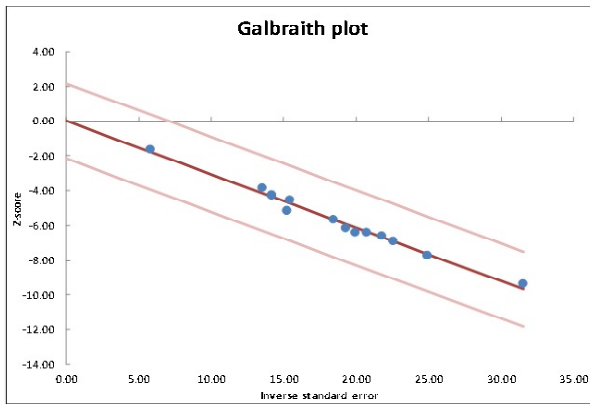
Figure 3 - Galbraith plot of 14 primary studies related to Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention

4.2 Meta-Analysis Results: The synthesized outcomes of the meta-analysis are presented in Table 2, providing a comprehensive overview of the relationship between authentic leadership and turnover intention across the selected studies. Table 2 includes effect sizes, confidence intervals, and heterogeneity statistics, offering valuable insights into the overall impact of authentic leadership on turnover intention.

Table 2 - Meta-Analysis Results

Variable	k	N	r	ρ_+	ρ_{+x}	CI_{LL}	CI_{UL}	PI_{LL}
AL→TI	14	5,272	-0.27	-0.26	-0.3	-0.3	-0.29	-0.3
	PI_{UL}	Q	P_Q	I^2	P_{ERT}	P_{BMT}	$TFMr_{+C}$	IS_{TFM}
	-0.29	0.65	1	0.00%	0.99	0.412	-0.31	0

Our meta-analysis, based on data from 14 primary studies involving 5,272 individual participants see Table 2, elucidates the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention. The overall correlation across these studies is -0.27, signifying a negative association. In simpler terms, higher levels of Authentic Leadership are, on average, linked to lower levels of Turnover Intention. Upon closer scrutiny, we considered potential artifacts introduced by sampling error. After their removal, the correlation adjusted slightly to -0.26. This step aimed at mitigating distortions arising from variations in sample sizes among the primary studies. Further refinement involved addressing artifacts from both sampling and measurement error. After this adjustment, the correlation shifted to -0.30, enhancing the precision of our estimate by accounting for potential distortions introduced by variations in both sampling strategies and measurement tools.

In essence, these results underscore the nuanced nature of the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention. The negative correlation values imply a protective effect of Authentic Leadership on reducing the likelihood of turnover. The meticulous adjustments made in our analysis reflect a dedication to refining our estimates and ensuring a more accurate portrayal of this significant organizational relationship. In the evaluation of the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention through our meta-analysis, reporting bias was rigorously examined through various statistical measures, shedding light on the robustness of our findings.

4.2.1 Confidence and Prediction Intervals: The Confidence Intervals (CI_{LL}: -0.30, CI_{UL}: -0.29) provide a narrow range within which the true correlation is likely to fall. Simultaneously, Prediction Intervals (PI_{LL}: -0.30, PI_{UL}: -0.29) anticipate the correlation of a future study, offering a comprehensive view of the potential effect size.

4.2.2 Heterogeneity Measures: The Q value (0.65) and its associated p-value (P_Q: 1.0), along with the I^2 value (0.00%), collectively indicate low heterogeneity across studies. This suggests a consistent relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention.

4.2.3 Publication Bias Analysis: The Egger Regression Test (P_{ERT}: 0.99) and Begg & Mazumdar Test (P_{BMT}: 0.412) p-values

demonstrate the absence of publication bias, assuring the reliability of the meta-analysis outcomes.

4.2.4 Trim and Fill Method: Employing the Trim and Fill Method, the Combined Effect Size adjusted with Trim and Fill (TFMñ$_{+C}$: -0.31) indicates a slight adjustment from the original correlation, reinforcing the stability of the overall effect size. Notably, no imputed studies (IS$_{TFM}$: 0) were added during this process, affirming the robustness of the results see figure 4.
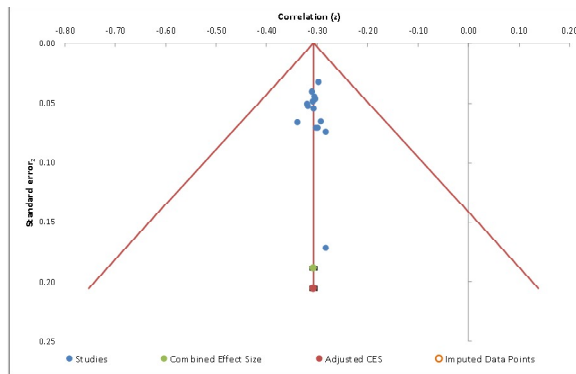
Figure 4 - Funnel plot for publication bias analysis in which trim and fill method applied in studies related to AL and TI, (k=14), (IS=0)

This comprehensive reporting bias analysis ensures the validity of our meta-analysis outcomes, emphasizing transparency in the reporting of study results. The narrow Confidence and Prediction Intervals minimize the impact of potential reporting bias, while low heterogeneity and non-significant p-values in publication bias tests strengthen the credibility of the relationship between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention. These insights set the stage for a nuanced interpretation of the findings and their practical implications in organizational settings.

5. Discussion: Interpreting the Nexus Between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention in the Present Study - In unravelling the dynamics between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention within the context of our meta-analysis, the synthesized outcomes present a nuanced narrative with practical implications.

5.1   **Affirmation of Protective Influence**: The negative overall correlation of -0.30 reinforces the protective influence of Authentic Leadership against Turnover Intention. In the present study, higher levels of Authentic Leadership are associated with a reduced likelihood of employees expressing the intention to leave their positions. This finding aligns with the theoretical underpinnings of Authentic Leadership, emphasizing its potential as a mitigating factor in turnover intentions.

5.2   **Robustness Across Diverse Studies**: The consistency observed across studies, as reflected in the narrow Confidence and Prediction Intervals, enhances the robustness of our findings. The low heterogeneity (I^2: 0.00%) signals a uniformity in the observed relationship. This suggests that, irrespective of variations in sample characteristics and methodologies across the primary studies, the negative association between Authentic Leadership and Turnover Intention persists.

5.3   **Addressing Reporting Bias**: Our comprehensive reporting bias analysis instils confidence in the reliability of the meta-analysis outcomes. The non-significant p-values from the Egger Regression Test (P_{ERT}: 0.99) and Begg & Mazumdar Test (P_{BMT}: 0.412) assure that our results are unlikely to be skewed by publication bias. The slight adjustment through the Trim and Fill Method ($TFM\tilde{n}_{+C}$: -0.31), with no imputed studies (IS_{TFM}: 0), further supports the stability of the correlation.

6.   **Practical Significance for Organizations**: For organizational leaders and managers, understanding the practical implications of these results is paramount. The negative correlation suggests that cultivating Authentic Leadership within an organization could serve as a strategic approach to mitigate turnover intention among employees. Leaders fostering authenticity may contribute to a positive workplace culture, thereby enhancing employee commitment and reducing the likelihood of turnover.

7.   **Study Limitations and Future Directions**: Acknowledging the limitations of the present study, such as variations in measurement

tools and contextual factors, opens avenues for future research. Exploring these contextual nuances and conducting longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into the sustained impact of Authentic Leadership on turnover intentions.

8. **Conclusion**: In conclusion, the present meta-analysis underscores the relevance of Authentic Leadership in shaping employee turnover intentions. The synthesized outcomes not only affirm the negative relationship but also highlight its robustness across diverse studies. As organizations navigate the challenges of talent retention, the cultivation of Authentic Leadership emerges as a valuable strategy, fostering employee well-being and organizational resilience.

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The Sweet Revolution: Transformations in India's Sugar Sector

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Abstract

Over the past five years, the sugar sector in India has seen a revolution because of increased efficiency, sustainability, competitiveness, and technical advancement. The paper examines how sugar business in India has changed over the last five years. This study uses secondary data sources gathered from government websites, publications, journals, and newspapers to review pertinent literature. It explores the significant changes in the sector, including the adoption of contemporary technology, heightened rivalry, governmental initiatives, and progress toward a sustainable future. The impact of these changes on the industry, including increased production efficiency, decreased prices, and higher-quality products, is also examined in the study. The final section of the study explores how government regulations help to promote biofuel production and stabilize the business. Changes in the structure of consumption, as characterized by rising demand from the food industry and a larger role in bioethanol production, are the main drivers impacting the expansion of the sugar market. It examines adjustments to production and exports and highlights significant advancements in the industry.

Keywords: sugar industry, biofuel, sustainable development, ethanol

I. Introduction

India's sugar industry is one of the biggest and most significant in the world. India has surpassed Brazil to become the world's greatest producer and consumer of sugar and second-largest exporter of sugar, according to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, food, and Public Distribution.

It is categorized as a Kharif crop, one that needs a hot, muggy atmosphere as well as soil that can hold moisture. Three divisional belts - the Sutlej Ganga plain, the black earth belt, as well as the coastal Andhra and Krishna valleys - are used for the cultivation of sugarcane. With the advent of contemporary technology and the appearance of new companies, the industry has seen a significant transition in recent decades. The Food and Agriculture Organization predicted that India will produce around 33.7 million tons of sugar in 2019–20, an increase of about 3.2 percent over the previous year. India produced 35.8 million tons of sugar during the marketing year 2021-2022. It is anticipated to reach 36.5 million tons in the marketing year 2022-2023.

In the 2022 marketing year, Maharashtra overtook Uttar Pradesh as the state with the most sugar output in India. The state with the second-highest number of sugar mills is thought to be Uttar Pradesh. Maharashtra is thought to be the first state with the most sugar mills, and it has 155 of them. 195 mills are present. Most of the sugarcane in the nation is grown in Uttar Pradesh, which Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Haryana, and Punjab follow. The significant developments in the Indian sugar business and their effects will be examined in this essay.

Background

The sugar industry in India has a lengthy history dating back to the 16th century. The Portuguese were the ones who initially brought the sugar-making process to India. At that time, most of the nation's southern and western areas were the only ones that produced sugar. In the 18th century, the British colonized India and built enormous sugar refineries throughout the country. Unfounded rumors state that about 1824, the French established the first sugar mill in Odisha. The first complex sugar processing enterprise was created in 1904 with the construction of the first Hoover pan processing facility in Saran, Bihar (Mishra, 2018). There was a lot of room for improvement in the industry's performance at that point.

The Indian government has implemented several policies and initiatives to support the industry, such as the Sugarcane Price Control Order of 1964 and the National Sugar Policy of 2006. These policies have helped to stabilize the industry and promote the growth of the sector. By the 19th century, India's sugar industry had developed into one of the most prominent in the country.

The sugar business is one of India's oldest industries and an important economic driver. It is the largest sugar producer in the world. India is the nation where sugarcane is grown on the largest amount of land. In the nation, there are about 6000 sugar mills, 507 of which are operational, and over 1.2 million people are employed overall. In India, where these kinds of producers dominate the market, most sugar mills are owned by small-scale farmers and cooperatives. As large players, such as multinational firms, have progressively joined the market over time, the dynamics of the sector have changed.

II. Literature Review

In recent years, several studies have been conducted to explore the transformation of the Indian sugar industry. The Literature Review is stated below-

Kumar & Singh (2014) studied the impact of the transformation of the sugar industry on the profitability of the industry. The study found that the introduction of new business models had led to increased competition and better pricing for consumers, resulting in higher profits for the industry.

Eggleston, G. & Lima I. (2015), in their research paper, identified Sustainability Issues and Opportunities in the Sugar and Sugar-Bioproduct Industries: The worldwide shift from a fossil-fuel-based to a biobased economy is expected to entail a significant quantity of biomass from sugar crops. However, most of this transition is still in its early phases. The cost of the facility, the availability of reliable quality feedstocks at reasonable costs, financing possibilities, and the regulatory environment are all essential considerations in the development of commercial biobased operations. At the same time, the sugar industry is increasingly expanding into "sugar and sugar-bioproduct industries" that are extensively involved in increasing the biomass of the sugar crop in various regions of the world.

Malik (2017) studied the impact of technological advancements on the industry and concluded that new technologies have enabled the industry to become more efficient and reduce costs.

Mohan, N. & Kanaujia, A. (2019) Biomass Energy for Economic and Environmental Sustainability in India: The development of sugarcane bio-refineries, such as those for bio-electricity, bioethanol, bio-manure, and chemicals, etc., is crucial for the future of the sugar industry as a whole. By generating value addition, ensuring the country's energy security, and addressing environmental challenges, the sugar sector may be a possible source of delivering renewable, clean, and green bioenergy for the industry's benefit.

Sharma et al. (2019) analyzed the impact of increased competition on the industry and found that it has led to a reduction in prices and improved the quality of products.

Kumar (2020) evaluated the role of government policies in the industry and concluded that these policies have helped to stabilize the industry and promote the growth of the sector.

Solomon, S., & Swapna, M. (2022) Indian Sugar Industry: Towards Self-reliance for Sustainability: Innovative technology interventions for sugarcane development, production, and management have aided the industry's transition to a more diverse and bio-based productive, sustainable, and lucrative model, allowing it to progressively become self-sufficient. With the correct combination of links and partnerships, this self-sufficient sector has been effective in addressing numerous unanticipated obstacles, including those that arose during the COVID-19 epidemic.

Objectives of Study

1. The objective of this paper is to explore the transformation of the Indian Sugar industry in the past 5 years and to analyze the impact of these transformations on the industry.

2. The paper also examines the role of government policies in stabilizing the industry and promoting the growth of the sector towards sustainable development.

III. Research Methodology

This paper will use a qualitative approach for content analysis to analyze the transformation of the Indian sugar industry. The research methodology will involve a review of relevant literature, such as academic articles, newspaper articles, and government reports.

Data Source: Secondary Data is Collected from Government websites, articles, Journals, and Newspapers.

Research Tools: Average, Percentage through MS Excel.

IV. Results And Findings of the Study
Transformation of the Sugar Industry

The sugar industry in India has undergone a significant transformation in the past few years. This transformation has been driven by technological advancements, increased competition, and government policies.

A) Technological Advancements: With the advent of new technology, the sector has grown more efficient. Automation has increased manufacturing productivity, and new technologies have allowed the sector to cut prices. The application of current technology has helped the sector to boost production while decreasing waste.

The following table represents technological changes in the Indian sugar industry in the last five years:

Table 1: Shows technological changes over the year.

Year	Description
2015	Introduction of energy recovery systems to reduce energy consumption.
2016	Automation of sugar production processes and adoption of energy-efficient technologies.
2017	Implementation of advanced energy management systems and adoption of renewable and sustainable energy sources.
2018	Introduction of evaporators with multiple effect concentration (MEC) technology and use of membranes to separate sucrose from other impurities.
2019	Implementation of advanced analytics and optimization techniques to improve production planning and process control.
2020	Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) to improve decision-making and optimize production.
2021	Use of digital technologies such as Blockchain, Internet of Things (IoT), and Cloud Computing to facilitate data exchange and improve traceability.

B) Increased Competition: The rise of new industry competitors has intensified competitiveness. This has resulted in lower pricing and higher product quality. As firms attempt to remain competitive, competition has also helped the sector to become more efficient.

Table 2: Increase in the number of Sugar Mills

Year	Mills Operated
2015	526
2016	493
2017	525
2018	532
2019	461
2020	506
2021	***

Source: IndiaStat

*** Data was not available

The above tables show that the total number of mills operating fluctuated between 461 to 526 from the year 2015 to 2021. From the year 2019 to 2020, there has been a significant increase in mills being operated from 461 mills to 506 mills respectively. This clearly shows that there has been a 9.7% growth in mills being operated in 2020.

C) Government Policies: To assist the sector, the government has developed a variety of programs and initiatives. These regulations have contributed to the industry's stabilization and expansion.

Table 3: Various Government policies implemented till now-

GOVERNMENT POLICIES	DESCRIPTION
Price Support Scheme (PSS)	Providing financial assistance to Sugar mills in the form of loan waivers and subsidized loans.
Sugar Development Fund (SDF), 1982	Providing funds to sugar mills for research and development activities.
Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)	Providing financial assistance to farmers in the form of subsidized loans and loan waivers.
National Policy on Biofuels (2018)	It mandates the use of 10% ethanol-blended petrol in India by the year 2022 and 20% by the year 2025.
National Biofuel Coordination Committee (NBCC)	Being responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of policies and regulations related to the production and use of biofuels.

Changes after the Implementation of the Policy

Government initiatives in India's sugar sector have had a good influence. It has enhanced farmer returns, increased industrial efficiency and output, and reduced reliance on imported petroleum products. These laws have allowed the sector to become more competitive and resilient, while also promoting a sustainable and lucrative environment for farmers and businesses alike. The government has mandated that oil firms mix a certain quantity of ethanol into gasoline. Sugarcane prices have risen because of increasing demand for ethanol, which is generated from sugarcane, and farmers are now earning larger returns. Furthermore, to stimulate the production of ethanol from sugarcane, the government has provided many subsidies, tax rebates, and power discounts. This has contributed to decreased production costs and increased profitability in the sugar sector. Sugarcane MSP has grown by 20%. The government mandates that 10% of ethanol be mixed with gasoline.

Impact of Transformation

The sector has been significantly impacted by the Indian sugar industry's restructuring. The sector has enhanced output and cut expenses, making it more efficient. Prices have decreased and product quality has improved as a result of increasing competition. The government's measures have also assisted in promoting sector growth and stabilizing the industry.

a) Technological Changes:

India's sugar industry has benefited from several technical developments in recent years. These developments have had a substantial effect on the industry's success. The largest changes are the adoption of new production techniques and the installation of new gear and equipment. With the introduction of mechanized harvesting and hauling equipment, cane harvesting has accelerated and increased in output.

To increase yields and reduce costs, new cane cultivars have also been developed. There are around 116 improved sugarcane varieties in India, thanks to the All India Coordinated Research Project's (AICRP) well-organized network. About 60 of these cultivars have received approval for commercial cultivation since 2000. All of them were created by Indian experts, and several variations of them are cultivated over huge territories. The most important technical advancement in the field has been brought about by the adoption of new manufacturing techniques.

The use of Continuous Diffusion and Sugar Syrup Clarification technologies has enabled higher sugar recovery rates, improved productivity, and higher product quality. Accuracy and efficiency have also increased with the development of automated technology for managing sugar production.

Increased yields and lower costs are now possible thanks to the advent of new manufacturing methods and technology.

b) Management Changes:

In India, there have been several changes in the sugar industry's management. The two main changes are the introduction of corporate governance and the reorganization of the industry. The advent of corporate governance has allowed the industry to become more organized and productive.

However, the reorganization of the sector has allowed for more specialization and consolidation, which has increased efficiency and profitability.

Current Scenario
- **Production**: Sugar output in India has expanded from 20 million tonnes in 2000 to 30-32 million tonnes by 2020.

- **Exports**: India's sugar exports have climbed from 2.5 million tonnes in 2000 to 4.5 million tonnes in 2020.

- **Consumption**: Sugar consumption in India has risen from 18 million tonnes in 2000 to 25 million tonnes by 2020.

- Sugar sector is now self-sufficient with no subsidy.

- In the current season, more than 5000 Lakh Metric Tons (LMT) of sugarcane were produced in India, with around 3574 LMT being exported. (Sucrose), of which 36 LMT was used to manufacture ethanol, while sugar mills produced 359 LMT.

- **Prices**: Sugar prices in India have fallen from Rs. 17 per kg in 2000 to Rs. 13.5 per kg in 2020, with the average expected to be in the range of Rs.28 to Rs.35 per kg in 2022.

"Sugar Industry and the "Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030"

All nations and stakeholders may follow the bold blueprint provided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 17) to strive toward a future of sustainable prosperity while also preserving the environment and leaving no one behind. Sustainability's social, economic, and environmental elements are all included. The sugar industry is gradually moving towards sustainability and self-reliance in order to capitalize on new opportunities brought about by changes in global sugar production and trade, as well as new options for renewable energy (ethanol, electricity, CNG), and bio-based products (bio-plastics, bio-chemicals, and wellness products) through the concept of bio-refineries. The industry has adopted the essential sustainability measures for all its major stakeholders, resources, environment, and product development through multiple Government departments, agencies, NGOs, CSR, and so on.

Table 4: India's Ethanol industry has a huge potential to grow in the next decades

PARTICULARS	INDIA
FY21 Ethanol production (bn litres)	3.5bn
FY30E Ethanol production Target (bn litres)	11.5bn
Cane diverted towards ethanol (%)	25%
Flex fuel Car penetration (% of total cars)	---

Source: Industry Reports, Systematix Institutional Research.

Until now, industrial-scale ethanol production in India has come from sugar manufacturers, which have been allowed to redirect it to other customers, such as alcohol producers, who pay considerably higher rates. The National Biofuel Policy was established in May 2018 to encourage the usage of biofuels (such as ethanol) throughout the country. It aims to expand biofuel availability by raising blending rates in gasoline from 2% to 20% by 2025 and diesel from 0.1% to 5.0% by 2030. As a result, sugar will serve as both a bio-energy source and a sweetener.

**Table 5: Export- Import Data of Sugar Industries in India (2015-2020)**

Sugar season/ Financial Year (Apr-Mar)	Export (Quantity in tonnes)	Import (Value in Rs/Crore)	Export (Quantity in tonnes)	Import (Value in Rs/Crore)
2015-16	3128275	9787.95	1600027	4011.03
2016-17	2538230	8621.61	2144429	6849.63
2017-18	1750724	5180.54	2401484	6017.22
2018-19	3977639	9451.57	1487677	3147.5
2019-20	5787322	13910.31	1114828	2441.95
2020-21	7506555	20577.09	1963233	4698.64
2021-22	10431275	34197.63	358431	1227.4
2022-23 (Apri1-July) *	455282	16510.53	1451*	19.75

Source: DGCI&S, Kolkata

*Estimate

The data demonstrates that sugar exports have significantly increased during the past five years. This is most likely a result of rising molasses and sugar demand on the international market, as well as rising sugar industry production capacity in India. Sugar imports have somewhat dropped, most likely because of India's expanded production capability.

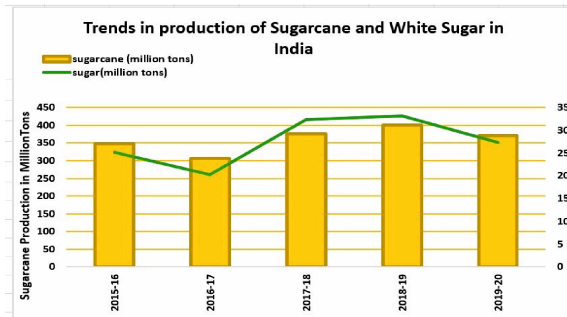**Figure 1: Diversion of Sugar for Ethanol production**
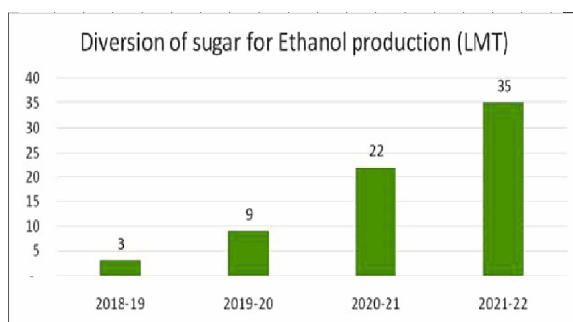
Source: Press Bureau of Information, Government of India.

From 2018 to 2021, the amount of sugar diverted to ethanol increased from 3 LMT to 35 LMT, bringing in money for sugar mills, as seen in

figure 1 above. To better their financial status and enable sugar mills to continue functioning, the government has urged companies to divert sugar to ethanol production and export extra sugar.

Figure 2: Production of sugarcane and white sugar.

Trends in production of Sugarcane and White Sugar in India

The information shows that between 2015 and 2019, there was a rise in the global output of white sugar. 2020 will see a modest decline in production as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, which affected every sector. In terms of the production of white sugar and sugarcane, the sugar sector may be expected to rise on average.

Figure 3: Sufficient feedstock available to meet the 20% Ethanol blended target
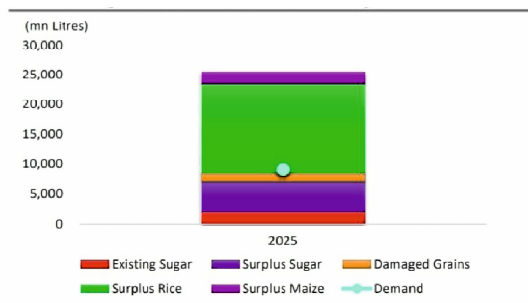
Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Systematix Institutional Research

The government's biofuel program is notably succeeding as it has attained the 10% ethanol production objective before the deadline of 2022, which would alleviate the problem of Surplus Sugar Stock. The sugar

industry has served as the face of Made in India due to the large sugarcane harvest and has the ability to set the standard for ethanol generation. The Indian government and the sugar industry are collaborating to reach their objective of mixing 20% ethanol into gasoline by 2025.

Since the use of sugar in ethanol has improved sugar mills' financial standing through quicker payments, lower working capital needs, and less cash blockage due to less surplus sugar with mills, the growth of ethanol as a biofuel over the past five years has been very beneficial to the sugar industry. The 20% blending goals set by the Ethanol Blending with Petrol (EBP) Program are still being reached, albeit more slowly. The aim of 20% ethanol by 2025 can be reached with the current cane supply.

According to the conclusions of this study, the advent of modern technology, greater competition, and government regulations have all contributed to the sector's development. The Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) and other organizations initiated a GPS-based sugarcane crop area survey, which has made a significant contribution to the sugar business. ISMA has been using GPS to scan and estimate the sugarcane acreage since 2011. This makes physical involvement less necessary and enables a quicker, more precise examination. Before 2011, surveying the sugarcane region required a minimum of 4-5 workers. The portable GPS gadget could work with just one operator. The industry has benefited from this shift because of increased production efficiency, lower prices, and better product quality. The government's measures have also assisted in promoting sector growth and stabilizing the industry. Following India's national biofuel policy, sugarcane juice has just been approved in addition to molasses. The exploitation of excess sugarcane to make ethanol, the future of new energy generation, is made possible using sugarcane as a biofuel. With the government's continuing backing, it is anticipated that the industry will expand in the years to come.

V. Conclusion and Suggestions

Over the past few years, India's sugar business has seen a substantial transition. Government regulations, heightened competition, and technology breakthroughs have all fueled this transition. The government's measures have also assisted in promoting sector growth and stabilizing the industry.

Markets throughout the world are evolving as a result of ongoing efforts to boost productivity while seeking sustainable growth. As a result, the demand for all resources—including food, feed, and energy-has risen. India imports 83 percent of its oil needs, which costs roughly Rs. 120 billion ($1.74 billion). Utilizing biofuels has advantages such as reducing reliance on imported crude oil, enhancing the environment, increasing farmer income, and creating jobs in rural regions. The effort promotes the Made in India, Swachh Bharat, and increasing farmer income programs of the Indian government. The sugar business is a great illustration of a developing sustainable system with many opportunities for self-sufficiency.

The government should concentrate on assisting cooperatives and small-scale producers to guarantee the sugar industry's sustained expansion in India. The government should also offer incentives to promote the industry's usage of cutting-edge technology like automation. Finally, the government should keep enforcing regulations to aid the sector and encourage its expansion.

VI. Future Scope of Research

This study looked at how the sugar industry in India has changed over the last five years and how those changes have affected the sector. Future studies should concentrate on certain facets of the business, such as how the government supports it, farmer dues, and how technology improvements affect it. Further investigation should be done to assess the effects of government policies on the industry as well as the effects of the epidemic.

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Acceptability of Artificial Intelligence-enabled Digital Banking Among Customers: Insights from PLS-SEM Approach

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Abstract

AI has proved useful in almost every area, but its role in Indian banking is still something that needs to be examined. The study looks at how bank customers feel about tools that use AI. Making customers happy is the first step to getting them to accept and stick with less well-known banking technology and automated processes. The study utilizes the technological-acceptance model to figure out the level of acceptability of its parts and separate them into factors that are independent and those that are dependent. "Awareness level", "efficiency", "trust", and "social influence" are the independent variables. "Customer satisfaction" is the dependent variable. So, the structural equation model was made from the answers of 239 retail bank users in northern India. According to the survey, trust is the most important thing for bank customers to enjoy AI-enabled services, followed by awareness. The least important part of customer satisfaction for AI-based banks is their protection. Age and gender are control factors that affect how people see things. In emerging markets like India, it is hard to find out how retail-banking customers feel about AI-based technology. The results shed light on compliance formation. At the end of this study, the paper discusses

what it means for financial authorities and decision-makers to use AI in customer service.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, digital banking, customer acceptability, PLS-SEM

Introduction

Machine learning, cognitive computing, and natural language processing form the backbone of artificial intelligence (AI), which is revolutionizing our lives in ways we could never have imagined (Mangani, 2017). AI-enabled equipment can now reason, grasp, and carry out jobs formerly undertaken by humans. Complex cognitive tasks can be carried out by AI systems (Vieira & Sehgal, 2017). The development of AI is a major step forward in the process of digitizing and transforming contemporary business. The advent of AI in banking has sparked a worldwide upheaval that is altering the sector as a whole. Information systems and the application of AI have become increasingly important to banks as a means of handling financial transactions and providing consumers with individualized services and products (Abdulla, Ebrahim, & Kumaraswamy, 2020). With the help of AI, businesses are better able to anticipate their consumers' needs, provide individualized service, and create high-quality, persona-based goods (Payne, Dahl, & Peltier, 2021). As a result, AI has brought forth significant benefits for the banking industry. Reduced expenses, easier access, greater precision, and enhanced productivity are just some of the benefits.

Customers' openness to using AI in banking has a significant impact on banks' willingness to adopt digital technologies and their customers' level of happiness. Customer satisfaction rises as a result of AI's ability to make interactions more pleasant. Robotics and AI are helping financial institutions tailor their services to individual customers. Thus, this results in stronger customer relationships and higher levels of consumer engagement (Abdulla, Ebrahim, & Kumaraswamy, 2020). Since happy customers are a major factor in whether or not AI in banking will succeed, this is an issue that must be taken seriously.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has tremendous potential in the banking industry, especially in situations where a large number of customers must be managed effectively through a database system (Bharti, Prasad, Sudha, & Kumari, Customer acceptability towards AI-enabled digital

banking: a PLS-SEM approach, 2023). The perceived utility and the simplicity of use of AI are two crucial criteria driving client acceptability. Therefore, "this study takes into account customer satisfaction as the dependent variable and incorporates awareness level, efficiency, trust, and social impact as independent variables in the conceptual construction of the model."

Previous AI research has provided only a partial picture of how widespread digitalization affects the financial sector. This study fills a need in the literature by analyzing the effects of using artificial intelligence-based technologies in banking. The research takes a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique to answer questions concerning banking customers' satisfaction. Customers' familiarity and comfort with the banking system will be used to gauge the impact of these technological innovations.

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Formulation

The construction of the model is driven by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provided by (Davis, 1989). It primarily assesses whether a new information system will be accepted by its target audience. In the opinion of (Banna & Alam , 2021) **a**utomation is more accessible, less expensive, and more productive than the traditional banking system. It needs more understanding to grasp how AI-based technology will be accepted and maintained. Additionally, the post-adoption experience of users in banks will be determined by the measurement of consumer acceptability. Customer acceptance is thus closely related to the dimensions employed in this study since it will help clarify how the constructs are related to one another (Bharti, Prasad, Sudha, & Kumari, 2023). As a result, a number of factors have a significant impact on how customers perceive AI in banks when the literature is critically analyzed. However, some key indications are exclusively chosen for use with theoretical models in order to ensure clear understanding. The degree of acceptance and customer preparedness are taken into consideration while choosing these indicators. The model of TAM constitutes constructs such as "attitude", "perceived usefulness", "perceived ease of use", and "behavioral intention to use"

Attitude

An individual's mental state of willingness to embrace a specific change is referred to as attitude (Belanche, Casaló, & Flavián , 2019). The

perception is developed about a particular product or service through usage and usually with others who would develop similar perception**s** (Kohnke, 2022), (Bhatia, Chandani, Atiq, Mehta, & Divekar , 2021). Likewise, trust and consumer social influence helps shape people's attitudes about the use of AI. Consequently, the following hypotheses were developed:

> *H1: Trust of customers in AI-based technology positively impacts customer satisfaction.*

> *H2: The social influence of customers is positively linked with customer satisfaction.*

Perceived Usefulness

Perceived usefulness (PU) is the extent to which an individual can see how technology improves a system's functionality (Davis, 1989). It is a crucial construct that determines how the user intends to behave (Robinson, 2020)**.** Based on the level of awareness of AI-based technology, the user determines the significance of this technology in banks (Rahman, Ming, Baigh, & Sarker, 2021). The accuracy and volume of information an individual learns about unfamiliar technology serve as an indicator of their level of awareness (Shankar & Rishi, 2020). Therefore, the following hypothesis is generated:

> *H3: The level of customer awareness will positively impact customer satisfaction.*

Perceived Ease of Use

The idea that using technology is basic and simple can be termed as perceived ease of use (PEOU) (Bawack, Wamba, & Carillo , 2021)**,** (Gupta, Ghardallou, Pandey, & Sahu, 2022). Over time, it has a major impact on how often the service is to be used. The user is able to identify if they have a deeper fondness for the service (Fan, Han, & Gao, 2022)**,** (Jakšiè & Marinè, 2019). The PEOU of AI in banks, as represented by efficiency, is thus another independent variable. Optimizing resource consumption for customers is how efficiency is defined (Przegalinska, Ciechanowski, Stroz, Gloor, & Mazurek, 2019)**,** (Hasal, Nowaková, Saghair, Abdulla,, & Snášel, 2021). Hence the following hypothesis is formulated:

> H4: *Efficiency of AI-enabled technology is positively associated with customer satisfaction.*

Customer satisfaction

The factor that contributes to the outcome is behavioral intention (BI) to use AI in banks, which is determined by how satisfied customers are i.e. customer satisfaction with the financial products and services (Gunawardane, 2023)**.** Hence it serves as a dependent variable. Customer satisfaction ultimately determines whether a product will be used consistently in the future (Venkatesan, 2017)**,** (Boustani, 2021).

Therefore, in order to clarify the positive aspects of deploying AI-based technology, this study delves more deeply into consumer TAM and its significance to digitalization.

Table 1: Description of constructs in brief Source authors

Concept	Description
Perceived usefulness	The extent to which users perceive the advantages of technology on system performance.
Awareness level of the customer	Quality and quantity of customer knowledge about unknown technology
Perceived ease of use	The illusion that using technology is simple
Efficiency	Customer-focused resource optimization
Attitude	mental preparedness for a change in the user
Trust	Consumers' confidence in a novel concept
Social influence	Influence of other people's opinions on the buyer
Customer satisfaction	When a customer's wants and needs are accurately perceived
Occupation	User's academic and occupational history

Research framework

This study concentrates on examining consumer satisfaction about the application of AI-based technology, which influences the demand for digital adoption among bank clients. This examination is conducted through the utilization of a theoretical model. The research framework provides a comprehensive overview of the investigation and succinctly presents the acquired results.

Materials and Methods

Data sources and sample composition

Three hundred customers of "private and public sector retail banks" in northern India were selected at random to fill out questionnaires as part of the research strategy. However, a grand total of 239 responses were considered fully complete. This yielded a response rate of 79.66%. Sixty-one out of the total number of responses (20.33%) were either missing information or were left blank on purpose. During the prototype stage, we calculated the total number of responses. The test's consistency and reliability were calculated using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. According to SmartPLS's analysis, the response rate of the primary data is satisfactory. The size of the sample was picked so that all viewpoints and points of view would be adequately represented in the allotted amount of time. The participants in this study range in age from 18 to 60, and they all know their way around a bank. They are a technologically savvy bunch, made up of clients of public and private retail banks in the north of India. Therefore, in order to select people for the study, the researchers used snowball and purposive sampling. The respondent has experience with the banking system, either formally or informally, and is familiar with basic banking concepts and products such savings and checking accounts. Students, working professionals, and retired persons were all represented among the attendees. In their responses to the questions, the participants showed a great deal of energy and interest. The participants' level of agreement or disagreement with the claims was used to determine the order in which the traits were ranked. Twenty statements in all make up the final questionnaire, which has been broken down into seven sections based on factors such as respondents' levels of awareness, efficiency, trust, social influence, and customers' overall satisfaction. The items included in the aforementioned surveys were taken directly from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The TAM is a groundbreaking concept for gauging the satisfaction of customers (Ladhari et al., 2011). This tactic is frequently used when fully deploying cutting-edge company technology after initial trials. Compared to other theoretical frameworks, the items in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) had a far higher degree of coherence with the research objectives of the study. Previous studies' scales were different from those used here. In light of this, the authors crafted the questionnaire's scale to match the question's intended response and the items used in the study. The questions are written in clear,

simple language that can be easily understood. Before beginning the response activity, participants were given a brief introduction to artificial intelligence (AI). In order to obtain the participants' written responses at the banking facilities, we gave them a self-administered questionnaire. Participants were given paper forms to fill out at local bank locations and were given the option to participate. The remaining statistics came from surveys and online forums, with an emphasis on northern India. To better reach the target audience and ensure they can understand the questions, they were translated into English and Hindi. The collected responses were imported into a comma-separated value Excel spreadsheet for further processing before being integrated into SmartPLS 4.0. Banking institutions have a lot to gain from, and their customers have a lot to learn from, asking questions about the effects of implementing AI-enabled technologies. The participants' demographic information is presented in Table 2. There was an age disparity between individuals who responded to the self-administered questionnaire and those who responded via email or other online platforms. Participants were informed that their privacy would be protected before they even filled out the survey. If there is a breach of confidentiality, it will be dealt with immediately. There was no requirement to reveal identifying information like name or occupation, and the questions asked raised no moral issues. There was no special effort made to ensure the participants felt at ease when providing information about their investments.

Table 2: Demographic profile of the respondents.

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
18-35 year	118	49.4
35-46 year	38	15.9
47-54 year	46	19.2
>55 year	37	15.5
Education level		
Others	6	2.5
Postgraduate	65	27.2
Graduate	141	59
High school	27	11.3

Gender		
Male	190	79.5
Female	49	20.5
Income		
>5 Lakhs	54	22.6
<5 Lakhs	102	42.7
Prefer not to answer	36	15.1
>10 Lakhs	47	19.7
Occupation		
Manufacturing/industrial sector	46	19.2
Service sector	75	31.4
Student	29	12.1
Retired	3	1.3
Commercial sector	87	36.4

Source: The authors

The survey data reveals a population predominantly within the 18-35 age bracket (49.4%), majorly graduates (59%), and predominantly male (79.5%). In terms of income, a significant portion earns below 5 Lakhs (42.7%), with the commercial sector (36.4%) being the largest employer. The education level shows a considerable number of postgraduates (27.2%), and the age distribution indicates a minor segment above 55 years (15.5%). This demographic profile highlights a young, educated, male-dominated population, with varied income levels and occupations, mainly concentrated in the commercial and service sectors.

Measurement Scale and Methodology

Each topic is broken down into multiple parts, and the participants' responses to each section are tallied using a Likert scale, where a rating of "1" indicates strong disagreement and a rating of "5" indicates strong agreement. The study participants were selected by a combination of snowball and purposive sampling by the researchers. This method guaranteed that the sample would be statistically representative of the whole. The responses were admirably well-rounded, providing both an insightful viewpoint on AI and a critical examination of its potential

applications. According to the remarks made by the participants, there was a noticeable lean towards the perceived acceptance of AI-based technology in banks and the benefits associated with it. Using SmartPLS version 4.0, a structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis was performed on the data. To ensure the reliability of the instruments employed in the study, a pilot study was conducted using a convenience sample of 30 persons. It was determined, through preliminary research, whether or not the respondents could answer all the survey questions and understand their relevance. It was also crucial to determine the sample size and the results gained from the survey before undertaking the inspection on a larger scale. The results of the present study were similar to those of the pilot study, which also used SPSS version 26, with a few minor tweaks. Because of the potential for erroneous findings, the expected sample size was doubled. In addition, only fully completed responses were included in the analysis; the few partially completed surveys were from the pilot phase. Because of the possibility of missing data to introduce bias into the study, it was decided to throw out the questionnaire with the holes in it. According to (Hair, 2019), whose research supported the development of the theoretical framework, a larger sample size was associated with a smaller degree of bias in the results. In addition, structural equation modelling (SEM) methods can work with non-standard data sets, such as those with missing information, non-normally distributed variables, or autocorrelated error structures (as is commonly seen in time series research). Furthermore, SEM offers flexible strategies for handling longitudinal data (Oino, 2018; Abikari et al., 2022). The research results are separated into two sections. The measurement model is discussed in the first part, while the structural model is discussed in the second. The Maximum likelihood (ML) estimate is used in the context of structural models to increase the likelihood that the observed covariance matrix is drawn from the population in a way that is consistent with the proposed covariance matrix. One significant benefit of covariance-based SEM over competing models is that, during the iterative phase, the fitness function is continuously optimised through the use of maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) (Khan et al., 2017). Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is a powerful tool for reducing the impact of multicollinearity. When using a reflecting scale or reliability test, it's crucial to pay attention to how statistically significant each independent variable is. There is a high degree of correlation between the independent variables, but this does not have a major impact on the overall measurement and structural models.

Because the approach employs questions that evaluate the same construct and measure the same unit of analysis, it is considered reflective. For this theory to hold, it's necessary to interpret the questions as evidence of a common worldview.

Figure 1: Structural equation model obtained from SmartPLS.
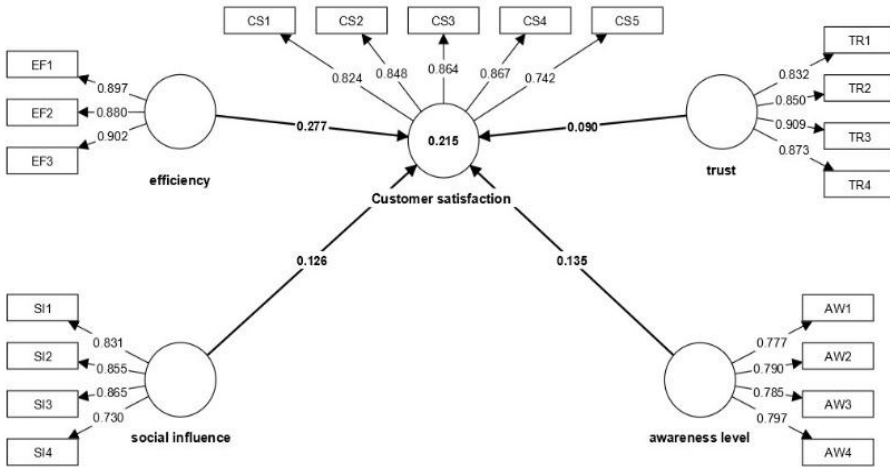
Source: The authors

Table 3: Summary of internal consistency, reliability, and convergent validity of the model.

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Customer satisfaction	0.887	0.896	0.917	0.689
awareness level	0.798	0.803	0.867	0.620
efficiency	0.875	0.897	0.922	0.798
social influence	0.838	0.843	0.893	0.676
trust	0.889	0.897	0.923	0.751

Source: The authors

Table 4: "Outer loadings" and "collinearity statistics" of the measurement model

S. no.	Items	VIF	Outer loadings
1	AW1	1.472	0.777
2	AW2	1.576	0.790
3	AW3	1.813	0.785
4	AW4	1.611	0.797
5	CS1	2.322	0.824
6	CS2	2.702	0.848
7	CS3	2.612	0.864
8	CS4	2.402	0.867
9	CS5	1.568	0.742
10	EF1	2.224	0.897
11	EF2	2.551	0.880
12	EF3	2.368	0.902
13	SI1	1.943	0.831
14	SI2	2.223	0.855
15	SI3	2.193	0.865
16	SI4	1.462	0.730
17	TR1	2.108	0.832
18	TR2	2.254	0.850
19	TR3	3.052	0.909
20	TR4	2.451	0.873

Source: The authors

Findings

Reliability and validity

Since there were many things to test, measurement models were used to determine factors like optimism, overconfidence, and a willingness to take risks. Internal consistency is measured by Cronbach's alpha and composite dependability, both of which are presented in Table 3. The SEM model used in this investigation is also reflective in its approach. Therefore, Table 4 displays the results of the calculations made to determine the outer loading values. Outer loading levels are generally higher than 0.708 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), as is well accepted. All measures in table-4 (Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted) are above the minimum threshold of

0.7 (Li et al., 2021) and much beyond the maximum threshold of 0.5 (Li et al., 2021). The composite reliability metric takes into account both the convergent validity and the average extracted variance. The results provide evidence for the convergent and robust validity of the model (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). According to Ahmadi Danyali (2018), outer loading values ranged from 0.73 to 0.90, with VIFs typically falling below 3. Discriminant validity is established by calculating the average variance of the retrieved data using the HTMT ratio and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The Fornell-Larcker criteria provide support for establishing discriminant validity by contrasting the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) with correlation values of latent variables (Chong et al., 2021). The Fornell-Larcker criteria are mentioned, so Table 6 satisfies this requirement. Table 7 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the HTMT values. The fact that the reported HTMT ratio values are all smaller than the cutoff value of 0.85 demonstrates that all components within the construct are statistically unique from one another and have individual significance. To evaluate discriminant validity, Hair et al. (2019) suggest the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). This leads us to believe there is discriminant validity in this case.

Structural model

The current research endeavors to probe this concept from within an internal structural model with multiple branches. To test for a statistically significant link between the latent constructs, the bootstrapping method is used. Figure 1 depicts the value of the path coefficient, which indicates that the effect of trust on customer satisfaction in AI-based banks is quite small. All t-values obtained were more than the cutoff value of 1.96 (Bellini et al., 2017), as shown in Table 7. A 0.05 level of confidence is assumed; hence it is essential that the t-values coincide with the measured route coefficient. Table 8 shows that all of the hypotheses were supported by the data (p-values were less than 0.05, which is the threshold for statistical significance). Therefore, the internal model demonstrates the importance of efficiency in affecting customer satisfaction with AI-enabled solutions in the financial services industry.

Table 5: Fornell–Larcker criteria.

	Customer satisfaction	awareness level	efficiency	social influence	trust
Customer satisfaction	0.830				
awareness level	0.315	0.787			
efficiency	0.401	0.373	0.893		
social influence	0.285	0.351	0.313	0.822	
trust	0.279	0.364	0.379	0.278	0.866

Source: The authors

Multivariate research of customers' feelings towards AI-enabled financial institutions revealed an R2 of 0.215 in table-8. Thus, the remaining 21.5% of the observed variation in customers' levels of satisfaction can be attributed to the other four latent variables. Therefore, the study's hidden elements are the most important ones in determining consumer happiness. The adjusted R-squared value was remarkably close to the real coefficient of determination. R2 variation is quantified by the effect size f2, which can be thought of as a scale with three distinct levels. Values of R2 between 0.26 and 0.13 indicate a considerable association between the latent variables, while values between 0.02 and 0.06 indicate a weak relationship (Cohen, 1988).

Table 6: Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) – List

	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
awareness level <-> Customer satisfaction	0.358
efficiency <-> Customer satisfaction	0.436
efficiency <-> awareness level	0.438
social influence <-> Customer satisfaction	0.325
social influence <-> awareness level	0.419
social influence <-> efficiency	0.365
trust <-> Customer satisfaction	0.305
trust <-> awareness level	0.432
trust <-> efficiency	0.428
trust <-> social influence	0.323

Table 7: Sample mean, standard deviation, T-values, P-values.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
awareness level -> Customer satisfaction	0.135	0.140	0.064	2.118	0.034
efficiency -> Customer satisfaction	0.277	0.274	0.070	3.960	0.000
social influence -> Customer satisfaction	0.126	0.131	0.063	2.020	0.043
trust -> Customer satisfaction	0.090	0.092	0.066	1.356	0.175

Source: The authors

Table 8: R Square and Adjusted R Square Values

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Customer satisfaction	0.215	0.201

Table 9: F Square Matrix

	Customer satisfaction
Customer satisfaction	
awareness level	0.018
efficiency	0.075
social influence	0.017
trust	0.008

Table 9 presents a comprehensive overview and analysis of the impact sizes pertaining to the latent variables. The p-values were verified using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in SPSS version 26 software, revealing that all values were below the significance threshold of 0.05. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is a statistical method used to assess the empirical distribution function of a sample in order to detect significant variations in the position and shape of the distribution. In this study, the test is utilised to validate the findings derived from the Smart PLS software and to establish a comparative analysis using the SPSS software. Therefore, the variables of 'efficiency' and 'awareness level of the customer' exert a more substantial influence on the model, whereas the variable of 'trust' in banks has the least impact on the model.

The inclusion of control variables, such as age and gender, has a limited impact on the statistical significance of the association between the inner and outer models.

Discussions and Implications

The goals of this research are to (1) determine how digital penetration relates to AI adoption and (2) identify the major characteristics that significantly contribute to the application of AI in banks. The research looks at four factors to determine which ones matter most to customers. The model was able to extract the most important latent variables from the path modelling framework. When looking at the direct relationship between parameters that affect customer satisfaction, the study found that the adoption of security measures in AI-based banking systems exhibited the least significant path coefficient.

Awareness Level

The first factor identified is the 'level of awareness' with a weighting of 0.135. For banking entities, it's imperative to prioritize this area. Elevating the customers' understanding through insights about the bank's operations and the potential benefits can heighten their awareness.. As a result, Hypothesis H1, which postulates that heightened customer awareness directly correlates with increased satisfaction (with a coefficient of 0.135 and a t-value of 2.118), is accepted.

Efficiency

Next in line is the long-term 'effectiveness' of AI-integrated technologies, represented by a value of 0.277. Existing research indicates a relationship between the seamless integration of such technology and optimal resource utilization, a notion supported by findings. Given the positive association between the efficacy of AI solutions and customer gratification (with a coefficient of 0.277 and a t-value of 3.960), Hypothesis H2 is accepted.

Social Influence

The 'societal impact' factor, with a magnitude of 0.126, is predominantly molded by mainstream media and interpersonal endorsements. In regions that display apprehension toward new tech adoption, individuals often rely on counsel from their acquaintances. For this reason, banks need to establish robust bonds with pivotal customers who disseminate

feedback. Therefore, Hypothesis H3, which posits a direct positive relation between societal influence and customer contentment (with a coefficient of 0.126 and a t-value of 2.020), is accepted.

Trust

Based on the internal assessment, 'trust' is highlighted as the most salient variable, albeit with a score of 0.090 concerning customer contentment. Retail banking sectors should craft strategies to engender trust, possibly through timely service provision and addressing grievances. However, the notion that the trust of customers plays a significant role in shaping their satisfaction, as proposed in Hypothesis H4 (with a coefficient of 0.090 and a t-value of 1.356), is rejected.

Conclusions

This study provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the factors influencing the acceptability of AI-enabled digital banking among customers in northern India. Utilizing the PLS-SEM approach, it reveals that trust, awareness, efficiency, and social influence significantly impact customer satisfaction. The findings underscore the critical role of trust in AI-enabled products, followed by customer awareness, indicating that banks must prioritize building trust and raising awareness to enhance customer satisfaction. Interestingly, the study also found that customer satisfaction is least influenced by the perceived security of AI-based banking services, challenging the common assumption that security is a primary concern for digital banking customers.

Limitations

While the study offers valuable insights, it acknowledges several limitations. The research is geographically limited to northern India, suggesting the need for caution when generalizing findings to other regions or countries with different economic conditions or digital penetration levels. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the data may not fully capture the dynamic nature of customer attitudes towards AI over time. The study also recognizes the potential for broader factors, such as education level, customer engagement, and income level, which were not extensively covered, to influence the acceptability of AI-enabled banking services.

Future Directions

The study opens several avenues for future research. Given the geographical limitation of the current research, subsequent studies could explore the acceptability of AI-enabled digital banking in different regions or countries to understand cultural and economic impacts on customer attitudes. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess how customer perceptions of AI-enabled banking services evolve over time. Furthermore, future research could delve into additional factors such as personalization, data privacy concerns, and the role of digital literacy in shaping customer acceptability. Investigating the impact of specific AI applications within banking, such as chatbots for customer service or AI-driven personal financial management tools, could provide deeper insights into which aspects of AI technology are most valued by customers.

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Digital India: Paving the Way Towards a Sustainable Digital Economy

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Abstract

Digital India, is an initiative by the Government of India for transforming India into a digitally-empowered knowledge hub. The Honourable Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi launched this initiative on 1 July 2015, with a vision to bring three goals as aprt of this initiative. The major areas of the vision include providing digital infrastructure to every citizen, bringing service and governance on demand and digitally empowering the citizens of India. This dream will make India a digital economy and will help achieve the goal of sustainability. Digital infrastructure, advanced technologies and digital platforms will help reduce carbon footprints. This paper highlights how the concept of Digital India is working on transforming India into a digital economy. It shows how the vision of digital India takes India on the road towards sustainability. The opportunities and challenges for sustainability in the digital economy are also highlighted in the paper.

Keywords: sustainability, sustainable development, Digital India, financial inclusion, digital infrastructure, circular economy, digitalization

Introduction

Digital India is an innovative tool of technological advancement that has been implemented in the form of the Digital India initiative by the Government of India. This flagship program envisioned India as a knowledge hub. The dream was to provide digital infrastructure to all

the citizens, on-demand governance and services and the empowerment of citizens digitally. With these initiatives the programme was launched on July 1, 2015, by our honourable Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi. This program was launched as a beneficiary scheme for other programs of the Government of India which includes Startup India, Make in India, Bharatnet, Sagarmal, Bharatmala. The vision was inclusive growth in various areas like manufacturing, electronic services and job opportunities. Broadband highways, public internet access, universal mobile connectivity, e-Kranti, e-governance, information for all, electronic manufacturing, IT for jobs and early harvest programs are the nine pillars of Digital India. This campaign has left its impact on various fields since its launch which include electronic linkage of around 1200 post office branches in rural areas, improvement of electronic manufacturing sector, improvement in health care and education sector and betterment of online infrastructure. The GDP also be boosted up to $1 trillion by 2025. Digitalization is a way to empower society and its citizens. The innovations and various technological advancements gave birth to this era of digitalization.

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the concept of digitalization by studying the Digital India initiative of the Government of India.

2. To explore the relationship between digital economy and sustainability.

3. To highlight the various opportunities for sustainability in the digital economy

4. To point out the challenges for sustainability in the digital economy.

Literature Review

1. *Ha & Chuah (2023)* in their paper have tried to assess the impact of digital transformation in Southeast Asia. They have majorly taken the impact on the human and physical capital development of digital transformation and tried to give certain recommendations for the policymakers regarding the better implementation of digital transformation. Through their findings, they gave certain suggestions for the improvement of the digital

skills of the workforce by providing them with the necessary training, increasing cybersecurity at the regional level and a common platform for data and payment.

2. *Zheng & Wong (2023)* conducted a study in China to analyse how the digital economy put its impacted on renewable energy development. In their research, they discovered that the impact of digitalization of the economy was on renewable energy development. When compared to solar and wind energy, the positive impact of the digital economy was found to be greater in the case of hydro energy. According to their findings, central and western provinces had more renewable energy growth due to a more significant impact of digitization than in the eastern provinces.

3. *Kumar et al. (2022)* aimed to investigate and highlight the factors that have an impact on coordinating sustainable supply chains and behavior. They emphasized evaluating strategies to reduce supply chain risks in the age of digitization. They concluded that decarbonization and environmental performance are the most significant factors in the development of sustainable supply chain coordination in the digitization context, while speed to market is the least important.

4. *Xu et al. (2022)* in their research have tried to identify and measure the relationship between the digital economy and the pollution in the environment from 2008 to 2018 in 287 cities of China. They found that digital economies have suppressed environmental pollution at the local level. They concluded that good coordination and balance between digital transformation and the green economy will lead to high-quality development.

5. *Gomez-Trujillo & Gonzalez-Perez (2021)* have summarized various findings in the previous research on the relationship between digitalization and sustainability.

6. *Ordieres-Meré et al. (2020)* tried to explore how digitalization contributes to sustainability by covering two different cases of manufacturing and service industries.

7. *Kunkel and Matthess (2020)* analyzed the digital and industrial strategies of Sub-Saharan African and East Asian and Pacific countries to assess the potential impact of digital technology on environmental sustainability across sectors. They examined four Sub-Saharan African countries (South Africa, Rwanda, Kenya, and Nigeria) as well as three East Asian and Pacific countries (China, Thailand, and the Philippines) for this aim. The findings revealed that the majority of expectations centered on the positive indirect effects of using digital technologies.

8. *Kar et al. (2019)* in their paper have tried to give a better understanding of digital nations. They explored the concept of digital nations while taking into consideration sustainability.

9. *Savina (2018)* in their research tried to identify various opportunities, challenges and prospects of the digital economy in Russia. They concluded that digitization's paradigm has positive as well as negative impacts and through this research, various strategies and policies could be made and implemented in the Russian economy.

10. *D. Borremans et al. (2018)* in their article have described the relationship between digitization and socio-economic development of society by assessing the impact of digital technologies on society's social and economic development. Based on the volume of business capitalization it has also provided ratings to the largest IT companies. They have found out the various problems that would come with digitally transforming the economy.

Research Methodology

The research is exploratory. It uses Secondary data collected through an examination of the literature, publications, articles, and websites to throw light on the concept of Digitalization and Digital economy. It explores the impact of the digital economy on sustainability and highlights the various opportunities for sustainability in the digital economy. It also points out the challenges for sustainability in the digital economy.

Digital Economy

The term digital economy came into being in the early 1990s. This term focuses on digitalizing all economic activities. So, the economy

that is based on digital economies is termed a digital economy. The term 'Digital Economy' was coined by 'Don Tapscott' in 1995, for the first time in his book "The Digital Economy: Promise and Peril in the Age of Networked Intelligence". The digital economy is more advanced in comparison to the internet economy. The invention of smartphones, tablets, computers, etc. has revolutionized the economies into a digital economy and has transformed them into more advanced and complex structures. These economies are characterized by their higher connectivity features, effective collection and analysis of big data and rapid innovation.

Features of Digital Economy

- **High interdependence and connectivity:** The digital economy is characterized by its high reach whereby people can connect at anytime and anywhere in the world and can access published content online. Apart from that it has become easier for consumers and businesses to connect through social platforms.

- **Effective use of data:** Data is now easily available and through innovative technologies, the collection and analysis of data becomes easier. It helps the companies to gather information about the behaviour of consumers, the trends in the market and other relevant information for making important decisions.

- **Disruptive technologies:** Continuous innovation and disruption is the result of disruptive technologies. As a result, companies are producing and launching new products and services.

- **Economic growth:** Dissemination of information and quick analysis of data leads to innovation and launching of new products and services for consumers. This leads to economic growth.

- **Greater productivity and efficiency:** Companies are automating repetitive tasks and working to increase their efficiency and accuracy by leveraging digital technologies and setting up digital infrastructure.

Government Policies and Initiatives for Promoting Digital Economy

The key initiatives implemented by Government of India as part of the Digital India program can be summarized as follows:

- **Aadhaar:** It offers a unique 12-digit biometric and demographic-based identity that is online, lifelong and verifiable. It was provided legal support by the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 which was officially notified on March 26, 2016. According to the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) data, more than 138.08 crore residents have been enrolled as of September 29, 2023.

- **Common Services Centres:** CSCs facilitate the delivery of digital government services in rural areas by Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs). Presently, these CSCs offer over 400 digital services, and as of December 2023, there are 5.9 Lakh functional CSCs (including both urban and rural areas) across the country. Of these, 4.69 Lakh CSCs are operational at the Gram Panchayat level. As per the data from Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY), a total of 439.25 transactions have been conducted through CSCs till December 2023.

- **DigiLocker:** DigiLocker, a digital ecosystem, offers a digital platform comprising gateways and repositories for issuers to upload documents. As of December 2023, DigiLocker boasts a user base exceeding 24.5 crore, with over 628 crore documents accessible from 1684 issuer organizations.

- **Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG)**: It serves as a unified platform enabling citizens to access multiple government services (Central, State/UT & Municipal) via mobile. As of January 2024, UMANG has garnered more than 6.09 crore registered users, providing access to 1882 e-Services from 207 government departments.

- **e-Sign:** It facilitates the immediate online signing of forms and documents in a legally acceptable manner for citizens. Various applications leverage these services through OTP-based authentication services of UIDAI. Over 34.41 crore e-Signs have been issued by all agencies, with CDAC contributing 8.22 Crore e-Signs.

- **MyGov**: MyGov is an engagement platform for citizens designed to foster participatory governance, boasting a current user base of over 3 crore individuals actively participating in numerous activities available on the platform.

- **MeriPehchaan:** In July 2022, the National Single Sign-on (NSSO) platform named MeriPehchaan was launched to simplify citizens' access to government portals, integrating a total of 5057 services from various Ministries and States.

- **Digital Village:** MeitY initiated the 'Digital Village Pilot Project' in October 2018, covering 700 Gram Panchayats/Villages per District per State/UT. This project provides digital services such as Education, Digital Health, Financial Services, Solar panel-powered street lights, Skill Development and various Business to Citizen (B2C) and Government to Citizens (G2C) Services.

- **eDistrict MMP:** eDistrict, a Mission Mode Project (MMP), focuses on the delivery of high-volume citizen-centric services electronically at the district or sub-district level in India. As of December 2022, 4,671 different e-services have been introduced in 713 districts.

- **Open Government Data Platform:** The Open Government Data Platform has been established to enhance data sharing and encourage innovation with non-personal data. As of February 9, 2024, over 6.20 lakh datasets spanning 13081 catalogues have been published on the platform, leading to 1.01 crore downloads, promoting transparency and accessibility.

- **E-Hospital and Online Registration System (ORS):** The e-Hospital application serves as a Hospital Management Information System, managing internal processes and workflows for 620 active hospitals on the portal as of February 9, 2024, with a total patient registration count exceeding 38.77 crore. The Online Registration System (ORS) has been adopted by 586 hospitals nationwide, facilitating over 88.15 lakh appointments to date.

- **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyaan:** This scheme was endorsed by the government to promote digital literacy in rural India. The initiative targets 6 crore households

in rural areas, with 4.38 lakh registered training centers across the country. Currently, there are 6.63 crore candidates have registered, of which 5.69 crore have undergone training and 4.22 crore have received certification.

- **Future Skills Prime:** FutureSkills PRIME, a joint effort between NASSCOM and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), is dedicated to enhancing the skills of IT professionals through re-skilling and up-skilling in 10 emerging technologies. These technologies include Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Augmented/Virtual Reality, Big Data Analytics, Robotic Process Automation, Cloud Computing, Additive Manufacturing/3D Printing, Blockchain, Social & Mobile and Cyber Security.

- **Cyber Security:** To address challenges related to data privacy and security, the government has implemented measures through the Information Technology Act 2000, which contains provisions for ensuring data privacy and cyber security. On June 29, 2021, India made a significant mark in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2020 released by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). The country climbed 37 positions, securing the tenth position globally, in recognition of its commendable performance across essential cyber safety parameters.

- **Electronic Manufacturing Clusters (EMC):** This scheme has given the green light to 19 Greenfield EMCs and 3 Common Facility Centres (CFCs), spanning 3,464 acres and totalling a project cost of Rs. 3,732 crores. This includes a Government Grant-in-aid of Rs. 1,529 crore and covers 15 states nationwide. After concluding the application period for the EMC scheme, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) introduced the Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters (EMC 2.0) Scheme on April 1, 2020. The objective of this initiative is to further augment the infrastructure for the electronics industry in the country and strengthen the electronics value chain.

- **Unified Payment Interface (UPI):** The leading digital payment platform is the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), an immediate

real-time payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). UPI, an indigenous payment system, enables users to connect multiple bank accounts in a single smartphone app, facilitating fund transfers without the need for IFSC codes or account numbers. As of January 2024, it has successfully integrated 550 banks that have facilitated 1220 crore transactions by volume, amounting to Rs 18.41 lakh crores.

The trends of UPI payment in India are as follows:
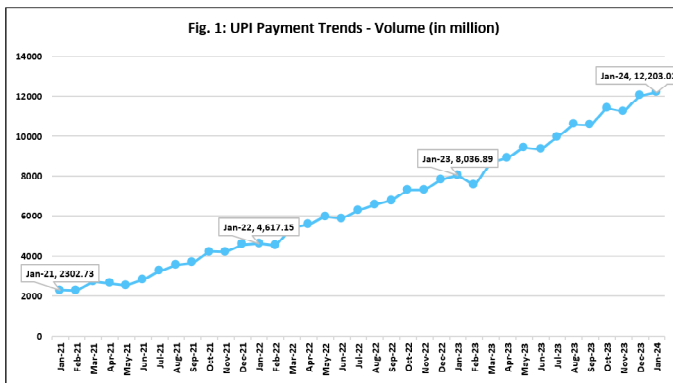
Source: National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)
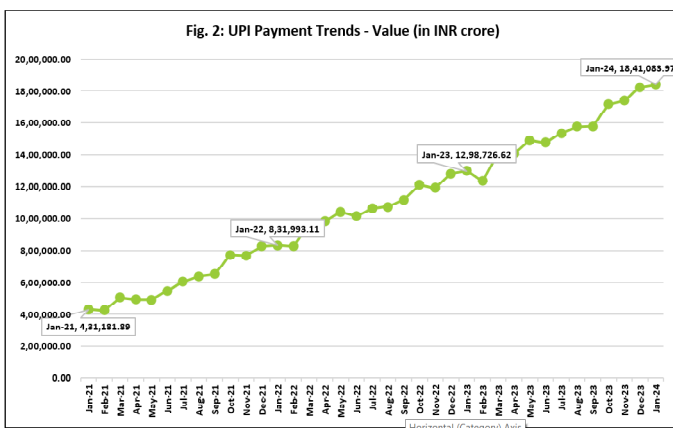
Source: National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

Digital Economy and Sustainability

The concern of policymakers, businessmen and researchers all over the world is bent towards sustainability. Sustainability is a new global concern, and economies all around the world are striving for it. The concept of sustainable development entails addressing the requirements of current generations without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. Sustainable development focuses on three major dimensions: social, economic and environmental. Digital economy and sustainability are interconnected. A digital economy supports sustainability in many ways. The economies can achieve sustainability by using such technologies which can help in reducing carbon emissions. Companies can use advanced technologies to trace their carbon footprints and outline the measures to reduce them. The makers of policy can also collect data easily and analyze it by using innovative technological measures and implementing legal frameworks for businesses to adopt sustainable practices. Energy companies can help in optimizing the distribution of electricity by developing smart grids and thus can help in the generation of renewable energy. The digital economy promotes a circular economy model which contributes to sustainability by reusing and regenerating products and services. Thus, it helps in ensuring sustainable consumption by reducing waste. A digital platform can also be developed for the customers where they can sell or exchange those products which are no longer in use. Moreover, such products can also be used to manufacture other products or be sold as second-hand products at reduced rates. This ensures a reduction of wastage. In this advanced stage of technology, consumers have all the information about all the products and services and their environmental impacts. The smart packaging allows the customers to easily scan QR codes and have all the information about its production and sourcing. Thus, they can make informed purchase decisions and consumptions. Customers who are sensitive to the environment will surely choose products that are environment-friendly and sustainable. The latest technology of blockchain makes the supply chain transparent and increases accountability. It promotes sustainable production and consumption. Thus, the concepts, of digital economy and sustainability go hand in hand when digital technologies are put into use to promote positive environmental impact.

Opportunities for Sustainability in the Digital Economy

The world is witnessing severe environmental issues and, in this situation, it becomes significant to explore the opportunities for sustainable development in the digital economy. The opportunities that can be availed by digital economies are as mentioned below:

1. **Developing renewable energy:** The economies can switch to digital solutions to harness the opportunities for renewable energies. They can monitor and control renewable energy systems efficiently and effectively through the use of innovative technologies and can also install smart grids for efficient energy distribution.

2. **Innovative technological solutions:** Sustainable technological solutions promote sustainable production and consumption. The digital economy provides sustainable technologies like 3D printing which focuses on on-demand production reduces waste and increases efficiency.

3. **Huge data and analysis:** Through advanced technologies companies can easily collect big data and do the analysis. They can use that data to trace their carbon emissions and the environmental impact of their activities. Accordingly, they can make informed decisions to reduce emissions, promote renewable energy and increase the efficiency of resources. Companies can also optimize their supply chains through big data and analysis for sustainability.

4. **Smart cities:** The population moving towards urban areas has increased the level of carbon emissions and degraded the environment. Thus, there is a need for sustainable urbanization. The digital economy can help in implementing the concept of smart cities and ensuring sustainable urbanization. Installation of smart sensors to monitor traffic, air quality and energy consumption can help to ensure sustainability. Through online platforms, awareness can be created among consumers about sustainable living practices.

5. **Sustainable consumption:** The digital economy promotes a circular economy model that addresses the global issue of plastic waste. The concept of circular economy encompasses reuse,

recycling and repair. These sustainable practices help reduce waste and ensure proper waste management. Thus, it ensures sustainable consumption.

6. **Sustainable production:** Modern companies are incorporating socially responsible models into their business practices. Digital technologies can help companies develop such business models and sustainable business strategies. It increases the transparency and accountability of the companies and ensures sustainable production.

7. **Consumer empowerment:** Online power has empowered the consumers by making available all the information for them. They are more aware of the digital platforms that provide them with every inch of information. They make informed purchase decisions by comparing various products available. Thus, they can choose products that are environmentally friendly and drive production towards sustainability.

8. **Value co-creation**: Companies produce according to the customer needs to ensure that the production meets the expectations of consumers. The digital economy promotes the collaboration of producers and consumers. This leads to value co-creation.

9. **Intervention through sustainable policies**: Through digital technologies economies can make policies to reduce carbon emissions of businesses and ensure sustainability.

Challenges For Sustainability in the Digital Economy

Although there are various opportunities yet digital economy is full of challenges. Its impact on society, environment and economy is not always positive. Various challenges are as follows:

1. **E-waste:** Newer technologies and rapid innovation are generating e-waste. Lack of infrastructure, e-waste management system and lack of resources to dispose of e-waste add to the problem. The practice of illegally exporting e-waste to developing countries and dumping it in landfills has become a common practice and challenge for the digital economy. This leads to the degradation of the environment and air, water and soil pollution.

2. **Increasing carbon emissions and energy consumption:** The biggest players of the digital economy i.e., electronic devices are doing more energy consumption and more carbon emissions. With growing demands for efficient and high-performing technology devices, manufacturers are producing more of them. It requires more energy inputs. Also, various data-intensive applications, cloud-based services and media streaming are consuming energy and emitting carbon.

3. **Digital divide:** The digital economy is increasing inequality in terms of access to technology. Thus, it increases disparity in social, economic and educational terms and leads to a digital divide.

4. **Job insecurity:** Rapidly changing technology is changing the job markets and increasing the insecurity regarding jobs of people. With robotic technology, the tasks are being done easily. Thus, automation is displacing manual labour. It leads to unemployment and affects the standards of living of people.

5. **Data insecurity:** To use technology, data is required in the form of digital information. Increasing cyber-crimes and hacking leads to the risk of loss of personal information. Privacy and data protection is the biggest challenge in this era of digitalization.

6. **Growing monopolies in the market:** Many large corporations have access to digital technologies, a high-skilled workforce and access to various data-intensive applications which help them to exploit the market dominantly. This leads to the concentration of power and the creation of market monopolies. They have the power to limit the variety of products and services available to customers and this reduces the options to choose for customers.

Conclusion

Digitalization and sustainability are the two concepts that could prove beneficial for economies if mixed in the right manner. When the digital economies exploit digital resources to avail several opportunities and face the challenges with a responsible approach only then they can attain sustainability. The digital economy has played a crucial role in

reducing emissions, energy consumption, providing sustainable technological solutions, big data and analytics, sustainable urbanisation and smart cities, sustainable production and consumption. It will play its role smoothly when we face the challenges of e-waste, the digital divide, job displacement, privacy and data protection and concentration of power. Digitalization is a road that must be taken for the optimal use of technology to reach our destination i.e., sustainability.

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Digital Transformation and Financial Inclusion: A Case Study of State Bank of India

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Abstract

The State Bank of India (SBI), one of the biggest and oldest commercial banks in India, has launched several digital transformation efforts that are the subject of this paper's in-depth research. In a time of accelerating technological change and shifting consumer tastes, SBI has set out on a mission to modernize its business practices and promote financial inclusion. In order to shed light on how SBI's digital transformation efforts have affected the bank's competitiveness, customer experience, and socioeconomic inclusion, this paper examines the methods, difficulties, and results of such efforts. The article examines significant digital projects like mobile banking, online account opening, and biometric authentication by combining qualitative and quantitative data sources, including interviews, surveys, and financial reports. It also evaluates how government regulations and policies have influenced SBI's journey toward digital transformation. The results show that SBI's digital transformation has not only enhanced operational effectiveness and customer service but has also been essential in providing financial services to people in remote locations. Additionally, this study provides insightful information for other financial organizations, politicians, and scholars who wish

to comprehend how digitalization affects financial inclusion and sustainable development.

Keywords: digital transformation, financial inclusion, State Bank of India, banking technology, mobile banking, financial services

Introduction

The State Bank of India (SBI) is a tribute to flexibility and creativity in an era defined by the relentless march of technology and the ever-changing landscape of the financial industry. As one of the world's largest and oldest commercial banks, SBI has not only survived but also harnessed the sweeping waves of change to chart a road toward a more inclusive and digitally transformed financial ecosystem. In this age of digitization, when banking is no longer limited to brick-and-mortar branches, SBI has begun on a transformative journey to redefine the boundaries of traditional banking and extend its services to the most remote regions of the Indian subcontinent.

This paper delves into the diverse world of SBI's digital transformation activities, a path that highlights the convergence of technology, strategy, and a dedication to financial inclusion. The State Bank of India has long been a foundation of stability in the Indian financial scene, with a rich history spanning over two centuries. However, it recognized that in order to remain not only relevant but also useful in the lives of its clients, it needed to evolve.

The combination of mobile technologies, internet penetration, and shifting client demands fuelled SBI's digital transformation. SBI wanted not just to streamline its internal operations and improve client experiences, but also to play a crucial role in promoting the cause of financial inclusion, particularly in a country as big and diverse as India.

This study aims to peel back the layers of SBI's digital journey, delving into the tactics, difficulties, and outcomes that have defined its transformation. It investigates the effects of digitization on SBI's competitiveness, operational efficiency, and, most crucially, its role in promoting socioeconomic inclusion. This research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between technology, policy, and financial inclusion in the context of SBI by drawing on a diverse array of data sources, including interviews, surveys, financial reports, and a comprehensive review of the regulatory landscape.

As we embark on this investigation into SBI's digital transformation, we will not only gain insights into the bank's remarkable evolution, but we will also glean valuable lessons and implications for other financial institutions, policymakers, and researchers attempting to navigate the ever-changing landscape of digital banking and its profound effects on financial inclusion and sustainable development. SBI's narrative is not only a monument to the bank's tenacity and adaptation, but it also provides a view into the future of banking in an increasingly digitized world.

Literature Review

Pinal Barot (2017) Researcher aims to comprehensively grasp the significance, scale, opportunities, and obstacles associated with financial inclusion in India, while also assessing its current status within the Indian economy. Among the prominent challenges highlighted in the study is the limited adoption of financial services by specific segments of the population, compounded by financial illiteracy among the impoverished and underprivileged, thereby presenting formidable barriers to achieving comprehensive financial inclusion.

Jha & Bakhshi (2019) India's green finance dreams are hampered by expensive investments scaring off private investors. Blended finance, mixing public and private funds, could be the key to lowering costs and attracting them. However, the Indian government needs a clear, long-term green investment policy that balances environmental goals with overall economic health, like affordability and job creation. Short-term fixes won't do; a sustainable future needs a sustainable plan.

Kumar & Prakash (2020) While India's government tackles climate change through policies, its banking industry lags behind. More funding from banks is crucial to bridge the gap and truly green the economy. This suggests current efforts aren't translating into the financial sector, emphasizing the need for increased commitment from banks.

Srinivas & Shanigarapu (2020) conducted a study that centred on examining the governmental efforts in India aimed at enhancing financial inclusion, with a particular focus on the role played by small finance banks. Their research revealed that there were 3533 branches of small finance banks across 31 states and union territories, spanning a total of 46553 districts. The study highlighted the widespread and diverse

networking of small finance banks, emphasizing their significant contribution to fostering financial inclusion in India.

RBI (2021) In early 2007, India launched its green financing initiative. The Reserve Bank of India has also made several encouraging policy measures to boost its green financing initiatives since then. Since 2015, the small renewable energy sector has been included in its Priority Sector Lending (PSL) scheme. As of March 31, 2020, the total outstanding bank credit to the non-conventional energy sector was approximately 36,543 crores, accounting for approximately 7.9 percent of the total bank credit provided to the power generation sector.

Abdullah (2021) In his study of the relationship between financial inclusion and economic development in rural India, researcher focuses on evaluating the chain between the various aspects of financial inclusion and the growth of the country's rural economy. They have also researched India's financial inclusion concerns. In order to conduct their research, they used the grandeur causality test and vector auto-regression (VAR) models. They discovered during their research that financial inclusion can boost rural India's economic development and that various programs are working as planned to do so.

Sharma & Choubey (2021) If Green Banking projects can be managed more effectively, handling environmental concerns, and strengthening environmental issues would improve. Green projects can be made possible through effective resource planning, and banks can play a significant role in establishing favourable chances to improve the environment for both current and potential consumers.

Rout Sanat and Sahoo Sadananda (2021) India needs to get out of the current crisis quickly with immediate policy adjustments to revive its economy and meet its promise at the Paris agreement. Technology risk and credit risk must be managed with caution. Research and development of innovative green technology require funding. The energy sector has already proven to be one of the fastest expanding in the world, garnering massive amounts of investment with a lot of promise. Central banks and governments must collaborate to create dependable green financial policy frameworks that are more environmentally sustainable in the long run. The RBI has regulatory authority over money, credit, and the financial sector.

Mahesh K. M. et al., (2021) Objective is to raise awareness of farmer financial inclusion programs and to evaluate the effectiveness of different financial inclusion plans. According to the report, the Indian government launched several agricultural programs to encourage farmers to access credit. Most of these programs were effective and met expectations, but a small number of those designed to promote financial inclusion in the agricultural sector have not yet succeeded in doing so.

Kumar Sumit (2022) The total amount raised through green bonds at the BSE in fiscal year 2019-20 was INR 18.03 billion, up from INR 8.65 billion in fiscal year 2018-19, according to the BSE's annual report for fiscal year 2019-20. Within a year, there has been a considerable surge in green finance via domestic market green bonds. as the market swings toward rewarding companies that follow ESG principles. Public transportation, particularly electric vehicles, and solar energy are two key green industries that could benefit significantly from the issuance of green bonds. Policymakers may consider providing incentives to businesses in these developing industries to encourage them to raise financing in global and local bond markets, thereby driving their expansion.

Abebe & Kegne (2023) Enhanced savings behaviour, loan accessibility, skill-building workshops, and fostering women's entrepreneurship are advantages facilitated by microcredit programs led by MFIs, contributing to the growth of businesses and exposure in the entrepreneurial realm for women.

Vallabhaneni & Nithyashree (2023) The study finds a positive association between PMJDY and financial inclusion of Indian farmers, but not a positive relationship between PMFBY and financial inclusion of Indian farmers. The study also shows that the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana is to be given credit for 98.8% of India's farmers being financially included.

Chaturvedi Anubha (2023) The research investigates the nexus between financial innovation and growth within the State Bank of India (SBI), amid dynamic industry landscapes. Employing a descriptive and analytical approach, it scrutinizes SBI's financial performance using annual reports and Multiple Discriminate Analysis (MDA). The findings unveil diverse trends in SBI's financial health across different periods, with notable

innovations positively impacting the bank's performance and, consequently, fostering overall economic growth at the national level.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess SBI's initiatives to promote financial inclusion through its digital transformation.

2. To assess how SBI's initiatives have affected the availability of financial services.

3. To identify the obstacles faced by SBI in implementing digital transformation initiatives for financial inclusion.

4. Make recommendations for how SBI may overcome the obstacles in the way of its efforts to promote financial inclusion and digital transformation.

Need for the Study

The crucial role that financial inclusion plays in promoting economic growth and decreasing inequities justifies the need for this study. Understanding how digital transformation affects financial inclusion is crucial as it permeates more and more of the banking sector. The State Bank of India's (SBI) innovative position in embracing digital technologies bears great relevance in India, where millions still lack access to formal financial services. This study aims to identify lessons that might help SBI, other financial institutions, and policymakers use technology successfully to improve financial inclusion. The study's results may also have wider global ramifications, adding to the conversation on financial inclusion and digital transformation in general, especially in areas with comparable problems.

Research Methodology

Data Collection: The study will use a mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research approaches, to give a complete analysis of SBI Bank's digital transformation and its influence on financial inclusion.

1. Qualitative- In-depth studies will be performed to acquire insights into the strategies, difficulties, and policy frameworks that have impacted the digital transformation process.

2. Quantitative- Data analysis of financial reports will be performed to collect quantitative data on SBI's effectiveness of digital banking services, as well as the bank's performance towards financial inclusion.

Case Study Approach: The State Bank of India will be used as a full case study in the project, with an in-depth evaluation of its digital transformation plans, policies, and outcomes. This method gives a more detailed grasp of the subject.

Digital Transformation by SBI

The largest commercial bank in India, State Bank of India (SBI), has started a digital transformation journey to better serve its customers' evolving requirements and stay competitive.

Here are some of the recent SBI initiatives that have aided in the digital transformation-

Table 1: Initiatives Taken by State Bank of India

Initiative	Date of Initiation	Statistical Data
SBI Insta Account: A digital savings account that can be opened online or through the YONO mobile banking app in a few minutes.	April 2022	Over 1 million SBI Insta Accounts have been opened since its launch.
YONO Lite: A lightweight version of the YONO mobile banking app that is designed for customers with low-end smartphones or limited internet connectivity.	May 2022	Over 10 million customers have downloaded YONO Lite since its launch.
SBI Video KYC: A digital KYC (Know Your Customer) solution that allows customers to complete their KYC requirements remotely through a video call.	June 2022	Over 5 million customers have used SBI Video KYC since its launch.

SBI AI Chatbot: A chatbot that can answer customer queries and provide assistance with various banking transactions.	July 2022	SBI AI Chatbot has answered over 10 million customer queries since its launch
SBI Open Banking Platform: A platform that allows SBI to partner with fintech companies to develop and offer new digital financial products and services	August 2022	SBI has partnered with over 10 fintech companies to offer new digital financial products and services through its Open Banking Platform.
SBI FASTag App: A mobile app that allows customers to purchase and manage FASTags (electronic toll tags) for their vehicles.	September 2022	Over 1 million customers have downloaded the SBI FASTag app since its launch.
SBI Robo Advisor: A robo-advisory platform that helps customers invest in mutual funds based on their risk appetite and financial goals.	October 2022	Over 100,000 customers have used the SBI Robo Advisor platform since its launch.

To further alter its processes and enhance the client experience, SBI is also investing in cutting-edge technologies like blockchain, machine learning, and artificial intelligence. Here are some specific instances of how SBI's most recent initiatives in digital transformation are helping its users:

1. **MINGLE**- SBI MINGLE was first launched in July 2016. The introduction of SBI Mingle, their mobile banking app, is another significant initiative. It is an innovative project of the State Bank of India (SBI) that makes use of social media to deliver financial services and interact with customers. SBI Mingle's fundamental objective is to increase the usability, accessibility, and interactivity of banking services for younger, more tech-savvy generations and clients with access to the Internet. It aims to capitalize on the pervasive use of social media for banking and financial activities. approximately 1 million people have signed up for SBI Mingle, and over 10,000 of them are active users. It features more than 100 communities with a range of interests, including money, fashion, travel, and entertainment. Customers of SBI can benefit from SBI Mingle. They may stay in touch with SBI, find out about new goods and services, and receive assistance with their financial issues thanks to it.

2. **YONO**- SBI YONO was initiated in November 2017**.** The launch of SBI's digital banking platform, YONO, is one of the main

projects of its digital transformation. YONO is a one-stop shop for all SBI's banking and financial requirements, including account opening, money transfers, bill payments, and investment products. Additionally, YONO relates to several outside services, including e-commerce, travel, and food delivery. SBI YONO counts over 100 million downloads and more than 37 million registered users as of 2023. With over 20,000 daily transactions, the platform provides access to a wide range of financial and non-financial services, such as account management, fund transfers, and bill payment. Additionally, YONO has partnered with more than 30 e-commerce businesses, which has increased online purchasing transactions by 60% from the previous year. Recently they also introduced **YONO Lite** which is a simplified version of the YONO mobile banking app created for users with less advanced smartphones or spotty internet access.

3. **SIA:** It is a chatbot created by the State Bank of India (SBI). It is made to respond to consumer questions and help with different banking procedures. SBI YONO mobile banking, SBI internet banking, and the SBI 24-hour customer service helpline all offer SIA. Natural language processing (NLP) and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies power SIA. It can comprehend and address a variety of consumer inquiries, such as Account status and activity, Information about loans Investment items, Consumer assistance et cetera. Although SIA is still under development, it has already mastered the ability to respond to over 10 million consumer inquiries. It is accessible in 11 more Indian languages in addition to English and Hindi.AI is also being used by SBI to identify and stop fraud. SIA is a revolution in the banking industry

4. **Online Account Management for NRIs (SBI NRI Services):** In 2016, SBI elevated its online offerings for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs). A strategic project called SBI NRI Services intends to meet the banking and financial needs of Non-Resident Indians, a significant diaspora community. Over the past year, NRI customers' internet banking transactions have climbed by more than 50%. More than 2 million NRI customers of SBI use its online banking system. According to a recent SBI poll over 90% of NRI clients utilize online banking services to handle

their accounts in India. Compared to a few years ago, when fewer than 50% of NRI clients used online banking services, this represents a huge growth.

5. **SBI YONO Krishi-** Specifically designed for farmers' requirements, SBI YONO Krishi is a smartphone application. This cutting-edge technology offers useful agricultural data, such as weather updates and crop prices. Additionally, it makes financial services like loans and insurance more accessible, enabling farmers to make better decisions, manage risk, and increase agricultural production.

SBI's Contribution's Towards Financial Inclusion

In contrast to financial exclusion, which occurs when certain services are unavailable or unaffordable, financial inclusion or inclusive financing refers to the provision of financial services at reasonable costs to disadvantaged and low-income parts of society. In India, the current focus of financial inclusion is limited to providing everyone with at least basic access to a savings bank account without frills. Financial inclusion has received considerably larger attention on a global scale. A current account or savings account is not considered to be a reliable indication of financial inclusion on its own. At the very least, "financial inclusion" initiatives should provide affordable access to a variety of financial services, such as savings, long and short-term credit, insurance, pensions, mortgages, money transfers, and more *(Ramkumar. V,2007)*. The largest public sector bank in the country, the State Bank of India (SBI), has been instrumental in pushing this important objective. SBI has started a transformative journey to provide banking services to the unbanked and underserved parts of the public through a wide range of activities. below mentions are steps that outline SBI's influential activities and describe its trailblazing contributions to increasing financial inclusion in India-

1. **Last mile connectivity:** The State Bank of India is driving the effort to make banking available to millions of people in the most remote areas of the nation through a network of more than 25,000 branches and 76,000 business correspondents. The outcome: The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), which aims to provide financial inclusion for every household in the nation, has resulted in the opening of 492 million accounts,

and the largest lender in India has recorded the highest percentage (28%) of those accounts. Beyond just opening accounts, the state-owned bank is now pursuing financial inclusion 2.0. SBI Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara stated before the World Economic Forum (WEF) that "when we launched these (accounts), they were all zero balance. The average balance in these accounts has increased over time to over 4,000. It implies that we should be able to pool (these) modest savings from all throughout the nation. Based on the amount in their accounts, SBI offers credit options to account holders with small enterprises. *(Thakur, A.2023, July 6).*

2. **Doorstep Banking through Business Correspondents (BC)-** SBI was the first to deploy Business Correspondents (BCs) in order to bring banking services to India's most rural regions. SBI has established a financial outreach network that crosses geographical boundaries with its more than 500,000 BCs dispersed around the nation. These BCs serve as middlemen, providing necessary services including account opening, cash in and outs, and financial transfers. Reaching out to people in remote and rural locations, where access to conventional bank branches is still scarce, has been made possible thanks to this strategic network. BCs have given people the ability to carry out necessary banking activities in their neighborhods, promoting financial inclusion at the local level. Through BC channels, there were 49.29 crore financial inclusion transactions in the 2019–20 fiscal year. *(Kalani, H. 2020, Oct 13)*

3. **Economic Development and Self-Sufficiency through Microfinance-** SBI is dedicated to ensuring that everyone has access to financial services, and this dedication extends to microfinance, where the bank offers loans to start-ups and small enterprises. The economic environment has been significantly impacted by this project. Millions of people have benefited from the bank's microfinance loans, which gave them the money they needed to launch and grow their enterprises. For innumerable people, having access to credit has changed the game by generating income, and jobs, and reducing poverty. SBI's microfinance programs have been crucial in promoting economic development and self-sufficiency.

4. **Promoting Digital Banking**- SBI has been at the forefront of offering cutting-edge banking products in the digital era. The bank provides a full range of online and mobile banking services, including ATM, internet, and mobile banking. The way that people access financial services has been changed by these digital channels. SBI's digital platforms enable millions of transactions on a daily average, improving accessibility and convenience for banking. People living in rural and isolated places, where the closest bank branch can be miles away, have benefited most from this. SBI's digital initiatives have lowered the obstacles to using financial services and put them at the fingertips of customers.

5. **Solutions for Inclusive Banking (***SBI Tiny and SBI Insta Account***)**- SBI is aware that there is still a digital divide in India, where many people have restricted access to smartphones and the internet. The bank established SBI Tiny, a mobile banking solution targeted at those with low-end handsets or spotty internet connectivity, to close this gap. Even people with little digital resources can access financial services thanks to this user-friendly website, which provides fundamental banking services like account opening, cash transactions, and fund transfers. The process of opening an account has also been made simpler with the SBI Insta Account. In just a few minutes, customers can start digital savings accounts online or through the YONO mobile banking app. By lowering paperwork and administrative barriers, this effort opens up banking to a wider range of people.

In a nutshell, the State Bank of India's unrelenting dedication to financial inclusion has had a profound impact on countless people's lives as well as the nation's banking scene. The gap between the unbanked and formal financial services has been closed by SBI by aggressively taking part in government-led initiatives like PMJDY, extending its branch network through Business Correspondents, and implementing cutting-edge digital solutions. The bank's efforts to promote economic growth, lessen inequality, and enhance the financial security of millions of Indians are demonstrated by its progress toward financial inclusion. As a shining example of financial inclusion, SBI continues to pave the path for a more prosperous and inclusive India where everyone has access to banking services and financial security.

Table 2: Quantitative Aspects of Financial inclusion and Digital transformation practices by State Bank of India

Year	No. of ATMs	Total Branches
2019	58,415	22,010
2020	58,555	22,141
2021	62,617	22,219
2022	65,030	22,266
2023	65,627	22,405

As per the data shown by SBI Annual Reports for the last 5 years, it can be concluded that number of ATMs and bank branches have been increasing in the recent years. This shows that bank has been doing a lot to reach out each individual and connect them with the banking environment. Customers may benefit from easier access to ATMs, particularly in remote or underdeveloped locations. In this way, SBI has been managing financial inclusion task efficiently.

Table 3: Trend of Digital Transactions in Recent Years

Years	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Share of transactions through alternate channels	88.1%	91.0%	93.0%	95.5%	97.0%

The "share of transactions through alternate channels" calculates the proportion of total financial transaction volume that uses the modern and digitalised channels of transaction as opposed to more conventional ones like cash or checks. Understanding how consumer preferences and technology are altering and how individuals conduct financial transactions is a crucial indicator for the banks.

As per the data mentioned above, it can be concluded that the alternate channels of transactions have been increasing in the recent years and thus it indicates a shift of customers towards digital payment options. In other words, it can be said that bank has been doing very well in field of digital transformation.

Challenges

Like many financial institutions, the State Bank of India (SBI) has

faced several obstacles on its path to digital transformation and financial inclusion. These difficulties cut across technological, governmental, operational, and social domains. Here are some of the main difficulties SBI is now facing:

1. **Varying levels of digital literacy and awareness**: Diverse levels of digital literacy across SBI's customers pose an obstacle. In India, a sizeable segment of the population, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, may not be familiar with or uncertain about adopting digital technologies. Comprehensive digital literacy programs are therefore required to inform users about the advantages and applications of online banking services**.**

2. **Infrastructure Limitations:** In India, not all areas have equal access to dependable cell networks and internet connectivity. The absence of infrastructure in isolated and impoverished areas can make it difficult to use digital banking services. To expand its services to these regions, SBI must come up with creative alternatives, including using satellite-based internet or mobile banking devices.

3. **Last-Mile Connectivity:** It is difficult to extend digital banking services to the last mile, especially in isolated rural locations. Building infrastructure, such as establishing banking correspondents and mobile banking units, demands a large investment. To guarantee that underprivileged populations may access digital financial services, SBI needs to bridge the connectivity gap.

4. **Integration with Legacy Systems**: SBI operates in a sophisticated technological environment with legacy systems. I. It might be difficult and time-consuming to integrate brand-new digital solutions with these systems. A top priority task is to ensure a smooth transition while maintaining the operation of current services.

5. **Social and Economic Divides:** Reducing social and economic divides among customers is a difficult task. SBI must make sure that people of all income levels can access and afford digital services. To satisfy the unique requirements of different consumer segments, customized solutions could be needed.

6. **Adoption Barriers**: It can be difficult to get customers to use digital banking services, especially the elderly or those who are less tech-savvy. SBI must create intuitive user interfaces, offer sufficient training, and provide incentives to encourage usage.

7. **Lack of inclusivity in Demographics**: It can be difficult to make sure that digital services are accessible to people from all different demographic groups, especially those who have limited access to technology. It's crucial to customize solutions to satisfy the requirements of various consumer groups.

Suggestions

1. For the purpose of educating clients about the benefits of digital banking and offering training on how to use these services, SBI has to finance digital literacy initiatives and awareness campaigns.

2. SBI must make investments in extending infrastructure to reach remote places, as well as consider alternate technologies like satellite-based communication.

3. In order to increase last-mile connectivity and make sure that even rural customers can access digital services, SBI must work with telecom companies and government initiatives.

4. To foster trust in digital transactions, SBI must give priority to cybersecurity measures, carry out regular security audits, and inform clients about online security best practices.

5. To manage infrastructure costs, SBI should carry out cost-benefit studies and investigate cost-sharing arrangements with businesses or governmental organizations.

6. SBI should put an emphasis on user-friendly design, offer individualized help to new users, and provide incentives to promote adoption among different demographics.

Conclusion

The State Bank of India's journey toward digital transformation serves

as an excellent example of how technology may be transformed to further the goals of financial inclusion. SBI has empowered marginalized people, increased access to financial services, and promoted inclusive growth through creative digital initiatives. To fully realize the potential of digital transformation in fostering financial inclusion, however, issues like digital literacy and infrastructural deficiencies must be addressed. Through prioritizing investments in cybersecurity, education, and digital infrastructure, stakeholders have the opportunity to build on SBI's achievements and expedite the shift towards inclusive finance for all.

The State Bank of India (SBI) has achieved notable strides in both financial inclusion and digital transformation. Financial inclusion is a continuous process, not a one-time endeavour. It is a sizable undertaking that calls for coordinated efforts from all parties involved, including the government, financial institutions, regulators, the corporate sector, and the general public. To expand its digital capabilities and connect with the unbanked and underbanked population, SBI has started a variety of projects. The customer experience has been enhanced thanks to SBI's digital transformation initiatives, which have also made it simpler for clients to access banking services. Millions of people have gained access to basic banking services thanks to SBI's financial inclusion initiatives, which have also helped them enter the mainstream financial system. SBI has made progress, but there are still certain issues that need to be resolved. Lack of client knowledge about SBI's digital products and services is one of the greatest problems. SBI needs to do more to inform its clients about the advantages of online banking. The requirement to adhere to different regulations relating to digital banking and financial inclusion presents another difficulty. Regardless of the difficulties, SBI is in a strong position to achieve financial inclusion and digital transformation in the years to come. SBI has a great reputation, sizable customers, and an extensive network of branches and ATMs. SBI is also spending money on new technology and educating its staff to enhance financial inclusion and digital transformation.

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RESEARCH ESSAY

Law and Social Solidarity

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Introduction

Durkhiem's Law and Social Solidarity

Emile Durkheim's view of society was in the form of a unique and holistic entity. According to him, society is like the elements of a human body which come together to constitute life. The unification of social facts (customs, law and morality) is termed as social solidarity. It links individuals to each other and to society as a whole. For Durkheim, society precedes the individual in contrast with the theory of Marx, where individual has been given prime importance. Durkheim proposed different theories to answer one single question: "How society holds itself together in spite of the fact that we all have different interests?" Social facts are the scientific solution to the question.

Social solidarity is the way in which individuals feel connected and united with each other and with society. For Durkheim, social solidarity is primarily based on two things i.e., "social regulation" and "social integration". Social regulation is based on three components: (1) number of rules which includes social, cultural and legal rules that people in society should obey; (2) application of the rules meaning thereby that to what extent these rules are strictly enforced by society; (3) predictability of life which is related to the second component of social regulation. Individuals should think how severely they will be punished for breaking the rules and how they will be rewarded for following the rules. Emile Durkheim believed that social regulation was important for the strength of society and the health of people living in a society.

Now, the 2nd component that is social integration is based on two components: (1) how people associated with the society and others feel; (2) how often an individual interacts with others in the society.

Durkheim said, "Since law reproduces the principal forms of social solidarity, we have only to classify the different types of law to find therefrom the different types of social solidarity which correspond to it." (Durkheim, 1933)

Through the above statement, Durkheim wanted to emphasize that to social solidarity, different systems of law need to be traced. Durkheim in the above quote says that law constitutes such an index since it "reproduces the principal forms of solidarity." Thus, from this, Durkhiem started developing a proof of division of labor as the basis for different forms of solidarity. After explaining this much in his theory, Durkhiem went on to analyze the nature of society, how it changed over time, and how this has resulted in the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity.

Social Solidarity: Organic and Mechanical

Durkheim defines Solidarity as "a social cohesion based upon the dependence which individuals have on each other in more advanced societies". Social solidarity encompasses a very different meaning to itself with respect to different types of societies. Durkheim identified this and in order to give recognition to his terminology, he defined the distinction between two structural principles of social integration: mechanical and organic solidarity. He introduced these terms as a part of his theory of the development of societies (Durkheim, The Division of Labour in Society, 1933).

MECHANICAL SOLIDARITY: Mechanical Solidarity relies on the societies of pre- industrial era and its members are characterized by possessing some common core beliefs, values, educational background as well as lead similar lives. Earlier societies tend to be small scale, localized into villages, or rural areas having very low division of labor either on basis of sex or age. Solidarity of this kind is characterized with a greater degree of homogeneity between the members, without which there could not exist any strong social unification. Durkheim believed that mechanical solidarity follows that an individual's conscience in this society is dependent upon the collective types and follows all

its movements. This notion believes that differences in conscience are disadvantageous to the solidarity of the society as a whole. Societies with mechanical solidarity tend to be small with a high degree of social commitment. This society indicates a low division of labor. It is not a very complex society and is based on shared sentiments and responsibilities.

ORGANIC SOLIDARITY: In contrast, a modern western society, which is viewed as more complex can be characterized as organic solidarity. Individuals are characterized as heterogenous in such solidarities but are still interlinked with each other through mutual reliance. Division of labor is the reason for existence of such reliance i.e., the specialization of individuals in different fields is something which causes increasing number of reliance over each other to fulfill the needs. Organic solidarity has a notion of collective conscience within which society has to interact individually with specialized individuals. These individual interactions are linked to the large fabric of interest of society as a whole. Thus, it can be said that society of organic solidarity is more secular and individualistic due to high division of labor.

For Durkheim, modern the system of law tends to be more restitutive in nature which are primarily characterized by judgements that require the offending party to restore the situation to the original state, e.g., paying restitution for theft to victims. For Durkheim, this kind of law is simply concerned with a 'return of state'. In fact, the presence of restitutive law, presupposes the prevalence of a differentiated division of labour as it covers the rights of individuals either over private property, or over other individuals being at different social position. As the division of labour develops, people do not remain with same consciousness and accordingly the system of law is also required to be changed.

CAUSES OF ORGANIC SOLIDARITY: Durkheim is very critical of economists' ideas of the development of division of labor because they merely examined it through the technical point of view and ignored how society plays a very large and important role in developing it and how societal conditions are necessary to maintain it further.

Durkheim considers the development of division of labor to be associated with increasing number of contacts among people. It is the greater density of contact which leads to specialization among people. It is

the emergence of division of labor in different ways which has led to development of a different type of solidarity.

Leon Duguit's Theory of Social Solidarity

INTRODUCTION: Duguit contributed significantly to the theory of sociological jurisprudence in the early 20th century. He was against the traditional concepts of state, sovereignty and law, and went with a new approach towards those matters from the angle of society. Social solidarity is the spirit of oneness; it represents the strength, cohesiveness, mutual consciousness, and viability of the society.

He focused on duties of an individual towards the society rather than their rights. He analyzed as to how solidarity is crucially important in society rather than the government or the state per se. He believed that individuals are interdependent on each other. He observed, "The only right which a man can possess is the right always to do his duty". It means that if one follows all their duties properly, s/he is actually fulfilling their first and foremost right. The importance given to the duties by Duguit is what makes him different from other sociologists who time and again only gave importance to the rights of an individual in the society.

According to Duguit, the outstanding fact of society is the interdependence of people which has increased in modern times due to increasing knowledge possessed by humans and their greater mastery over the physical world. Humans cannot live in isolation; each individual cannot procure the necessities of life by themself. Hence, the law should be such that it will focus on every person of the society rather than on an individual. He pointed out that law is a rule which humans obey not by virtue of any higher principle but because they have to as members of society. Law will have no other justification than that gained from maintaining the conditions to complete life in the associated state. He said that a law which does not promote social solidarity is a bad law.

Duguit rejected the traditional notions encompassing state, sovereign, public or private law etc. for they were just unreal in the true sense and he contested so because these notions were not related to social solidarity. He strived for mutual cooperation and interdependence between the individuals, groups and societies in accordance with the principle

of division of labor to maintain social cohesion. According to him, the state cannot claim any special provision or privilege because all the human activities are to be judged on the basis of how they contribute to the social solidarity. He considers that state is merely one of the organizations which is required to protect the principle of social solidarity.

He said, "Man must so act that he does nothing which may injure the social solidarity upon which it depends, and more positively, he must do all which tends to promote social solidarity." (Mirow, 2019)

Furthermore, he considers justice as social reality which recognizes its roots from the society itself. Hence, law must always seek to promote social solidarity. The most important contribution of Duguit is that he rejected the omnipotence of state which has led to despotism and totalitarian rule. He rejected the notion of natural rights of men which made individual hostile to longer interest of society. Duguit used law as an instrument to promote social justice. The action of the state should be judged on the basis of whether it promotes social solidarity or not.

Criticism

There were many criticisms to Duguit's theory. He ignored the metaphysical elements according to some of his critics. He also did not take into consideration what would happen in the context of conflicts.

Conclusion

Social solidarity is the way in which individuals feel connected and united with each other and with society. For Durkheim, social solidarity is primarily based on two things i.e., "social regulation" and "social integration". Emile Durkheim believed that social regulation was important for the strength of society and the health of people living in a society.

Durkheim defines Solidarity as "a social cohesion based upon the dependence which individuals have on each other in more advanced societies". Social solidarity encompasses a very different meaning to itself with respect to different types of societies. Durkheim identified this and in order to give recognition to his terminology, he defined the distinction between two structural principles of social integration: mechanical and organic solidarity. He introduced these terms as a part

of his theory of the development of societies in the division of labor in Society, 1893. He said that traditional societies are held together by the help of mechanical solidarity and modern societies are held together by the help of organic solidarity.

The importance given to the duties by Duguit is what makes him different from the other sociologist who time and again only give importance to the rights of an individual in the society.

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Book Review

J.P. Das (Trans.). Vinita Gupta Chaturvedi (Ed.). 2023. *In Our Own Voice: Poems by Odia Women Poets.* **Black Eagle Books. Pp. 146.**

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In Our Own Voice, published by Black Eagle Books brings together seventy-nine poems penned by twenty-four Odia women poets. The collection has been translated by Jagannath Prasad Das (b 26 April 1936), an eminent Odia poet, playwright, essayist and fiction writer. The book brings together poets who are recognised literary luminaries and have been recipients of various honours and prizes that are a testament to the impact of their craft. The poets comprise Manorama Mahapatra, who has been a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi award, the Best Poet Award recipient by Vishwa Odia Sammelan (2013), and Odisha Sahitya Akademi (2022); Mamata Dash, who received awards from the Odisha Sahitya Academy and the Bharatiya Bhasa Parishada National Award; and Yashodhara Das, who was awarded the Best Poet Award by Vishwa Odia Sammelan (2013) and Odisha Sahitya Akademi (2022). The collection also includes emerging voices such as Swapnajita Sankhua. Vinita Gupta Chaturvedi provides a crisp Introduction that frames the temporal as well as sociocultural context of these poems. The Introduction also elaborates on J. P. Das' translation as one that embodies the rich prosodic and rhetorical features of the original. The Introduction elaborates on the nuances of various stylistic devices and imagery that coalesce to weave a rich tapestry of women's responses to the contemporary moment. The verses beckon the reader through images derived from flora such as kashatandi, sunahari, gulmohar, louki vine, and kadamba; fauna such as the kumbhatua bird; and women from mythology such as Ahalya, Urmila, and Yashodhara.

The verse compilation curates a spectrum of mediations on aspirations, desires, hopes, and relationships, among others. Even as the collection of poems signals a self-reflexive speaker, the collection also comprises poems that evaluate the nation-state in terms of the well-being of citizens, the extent of democratic inclusivity, access to justice and rights, etc. The poems provide an insight into the rich interior landscape that extends beyond the mandated normative ideas of womanhood. The various contemplations of self and the world embodied in the collection reveal a rich mosaic of autonomous feminine selves to the reader. The speakers in the poems ask questions that compel the reader to reflect on his or her own assumptions. These questions destabilize the norm and serve to transcend the terms of desire that have traditionally framed women's lives. The tone of the speaker in Aparna Mohanty's "Untitled" critiques, through a series of questions, the terms that frame the meaning of being a "soul-mate," "partner," or "companion" (49). For "men," the speaker charges that these terms are "shackled" to "rank and status" (50). Giribala Mohanty's "Woman" also signals this shift. The speaker in her poem puts forth a counterpoint through questions about adherence to mandated desires. The speaker asks, for instance, "How can a woman have a heart that throbs?" (55). The poet examines a version of womanhood that is reflexive and expresses "yearnings" that transcend those that have been sanctioned ("Woman," 55). The tone and mood of these ruminations are, however, one of optimism. Amiyabala Muni's optimism is sounded in the "promise" that "tomorrow" holds (64). The speaker in Sarojini Sarangi's poem declares through an interplay of metaphor and simile that she "no longer" wishes to lose herself "like a shell" in the "ocean" of the beloved's eyes (67). The mood of rejuvenation through cleansing and renewal is signaled by the allusion to rain in the poem. For Pritidhara Samal, "Poetry" offers an avenue that has the ability to pull her out "from abysmal depth" and helps clarify her thoughts (103).

Besides these contemplations of the self, the collection also includes poems that engage with contemplations pertaining to a deeply iniquitous society. The speakers make a trenchant commentary on the extreme concentration of resources amongst a few and the deleterious effect of the same on the others left disempowered and dispossessed. In doing so, speakers in the poems enunciate a critique of the post-colonial Indian state. Pratiksha Jena uses the metaphor of a chess board to allude to the mechanisms that effect these inequities at the cost of the

deprived. Chirashree Indrasingh's poem "Farmer's Song" also resonates with this concern. The mood of festivity in the second stanza is followed in the third by a reference to farmer distress and suicide due to an inability to pay loans. Gayatribala Panda in "Country" laments that the country belongs to "those who have muscle, power, money" (121). The speaker recognizes the value of the poems in conveying the myriad struggles for resources and justice denied. The collection contains poems that appear to offer a remedy to the malaise. Sucheta Mishra's poem "Love" juxtaposes "love" with "history" (86). The resilience and power of love are presented as a veritable "miracle" in contrast to the powerful forces that have shaped history (86). Madhuri Panda also utilizes the juxtaposition between "love" and violence singled out through "grenade" (90). The latter is a response to her attempts to reframe meaning through linguistic control. The mere attempt, it seems, is perceived as subversive and engenders violent reprisals. In the final poem of the collection composed by Swapnajita Sankhua, the speaker recounts the decisive moment when she "started writing poems" following which she became a "rollicking river without fear of getting lost" (134). The metaphor employed by Sankhua in this illustration forges a connection between the poet and ideas of fluidity, change of course, and constant movement. Qualifying the river as "rollicking" clarifies the feeling of abandonment and freedom from restraint. The speakers of the poems in the collection *In Our Own Voice* relate the act of writing poetry to a moment of assertion of linguistic control. They value this moment as a liberating one, as the speaker seizes the narrative and initiates the reformulation of the terms of self in a meaningful manner.

The project of exploration of ideas of self and nation in the anthology *In Our Own Voice* is distinctly contemporary. It is a fascinating journey that offers an insight into the tradition of Odia poetry composed by women and also various themes that comprise their rumination in the current moment.

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